



Collaborative Humanities Research and Pedagogy

The Networks of
John Matthews Manly
and Edith Rickert

Edited by
Katherine Ellison · Susan M. Kim

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CHAPTER 1

Marvelous Equipment: The Collaborations and Networks of John Matthews Manly and Edith Rickert

Katherine Ellison and Susan M. Kim

John Matthews Manly and Edith Rickert appear together as the authors and editors of many publications, from the well-known eight-volume *The Text of the Canterbury Tales Studied on the Basis of All Known Manuscripts* (1940) to textbooks, anthologies, and projects that have only recently come to light. Together, they imagined and then oversaw one of the most massive archival projects of the early twentieth century, traveling the world to collect documents and create a fully staffed laboratory for the rigorous, collective organization and study of medieval literature. In his eulogy for her, Manly described Rickert as having the “marvelous equipment” necessary to take on work of this magnitude; by this he meant that she had an incredible range and depth of knowledge, “the temperament and training of an artist,” and the organizational instincts needed to coordinate the

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collection and verification of the materials.¹ He, too, had these skills. What made their marvelous equipment seem to work so efficiently, though, was that they recognized they were not isolated scholars: rather, by working together and with others, they could be part of a complex of networks through which enormous projects could be completed.

Manly and Rickert co-authored publications with one another on multiple topics within but also outside of medieval scholarship, in which they brought together a range of voices and methods, and they also worked often with other scholars. During World War I (WWI), they even took leave from the University of Chicago English department, where Manly was chair and Rickert was an instructor, to join the Code and Cipher Section in Washington, D.C., where they deciphered messages with a diverse staff. In addition to influencing their approach to the teaching of writing, cryptography training opened their eyes to the benefits of cross-disciplinary collaboration. They worked alongside geneticists, mathematicians, military strategists, entrepreneurs, and engineers as they learned how to decipher texts. Manly's personal correspondence in the University of Alabama Special Collections Library reveals that he had already built a rich network of acquaintances in a number of fields as early as his undergraduate days, and his own natural curiosity had led him to reach out to scholars whose work he found interesting. Similarly, Rickert's early work emerged in complex and overlapping circles of researchers, writers, artists, editors, and educators, as the chapters in this volume by Sylvia Tomasch and Sealy Gilles, as well as by Molly G. Yarn, detail. Through their war-time service, Manly and Rickert also had the opportunity to work side by side with both academic and nonacademic minds toward solutions to problems that challenged their uniquely diverse range of interests. Together, they built a massive system of connections that reached across universities, the US and UK arts and sciences communities, across webs of wealthy corporate donors, and across government agencies.

In an intellectual climate, today, that persistently challenges the value of humanistic endeavor, the story of Manly and Rickert's collaborations provides a reminder that humanists and the work they do, though it might not be immediately tangible, are useful. The same training and expertise that made possible the massive editing project of the *Text of the Canterbury Tales* also underlay the ability to intervene in the course of the war through the Code and Cipher Section. Here we emphasize that one innovation in the work that Manly and Rickert conducted was this explicit commitment to collaboration, and that the collaborative models they established are

more relevant than ever for humanists. Manly himself, as he assumed leadership of the Modern Language Association (MLA), argued explicitly for the intellectual and practical necessity for collaborative models. In his President's Address to the Modern Language Association (MLA) on December 28, 1920, he urged the MLA to create and support collaborations among faculty, to fund team projects, and to facilitate accessibility *to one another* for collective investigations of topics and questions so large that they could not be researched by individuals. There had been no attempt, he said, "to bring together in any special way or for any special purpose members who were working on subjects closely related or capable of being made of mutual service."² Further, he emphasized,

We in the humanities have been too reticent, too lacking in human fellowship. We too have stars in our firmament, systems as mysterious and fascinating as comets or double suns, but we have too seldom invited the public to look through our telescopes and share our visions of the strange and interesting processes by which the chaotic chatter of anthropoid apes has been organized in the wonderful fabric of human speech or their formless outbursts of emotion have after many centuries issued in lyric and drama.³

Most notably, he urged the humanities to adopt the spirit of collaboration and teamwork that characterizes scientific research, through which humanists could then better share and express the excitement of their findings. Astronomy has been well funded, he notes, simply because of its "appeal to the imagination of men," and the study of language and history must also do better at igniting that curiosity in the public.⁴ He encourages the organization to move beyond its exclusivity, to also admit and encourage the participation of independent scholars, of members who do not work in higher education, as well as to engage more actively in public intellectualism. Sharing knowledge with the public is, itself, also a collaborative activity. "Let us," he adds, "when in our own research we have discovered anything, not carry it off and hide it to play with, but bring it out into the public square and talk with our fellow-men about its meaning, if it has any."⁵ This collaboration and open sharing of knowledge, too, could have financial benefits. He notes that wealthy donors often want to fund new discoveries, but they need to be able to know about, and become excited about, humanities scholarship just as they do work in the sciences and engineering. Humanists, he argues, need to learn how to make the intangible tangible, and collaborative models can facilitate that.

Manly and Rickert shared not only scholarly interests but also this commitment to working collaboratively at every opportunity. This is, in turn, what others remembered about them. Repeatedly in profiles and memorials, Manly is described as having a “seminal mind.” William Snell writes that “I see Manly as a rather frigid breaker and analyst of codes with a *seminal mind* who was more prone to coming up with ideas while his collaborators provided the detailed and often painstaking labor.”⁶ The Medieval Society of America had used the same phrasing in 1941: “The range of catholicity of John Manly’s scholarly activities, the international scope of his associations [sic] and influence, and the *seminal fertility* of his recorded or spoken word mark the distinguishing qualities of his mind and suggest the main outlines of his career.”⁷ In a memorial, colleague J.R. Hulbert said Manly made others’ minds “fertile.”⁸ Rickert, too, is remembered as always connected to others, as continuously surrounded by colleagues and students as she worked busily. In contrast to the representation of Manly’s fertile and fertilizing mind, descriptions of Rickert’s influence tend to emphasize selflessness and dedication, as Snell notes even of Manly’s words in the *Preface to the Text of the Canterbury Tales*.⁹ Several years after her death on May 23, 1938, Fred B. Millett wrote a brief memoir of her in which he describes her physically as a beautiful and energetic woman, with emphasis on her gifts for analytical synthesis. She is a connector in that she was good at making *mental* connections. Socially, she is described as aggressive, a “miniature cyclone,” as a teacher who sometimes put unbearable pressure on her students, who expected perfection and rigor at all times. But whereas Manly’s high standards were inspiring, hers were perceived as overwhelming, including of her own physical well-being. She was encouraged to slow down. Though they contributed equally to their numerous publications, and though Rickert published as prolifically as Manly on her own and with others, the power of Manly’s male academic mind is hyperbolized, while Rickert’s abilities are frequently trivialized, and in gendered terms, in the early reception of their work together. As Elizabeth Scala notes of Hulbert’s *Dictionary of American Biography* entry on Rickert, for example, even when the equal and collaborative nature of their work together is asserted, her contributions tend to be described, perhaps inadvertently, as secondary, even by friends and supporters. Scala writes, “Here one sees in this individualizing of expertise a subtle hierarchizing of labor. While Rickert concerned herself with the material that provided some introductory chapters and eventually two volumes of biographical and cultural background materials, Manly focused on the central and ‘real’ work of editing.”¹⁰

While acknowledging the persistence and durability of such representations of Rickert, this collection also, benefitting from the recuperative work of scholars like Scala, Tomasch and Gilles, and Christina von Nolcken, aims to emphasize the equal intelligence and labor of their contributions to the humanities in the early decades of the twentieth century, as well as highlight the visible influence of both Rickert and Manly still today, 100 years after their tenures as scholars, teachers, colleagues, friends, and code-breakers. In their personal correspondence and in their wide range of work, readers encounter the central conflict that has come to characterize academic scholarship of the twentieth *and* twenty-first centuries: the conflict between the natural desire of the scholar to embrace and follow curiosity, to ask questions and follow the sources to find answers, and the pressures of the institutional systems within which that work is supposed to take place, which insists on deadlines, frequent publication, funding, and results that create status. One of their solutions to these pressures, and to the personal and physical toll of academic labor, was to seek and offer help at every opportunity. Manly's letters to his family make it clear that from an early age, he was drawn to scholarship not only in and of itself, but also for the connection it provided to other scholars. Concerned about his mental and physical well-being, Manly's mother had questioned his career choice to stay in teaching and not advance to higher leadership positions as his father and grandfather had before him. But Manly was drawn to the library and the classroom from a young age. His mother continued to worry about his isolation from others as he studied, about whether he could be happy without being close to family. What was most attractive about academic life, for Manly, though, was not the isolation of scholarship but the very opposite: the rich social networks that weave through the research experience, connecting minds. He could continue to stay intellectually connected to his family, which included talented siblings with a range of interests, but he did not need to return home to do so.

Never were Manly *and* Rickert so joyful in correspondence as when they were describing what they had found or sharing a connection they had made—all while connecting to that very person with a contagious kind of intellectual excitement. This is what stands out about Manly's letters to William Friedman, as documented in Katherine Ellison's chapter in this collection on the Riverbank Laboratory and in John F. Dooley's essay on codebreaking, and in Rickert's many projects and friendships, as discussed in chapters by Tomasch and Gilles, Yarn, and von Nolcken. Susan M. Kim and Michael Matto's essays, too, find this excitement in their

textbook and anthology work as well. Indeed, the collaborators on this volume have enjoyed that same energy and excitement. This project began as a partnership between two scholars who work in different fields and yet found inspiration in Manly and Rickert's relationship and approach to academic work. Given the vast range of influences to be traced to Manly and Rickert, this is a collection that can only operate *as* a collection that brings together voices from across disciplines now often otherwise isolated within disciplinary boundaries.

JOHN MATTHEWS MANLY, EDITH RICKERT,
AND THE COMMUNION OF SPIRITS

A portrait of Manly, alone and looking stern, still hangs on the wall of The University of Chicago Department of English, a daily reminder of the legacy of the figure who served as chair for 35 years, from 1898 to 1933. Manly's contributions continue today to shape that department, the curricula of English Studies, the disciplines of literary studies, philology, and writing studies, the field of library science, and even the professions of cryptanalysis and computing and the seemingly unrelated future methods and goals of the digital humanities. In the Manly Papers, made public in 2015 by the University of Chicago Library, visitors find 15 boxes of materials documenting Manly's interdisciplinary networks. Though Manly's portrait hangs alone in that hallway, it represents a career of collaboration and partnership. In his October 11, 1940 memorial to Manly upon his passing, David H. Stevens noted that while Manly was a great scholar, what they celebrated that day were the connections he made with others: "The real tribute will always be in ourselves and in others reached indirectly by his influence. We know he himself would value that above all formal testimonials or even a full life history."¹¹ Manly idealized the "communion of spirits," Stevens noted, that George Santayana describes in *The Realm of the Spirit* (1942), or "truth made visible to us through others."¹² The Medieval Society of America ended their memorial similarly. After a long description of his illustrious life and accomplishments, the Society authors closed "on a personal note": "though he was never married, his household was the congenial home of members of his family during the last thirty years of his life. Those who knew him best stress his modesty, honesty, sympathy, generosity, and genius for friendship."¹³

There are no full published biographies of Manly or longer explications of what it means to have a genius for friendship, even though his impact on literary studies for the first decades of the twentieth century has given him legendary status in the halls of the University of Chicago.¹⁴ This brief summary of his career, and the next chapter that goes into more detail about his life of collaboration through his personal letters and unpublished essays, must suffice to familiarize the reader with his achievements and significance. Manly joined the English department at Chicago in 1898 after a short career at Brown University. Personally recruited by University of Chicago President William Rainey Harper, Manly immediately changed the department's curriculum, which a former chair, William D. MacClintock, had centered on aestheticism and the policing of literary works that would be considered valuable and worthy of inclusion in the developing canon. The curriculum before Manly was made up of a range of Eurocentric literature courses, beginning with surveys and proceeding to author studies, such as on William Shakespeare and John Milton, and studies of the periods.

Manly sought, at least philosophically, a return to a German model of literary study, recentering the department on philological and historical study. Yet, Manly's vision was not to replicate the German university or its study of literature, which he learned a great deal about while on exchange at the University of Göttingen in 1909. Though Harper's desire was for the University of Chicago to rival German universities, Manly, the son of a line of university presidents, well understood the unique origins of the emerging US tradition. He also understood the corporate interests of US higher education, the unique character of the administration and also of the student body, and the particular needs of the American public. He was more dedicated to the practical potential of the study of English language and literature than Harper could have anticipated. Finally, he greatly appreciated mathematics and science (he had a degree in mathematics) and envisioned a new kind of English department—and a new kind of humanistic inquiry—that would more resemble the sciences in the rigor of its methods and the collaboration of its thinkers. Many publications on Manly, including the current website of the University of Chicago English department,¹⁵ say that he wanted literary studies to follow the “scientific method.” However, his appreciation for the methods of scientific inquiry was more nuanced than that. What he truly appreciated was the

collaborative spirit of the sciences as a community. He outlined his interest in methods of scientific discovery in his presidential address to the Medieval Academy on “Humanistic Studies and Science,” published in *Speculum* in 1930.

Manly’s choice to work in higher education was not surprising, though his dedication to the humanities seemed to come as a shock to his family. He was from a long line of academic administrators. Born September 2, 1865 in Sumter County, Alabama as the oldest of seven children, Manly was the great-grandson of Basil Manly, President of the University of Alabama and minister to the Confederacy. Basil Manly actually gave the prayer for Jefferson Davis’s inauguration in 1861. His grandfather, Basil Manly Jr., was a Baptist minister and President of Georgetown College in Kentucky. Manly’s father was also a Baptist minister, President of Alabama Central Female College, and then President of Furman University in South Carolina. It was expected, then, that Manly would also work his way up the administrative ladder, eventually residing in a university president’s office. He would seem to have been on his way there, earning his master’s degree in mathematics from Furman in 1883 when he was only 18 (he was often described as a prodigy) and then his doctorate in philology from Harvard University in 1890. He taught mathematics at William Jewell College in Liberty, Missouri, literary studies briefly at Brown University, and then was recruited swiftly to the University of Chicago to rise instantly to Chair of the Department of English, despite being so early in his career. Yet, this is as far as Manly would go administratively. While his brothers moved higher in their own careers—his younger brother Charles became a well-known aerospace engineer, for example, with papers archived at the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum—John Matthews remained chair of the English department for 35 years until he retired, at which time he continued to publish and remain active in organizations.

Manly was part of a new movement in academic study, when disciplinary journals and organizations were forming rapidly to create networks for knowledge sharing. Early in his career, he immediately began joining a large number of local, national, and international communities to meet others with similar interests and to connect himself to resources. He joined the Rhode Island Historical Society in 1892. In addition to the Modern Language Association, the Modern Humanities Research Association, and The Mediaeval Academy of America, Manly was also a member of or presiding officer in the American Philological Society, the American

Philosophical Society, the American Dialect Society, the Linguistic Society of America, the Shakespeare Association of America, the Malone Society, the Bibliographical Societies of London and Oxford, and the Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen. And in addition to serving as president of the MLA, Manly was also president of the Modern Humanities Research Association from 1922 to 1923, for which he recited another groundbreaking speech, “The Outlook.” From 1908, five years after its founding, until 1930, Manly was editor of *Modern Philology*, shaping that journal into one of the most reputable academic journals in English studies. He served on the Advisory Board of *Speculum* from 1925 to 1930 as well. Additionally, he received five honorary doctorates and was awarded the biennial Sir Israel Gollancz Prize in 1939 by the British Academy.

Manly was publishing frequently in *Modern Philology*, *Speculum*, *PMLA*, and many other journals on medieval and early modern literature, as well as authoring numerous books, manuals, and anthologies through the first two decades of the century. While at Brown, he published two volumes of *Specimens of the Pre-Shakespearian Drama*. After his arrival at the University of Chicago, he immediately published an infamous criticism of Berlin scholar Alois Brandl in the *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*.¹⁶ Brandl was known for his ruthless published attacks on scholars he deemed less qualified or well-educated than himself, a quality that seemed to often trigger Manly. This gained Manly even more friends and allies. Yet while Manly was loyal to those friends and even published with them, he was also ready to call out any scholarship he felt would damage the reputation of the humanities and its methods, even if written by colleagues he respected. In 1931 in *Speculum*, he countered—or rather, destroyed—dear friend William Romaine Newbold’s “solutions” to the Voynich manuscript, which Newbold had forwarded in “Roger Bacon’s Cipher Manuscript” (1921) and “The Most Mysterious Manuscript in the World” (1921).¹⁷ Newbold had tried to prove that Roger Bacon had written the manuscript. Intent on keeping his friendship, however, Manly calls Newbold “ingenious” and his work an example of “scholastic heroism” and “the stuff of which heroes and martyrs are made” because he dared take on such a controversial topic with academic rigor.¹⁸ Even in print, and even as he demanded the highest scholarly standards, he also championed inclusivity and experimentation with new ideas. He sought not to censor or shame authors but, rather, to debate with the scholarship on its own terms.

When possible, he connected with other scholars in co- or multiple-authorship studies. With University of Chicago Press typesetter J.A. Powell, he wrote *A Manual for Writers Covering the Needs of Authors for Information on Rules of Writing and Practices in Printing* (1913) and *Better Business Letters: A Practical Desk Manual Arranged for Ready Reference* (1921). Powell felt similarly about collaboration and about welcoming new ideas in scholarship, even when controversial. In their *Manual for Writers*, writing is equated with thinking, and “successful thinking” is described as “an attitude of what may be called ‘active receptivity,’” in which the mind not only observes and records, but also seeks out association with new ideas. Manly and Powell continue, “In too many minds a new idea is received as a stranger is in an English hotel, not as a newcomer is in a boom-town in the West.”¹⁹ As the best thinking requires “active receptivity,” and with the striking metaphor of inter-personal connection, similarly Manly argues in his famous and formative address to the MLA that it should be one of the functions of such an organization to bring together “members who were working on subjects closely related or capable of being made of mutual service”: “instead of working as isolated individuals—scattering our efforts as did the monks of the middle ages—we can organize groups for working cooperatively on special topics.”²⁰

Manly worked with Powell even though he disagreed with Powell’s work at Riverbank Laboratory on Elizabeth Wells Gallup’s theory that Francis Bacon had authored the plays of William Shakespeare. He, in fact, had connected Powell and Riverbank’s founder and director, George Fabyan. Manly’s fascinating correspondence with Fabyan is described in more detail in the chapter on Riverbank in this collection. His relationship with Powell also kept him connected to the network he built with the rest of the Riverbank staff, some of whom would become colleagues during World War I when he reported for service with the Military Intelligence Division (MID, or MI-8) in September of 1918.

Alongside Manly in the Code and Cipher Section of the MID were Powell, Rickert, and other University of Chicago students and faculty Manly had recruited, including Stevens, Thomas A. Knott, Latinist Charles Beeson, and linguist Edgar H. Sturtevant. He had met Rickert during her dissertation defense in 1899 when her own advisor had left town, and Manly stepped in as a replacement. As this collection attests, that chance meeting led to an iconic friendship that would shape the seemingly very different fields of literary studies and intelligence, certainly, but also library science, archival research methods, rhetoric and writing studies, the

profession of English, and fields that had not even been invented yet, like the digital humanities. Henry Veggian's reprinted essay provides more detail about how their MID work influenced literary formalism and also connected to Manly's pragmatist educational philosophy; in fact, Veggian finds, literary studies and the formation and development of US intelligence are intimately intertwined.

Rickert, born Martha Edith Rickert in July, 1871, had grown up in a world very different from that of Manly's privileged and intellectual Southern family. Although she was able to attend Vassar on a scholarship (graduating in 1891), the financial concerns of her family, including providing care for her sisters, color and shape many of her early years. Rickert would teach high school, for example, in the years after her graduation, and later she would edit for D. C. Heath as well as *Ladies Home Journal*, not because she enjoyed such editing, but because she was sufficiently financially pressed to be driven to it. In 1895 she began her graduate work at the University of Chicago, completing her dissertation in 1899. Her dissertation, an edition of the romance *Emaré*, would be published in 1906 (issued in 1908) by the Early English Text Society with the curious, given subsequent readings of her relationship with Manly, note of thanks in which Manly is credited less for intellectual guidance than for proof-reading: "My thanks are due to Dr. Furnivall for good advice on many occasions, and to Professor Manly, of the University of Chicago, for reading the proofs." Although in the period between Rickert's completion of her PhD and her tenure at the University of Chicago, Rickert had opportunity to interact with Manly both personally and professionally, at the very least in his capacity as the editor of *Modern Philology*, which published her long essay on the English Offa cycle across two issues in 1904 and 1905 (and Rickert would continue to publish in *Modern Philology* over the next 30 years), the collaborative relationship does not emerge until after Rickert returned to Chicago with an appointment for summer term teaching in 1914.²¹ Manly would publish a third edition of *English Prose and Poetry* in 1916, for example, already with the acknowledgment, "For assistance with the notes and the translations, the editor wishes to thank his friends Professor James Weber Linn and Miss Edith Rickert."²²

The period between 1899 and 1914, this period *before* the famous collaboration with Manly, however, was hardly a fallow time in Rickert's life: on the contrary, it is marked by rich creative and scholarly productivity, and the development of friendships and intellectual networks in England as well as the United States, as the chapters in the volume by Yarn and by

Tomasch and Gilles detail. This period saw the publication of Rickert's translation of Marie de France and *The Babe's Book* as well as numerous short stories and her novels *Out of the Cypress Swamp* (1902), *The Reaper* (1904), *Folly* (1906), *The Golden Hawk* (1907), and *The Beggar in the Heart* (1909).²³ The return to the University of Chicago, while it certainly made possible the collaboration with Manly, also signaled a shift for Rickert from the communities of women in which she worked and lived as an artist, writer, and scholar to the precarious existence of a part-time instructor, holding, as Scala notes, "a kind of adjunct position" at the University while also engaged in the formation of a long-time professional friendship and developing collaboration with the, by then, world reputed Head of the department.²⁴

During their service for the Military Intelligence Division (MID), removed from the special hierarchy of the university, Rickert and Manly took on work that was naturally, and necessarily, collaborative. Ciphers and codes are not solved individually, though Manly did puzzle over many in his solitary hours. The staff, with Manly and Rickert as motivators with seemingly endless energy, created new strategies, approaching the field with the same methodical close reading and analysis they conducted with older languages, difficult poetry, and complex prose. Dooley walks readers through this problem-solving process in his chapter on the famous Pablo Waberski cipher, which Manly and Rickert solved in just three days in May of 1918. Manly contributed frequency charts to track the occurrence of letters and letter combinations across a large number of languages, ancient and modern. The literary scholars in the office were good at recognizing linguistic patterns, tropes, and distinctive authorial styles. As if decryption was not tiring enough, Manly and Rickert then also worked on *The Writing of English* in the evenings after MID work. Veggian notes in his chapter that this later publication was a major departure from the methods and audience of the J.A. Powell collaboration.

In the years following the war and their work together in the MID, Manly and Rickert returned to the University of Chicago, Manly as the Head of the department, and Rickert teaching courses on Chaucer as well as contemporary literature, and, increasingly, joining Manly in collaborative work on textbooks and manuals. In 1921, they published *Contemporary British Literature: Bibliographies and Study Outlines*, and in 1922 *Contemporary American Literature: Bibliographies and Study Outlines*,

with later revisions by Fred B. Millett. Also in 1922, they teamed with Eliza R. Bailey on *Lessons in the Speaking and Writing of English* (Manly had collaborated with Bailey much earlier in his career on the *Bailey-Manly Spelling Book*, published in 1908). That such collaboration was unusual enough between unmarried male and female scholars within a department to occasion rumors of romantic attachment is clear. On April 12 (likely in 1921, but the letter does not have a date), Manly mentions to his sister Annie that he had received a telegram from Rickert. She had been inquiring about the rumor of a resignation, perhaps from the University of Chicago English department, though it is not specified, and she was seeking a recommendation from Manly. He notes that “I could not recommend her, as such an appointment would certainly revive reports that we were engaged & would thereby embarrass me & hamper her work.”²⁵ Faculty at the University of Chicago at this time were not allowed to carry on romantic relationships with one another or marry; if they did, the female academic was required to resign her position. As Scala has noted, Manly knew the threat a romantic relationship might pose for a woman academic all too well from his own early engagement to an assistant in Romance Languages.²⁶ Whether or not Manly and Rickert had been “engaged” in any way is unclear here; what is certain is that Manly seeks not only to protect his own reputation but also to protect Rickert’s career. Even the rumor of a relationship could cost a woman her professorship. Personal correspondence, administrative decisions, and these scholarly collaborations reveal that Manly believed in the equality of women and their right to access to academic careers, resources, and opportunities. He shared this belief with other men who would become close to him over the years, most notably William Friedman. Other scholars with whom Manly forged close personal connections, like Thomas O. Mabbott, an Edgar Allan Poe scholar, were known widely for their feelings on suffrage and the women’s movement. Of Rickert, Mabbott remarked that she was “one of the two most competent women in the learned line I ever met—the other is Belle Greene—and I should judge her Chaucer course must be interesting.”²⁷ Though Manly could not recommend her, Rickert did secure the position at the University of Chicago: Rickert was promoted to associate professor in 1924, when she then began formally working with Manly on the Chaucer project.

FEMINIST RECUPERATIONS OF EDITH RICKERT

Noting, as a powerful example, that Rickert is unmentioned in the press release for the Haskins Medal awarded to *The Text of the Canterbury Tales*, Scala offers her brief 1998 biography in the spirit of a “corrective” to the near erasure of Rickert in much of the reception. Scala writes, rather gently, “One wishes that Rickert were better remembered.”²⁸ With greater emphasis, Scala’s “Scandalous Assumptions: Edith Rickert and the Chicago Chaucer Project” begins with the provocation of an anecdotal dismissal of Rickert’s work on the grounds of her rumored romantic relationship with Manly.²⁹ Even more than 20 years after the publication of that essay, it is difficult to overlook the persistence of such characterizations of Rickert’s contributions and the impact of her work both in collaboration with and independent of Manly. While Manly’s photograph still hangs in the Department of English, rubbings and reproductions of medieval drawings, from which Rickert made lantern slides, were displayed in Wieboldt Hall. Her passion for the period, and for sharing archival findings, was thus present but invisibly so as students walked the staircase.³⁰ And perhaps in a similar vein, Rickert’s contribution to scholarship as well as the intellectual and personal lives of her students was recognized in the dedication of Rickert House, initially part of Woodward Court, in 1963, and subsequently relocated to Max Palevsky West on the University of Chicago campus. While it is Manly whose authority within the Department is invoked, it is Rickert whose name still shapes the architecture of undergraduate life at the University of Chicago, but again in association less with intellectual achievement than with community life: she is both present and trivialized, as, for example, in the recent Rickert House badges which bear her name above a lightning bolt on a field of blue, or House tee-shirt designs featuring the badge with a monkey striding across it.³¹ And though a number of biographical essays have made it clear that Rickert collaborated as widely as Manly did, across a range of fields, taught many courses and students, and published widely, her influence upon others remains consistently described in different terms. Snell, for example, represents her as a nurturer, interpreting her novels and children’s literature as inspiration to others because they connect through maternal emotion: whereas Manly had a “seminal mind,” Rickert was “of another mould: a feeling, creative woman; hence the novels, not to mention the three volumes of children’s stories she published in her lifetime.” Snell remarks that her attention to children “must surely testify to an unfulfilled

desire to have a family of her own,” a comment never made about Manly even though he also never married or had children.³² Scala has pointed out the presentation of Rickert by Virginia Leland in her affectionate remembrance of the Chaucer Laboratory as occupying a “subtle, advisory role that we might characterize as stereotypically ‘feminine.’”³³ However, as we note above, while we feel the force of Scala’s repeated call for scholarship recognizing Rickert’s achievements, we also acknowledge the significant shift in critical scholarship on Rickert evident in the attentiveness to the equal collaboration between Manly and Rickert in the work of Tomasch and Gilles (“Editing as Palinode,” “Professionalizing Chaucer”), as well as the ongoing critical and biographical research of von Nolcken on Rickert herself. In the context of that shift, the chapters focused on Rickert in this volume take up examinations of aspects of Rickert’s work that have sometimes been elided even in the recuperative approaches to her contribution to the Chaucer Project. Tomasch and Gilles find that the “families” of women with whom Rickert worked but also lived and whom she befriended sometimes for life were just as, and perhaps more, influential in her life than Manly, and that in the context of cultural attitudes toward the New Woman, the staggering production of often dismissed creative works—novels, short stories, poems—both reproduces cultural and generic strictures and suggests Rickert’s efforts to resist those strictures, to revise their inevitably compromising endings. Rickert’s important associations with other women are the focus of Yarn’s chapter, which leads us through the networks of women mentors, friends, and colleagues who defined her early career, networks that also often invisibly made possible the research and achievements of other scholars. The chapter by Pearce considers Rickert’s children’s books, *The Bojabi Tree* (1923), *The Blacksmith and the Blackbirds* (1928), and *The Greedy Goroo* (1929), often dismissed simply as evidence of Rickert’s desire to have children of her own, and places those works in the context of an uneasy situating of modernism in literature for children. Examining other often invisible collaborations, in her chapter on the complex cooperative gender dynamics of the Chaucer Laboratory, von Nolcken considers the relationships among the assistants in the Laboratory and under the supervision of Rickert and Manly as they completed the exacting, even maddening tasks required by the project, providing insight into perceptions of both Rickert and Manly in those supervisory roles as well as into the collaborative but also competitive dynamics that the project demanded.

CRITICS OF COLLABORATION AND THE CHAUCER PROJECT DEBATE

Perhaps the main misconception that we must confront in thinking about the incredible range of projects that Manly and Rickert contributed to, together but also separately and with other collaborators, is that this diversity of interest—what we today might call interdisciplinarity—limited their achievements rather than magnified them. One of the reasons that no collection on their collaborations *beyond* the Chaucer project has yet surfaced is because there is a persistent sense among scholars that Manly and Rickert stretched themselves too thin, that they let themselves become preoccupied with unimportant fields or obsessions that hindered the work that they could have done on more important topics. Snell articulates this attitude clearly when he asks: “But one aspect of the couple’s approach to the text has been overlooked: namely, how much did their cryptanalysis undermine the Chaucer project in their thinking?”³⁴ There is also the sentiment that Manly and Rickert started such a large, demanding project too late in life. They began when Manly was 59 and Rickert was 53, and they passed away at 75 and 67, respectively. Snell speculates that their errors might have been because they were rushed to complete it before they died.

Manly honestly described their shortcomings in the introduction to their Chaucer volume: “It has been more difficult than usual to bring into harmony parts of the work composed and typed at widely different periods. We hope, nevertheless, that our readers will make allowances for these restrictions and consider the difficulties under which we have worked.” Both the Dooley and von Nolcken chapters in this volume include summaries of the Chaucer project. Detailed descriptions are to be found also in the first and second volumes of *The Text of the Canterbury Tales*, and in Roy Vance Ramsey’s 1994 comprehensive description and defense of the volumes, *The Manly-Rickert Text of the Canterbury Tales*, with additional treatments as well in the exhaustive and vexed reception history of that project, as represented fairly recently in the articles collected in the 2010 special issue of *Studies in the Age of Chaucer*.³⁵ Here we will very briefly note that the project began with a shared sense for Manly and Rickert, as they document in the “Prolegomena,” of “the need for a text of the Canterbury Tales based throughout upon the evidence afforded by all the extant MSS and such early editions as represented MSS no longer in existence.” Such an edition was made possible, they knew, in part by their work for the MID, which familiarized them with the potential of

“the relatively cheap process of photographic reproduction by the machine known as the photostat” which would enable “careful collation” as well as the “repeated examination” necessary for maximal accuracy.³⁶ The enormity of the endeavor is breathtaking to contemplate. Beyond the problems that arose from the unanticipated scope of the project as well as the limitations in the funding that created relentless pressure to complete the project, the Chaucer project came face to face with a central problem in their approach to the edition: their initial belief that an archetype or “ur-text” (what Gilles and Tomasch have wryly called “the plaintext”) might be retrievable through the processes of recension, and their increasing recognition, by means of their own exceptionally rigorous application of the very same processes, that such a text could not exist.³⁷ Despite early and vehement criticism of the edition, subsequent editors of Chaucer return to the edition, almost of necessity, for its completeness and accuracy. As F. N. Robinson notes in the preface to his second edition of *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* (the first having been published before the completion of the Manly-Rickert), as an editor himself he has made “extensive use” of the Manly-Rickert volumes, but also that rather than attempt to reproduce the materials himself, has simply “assumed that scholars will resort to Manly’s complete presentation of the material.”³⁸ Robinson, that is, at once acknowledges his own debt and takes as a given that the Manly-Rickert volumes will be a fundamental resource for all serious scholars. As Paul G. Ruggiers summarizes,

There have been problems in the critical reception of the edition: the classification system and that of the constant groups are complicated; the case for lines of transmission of tales and parts of tales is only partly demonstrated; the text, although it may be the finest text of *The Canterbury Tales* ever produced, is purportedly derived by the processes of recension but is not so clearly demonstrated to be so. There may be a flaw in logic in the reasoning-through to the notion of an archetype.³⁹

Even so, and in the introduction to a volume which includes George Kane’s forceful critique of the Manly-Rickert volumes, Ruggiers will conclude, “Flawed though their edition may be, it is the single greatest contribution to our knowledge of the text of *The Canterbury Tales* in our time.”⁴⁰

Daniel Wakelin has argued that in addition to considering the influence of the volumes on the representation and understanding of the *Canterbury*

Tales, we might also engage “the historian’s mode, the recovery and interpretation of Manly and Rickert’s work within the wider histories of university professionalization, evolutionary theory, gender in the academy, and so on.”⁴¹ Gilles and Tomasch similarly argue that studying the careers of Manly and Rickert is also reckoning with the larger intellectual currents of the early twentieth century in which Manly and Rickert were active participants, if not leading forces, “from the rational organization of research universities and the professionalization of military intelligence to the specialization of academic departments and the suppression of ancient texts by modern ones.”⁴² That is, central as the Chaucer project would be to the careers and lives of Manly and Rickert, and to the study of Chaucer, the urgency of broader study manifests perhaps in the recognition that, as Gilles and Tomasch have argued, in this “story of science in the service of the humanities, of technology’s role in literary discovery, of the search for ever-elusive origins, and of the rise and fall of Chaucer as cultural capital,” is also a tracing out of the history of approaches to humanistic study in the twentieth century, and an opportunity to see ourselves within but perhaps not wholly limited by the consequences of that history.⁴³

MANLY, RICKERT, AND CHICAGO PRAGMATISM

It is important to remember that Manly and Rickert were both receiving their graduate educations, and entering the profession of college teaching, just as US higher education was beginning to take shape and doctoral graduate study was not yet formalized. Their belief in the accessibility of education to all classes, the centrality of the student voice, and the application of college education to the principles of democratic citizenship and real-world use was part of the political progressivism for which Midwestern universities of the early twentieth century became known. As Veggian, Matto, and Kim discuss in this collection, their approach to reading and teaching literature was a reflection of their belief that education is the key to upward mobility. While Manly and Rickert did not depart entirely from the idea that literary criticism is aesthetic appreciation, they valued the study of texts in their materiality with attention to the historical and cultural contexts of their production. They believed, too, in the importance of publishing findings. Though they did not define themselves as pragmatists, it was not coincidental that they were working within and shaping curricula at the University of Chicago following John Dewey’s time there,

from 1894 to 1904, as Veggian explains. William James had named the University of Chicago network of pragmatists the “Chicago School” in his famous 1904 essay.⁴⁴

Dewey, along with George Herbert Mead, James H. Tufts, Jane Addams, and Ella Flagg Young, who were also at the University of Chicago, positioned himself in contrast to the German university tradition and believed that all academic knowledge should have practical use and application in the real world.⁴⁵ For example, Dewey, Mead, and Tufts were closely involved with Addams’s Hull House, with the City Club of Chicago Committee on Housing Conditions, and with the League for Industrial Democracy with Upton Sinclair and Jack London. Daniel Tröhler notes that the scholarly tendency in work on the pragmatists and on the Chicago School is to think of it only in terms of Dewey and his direct followers and closest colleagues. However, it was a much wider network: studying the early pragmatists, Tröhler stresses, requires “an analysis of the dominant mental dispositions that frame the theoretical options of these figures, as well as the personal networks out of which—against a background of special social and economic developments—their discourse developed.”⁴⁶ Like Dewey, Manly and Rickert also resisted the compartmentalization of disciplinary methodology and language that Veggian discusses in this collection, as well as a “more inclusive and professional model of pedagogy in which students attained status rather than having it granted to them by the privileged and forceful determinism theorized by Social Darwinists.”⁴⁷

The climate at the University of Chicago in the first decade of the twentieth century was therefore already receptive to Manly and Rickert’s new methodologies, but it was not an inevitable home for pragmatic philosophy. Tension was high between upper administration and faculty like Dewey. The University of Chicago was, in its very origin, the product of wealthy, corporate interests that were at odds with the pragmatists. John D. Rockefeller (owner of Standard Oil Company) had given \$600,000 toward a \$1,000,000 endowment to create the university as a demonstration of his Protestant belief that philanthropy could “put things right with God and their fellow human beings through acts meant to serve the social good, such as founding universities.”⁴⁸ Dewey had joined the University of Chicago in 1894, invited by Tufts, chair of the Department of Philosophy. Dewey was to administer the School of Education, and one of the agreements of his hire was that pedagogy would be central and well funded. He secured 1000 dollars in free tuition for elementary school

students to attend a laboratory school that he created, popularly called “The Dewey School,” that practiced as well as allowed the study of his democratic vision of education. The school featured a student-centered, rather than content-centered, curriculum, with a focus on process and curiosity. When University of Chicago President William Rainey Harper consolidated the laboratory school with the university’s School of Education without Dewey’s consultation, Dewey resigned in 1904. Flagg Young, former Superintendent of City Schools of Chicago and close collaborator and friend to Dewey, took over as chair of the School of Education after his departure. Harper’s corporate vision, and Flagg Young’s democratic vision, would clash continuously.

The scholarly and curricular work that Manly and Rickert engaged in, and their mentorship of and collaboration with many women academics, was directly connected to the early twentieth-century momentum in women’s education and civil rights, as Tomasch and Gilles explain in more detail in this collection. Nearby, Flagg Young was a suffragist and early feminist educator who lamented that industrialism had largely left women and the poor behind. In her 1915 address to the National Education Association, she noted that the strides women had made toward independence and personal fulfillment had been stifled by industrialism:

The work has been taken from her, but she is not doing it in the world outside the home. We teach girls sewing, we teach them cooking. Do they go out in the world and manage the great restaurants, the kitchens of the great hotels? Certainly not. Men cook in the large establishments. And so with sewing. Girls are taught to sew. But if you or I want a tailor-made dress, we look around and find a man to make it.⁴⁹

Young’s focus was children’s education and on raising the status of children and their social importance. Central to her vision was the idea that teachers must be *trained*—she established the first teacher-training programs, working with the University of Chicago. She created the first teachers’ organizations, recognizing the importance of collaboration and solidarity to increase the reputation and respect for the profession. Though the archives provide no evidence that Manly and Rickert worked intimately with her on these projects, they do reference her in *A Manual for Writers: Covering the Needs of Authors for Information on Rules of Writing and Practices in Printing* (1913). As Matto and Kim prove in this collection, too, Manly and Rickert were concerned about the teaching of

reading and writing at the elementary school level as well. The seven volume *Good Reading* series (1926–1928) written with Sarah E. Griswold and Nina Leubrie and with illustrations by Elizabeth M. Fisher and Blanche Greer, would anticipate the William Scott Gray readers as it engaged the most recent scholarship on the teaching of reading to young readers. Rickert's own children's books were on featured lists of age-appropriate materials for those schools.

What is useful to understand, as a context for Manly and Rickert's work, then, is that both early education and higher education were on the precipice of change at this juncture in their work and teaching, and they were actively participating in—and even pioneering—those changes. Debate surrounded the proper type of training that the lower and middle classes, in particular, should receive—should they attend what we now call trade schools, studying specific skills and funneling into particular trades or professions, or should they receive a broader education rooted in what we might identify now as humanistic or liberal arts traditions, taking a range of courses across fields? Flagg Young, like Manly and Rickert, felt passionately that working and lower class citizens should have access to the same range of options as the upper-class student, which included access to the humanities: “When the fourteen to sixteen-year-old children of the working classes are cut off from everything in education except that which bears directly on shop work, the life, the character of the American workman will lose the stimulus that comes through the humanities.”⁵⁰

The English department at the University of Chicago thus became a central testing ground for pragmatist philosophy. James A. Berlin notes how fragmented the university curriculum became after the turn of the twentieth century; under this idea of higher education as the key to democratic citizenship, college began to be promoted as a necessity for entrance to the workforce, as a place where highly skilled, expert laborers were trained. These skill sets were taught in increasingly isolated departments and majors, curricula bridged only by a first-year composition course and a few core general education courses with no apparent logical connection or intellectual link to one another. Manly saw an opportunity to change the focus of the English department curriculum; he valued specialization and thorough, rigorous research of very specific topics, as Rickert did as well, yet as the authors in this collection report, they also looked to composition studies as a way to connect the English department curriculum to other disciplines. They recognized the value of interdisciplinarity and the interconnectedness of scientific, vocational, and humanistic knowledges.

The unexpected learning opportunity that collaboration with Riverbank Laboratory, as described in the chapter on that facility, would provide, then, would be right in line with their larger curricular goals.

While the university would seem to be the best place for the invigorating kinds of collaborations that Manly and Rickert cherished, it had curricular and institutional limitations that they came to understand more clearly only after stepping outside of higher education to experience different kinds of learning environments. Riverbank Laboratory, for example, provided an alternative to the university system that embraced and embodied this spirit of connection and cross-disciplinary interest. Interactions with Fabyan, the eccentric director of Riverbank, too, taught Manly about the growing problem facing the humanities—the lack of financial support that its disciplines inspired, in contrast to the sciences. From the Riverbank network, Manly established a connection with the Friedmans, and a productive lifelong friendship that was a true meeting of the minds, and he also learned how a laboratory structure could benefit humanities scholarship. What he witnessed at Riverbank he then had the opportunity to experience himself when he volunteered for service in the MID. There, he was immersed in a unique kind of problem-solving environment, immersed in hands-on experimentation with language and text to solve ciphers. As Rachel Sagner Buurma and Laura Heffernan also find, this work inspired both Manly and Rickert to “remake humanities scholarship on the model of their urgent, collaborative wartime codebreaking.”⁵¹ They note, as we do, that Manly presented this new model of collaboration to the Modern Language Association (MLA) when he became director in 1920, and that he “argued that individualist scholarship benefited faculty working at well-endowed institutions but left others out in the cold.”⁵²

Manly and Rickert recognized that collaboration, in the spirit of the sciences, was one strategy for handling the pressures of academic output while also adding value to the work through collective creativity. In *New Methods for the Study of Literature*, published in 1927, Rickert explains that her work in the Code and Cipher Section of the MID changed her perspective on literary study, leading her to embrace—and share with her students—the “scientific” study of how patterns in tone, rhythm, figurative language, syntax, and visual devices could reveal authorship and provide crucial information about a text’s context and production.⁵³ For Rickert, that collaboration took place when solving ciphers but also when problem-solving with her undergraduate and graduate students. Recently, Sagner Buurma and Heffernan included a chapter in their book, *The*

Teaching Archive: A New History for Literary Study (2020), specifically on Rickert's collaborative classroom model. Her course, "The Scientific Analysis of Style," allowed students to mine texts for patterns and then record and analyze those patterns using a range of computational and statistical methods. Rickert gives credit to the students, by name, for each of their discoveries and insights. It is truly a work of groundbreaking pedagogy and scholarship, yet *New Methods* did not have the impact that Rickert hoped it would. It was overshadowed by works like I.A. Richards's *Practical Criticism*, published in 1929, two years after Rickert's study. What Rickert introduced is very much along the same lines as what digital humanities scholarship strives for today. Although criticized by scholars like Stanley Fish, the data mining methods of the digital humanities owe a debt to Rickert and the early activities of literary scholars as codebreakers. The two fields working together—cryptanalysis and textual studies—greatly influenced WWI and WWII intelligence; literary scholars helped develop the computational and pattern analysis methods that then, in turn, became early computing, and computing then made the digital humanities possible. This is precisely what Veggian's chapter in this collection explains, reprinted with permission from *Reader*, where it was published in 2006. Veggian focuses on the interdependent development of cryptology and literary study during the early twentieth century, placing Manly and Rickert's "relentless reform" at the center of significant shifts in humanistic inquiry and its methods.⁵⁴ Arguably, the efforts of Rickert and her students can teach us much more today than those of critics like Richards can. In fact, there is a key difference between what Rickert learned in MID and what Richards attempted in *Practical Criticism*: Richards sought a completely decontextualized critical reading experience in which students encounter texts with absolutely no knowledge of author, situation, or tradition. They were to interpret poems entirely on their own terms. Rickert, however, understood from her work in the MID—and in her work as a medieval scholar practicing what we might today call cultural studies—that texts are never without context. Like Richards, Rickert did also understand the close scrutiny necessary to read and interpret; in real-world, urgent situations like war, there has to be a balance between contextual understanding and observation, quantitative recognition of patterns, and close reading.

This collection challenges the idea that Manly and Rickert's service to the MI-8 and interest in cryptography as a discipline of language and literacy diminished their scholarly contributions to literary studies,

philology, or any of the other fields in which they contributed pioneering work, like composition studies, English education, children's literature, and creative writing pedagogy. One of Snell's critiques of Manly and Rickert's MI-8 contributions is that "their common interest in breaking codes may have had a negative influence on their editorial methods."⁵⁵ Yet decryption of a ciphered document involved, for Manly and Rickert, much the same goals as researching Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*: to discover what decisions went into its creation, to understand what choices carried it through time and space and how those changed it, to read the mind and culture of all of those agents through that document's evolution.

INTERDISCIPLINARY EDUCATION, COLLABORATION, AND IMAGINATION IN THE HUMANITIES

Inspired by his cross-disciplinary work with cryptanalysts, and perhaps invigorated by the rich range of prose correspondence he read as they watched for ciphered wartime letters, Manly proposed a massive American speech project, in cooperation with the American Dialect Society, during his 1920 MLA speech. He urgently wanted to preserve languages that were in danger of extinction, like the "musical dialects" of African American communities in South Carolina, Georgia, and Louisiana:

The cynical among you are still objecting that such undertakings cost money and that while money is being poured out in large sums for research in physics and chemistry and metallurgy and botany and every other branch of the physical sciences, this support of research is due to the fact that business men see immediate practical returns from the development of these subjects. That it is easier to obtain money for subjects of this kind is true, but it is far from being true that men and women of large wealth are interested only in subjects that pay money. They are interested in any subject that awakens their imaginations by its significance for the large problems of human history and destiny.⁵⁶

One of the motivations for large projects like this—and one is reminded of the Chaucer volumes as well—is that their sheer scale makes them more tangible, more real, for investors. The American speech project could help donors understand the nature of humanistic research that is otherwise invisible to them and, in turn, reveal the importance of the problems scholars are trying to solve (in this case, linguistic extinction). Manly

focuses on a key challenge for the humanities that still persists, which is that those without disciplinary knowledge cannot *see* the work and its benefits. To counter that abstraction, humanists need to ignite others' imaginations.

Manly's interest in the kinds of big ideas that require interdisciplinary collaboration, as a means of understanding human history and destiny, had long been central in his educational as well as personal philosophy. In a heartfelt letter to his mother in 1894, Manly describes how the synthesis of different academic fields had transformed his identity. That transformation was possible because of his openness to the range of disciplinary approaches and teachings he had encountered:

I need hardly say, therefore, that my faith has been changing its form constantly as I have learned & felt new things. History, literature, science, philosophy have profoundly modified my conceptions of the universe, of the origin & destiny of man, & consequently of religion. I have tried hard to think clearly & sincerely about such questions, & I think my belief has never been a forcing of my conscience. If one is an honest man—intellectually honest, I mean—it seems to me that his belief must always be the inevitable, the absolutely necessary outcome of the forces and knowledge that have gone to make him what he is. I have gone through many dark days & have believed and doubted many things, but I cannot remember a time when I did not try to be absolutely sincere with myself & to keep my mind open to every ray of light.⁵⁷

Intellectual honesty, openness to “every ray of light”—this is the same philosophy that guided Manly's teaching and scholarship as well as his spirituality. For him, and for Rickert as well, education was one way to foster cross-pollination of knowledge. They emphasize the need for educational systems to encourage curiosity, the freedom to pursue information across fields, and the imagination. One sees this push against disciplinary boundaries—at the very historical moment when they are being forged in academic systems—across all of their work, from their medieval scholarship to their publications on writing instruction. In “Chaucer at School” (1932), for example, Rickert uses the will of William de Ravenstone and the library inventory of St. Paul's Almonry School to speculate whether Chaucer had attended the Grammar School at St. Paul's. From intense close readings of these seemingly simple documents, with knowledge of economics, geography, history, and genre, she builds to a surprising revelation about the multidisciplinary of the medieval

educational system. She finds that there was an unexpected socioeconomic range at the school, too, based on records about boys who needed shoes, noting that musical talent and merit, rather than economics, appeared to ground the boys' admission. From this project that she began out of mere curiosity, she really does follow every ray of light to realize "there are other scattered hints of ideals and practices in education far in advance of what they have commonly been supposed to be."⁵⁸

Their vision is also reflected in *The Writing of English*, which they had worked on together in the evenings after their MID work and which they published with Martin Freeman in 1929. They describe a campus that focuses on liberating the student imagination to foster critical thinking skills:

One of the defects of our educational system today is that it tends to suppress rather than to develop this innate love of creation. In the routine of fixed tasks in which there is no choice, and little scope for originality and inventiveness, most children learn to conform as well as they can to the average, and so establish a habit, which remains unbroken throughout life, of accepting unthinkingly customs and ideas that come to them with no more real authority than a vague "It is proper," "They are wearing," "They say," and so on. To the mind in which the imagination works freely, all such expressions are meaningless; it seeks continually the root of experience from which they grow, and upon the basis of its investigations creates its own patterns.⁵⁹

Whatever shape the future of education might take, Manly and Rickert agreed that it must do a better job removing restrictions on the student imagination. In another section in *Writing of English*, Manly, Rickert, and Freeman theorize that the imagination "is not the endowment of the few only whose names are remembered for great works; but it is shared by millions who make little or no use of it," and "it is probable that every normal mind has imagination enough to achieve more than it even dreams of undertaking."⁶⁰ While it is not fashionable to evoke such language of imagination in defense of humanistic endeavors, we return to its importance here as what Manly and Rickert present as a fundamental and shared human capacity, one that enables us to function effectively within institutions, the university among them, but also to both see ourselves within and find our way outside of their strictures. The final volume of *Good Reading* concludes, somewhat surprisingly, with a history of electricity, emphasizing the long history of experimentation, the sharing of ideas, and

the “never-ending search for truth” of scientific inquiry.⁶¹ But the culminating accomplishments are described as achievements of facilitating not only commerce and industry but also connection: “It is easy to talk from New York to San Francisco. And, too, we can talk across the ocean.”⁶² The many relationships that Manly and Rickert fostered, and the connections between scientific and humanistic approaches that they supported, also suggest something similar: experimentation, the sharing of ideas, and a search for truths that may or may not exist underlie their training and the imaginative possibilities they then provided for others.

NOTES

1. John Matthews Manly, Edith Rickert, Mabel Dean, Helen McIntosh, and Margaret Josephine Rickert. *The Text of the Canterbury Tales: Studied on the Basis of All Known Manuscripts* Vol. I (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1940), viii.
2. John Matthews Manly. “The President’s Address: New Bottles.” *PMLA* 35 (1920): xlviii.
3. *Ibid.*, lii.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*, lv.
6. William Snell, “A Woman Medievalist Much Maligned: A Note in Defense of Edith Rickert (1871–1938),” in *Eminent Chaucerians? Early Women Scholars and the History of Reading Chaucer*, ed. Richard Utz and Peter Schneck, *Philologie im Netz* Supplement 4 (2009): 44. Emphasis ours. It is worth noting some disagreement here with Snell’s assumption that Manly provided the ideas while others did all the difficult labor; Manly’s personal letters and academic writings, as well as reports of him by co-authors, tell a different story and emphasize how much he contributed to all stages of projects.
7. E.C. Armstrong, J.D.M. Ford, Francis P. Magoun, et al. “Memoirs of Fellows and Corresponding Fellows of the Mediaeval Academy” *Speculum* 16, no. 3 (1941): 379. Emphasis ours.
8. J. R. Hulbert, “John Matthews Manly, 1865–1940,” *Modern Philology* 38, no. 1 (1940): 6.
9. Snell, “Woman Medievalist,” 44. Snell quotes from the *Text of the Canterbury Tales*, vol. 1, Preface, vii.
10. Elizabeth Scala, “‘Miss Rickert of Vassar’ and Edith Rickert at the University of Chicago (1871–1938),” in *Women Medievalists and the Academy*, ed. Jane Chance (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005), 139.

11. David H. Stevens, "Memorial Service for John Matthews Manly," Bond Chapel, The University of Chicago (October, 11, 1940), 1.
12. *Ibid.*, 2.
13. Armstrong, Ford, Magoun, et al., "Memoirs of Fellows," 381.
14. For an important short biography, however, see Elizabeth Scala, "John Matthews Manly (1865–1940), Edith Rickert (1871–1938)," in *Medieval Scholarship: Biographical Studies on the Formation of a Discipline* Vol. 2: Literature and Philology, ed. Helen Damico with Donald Fennema and Karmen Lenz (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1998), 297–311.
15. Eric Powell, "History of the English Department," The University of Chicago Division of the Humanities Department of English Website, created September 2014, accessed December 22, 2020, <https://english.uchicago.edu/about/history-english-department>.
16. Richard Utz, "The Colony Writes Back: F.N. Robinson's *Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* and the *Translatio* of Chaucer Studies to the United States," in *Studies in Medievalism XIX: Defining Neomedievalism(s)*, ed. Karl Fugelso (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer), 2010: 160–203.
17. John Matthews Manly, "Roger Bacon and the Voynich MS" *Speculum* 6, no. 3 (1931): 345–391.
18. *Ibid.*, 391.
19. John Matthews Manly and J.A. Powell, *A Manual for Writers, Covering the Needs of Authors for Information on Rules of Writing and Practices in Printing* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1913), 8.
20. Manly, "New Bottles," xlviii, liii.
21. For example, the Manly Family Papers include a letter from Rickert thanking Charles Manly for a conversation "after church," a conversation she says that she returns to "when life seems especially difficult." Edith Rickert, "Letter from Edith Rickert to Charles Manly, Chicago" Manly Family Papers, University of Alabama Libraries Special Collections, January 6, 1912. The articles: Edith Rickert, "The Old English Offa Saga. I" *Modern Philology* 2, no. 1 (June 1904): 29–76 and "The Old English Offa Saga. II," *Modern Philology* 2, no. 3 (Jan. 1905): 321–376.
22. John Matthews Manly, ed., *English Prose and Poetry (1137–1892)* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1916), iv.
23. Edith Rickert, *Marie de France: Seven of her Lays Done into English* (New York: New Amsterdam Book Company, 1903); Edith Rickert, ed. and trans., *The Babee's Book: Medieval Manners for the Young* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1908); Edith Rickert, *Out of the Cypress Swamp* (London: Methuen, 1902); Edith Rickert, *The Reaper* (London: Edward Arnold, 1904); Edith Rickert, *Folly* (London: Edward Arnold, 1906); Edith Rickert, *The Golden Hawk* (London: Edward Arnold, 1907); Edith

- Rickert, *The Beggar in the Heart* (New York: Moffat, Yard and Company, 1909).
24. Scala, "Miss Rickert," 133.
 25. John Matthews Manly, "Letter from John Matthews Manly, to Annie Manly," Manly Family Papers, University of Alabama Libraries Special Collections, April 12, no year listed.
 26. Elizabeth Scala, "Scandalous Assumptions: Edith Rickert and the Chicago Chaucer Project," *Medieval Feminist Forum* 30, no. 1 (2000): 33–4.
 27. Maureen Cobb Mabbott, "Mabbott as Poe Scholar: The Early Years" (Baltimore: The Edgar Allan Poe Society of Baltimore, 1980). This essay is available online at <https://www.eapoe.org/papers/psblctrs/pl19802.htm>. Mabbott shared his thoughts on Rickert with his fiancé at that time, Maureen, in a letter dated February 23, 1924. Cobb Mabbott took up the editing of the Poe book that her husband had been working on until his death in May 1968. Her story is one that should be told just as the women of the Chaucer lab's stories should be known. With a network of other women scholars, Cobb Mabbott worked tediously on the edition, the *Collected Works of Edgar Allan Poe*, for Harvard's Belknap Press. Cobb Mabbott details her work with Harvard's Chief Editor in Charge of Special Projects, Eleanor Kewer, as well as her work looking at variants with a "Mrs. Szladits" and Patricia Edwards Clyne. See also Patricia Edwards Clyne, "Thomas O. Mabbott as Teacher" *Books at Iowa* (April 1981): 29–36.
 28. Scala, "Manly, Rickert," 308. Tomasch writes as well, "The Haskins Medal Committee's effort to memorialize Manly and revivify Chaucer is all the more striking as it coincides with the erasure of *The Text's* co-editor." Sylvia Tomasch, "Editing as Palinode: *The Invention of Love* and the *Text of the Canterbury Tales*" *Exemplaria* 16, no.2 (Fall 2004): 466.
 29. Scala, "Scandalous," 27–28. Scala writes that "the suggestion was clearly that Rickert was involved with the enormous manuscript research at the University of Chicago (perhaps was even at Chicago itself) only because of a personal—i.e., romantic, sexual—relationship with John Matthews Manly, the 'real' editor of the Canterbury Tales project" (28).
 30. Fred B. Millett, *Edith Rickert—A Memoir* (Whitman, MA: The Washington Street Press, 1944), 2.
 31. "7 Campus Buildings Named," *The Chicago Maroon* 71, no. 108 (Friday, May 17, 1963): 3. And Patrick Fitz, "Remembrance of a Dorm's Past," *The Chicago Maroon* (Feb 14, 2012), accessed on September 16, 2021, <https://www.chicagomaroon.com/2012/02/14/remembrance-of-a-dorms-past/>.
 32. Snell, "Woman Medievalist," 45.
 33. Scala, "Miss Rickert," 138–9. Virginia Leland, "Miss Rickert, Mr. Manly, and the Chaucer Laboratory," *The Chaucer Newsletter* 9, no. 2 (Fall 1987).

34. Snell, "Woman Medievalist," 48.
35. Roy Vance Ramsey, *The Manly-Rickert Text of the Canterbury Tales* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, Ltd., 1994).
36. John Matthews Manly and Edith Rickert, *The Text of the Canterbury Tales Studied on the Basis of All Known Manuscripts*, Vol. One: Description of the Manuscripts (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1940), 1.
37. Sealy Gilles and Sylvia Tomasch, "Professionalizing Chaucer: John Matthews Manly, Edith Rickert, and the Canterbury Tales as Cultural Capital," in *Reading Medieval Culture: Essays in Honor of Robert W. Hanning*, eds. Robert M. Stein and Sandra Pierson Prior (Notre Dame: Notre Dame Press, 2005), 373–4.
38. F. N. Robinson, *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1957).
39. Paul G. Ruggiers, "Introduction," in *Editing Chaucer: The Great Tradition* (Norman, Oklahoma: Pilgrim Books, 1984), 10.
40. Ibid., 11.
41. Daniel Wakelin, "'Maked na moore': Editing and Narrative," *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 32 (2010): 365.
42. Gilles and Tomasch, "Professionalizing," 365.
43. Ibid.
44. William James, "The Chicago School," *Psychological Bulletin* 1 (1904): 1–5.
45. Daniel Tröhler, "The 'Kingdom of God on Earth' and Early Chicago Pragmatism," *Educational Theory* 56, no. 1 (2006): 96.
46. Ibid., 91, 92.
47. Veggian, "From Philology to Formalism," PG #TBD in this collection.
48. Tröhler, "Early Chicago Pragmatism," 94.
49. Qtd. in John T. McManis, *Ella Flagg Young and a Half-Century of the Chicago Public Schools* (Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Company, 1916), 3.
50. Ibid., 11–12.
51. Rachel Sagner Buurma and Laura Heffernan, *The Teaching Archive: A New History for Literary Study* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2020), 90.
52. Ibid.
53. Edith Rickert, *New Methods for the Study of Literature* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1927), v.
54. Cite Veggian pg. in this collection.
55. Snell, "Woman Medievalist," 48.
56. Manly, "New Bottles," li, lii.
57. John Matthews Manly, "Letter from John Matthews Manly, to Mary M. Manly," Manly Family Papers, University of Alabama Libraries Special Collections, October 14, 1894.

58. Edith Rickert, "Chaucer at School," *Modern Philology* 29, no. 3 (February 1932): 273.
59. John Matthews Manly, Edith Rickert, and Martin Joseph Freeman, *The Writing of English* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1929), 278.
60. *Ibid.*, 275.
61. John M. Manly, Edith Rickert, Nina Leubrie, *Good Reading: Sixth Reader*, illus. Blanche Greer (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), 435.
62. *Ibid.*, 440.

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Finding Connection in the Nomadic Life of Scholarship: John Matthews Manly's Letters and Unpublished Essays

Katherine Ellison

To present a collection about connection and collaboration, with Manly as one of its axes, may seem intuitive if one is thinking only of the massive team effort of the Chaucer project. But Manly's name, on its own, is for some a symbol of the very opposite of collaborative scholarship because he was a student of George Lyman Kittredge, as was argued by Oscar Cargill in *Intellectual America*, a scathing attack on the direction of higher education and the humanities published in 1941. A Harvard University English Literature professor known for his influential 1912 essay on the Marriage Group in *The Canterbury Tales*, his Shakespeare edition, flawless pronunciation, and wide knowledge of languages, Kittredge has been described as an arrogant "Aryanizer" icon of encyclopedic knowledge who brutalized students who did not idolize him.¹ The students closest to him—including Manly as well as John S.P. Tatlock and Karl Young—have been considered

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his cult followers. In a 1988 assessment of the history of collaborative learning by composition scholar Donald C. Stewart, too, Manly was the antithesis of collaboration. He represented, to Stewart, the spawn of dictatorial, authoritarian teaching, one of the “clones” who was sent “out to dominate English departments across the country.”² Stewart echoes Cargill’s description of Kittredge’s students as a “legion” who “groveled” for his approval.

But one clear purpose in Cargill’s *Intellectual America: Ideas on the March*—for the subtitle is important—was to provide a conservative counter to what Cargill calls the liberal “ideodynamics” of college instruction, or the trend toward imposing one’s personal and political ideologies on the teaching of history, of which he believed there were five main categories: the Naturalists, represented by Stephen Crane, Theodore Dreiser, Pearl Buck, and James T. Farrell; the Decadents, by Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot, and Ernest Hemingway; the Intelligentsia, by Henry Louis Mencken, Kittredge, Irving Babbitt, and Robert Maynard Hutchins; the Primitivists, by Eugene O’Neill, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Gertrude Stein, and William Faulkner; and the Freudians, by Henry Adams, Sherwood Anderson, Eugene O’Neill, and Robinson Jeffers. These are all, Cargill writes, “infections.”³ So, in his opinion, Manly was nothing more than a viral variant of Kittredge’s Intelligentsia strain. One of the most visible ways that Manly has been traced to this variant is through his belief in the proper usage of the English language and retention of the classical requirement of the recitation.

Manly did lead the Department of English at Chicago to propose a university-wide mandate that all students must pass an oral examination that proved they could articulate the English language “correctly.” The department website today notes that this requirement reflected the program’s intent “to educate ‘gentlemen’ to be a ruling elite.”⁴ Yet, as Susan M. Kim’s chapter in this collection explains, Manly’s commitment to a common vocabulary and pronunciation is more complex than that. Through textbooks widely distributed to public schools, Manly, Rickert, and their other collaborators contributed to a new culture of professionalization in education, and readers and anthologies Manly developed also taught new visual literacy and critical thinking skills for all primary and secondary students, not just those of the upper class. Yet, it is important to acknowledge that Manly’s dedication to a democratic vision of accessibility for the poor and working class, which he would develop during his tenure at the University of Chicago and as president of the Modern

Language Association (MLA), was still arguably rooted in a discriminatory foundation: his anthologies relied upon the assumption that all students, no matter their class, gender, sexuality, or race, could and should find value and relevance in the same set of predominantly white authors. Manly, and Rickert as well, certainly sought to open that field, through their anthologies, but their inclusiveness was not diverse by twenty-first-century standards.

Despite his continuation of this problematically discriminatory student requirement, Manly's personal correspondence provides no evidence of devout worship of Kittredge or any other scholar. He thanks Kittredge often in acknowledgments, such as in the preface of *Specimens of the Pre-Shakespearean Drama*, but he barely mentions Kittredge in letters to his mother, for example, to whom he confessed his innermost feelings, nor to his father, with whom he discussed university matters. His private writings do not even indicate his political ideologies or demonstrate any determination to indoctrinate students or colleagues to any particular beliefs. His many solo and joint publications also show that he was capable of changing his mind about texts, methodologies, and scholars; his work did not mimic the voice of Kittredge or any of his mentors and was distinctly his own. He also did not always write on topics that Kittredge and others in that community would have deemed important. Paraphrasing Robert Morse Lovett, Harvard did not make Manly—Manly made Harvard.

The University of Alabama Special Collections Library holds many documents of personal correspondence between Manly and family, friends, and colleagues. Whereas the University of Chicago Manly Papers have received much attention and record his extensive professional friendships and collaborations, the University of Alabama's Special Collections Manly Family Papers contain private letters from John Matthews as well as documents belonging to his great-grandfather, grandfather, mother and father, and sister Annie, who lived with him in Chicago. These letters reveal a side of Manly that one does not see in his many professional writings. They depict a man who, from his youth, struggled against the legacy of his successful grandfather, father, and brothers, who was sensitive to the intelligence and influence of his mother, and who was at once proud of his own accomplishments yet frequently vulnerable and unsure of himself. Throughout his life but even as a young adult at that stage of peak self-consciousness, he was open to transformative experiences—to moving to new places, meeting new friends, and learning new fields. What he shared most evidently with Rickert, in fact, was this spirit of intellectual

adventure. In the unpublished essays he drafted for *Collier's* magazine in 1927, readers clearly see that while others described *him* as having the “seminal mind” that was always influencing others, he was the one who was always seeking a kind of fertilization. David H. Stevens said during the memorial after Manly's death that “he would cherish most the realization that he had added to the tradition of free intellectual endeavor.”⁵ Certainly, academic freedom is key here: to be a scholar, one must be able to follow one's ideas in any direction they might go. These personal correspondences also reveal that his devotion to lifelong learning was not a sign of egocentrism, though the new faculty generation who inherited the English department at the University of Chicago seemed to think of him in that way, as the looming, intimidating portrait in their hallway. He was also a caregiver for others. In a sense, care defined his life and his approach to collaboration.

Manly himself writes that of the many roles and offices in which he served, he thought of himself as having only one identity: a scholar. “I am a very ordinary teacher & have no ability as a leader of men,” he writes, “I am a scholar, & to make the most of myself I must live where scholarship is easiest to obtain.”⁶ Academic freedom to Manly was intellectual, so that he was always seeking institutional means of pursuing his own interests, but it was also physical. Because of the institutional realities of academic research—the fact that only particular libraries had strong collections, the fact that only particular universities and cities had resources for study—he recognized that to be a scholar, one cannot have geographical limitations. In this early example of what academics have now long understood, one must choose between the university and home, where family might be. In August of 1884, he notes in a personal letter that he has a “nomadic life.” Certainly, in trying to fit together the pieces of his chronology, he may have traveled often that year. In August he was in Boston doing research, and by October he was in Palmyra, Virginia, working as a tutor. The letter depicts him as a student wholly focused on his work, often alone, always on the move, abiding by a strict personal schedule:

I go to bed as near ten as I can & wake exactly at twenty minutes before seven. By seven I am dressed & ready for breakfast. I eat leisurely, reading the morning paper in the intervals between the courses, and finish in time to take the 7:50 boat for Boston Common, & at the Common another which lands me at the University at ten minutes past nine. As the library does not open until nine, you see I do not lose much time in the morning. At five

o'clock the library closes and I take a car which enables me to catch the 5:45 boat.⁷

His sense of the need for strict and predictable regiments, and his energy for nonstop work from morning until evening, would help shape the organization of the Chaucer Laboratory later in his life, as well as assist him in code and cipher work. This moment also repeats his need to be close to where the resources are so that he can immerse himself in study. Even at Harvard, where he attended graduate school, this need for immersion was singular. Lovett explains that Harvard did not have an organized graduate program in English when Manly attended, but "there were existing materials and parts of such a school, but they had never been assembled." That was what Manly needed—the resources and access to those resources. The rest he could accomplish with the help of others. Lovett's version of Manly's graduate school story is that the Harvard English and French professors—Kittredge, Francis James Child, and Edward S. Sheldon—taught a range of courses but did not have an organized program at the doctoral level. "It is speaking within bounds to say that Manly founded the Harvard graduate school of modern language," Lovett notes, because "at the demand of a real student higher studies formulated themselves. The young scholar had taken all knowledge to be his province, and the university felt and responded to his challenge to its universality. When in 1890 Manly took his Ph.D. degree, Harvard had a graduate school."⁸ Most famous, perhaps, is the story of Manly's emergence from his Ph.D. exam, which Lovett retells in his memorial. "When the anxious students outside asked Manly what questions were put to him, and in particular Professor Wendell, Manly said, 'He didn't ask me anything. He only gave me a cigar.'" Lovett notes, too, that when Manly later completed an independent study at Harvard and was asked what he would read next, a Professor Hill answered that "'He's going to read the Harvard Library,' ... This was said cynically, but it came near being true. Where others measured their reading by pages, or chapters, or volumes, Manly read by the stack."⁹

Also important to a holistic view of Manly as scholar is that he was not driven by money, fame, status, or even some eagerness to impress his parents, who seemed to hope he would pursue other avenues within higher education. Eager to move away from the money, fame, and status that defined his family, and wary of the lifestyle that had been provided for him, he was clearly driven instead by the great satisfaction that the research

process gave him. In his letters, he is expressly passionate about discovery, about *finding* new things. To his mother, he writes that “my work still goes on very satisfactorily. Almost every day I come upon some neglected fact that is of value for my work. I have [worked? or poked?] through a vast number of books, often finding nothing at all, sometimes finding something very important.”¹⁰

DISCONNECTING FROM THE CONFEDERATE PAST

There is no doubt that Manly’s ability to move and attend the country’s finest institutions, his access to resources, and his leisure to take the time that is necessary to sit in a library from breakfast until dinner, is a consequence of his privilege. Some of Manly’s early connections, networks, and success due to those networks were because of the status and wealth of his family’s white plantation past and their later efforts to hold onto that status through the Confederacy. Born at the beginning of the Reconstruction era in Sumter County, Alabama, in 1865, Manly’s migrations—physical but also intellectual and spiritual—can be attributed, in part, to this upbringing, yet his personal correspondence also reveals his attempt to distance himself from the legacy of slavery in his family and his community. Did Manly ever publicly address the racist, slave-holding inheritance of his family and the fact that his career was successful, in part, because of it? Did he ever connect his privilege to the horrors of slavery? In those words, no, and certainly not with the kind of recognition of systemic racism and awareness of white privilege that we have, today. However, Manly did consciously remove himself from his family’s moral, religious, and political influences, so much so that his mother would write to him repeatedly to ask why he had left the South and inquire if he was ever coming back.

On October 14, 1894, Manly wrote to his mother to candidly justify his experiences with isolation, loneliness, and homelessness when he could have simply returned to their estate in Alabama. Though her letter is missing, his mother had apparently been deeply worried about her son’s finances, spiritual condition, and decision not to return to the South and continue his family’s legacy in Southern higher education and politics—to return to the vast networks of influence that had propelled the men in her family to prestigious leadership positions. He writes a measured, honest letter in response, addressing each of her concerns. It is a rare find for researchers interested in the motives and emotions of their subjects, and it

is an even rarer glimpse inside the mind of a scholar writing openly about his devotion to scholarship and the tireless work it entails. He redefines success, not in the terms that his wealthy, Baptist family honors, but as the acquisition of knowledge for moral and civic progress. Seeking a humanistic life of the mind, he rebels against the racist, patriarchal South that “disgusts” him. His physical draw to the South, and to his family, is strong, but it is a sentimental connection to an ideal that the South does not, in reality, embody. He also expresses what we would today call an awareness of the importance of self-care. While he could symbolically say he would “die for the South,” it would be an empty expression of false heroism: “I am not willing, on the other hand, to spend my life trying to add some infinitesimal portion to the culture & to raise minutely the ideals of the country by carrying on the ordinary humdrum occupations of life in it, at the expense of my own development in the direction in which I know I can develop.” The North, however, is neither answer nor destination—he has no physical home. Rather, his intellectual home is in whatever “comfortable lodgings” are nearest the libraries and archives that sustain his curiosity.¹¹

Manly’s great-grandfather, Basil Manly Sr., believed fully in the secession of the South and the creation of a Confederate nation. He was Jefferson Davis’s Baptist chaplain for the Confederacy and gave Davis’s inauguration introduction. Basil was also a planter and slaveholder who made his fortune on slaves; he attempted to argue—successfully argued, in fact, in the eyes of Southern slaveholders—that through Christian gentility, masters could learn to be good and moral, that they could be evangelically virtuous. He strengthened the Southern dependence upon and belief in slavery by arguing its Christian acceptance. As James A. Fuller, in his study of the early Manly family, explains, Basil used academic research—“Calvinism, evangelicalism, romanticism, the classics, the precepts of honor, science, natural theology, and republicanism”—to persuade Southern leaders and land owners through “Sermons on Duty.” These sermons preached that humanity is organized hierarchically and under strict patriarchy and that this order is necessary for God to operate. “In [Basil] Manly’s eyes,” Fuller writes, “the Confederacy was the culmination of God’s plan for the world.”¹²

That Manly would be influenced by this belief, passed down through his family, is likely. Yet by 1894, when he was 29 years old, he had traveled widely in the United States and abroad, he had met many new people working across a wide range of professions and academic disciplines, and

he had been reading voraciously across the full history of English and US literature and history. In that most candid letter to his mother, he carefully articulates how he had changed, spiritually, over the past decade. He tells his mother that he cannot claim to hold the same religious beliefs as he did in his youth, and that “many of the things I believe would sound unorthodox to you if I had time & space to phrase them for you.” However one might define his current beliefs, he emphasizes that

the things that your faith makes valuable to you are the same things that mine makes valuable to me; and—although it might not please him to hear it, I say it with the absolute reverence for his character & intellect—I have not a doubt that if Father had been born when I was born & had been subjected to the currents of thought to which I have been subjected, he would phrase his faith in almost if not quite the words which I should use for mine.¹³

The phrase “currents of thought” is meaningful, here. Manly is explaining how the new networks he had forged were exposing him to other ways of thinking and believing. Connections to others not only inspired his research and furthered his career—they changed him spiritually. Manly notes in this letter that these alternatives to his family’s Baptist values were partly the result of his conversations, travels, and readings, but they were also because he started contemplating the relationship between his intellectual and his spiritual health. He tells his mother that as early as 16, he had begun “to think.” Desperately trying to communicate to his mother why he no longer follows the family’s Baptist preachings, he stresses that religious faith must be compatible with the historical truths that one learns. “For a man whose life is devoted to thinking I cannot understand a faith which does not rest upon & include all his knowledge & satisfy the highest demands of his intellectual and spiritual nature,” he writes. And importantly, one’s personal faith needs to be flexible and allow for the changes that will happen when one meets new people, experiences new cultures, and learns about new subjects. He puts it this way: “I need hardly say, therefore, that my faith has been changing its form constantly as I have learned & felt new things. History, literature, science, philosophy have profoundly modified my conceptions of the universe, of the origin & destiny of man, & consequently of religion.” Manly calls this way of being and believing “intellectual honesty.” Though he had “gone through many dark days,” he recalls, “I cannot remember a time when I did not try to be absolutely sincere with myself & to keep my mind open to every ray of

light.”¹⁴ When he notes that his father, if he had grown intellectually during this same period at the turn of the twentieth century, would have also recognized that faith adapts to the time, he is recognizing how religion and spirituality must develop with awareness of what is happening—and changing—in the world.

Intellectual honesty certainly defines most of his achievements. Whether he was teaching students, correcting another scholar’s emendations to medieval texts, or corresponding with figures like George Fabyan, who sought Manly’s authority to verify the Shakespeare-Bacon theory (which Manly would never do), intellectual honesty was always his goal. One sees this even in his advice to his father, who in 1897 was facing controversy as President of Furman University after 16 years in the office. The patriarchy of the Manly family, of course, had lived and breathed higher education. As noted in the introduction, his great-grandfather, Basil, had been President of the University of Alabama; his grandfather, Basil Jr., had been President of Georgetown College of Kentucky; and his father, Charles, had been President of Alabama Central Female College and Furman University. In his letters to his mother and his father, Manly provided counsel, clearly knowledgeable of the workings of university administration and the corporate changes in higher education near the turn of the century—changes that he eyed with skepticism. On August 9, 1897, Charles Manly was being pushed to give up all pastoral duties and activities and commit fully to the position of President as his sole profession, which he refused. The board also voted to abolish athletics, which he had worked to bring to the campus. He was contemplating resignation as President of Furman, and John Matthews tells his mother that he has urged his father to be rhetorically transparent and honest. He advises his father to write an official statement detailing the good that he had done the university, to publicly, and on record, establish his proud position within the university’s history.¹⁵ He advocates for his father to act with intellectual honesty, staying true to his own beliefs, and to center his own integrity in the conversation. Charles Manly did resign that year, but it is unclear whether he took his son’s advice.

In that same letter, John Matthews then addresses a recent scandal at the university where he is teaching at that time, Brown University. His mother fears that his position is precarious, and that he should be cautious of participating in university politics while his lectureship is vulnerable. He reassures her that he has nothing to lose—he will be on leave for research in Europe, and he notes that for all the university cares, he could play golf

during his leave and his job would still be secure. In fact, he leaves Brown the next year anyway, accepting an offer to chair the English Department at the University of Chicago.¹⁶ Though Manly had claimed in 1894 that he was not a great leader, identifying himself only as scholar, he seems to have been an effective rhetorician others naturally followed. The scandalous affair his mother was worried about was, indeed, an incident of higher education drama that gave Manly much insight into the workings of administration and corporate and government influence. The President of Brown University at that time in 1897, Elisha Benjamin Andrews, participated in an ongoing debate called “the Silver question,” expressing his belief in “international bimetalism,” or that the United States should begin the free coinage of silver without approval from other countries. The problem with this stance was that a president was expected to keep personal politics out of the business of running the university. Manly signed a petition for Andrews’s removal—he may have even helped compose it—and Andrews did resign for a period in 1897. Andrews was allegedly so affected by the controversy that he had to spend some time in a sanitarium. Then the board (the “Corporation”) issued a letter saying they did not accept the resignation. What had changed is that the case was made that he did not broadcast his personal political views but that they had been published from his personal letters; he had tried to keep his politics separate from the university business, they argued. He was reappointed but did not stay long, leaving again in 1898.¹⁷

CAREGIVING AS COLLABORATIVE FRAMEWORK

In the deeply personal letter to his mother, Manly articulated an ethic of care as central to his approach to intellectualism and to the nature and need for critique: “I am apt to think & say hard things about the crudeness and pettiness & lack of interest in the things that I care most for, which—although I know they mark every people and make up the larger part of human life everywhere—disgust me in the South just because I care so much for it.”¹⁸ Manly does not write professionally about his views of the South and its history, nor does he discuss it at length in many other letters to family. However, his decision to dedicate his career to teaching and learning seems to pivot on this realization that the South is not what it seems—that its politeness is a disguise for crudeness, and that its traditions of care are performative and not genuine. The South was not, as he valued, intellectually honest. Throughout the memorials written during

his life and after his death, colleagues emphasized the sincerity of his devotion to helping others. Herbert O. Yardley, famous cryptanalyst who worked with Manly in the Military Intelligence Division's Codes and Cipher office and who later wrote *The American Black Chamber* (1931), expresses heartfelt gratitude to Manly for his support. Yardley notes at several points how it was not just the genius of Manly that helped sustain him during World War I (WWI) but the "comfort" that Manly provided. Even after Manly had returned to the University of Chicago and Yardley continued working in intelligence, Yardley would write him frequently, particularly when he was struggling with Japanese ciphers during World War II. Manly would respond with a gentle, teacherly tone, affirming that Yardley was on the right track and encouraging him to keep working.¹⁹ J.R. Hulbert notes, too, that "There was no limit to what he would do for [students], and he made no distinction among them except as to the quality of their minds. He treated a woman precisely as he did a man, and, once he had become convinced of a person's ability, he never ceased to feel a parent's duty to help."²⁰ In the context of his equal assistance to others, the term noted in the introduction that was used often to describe him—"seminal mind"—means not that he sought to systematically replicate himself as a scholar but that he sought to nurture others to become the best scholars they could be. It is, too, another way to interpret the frequent description of him as always "careful." It was not just that he was a scholar with meticulous attention to detail but that he *cared* so much about the history, the texts, and his colleagues and students that he took the time to attend to those details.

As theorists of the ethics of care have discussed since at least the 1980s, care is important in collaborative models and frameworks. Whether working in a one-on-one environment or in a classroom or community, whether one is the caregiver or the "cared-for," this ethics emphasizes reciprocity and the empathic ability to understand and even imagine oneself in the position of another.²¹ Indeed, this empathy is central in the textbooks that Manly and colleagues would produce later in his career. Manly and his collaborators, I believe, were proponents of this ethic before it had a name. The early twentieth-century education reform movement centralized care even as it promoted universalizing, authoritarian habits as part of its mission to raise productive and patriotic community-minded citizens. As Kim explains in her chapter in this collection, the basal readers and anthologies that Manly, Rickert, and colleagues developed also focused, uniquely, on the personhood of children and young adults and the dynamic and flexible

identity of the family. She notes that these texts posit what we might call pedagogical caregiving, particularly in the reading practice texts that Rickert wrote like “True Cat Stories,” followed by “How to Care for Cats,” that counters the assumption that women are necessarily maternal and mothers are the only caregivers, offering instead narratives in which men act as surrogate teachers.

Caregiving may have come naturally to Manly as the eldest of seven children. He took pride in the academic talents of his family, especially of his siblings. Of his younger brother Charles, he writes, “Tell him that the Manlys always stand right up at the head of their class no matter how much bigger the other boys are.”²² In their personal correspondence, Manly’s relationship with his father appears at first to be all business, with infrequent chatty salutation or inquiry into his father’s health. At the same time, though, he is very protective of his father’s reputation. When Furman threatens his father’s position and legacy, Manly is upset with the Board of Trustees for their disrespect. He offers counsel and empathy to his own mentor, in this situation and others.²³ In his letters to his mother, one clearly sees how he helps her through her struggle with depression. He writes, “You mustn’t feel as you do about not being loved. You know that your husband & all your children love you dearly & there are friends who do the same. As for Uncle’s boys I know that all three of them love you more than they do any of their aunts.” “You are the best and tenderest woman in the world. I know it,” he continues, emphasizing his mother’s unselfish care for others.²⁴

Throughout his letters, Manly is often concerned about others, stepping in quickly as a caretaker. On April 24, 1910, he describes taking care of a guest who was staying with him and who became very tired. He woke her up for breakfast, and after she had run errands he insisted she take a nap for an hour.²⁵ In another letter, he discusses a friend or family member named George who has *Paranoia simplex*, for which there is no cure. He brainstorms plans for admitting George to a hospital where an expert he knows can see him, who is interested in paranoia and sees George as an ideal case. Manly hopes George can be hypnotized, and he recommends M. Alfred Binet, now well known for his work in the French School of Psychology and developer of the first intelligence tests. Manly knows him and wants to tap into his networks to help George, hoping Binet’s new work in interrogative suggestibility might be the key to a breakthrough. Indeed, as he explains in the 1928 essay “Education that Educates,” Manly was an advocate of both psychological and intelligence testing as a means

of ascertaining students' "mental ages" as distinct from their biological age. He felt strongly about testing as a means of grouping students together in classrooms based on intellectual capacity rather than age, to the point that he argued that to not do so was "criminal."²⁶

By 1928, Manly had integrated his ethic of care into his vision of education. In that essay, he makes clear that the key to unlocking achievement, in students of any intellectual capacity, is to focus not only on rote learning and content but on the *emotional* and *moral* nurturance of their creativity through activities that are inclusive, helping them understand the traditions and routines of their communities, and through reasoning exercises that reveal the purpose and structure of those traditions and routines. It is, in one sense, a pedagogical theory of empathy, the ability to see from multiple points of view. "The average man sees in every object only what he and his ancestors before him have been accustomed to see," he writes, but the ideal education will teach the skills necessary to see objects as well as human habits and systems from the perspective of both informed and uninformed others—from the vantage point of experts, for example, or from the perspective of children. "We are endowed with the parrot-like repetition of formulas which we do not understand or believe," he continues. One can almost hear his own past letters about the Confederate past of his ancestors resonating here, or recall his spiritual transformation as he broke away from his family's Baptist roots.

For graduate students and colleagues at the University of Chicago, the Chaucer Laboratory in Wieboldt Hall was just the kind of space and project that trained them in the traditions and routines of archival research yet allowed for creative problem solving and discovery. Their job there was to see the *Canterbury Tales* from new perspectives, to break from what their eyes had been accustomed to in order to arrive at the most accurate edition possible. As Christina von Nolcken details in this collection, they paid the staff well—more than they would receive for teaching a class—and though the work was tiring, Manly and Rickert did consider the staff's workload. As von Nolcken points out, Manly reduced the students' course loads, and they also began encouraging half-days and shorter hours to prevent overwork. Of course, while some students remembered the lab as "idyllic," in von Nolcken's words, others presented a less flattering portrait. In the drama that ensues in the lab, Manly considers letting the staff go but then reconsiders, opting to advocate for forgiveness and understanding. He understands that while this kind of collaboration is productive and energizing, the tedium of the work itself might be causing tension,

and the escalation of otherwise minor disputes. In these disagreements, Manly is a careful mediator; he seems to stay focused on the scholarship, and the positives of the teamwork, but acknowledges the psychological toll of the work. As this collection's conclusion also explains, collaboration is not without consequences.

COLLABORATION AS LEADERSHIP STYLE

Manly's commitment to collaboration was evident not only in this teaching and in his ethic of care for students, friends, and family, but also in his position as a leader. The lab certainly experienced drama, but Manly redirected the staff back toward the work at hand. Von Nolcken notes that he always had time for conversation with students, too, even as they kept focused on the archives. Lovett notes that under Manly, the English department at the University of Chicago was "wholly harmonious" and in "absolute unity."²⁷ Stevens, too, described Manly's complete "consideration" of and attention to the members of his department.²⁸ Manly felt that because he put so much time and energy into the administrative leadership of his department, he did not become a leading scholar in any particular specialty. Stevens notes that Manly did not regret this, however, and that he was aware of the scholarly consequences of administrative work when he agreed to chair. Stevens sees this selflessness and dedication to the university and the future of the English studies profession as Manly's strength and legacy.²⁹ He continued to seek resources for faculty in his department even after he, and they, retired. In a letter to Stevens in 1934, Manly discusses an idea for a circulating loan library that would allow retired faculty to continue in their research. In the conclusion to this collection, more information is provided about this and other library access ideas Manly pursued to support his department and other colleagues.

Certainly, Stevens's opinion is just one among others in a large department. Just as the Chaucer Laboratory was not idyllic for everyone, it is possible that Manly's leadership style was not perceived in the same way by every faculty member. After Manly's retirement, his department moved on from his guidance and revised the structures he had put into place. In 1930, the new University of Chicago President Robert Maynard Hutchins created a plan to institute university-wide general education courses, which deeply affected the English department. As English faculty today know, required general education courses have sustained the department even when enrollment trends have reached lows in the humanities, yet

they have also limited departments' resources and challenged their core goals. Hutchins also created four graduate divisions in physical science, biology, social science, and the humanities, thus unifying previously independently managed departments.³⁰ Manly was nearing the end of his long reign as chair—he retired in 1933—so he would see only the beginning of the division that would ensue in the university but also in his department. Young scholars, most notably Richard McKeon and Ronald S. Crane, would take up a new direction after his departure and significantly change the curriculum and the administrative structure of the program, creating what would become widely known as the Chicago School of Criticism.³¹ McKeon became Dean of the Division of the Humanities in 1935, and Crane became Chair of the Department of English from 1936 until 1947. That there had been tension between Manly and Crane before Manly's departure is evident in a letter that Crane sent Manly on January 29, 1940, less than three months before Manly's death on April 2 of that year. Crane politely flatters Manly on the publication of the Chaucer volume, expressing his admiration for it as "a symbol of the kind of scholarship—at once rich in detail and closely reasoned—which you made the tradition of this department and which, in however diverse or new forms, is, and I hope will continue to be, the ideal of us all." Crane compliments Manly's achievement but reminds him that his volume represents only one approach to literary studies, and not the approach that the department has taken since his retirement seven years earlier.

There is much to analyze, rhetorically, in Crane's letter, though the transition from the Manly to Crane models of English Studies is beyond the scope of this collection. Crane urges Manly to see the new program as an "extension" of what he was trying to do, to recognize that it is still about rigor, close analysis, and the "fidelity of texts." Yet, he reminds Manly, "only by daring to do new things and trying always to do them in the most workmanlike way can we expect to justify our presence at the University of Chicago, which, for me at least, will always be the university of Manly."³² The tone with which Crane punctuates his letter is one of polite deference. He acknowledges the achievements of his senior predecessor, who was monumental in stature, yet he reminds Manly that the next generation has taken over and is not looking back. Crane had argued passionately against historical approaches to literature, so his observation that Manly's Chaucer edition is "rich in detail" is a potentially underhanded, and certainly understated, compliment. Whether Crane truly believed that his vision for the department, as a place of criticism and

theory and not history or philology, was actually an extension of Manly's approach is not certain. But from the hindsight of almost a century, and with understanding of the complexity of Manly's full educational philosophy, Crane and McKeon's changes were neither surprising nor revolutionary, as Henry Veggian points out in his essay reprinted in this collection. Manly, Rickert, and the teams with which they collaborated had certainly been working theoretically, and Manly in particular had networked with the very scholars who would inspire the Chicago School of Criticism. The Mediaeval Academy of America wrote a tribute to Manly in 1941 in which they specifically note that "he was less interested in details than he was in erecting broad and comprehensive hypotheses, and he never failed to encourage his colleagues to do likewise."³³ What Crane seems to not fully understand is that Manly, of all scholars, would have most supported innovation and experimentation.

Some of Manly's own most innovative and experimental work was inspired by his extracurricular work in editing and as a leader in academic organizations outside of the University of Chicago. From 1908, five years after its founding, until 1930, Manly was editor of *Modern Philology*, shaping that journal into one of the most reputable academic journals in English studies. It fit well with Manly's restructuring of his English department's curriculum. Whereas his predecessor as chair, William D. MacClintock, had purposely minimized the influence of philology and history in the curriculum and instead focused courses on aesthetics and identifying what should or should not count as literature, Manly returned the department's focus to linguistic and historical contexts. Department involvement in the editing of academic journals supported and aligned with that curricular change, disbursing the more "scientific methods" of historical and philological research to the wider discipline and to other universities.³⁴ Michael Sprinker, studying the editor who followed Manly—the same R.S. Crane who would follow him as Department chair—notes the importance of *Modern Philology* in particular in influencing curricula and trends in the field. "The journalistic organs of numerous twentieth-century critical movements have been crucial to the maintenance of cohesion among members of the group," he writes, "as well as to the ability of these groups to influence a wide spectrum of critical discourse."³⁵

Within the context of this collection, what is noteworthy about Manly's *Modern Philology* work is not just that the journal was so influential in sharing Manly's vision for the field, and that it would then likewise shift its vision when it was under the editorship of the next generation of critical

theorists, but that the journal itself is yet another example of Manly's vast network. From this editorial position, as well as from his seat on the Advisory Board of *Speculum* from 1925 until 1930, he could connect with most of the publishing scholars of his generation, novice and veteran. He could read manuscripts before publication, survey even those that were rejected, to understand the broader picture of the field and its methods. Perhaps no other intellectual position serves as such a powerful conduit as an editor does.

Manly's tireless participation in professional societies, too, widened his network. His service as president of the Modern Language Association in 1920 is well known, and his inauguration speech that year, "New Bottles," is still often cited by the association as a pivotal point in its history. In it, Manly urged the MLA to create and support collaborations among faculty, to fund team projects and to facilitate accessibility *to one another* for collective investigations of topics and questions so large that they cannot be researched by individuals: "Not only has there been no attempt to direct the investigations, there has been equally no attempt to bring together in any special way or for any special purpose members who were working on subjects closely related or capable of being made of mutual service."³⁶ His first proposal was a massive American speech project, in cooperation with the American Dialect Society.

By 1925 and after his presidency, according to Albert Marckwardt, Manly had transformed the MLA into a research-focused, rather than teaching-focused, organization with a focus on collaboration. This would draw criticism from later society members. A 1969 speech opening a panel on teaching expectations and policies for the Midwest MLA uses Manly's decisions as an example of the wrong direction that early twentieth-century English faculty took, dedicating resources to research rather than to pedagogical training for secondary education undergraduates, graduate students going into higher education, and faculty. In 1969, state and federal regulatory agencies were beginning to threaten higher education, imposing external mandates and policies to increase retention, graduation rates, and employment. Marckwardt notes that the pivotal moment of lost potential was in the 1880s and 1890s, when Manly was trained. These were the decades, he notes, when universities made the explicit decision to value research only and to disregard any attention to the craft of teaching. He explains, too, that from 1884 until 1903, the MLA had been interested in pedagogy, and numerous articles in *PMLA* were about teaching, but by 1925, because of Manly, "the commitment to total research

orientation was achieved.”³⁷ The 1911 formation of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) sought to fill this gap, and Manly does not appear to have joined. Marckwardt explains the division in English studies that ensued: faculty at “teacher colleges” tended to join the NCTE, faculty from research institutions joined the MLA, and neither would cross over to the other organization. Those who cared about pedagogy feared membership in the MLA would mark them as apathetic to teaching, and those who cared about research feared that NCTE on their curriculum vitae would signal that they were not serious about their scholarship. Rachel Sagner Buurma and Laura Heffernan convincingly counter this assessment of the research/pedagogy divide, however, detailing how prolific research scholars actually conducted their classrooms. They find that not only were scholars teaching, and teaching with energy, attention to pedagogy and the scholarship of learning, and experimentation, but they were also choosing texts and topics well outside the supposed “canon” that was assumed to have dominated the early twentieth-century college course syllabus.³⁸ And as the chapters in this collection also attest, Manly was very much committed to teaching, to pedagogical innovation, and to fostering lasting relationships with students.

CIPHERING AS THE LANGUAGE OF CONNECTION: THE ARTS OF LISTENING AND READING

After being contacted by George Fabyan to visit Riverbank Laboratory to provide a professional assessment of Elizabeth Wells Gallup’s theory that Francis Bacon had authored William Shakespeare’s plays, Manly became personally interested in the history of ciphering. He did not endorse Wells Gallup’s work, as discussed in more detail in this collection, but the visit fueled his curiosity about cryptography and connected him to intellectuals in other disciplines with whom he would begin lifelong friendships. He recognized the sophistication of early modern cryptography, in particular, reading early sources, creating word and letter frequency lists, and learning about the methodologies of cryptanalysis. In 1918, he joined MI-8, the cryptology specialists of the Military Intelligence Division, to help develop decryption methods, as John Dooley outlines in more detail in this collection. At that time, the United States did not have any organized government intelligence service or agency, and cryptology was largely a linguistic and philological discipline. “The first of these captains to arrive

was Dr. John M. Manly, a small quiet-spoken scholar, who was head of the English Department of the University of Chicago,” Yardley would write in the best-selling yet controversial exposé, *The Black Chamber*. “Fortunately for us,” Yardley continues, “Captain Manly had the rare gift of originality of mind—in cryptography called ‘cipher brains.’ He was destined to develop into the most skillful and brilliant of all our cryptographers. It is to Captain Manly that I owe a great measure of the success I achieved as head of the War Department Cipher Bureau.”³⁹

One of the most valuable recent resources on Manly is Dooley’s publication of the 12 essays on cryptography that Manly drafted with the intent of publication in *Collier’s Magazine*. These unpublished articles provide rich insight into Manly’s introduction to and training in deciphering after his first connections with Riverbank, as well as offer a kind of road map to his collaborations with a range of thinkers working in academic and military environments. Manly began these articles, about his code and cipher experiences, in 1923, though he did not enter into a discussion with the *Collier’s* editor William Chenery until 1926. Manly was about to leave for one of his frequent research trips to England at that time, so he agreed to contribute a series of articles about his experiences beginning in 1927. He was to be paid \$2000 for each article, and he agreed to write 12. In September 1927, he rented an apartment in New York City and resided there to write his essays. The first three were received with lukewarm critique; while Chenery liked the freshness of the content, he felt Manly wrote too much like an academic and not in a prose style that would appeal to *Collier’s* readers. Beyond the editor’s dislike of Manly’s writing style, even after Manly worked with a freelance journalist to broaden its appeal, the reason that Manly’s 12 articles were never published is a bit of a puzzle. *Collier’s* did not accept the articles but agreed to pay just \$2000 for Manly’s time. The papers passed to Manly’s attorney, then to Manly’s brother Basil Maxwell, who was executor of his will upon his death, and then upon the brother’s death, they were given to two Army generals. They then passed them to William Friedman, who made some notes about them and then archived them in his own papers.⁴⁰ The unpublished articles are now in the Friedman Collection at the Marshall Library, where Dooley found them and edited, annotated, and republished them in *Codes, Ciphers and Spies* in 2016.

The *Collier’s* essays reveal Manly’s strengths as a codebreaker and decipherer, but in their narrative style they are very different from the kinds of intelligence memoirs and tell-alls written by his contemporaries, like

Yardley's *American Black Chamber*. From the detailed narratives of his experiences and knowledge, Manly demonstrates how he was able to understand the full context of secret writing, the contextual *life* of a message. Manly was, above all else, a humanist and a storyteller, even when he was deep in wartime decryption. Importantly, his accounts focus on relationships and collaborations, and he noticed and considered the human authors and readers in all the interactions and interventions that shaped early intelligence history. For example, in "American Codes and Ciphers in France," he describes the collaborative sharing of information that helped Lieutenant J. Rives Childs better prepare his team to secure their messages. In an entertaining essay on their study of suspicious civilian messages, he describes a moment with Yardley in which they were both overjoyed to analyze a letter written in invisible ink hidden in a woman's shoe. At the moment their overheated iron began revealing the writing, they were so excited it would be "hard to describe" it.⁴¹ In "Painvin Breaks a Cipher," he describes some dramatic moments of teamwork in Georges Painvin's career. Painvin was known as a genius in the French Cipher Bureau, but even he relied upon a kind of competitive collaboration. Recovering from a serious illness, Painvin faced a difficult cipher that mixed 22 alphabets:

He and all the rest of the cipher analysts of the Allies immediately began a study, feverish in its intensity, but sane and dogged, and determined and cool in its method. A friendly rivalry arose in which, like newspapermen, every expert was eager to make a "scoop," by being the first to solve the problem, but each loyally communicated to all the rest every new method of attack as soon as it was invented or discovered.⁴²

Even in emergency situations, and with egos and careers on the line, cryptologists developed methods not only for decryption but for teamwork. As Manly and Rickert would establish in the Chaucer Laboratory years later, the team problem solved by working on the same documents but also working individually in competition with one another, motivated by the chase. The competition could not be so cutthroat, however, that they lost sight of their primary mission and failed to share knowledge. This might seem like an obvious requirement in wartime decryption, but it is not the established method for humanist scholars for whom study usually remains solitary, revealed in full publication as an individual accomplishment only after years of examination.

Repeatedly, Manly emphasizes the need for experts with knowledge of reading and interpretation to do this kind of work, which is what other nations like Russia were lacking. The scholars he had recruited, he notes, could learn decryption methods very quickly. And like scholars of historical literatures, they also needed to exercise great “care” with the messages: “The security of a code or cipher system depends not only upon its merits but also upon the intelligence and care with which it is used.”⁴³ Just as in his work with the Chaucer manuscripts, one could not carelessly handle the messages. What was perhaps most important was that the entire textual history and context of the message needed to be considered, requiring a kind of analytical stamina that was only common for historical literary scholars. Without this care at all times, messages could slip by that were important or, sometimes worse, too much time could be spent on a message that was insignificant. It was vital that readers know when a plaintext message was just plain text, not a secret transmission.

Not all readers were trained in contextual interpretation, as Manly and his colleagues were, nor were most receiving the kind of hands-on experiences in decryption that the MID could provide. Yet as Manly noticed, the public was fascinated with secret messages and the possibility that enemies were communicating across otherwise obvious channels, like newspapers and personal letters. Manly identifies *paranoid* reading as a new concern for his generation. The war, and the fast communication technologies supporting it, had created an “awakened suspicion” in the public, he notes in the ninth essay he wrote for *Collier's* on “Civilian Correspondence: Foreign Letters and Hoaxes.” This had immediate relevance to his own primary area of study as a literary scholar and a teacher of reading. There emerged, he writes, a “general tendency to interpret as dangerous everything that was not understood,” and everyone—even children—were involved in “reporting some thread of the network of plots.”⁴⁴ Certainly, his visit to Riverbank Laboratory, which did or was going to have a kindergarten devoted to learning cryptology, was part of this “hysteria,” as he called it. In the *Collier's* essays, he sees his work in MI-8 as a direct counter to this public reading crisis, but he certainly also imagined how his work back in the English department would need to change to address this public movement. Not only would his department faculty need to focus more intently on methods of interpretation, and on knowing coded language from straight-forward plain text, but they would also have to counter the prejudices that the paranoid reading was creating. He notes even in his *Collier's* essay that letters written by people who were not highly

literate were unfairly suspected, as well as correspondence by foreign writers with customs or slang that were not well known. Time and again, he had to use his academic research skills and knowledge of studying *culture* to deduce that messages were not threatening. A New York City soap company, for example, had created a marketing contest: the person who could create the longest word in Spanish by re-organizing the letters of their name would win a prize. This attracted a large number of letters from South America, with lengthy, bizarre lists of Spanish words that looked like codes.⁴⁵ His team needed to track down the motivation of those suspicious messages—the contest—to dismiss them. Manly's humor emerges during his descriptions of other messages that had logical, innocent explanations as well. He is also amused by the many hoaxes. When letters were coded or ciphered but to protect one's private business, with no connection to the war, Manly humbly recognizes that "cipher affords a sort of protective coloring to the writer and encourages him to express himself more unreservedly than he would in ordinary writing."⁴⁶ He writes of some of these examples with great respect and curiosity. He notes at the end of this essay that reading some of these messages might feel like "an unwarrantable profanation of sacred feelings." His lesson is for the writer as well as the reader: in times of heightened paranoia, it is safer to communicate secrets in plain writing than in cipher.

LONG-TERM LESSONS FROM A LIFE OF COLLABORATION

For Manly, decryption was a useful tool to improve literacy, but not in the same way that Fabyan envisioned teaching Bacon's ciphers to kindergartners. Manly kept learning about cryptology, researching past methods, and staying in contact with his new networks. One might assume that his new understanding of his own culture's paranoid reading practices, coupled with fresh knowledge of the latest communication technologies and the most cutting edge methods for analyzing and interpreting texts, would turn his attention fully toward the twentieth century. Yet, he became determined to adopt this technological, cultural, and methodological knowledge in the study of the past. Of all of the topics he explored, and of all the colleagues across disciplines with whom he enjoyed conversing, medieval studies was always his enduring passion. In his presidential address to the Mediaeval Academy on "Humanistic Studies and Science," published in *Speculum* in 1930, Manly noted that

the infinitely various and fascinating period we roughly call the Middle Ages must not be neglected. It lies close to us. In it arose many of our most important institutions. Our social life, our customs—our ideals, our superstitions and fears and hopes—came to us directly from this period; and no present-day analysis can give a complete account of our civilization unless it is supplemented by a profound study of the forces and forms of life, good and evil, which we have inherited from it.⁴⁷

One can hear Manly's wartime experiences echoing in this renewed love of medieval history. The fears that manifested in the first world war were rooted in deeply engrained cultural biases and competitions for land and resources that were centuries old. Its end was also possible, though, because of equally long-established institutions, like universities. Yet the war also ushered in new ways of thinking that Manly did not naively dismiss. He recognizes, in his *Collier's* essays, what no other early twentieth-century cryptanalyst mentions: that the communication technologies of WWI require new methods of *listening* and, specifically, of "listening-in." This is not unlike the kind of research that literary scholars conduct. Reading historical texts is like interpreting a transmitted message. In the new telegraph technologies, he notes, one can splice into a wire to hear an ongoing conversation, though this can easily be discovered. Newer methods then allowed electrical engineers to simply lay lines parallel to telegraph wires, allowing one to eavesdrop on conversations. Then, even more advanced, was wireless telegraphy, which meant the air was now "full of voices."⁴⁸ These rapid changes required that he and his colleagues learn how to listen differently—and how to *read* differently—for which he seemed to enjoy developing new methods. He pauses, in his essay, to remember his own historical knowledge and muse about the sophistication of sixteenth-century cryptography. He notes that early modern cryptologists not only developed ciphers that would have confused his age, but also would have easily solved the ciphers of World War I. For him, the key is listening not only to the present voices but to the voices of the past as well.

NOTES

1. Donald C. Stewart, "Collaborative Learning and Composition: Boon or Bane?" *Rhetoric Review* 7, no.1 (1988): 64. See George Lyman Kittredge, "Chaucer's Discussion of Marriage," *Modern Philology* IX, no. 4 (April

- 1912): 435–467. Kittredge is credited with inventing the category of the Marriage Group, but as Elizabeth Scala persuasively argues, the credit should go to Eleanor Prescott Hammond, who first used the phrase in her 1908 *Chaucer: A Bibliographic Manual*. See Elizabeth Scala, “The Women in Chaucer’s ‘Marriage Group,’” *MFF* 45, no. 1 (2009): 50–56.
2. Stewart, “Collaborative,” 64.
 3. Oscar Cargill, *Intellectual America: Ideas on the March* (New York: Macmillan, 1941), 523.
 4. Eric Powell, “History of the English Department,” The University of Chicago Division of the Humanities Department of English Website, created September 2014, accessed December 22, 2020, <https://english.uchicago.edu/about/history-english-department>
 5. David H. Stevens, “Memorial Service for John Matthews Manly,” Bond Chapel, The University of Chicago (October, 11, 1940), 1.
 6. John Matthews Manly, “Letter from John Matthews Manly, to Mary M. Manly,” Manly Family Papers, University of Alabama Libraries Special Collections, October 14, 1894, 7.
 7. John Matthews Manly, “Letter from John Matthews Manly to Mary M. Manly,” Manly Family Papers, University of Alabama Libraries Special Collections, August 19, 1884, 2.
 8. Robert Morse Lovett, “Sketch of Manly,” *The Daily Maroon* XXVII (Nov. 1917): 1.
 9. *Ibid.*, 2.
 10. Manly, “Letter to Mary M. Manly, August 19, 1884,” 2.
 11. Manly, Letter to Mary M. Manly, October 14, 1894, 2–7.
 12. Fuller, A. James. *Chaplain to the Confederacy: Basil Manly and Baptist Life in the Old South* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2000), 1–2.
 13. Manly, “Letter to Mary M. Manly, October 14, 1894,” 18–20.
 14. *Ibid.*
 15. “Furman History and Traditions: Furman University Historical Timeline,” Furman University Special Collections and Archives, accessed May 19, 2021, <https://libguides.furman.edu/special-collections/history-and-traditions/chronology#s-lg-box-wrapper-18593732>
 16. John Matthews Manly, “Letter from John Matthews Manly, to Mary M. Manly, Barnstable, Massachusetts,” Manly Family Papers, University of Alabama Libraries Special Collections, August 9, 1897.
 17. For details on “The Andrews Controversy” see https://www.brown.edu/Administration/News_Bureau/Databases/Encyclopedia/search.php?serial=A0340. Andrews’s tenure as president was remembered not only for this controversy, however, but also for several positive measures, including bringing women into the university, improving facilities, greatly

increasing enrollment, and moving Brown from college status to university status.

18. Manly, "Letter to Mary M. Manly, October 14, 1894," 2.
19. Herbert O. Yardley, *The American Black Chamber* (New York City: Ishi Press, 2018), 173. *The American Black Chamber* was originally published in London by Faber & Faber Ltd. in 1931.
20. J. R. Hulbert, "John Matthews Manly, 1865–1940," *Modern Philology* 38, no. 1 (1940): 7.
21. See Nel Noddings, *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education* (Oakland: University of California Press, 1984).
22. John Matthews Manly, "Letter from John Matthews Manly, Liberty, Missouri, to Mary M. Manly," Manly Family Papers, University of Alabama Libraries Special Collections, October 30, 1887, 6.
23. See Manly, "Letter to Mary M. Manly, October 14, 1894."
24. John Matthews Manly, "Letter from John Matthews Manly, Liberty, Missouri, to Mary M. Manly," Manly Family Papers, University of Alabama Libraries Special Collections, September 25, 1887, 5–6.
25. John Matthews Manly, "Letter from John Matthews Manly, to Mary M. Manly," Manly Family Papers, University of Alabama Libraries Special Collections, April 24, 1910.
26. John Matthews Manly, "Education that Educates," *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors* 14, no. 4 (1928): 267.
27. Introduction to "Sketch of Manly by Robert Morse Lovett," *The Daily Maroon* XXVII (Nov. 1917): 1, 4.
28. Stevens, "Memorial," 2.
29. *Ibid.*, 6.
30. *Ibid.*
31. For an example of an early volume that established the character of the Chicago School, see Ronald Crane, ed., *Critics and Criticism: Ancient and Modern* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952); and Ronald Crane, *The Languages of Criticism and the Structure of Poetry* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1953).
32. Ronald S. Crane, "Letter to John Matthews Manly," John Matthews Manly Papers, Box 2, Folder 4, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
33. E.C. Armstrong, J.D.M. Ford, Francis P. Magoun, et al. "Memoirs of Fellows and Corresponding Fellows of the Mediaeval Academy" *Speculum* 16, no. 3 (1941): 379.
34. *Ibid.*, 380.
35. Michael Sprinker, "What is Living and What is Dead in Chicago Criticism," *boundary* 13, no. 2/3 (1985): 192.

36. John Matthews Manly, "The President's Address: New Bottles," *PMLA* 35 (1920): xlviii.
37. William B. Hunter, Albert Marckwardt, Douglas Sheppard, and Michael Shugrue, "Educational Standards-Educational Politics," *The Bulletin of the Midwest Modern Language Association* 2, no. 1 (1969): 5.
38. Rachel Sagner Buurma and Laura Heffernan, *The Teaching Archive: A New History for Literary Study* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2020).
39. Yardley, *American Black Chamber*, 15.
40. John Dooley, *Codes, Ciphers and Spies: Tales of Military Intelligence in World War I* (New York: Springer, 2016), 8.
41. John Matthews Manly, "MI-8 and Civilian Messages," in *Codes, Ciphers and Spies*, ed. John Dooley (New York: Springer, 2016), 121.
42. John Matthews Manly, "Painvin Breaks a Cipher," in *Codes, Ciphers and Spies*, ed. John Dooley (New York: Springer, 2016), 86.
43. John Matthews Manly, "American Codes and Ciphers in France," in *Codes, Ciphers and Spies*, ed. John Dooley (New York: Springer, 2016), 76.
44. John Matthews Manly, "Civilian Correspondence: Foreign Letters and Hoaxes," in *Codes, Ciphers and Spies*, ed. John Dooley (New York: Springer, 2016), 131.
45. *Ibid.*, 134.
46. *Ibid.*, 141.
47. John Matthews Manly, "Humanistic Studies and Science," *Speculum* 5, no. 3 (July 1930): 250.
48. John Matthews Manly, "Overview of Cryptology and the Army" in *Codes, Ciphers and Spies*, ed. John Dooley (New York: Springer, 2016), 33.

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CHAPTER 3

Edith Rickert and the New Woman Movement

Sylvia Tomasch and Sealy Gilles

“When Adam delved and Eve span,
No one need ask which was the man.
Bicycling, footballing, scarce human,
All wonder now “Which is the woman?”

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But a new fear my bosom vexes;
 To-morrow there may be *no* sexes!
 Unless, as end to all the pother,
 Each one in fact becomes the other.
 E'en *then* perhaps they'll start amain
 A-trying to change back again!
 Woman *was* woman, man *was* man,
 When Adam dived and Eve span.
 Now he can't dig and she won't spin,
 Unless 'tis tales all slang and sin!
 —“Sexomania” (1895)¹

In 1895, when *Punch* satirizes the New Woman movement in “Sexomania, By an Angry Old Buffer,” the movement is flourishing and twenty-four-year-old Edith Rickert is taking full advantage of it.² Her generation of white, native-born, college-educated middle-class women³ were seeking out and enjoying opportunities for travel, relationships, and professional advancement undreamt of by their mothers and grandmothers. With increased access to university education and professional training, young middle-class women in England and the United States began to resist the strictures of Victorian society that privileged domestic stability and a rigid gender hierarchy. The New Woman sought economic independence and sexual freedom, eschewing the confines of Victorian femininity in dress and behavior, questioning traditional marital arrangements, and generally undermining gendered assumptions of privilege and possibilities.

Highly educated, independent, bicycle-riding, and unmarried: in many respects, Edith Rickert fits the New Woman profile in her three concurrent careers: as a medievalist, an editor, and an author of popular fiction.⁴ During the period between 1891 and 1915, Rickert lived as a literary bluestocking in London, published novels and short fiction by the dozens, then worked as an editor at D.C. Heath and for *The Ladies' Home Journal*.⁵ In London especially, she plunged into the milieu of the New Woman, living in the company of other educated women and traveling extensively, sometimes on bicycle and frequently by herself, in England, Spain, Belgium, Provence, Germany, the Shetland Islands, and elsewhere. These travels became integral to her fiction and to her integrity as a writer.

Indeed, for some readers, her adventurousness was essential to the charm of her fiction. According to *The Johnstown Daily Republican* (N.Y.)

(October 29, 1904): “Miss Edith Rickert’s novel, ‘The Reaper,’ contains pictures of life in the faraway Shetland Islands which are undoubtedly true to fact. As an illustration of the determination of this young Vassar girl to acquaint herself thoroughly with every detail of the Shetlander’s existence, it is related that on one occasion she accompanied the fishermen on a voyage to the ‘herring grounds,’ an achievement never before equaled by one of her sex.”⁶ Also in October of that year, *The Sun*, a New York paper, presents this surprising information: “Miss Edith Rickert, the author of ‘The Reaper,’ gained her first knowledge of English country people by tramping from village to village selling combs, needles and thread to the farmers’ wives.”⁷ (Rickert’s “Gloucestershire Constabulary Pedlar’s Certificate,” dated April 9, 1897, is among her Papers.) This reviewer follows this account of field research by noting that Rickert “was educated at Vassar and the University of Chicago.” Other reviewers too take note of Rickert’s unusual (to them) independence and adventurousness, tying those qualities to her uncommonly high level of education and connecting her fiction with her daring (bordering on scandalous) life experiences. For example, in 1906, the *Plattsburgh Republican* (N.Y.) writes about the forthcoming publication of *The Golden Hawk*: “Miss Edith Rickert, the Chicago novelist, has made a specialty of Old English and Anglo-Saxon. Her ‘Emaré’ is to be published by the Old [sic] English Text Society. While in Provence she lived near the poet Mistral, and spent much time with him.”⁸ In other words, although Rickert never names herself a New Woman or aligns herself with New Woman novelists—in fact, she uses the term only once in her fiction—her independence, education, and unconventionality make her seem very well-suited to the model.

However, unlike her contemporaries who were partisans in the decades-long New Woman debates, Rickert neither championed this new model of womanhood nor denigrated it. Rather, she understood all too well the tensions between freedom and dependency, public accomplishments and private domesticity, autonomy and family ties. She explores these tensions extensively in her fiction, particularly in the requisite happy endings, where frequently even the most adventurous and accomplished protagonist chooses to submit to a benevolently despotic husband, answering the call of motherhood and the hearth as, in William Congreve’s phrase, she “dwindles into a wife.”⁹ Yet, even as Rickert almost obsessively writes and rewrites these endings, she not only shows that such resolutions come at an exceedingly high price but also hints that the story might not end with the formulaic denouements that put women in their proper places. Rather,

they, and we, remain haunted by their struggles and sometimes by visions of what could have been or still might be. In other words, we can read at least some of Rickert's fiction as a form of "writing beyond the ending" in Rachel Blau DuPlessis's sense, where "there is often a disjunction between narrative discourses and resolutions, which may be felt as the 'patness' of a resolution, or as the ironic comment of an author at closure. There may also be a sense of contradiction between the plot and the character, where the female hero/heroine seems always to exceed the bounds that the plot delineates."¹⁰ Embedded within many of Rickert's stories, therefore, is a resistance to the roles and situations celebrated or prescribed by the ending.¹¹

While it may seem at first that Rickert's own freedom and accomplishments are in contradistinction to the constricted roles she crafts for her heroines, it is helpful to remember that although she edited medieval manuscripts, authored multiple volumes of pedagogical and literary critical texts, and collaborated with John Matthews Manly on the eight-volume *Text of the Canterbury Tales*,¹² she found a secure place in academia only late in life, becoming an associate professor at fifty-two and a full professor at fifty-nine, only five years before ill health forced her to retire and eight years before she died.¹³ Perhaps because of these struggles, throughout her life she seems to find a way that allows her to "exceed the bounds" of her own narrative. Even while maintaining decades-long associations with accomplished men, such as Manly (as has already been well documented),¹⁴ the medievalist F.J. Furnivall, the naturalist John Burroughs, and the poet and lexicographer Frédéric Mistral,¹⁵ in Rickert's personal and professional relationships she also seeks out and maintains close friendships with accomplished women, including Katherine Lee Bates, Wellesley professor and author of "American the Beautiful," the author Abbie Farwell Brown, and the younger medievalists and textual scholars she recruits for work on the *Canterbury Tales* project.¹⁶ In addition, and most notably for this paper, Rickert throughout her life forges small communities of women—sisters, housemates, colleagues. In other words, although the staging of human connections is frequently realized in her fiction within an emphatically patriarchal domestic space, in her life Rickert steadily resists the constrictions of that space. Neither reactionary nor revolutionary nor even reformist, she finds, in rigorous intellectual work and in personal bonds with men and women, ways to move beyond the quandaries that face her, her contemporaries, and her heroines.

RICKERT'S FICTIONAL WOMEN: OLD AND NEW

She did not belong in any of my categories, being too independent and strong-minded, perhaps, to be an Old Woman, and too little of an amazon [sic] to be a New Woman. (Edith Rickert, "The Capitulation of Her Parents"¹⁷)

The New Woman was one element of a whole set of attitudes, ideas, and behaviors that included the New Politics, the New Psychology, the New Art, and the New Theater, all of which developed in reaction to the strictures of Victorian society, against which many felt the need to "define and differentiate themselves."¹⁸ According to Adele Heller and Lois Rudnick, the New Woman "no longer [felt] bound by the separate spheres [between men and women] and [the] assumed biological and intellectual limitations that [had] kept her mother at home. [Rather, s]he was presumably free to work, study, and determine her own life and sexual partners. During this period, middle-class women [in particular] gained greater access to higher education and the professions."¹⁹ In this period, such ideas were controversial, and they were thought to be so threatening to the natural order of home and society that soon after the term "New Woman" was coined in 1893 a "stereotyped image of [her] quickly took hold on the public imagination."²⁰ According to the stereotype, the New Woman "was educated at Girton College, Cambridge, rode a bicycle, insisted on rational dress [e.g., the wearing of culottes instead of skirts, the better to ride astride bicycles], and smoked in public: in short, she rejected traditional roles for women and demanded emancipation."²¹ Not surprisingly, the New Woman's refusal to conform to traditional expectations of women elicited strong reactions from contemporaries, male and female alike. The *Punch* poem quoted above is but one example of the skepticism and denigration that greeted this new model of womanhood.

Even within the ranks of its adherents, New Woman ideology was not monolithic. Ann Ardis lists three main strains of New Woman beliefs "in order of their increasing 'deviancy' from the dominant Victorian ideal of femininity ...: single-issue reformers, 'Independent Women,' and middle-class women who 'converted' to socialism in the 1880s and 1890s."²² In her life and work, Rickert seems to fall squarely within the category of Independent Woman, neither a single-issue reformer nor an adherent of radical political ideals or activities. Like many progressive middle-class women, she took an interest in the work settlements were doing among

London's poor; this is reflected in journal entries from 1896 onward expressing her distress upon seeing evidence of poverty and domestic abuse. In the journal entry for November 24, 1896, she notes that the district is "very poor: most of the people, dirty, wretched, depressed except where liquor had made them insolent. Pitiful stories, squalor + misery on all sides." The problems seem intractable: "Want to think it all over; what is, what can be the meaning of all this misery + what is the key to its solution? No one has found it yet, I think" (November 24, 1896).²³ Occasionally she mines these experiences for her fiction, including her novel *The Beggar in the Heart* (discussed below). An unpublished story (no date), "On a Park Bench," wryly satirizes the reformers: "'Settlement worker' was written all over her—you know the type" (2); the settlement worker is called to account by a poor mother of eight: "Ye live in your settlement houses, telling the poor what to do when all ye know about it could be put into pocket" (11). The unnamed narrator is one of Rickert's writers of fiction (discussed below): "You can never tell when and where a story will be born" (1).²⁴ Overall, despite her concern for the plight of the poor, and unlike her peers advocating for social justice reforms, there's no evidence that Rickert fought for any of the political causes of the day, such as women's suffrage or temperance. In fact, her later work for *The Ladies' Home Journal* supported prevailing norms for white, middle-class women, norms that the *Journal* itself went to some lengths to promote.²⁵ Nevertheless, as a thoroughly Independent Woman, even as she was eager to earn a living as an author of fiction and willing to cater to the tastes of a largely female public, Rickert returned repeatedly to issues at the core of New Woman literary productions: marriage, family, sexuality, gender roles, economics, and class. In fact, the issue of marriage within the context of social and economic forces and the limited choices available to women lie at the core of much of Rickert's fiction.²⁶

New Woman authors such as Sarah Grand, Mona Caird, and George Egerton, among others, created female protagonists with powerful and complicated emotional lives who resisted conventional marriages, traveled widely, and were keenly aware of social injustice. Drawn to new ideas, these authors were often also drawn to experimental form. Between the late 1800s and the turn of the century, more than one hundred novels and many more short stories revolved around the New Woman.²⁷ In addition to relations with husbands and lovers, New Woman authors, such as Victoria Cross, explored cross dressing and gender ambiguity, sexual passion, and exotic places and religions.²⁸ However, the struggles young

women faced in marriage lie at the center of story after story, both in the daring experimental fiction of the movement and in Rickert's more conventional fiction. As Carolyn Christensen Nelson writes,

The marriage question was central to most discussions by and about the New Woman and was an important part of New Woman writing, both fiction and essays [M]ost of the New Woman writers were not opposed to marriage. Rather, they believed that it should be constituted on entirely different terms than it presently was; marriage should be freely chosen rather than imposed on women by social and economic forces.²⁹

Rickert's heroines, like those of her more unorthodox contemporaries, struggle with the limited horizons and painful compromises marriage entails. Like many New Woman protagonists, her characters face a future in which they must tamp down their passions and readjust their dreams. The differences, as our discussion of Rickert's fiction will show, lie in the endings.

Questions about marriage and the limited choices available to women are well illustrated in Netta Syrett's short story "Thy Heart's Desire" (1894), when the protagonist, Kathleen Drayton, tries to explain her marriage to her would-be lover, Broomhurst:

Why *did* I marry him? ... for the reason that hundreds of ignorant inexperienced girls marry, I suppose. My home wasn't a happy one. I was miserable, and oh,—*restless* [He] wanted me very badly—nobody wanted me at home particularly. There didn't seem to be any point in my life.³⁰

In Syrett's story, as in other narratives from New Woman authors, a woman decides to marry out of despair at the constrictions she faces at home, and, as a result, makes an ill-suited match that leads, as in many other cases, to an extra-marital entanglement with a man better suited to her free spirit.

Syrett's story ends when the protagonist, who blames herself for the death of her husband, turns away from her lover and chooses a solitary life. Even in doing so, she does not regret betraying her marriage vows but stays true to her New Woman ideals: "What sort of woman should I be to be willing again to live with a man I don't love? I have come to know that there are things one owes to *one's self*. Self-respect is one of them" (69, original emphasis). The story ends as Kathleen turns her "swimming eyes

to the gray sea" (69), a moment that will be amplified by Kate Chopin's Edna Pontellier six years later.³¹ In Syrett's story, the last glimpse of the sea on which "gleams of sunlight ... swept like tender smiles" suggests, in the DuPlessis mode, that Kathleen's story does not end here. While this heroine adamantly rejects her suitor, refusing to "offer gray ashes to any man" (69), even more importantly she refuses to settle for ashes herself. What she will do afterward is not clear; it is up to readers to imagine the story after she turns away from the sea.

Though her ending is much less audacious, Rickert's 1906 novel *Folly* outraged middle-class morality as her heroine also leaves her husband for a more attractive man.³² Born Florence (6) but true to her pet name, Folly abandons her steady but unromantic husband, Andrew Christie, for a peripatetic life abroad with a poet. In contrast to Syrett's more open-ended resolution, Folly's marriage is restored when her husband comes searching for his errant wife. Her lover has died, and she, who was once concerned more with the colors of her costume than with her own young son, eventually finds solace in running a home for orphaned children. At the end, in contrast to the flighty young woman he married, Christie finds "a woman in gray and white, with fire-gleam on her hair, and her face hidden behind a rampantly affectionate bald-headed baby" (360), one of the many children cared for on her "baby-farm." Folly asks her husband to "take me back" and, when he does so with great generosity, "she was content to believe that she was on the footpath to the citadel of peace" (306). He, in turn, recognizes the enormous change she has undergone: "'Folly,' said he, after a time, 'or must I say Wisdom?'" (306).

The phrase "content to believe" suggests a certain resignation but perhaps also a resolution that making a happy marriage involves conscious choice; it does not just happen. Perhaps, after all her (mis-)adventures, Rickert's heroine renounces "the folly" of imagining there is such a thing as complete independence, as in the chapter called "The Sisterhood," when Folly lives for a time in a convent within a community of nuns. In the end, even as she is "content to believe," Andrew comes to his own understanding that their new relationship involves not a capitulation on either of their parts but rather mutual and mature agreement: "he knew that this was no surrender of the fruits of her hard-won victory; but rather a sharing of the treasure that she had garnered from sorrow and the love of little children" (306). In Mona Caird's New Woman novel *Daughters of Danaus* (1894), the protagonist "pointedly ignores her two (unnamed) sons, the product of an unhappy marriage, but, to make a point about

‘free’ motherhood, adopts an illegitimate girl.”³³ While it eschews the explicit polemic of Caird’s novel, Rickert’s *Folly* too moves from maternal rejection to maternal choice—which, in spite of a resolution that conforms to patriarchal norms, exposed its author to some acerbic critiques.

For some contemporary readers, *Folly*’s ending, even highlighted as “Wisdom,” was still too disturbing to redeem the novel completely. As one reviewer wrote,

Miss Rickert could scarcely do work other than good—judged from a literary standpoint The great fault of “Folly” is that the theme is not worthy of so excellent a writer “Folly” remains the problem of the woman and two men, and skillfully as the situations are managed, there is still the taint of that realism that invariably touches mud.³⁴

While not explicitly using the term “New Woman,” this anonymous reviewer is clearly aligned with the faction that saw New Woman fictions as sex-obsessed, anti-marriage, and coarse. In this critique Rickert barely escapes such charges, but not in others. Even more damning, on August 25, 1906, the *New York Times* reprinted some accusations by Mrs. L.H. Harris in her review of *Folly* in *The Independent*, along with Rickert’s response. Such accusations illustrate the forces of morality that confronted both the New Woman authors and their less daring peers:

It is intended that certain savage instincts shall preserve us from utter depravity where more cultured morality sometimes fails. And one of the most shocking developments of fungus fiction is the way men and women act in it contrary to natural antipathies. Thus, we have a new novel of English life, “Folly,” in which the heroine abandons her husband for another man When about to die, the [other man] ... returns the wife [in such a way] that, instead of killing him, the wronged man offers his hand in generous admiration. A more revolting denouement can only be imagined by Bernard Shaw As for Mrs. “Folly,” ... a thrice-fallen woman [is] unfit to care for any kind of a baby. There is too much honey juggling of sinners these days, in fiction and out of it.³⁵

Given Harris’s accusation of “fungus fiction,” Rickert’s response is quite temperate. Refusing to debate anyone’s knowledge of so-called savage instincts or to defend Shaw, Rickert stresses, first, that “novels which deal respectively with temptation and imperfect perception of duty are not by that bare fact to be condemned as unhealthy”; and, second, in words that

remind us of her “other” life as a medievalist with deep historical knowledge: “My whole contention is that it is futile to long for a return to the perfection or to the mannerisms of the past; it is worse than futile to attempt to limit either the progress of ideas or their reflection in literature.”³⁶ Interestingly, she sidesteps issues of gender and refrains from debating the “Woman Question.” Whether this is because she knows that bringing up such issues would only further inflame already antagonistic critics or because at bottom she is not much concerned with such matters *as issues*, either philosophically or politically, we cannot know. What we do know is that in her fiction she returns to the situation of women in marriage time and time again.

Rickert uses the term “New Woman” just once in her fiction, and she puts it in the mouth of Thomas Caird Fulton, the narrator of her 1897 short story “The Capitulation of Her Parents.” He muses about the young woman whom he has just, literally, run into on the steps of the British Library: “She did not belong in any of my categories, being too independent and strong-minded, perhaps, to be an Old Woman, and too little of an amazon [sic] to be a New Woman” (474). “Old Woman” here is a somewhat humorous back formation from “New Woman” and one of the very few times Rickert directly alludes to the movement.³⁷ A writer himself, Fulton finds that he cannot easily characterize Esther Hunt: “[A]though she was not very young ... and hardly beautiful ... I took out my note-book and tried to classify her among my heroines. But I speedily found myself between the horns of dilemma” (474). A second accidental meeting is no more clarifying: “I had a general impression that most of them [American women] went in for rational costume and missions. Now I began to see how utterly false my ideas had been” (474). With some difficulty, he decides that “I was studying a new type of character” (474), one that is not, early in the century, yet fully defined.

He learns that Hunt came to England to “be independent,” show her father her “pluck,” and perhaps “write”: all this, she once believed, would bring her father “to terms” (476). In fact, she now believes she has failed, she is discouraged about her ability to make her way in the world, and she is about to “surrender” to her father who had earlier tried to force her “to marry somebody [she] didn’t like” (476):

When I first came here I used to go to the Museum every day to write. Everybody used to tell me at college that I could. I sent off so many things that I thought they could not all come back—but they did. And so one

misfortune after another I believed that it was a good story, and had set my heart on its success, so much so that I felt as if everything—my whole future life—was at stake and I had lost. (476)

Hunt's impasse shows how often "the fragile independence [New Woman] heroines enjoy is constantly threatened by their frustrated hopes of professional success and their disillusionment with the monotonous drudgery of a working life."³⁸ Fulton takes it upon himself to rescue Esther from her fragile independence, repeatedly cabling her father and declaring his intentions. Unable to resist this unknown *man*'s appeals, her father "yield[s] his colors—surrender[s]" (480), continuing the series of martial metaphors used throughout this story. What is most interesting here, however, is not one young woman's dependence on a suitor to get her own way, but what happens after the story proper is over. In an asterisked coda that exemplifies DuPlessis's theory about "writing beyond the ending," Rickert's narrator appends a note that at first seems out of place or even irrelevant to the romance plot:

I cannot forego the pleasure of saying here that I was right after all. My wife's later success proves conclusively that she was quite capable of maintaining her own independence, and of bringing her parents to terms, had not Providence granted me the privilege of helping, that I might win my own happiness. (480)

Not only does this addendum provide an unusual reversal of generic romance expectations in that *he* becomes *her* helpmeet in an egalitarian marriage that was a touchstone for many adherents of New Woman ideology,³⁹ but it also reminds readers that the kind of woman coming to maturity in the first decades of the century was most often neither simply Old nor New. As yet not fully defined, this woman, like Rickert herself, was figuring out how to make her way in a world that would not easily make space for her.⁴⁰

The protagonist as writer or artist is a hallmark of much New Woman fiction. As Sally Ledger writes, "one of the striking features of many New Women novels is that they were peopled with female writers of feminist fiction."⁴¹ None of Rickert's heroines proclaim themselves feminists, but they are often artists or writers (see our discussions of "The Knocking at the Door" and *The Beggar in the Heart* below), two of the professions acceptable for single women at the turn of the century. That her heroines have talent and ambition makes their ultimate capitulations to domesticity

and marriage all the more poignant. In *The "Improper" Feminine: The Women's Sensation Novel and the New Woman Writing*, Lyn Pykett suggests that by "foregrounding the figure of the woman writer, such novels foreground the problems of their own production."⁴² That problem, the artist's struggle to make a living, is not only the predicament facing Esther Hunt, the protagonist of "Capitulation," but also the author's own situation in London (minus the tyrannical father and savior lover). Suffering the disappointments of rejection letters and sleepless nights wondering how she was to pay the rent, Rickert too was entirely familiar with an artist's struggle to make a living.⁴³ Certainly, during the period before World War I when she produced the bulk of her fiction, although Rickert was beginning to succeed in her career as a writer, she was rarely without financial worries; and unlike Hunt, Rickert did not have a wealthy family behind her. She was born in 1871 into the lower, sometimes struggling, rungs of the American middle class; her father was a chemist who often had trouble supporting the family; her mother was, for much of her life, an invalid. Rickert too struggled with illness throughout her life. "Mattie" (for Martha Edith) was the eldest of four girls and worried about her sisters' chances for good educations.⁴⁴ With the aid of a scholarship, Rickert attended Vassar College, which had been founded in 1861. The opportunity is celebrated by her family, but her correspondence and journals also disclose the emotional and financial difficulties brought on by their separation.⁴⁵ Rickert had no choice but to make her own way, managing to do so with the help of friends and mentors but especially within communities of women (more on these below). In contrast, her heroines struggle in isolation and must find an uneasy fulfillment in the patriarchal space of the nuclear family.

That family almost always includes children. In several of Rickert's stories from this period, happy endings are entwined with delayed but longed-for motherhood; often, they are also shadowed by loss. For instance, "Strayed—A Princess" (1905)⁴⁶ begins and ends with a newborn child.⁴⁷ In this story, an attractively foreign young woman, running away from an arranged marriage, meets Gilbert Vallance, a master of tall ships (133). Drawn together by the appeal of his infant nephew (133), the two almost instantly fall in love. Before renouncing the simple life, Rickert's heroine asks to be godmother to little Gilbert, thus creating a kind of pseudo-marriage with Vallance as godfather [137], and so the plot ends: "they kissed and parted; and there was no more to be said. Princess Ursula of Cassel-Blankenburg gladdened the heart of her old father ... with the

news that she was ready to take the [noble] husband whom he had chosen for her" (138). Although the plot is complete, as in "Capitulation" we are given a glimpse into the future:

And when, after long years, there was born to her a child, heir to her husband's throne, Vallance hoped and was content to believe that she had found compensation for her sacrifice, that she who so gladly would have wandered from her high station, was now, perhaps, happy in the fulfillment of her destiny. (138)

Since the story is told from Vallance's perspective, we never know if Princess Ursula was indeed happy, only that he was "content to believe" (the same phrase as used in *Folly*) that "perhaps" she was so. Did the much longed-for child truly fulfill her? Since neither he nor we can ever be sure, the story refuses to end tidily, suggesting unfulfilled possibilities.

While Rickert, unlike some of her New Woman writer contemporaries, never completely rejects traditional gender roles, many of her stories are filled with ambivalence. "The Wonderful Day" (1909), for instance, presents a less-than-rosy picture of female marital submission.⁴⁸

If Tom wished a certain dish for dinner, if he liked her hair becomingly short or his wife's hat in last year's style, Peg soon found that her part in life was to say "Amen." She did not like it; but she proved by experiment that it was better than its alternative [H]er cue—and she soon learned it—was always to have been longing to see that particular play, and to accompany him joyfully, sometimes with a bottle of phenacitin in her little bag. (561)

The phenacitin mentioned here was discovered in 1887 to be an analgesic⁴⁹: in other words, Peg self-medicates in order to keep herself "joyful" in her marriage. "The wonderful day" of the title refers to the birth of her son, which Peg recognizes will change her world entirely: no longer would "her horizon [be] bounded by Tom on the north, east, south, and west, and her days ... measured from his outgoing at breakfast to his homecoming at night" (561). Our heroine transfers her hopes and her happiness from husband to son, with no separate dreams for herself. Peg's very last words—"It was come. My day!" (562)—perfectly manifest what Pykett has called "the self-sacrificially other-directed feeling of the regime of the properly feminine."⁵⁰ And yet, the narrative itself seems torn: on the one hand, the miracle of motherhood is presented as an unalloyed good;

on the other hand, it seems likely that Peg's bottle of phenacitin will continue to help her avoid the condition described by the gynecologist William Edgar Darnall in 1901: "She may be highly cultured and accomplished and shine in society, but her future husband will discover too late that he has married a large outfit of headaches, backaches, and spine aches instead of a woman fitted to take up the duties of life."⁵¹

In Rickert's "The Knocking at the Door" (1905), the miracle of an infant similarly saves another "highly cultured" woman when a foundling, presumably left by "gypsies," appears on Cecilia's doorstep in "a bundle of shawls" (32).⁵² Having quarreled with her fiancé, Robert, about her career and independence—"You said I mustn't finish that article, because I needed rest; and I said I should, because I had to" (30)—this "maker of literature" (31) has called off their engagement. Everyone and everything advocates that she is wrong, including an item in the newspaper of "a police-court squabble between husband and wife":

"Don't tantalize him," had said the peace-making magistrate, who was also a noted humorist. "Be nice."

Cecilia threw down the newspaper as if the charge had been directed against her: "I've always been 'nice'—after—until now, and it's isn't fair. It isn't my turn." (31)

If there were any fairness, it would indeed be her turn; instead the choice is stark: to continue to "wail" and "flit" (31) or to capitulate. Cradling the infant, she immediately decides to keep it, even naming it "Benoît Dieudonné" ("blessed God-gift") (34), at which point Robert returns and accepts without question that both he and the child will stay. The infant "miracle" (36) saves Cecilia for True Womanhood,⁵³ but this story, like much writing of the period according to Jennifer Scanlon, "both mystifies and mourns some of the realities of married life," including "the subordination of women's interests and ideals to those of their families."⁵⁴ Cecilia, like Peg, must become whatever her husband and son need, and yet we cannot forget that she, too, is owed her "turn." Recuperated into the marriage plot, Cecilia is, unfortunately, all too typical; as Pykett, in "Portraits of the artist as a young woman," points out: "New Woman fiction is littered with would-be literary artists, painters, and musicians who break down or give in under the pressures of the various circumstances which conspire against them, and end up as lonely spinsters, or happily—or, more usually, unhappily—married wives and mothers" (136).⁵⁵

In all of Rickert's *oeuvre*, only two unpublished stories, "A Question of Adjustment" (1898) and "Cynthia Brought to Earth" (no date), give us heroines with truly fulfilling careers; both are medical doctors. That choice of profession is likely what Matthew Bowie calls a "biographeme,"⁵⁶ as Rickert's close friend, Kate Platt, with whom she shared a London flat, traveled extensively, and set up country housekeeping, was a medical student when they first met. However, unlike Platt, whose career as a doctor included authoring a standard medical handbook and founding a Medical School for women in India,⁵⁷ the accomplished young women in these two stories relinquish their careers, one responding to the call of motherhood and the other to the pressures of abduction (more on that scenario below). In "Adjustment," Anne Grimshaw meets Fairlie, a professor of Norse studies (6),⁵⁸ who does not believe in independent careers for women. When she refuses to give up her studies and her independence, we hear his rationale for parting:

She must go her way, fight her battles, compete with men in the same profession—he winced at the idea—succeed or fail, grow in womanly tenderness and breadth of view or shrink into the model of an aggressive, disputatious, "women's rights' woman": but all this alone. (21)

His dismissal of her ambitions in the phrase "women's rights' woman" recalls all that was thought to be wrong with the New Woman; as *Punch*'s "Angry Old Buffer" laments, she is "scarce human," indistinguishable from men, and "won't spin." Throughout the story, Grimshaw's course of action is a see-saw of ambivalence: when the two characters meet again after two years, after she has acquired her MD, she is willing to give up her profession for him; however, shortly after they marry, she finds she is bored, so when he goes to Iceland she refuses to accompany him, instead resuming her practice, seemingly happy once more. Yet upon his return, having recently held an orphaned babe in her arms, she declares her intention to be solely his wife: "my success is—is ashes, without you It is a cruel thing for a woman to have to say, ... but I have learned it" (37).

Even so, the story does not end there, as if Rickert could not let such complete capitulation stand. In this instance, Fairlie, living up to his name, insists on "compromise" (37), agreeing to "let" her "have a door-plate" and "regular office hours" (38). We are not told how well such a compromise will work, but on that uncertain note the narrative ends. Pykett says of Grand's novel *The Heavenly Twins* (1893) that "this is a plot in which

both romantic love and domestic narratives are recuperated [Such a plot] often involves the education and transformation of an avowedly anti-domestic, unwomanly heroine who is recuperated for True Womanhood.”⁵⁹ Such recuperation can also be seen in other Rickert stories (discussed below), but in this instance the author seems to want to have it both ways: true domesticity wedded to true professionalism.

Another scenario of female capitulation to male authority in the service of True Womanhood appears in Rickert’s “The Orderly House” (1909), in which the young Dr. Fields is true to his name in prescribing a nature cure for his neurasthenic patient, Petronilla.⁶⁰ Swaddled and suffocated in her overly decorated home by things large and small, including items from her successful jewelry business,⁶¹ she must live in the woods for three months in order to recover (655). First encountered looking “like an old Italian picture” (653), she must become, as he says, like “this fir branch—always growing, putting the old behind it, budding out into the now. And it’s got to grow” (658). To her query, “Am I really going to get well and begin again?” he responds, “If you are good.” Her reply ends the story: “I have been building another house—up here in the woods—and it is yours” (658). This story thus illustrates what Ann Heilmann says of New Woman novels of the artist, that they “focus not so much on the process that *form* an artist, as on the many obstacles that *prevent* her from becoming—or remaining—one.”⁶² Here we have another rescue by another male savior, not, as we will see, with the overt violence of “The Golden Isle,” but still according to the same basic romance plot, as if Austen’s famous opening lines were being continually rewritten: “it is a truth universally acknowledged that a girl with a modicum of independence must be in search of a husband who’ll rescue her from it.”

Perhaps the story that most strongly and disturbingly illustrates the theme of complete female capitulation—and with no infant in arms to remediate possible deficiencies of marriage—is “The Golden Isle,” surprisingly published in 1907 in both *Everybody’s Magazine* and *The Strand Magazine*.⁶³ In this story, Mademoiselle Adèle de Valincourt-Rogye, the daughter of a marquise, is abducted by an unnamed horseman, brought to an isolated farmhouse in the Camargue swamps, forced to live in the company of peasants, made to dress like one, and required to serve morning coffee to her captor—a magnificent horseman upon a magnificent steed (661 and ff.)—until she willingly submits to his notion of “freedom”:

“Adèle,” said he, and took her hand as reverently as she might desire, “this might be a little Paradise for lovers who were free—this Golden Isle of mine But you hate me still?” His magnificent manhood, his resolute face, the light in his eyes—were full of challenge. Slowly she shook her head. “I have tried with all the strength of my will and—I cannot.”

“Then,” he said, “you are mine by right.” (671)

Only upon her complete submission does she learn that her abductor is in reality her fiancé, the decorated explorer, the Vicomte de Mornas; though she wears his picture in a locket around her neck, she had not seen him in person since she was a child (670). This revelation might serve to mitigate any accusations of immorality, but her abjection—forced captivity, compulsory change of clothing, and required household labor—remains to trouble the happy ending. Despite early objections, swoonings, and attempts at escape, Adèle comes to her own awakening: “He came splashing through the marsh, and without a word passed his arm under her shoulders, lifted her like a child, and swung her before him in the saddle. This time she did not cry or struggle; and she was amazed to find that she liked the rush of the wind against the galloping horse” (668).

Although the heroine’s sexual awakening is only implied, we know for sure that no longer will she be like her mother, “cased like a beetle in convention” (671). Yet, while *her* willing capitulation ends the plot, *his* words end the story with a significant ellipsis: “Shall I tell you what word I sent to your mother? I told her you were married to the Vicomte de Mornas and spending your honeymoon on the Golden Isle. It is half true; for the rest ...?” (671). As every Chaucerian knows, *raptus* is not the equivalent of either love or marriage, but in this story there’s an intimation that the heroine’s real problem is not ravishment but rather the conventional bonds that constrain her mother. De Mornas’s demands upend traditional social expectations: “You have within you the power to live, as my wife must live—free in soul and body from the chains society has forged” (671). These are the very chains of propriety that New Woman activists were working to break—although certainly not through “liberation” by a male abductor.

Fortunately, not all of Rickert’s stories so heavily recapitulate a narrative of patriarchal domination. For instance, “The Three Bears” (1910) is a light-hearted retelling of a folk tale, starring Madeline, a “girl not two years out of college” (410), lost in the New Hampshire woods.⁶⁴ Finding a cabin, naturally she enters, then encounters, and, in this case,

tames an “unshaven” and broken-hearted “hermit,” a “naturalist” (416) like Rickert’s friend Burroughs. Unlike the little girl in the folk source, this young woman is neither afraid nor threatened—and certainly does not require rescue. Rather, through her common sense, good humor, and general insouciance, she reconciles “Ursa Major” to a return to society in general and to the society of one eligible woman in particular (416). Here too, however, Rickert highlights the story that remains unwritten: “Like the little girl in the fairy-tale she got away—for that time; but this story has a different ending” (416).

The fairy-tale plot is realized most completely in Rickert’s fourth novel, *The Beggar in the Heart* (1909), which perhaps contains her most intricate and compelling romance.⁶⁵ The plot is not very complicated: an orphaned American girl, the petite and charming Miss Tyrrhena Sidonia Coverdale,⁶⁶ is taken under the wing of her worldly uncle, Benjamin Pickersgill (9). Together, they travel the world (16–18). Uncle Ben has many pet names for her, including Renée, short for Tyrrhena, and Petty-Zou, from Petit Jou Jou [“petit chou”] (12). After his death, our heroine settles in London (22). No longer young, “with gray in her golden hair and sorrowful lines about her delicate lips” (22), she determines to “be a working potter” (24), to live among the poor in a Council House in Westminster (30), and to go by “Petty-Zou,” as somehow most fitting to her reduced circumstances (36). All alone in the world, she’s also quite independent; when Philip, Lord Wharton, Earl of Uxminster, comes to her studio, she shocks him by smoking (46)—which does not deter him from declaring his love (60). Her inherent quality is also recognized by her fellow flat-dwellers, who benefit from her willingness to share what little comes her way, her eagerness to bring culture to their offspring, and her selflessness in helping those down on their luck (149). In other words, she always acts and lives as a gentlewoman, even in her straitened circumstances. Although Philip repeatedly asks for her hand in marriage against the preferences of his family (178), she, equally repeatedly and over the course of years, refuses. Not surprisingly, the ending of the novel is a happy one. Petty-Zou finally gives her consent—but only after Philip, his previously disapproving sister, Lady Savernake, and Petty-Zou herself become aware of her own aristocratic origins through an eighteenth-century “cast off” younger son (311). Even more, Philip shocks his sister with the news that if their family drama had played out differently, *that son* would have been the Earl of Uxminster (331), and, if she had been a man, Petty-Zou would have inherited (332)!

It is easy to make the plot of *Beggar in the Heart* sound ridiculous. If so, we suggest it is not so much because of its unlikeliness but because of its familiarity. This is very much a Cinderella story, updated to the post-Victorian world, which brings together the marriage question and other challenges of New Woman ideology, particularly class. Partly romance, partly social satire, partly economic critique, *Beggar* addresses very real issues facing women in the Edwardian era: how does an unmarried woman make her way in the world? what occupations are open to her? what are the options for a woman artist? what kinds of marriage are possible? is marriage the only alternative to a poor and lonely spinsterhood? When *Beggar* was published, Rickert was well into her thirties and thus, by the standards of the pre-war years, already a spinster herself. Reviews of the novel, in general quite positive, couldn't help but note Petty-Zou's age. The *Minneapolis Book Review* comments, "To weave a romance around an elderly heroine is a daring enterprise" (Nov. 1909). Thus this novel, along with a number of Rickert's stories, speaks to the phenomenon of the "New Spinster," a subset of the New Woman.⁶⁷

In addition to the issues facing unmarried women intent on pursuing careers, the novel also addresses class barriers. Can—should—they be breached? What are the constraints or possibilities for members of each class? In connecting gender and class, Rickert's novel reflects two character types in New Woman fiction that were so commonly linked that they were derided as the "two W's" in anti-New Woman condemnations: "The Workingman and the Woman, the New Woman, be it remembered, meet us at every page of literature written in the English tongue, and each is convinced that on its own especial W hangs the future of the world."⁶⁸ However, while issues of work and class are raised in *Beggar*, Rickert's solutions are far from radical: in the end, the Independent Woman Petty-Zou marries her Prince Charming, her new-found lineage allowing them not so much to dissolve the class barrier as to maintain it.⁶⁹ This fairy-tale ending also allows the reconciliation of the two warring elements of Petty-Zou's character as exemplified by her double-barreled name: the bohemian artist Sidonia and the upright New Englander Tyrrena.

In fact, the most experimental aspect of *Beggar* might be the representation of the protagonist's internal conflict through her split personality: throughout the novel, with the aid of an heirloom mirror, Sidonia and Tyrrena conduct extended debates. These debates begin the novel, with the little orphaned girl talking to her image in that very mirror, which her uncle agrees to take with them when they leave New England for Paris and

points beyond (1–11). As Heilmann points out, a mirror is a not uncommon image in New Woman fiction and may serve a number of purposes, from “the heroine’s retreat from the world” to “the clash of conflicting desires” to “her collision with sex-role expectations.”⁷⁰ In *Beggar*, it would appear that the integration of the two personalities means the transformation of Petty-Zou into Lady Wharton, a woman of property and responsibility, so that “the funny little beggar” (11), as her uncle first called her, can finally grow up and become whole. Lest any doubts remain that the unorthodox heroine *as she was* would disrupt the proper line of inheritance, we are assured that by the time of their marriage the “middle-aged lord” (310) and the “little old maid” (311) are too old to have children; the Uxminster line will be continued by Philip’s brother’s descendants (346). Such a resolution neither reforms nor violates the established order, and the novel’s mild formal experimentation is overshadowed by its traditional ending.

Yet, as is often the case in Rickert’s fiction, the novel’s conclusion disturbs its own capitulation to domestic harmony. The final chapter of Rickert’s romance is called “All the Beggars in the Glass,” and it turns out that more than our heroine’s immediate future is at stake. Petty-Zou tries to explain to Philip what her life has been like:

It’s been such a strange life—mine, all the way. I count it back to the discovery of my other self in the Magic Mirror—my mother’s little glass; and all along there is the double nature, Tyrrhena and Sidonia, the Puritan and the Pirate, the good girl and the naughty one I don’t think I want to go on It has been all struggle and adventure and fairy-tales hitherto. I can’t imagine what respectability will be like. (346–47)

In other words, Petty-Zou is still torn: she’s pulled back toward her multiple identities, including the now-forgotten Renée, and does not necessarily want to move forward and give up “all struggle and advance and fairy-tales,” as she believes she must. Philip, however, in a move that by this time should be familiar from Rickert’s other endings, wants to lay out the future, which he “can see in the glass” (348), thus “writing beyond” once again:

outside, the big old orange of the world that you haven’t sucked dry yet, nor won’t as long as you live; and inside, at your hearth, a husband from whom

you laboriously peel off layer after layer of class-feeling until you have modelled him into quite a decent sort of chap (348, ellipsis in original)

It seems that their marriage will erase not only the conflicted identities of Sidonia and Tyrrhena but also those of Petty-Zou and Philip himself! Who then are they? More to the point, who then is she? Is she also to be “peeled off layer after layer” and will she find the authentic self sought by New Woman writers or is her core “a mere reflection of social norms”?⁷¹ In this novel, as in so many of Rickert’s short stories, the question of the woman—however many names she is given—remains at the heart of the narrative to unsettle tidy romantic closure.

COMMUNITIES OF WOMEN

Here she comes, running, out of prison and off pedestal; chains off, crown off, halo off, just a live woman!—Charlotte Perkins Gilman, “Is Feminism Really So Dreadful?”⁷²

Edith Rickert may have seen herself in the writers and artists that figure in some of her stories, and as a young expatriate in many respects she conformed to the profile of a New Woman, but her career, both in the decade in which she reveled in being an Independent Woman in London and in the years that followed, tells a much more complicated story. Importantly, she differs from her heroines in that much of her career is enriched, even made possible, by small groups of women, both informal and deliberately structured, and often organized and led by Rickert herself. In “Miss Rickert of Vassar,” Elizabeth Scala suggests that Rickert “thought seriously about her role in the community of women scholars of her day, a stronger community of whom she might have appreciated.”⁷³ It seems clear that when such a community was not already available, she took up the challenge and invented her own.

On October 18, 1896, Rickert describes her new life in London to an American friend and teaching colleague: “I have a very happy home here. There are over 20 of us, all girls, all students, chiefly medical, in 3 adjoining houses in a quiet square out of the whirl of London.”⁷⁴ That first cohort was formed in response to the need for shared housing, but in a few months, she has co-founded an “Order of Ancient Spinsters.” Their motto was “Single we stand, united we fall,” and in her journals Rickert records mock initiations and games, similar to those she describes during

her Vassar years.⁷⁵ So important was this London community of women that boarding houses and the female medical students in them become biographemes in Rickert's fiction. Among other instances, "Unwilling Burglars: The Story of a Chance Acquaintance," (1904) brings the two together and amusingly suggests the downsides of communal living. The heroine is a poet "boarding" among "twenty-nine medical students" (19): "I don't mind sitting on the steps every morning to make one of a procession to the bath; I can eat cold finnan haddie for breakfast and drink chicory-coffee; and I can lunch off bread and jam when I happen to be late. And I can cut morning prayers and I can hug the cat when I've got to be silent in the common study—which is nearly always; but I cannot stand ... [that] some of the medicals are always fingering their horrid bones" (19–20).⁷⁶ The narrator's wry tone suggests that the author herself enjoyed every minute!

In the 1930s, when the bulk of her fiction writing was behind her⁷⁷ and she was focused on the Chaucer projects, Rickert created a female "Round Table," whose members went by names out of chivalric romances: Lady Guinevere, Enid, Elaine, Dionise, Yseult, and Ydoine. In fact, she addresses them as family—her "Chaucer family."⁷⁸ This group of researchers did the bulk of collating the photostats of manuscripts that she and Manly collected in their annual half-years abroad starting from 1924.⁷⁹ The Round Table collective of scholars recalls the decades-earlier "Order of Ancient Spinsters," the still-earlier Vassar cohort, and the three siblings of her natal home: light-hearted sisterhoods of young, impecunious girls and women. In each instance, playful and affectionate rituals both create and validate a community of women, deliberately formed and freely chosen. Instead of, as in Rickert's fiction, single artists struggling to make their lone ways in the world, or wives contending with domestic stresses in isolation, these women thrive as companions pledged to support each other.⁸⁰

In these and other ways, Rickert's life as an Independent Woman depends on connections long and deep. Others may speculate about her relationships with John Matthews Manly or Kate Platt or John Burroughs or the many others with whom she exchanges letters full of affectionate terms that are foreign to our own age's conception of the bounds of friendship.⁸¹ For us, the most resonant relationships are those found in Rickert's various families of women, cohorts that enabled Independent Women to survive in a world determined by Adam delving and Eve spinning. In so much of Rickert's fiction, heroines define themselves in relation to a man: fleeing from, fighting with, or succumbing to. Even in those texts where there is a

hint of compromise or equality, the future is still, most often, determined by that man. Christensen Nelson notes that “[t]he only solution, albeit a partial one, that any of the [British New Woman] novels gives for the solitude of the lonely woman artist lies in the support of female friends or a community of women.”⁸² With few exceptions, such female communities are precisely what Rickert does *not* present in her fiction; in contrast, in her own life, Rickert creates a series of all-female families—sisters, college peers, housemates, and fellow researchers—in which women work and sometimes live together, forging accomplished and interesting lives. If, in the pre-war period we focus on in this chapter, Rickert’s own life and work are influenced by the constrictions surrounding women *as individuals*, she is never defined by those constrictions. Her relationships within female communities played a large part in making that independence possible.

Whether or not Rickert can be defined as a New Woman, we prefer to take her on her own terms, as someone who forges her own path—and knows she must pay a price for doing so. In 1907, when her renown as an author was spreading in both England and the United States, she was asked for her autograph and motto. In response, she quotes from the Anglo-Saxon poem, “The Battle of Maldon”:

Hige sceal þē heardra, heorte þē cēnre,
mōd sceal þē mære, þē ūre mægen lytlað.⁸³
[The mind shall be tougher, the heart keener,
The spirit shall be greater, as our might lessens.]

We know that despite a tough mind and a keen heart, Rickert’s might did lessen in the end when her heart condition prevented her from seeing *The Text of the Canterbury Tales* through to completion.⁸⁴ But we also know that from early on, Rickert was determined to accomplish great things, and it is true that few today could match her record for productivity and quality, even if she was never to fulfill her early ambition to become “the greatest writer of the centur[y].”⁸⁵

Born into the New Woman era and taking full advantage of the opportunities that were arising for smart, ambitious, talented women, it is doubtful that even she could have envisioned everything she would eventually accomplish in so many fields. In the end, Rickert both was and was not an exemplar of the Independent Woman—which is, after all, merely a type. As this chapter, and this collection, shows, we ourselves continue to write beyond the ending, to tell her story beyond the close of her life’s narrative.

NOTES

1. "Sexomania, By an Angry Old Buffer," *Punch* 108 (April 27, 1895), accessed January 19, 2014, <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/44708/44708-h/44708-h.htm>, 203 (emphases in original).
2. Scholarship on the New Woman is extensive, including Emma Heaney, *The New Woman: Literary Modernism, Queer Theory, and the Trans Feminine Allegory* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2017); Ann Heilmann, *New Woman Fiction: Women Writing First-Wave Feminism* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000); Ann Heilmann and Margaret Beetham, eds., *New Woman Hybridities: Femininity, Feminism, and International Consumer Culture, 1880–1930* (London: Routledge, 2004); Sally Ledger, *The New Woman: Fiction and Feminism at the Fin de Siècle* (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 1997); Patricia Marks, *Bicycles, Bangs, and Bloomers: The New Woman in the Popular Press* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1990); Martha H. Patterson, *Beyond the Gibson Girl: Reimagining the American New Woman, 1895–1915* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2005); Lyn Pykett, *"The Improper Feminine": The Women's Sensation Novel and the New Woman Writing* (London: Routledge Press, 1992); and Gillian Sutherland, *In Search of the New Woman: Middle-Class Women and Work in Britain, 1870–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015). Original New Woman texts can be found in Martha H. Patterson, ed., *The American New Woman Revisited: A Reader, 1894–1930* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2008) and Carolyn Christensen Nelson, ed., *A New Woman Reader: Fiction, Drama, and Articles of the 1890s* (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2000). Heilmann defines "the first generation" of New Woman writers as those "born around the mid-century whose main work falls between 1880 and 1910" (*New Woman Fiction*, 4). Rickert, born in 1871, comes at the tail end of this first generation and writes most of her fiction before 1915. See Note 13.
3. Angelique Richardson, "The birth of national hygiene and efficiency: Women and eugenics in Britain and America 1865–1915," in *New Woman Hybridities: Femininity, Feminism, and International Consumer Culture, 1880–1930* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 240–62. Richardson argues that the New Woman "was inherently conservative, [representing] a specifically white identity" and one that was middle class, enjoying privilege and stability—and the responsibility to reproduce and inculcate refinement and culture (243–44). However, for other scholars, the scope of the term

- is wider; see Jill Bergman, "'Natural' Divisions/National Diversions: Whiteness and the American New Woman in the General Federation of Women's Clubs," in *New Woman Hybridities*, 223–39; Li Guo, "Rethinking Theatrical Images of the New Woman in China's Republican Era," *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture* 15, no. 2 (2013): <http://doi.org/10.7771/1483-4374.2233>; Jiyoung Suh, "The 'New Woman' and the Typography of Modernity in Colonial Korea," *Korean Studies* 37 (2013): 11–43; and Muta Kazue, "The New Woman in Japan: radicalism and ambivalence towards love and sex," in *New Woman Hybridities*, 205–20.
4. Rickert will later add a fourth career when, along with John Matthews Manly, she joins the War Department as a cryptographer in 1918–19. For a brief account of that experience and its connection to her codicological work on *Canterbury Tales* manuscripts, see Sealy Gilles and Sylvia Tomasch, "Professionalizing Chaucer: John Matthews Manly, Edith Rickert, and the *Canterbury Tales* as Cultural Capital" in *Reading Medieval Culture: Essays in Honor of Robert W. Hanning*, eds. Robert M. Stein and Sandra Pierson Prior (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005), 364–83. See also Henry Veggian's and John Dooley's chapters in this collection.
 5. Edith Rickert, Personal History Statement, application for work in the War Department, 8930–254, United States National Archives (April 22, 1918), 3. Elizabeth Scala summarizes Rickert's biography in "John Matthews Manly (1865–1940) and Edith Rickert (1871–1938)," in *Medieval Scholarship: Biographical Studies on the Formation of a Discipline, Volume Two: Literature and Philology*, ed. Helen Damico (New York: Garland, 1998), 297–311.
 6. *The Johnstown Daily Republican* (N.Y.) (October 29, 1904), 4.
 7. *The Sun* (N.Y.) (October 12, 1904), 7.
 8. *Plattsburgh Republican* (N.Y.) (21 July 1906), 4. Presumably, Rickert made use of her "Pedlar's Certificate" during her extended bicycle trip with her friend Kate Platt, as described in diary entries, April 2–22, 1897; Papers, Box 2, Folder 2, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library. Unless otherwise noted, all citations to Rickert archival material refer to these Papers.
 9. William Congreve, *The Way of the World* (London, 1700), IV.1.233–4.
 10. Rachel Blau DuPlessis, *Writing Beyond the Ending: Narrative Strategies of Twentieth-Century Women Writers* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 7.
 11. As a medievalist, Rickert understands "writing beyond" very well, as in her 1905 poem: "To an Intruder (On the Margin of an Old Manuscript)," which includes this stanza: "Some patient, drowsy monk who wrote this gnarled text,/Set here as comment—thee,/With stubborn quirk of brain

- by learning over-vexed,/Thou madcap sprite of glee" (9–12). Edith Rickert, "To an Intruder," *The Book News Monthly* 24 (Nov. 1905): 129.
12. In a letter to Rickert's youngest sister and medieval art historian, Margaret Rickert, Clair Olsen included a bibliography of Rickert's writings, which, he stated, "was prepared for publication in *Chaucer's World* but which was never published because of the altered nature of the volume" (December 23, 1955): Papers, Box 10, Folder 10. This book was eventually published ten years after Rickert's death: *Chaucer's World*, comp. Edith Rickert, ed. Clair C. Olsen and Martin M. Crow (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948). This bibliography of published works (in addition to the many unpublished works in typescript and manuscript) includes more than 50 short stories (1890–1915), 6 novels (1902–30), 3 children's books (1923–29), 7 poems (1905–12), 9 articles in popular magazines (1910–13), 19 reviews and critical articles (1904–36), 34 scholarly articles (1903–34), 7 textbooks (1919–27), and 10 editions, translations, and compilations (1901–1948). The bibliography is testament not only to Rickert's remarkable productivity but also to the simultaneity of her activities as a medieval scholar *and* a fiction writer *and* a travel writer *and* a reviewer, and so on.
 13. See the biographical sketch of Rickert by Elizabeth Scala, "Rickert, Edith," in *Women Building Chicago 1790–1990: A Biographical Dictionary*, ed. Rima Lunin Schultz and Adele Hast (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 747–49.
 14. See Elizabeth Scala, "Scandalous Assumptions: Edith Rickert and the Chicago Chaucer Project," *Medieval Feminist Forum: A Journal of Gender and Sexuality* 30, no.1 (2000): 27–37; and Sylvia Tomasch, "Editing as Palinode: *The Invention of Love* and *The Text of the Canterbury Tales*," *Exemplaria* 16 (2004): 457–76.
 15. Rickert had a talent for making and keeping friends. In her journal on October 5, 1896, Rickert records first meeting Furnivall and W.P. Ker: Papers, Box 1 Folder 6. Furnivall invites her to meetings of the Philological Society, where, on November 6, 1896, he introduces her to eminent medievalists Henry Bradley, Israel Gollancz, A.S. Napier, and W.W. Skeat. Numerous letters and postcards from Furnivall can be found in her Papers; their friendship continues until his death in 1910, and Rickert is one of the contributors to a memorial volume edited by John Munro, *Frederick James Furnivall: A Volume of Personal Record* (London: Oxford University Press, 1911). Rickert's acquaintance with Burroughs began in 1889 and is mentioned in a letter to her parents when she was still a student at Vassar (October 13): Papers, Box 1 Folder 3. In 1900, the *Chicago Record* accepts her article about him; letter of February 12: Papers, Box 1 Folder 6. Their friendship continues to his death in 1921; often she writes of visiting his

- home, Slabsides (which also seems to be one of her nicknames for him); letter dated May 15 (no year): Papers, Box 1 Folder 10. Postcards and letters from Burroughs to Rickert are in Papers, Box 1 Folder 8; 11 photographs of him are in Papers, Box 10 Folder 16. After Burroughs's death, Clara Barrus, executor of Burroughs's estate, writes that she is returning Burroughs's letters to her and will return ones written by Rickert to him; she assures Rickert that in the transcriptions she was making she has "not copied anything you could object to" (April 26, 1923): Papers, Box 1 Folder 8. Rickert's letters to Burroughs are not actually among her Papers, but 12 letters from her are in his Papers at Vassar. John Burroughs Papers, Box 41 Folder 5, Vassar College, Special Collections Library. Rickert's friendship with Mistral dates from her sojourn in Provence, which she uses as background for her novel *The Golden Hawk* (New York: Baker & Taylor, 1907); in fact, she dedicates this novel to him, saying the story is based on a tale he told her. A 1906 postcard to her from Mistral is in Papers, Box 1 Folder 6.
16. Letters from Bates from 1905 through 1911 are in Papers, Box 1 Folder 9. Abbie Farwell Brown's correspondence with Rickert runs from 1910 to 1922: Papers, Box 1 Folders 7, 8, and 10. See also Molly G. Yarn's chapter in this volume for further discussion.
 17. Edith Rickert, "The Capitulation of Her Parents," *The Windsor Magazine* 6 (1897): 471.
 18. Adele Heller and Lois Rudnick, "Introduction," 1915: *The Cultural Moment: The New Politics, the New Woman, the New Psychology, the New Art, and the New Theatre in America*, eds. Adele Heller and Lois Rudnick (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1991), 1. In an unpublished story (no date), "Which Floor?" one of Rickert's characters comments on the confusing proliferation of "the New Age, The New Thinking, the New Republic, the New Statesman," and so on (5): Papers, Box 7, Folder 4.
 19. Heller and Rudnick, "Introduction," 4–5.
 20. Although the New Woman figure was popularized through the debate between Sarah Grand and Ouida in 1894, Michele Tusan points out that the capitalized term "New Woman" was first used in an 1893 article, "The Social Standing of the New Woman," in *The Woman's Herald* (Aug. 17, 1895): 410. According to Tusan, as a "fictional icon" and "symbol of new female political identity that promised to improve and reform English society," the New Woman was a "respectable" counter-image to that popularized in *Punch* and other publications of the contemporary woman as "mannish and overly sexualized" (169). Michele Tusan, "Inventing the New Woman: Print Culture and Identity Politics During the Fin-de-

- Siècle,” *Victorian Periodicals Review* 31, no.2 (1998): 169–82. See also Christensen Nelson, *New Woman Reader*, ix.
21. Christensen Nelson, *New Woman Reader*, ix. For an account of the New Woman movement in the United States, see Jean V. Matthews, *The Rise of the New Woman: The Woman's Movement in America, 1875–1930* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2003).
 22. Ann Ardis, *New Women, New Novels: Feminism and Early Modernism* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1990), 15. Ardis discusses some of the complexities of the term in detail, particularly in her first chapter (10–38). In addition, Heller and Rudnick note that “[w]orking class women, who often did not have the choice of staying at home, became actively involved in labor union organizing, while African American women took leading roles in working for civil rights and educational reform for their people. [In fact, ...] women took leadership positions in all the new movements” (1).
 23. Papers, Box 2 Folder 1. In spite of her sense of hopelessness, Rickert returns to district work in 1901. On February 20, 1901, she writes that she has seen “28 out of my 50 families, of whom perhaps 20 seemed indiff. [sic] or displeased—as I should be in their place.” Papers, Box 2 Folder 7. Again, on March 21, 1901, she canvassed in “wretched slums off Earl’s Court Road”: Papers, Box 2 Folder 7.
 24. Papers, Box 7 Folder 2.
 25. See Margaret Beetham, *A Magazine of Her Own? Domesticity and desire in the woman’s magazine 1800–1914* (London: Routledge, 1996) for discussion of the periodical culture and its role in shaping gender identity.
 26. Lyn Pykett explains that New Woman concerns regarding marriage were actually a concatenation of related issues: “the nature and limitations of women’s role within the family; the limited opportunities available to middle-class women outside of the family; the economic and emotional dynamics of marriage and its unequal power relations under the current state of the laws governing marriage, inheritance, and women’s property rights; the desirability (or otherwise) of divorce, and the circumstances under which it might be obtained; the rights of the divorced woman (particularly in relation to the custody of her children); the operations of the sexual double standard (in which chastity before marriage and sexual fidelity after it were expected of women but not of men)” (136); “Sensation and New Woman Fiction” in *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian Women’s Writing*, ed. Linda H. Peterson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 136–42.
 27. Heller and Rudnick, “Introduction,” 1.
 28. Victoria Cross’s *Six Chapters of a Man’s Life* (New York: W. Scott, 1903) encompasses all of these issues.

29. Christensen Nelson, *New Woman Reader*, x–xi.
30. Netta Syrett, “Thy Heart’s Desire” (1894), in *A New Woman Reader*, 66.
31. Kate Chopin, *The Awakening* (Chicago: Herbert S. Stone, 1899). Ann Heilmann notes that the sea as metaphor for sexual satisfaction runs through New Woman fiction, citing, in addition to Chopin’s *Awakening*, Grand’s novels *The Beth Book* (1897) and *Ideala* (1899) (101); Ann Heilmann, “*The Awakening* and New Woman Fiction,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Kate Chopin*, ed. Janet Beer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 87–104.
32. Edith Rickert, *Folly* (New York: Baker & Taylor, 1906).
33. Heilmann, “*Awakening*,” 97.
34. Rev. of *Folly*, *The Book News Monthly* 24 (Apr. 1906): 568.
35. J.F., “Miss Rickert on Literary Morals,” *The New York Times* (Aug. 25, 1906): 526. Additionally, after a critical review of another of her novels, *The Golden Hawk*, Rickert defends herself against the charge not of immorality but of unfamiliarity: “Many of the scenes of ‘The Golden Hawk’ and of ‘The Reaper’ are memory pictures of my own, almost literal transcripts from life”; further, “[a]s for ‘Folly,’ it was based on six (not ‘a couple of’) years’ experience of living intimately with English people. The elder Mrs. Christie was my dear friend.” “Miss Edith Rickert in Her Own Defense,” *The New York Times Saturday Review of Books* (July 13, 1907): 445.
36. J.F., “Miss Rickert,” 526.
37. Rickert uses a near-synonym, “womens’ movement woman,” in an unpublished short story “A Question of Adjustment” (1897), whose protagonist is a physician. This story is discussed further below: Papers, Box 7 Folder 6. In another unpublished story, “Cynthia Brought to Earth” (no date), the protagonist is a “suffragette,” but the word remains a short-hand descriptor only; in neither story are the character’s political beliefs or activities part of the narrative. She is also a physician, who learns her lesson when she is forcibly abducted by a male doctor: Papers, Box 6 Folder 6. On the abduction plot, see discussion of “The Golden Isle” below.
38. Heilmann, *New Woman Fiction*, 179.
39. Christensen Nelson reviews the “Marriage Question” in *British Women Fiction Writers of the 1890s* (New York: Twayne, 1996), 41–58.
40. Like all authors, Rickert’s fiction career also depended upon what the public wanted. We should be careful, therefore, not to read Rickert’s own thoughts into the situations she presents in her fiction; for instance, in an April 28, 1897 journal entry, Rickert rejoices at the imminent publication of “Capitulation” but also characterizes it as “trash”: Papers, Box 2 Folder 1.
41. Ledger, *New Woman*, 27.
42. Pykett, ‘*Improper*’ *Feminine*, 177.

43. Money worries followed her from Vassar to London. In the beginning of 1897 she is "rather blue, being in debt for my board + having to wait another month for the payment of the money which I need" (January 27, 1897): Papers, Box 2 Folder 1. Four years later, on February 14 and 17, 1901, she writes about having to pawn her watch: Papers, Box 2 Folder 8.
44. Journal entry, January 15, 1899: Papers, Box 2 Folder 5.
45. Letters from Rickert's parents reveal that they were often moving, were unable to send her money, and needed to take in boarders: December 16, 1887 (Papers, Box 1 Folder 1); March 9 and October 25, 1888 (Papers, Box 1 Folder 2); November 9, 1889 (Papers, Box 1 Folder 3); and November 9, 1890 (Papers, Box 1 Folder 4). In fact, Rickert gives her parents the bulk of the prize money she won for an essay on Shakespeare (\$50 of \$60), so that they could make the trip east for her graduation (letter of May 29, 1891): Papers, Box 1 Folder 5.
46. Edith Rickert, "Strayed—A Princess," *The Era Magazine* 15 (Feb. 1905): 133–38.
47. In addition to the fiction discussed in this chapter, babies figure in a number of Rickert's stories, including unpublished manuscripts or typescripts: "Escape" (no date): Papers, Box 6 Folder 8; "God" (no date): Papers, Box 6 Folder 9; "The Guardian of the Flame" [no date]: Papers, Box 6 Folder 9; "Her Wedding Day" (no date): Papers, Box 6 Folder 9; "Home" (no date): Papers, Box 6 Folder 10; "The Home-Coming" (no date): Papers, Box 6 Folder 10; "Little Sister to Old Ladies" (no date): Papers, Box 7 Folder 1; "Obelisk: One Afternoon of a Professor's Wife" (no date): Papers, Box 5 Folder 9; "Palimpsest" (no date): Papers, Box 5 Folder 9; and "Tow'ead: The True Story of a Baby" (no date): Papers, Box 7 Folder 8. Published stories include "The Fertile Hand," *The Atlantic Monthly* 94 (Nov. 1904): 692–96; and "Grandfeythers Both," *Everybody's Magazine* (Jun. 1906): 833–40.
48. Edith Rickert, "The Wonderful Day," *The Metropolitan Magazine* 30 (Sep. 1909): 653–74.
49. On pheneticin, see: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK304337/>.
50. Pykett, *Improper Feminine*, 140.
51. William Edgar Darnall, "The Pubescent Schoolgirl," *American Gynecological and Obstetrical Journal* 18 (Jun. 1901): 490–2; qtd. in Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 258.
52. Edith Rickert, "The Knocking at the Door," *The Outlook* 81 (Sep. 1905): 29–36.
53. See Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820–1860," *American Quarterly* 18, no. 2 (1966): 151–74.

54. Jennifer Scanlon, *Inarticulate Longings: The Ladies' Home Journal, Gender, and the Promises of Consumer Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 9.
55. Lyn Pykett, "Portraits of the artist as a young woman: representations of the female artist in the New Woman fiction of the 1890s," in *Victorian Women Writers and the Woman Question*, ed. Nicola Diane Thompson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 135–50.
56. Matthew Bowie, "Freud and the Art of Biography," in *Mapping Lives: The Uses of Biography*, ed. Peter France and William St Clair (British Academy Scholarship Online, 2012: <https://doi.org/10.5871/bacad/9780197263181.003.0011>).
57. Dr. Kate Anne Platt was the first principal of the Lady Hardinge Medical College for Women, Delhi, India. She wrote a popular medical handbook, *The Home and Health in India and the Tropical Colonies* (Baillière, Tindal and Cox, 1923). We are indebted to Dorothy Saul Pooley for information about her great-aunt, Dr. Platt.
58. This is not the only story in which the main male figure is a medievalist. See "A Castle in Spain," *Red Book Magazine* 15 (1910): 157–64, and the unpublished story "Luck" (no date), where the unnamed narrator is "taking my doctor's degree this June. Mediæval history. Got a place to teach in the fall" (2): Papers, Box 6 Folder 6. In addition, Rickert regularly sets stories in the Middle Ages, including "The Christmas Thorn," *New England Magazine* (December 1909): 404–06; "The House of the Star" (unpub., no date): Papers, Box 6 Folder 5; "The Lords of the World," *Everybody's Magazine* 16 (Jan. 1907): 54–59; "The Way of the Wild," *New York Tribune Sunday Magazine* (27 Oct. 1907): 5–6; and "When The Time Came," *New England Magazine* (March 1911): 65–69. In addition, one of her stories, "Bats," *Adventure* 11 (1911): 151–58, is, appropriately for the later Chaucerian, a retelling of the "Pardoner's Tale." Set in early twentieth-century Tacarigua, three men go after Spanish treasure, two kill each other (157), and one returns amnesiac (158), so no one gets the gold. Another story (unpub., no date) echoes *The Romance of the Rose*/"Sleeping Beauty": "The House of Afternoon": Papers, Box 6 Folder 5.
59. Pykett, *Improper Feminine*, 157.
60. Edith Rickert, "The Orderly House," *The Outlook* 92 (May-Aug. 1909): 653–58.
61. Another biographeme, perhaps: Ethel Rickert was also a jewelry-maker, as noted in her 1919 obituary: "She was an unusually gifted artist, a designer in gold and silver. She and her friend, Miss Worthington, had their work shop at 'Tibbles Greene' [sic]" (*Perry Record* [N.Y.], 23 Jan 1919: 2). Tibbles Green was Edith Rickert's much-loved country home in Kent, which she shared with Ethel, Kate Platt, and others. By 1908, Rickert's

- fiction writing has gained her such a solid reputation that she is profiled in an illustrated article, "Edith Rickert and Her English Home," accompanied by a photograph of the three dark-haired young women residents, with their upswept hairdos and the long white dresses of the period, near a pony; Norma Bright Carson, "Edith Rickert and Her English Home," *The Book News Monthly* (Nov. 1908): 153–57. Rickert herself writes a two-page description of the history and situation of Tibbles Green, from which Carson's article draws: Papers, Box 7 Folder 6.
62. Heilmann, *New Woman Fiction*, 162.
 63. Edith Rickert, "The Golden Isle," *Everybody's Magazine* 16 (1907): 661–71; and "The Golden Isle," *The Strand Magazine* 34 (Jul.-Dec. 1907): 289–97. Page numbers refer to the former. As noted above, the plot of "Cynthia Brought to Earth" also turns on an abduction. The motif of "nobleman in disguise" seen in "Golden Isle" also occurs in Rickert's "The Princess Steps Down" (*Red Book* 14 [Nov. 1909]: 50–64), in which Princess Anne refuses to marry a prince, runs away to the gypsies, falls for a tinker who turns out to be the prince himself, and discovers that it was her father, the King, who, "was at the bottom of the little game" (64) to teach her a lesson. In this story, however, there is no hint of brutality.
 64. Edith Rickert, "The Three Bears," *Pearson's Magazine* 23 (March 1910): 410–16.
 65. Edith Rickert, *Beggar in the Heart* (New York: Moffat, Yard, 1909).
 66. The name "Sidonia" is a possible reference to Wilhelm Meinhold's novel *Sidonia the Sorceress* (1848), translated and popularized in 1849 by Oscar Wilde's mother, then Jane Francesca Elgee, and printed by William Morris's Kelmscott Press in 1893. We have not determined a source for "Tyrrhena" beyond its resemblance to the Tyrrhenian Sea; "Coverdale" recalls Hawthorne's character Miles Coverdale in *Blithedale Romance* (1853) and thus emphasizes our heroine's New England heritage.
 67. *The New York Times* notes "She is no longer young" (Nov. 6, 1909) and *The Westminster Gazette* calls her "an elderly woman" (Oct. 16, 1909). It is true that the author never mentions precise ages, but to assert, as does the *Daily Chronicle* (London) (Oct. 26, 1909), that "two elderly people concluding to act like two young ones ... is humorous and sweet" would seem to be stretching a point, even for the times: all Papers, Box 10 Folder 2. A number of unpublished stories include an "elderly" female main character: "Her Wedding Day" (Papers, Box 6 Folder 3); "The Home-Coming" (Box 6 Folder 5); "Little Sister to Old Ladies" (Papers, Box 6 Folder 7); "The Night Bird" (Box 6 Folder 7); and "Return Through the Snow" (Papers, Box 7 Folder 1). Three published stories include: "The Hoofs of the World," *The Churchman* (Aug. 15, 1914): 221–23; "She is Mary-Gold," *The Reader* (July 1907): 204–08; and "Southern Pride," *The*

- Smart Set* (June 1905): 101–07. One unpublished story “The Girls” (no date) is notable for the name of its “spinster”: Matty: Papers, Box 6 Folder 3. In presenting so many spinster protagonists, Rickert’s fiction speaks to a contemporary phenomenon related to the New Woman movement; see Ruth Freeman and Patricia Klaus, “Blessed or Not? The New Spinster in England and the United States,” *Journal of Family History* 9, no. 4 (1984): 394–414; and Naomi Braun Rosenthal, *Spinster Tales and Womanly Possibilities* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2012).
68. Ouida, “The New Woman,” *The North American Review* 158, no. 450 (May 1894): 610–19; this quote on 610. Also see Ardis’s chapter on “Naming the New Woman,” 10–28.
 69. The maintenance of class difference occurs in Rickert’s “The Capitulation of Her Parents” as well. Although Fulton thinks of Hunt as “my Museum lady,” when he discovers she works in a shop and “lives in a shabby lodging-house” (476) he refrains from declaring his love until he further learns that she comes from a well-to-do family. An even more problematic resolution occurs in Rickert’s first novel, *Out of the Cypress Swamp* (London: Methuen & Co., 1902), in which the ostensible lines to be crossed are not of class but of race. As the anonymous reviewer in *The Spectator* 88 (27 Feb. 1902) writes of this “historical romance” set in Louisiana during the early years of the nineteenth century: “the long arm of heredity shatters [the hero’s] dream of happiness with appalling suddenness, his first-born bearing unmistakable traces of negro [sic] parentage and as the secret of his origin is discovered [he is “the son of a Southern planter and an octoroon”], his marriage is annulled. The sequel traces the slow resurrection of his wife’s love ... culminating in the discovery that she herself was the granddaughter of an octoroon, which thus renders their marriage legitimate” (206); <http://archive.spectator.co.uk/article/22nd-february-1902/25/novels>. This novel deserves further study in the context of Jim Crow-era fiction, but space constraints prevent us from doing so here. *The Tatler* compares this novel’s action favorably to the “bloodhound chase” scene in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*; qtd. in Methuen catalogue announcement of October 1902 (37); <https://books.google.com/books?id=ThUhAQAAAMAAJ&pg=PA351&clpg=PA351&dq=rickett+%22out+of+the+cypress+swamp>. “The delicate question of colour” (*Spectator* 206) is not an issue to which Rickert returns in her adult fiction in any overt manner, though she frequently employs national and class types and was not exempt from the exoticizing typical of her race and class (see Note 76). William Snell calls attention to this novel in “A Woman Medievalist Much Maligned: A Note in Defense of Edith Rickert (1871–1938),” *PhiN-Beihft* Supplement 4 (2009): 41–54.
 70. Heilmann, *New Woman Fiction*, 171.
 71. *Ibid.*, 174.

72. Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "Is Feminism Really So Dreadful?" *The Delineator* (Aug. 1914); 6: qtd. in Ellen Wiley Todd, *The "New Woman" Revised: Painting and Gender Politics on Fourteenth Street* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 1.
73. Elizabeth Scala, "'Miss Rickert of Vassar' and Edith Rickert at the University of Chicago (1871–1938)," in *Women Medievalists and the Academy*, ed. Jane Chance (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005), 126–45; this quotation, 135.
74. Papers, Box 1 Folder 6.
75. The Order's motto and Rickert's election as president appear in a journal entry for December 10, 1896; Papers, Box 2 Folder 1. The activities of the society are found in journal entries for January 11 and 20 and May 7, 1897: Papers, Box 2 Folder 1; and letters sent home reveal her excitement at such creative opportunities, even as they remind us of the racist temper of the times. At Vassar, Rickert wrote and produced a pageant in which she and her cohort played "Numidian slave girl[s]," faces stained "beautiful deep brown" with "chocolate" and wearing "gaudy color Eastern dress" (Letter to parents, Feb. 10, 1889: Papers, Box 1, Folder 3). One wonders what another Vassar student, Anita Hemmings, would have made of such activities. Hemmings was outed as "colored" by her roommate but despite the "scandal" was allowed to graduate (class of 1897); Mancini, "Passing as White: Anita Hemmings 1897," *Vassar, the Alumnae/i Quarterly* 98.1 (2001); <https://www.vassar.edu/vq/issues/2002/01/features/passing-as-white.html>.
76. "Unwilling Burglars: The Story of a Chance Acquaintance," *Short Stories* (April 1904): 16–31. Other stories featuring boarding houses and medical students include "Home" (unpub., no date) (Box 6 Folder 5); "The Queen of Hearts" (unpub., no date) (Papers, Box 7 Folder 1); and "Southern Pride," *Smart Set* (June 1905): 101–07.
77. The choice to leave off writing fiction was not Rickert's own; both she and, after her death, her sister Margaret made efforts to re-publish her stories but met with rejection. Rickert's final novel, *Severn Woods* (New York: Harcourt, Brace); titled *Olwen Growing* in England (London: Chapman & Hall), was published in 1930. In a letter dated April 14, 1934 to Helen Waddell, Rickert wonders about a possible future for herself as a fiction writer: Papers, Box 1 Folder 9. In 1956, editors at *The Ladies Home Journal* and the *Atlantic Monthly* decline Margaret Rickert's suggestion to publish a collection of her sister's short stories: Papers, Box 10 Folder 10.
78. In April 1930, Rickert sends a letter from England beginning, "Dear Chaucer Family": Papers, Box 1 Folder 9. The names are from the salutation in a letter dated May 22, 1932 (Papers, Box 1 Folder 9); "Dear Round Table" occurs in a letter from Ireland dated "12 ad Lughnasa 1930":

- Papers, Box 1 Folder 9. The letters are full of news and anecdotes, mostly about the hunt for manuscripts and life records. Ramona Bressie was one of the Chicago researchers; her very different, and much sadder, relations to the Chaucer projects, to academic success, and to colleagues and communities of women is told by Thomas Bestul, "Ramona Bressie, the Study of Manuscripts, and the Chaucer Life-Records," *Medieval Feminist Forum* 45, no. 1 (2009): 68–92, and in von Nolcken's chapter in this volume.
79. Fred Millett, "Edith Rickert—A Memoir" (Whitman, MA: The Washington Street Press, 1944), 3: Papers, Box 10, Folder 9.
 80. Rickert was careful to distinguish productive and collaborative groups from those she saw as elitist or as trivializing young women. See her critique of "fraternities for women" in the *Century* (Nov.–Dec. 1912, Jan. 1913: vol. 85: 97–106). The series of four articles elicited passionate responses from sorority publications such as *The Key* (vol. 29, issue 4).
 81. See Sharon Marcus, *Between Women: Friendship, Desire, and Marriage in Victorian England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).
 82. Christensen Nelson, *British Women Fiction Writers*, 33.
 83. "Battle of Maldon" (c. 1000), ll. 312–13; Rickert's handwritten motto, without citation to any edition, is in the collection of one of the authors.
 84. See Manly's account of the last three years of Rickert's life and her determination to see the *Canterbury Tales* project to a close. John Matthews Manly, "Preface," *The Text of the Canterbury Tales*, vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1940), vii–viii.
 85. See letter dated January 30, 1890 in which a young Rickert tells her parents "I am determined that whatever I do is to be well done": Papers, Box 1 Folder 4. A journal entry from July 20, 1907, written during a solitary walking tour in the Hebrides, notes that "there rose involuntarily—almost unconsciously [the thought] that I might be the greatest writer of the centur (!) [sic]": Papers, Box 3, folder 5.

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Edith Rickert's Network of Women Editors

Molly G. Yarn

Edith Rickert and John Matthews Manly had a remarkable partnership. Without a doubt, each was integral to the other's professional life. To reduce Rickert's career to her partnership with Manly, however, is to elide not only the richness of her own work, but also that of the many notable women she engaged with throughout her life. From her undergraduate days at Vassar, through her years in the London literary scene, and up to her final decades at the University of Chicago, Rickert participated in a growing, transatlantic community of female scholars. This chapter moves chronologically through the major phases of Rickert's adult life, highlighting some of the scholarly women with whom she interacted along the way, in order to better understand her place as a member of a vibrant academic network. The first section considers her time as a student and early career scholar; the second focuses on her later career, when she herself became a mentor to, and employer of, younger female scholars.¹

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RICKERT AS STUDENT

Rickert's time in academia took place primarily at two outstanding, but very different, institutions. As an undergraduate, she attended Vassar College as a member of the class of 1891. After graduating from Vassar in 1891, Rickert spent several years teaching high school in the Chicago area before officially enrolling at the University of Chicago as a doctoral candidate. By 1890, single-sex women's colleges made up only 20 percent of the total number of degree-granting institutions in the United States, compared to coeducational colleges, which made up 43 percent of the total.² Although Chicago was founded in 1891 as a coeducational institution, and was initially committed to coeducation in theory, in practice, the rapid increase in the percentage of female students during the university's first decade (from 24 to 52 percent) provoked a serious backlash from the primarily male faculty, as well as male students. This culminated in a call, supported by the university's president, for female students to be relegated to a single-sex "junior college," a measure that was put into place in 1902, although it quickly lapsed due to the expense and difficulty of maintaining separate classes.³ With these discontented rumblings growing in the background, Chicago probably seemed very strange to Vassar-educated Rickert. Although women faculty members faced discrimination within the mixed-gender Vassar staff, very few women successfully secured positions at coeducational institutions like Chicago, meaning that the majority of Rickert's mentors at Chicago would be men.⁴ And clearly there was no possibility of women students being relegated to a subordinate role within the Vassar student body, whereas Chicago women faced mounting challenges to their right to be educated alongside their male counterparts.

In 1896, Rickert moved to England for a year in order to carry out research, primarily at the British Museum, for her dissertation, an edition of the medieval romance *Emaré*, written in Middle English around the late fourteenth century. During her time in England, she gained access to the active world of London literary societies. She also discovered the extensive and growing network of women scholars in London who carried out their own research and, often, assisted better-funded male scholars. While Rickert admired and enjoyed the company of the male scholars she interacted with, including Frederick Furnivall, W.P. Ker, and Alfred Pollard, her connections among scholarly women were immensely important to her life. One such connection who became a friend was Kate M. Warren. A.E. Fletcher, the editor of the Christian socialist *New Age* magazine, had

suggested to Rickert that she should introduce herself to Warren, a scholar “working for Stopford Brooke in [Middle English] who might give [Rickert] some good advice.”⁵ When they eventually met for tea, Warren gave Rickert the address of an editor to contact about her writing and promised to mention Rickert’s name to him when she had a chance.⁶ A friendship developed from there. While Rickert identified Warren in her diary simply as an associate of Stopford Brook, Warren was a lecturer at both Westfield and Bedford Colleges, two of the constituent women’s colleges of the University of London.⁷ In 1901, Westfield College awarded her with a Doctor of Sciences degree, one of the “higher doctorates.” At the time they met, Warren was editing *The Faerie Queene* in five volumes for Constable. When Rickert left London at the end of the year, Warren presented her with the newly released first volume of “her charming edition.”⁸

Rickert’s connections were not limited to up-and-coming women scholars. On January 16, 1897, she noted in her diary that someone at the Museum had told her that Lucy Toulmin Smith was in town. “Hope I shall meet her,” she writes wistfully. Lucy Toulmin Smith made a name for herself editing late medieval and early modern texts, including the first edition of the York Mystery Plays (1885). In 1893, she became the first librarian of Manchester College, Oxford. To Rickert’s delight, Toulmin Smith approached her at the British Museum—apparently Miss Porter, a mutual friend, had mentioned her to Toulmin Smith. “She was a sweet faced elderly woman,” Rickert wrote, “fair, very pleasant, gave me her Oxford address & told me to come see her.”⁹ A few months later, Rickert took her up on this offer and visited her at Oxford, having tea with her several times. “She is a dear woman & was most kind to me: I quite loved her at once.”¹⁰

During that same trip, Rickert toured Oxford with a group of women that included a Miss Weston. This may have been Jessie Weston, the prolific translator of Arthurian tales from Old French, Middle English, Middle High German, and Dutch. Weston’s career was just beginning—her first major translation was published in 1894. Weston would become best known for her critical work *From Ritual to Romance* (1920), which T.S. Eliot referenced in his notes to *The Waste Land*.¹¹ An acquaintance between Weston and Rickert would be perfectly logical: from 1896 till 1910, both were working on many of the same materials. In fact, Rickert and Weston both published translations of Marie de France’s lays in Alfred Nutt’s series of Arthurian Romances. The books appeared in 1900

(Weston) and 1901 (Rickert) and were even illustrated by the same artist, Caroline Watts.

In addition to the new connections she made in London, Rickert maintained her contacts in Chicago, becoming a proxy researcher for scholars unable to travel to London. Many women supplemented their income researching, translating, and transcribing in major collections such as the British Museum for scholars unable to visit those resources in person. Colloquially, they were known as “devillers,” a term originating in the early modern printshop as a title for a young assistant.¹² As a deviller, Rickert was a member of an underacknowledged but distinguished group—other nineteenth-century devillers included Eleanor Marx Aveling, Amy Levy, and George Eliot.¹³ Thirty years after her own stint as a deviller, Rickert and Manly would employ a large number of women in this very role.¹⁴

At the Museum, Rickert carried out research in 1897 for Martha Foote Crow, a professor at the University of Chicago. According to Rickert’s diaries, she “looked up old plays” for Crow and gathered information about the Kesselstadt mask.¹⁵ At some point around 1897–1899, Crow was commissioned by D.C. Heath to edit *King Lear*; the research Rickert did in London may have related to this project.¹⁶ Soon after Rickert completed her work for Crow, she noted in her diary that “Miss Hammond” had asked her to make copies of some manuscripts in the British Museum. “Miss Hammond” was almost certainly Eleanor Prescott Hammond, a medievalist in the final stages of her doctorate at Chicago. Hammond’s groundbreaking work on Chaucer manuscripts would become vital to Manly and Rickert’s work, and Hammond herself consulted occasionally for the Chicago Chaucer project. Although Rickert does not identify the manuscripts she transcribed for Hammond, Hammond’s dissertation was on “Lydgate’s Danse Macabre.”¹⁷ Facing constant financial pressure, Rickert wrote in her diary, “hope [Hammond’s commission] may come to something in the way of income; I mean I hope it may grow through others wanting the same.”¹⁸ Although she dreamed of earning enough to remain in her beloved London, it was not to be. Rickert ultimately accepted a teaching job at Vassar to support herself while she completed her dissertation.

When she returned to her alma mater, Rickert encountered a significant obstacle in the form of her department head—Laura J. Wylie. Wylie attended Vassar as an undergraduate, arriving in 1873. She had spent her life thus far caring for her younger siblings at the expense of her education.

Wylie overcame those disadvantages to become the valedictorian of her graduating class and, in 1894, one of the first seven women to be awarded PhDs from Yale.¹⁹ She returned to Vassar in 1895 and by Rickert's arrival in 1898 had become chair of the English department.

Rickert and Wylie came from somewhat similar backgrounds—both were born to less affluent parents than many of their Vassar classmates, and both shouldered responsibilities for their younger siblings. Rickert taught at Vassar in part to help pay for her younger sister Ethel's tuition there.²⁰ Despite these superficial similarities, the two women did not develop a congenial relationship. Although Rickert's initial impression of Wylie was positive, by January, her diary entries reflected a growing despair over Wylie's criticisms. On January 9, 1899, she wrote that

an interview with Miss W. just used me up. I don't know what to think of her or myself any more. She appears to think me on the whole second-rate, but yet in her summing up, she is so inconsistent that I cannot feel that her judgment is right. It's all a perfect jumble. If I am losing my grasp of things, it's time to take hold of the matter & stop it. Is it true? Sally says not, but then she is prejudiced by our friendship. Perfectly helpless, hopeless, yet I've got to prove to her that she's wrong—got to—or I shall regret it all my life. It's hard because she admits that she is prejudiced agst [*sic*] me, but it's got to be done—somehow.²¹

For the next few weeks, Rickert struggled to accomplish her own work in the face of such crushing disapproval. She met with Wylie again on January 24, after which she recorded a brief account of their discussion:

Another talk with my respected chief. Not much satisfaction. She grants that I may have a little brain—a little power to attack “intellectual problems” but makes an entirely new charge—lack of “literary sense.” Drop the subject. I am curious to know how it will come out; but I shall & cannot stay here more than one year longer. For Ethel's sake I'll do that, if possible. More dead than alive tonight.²²

Rickert's confidence suffered under Wylie's eye, but she toiled on with her dissertation, completing it in 1899 and leaving Vassar for good in 1900. A visit to the University of Chicago in the summer of 1899, undertaken to consult with her advisors and finish her degree, seems to have been a blessed respite from an unhappy situation, and she bloomed once more thanks to the positive feedback of John Matthews Manly, in particular.

In the wake of her disappointing time at Vassar, Rickert moved to London, intending to support herself as a writer. When embarking on this endeavor, she reached out to another senior female scholar who would prove to be exponentially more supportive than Wylie had been—Wellesley professor and poet Katharine Lee Bates. By 1900, when Rickert initiated their correspondence, Bates had already achieved national fame as the writer of “America the Beautiful.” She was the head of the Wellesley English department and was acquainted with Laura Wylie.²³ Despite the connection with Wylie, Rickert could not have picked a better source of advice. Throughout her career, Bates, who had herself benefited from the mentorship and support of an older Wellesley English professor, went out of her way to support young female scholars.²⁴ When Rickert contacted her for advice regarding publications that might be interested in her writing, Bates replied encouragingly, noting that “we are all colleagues, are we not, in the patient years of teaching and the secret ‘urge’ [...] toward the free pen.”²⁵ Bates herself longed to abandon academia to indulge in “the delights of the ‘garret aloof,’” but her personal responsibilities had prevented her from following that path.²⁶ Years later, Bates wrote admiringly of Rickert’s courage in “burning [her] Vassar ships behind [her] and starting out to invade the realms of literature.”²⁷ Bates followed Rickert’s career through correspondence, even suggesting that there might be a place for Rickert at Wellesley if she wished to return to teaching.²⁸

In 1909, facing financial difficulty, Rickert returned to the United States, where she worked as an editor for publisher D.C. Heath and for the *Ladies’ Home Journal*. In her role at D.C. Heath, Rickert’s involvement with Shakespeare editing came full circle. In 1897, Rickert had devilled for Crow, the editor assigned to D.C. Heath’s Arden Shakespeare edition of *King Lear*. During Rickert’s time at D.C. Heath, the company began to re-release the Arden series in new “American” editions, each one re-edited by an American scholar. Rickert herself edited *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (1916); Katharine Lee Bates, already an experienced Shakespeare editor, prepared *The Tempest* (1916). Given that Bates and Rickert were the only women commissioned to revise for this series, Rickert may have had a hand in her friend’s hiring. This was Rickert’s first and only work on an early modern text; by this time, however, she had translated and edited numerous medieval texts, including *Marie de France: Seven of her Lais* (1901), *Emaré* (1906), and *Early English Romances in Verse* (1908) and edited a collection of American lyrics with Jessie Paton, a friend from London.

RICKERT AS TEACHER

In 1914, Rickert returned to Chicago to take up an adjunct teaching position at the University of Chicago. During the war, she and Manly worked as cryptographers for the War Department, as Katherine Ellison and John Dooley discuss elsewhere in this volume. Rickert's Chicago archives contain no diaries and very little correspondence from this period. In 1924, however, with the outset of the Chaucer project, Rickert's written record resumes. While the Chicago Chaucer project was undeniably remarkable for the breadth and scale of its ambition, another aspect of its legacy deserves recognition. Over the sixteen years between the project's inception (1924) and the publication of *The Text of the Canterbury Tales* (1940), the Chicago Chaucer project directly employed at least twenty-seven women, from researchers in England to typists in Chicago. At any one time, the number of female employees dramatically outpaced that of male employees; the Chicago text and the accompanying Chaucer Life-Records were assembled via the blood, sweat, and tears of its female researchers. In fact, of the five main contributors listed on the title page of the *Text*, only one was a man. These statistics would not have been possible without both Manly's and Rickert's active support and mentorship of female students and scholars.

The Chaucer project had two component parts—the study and collation of manuscripts for the text, mainly carried out in the Chicago lab, and the collection and analysis of archival records related to Chaucer's life, which was based in England. When Rickert and Manly began setting the Chaucer project in motion, they initially reached out to a number of established, male British scholars for support, including Vincent B. Redstone. By profession, Redstone was an English teacher, but by inclination, he was a medieval historian and archivist. In 1925, he agreed to undertake substantial research for the Chaucer project, focusing on his particular specialty regarding Chaucer's ancestry. At that time, Vincent Redstone was already seventy-two years old, however, and his strength was limited.²⁹ His daughter Lilian was therefore recruited to carry out much of the required archival legwork. This decision would have monumental consequences for the Chaucer project.

Lilian Redstone was a professional archivist. She had a degree from the University of London and, in 1919, was named a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (M.B.E.) by King George V for her work in the Historical Records Section of the Ministry of Munitions

during World War I.³⁰ Although the biographical and archival work was originally envisioned as a subsidiary element of the larger Chaucer manuscript project, Redstone and Rickert quickly determined that the information at hand was too substantial to be contained in the edition's footnotes; instead, the Chaucer Life-Records became its own project, intended to be published alongside the planned edition. Because Rickert only worked in England for six months out of the year, Rickert and Redstone developed a system that allowed research to continue with reasonable efficiency year-round. Redstone assumed responsibility over the England-based researchers, communicating with Manly and Rickert in Chicago via letters and telegrams. Because so much work took place via correspondence, the nuts and bolts of the Life-Records project are significantly better-documented than the work in the Chicago lab.

Redstone immediately suggested that her sister Mabel be hired to do transcriptions and other secretarial work. By 1927, she had retained two primary researchers, Catherine Jamison and Mabel H. Mills. Jamison, a graduate of Lady Margaret Hall at Oxford, had worked with Redstone on the Victoria County History (hereafter VCH). The VCH was conceived as a collaborative historical project that would result in brief written histories of every parish and county in England.³¹ Many of the researchers tackling this sprawling mandate were women. In fact, during its first two decades, the VCH employed over one hundred women.³² Employment for women historians, even those who had attended prestigious universities, was scarce, so the VCH was a singular opportunity that drew a number of talented female researchers into its ranks.³³

In addition to rising to the rank of editorial assistant of the VCH, Jamison catalogued a number of important libraries and archives throughout her life, including the manuscripts at Lambeth Palace Library.³⁴ She was brought on to the Chaucer project to work on the Plea Rolls. Mabel H. Mills, a graduate of Bedford College, was hired to analyze Exchequer and Customs House records. To supplement Mills and Jamison, who both worked on the Life-Records until *c.* 1934, Redstone hired other women for shorter periods, bringing the total of England-based female Life-Records employees up to at least ten. A "Miss Moger" sent in reports on several Chaucer manuscripts. Lydia Marshall assisted Rickert and Redstone in London intermittently for several years beginning in 1930. Marion K. Dale, who studied the legal position of women in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, joined the project in 1934 to examine the records of the Court of Common Pleas.³⁵

Some women were hired because of access to certain materials. Henrietta Garbett, the librarian at the William Salt Library, carried out research for the project among her library's holdings *c.* 1932–1933 and continued to consult until at least 1937.³⁶ Other women experts contributed briefly on specific topics in their own fields without compensation. Bertha Putnam, for example, consulted on issues related to Chaucer and the role of Justice of the Peace, and Elizabeth Hammond consulted on manuscript questions.³⁷ In an even less official capacity, women researchers on other projects passed on information about ongoing searches, resulting in a sort of informal whisper network. Edith S. Scroggs, for example, who was assisting a male historian, gave Redstone details to confirm that her employer was using documents that the Life-Records researchers had already examined.³⁸ When Mills and Redstone learned that Marjorie B. Honeybourne was studying the London wool wharf, they conspired with her to share information without allowing Mills's work to fall into the "somewhat inefficient" hands of Miss Honeybourne's supervisor Mr. Leftwich, the Custom House librarian.³⁹

Only very occasionally do male researchers appear in the Life-Records' archives, and a similar gender breakdown prevailed among the Chicago lab employees. As Christina von Nolcken describes in this collection, the dynamics between the male and female workers repeatedly became so fraught that Manly suggested no longer hiring men for the lab. Although the drama merits attention, I would like to highlight these women's accomplishments. At the height of its activity, before the Great Depression affected its funding in 1931, the Chicago lab employed up to around fifteen full-time and part-time workers at a time. The employees were drawn from the ranks of Rickert's and Manly's students, with Rickert in particular taking on a heavy teaching load for the project. When the Chaucer project was initiated, Rickert began teaching paleography to a group of student volunteers on Saturdays to ensure that the project would have trained workers to draw on. She was not paid for this work even though, as Manly wrote two years later, she devoted the whole of every Saturday morning to it.⁴⁰ Virginia Leland recalled both Manly's and Rickert's care for the students, noting that it was Rickert who supervised the training of the lab workers in paleography, medieval Latin, Old French, Italian, medieval history, and Old and Middle English.⁴¹ Whereas most of the London researchers were already trained professionals when they joined the Chaucer project, in Chicago, Manly and Rickert exerted enormous influence over the development and education of the lab employees.

At least nine women employed in the Chicago lab had, were studying for, or went on to complete their PhDs. Another four earned master's degrees. The eight who did successfully complete their doctorates wrote on medieval topics, primarily Chaucerian (see Table 4.1). Many of the Chaucer lab employees continued to research and went on to hold university posts. Florence Teager taught at Illinois State Normal University, Virginia Leland (née Everett) at Bowling Green. Mary Giffin took a post at Rickert's alma mater Vassar in 1945. Wilma Kirby-Miller (née Anderson) became the vice-president of Radcliffe College and the dean of their graduate school; in that role, she was also a lecturer in the Harvard Faculty of

Table 4.1 Chicago lab employees, dissertation topics, and graduation dates

<i>Name</i>	<i>Approx. dates of lab employment</i>	<i>Dissertation title</i>	<i>Year degree awarded</i>
Ramona Bressie	1927–1932	A Study of Thomas Usk's <i>Testament of Love</i> as an Autobiography	PhD, 1928
Florence White	1928–1931	Dissertation of <i>Gamelyn</i>	PhD, Unfinished
Cloantha Copass	1930–1931	Story Material in the Decorative Arts of Chaucer's Time	PhD, 1931
Helen McIntosh	1928–1940	The Literary Background of the <i>Tale of Beryn</i>	PhD, 1931
Florence Teager	1928–1930	Chaucer's Technique in the Light of Rhetorical Traditions	PhD, 1931
Wilma Anderson	1928–1931	Scribal Dialects in the C and D Manuscripts of the Canterbury Tales	PhD, 1938
Margaret Rickert	1925–1940	The Reconstruction and Study of an English Carmelite Missal	PhD, 1938
Mary Giffin	1930–1931	The Wigmore Manuscript and the Mortimer Family	PhD, 1939
Virginia Everett	1933–1939	A Study of Scribal Editing in Twelve Manuscripts of the Canterbury Tales	PhD, 1940
Mabel Alice Dean	1927–1940	Parallels in the Views of Ireland	MA, 1940
Dorothy B. Smith	1929	Howell's Attitude Toward the Middle West and Middle Western Material	MA, 1929
Lucy P. Glasson	1930–1931	The Inedited Middle English Translation of Egidio Colonna's <i>De Regimine Principum</i> in MS. Digby 233	MA, 1929
Grace Anderson Olson		The Peculiar Features in the Fifth Book of Chaucer's <i>Troilus and Criseyde</i>	MA, 1940

Arts and Sciences. Helen McIntosh married a historian that she met in London during one of the Chaucer research trips; they both took posts at Atlanta University, a coeducational Historical Black College or University (HBCU); McIntosh taught Chaucer and served as the president of the Atlanta chapter of the League of Women Voters.⁴² And this list is limited to those officially employed by the lab; many of Manly's and Rickert's other female students taught at universities across the country, including Vassar, Baylor, UCLA, Goucher, and Wellesley, and the lab often hosted women researchers visiting from other institutions. Even the names of the lab employees that I have collected does not reflect the true scale of female effort involved in the project, since volunteers, usually Rickert's paleography students, chipped in around the lab and with administrative tasks.

Additionally, like many ambitious literary endeavors, the Chaucer project became a family affair. Edith Rickert's sister Margaret's involvement is fairly well-documented. An art historian who earned a Chicago MA in 1933 and a PhD in 1938, she traveled to England with Manly and Rickert many times and contributed a chapter on illuminations to the *Text*. Less well-known is the contribution of Manly's widowed sister, Hellen Manly Patrick, who lived with him in Chicago. In 1926, before Manly and Rickert's first trip to England together, Rickert wrote to Redstone that "Mr. Manly's sister says she is coming along to chaperon us---which is rather amusing at our age!"⁴³ Hellen Patrick accompanied Manly and Rickert on their trips for many years and, in the course of her travels, was dragooned into assisting with research. Years later, Manly sent some of her work on to a colleague with this explanation:

[M]y sister, several years ago, made records of such differences between the Hengwrt and Ellesmere in the forms of letters as she noted. She was entirely ignorant of paleography and indeed of fifteenth-century manuscripts when she did this work, but she was very careful and I am confident you will find it a fairly accurate record of all the differences an inexperienced observer would note. She also made a summary on two or three of the peculiarities in the different tales ...⁴⁴

Although the clues in the surviving correspondence suggest a very limited and sporadic involvement, Manly's introduction to the *Text* reveals the scale of Patrick's contribution to the project:

She rendered occasional aid in various ways before Miss Rickert's last illness, but since then she has devoted a large part of her time and strength to proofreading, researches, and all kinds of tasks that were necessary for the prosecution of the work. Though without special training, she was fortunately well equipped, both in knowledge and in the experiences which her own interest in family history had given her, for this prolonged labor of love. She has earned the gratitude not only of the few members of staff who remain, but of all scholars who may in any degree benefit by the accuracy and fullness of our work.⁴⁵

Even after Manly and Rickert's deaths, family involvement continued. Margaret Rickert wrote a preface and selected the illustrations for Martin M. Crow and Clair C. Olson's 1948 version of the Life-Records project, published as *Chaucer's World*, with Edith Rickert credited as its main contributor. Crow and Olson's introduction also acknowledged the contribution of Mrs. Grace A. Olson, Clair Olson's wife. Grace Olson did a master's degree at Chicago while Clair Olson completed his PhD. She wrote about scribal errors in *Troilus and Criseyde* while helping in the lab; during the production of *Chaucer's World*, she prepared the manuscript for the press, compiled the bibliography of source materials, and assisted the editors "in many ways."⁴⁶

The two women other than Edith and Margaret Rickert who were credited on the title-page of the *Text* were both lab employees—Helen McKintosh and Mabel Dean. Accounts of lab work tend to describe them in secretarial terms; Virginia Leland, for example, reminisces about the sight of the two "[typing] steadily on Underwood typewriters with Middle English characters, preparing camera-ready copy for *Text*."⁴⁷ However, the lab hierarchy drew a distinction between "workers" and "clerks." Manly explained that

[the workers] have had considerable training in reading the manuscripts, and have been found careful and accurate enough to justify their employment in the work. They are engaged in the mechanical work of making the collations and in the semi-mechanical work of preparing the evidence for judgment regarding relationships and classification.

The clerks, on the other hand, were "accurate but comparatively untrained workers" engaged in "strictly clerical tasks."⁴⁸ The lab also occasionally employed a temporary stenographer. So, despite the descriptions of their work, Dean and McIntosh's contributions to the *Text* should not be

dismissed as unskilled labor. Both were highly skilled and educated workers—Mabel Dean was hired after she completed her MA at Chicago on representations of Ireland in literature, and Helen McKintosh wrote her doctorate, “The Literary Background of the *Tale of Beryn*,” while employed in the lab. They were the only members of the Chicago staff retained when the Great Depression put an end to the lab’s boom time. Manly himself acknowledged their contributions in the introduction to the *Text*:

Our work could hardly have been accomplished without the faithful cooperation of our chief assistants, Miss Mabel Dean and Miss Helen MacIntosh [...] They have not only been responsible for the verification of collations and for the typing of the whole work, but their increasing familiarity with all phases of the work has made it possible for them to take so large a part in it that they are entitled to recognition as joint authors with Miss Rickert and myself.⁴⁹

Despite this note—and Manly did regularly attempt to make sure that his female collaborators received proper credit for their work—Dean and McIntosh are usually treated as nothing more than glorified secretaries in narratives of the Chaucer project, if they are mentioned at all.

The best-documented lab employee, and one of the longest-serving, was Ramona Bressie. Bressie’s story adds a negative dimension to records of Rickert’s role as a teacher and mentor. Thomas Bestul wrote a detailed article on Bressie’s life and work, drawing deeply on Bressie’s archive at the University of Chicago, in particular the hundreds of tightly written diary pages saved there.⁵⁰ Bressie joined the Life-Records project in 1927 and remained in the lab until 1932. Only limited contemporaneous commentary written by Bressie while she worked on the project survives. Most of her opinions were written almost thirty years later and, as Bestul notes, reflect a mindset shaped by disappointment, loneliness, and, probably, an unbalanced personality; however, surviving fragments of some remarkably frank letters confirm that Bressie’s later opinion was not inconsistent with her attitude during her years in the lab.

In stark contrast to the many positive accounts of Rickert’s efforts to teach and support students, Bressie developed a resentful attitude toward Rickert, who served as her PhD advisor and employer. Bestul quotes an illustrative 1961 entry:

Yesterday I felt so baffled—thought of Miss Rickert—at my age, or alleged to be my age, old, heavy, frumpy-minded—romantic notions still rife in her mind about marrying Prof. Manly. Fantastic and pitiful and nothing ahead of her in following up research because all she ever had was pilfered from others. At our last encounter she was trying to maneuver me into yielding up my work on Life Record no. 34 for her to publish as *hers*. What a mess she and Lilian J. Redstone would have made of that!⁵¹

Bitterness toward Rickert was nothing new for Bressie, however. In a letter fragment written around 1928, she told the unknown recipient, probably her sister, that “Miss Rickert is being very good just now. I guess you know that she is like most folks, she is either very very good, or else she is horrid.”⁵² About a year later, during a trip to England, Bressie was a bit more generous, although still deeply condescending:

Florence [White] told me with much pride how she could get along with men, implying of course that I couldn’t, and that she thought it wise to tie up to Mr. Manly in preference to Miss Rickert. The old girl will do me for a while yet although when I’m in the doldrums I get sort of provoked at her. I’m sure I couldn’t better myself and now that I’m working on my new problem, I’m delighted with everything, even runny cheese on crackers for lunch.⁵³

Bestul suggests that Manly was the only colleague exempt from Bressie’s “disdainful attitude,” which seems accurate on the basis of this fragment and her later diary entries.⁵⁴ Bressie’s troubling psychology regarding sex and gender, as documented by Bestul, may have contributed to this preference.⁵⁵

Only a few clues survive to illuminate the truth of Rickert’s treatment of Bressie. In 1929, Rickert wrote a letter thanking Lilian Redstone for her patience in settling a question of management with Bressie, who had been duplicating some of the London researchers’ work in Chicago, noting that Redstone had “been extraordinarily good to [Bressie].” The phrasing, combined with details in other letters, implies that Bressie was not easy to work with; even so, Rickert commented to Redstone, “she is a promising patient, isn’t she?”⁵⁶ A year later, Rickert told Redstone that although there were still problems with duplicated work, Bressie had a talent for discovering new problems or lines of investigation that justified her going over material that other researchers had already covered.⁵⁷ A note from Rickert to Bressie herself suggests that part of Bressie’s

problems stemmed from her own intense and somewhat manic approach to scholarship:

You are full of good ideas! But don't get too many; you can't do all—or half—the projects in Chaucer and medieval literature that you write me about. It's a fine spirit & you are getting a broad foundation, but try to close in on the subject nearest to your heart.⁵⁸

As Bestul points out, Bressie always planned projects on a massive, grandiose scale, setting impossible goals.⁵⁹ Rickert seems to have noticed this tendency and attempted to curb it without success.

Bestul admits that many of Bressie's disappointments, particularly those caused by her failure to network properly with other scholars in order to avoid duplicating work, should be attributed to her independent, "loner" personality, but also suggests that she may have been "badly served" by Manly and Rickert, "who might have made the introductions or pushed her harder to make connections."⁶⁰ Manly and Rickert gave Bressie numerous opportunities, however, and as part of her work on the Life-Records, Bressie traveled to England, working directly with Redstone and the other researchers for months. Manly and Rickert also continued to support Bressie after she left the lab; in 1933, Manly responded with pleasure to the news that she had received a major fellowship.

Ultimately, Bressie's complaints and lack of success should be set against the record of successes achieved by Manly and Rickert's other students and should not cast too great a pall on Rickert's legacy as a mentor. Even when she traveled to England, Rickert did not neglect her students. As both the junior and the female member of their team, Rickert may have seemed more accessible to students than Manly. One PhD student wrote her asking for a recommendation, admitting that although he had "taken more of [his] work under Mr. Manly than from any other member of the department, and [had] done creditable work for him, [he had] been hesitant in writing him."⁶¹ After Rickert suffered a breakdown from overwork, Manly told the university's vice-president that although she had been unable to come into the university during the aftermath of her illness, she had continued to hold her classes at her house. Manly explained that he was now keeping her in England partly because, were she in Chicago, "students would inevitably ask her advice on researches they had undertaken as a result of work with her, and there would have been a thousand and one details [...] forming a burden far beyond her strength."⁶²

Rickert also paid particular attention to her female students. Although Rickert wrote multiple group letters to the whole “Chaucer family” or “the Round Table,” she wrote at least one letter solely to her female students, addressing them by Arthurian names.⁶³ Elizabeth Scala has pointed out the connection between this form of address and an entry in Rickert’s 1896 diary referring to herself and her fellow London boarding-house residents as “the Ladies of the Round Table.”⁶⁴ Nor was her encouragement reserved solely for her students. In 1925, she wrote to her friend Harriet Blackburn, encouraging her not to neglect her scholarship despite the demands of family life: “Greetings to the boys. Are you having fun this summer? Don’t forget that you are the author-in-progress of a book on Anglo-Saxon art.”⁶⁵ Rickert’s mentorship continued even after her students left Chicago. Sister Mary Aquinas Devlin, who had received her PhD from Chicago in 1925 and returned later to carry out her own research in the lab, felt comfortable enough to write to Rickert a decade later asking for support in finding a publisher for her monograph.⁶⁶ In this letter, perhaps more than any other in the archives, the wheel has come full circle, as the young graduate who wrote to Katharine Lee Bates seeking contacts for publications receives a similar request from her own female student.

RICKERT’S LEGACY

From her early days at Vassar, Rickert benefited from the friendship and support of other scholarly women. As she gained influence and experience, she appears to have paid these kindnesses forward, to some degree. The repetition of the “Ladies of the Round Table” motif, almost forty years after she first used it, suggests the importance of female community and collegiality throughout Rickert’s life as well as, perhaps, a desire to replicate that early formative experience. Manly and Rickert’s female students went on to teach at institutions throughout the United States, passing on the lessons they had learned to a new generation of students. Rickert was certainly not perfect, and it is impossible to truly assess interactions and relationships that were not preserved through either correspondence or her students’ personal accounts, which suffer from the typical canonizing tendencies of posthumous biography. As Bestul notes in his article on Bressie, “competition, jealousy, and sheer pettiness exist across the axis of gender” and it is unlikely that Rickert survived her decades-long academic career without mistakes, slights, or even

unkindness. Maybe Bressie's assessment of Rickert is the most honest epitaph possible: "like most folks, [Edith Rickert] is either very very good, or else she is horrid."⁶⁷

Setting aside the specifics of Rickert's life, this account highlights the reality that women's scholarly work is not, and has never been, restricted to the universities. Devillers at the British Museum and other archives contributed materially to the work of scholars around the globe. Large-scale initiatives like the Chaucer project and the Victoria County Histories employed numerous women, many of whom operated entirely outside of academia. Women carried out their own research despite a lack of salary or institutional support, although success was often determined by personal privilege and access to independent wealth. While Ramona Bressie toiled in obscure poverty, Eleanor Hammond, for example, made a significant splash in medieval scholarship without holding a university post.⁶⁸ Women scholars who chose to marry were often forced out of academic posts by both official and unspoken marriage bars. Elizabeth Scala has suggested that Manly and Rickert may have remained unmarried in part to avoid complications with her employment at Chicago.⁶⁹ Some women who gave up university posts for marriage continued their work but experienced a new set of challenges, as described by Donne and Jonson editor Evelyn Simpson, who struggled to find a grant to pay for domestic help during a crucial phase of her project:

I don't believe a committee composed of men can ever be brought to understand that it is impossible to do proper research work of a high quality if one has continuously to interrupt it to cook a joint and 2 vegetables, make gravy & the like, make an apple tart, & when the meal is finished, wash up, etc, etc. answer the door-bell, dust the sitting-room, & all the hundred & one other jobs you know so well.⁷⁰

Nevertheless, women persisted in the face of overwhelming obstacles, collectively producing an enormous body of work, much of which has been unfairly dismissed, ignored, or forgotten by later critics. By examining their labor and excavating the networks they formed among themselves, we can better understand the economic, social, and logistical realities that enabled—and continue to enable—the creation of scholarship.

NOTES

1. Many thanks to the University of Chicago's Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, whose award of the Robert L. Platzman Memorial Fellowship funded my work in Edith Rickert's archive, and to the staff at the library for their welcome and support.
2. Barbara Miller Solomon, *In the Company of Educated Women: A History of Women and Higher Education in America* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1985), 44.
3. *Ibid.*, 58–59.
4. Patricia Ann Palmieri, *In Adamless Eden: The Community of Women Faculty at Wellesley* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1995), 103.
5. Edith Rickert, "Diary, 1896–1897, London," Edith Rickert Papers, Box 2, Folder 1, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, November 5, 1896.
6. Edith Rickert, "Diary, 1896–1897, London," Edith Rickert Papers, Box 2, Folder 1, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, January 6, 1897.
7. Westfield eventually became part of Queen Mary University of London, while Bedford merged with Royal Holloway.
8. Edith Rickert, "Diary, 1897, London," Edith Rickert Papers, Box 2, Folder 2, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, July 1897.
9. Edith Rickert, "Diary, 1896–1897, London," Edith Rickert Papers, Box 2, Folder 1, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, January 18, 1897.
10. Edith Rickert, "Diary, 1897, London," Edith Rickert Papers, Box 2, Folder 2, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, June 6, 1897.
11. Angela Jane Weisl, "By Her Works Shall Ye Know Her: The Quest for Jessie L. Weston (1850–1928)," in *Women Medievalists and the Academy*, ed. Jane Chance (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005), 38–39.
12. Susan David Bernstein, *Roomscape: Women Writers in the British Museum from George Eliot to Virginia Woolf* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 37; "Devil, n.," *OED Online* (Oxford University Press), accessed March 19, 2018, <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/51468>.
13. Bernstein, *Roomscape*, 35.
14. I have written elsewhere of Manly's correspondence with his own deviller Agnes Furnivall. See Molly G. Yarn, "A Correction to the Identity of 'Mrs Furnivall' in Harvard's Houghton Library Archives," *Notes and Queries* 65, no. 3 (2018): 401–2; in fact, Rickert became acquainted with Agnes

- Furnivall during her years in London, either through Manly or through Frederick Furnivall, Agnes's cousin. On July 28, 1905, Rickert wrote that she "dined with Mrs. Furnivall and the dear old doctor at her house [...] beautiful with old furniture & fine Japanese prints." Edith Rickert, "Diary, 1905, London," Edith Rickert Papers, Box 3, Folder 3, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, 1905.
15. Rickert, "Diary, 1896–1897," entries of January 1, 2, 13, 18, 27, and February 3. The Kesselstadt mask, which came to light in 1849, was purported by some to be Shakespeare's death mask.
 16. Sometime around 1901, however, Crow was replaced as editor by David Nichol Smith. Crow took up the position of dean of women at Northwestern in 1900, so she may have jettisoned the edition in order to reduce her academic workload in favor of the extensive national organizing that she carried out in that post, including a conference for deans of women.
 17. A.S.G. Edwards, "Eleanor Prescott Hammond (1866–1933): Pioneer Scholar of Middle English Manuscript Study," in *Women Medievalists and the Academy*, ed. Jane Chance (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2005), 91.
 18. Edith Rickert, "Diary, 1896–1897, London," Edith Rickert Papers, Box 2, Folder 1, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, March 11, 1897.
 19. Lynn D. Gordon, *Gender and Higher Education in the Progressive Era* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 129.
 20. Coincidentally, Wylie, like Rickert, would edit Shakespeare—her edition of *The Winter's Tale* (1912) was published just four years before Rickert's edition of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1916).
 21. Edith Rickert, "Diary, 1898–1899, Vassar, NY," Edith Rickert Papers, Box 2, Folder 5, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, 1898.
 22. Rickert, "Diary, 1898–1899."
 23. Katharine Lee Bates, "Diary, 1893–1897," Katharine Lee Bates Papers, Box 2, Folder: Diaries (1893–1897, 1894), Wellesley College Archive, January 19, 1896.
 24. Palmieri, *Adamless*, 122–23.
 25. Katharine Lee Bates, "Letter to Edith Rickert," Edith Rickert Papers, Box 1, Folder 6, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, March 8, 1900.
 26. Bates, "Letter to Edith Rickert"; Melinda M. Ponder, *From Sea to Shining Sea: The Story of the Poet of "America the Beautiful"* (Chicago: Windy City Publishers, 2017), 103–6.

27. Katharine Lee Bates, "Letter to Edith Rickert," Edith Rickert Papers, Box 1, Folder 8, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, October 13, 1908.
28. Katharine Lee Bates, "Letter to Edith Rickert," Edith Rickert Papers, Box 1, Folder 12, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, November 21, Year Unknown.
29. Despite his infirmity, he outlived both Rickert and Manly, dying in 1941.
30. "Lilian Jane Redstone," *Ipswich Women's Festival Group*, accessed September 6, 2019, <http://www.ipswichwomensfestivalgroup.co.uk/ipswich-women/lilian-jane-redstone/>.
31. J.V. Beckett, "Libraries and the Victoria County History," *Library & Information History* 25 no. 4 (2009): 217–18.
32. Elizabeth Shepherd, "Pioneering Women Archivists in England: Ethel Stokes (1870–1944), Record Agent," *Archival Science* 17, no. 2 (2017): 187.
33. Chris Lewis, "William Page (1861–1934), General Editor of the Victoria County History 1902–34," *Making History*, accessed August 29, 2019, https://archives.history.ac.uk/makinghistory/resources/articles/william_page.html.
34. "Catherine Jamison," *London Archives* (April 1, 1966): 169.
35. Lilian J. Redstone, "Letter to John Matthews Manly," Chaucer Research Project Records, Box 58, Folder 2, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, September 29, 1934.
36. Lilian J. Redstone, "Letter to Edith Rickert," Chaucer Research Project Records, Box 57, Folder 1, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, September 30, 1933.
37. For more on Putnam, see David Day, "The Justices' Chronicler: Bertha Haven Putnam (1872–1960)," in *Women Medievalists and the Academy*, ed. Jane Chance (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005), 157–66.
38. Lilian J. Redstone, "Letter to Edith Rickert," Chaucer Research Project Records, Box 57, Folder 9, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, August 13, 1931.
39. Lilian J. Redstone, "Letter to Edith Rickert," Chaucer Research Project Records, Box 57, Folder 9, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, October 13, 1930.
40. John Matthews Manly, "Letter to F.C. Woodward," Department of English Language and Literature, Records, Box 17, Folder 18, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago, November 9, 1927.

41. Virginia Leland, "Miss Rickert, Mr. Manly, and the Chaucer Laboratory," *The Chaucer Newsletter* 9, no. 2 (1987): 7.
42. Lucy C. Grigsby, "Phylon Profile, XXIV: Helen McIntosh Coulborn," *Phylon* (1960–), 24, no. 1 (1963), 13–19; <https://doi.org/10.2307/274219>.
43. Edith Rickert, "Letter to Lilian Redstone," Chaucer Research Project Records, Box 56, Folder 5, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, July 18, 1926.
44. John Matthews Manly, "Letter to H.C. Schulz," Department of English Language and Literature, Records, Box 18, Folder 10, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, March 4, 1938.
45. Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Text of the Canterbury Tales*, ed. John Matthews Manly and Edith Rickert (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1940), xvi–xvii.
46. Edith Rickert, Clair Colby Olson, and Martin Michael Crow, *Chaucer's World* (New York, Columbia Univ. Press, 1948), xiii.
47. Leland, "Miss Rickert," 7.
48. John Matthews Manly, *Report on Expenses, Salaries, and Employee Categories*, Department of English Language and Literature, Records, Box 18, Folder 2, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, Undated.
49. Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*, xiii.
50. Although I was able to examine Bressie's correspondence, I could not attempt the sheer volume of her diaries during my time in the archive; therefore, I rely on Bestul for quotes from the diaries.
51. Quoted in Thomas H. Bestul, "Ramona Bressie, the Study of Manuscripts, and the Chaucer Life-Records," *Medieval Feminist Forum* 45 (2009): 81; after Rickert's death, Bressie struggled to assert her own involvement in the completion of the still-unfinished Life-Records. Her diaries reflect a deep anger with Martin M. Crow, Clair C. Olson, and Lilian Redstone, born from the belief that they had stolen the project from her, its rightful heir, after Rickert and Manly's deaths. She claimed that Redstone had, essentially, exploited Rickert's increasing incapacity, "holding her up for every penny she could get out of her" (qtd. in Bestul, 78).
52. Ramona Bressie, "Letter to Unknown Recipient, Possibly Sister," Ramona Bressie Papers, Box 2, Folder 4, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago, c 1928.
53. Ramona Bressie, "Letter to Unknown Recipient, Possibly Sister," Ramona Bressie Papers, Box 2, Folder 4, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago, c 1929.
54. Bestul, "Ramona Bressie," 84.
55. *Ibid.*, 90–91, n. 53.

56. Edith Rickert, "Letter to Lilian Redstone," Chaucer Research Project Records, Box 58, Folder 5, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, September 22, 1929.
57. Edith Rickert, "Letter to Lilian J. Redstone," Chaucer Research Project Records, Box 57, Folder 9, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, November 16, 1930.
58. Edith Rickert, "Letter to Ramona Bressie," Ramona Bressie Papers, Box 2, Folder 4, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago, June 2, 1930.
59. Bestul, "Ramona Bressie," 78.
60. Ibid., 75, 38, 29. Bestul does allow that Manly and Rickert were ill and struggling with the enormity of the Chaucer project, and that mentoring in the way it is now practiced may not have been standard practice at the time.
61. Deane Willman Starrett, "Letter to Edith Rickert," Edith Rickert Papers, Box 1, Folder 11, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, May 18, 1936.
62. John Matthews Manly, "Letter to F.C. Woodward," Department of English Language and Literature, Records, Box 58, Folder 2, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, April 23, 1930.
63. Edith Rickert, "Letter to the Ladies of the Round Table," Edith Rickert Papers, Box 1, Folder 10, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, May 22, 1932.
64. Elizabeth Scala, "'Miss Rickert of Vassar' and Edith Rickert at the University of Chicago (1871-1938)," in *Women Medievalists and the Academy*, ed. Jane Chance (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005), 135.
65. Edith Rickert, "Letter to Harriet Blackburn," Edith Rickert Papers, Box 1, Folder 9, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, August 10, 1925.
66. Sister Mary Aquinas Devlin, "Letter to Edith Rickert," Edith Rickert Papers, Box 1, Folder 11, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, May 25, 1936.
67. Bestul, "Ramona Bressie," 81.
68. Edwards, "Eleanor Prescott Hammond," 91. For an important examination of the ways in which Hammond's work has not been acknowledged, however, see Elizabeth Scala, "The Women in Chaucer's 'Marriage Group,'" *Medieval Feminist Forum* 45, no. 1 (2009): 50-56.
69. Elizabeth Scala, "Scandalous Assumptions: Edith Rickert and the Chicago Chaucer Project," *Medieval Feminist Forum: A Journal of Gender and Sexuality* 30, no. 1 (2000): 34.

70. Quoted in Chanita Goodblatt, "The University is a Paradise, Rivers of Knowledge Are There": Evelyn Mary Spearing Simpson," in *Women Editing/Editing Women: Early Modern Women Writers and the New Textualism*, ed. Ann Hollinshead Hurley and Chanita Goodblatt (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2009), 276.

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From Philology to Formalism: Edith Rickert, John Matthews Manly, and the Literary/ Reformist Beginnings of U.S. Cryptology

Henry Veggian

I

Two historical veins course through the study of modern intelligence. The first derives from an anthropological model of history. The proponents of this school, which includes writers such as the historian David Kahn and the journalist/historian James Bamford, have argued that civilian men and women made the modern military intelligence agencies.¹ In the United States, these women and men (and the primary examples are nearly always William and Elizebeth Friedman) transformed the archaic U.S. military intelligence techniques that had stagnated since the Civil War; they did so

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primarily by lifting cryptology (the science of codes and ciphers) out from its amateur literary residence and adapting it to quantified methods and mechanized instruments of new military and industrial institutions. In both their rhetorical figures and their scientific models, the prime movers in these historical works are always human beings.

A second school of thought favors the anonymous engineering systems, innovative technologies, cybernetics, and arcane mathematical applications that launched the modern military intelligence institutions. This school subdues the human role in modern cryptology. Paul Virilio, for example, has occasionally theorized the admixture of human life with semiotic codes at a digital interface; Armand Mattelart has discussed the matter in terms of modes of production and antique semaphores.² By far the most insightful work in this area has been done by Manuel DeLanda, who demonstrated in *War in the Age of Intelligence Machines* how advanced crypto-systems and military intelligence technologies have effectively displaced human beings as primary decision-makers; rather, humans and machines have conjoined to form a new entity—a “machinic phylum.”³

Both schools are incisive with respect to what was until recently a largely ignored science and its extensive, global institutional networks. Yet both have also ignored the discursive beginnings of modern cryptology; that is to say, they fail to account for its emergence and partial detachment from a cluster of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century debates over language, education, and literature. The truth of the matter lies not with human or inhuman taxonomies, but in a rendering of genealogy. I have in the following pages attempted to elaborate a genealogy in such a way that accounts for the intentional roles played by individuals in the formation (and deformation) of modern discourse. My point is not only that modern intelligence institutions or the discipline of modern English studies are conjoined by a common discourse; nor is it to expose the unique, discursive rift that generated them both from the detritus of philology. In short, what I propose is not a genealogy that must contend with literary humanism—rather, I argue that literary humanism must contend with it.⁴

The newly inaugurated University of Chicago hired Dr. John Matthews Manly (1865–1940) in 1898 to work as chairperson of the Department of English.⁵ Manly, a recent Harvard graduate, was a consummate philologist and expert in every historical phase of the English language. He began publishing upon his arrival in Chicago books on Chaucer, pre-Shakespearean poetry and prose, and Middle English rhetoric, but he rose to academic prominence primarily as editor of *Modern Philology*

(1908–1930). During his early tenure, the journal continuously published essays written by important anthropologists (i.e., Sapir) and linguists (i.e., Bloomfield) despite disciplinary and professional divisions that had begun to separate philology from those kindred sciences.

While Manly's books are today largely forgotten, his career ended on a lasting note with *The Text of the Canterbury Tales* (1940), a collaborative eight-volume study that compared—line by line—over eighty manuscript versions of Chaucer's great work. His collaborator in that work was Dr. Martha Edith Rickert (1871–1938). Manly and Rickert had dedicated at least six months of every year since 1924 to *The Text of the Canterbury Tales*, and they continued to do so for nearly fifteen years, during which time they trained assistants in paleography. In the preface to *The Text of the Canterbury Tales*, Manly rightly noted of Rickert that she “often asserted that we could never finish it if we worked like normal human beings.”⁶ Manly's assessment was modest; their capacity for intellectual labor resembles more a Faustian reward.

Rickert was among the first graduate students to earn a doctorate in English literature from the University of Chicago.⁷ She was, like Manly, expert in English philology, and her expertise was divided between Old and Middle English. Her first essays of import were printed in *Modern Philology* (1904–1905), to which she contributed consistently for more than three decades. Following a long post-graduate hiatus from academia in England (during which she composed several novels), she returned to the United States prior to World War I (WWI). She officially joined the English Department faculty of the University of Chicago in 1924.

The Department of English at the University of Chicago was at that time not primarily a research institution; it was instead one “the members of which were devoted, in the main, rather to teaching than to scholarship.”⁸ In this institutional context, Rickert and Manly also composed several works written specifically for students and teachers. These were manuals of style, primers, and anthology readers. They include *The Writing of English* (1919), which was succeeded by *Contemporary British Literature* (1921), *Contemporary American Literature* (1922), and *The Writer's Index* (1923). Several other works of pedagogical import followed, among them Rickert's self-authored *New Methods for the Study of Literature* (1927), to which Manly wrote a prefatory essay. A common thread appears when their writings on teaching and pedagogy are placed in conversation with their capacity for linguistics, philology, and paleography: relentless reform.

The term “reform” must be distinguished from its historical affiliation with Progressive party politics (which were vital in the Chicago area), yet not entirely; as Richard Hofstadter once insightfully noted with respect to the term: “in America the roles of the liberal and the conservative have been so often intermingled, and in some ways reversed, that clear traditions have never taken form.”⁹ Indeed, it was such ambivalence that made possible Manly and Rickert’s collaboration, the efforts of which were directed specifically at *institutional* reform. More specifically, regional and national debates over literacy, canons, and authorship motivated them to reform the study of English literature and rhetoric. While these may seem common for the era, Rickert and Manly’s work in another science rendered them unique. The science—cryptology—would, like modern English, also soon depart from philology. As I shall demonstrate in the following section, this divergence was specific to Midwestern U.S. literary and political debate of the period. Furthermore, the division occurred precisely as literary formalism would mirror even more orthodox cryptological techniques that, once extracted from philology, would determine in large part the course of the future U.S. security state. Manly and Rickert’s individual interventions, combined with their regional and institutional situations, placed them in a unique position to negotiate a consequential shift in the human sciences (as well as its emergent professions) that would displace the historical and humanist concerns of philology.

II

Cryptology was an eccentric branch of philology that had drifted to the Midwestern United States during the late nineteenth century. It had arrived there following the American Renaissance and its post-Rosetta Stone interest in secret writing.¹⁰ Cryptology was embroiled in contemporary political debates over social (and educational) reform after its Midwestern drift. Debates over the civic value of Shakespeare’s plays ranked high among these.¹¹ The debate included speculation over the authorship of the Bard’s plays (indeed, Nathaniel Hawthorne penned the introduction to one of the first U.S. works on that problem, Delia Bacon’s 1857 book *The Philosophy of the Plays of Shakespeare Unfolded*).¹²

The Minnesota Senator Ignatius T. Donnelly propelled the debate over Shakespeare’s plays to international prominence in 1888 with *The Great Cryptogram*.¹³ Donnelly’s book returned to Francis Bacon’s sixteenth-century “cyphars” in order to propose a controversial thesis: that the

typographic design of the Folio editions of Shakespeare's plays concealed Sir Francis Bacon's signature. The signature was revealed, Donnelly claimed, when a mathematical system was applied to the Shakespeare's writings in such a way that the cipher system outlined by Bacon in *De Augmentis Scientiarum* revealed a secondary, concealed text.

Donnelly's "Baconian" theory was ridiculed in the American press.¹⁴ The negative publicity ruined his publishing career; Donnelly's prospects for a national political career were destroyed (he was then a member of the Minnesota State Legislature, and the state's former lieutenant governor). He later ran for Vice-President of the United States on the Populist ticket in 1900—the electoral results were negative, to say the least.

Donnelly's theories advanced, however, an implied socio-political thesis. *The Great Cryptogram* advocated a late nineteenth-century Social Darwinist reaction against Progressive social reform movements. Donnelly and later Baconians implicitly targeted the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century social reformists (such as Jane Addams) who used William Shakespeare to educate the underprivileged. Alfred Kazin later located Donnelly's political origins in the agrarian Populist movement in *On Native Grounds* (1942). Donnelly belonged, according to Kazin, to the "seeming demagoguery of Populism [that] anticipated the Know-Nothing native fascists of our own time, for Populism was essentially a groundswell of protest, an amorphous rebellion that caught all the confusions and hatreds of the time" (21). *The Great Cryptogram* thus prompted a long debate that was punctuated by dozens of attempts to reinforce the Baconian position.¹⁵

Donnelly's heirs later found an institutional residence at the Riverbank Laboratories of Colonel George Fabyan, a wealthy Illinois businessman. Fabyan had hired a Baconian, Elizabeth Wells Gallup, to work in a laboratory dedicated to discovering the Baconian cipher alleged in Shakespeare's plays. Gallup, a disciple of an earlier Baconian named Dr. Orville Ward Owen, directed the Riverbank cipher work prior to World War One.¹⁶

The Riverbank cipher department (there were also genetics and photography departments on the estate) consisted of six or seven researchers who combined their cryptographic research with the didactic platforms shaped by Fabyan's own particular Social Darwinism. Fabyan published dozens of different Baconian pamphlets during this period that included exercises in decryption for their readers. Fabyan hoped that such didactic methods would draw interest to the Riverbank research; should the Riverbank work against the "commoner" William Shakespeare disprove

the social reformists, it would also grant Fabyan's brand of Social Darwinism a semblance of scientific legitimacy.¹⁷

The Riverbank Laboratories were generally contemporary with Manly's tenure at the University of Chicago, and it was largely through Riverbank that the scandalous ripple of *The Great Cryptogram* eventually arrived at the English Department at the University of Chicago. Manly was, however, largely opposed to the Baconians' varied motives (indeed, he would have been one of their targets, as Manly had edited an edition of *Macbeth* in 1896). Manly's antagonism was manifest not only by his scholarly work and sustained by his institutional context; the University of Chicago harbored during his early years one of the most effective exponents of the Pragmatist challenge to Spencerian Social Darwinism—John Dewey.¹⁸ Manly had also Pragmatist sympathies dating to his Harvard doctoral education.¹⁹

Following roughly the Pragmatist line, Manly considered the Baconian methods as contrary to current standards of equity in education. To that end, he published in *Modern Philology* an article titled "Literary Forms and the New Theory of the Origin of the Species" (1907). The essay implicitly attacked the alleged scientific foundations on which rested the particular and distorted author-centered theories of the Baconians. The essay argued instead that Darwin was valuable to philologists for theories of typological development, chronology, and classification; for example, Manly elaborated how the distinction between "fluctuating" and "chance" variation (i.e., between the minor differences used to identify species and unprecedented mutations that distinguish an older species from a newer one) could be used to distinguish between "three generally recognized types of drama: the mystery, miracle play, and morality" (582). Using the example "a trope of the Introit of the Easter Mass" (8), Manly demonstrated how, at a distinct moment, it was transformed from liturgical component into the early modern English drama. Thus began an unprecedented "chance" variation in English literary history that carried to the present.

The essay proved that Manly did not accept fashionable interpretations that reduce Darwinian thought to social polemic; he presciently described such maneuvers as dogmatic "articles of faith." Rather, Manly's defense of Darwin against Spencerian (and Baconian) misappropriations warned that "theory" must not distort empirical evidence. To that effect, he discounted a fundamental tenet of Social Darwinism: Spencer's famous dictum that only the "fittest" agents could survive any natural or socio-economic situation. Instead, Manly characterized natural selection "not as directing,

propulsive force, but as a sieve" (17). Translated to literary history, this meant that "literature is not a plant or an animal; it develops in accordance with the laws of its own existence" (4). Thus Manly subordinated questions of authorship to classification; it was the first articulation of his predilection to formalism.

But "Literary Forms and the New Theory of the Origin of Species" also carried a reformist tone; that, in addition to being useful to philology, the proper study of Darwin was to become an irrefutable element of any scientific education and that such education was (ideally) available to all. And to underscore his own challenge to the Social Darwinists, Manly published a series of related essays by various writers after becoming editor of the journal in 1908; these contested Herbert Spencer's reading of Darwin. Manly's opposition to Social Darwinism or its Baconian streak could not have been more firm, or his growing commitment to somewhat impersonal, formalist theories of genre and language more clear.

It was altogether unpredictable, then, that Manly would have engaged the work of the Riverbank Baconians at all, or they him. His interest in Riverbank began at the very latest in 1916, and it included both correspondence and visits. The Manly Papers at the University of Chicago bristle with personal letters, some of them rather amusing, in which Manly attempted to negotiate in as polite a manner the demands made upon him for resources, research assistance, or even public support by Fabyan and the more enthusiastic members of his cohort. Manly was repeatedly bombarded with requests to endorse the Riverbank work or to join the "American Academy of Baconian Literature" established there, and Manly, perhaps out of pity, conceded some assistance (most often of a bibliographical nature, meant perhaps to gently correct them).

It was the literary-formalist allure of cryptology, rather than its Baconian, Social Darwinist distortion, that drew Manly to Riverbank. Manly's "Literary Forms and the New Theory of the Origin of the Species" had been careful in its estimation of literary theory and its formalist possibilities. Cryptology promised something more. Beginning with the major nineteenth-century decryptions of lost languages (the most famous of which had been the decipherment of the Rosetta Stone), "decipherment" and "decryption" became current within the anthropological horizon of the modern sciences. Cryptology was becoming synonymous with a new orthodoxy: it promised an exact, transparent hermeneutic science. In short, Francis Bacon's "cyphars" were not merely a linguistic trace of the late Middle Ages that had survived, like a vestigial tail appended to

modern literature; they marked the return of what Michel Foucault would later describe as “a difficult, hermetic, and esoteric learning.”²⁰

Manly soon befriended two newlywed Riverbank employees named William and Elizebeth Friedman.²¹ They began corresponding at a moment when the Friedmans began to doubt the scientific merits of the Baconian argument. With the United States increasingly involved in WWI, the Friedmans deposed Elizabeth Wells Gallup and redirected the efforts of the Riverbank cipher department toward perfecting cryptology as a formal science rather than using it to prove Social Darwinist theories. The Friedmans later developed, with Manly’s advice, both a new terminology and pedagogy for the science of ciphers and codes.

Sensing political opportunity in the Friedmans’ practical revision of the Riverbank research, Fabyan offered the services of Riverbank Laboratory to the U.S. government at the eve of WWI (Fabyan was to benefit little from the decision). The U.S. Departments of State and War accepted the offer because they lacked competent cryptologists, and they sent young officers to Riverbank to study elementary cryptology.²² After teaching several courses at Riverbank, William Friedman enlisted in the U.S. Army and later served in its Signal Corps in France during the war.

Manly (then age fifty-two) also volunteered his service in September of 1917, first to the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Investigation (later FBI) and later to the U.S. Department of War. Together with his University of Chicago colleagues Rickert and J.R. Hulbert, Manly was eventually commissioned to work in the Intelligence Bureau of the War Office in Washington, D.C. He was assigned to the Military Intelligence Division of the General Staff, chief section 8 (MI-8), a small code-breaking office modeled loosely after those found scattered within various British and French military institutions. The Chicago professors worked under Indiana native Herbert Yardley, a former State Department postal clerk who had recently taken a correspondence course in English literature from the University of Chicago. Manly was generally considered Yardley’s second in command, and he worked briefly in an official capacity as his substitute when Yardley later was sent to Europe.

The philologist was a careful and systematic reader, expert in languages, and generally accustomed to some institutional-bureaucratic work. It was for these reasons that literary scholars, linguists, poets, and other writers were preferred for cryptological work during WWI. MI-8 was staffed with humanists from several other major U.S. universities, most importantly The University of Chicago and Yale University. The Yale English

Department also contributed several “code-clerks” to MI-8 during WWI, including the scholar Chauncey Tinker and the young poet Stephen Vincent Benet.²³ Benet also worked at MI-8 together with the young fiction writer James Thurber, whom Benet later described as “an expert at solving difficult and improbable messages.”²⁴ Clerks such as Benet and Thurber were trained to decode and decipher captured enemy communications (cryptanalysis) and to supervise the other area of military cryptology known as cryptography, or the writing of codes and ciphers, to ensure their security in battlefield communications.

MI-8 was unprecedented in U.S. military intelligence history. It was staffed with a diverse group of amateur civilian cryptologists. More specifically, the University of Chicago contingent transferred their regionally specific, reformist impulse to the new institution. The Weberian efficacy of their instrumental reforms proved the new institution and its techniques indispensable to the Departments of War and State, and these later extended MI-8 (albeit in a new form) through the peace.²⁵ The literary humanists of MI-8 largely returned to their previous work following the war, while amateurs such as Yardley and the Friedmans continued to transform the U.S. security state over the following decades.²⁶ The two groups maintained, however, an extensive correspondence.²⁷

III

Manly and Rickert left MI-8 and Washington, D.C. in 1919, nearly two years after enlisting in the wartime intelligence services. They immediately set about publishing works that applied the lessons they had learned. These consisted for the most part in adapting models of collaborative labor, close reading techniques, and institutional reform to the teaching of writing and literature. Manly had composed a new textbook for student writers during the evenings after returning from MI-8 to his residence. Rickert later collaborated on the manuscript, which was published in late 1919 as *The Writing of English*. The work differed greatly from Manly’s earlier manual of style, co-written with John A. Powell and published in 1913 as *A Manual for Writers: Covering the Needs of Authors for Information on Rules of Writing and Practices in Printing*. The earlier work was digressive and didactic; it offered Platonic ruminations on thinking, speech, and writing, Romantic tangents on authorship reminiscent of Keats’s famed letter about “negative capability,” and rested on assumptions about “gentle breeding.”

Where the earlier *Manual for Writers* was written for an adult and non-academic audience, the later works written by Manly and Rickert were composed specifically for young college students as primers in rhetoric and style. *The Writing of English* thus differed entirely in audience and approach from its predecessor, as would the later *Writer's Index* (1923). It also carried the imprimatur of the MI-8 experience.

Manly and Rickert approached the teaching of writing in these works as a distinctly institutional intervention. The later of the two manuals is emphatic about the matter. The work begins with the student's institutional encounter (represented by the library) and then proceeds to discuss interpersonal (speech) and impersonal (written) communication. In its directions on how to use a library, revise one's writing, and even choose the paper stock on which to write, Manly and Rickert formalized and demonstrated, in practical lessons, how to obtain the advantages of proper writing (and, to a lesser degree, speech); to that effect, Rickert and Manly's use of terms such as "breeding" designated a type of education which college students from varied social backgrounds could attain. They proposed an institutional reformation of the subject.

The work maintained, however, Manly's earlier commitment to Pragmatism. Indeed, much of the work echoes Dewey's educational writings, which theorized students as more active in learning. In this respect, Manly and Rickert's primers should ring familiar to contemporary composition theorists. In particular, *The Writer's Index* encouraged students of college writing to exchange writings with peers, practice critical reading and notation, and to converse about writing to the end of "promoting variety and flexibility of style" (232). Manly and Rickert's manuals rendered universal notions of education accessible to their readers. These were the components of a disciplinary shift toward a more inclusive and professional model of pedagogy in which students attained status rather than having it granted to them by the privileged and forceful determinism theorized by the Social Darwinists.

But there is one exception. Manly and Rickert's work theorized an exchange between the subject and the institution. A figure began to emerge, if only in silhouette, that resembled a classical humanist reinforced with a new, technocratic intelligence. Rickert and Manly's other reformist interventions during this period compliment this notion. Manly would dedicate his work to specific institutional reforms for English departments while Rickert would focus on literary hermeneutics that drew largely upon her work at MI-8; the two would often overlap.

Manly announced his institutional designs when in 1920 he became President of the Modern Language Association (MLA). In his presidential address, titled "New Bottles," Manly outlined a model for the MLA's reconfiguration that sought to replicate the collaborative dynamic of his fellow WWI cryptologists. The model was one of supervised, collaborative, research: the MLA should "direct the investigations" of individual scholars in the field (xlvi). This program would focus the "organization for the accomplishment of purposes too large for a single investigator" (xlix), such as the editing and studying of a "great text or body of texts" (xlvi). The MLA should also modify its annual convention to facilitate such cooperation by providing meetings and panels specific to certain research groups and fields of interest (lv–lvi) and expend greater effort to coordinate bibliographical research (lvii).

Furthermore, Manly argued, the Association might also engage in an anthropological/linguistic endeavor focused on American English and its dialects, as well as a "recording of the languages all over the world which are vanishing before the advance of modern civilization." In addition to these projects, the association would also promote a "cooperative" study of the critical methods use to study the "problems of versification, the basis of rhythm, the perception of time relations, the rhythms of prose, and other related topics" (liii). The anthropological-linguistic components of the modern sciences were thus joined to emergent formalist theories of reading and literary language.²⁸ Manly concluded the speech with a visionary, even utopian depiction of the MLA's future institutional form:

Most of us can do but little, because our eyes are fixed, not on the great and wonderful building we are helping to rear—the structure of human evolution, the complete record of man's struggles and defeats and successes, of his dreams, of his plans, his battle cries, his songs to celebrate his triumphs or banish his faintness or drown his despair—but upon the single stone each of us is shaping, the brick he is molding for the building. Doubtless the stone cutter must keep his eye on the stone; but the public will not give money for stones and bricks unless it is allowed to see the plans for the building. Each of us who are at work on the details has his own picture—if not of the completed building, at least of the part on which he is at work. We could hardly labor as we do if we labored in complete blindness; and yet too often we are disappointed, resentful, scornful, if the public, which has never seen the drawings for our building, is not greatly interested in the size and shape and number of the bricks we have made. The building is the

thing, the palace of art, the structure of the intellectual evolution of mankind; let us show them the palace, or at least find the showman.²⁹

Manly's MLA replicated the institutional model by which cryptology had earlier shifted from what was known as individual "chamber analysis" to collaborative labor. There is perhaps a veiled reference to Herbert Yardley, the notorious "showman" of U.S. cryptology and his former director in MI-8, in the final sentence.³⁰ Manly surely recognized how effective Yardley had been in advocating an institutional form for cryptology during WWI and sought to replicate his success by stimulating a similar reform in university English departments.³¹

But Manly eventually dedicated himself instead to more discreet interventions than had Yardley. In 1920 he wrote in his letters about restructuring the Comparative Literature program at the University of Chicago.³² His students and colleagues published, in 1923, *The Manly Anniversary Studies in Language in Literature*. While it was a respectable collection of essays on literary history, linguistics, and philology, it was also a tribute to Manly's recent professional work and departmental reforms. Manly's MLA address, his subsequent departmental reforms, and the tributes dedicated to them were precedents for a collaborative project begun in 1924: the monumental eight-volume study of Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, a work that largely followed the outline he himself had prescribed in the MLA address.

Manly's reforms were of two specific kinds. The first, proposed at the MLA, advocated an increased inter-institutional communication between individual members to encourage cross-disciplinary and collaborative labor. The second was didactic: to introduce textbooks that advocated new hermeneutic methods. As Hulbert noted of Manly's early anthologies *English Poetry* (1907) and *English Prose* (1909), "their value for teaching was quickly recognized since they made it possible for students to study the literature itself instead of books about it."³³ While the institution proposed by Manly was an MI-8 for the U.S. humanities, its occupants were modern students who occupied the silhouette that emerged ever more clearly from the occult, reformist cloud that shrouded it.

It was Rickert who later sounded the call to "literature itself" in a contemporary vein. Hulbert stated with respect to Rickert that "her teaching consisted chiefly of courses on Chaucer and contemporary literature, the latter something of an innovation at the time as a topic of college instruction." Her experiments in teaching contemporary literature resulted in the

formulation of a new literary hermeneutics, the equivalent of which Manly never produced; in fact, Hulbert notes that Manly contributed as “adviser only” to the anthologies.³⁴

Rickert convinced both Manly and the graduate students in the Department of English at the University of Chicago to experiment with new methods of literary analysis. The results were published in Rickert’s *New Methods for the Study of Literature* (1927). The book attempted to synthesize coherent methods of literary criticism that Rickert and Manly had advocated in the *Contemporary American Literature* anthology. *New Methods for the Study of Literature* also drew upon Rickert’s work in MI-8. She stated in her foreword that the “root” of her method

lies, strangely enough, in the methods of code analysis used in the Code and Cipher Section of the Military Intelligence in Washington, during the war. In the belief that processes which served to bring content out of series of numbers and other meaningless symbols might also be applied to the analysis of literature, an attempt was made in 1922, in a graduate course at the University of Chicago, to work out scientifically some of the phenomena of tone color and rhythm. Later, methods were found for the study of imagery, of words, of sentences, and of visual devices.³⁵

Rickert’s book rests at the crossroads of philology and cryptology. Rickert outlined a pedagogy that might result, replete with textbooks and a uniform method.³⁶ Rickert’s work combined pedagogical Pragmatism with institutional reform. The student/reader assumed a central position in this intensive hermeneutic model. It was a location secured by the student’s ability to replicate an institutionalized, even quantified model of reading. The assignment lessons included in the work reinforced the reader’s place. The modern student of English, capable of dismantling sentences and words by James Joyce or Joseph Conrad, analyzing them for psychological effect and quantifying significant repetition, more fully embodied the vessel Manly had described in “New Bottles.” Manly himself noted in the book’s brief introduction that

as Professor Rickert herself says, a piece of literature must produce its effects solely by means of the symbols through which the artist communicates to his audience, because there is no other medium between artist and audience.³⁷

The passage's key words echo the language of I.A. Richards and C.K. Ogden in *The Meaning of Meaning*; Manly is clearly situating Rickert's work with respect to that earlier influential book and emphasizing what it shares with Richards's more recent studies of literary language and communication. Indeed, Richards would reappear in Manly's letters (he had wanted to hire him to the University of Chicago) and unpublished papers.³⁸ *New Methods for the Study of Literature* was also a precursor to the sorts of textual analysis advocated later by the New Criticism, not only in its advocacy of "literature itself" but also in its confrontation with the discipline's history. Rickert's work effectively extended and modulated a long debate over the scientific validity of literary criticism in the United States. She noted "more than a half century ago, the scientific method, which was beginning to creep into every phase of life, began to be applied to the study of literature."³⁹ Manly concurred, as he noted in his preface that Rickert's book was "the sign and the cause of a new era in the study of literature."⁴⁰

While Manly and Rickert's institutional Pragmatism prepared the field of literary criticism during the 1920s to accept Richards and his American heirs, it would be incorrect however to regard Rickert and Manly as mere precursors of literary formalism.⁴¹ Rather, Rickert and Manly elaborated earlier discursive currents, some of which began to diverge before literary formalism had appeared on the American scene. The most important of these was the Pragmatist critique of Social Darwinism, which stimulated the centrifugal flight of disciplines—pedagogy, linguistics, cryptology—that had previously been joined to philology. Working along this discursive rift, Manly and Rickert negotiated national debates such as that which pitted a scientific version of literary study against reformist claims to its civic relevance.⁴² Yet the regional and local debates that informed their work (such as the Riverbank Baconians) were perhaps even more important than the national debates in that they made possible unprecedented exchanges between institutions such as the University of Chicago and MI-8. It was by such local interventions that Anglophone literary formalism eventually passed over philology to occupy the edifice that Manly envisioned in his MLA address, and it did so by displacing the "going codes" of a genteel, Victorian literary world.⁴³

It is difficult, however, to regard Manly and Rickert's unique careers in a way that is not stained by the intense ideological pressures of the Cold War; viewed through those arrangements, it would seem that they contributed to an emergent, anti-historicist formalism that was favored over

its historicist competitors. That long-standing perception of formalism, which is ultimately an internationalist one, seems reductive precisely with respect to the national and even provincial debates that informed Manly and Rickert's work. But that same provincialism seems cosmopolitan when compared, for example, with the agrarian nostalgia of the New Criticism. The missionary zeal of their reforms is perhaps the only matter that remains constant through such comparisons; the amnesiac consequences for English or its occult institutional phenomena in the security state were, as I noted earlier, another matter.

Manly and Rickert's work remains fixed at a transitional, if not disturbing moment in the discipline's history. And while it is worthwhile to consider its consequence, it is more urgent to interrogate the discursive limits set upon such investigations by current institutional models. In saying this I do not call for any retreat into a recessive nostalgia for a totalizing humanism, nor is it a call to the alleged hope that resistance to such humanism inspires. Rather, any such representative work must be set aside in order to confront the current discursive limits imposed upon the discipline from without and from within. Such a confrontation might suggest that genealogy, or at least its radical misappropriation, have obstructed the historical truth; ironically, it is only from such a situation that a proper genealogy might begin.

NOTES

1. David Kahn, *The Codebreakers: A History of Secret Communication* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1967); James Bamford, *The Puzzle Palace: A Report on America's Most Secret Agency* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1982).
2. See Paul Virilio, "The Data Coup D'Etat," in *The Art of the Motor*, trans. Julie Rose (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 23–34; Armand Mattelart, *Mapping World Communication* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994).
3. DeLanda borrows the phrase from Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. See Manuel De Landa, *War in the Age of Intelligent Machines* (New York: Zone Books, 1991).
4. Without going into great detail, I have generally followed Edward W. Said's critique of Michel Foucault's work in this matter. The point is that, following Said, one returns to philology—the primary discipline in the shift in question.

5. J. R. Hulbert, "John Matthews Manly 1865–1940," *Modern Philology* 38, no. 1 (1940): 2. Manly was chairperson until 1933 despite the fact that he had worked for only a brief time in academia.
6. John Matthews Manly, Edith Rickert, Mabel Dean, Helen McIntosh, and Margaret Josephine Rickert. *The Text of the Canterbury Tales: Studied on the Basis of All Known Manuscripts*, Vol. I (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1940), vii.
7. She earned her Ph.D. in 1899. Her colleague J.R. Hulbert contributed an insightful biography to *The Dictionary of American Biography: Supplement Two* (1958).
8. "John Matthews Manly 1865–1949," 2.
9. Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought*, revised ed. (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1955), 8.
10. See John Irwin, *American Hieroglyphics: The Symbol of the Egyptian Hieroglyphics in the American Renaissance* (1980).
11. See, for example, Lawrence Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America* (1988).
12. Shawn Rosenheim briefly discusses Hawthorne's contribution in *The Cryptographic Imagination: Secret Writing from Edgar Poe to the Internet* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 11.
13. The book even prompted Friedrich Nietzsche's ire in *Ecce Homo*, although it was of a different sort than the wounded nationalism that Donnelly was subject to when he later lectured in England.
14. See Kahn, *The Codebreakers*, 875–879.
15. These included *Francis Bacon and His Secret Society* (1891) and *Shakespeare Studies in Baconian Light* (1901).
16. The most concise summary of the Shakespeare-Bacon Debate can be found in William and Elizebeth Friedman's *The Shakespearean Ciphers Examined* (1957). The Friedmans began their careers in cryptology at the aforementioned Riverbank Laboratories.
17. Rosenheim has incongruously described the Baconian project in the following terms: "Ciphred readings of Shakespeare aim to disrupt the authority of canons, the construction of authors, and the relation between authors and the works they produce—in part by mimicking the protocol of the literary history they resist" (10). Rosenheim's account disguises the awkward political affiliations of the Baconian movement in contemporary literary jargon. The Baconians desired the prestige of literary-scientific protocol, but only to conservative, often racist ends.
18. Hofstadter's account of Dewey's career is canonical. See Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought*, 135–141.
19. For example, an essay on Henry James by James's friend Robert Herrick was later included in an anthology dedicated to Manly.

20. Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Madness in the Age of Reason*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Vintage, 1988), 21.
21. The modern U.S. institutional intelligence apparatus was founded primarily as a result of the Friedmans' work.
22. Elizebeth later achieved prominence as a cryptanalyst while working for the U.S. Coast Guard against rum-runners during Prohibition. Both worked as consultants to various government agencies over the following decades, and William was eventually instrumental breaking the Japanese military codes during World War II (WWII) and in founding the National Security Agency after WWII.
23. Chauncey Tinker was a prominent Yale scholar of Old and Middle English, and his late essays on modern literature discuss many writers who were important to his young protégé, Stephen Vincent Benet (in particular William Morris). There are several biographical discussions of Benet's work for MI-8. See, for example, his brother William Rose Benet's essay, "My Brother Steve" (viii) and Charles Fenton's biography *Stephen Vincent Benet* (73–75). See also David Kahn's *The Reader of Gentleman's Mail* (30). William Rose Benet, "My Brother Steve," in *Twenty-Five Short Stories by Stephen Vincent Benet* (Garden City, NY: Sun Dial Press, 1943), vi–xiii; David Kahn, *The Reader of Gentleman's Mail: Herbert O. Yardley and the Birth of American Codebreaking* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004).
24. Neil Grauer, *Remember Laughter: A Life of James Thurber* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 15. Thurber completed his cipher training and was eventually sent to Paris to work as a code clerk during the Armistice. Thurber does not mention his cryptological work in his letters until after the war, when he was stationed in Paris. Burton Bernstein's biography of Thurber offers an amusing account of Thurber's work in Paris, and includes references to specific codes and political figures, including Woodrow Wilson's famous confidante, Colonel House. See *Thurber* 78–81.
25. Post-WWI U.S. intelligence agencies were modeled, as were those of every other military power, after the successful French *Bureau du Chiffre* of the nineteenth century. I discussed these institutions in greater detail in my doctoral dissertation, *Mercury of the Waves: Cryptology and U.S. Literature* (University of Pittsburgh, 2005). Historian David Kahn and journalist James Bamford are among the most notable contemporary authorities on the subject, while Manuel De Landa's *War in the Age of Intelligence Machines* is indispensable.
26. Some remained divided between the two careers. Charles Mendelsohn, who taught at the University of Pennsylvania and City College in New York, continued to work with Yardley during the 1920s.

27. That correspondence between the Friedmans and Manly lasted until the latter's death in 1940.
28. This conjunction would benefit the United States security agencies greatly during WWII when it deployed the Navajo code-talkers.
29. John Matthews Manly, "The President's Address: New Bottles," *PMLA* 35 (1920): lxix.
30. Yardley's 1931 book, *The American Black Chamber*, was so scandalous that it prompted the revision of the U.S. national security laws.
31. It was perhaps I.A. Richards, however, who proved the catalyst (rather than the showman) that Manly had hoped would arrive.
32. One such letter may be found in Box 2, Folder 8 of the John Matthews Manly papers in the Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
33. J.R. Hulbert, "John Matthews Manly," in *The Dictionary of American Biography: Supplement One and Two*, Vol. XI, ed. Robert Livingstone Schuyler and Edward T. James (New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1958), 427.
34. J.R. Hulbert, "Martha Edith Rickert," in *The Dictionary of American Biography: Supplement One and Two*, Vol. XI, ed. Robert Livingstone Schuyler and Edward T. James (New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1958), 557, 558.
35. Edith Rickert, *New Methods for the Study of Literature* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1927), v.
36. *Ibid.*, vi.
37. *Ibid.*, ix.
38. Manly often praised Richards' work. Among his papers at the University of Chicago there is the unpublished manuscript of a speech titled "The Teaching of Literatures" in which Manly clearly designates the "aesthetic" approach of Richards as the most likely future path of literary studies.
39. Rickert, *New Methods*, 1. Erika Lindemann has described the history of rhetoric as contemporaneous with the moment to which Rickert refers: "courses in the reading and analysis of English literature were not to become part of the curriculum until the second half of the nineteenth century" (52). Erika Lindemann, *A Rhetoric for Writing Teachers*, 4th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).
40. Both Manly and Rickert often echoed Darwinian terms in these later works. In "New Bottles," Manly juxtaposed "evolution" with the masons who designed the figurative edifice; in a similar vein, Rickert characterized philology as the study of the historical "environment" of literature.
41. William Friedman and the New Critic W.K. Wimsatt would later correspond on the subject of cryptology during the late 1930s and 1940s, citing one another in their works on the subject.

42. Contemporary literary historian Gerald Graff argues that one has to understand that while it was the scientific model of research that justified philological studies of literature to other professionals inside the university, it was the civic and humanist claims of literature that justified those studies to outsiders (5). Gerald Graff, "Introduction," in *The Origins of Literary Studies in America: A Documentary Anthology*, ed. Gerald Graff (New York: Routledge, 1989), 1–14.
43. Daniel Aaron, "Literary Scenes and Movements," in *Columbia Literary History of the United States*, ed. Emory Elliott (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 735.
44. The John Matthews Manly Papers located at the University of Chicago Library, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center. I thank the Center, and in particular Daniel Meyer and Julia Gardner, for their particularly generous assistance in the research for this essay. I cite and refer to sections of the John Matthews Manly Papers with the Center's written consent.

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John Matthews Manly and the Riverbank Laboratory Network: The Fabyan and Friedman Correspondence

Katherine Ellison

In a recorded interview now declassified in the Friedman papers of the Marshall Library archives, Elizebeth Smith Friedman notes that her experience working at the Riverbank Laboratory taught her that “rich people never pay their bills.”¹ She was referring, at least in part, to the financial promises of “Colonel” George Fabyan, the eccentric millionaire who in 1911 opened and directed the 500-acre Riverbank Laboratory, a research facility in the countryside of Geneva, Illinois that specialized in acoustics, cryptology, agricultural genetics, and diverse other projects that piqued Fabyan’s interest. Fabyan was not a researcher or academic himself; he inherited his wealth from his family’s Massachusetts textile empire and, after working various jobs in Chicago after his move there at the age of sixteen in 1883, he developed an interest in funding projects that excited his curiosity, particularly ones that were not supported by universities.

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Fabyan noted that “some rich men go in for art collections, gay times on the Riviera, or extravagant living, but they all get satiated. That’s why I stick to scientific experiments, spending money to discover valuable things that universities can’t afford. You never get sick of too much knowledge.”² Fabyan certainly spent money on experiments universities did not fund, though as Smith Friedman reveals, it did not necessarily go to the scholars he recruited to Riverbank. However, Fabyan’s invitations to scholars, including Smith Friedman and William F. Friedman—who would meet at Riverbank and wed in 1917—as well as to John Matthews Manly and several other researchers from a range of disciplines, did help create a network of productive, interdisciplinary collaborations.³

This chapter examines correspondence and resulting collaboration between Manly and scholars at Riverbank Laboratory, looking closely at what was at stake in the private financing of academic research. Other chapters in this collection highlight the particular relationships that Manly and Rickert developed with other academics in literary studies, and in the previous chapter, Henry Veggian introduces us to Manly and Rickert’s work in cryptology and the ways in which their pragmatist critiques of Social Darwinism predate, but anticipate, literary formalism. Riverbank was a site of Social Darwinist experimentation. I build from that critique, here, to explore the particular relationships that influenced Manly as he became interested in cryptology as a method for analyzing language and teaching writing and literary analysis. In the next chapter, John Dooley will explore in more detail the unique methods and insight that Manly and Rickert brought to code breaking, which they would then adapt in their next literary projects. Through his Riverbank networks, Manly experienced a kind of cross-pollination with colleagues in genetics, engineering, mathematics, military science, and architecture, an experience that opened his eyes to the richness of interdisciplinarity and encouraged him to seek out partnerships in new fields. As Dooley examines, he then brought Rickert, as well as other University of Chicago colleagues and students, into the network as they worked together on codes for MI-8, a military intelligence team that included scholars from Riverbank. Though he was not interested in the literary research that Fabyan funded, Manly was nonetheless influenced by the Riverbank model of collaboration between experts and nonspecialists, between humanists and early data specialists, and between wealthy donors and academics. Joining Manly on the government cryptology work that resulted from Riverbank’s dabblings in decryption and subsequent organization of a deciphering training

program, Rickert was also changed by this idea that humanist intellectual work, research driven by curiosity, and close reading and analysis of language and texts could take place within a laboratory, with teams of experts working together as they do in the sciences.

Manly and Rickert adapted this Riverbank model of collaboration in their future scholarly work on Chaucer and other projects, but they did not adopt the beliefs that had led Fabyan to create his think tank. As Veggian also finds, Fabyan was a Social Darwinist determined to establish that a lower working-class man could not have produced the works of genius that represented the pinnacle of human creative achievement, and he put one project at the center of his Riverbank dream: the literary quest to prove that Francis Bacon, a noble, had authored the works of William Shakespeare. Smith Friedman put it bluntly: "one of the things he fell for which shows his lack of education was the bilateral [sic] cipher of Sir Francis Bacon."⁴ Manly and Rickert's educational philosophy was directly opposed to Fabyan's and shaped by their personal backgrounds and commitment to student-centered pedagogy and wider class access to education, pioneered by theorists like John Dewey, who had also taught at the University of Chicago. These theories were transforming universities in the early twentieth century, particularly Midwestern institutions like the University of Chicago, where Manly and Rickert would advocate for a more democratic approach to the teaching of reading and writing and significantly influence curriculum.

This chapter provides more detail about Manly's epistolary correspondence with Fabyan, contextualized within Manly's experiences handling conflict, which reveals a philosophical duel played out in real time and in a tense, but sometimes hilarious, clash of discourses. Fabyan, with his aggressive business style, and bolstered by his unwavering and absolute confidence in the superiority of his upper-class intellect, attempted to bully and manipulate Manly into participation in the Shakespeare-Bacon research, but Manly countered at every turn. Yet, as a curious academic, cryptology fascinated him, and he involved Rickert and other colleagues in learning this new field. Though critics like William Snell have theorized that their cryptography work "undermined" the quality of their medieval scholarship, they clearly valued the knowledge they gained as cryptanalysts.⁵ This new kind of engagement with language and culture energized them not just as literary scholars but as *thinkers*. Their engagement with this work was not for Fabyan's benefit or out of any debt to him, as the Friedmans would experience, but to satisfy their own interests. Polite and

respectful, yet unwavering in his ethics and scholarly integrity, Manly appears to have entertained the possibility that their deciphering work might also be a means of *educating Fabyan* and other Social Darwinists. In contrast to his correspondence with Fabyan, Manly's communication with William F. Friedman demonstrates a genuine scholarly collaboration and friendship, a sharing of disciplinary knowledge across fields for the love of knowledge and mastery and not for personal profit, ego, or status. Though they did not agree on all topics, even ethically (as in the case of Herbert O. Yardley's publication of *The American Black Chamber* in 1931), they maintained a productive collaboration over a long period of time. I explore how Manly and Rickert negotiated and were influenced by these relationships and the extent to which those relationships led to a number of important directions in their lives, which are discussed in the conclusion of this collection. These include their commitment to libraries, the building of collections, and the accessibility of archives to the have-nots as well as the haves of the academic world.

GEORGE FABYAN, RIVERBANK LABORATORY, AND SOCIAL DARWINISM

Fabyan worked within the same networks as John D. Rockefeller, William Rainey Harper, and the corporate interests controlling the direction of the University of Chicago. He corresponded regularly with the university and its administration, worked with the library, and sought connections with the faculty. He was also operating as a millionaire within a Chicago culture increasingly wary of wealthy exploitation of the poor and working class. As contemporaries, like Jane Addams, were focusing efforts on creating settlement houses to aid the poor, Fabyan was setting up a live-in laboratory that, on the surface, appeared to be a philanthropic gift to science and the arts, funding diverse projects outside the spectrum of university research and offering opportunities to struggling academics. Yet, across the street from his laboratory, sat the Illinois State Training School for Girls, an institution that came to be known for cruelty and discrimination against the poor, which was founded in 1894. The tone of *The American Journal of Sociology*, which reported on the school in 1903, reflects the Social Darwinist attitudes toward philanthropy that Fabyan also demonstrated. The journal notes of the Geneva training school that "as they come largely from the slum districts of Chicago, we are not surprised to learn that

nearly 50 per cent. are afflicted with some venereal disease, and almost as many suffer from some stomach trouble, caused by inherited weakness, lowered vitality, bad food, narcotics and alcohol.”⁶ Fabyan supported the school, checking on it and providing maintenance. When foot-and-mouth disease was allowed to spread through the Chicago Stock Yards, potentially infecting many agricultural animals across Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana, and Minnesota, the school was directed to exterminate all of its cows, upon which the school—and Riverbank—depended for meals. Fabyan intervened and, controversially, used his staff veterinarian to declare that the animals were not infected (to the damage of the doctor’s reputation, even though he was correct). Other interactions may have been less heroic. By one unconfirmed account, Fabyan may have used the girls as unpaid servants. Without citation, Andrea Nolen alleges that “Fabyan kept a colony of wayward youth—blond girls this time— borrowed from the nearby Illinois State Training School for Delinquent and Dependent Girls, whom he housed in a cottage with his name over the door.”⁷ While the school was supposed to have been created for young women convicted of crimes, it predominantly housed women between the ages of ten and sixteen who were deemed mentally ill, destitute or in poverty, who were pregnant out of wedlock, or who were perceived as having disciplinary issues that made them unfit for school. Many were African American, and all were vulnerable.

Whatever role Fabyan may have played in maintaining the school or employing its students, its function seemed to reflect the same attitudes at the core of Riverbank Laboratory: the philosophical belief in the natural superiority of the rich, in “survival of the fittest,” and in what James A. Berlin calls the “literacy of meritocracy.”⁸ As Veggian finds, Fabyan was a Social Darwinist with an interest in Populist politics, and he followed the philosophy that wealth and success are the visible, measurable manifestations of genetic dominance, hence the genetic research—for which William Friedman had been recruited—that took place at Riverbank alongside the Shakespeare investigation. The role of Riverbank in the Chicago reform movement is not the subject of this chapter, but it is worth pointing out that the character, purposes, and motivations of and for philanthropy at this time were controversial and often difficult to identify. Fabyan’s own father, George Francis, a physician who had turned a small dry goods emporium into a cotton empire, for example, was a member of the Overseers of the Poor in Boston, which described itself as a charity and relief organization. That he contributed time and money for the relief of

poverty is clear in the documentation of the organization, yet annual reports also articulate a tone of contempt. The wealthy who helped create and organize the Overseers did so largely out of disgust for the poor and a desire to eliminate begging as a public nuisance: “Large cities draw together the idle, the thriftless, the vicious. This class live, if they can, on the industrious and thrifty; they would be fed and warmed and clothed on means they do not earn; and as long as money or other assistance can be had for the mere asking, beggars will abound and multiply.”⁹ Fabyan’s father worked to close loopholes that allowed begging, to create a verification or application system so that only the worthy poor could receive assistance, and he also advocated for an almshouse on Deer Island, purposely situated next to the prison there. Though the organization acknowledged that this proximity might conflate poverty and crime, they thought it important that the poor be segregated from the rest of society.

Though the father and son had not always seen eye to eye, the younger, more eccentric Fabyan seems to have inherited this philosophy of philanthropy but applied his fortune in a unique way. Not content to only run the Chicago base of the multi-million dollar inherited family business, Fabyan sought even more visible ways to prove that he was not only financially but *intellectually* (and thus genetically) privileged, creating Riverbank, a think tank to which he invited experts in a range of fields to prove, among many things, that poverty is a sign of degeneration, a weakness in nature that can be scientifically demonstrated. Clearly, Riverbank was a kind of workshop for the eugenics movement. When one researches Riverbank, the first hits are invariably about Riverbank’s geographic and architectural splendor. Nestled in the countryside of Geneva, Illinois, close enough for a commute to bustling Chicago but far enough to feel detached and tranquil, Riverbank’s Japanese gardens, exotic animals, and swinging chairs have been characterized as playful eccentricities. Yet, the architectural choices are reflections of Fabyan’s political and social worldview. The estate, in fact, *needed* to be visually stunning; it was meant to serve as a spectacle of his worldliness, a performance of his breadth of knowledge and cultural sophistication. Just as he had been given the title of “Colonel” without having served in the military, Fabyan also tried to play the role of intellectual without the education or disciplinary training. As the Friedmans put it in *The Shakespearean Ciphers Examined* in 1957, Fabyan “had the trick of parroting other people’s jargon; his conversation was usually impressive—superficially, anyway.”¹⁰

While a university education (which Fabyan did not have) has certainly never been a prerequisite to intellectualism, Fabyan was not even known to study on his own.¹¹ It was not, however, contradictory to believe in one's mental superiority based on class status, race, and gender by soliciting the assistance of experts of all classes, races, and genders to work on his projects; in fact, as Berlin notes, this is the investigative process of a Social Darwinist theory of literacy. The answer to all questions, no matter the discipline, "can be found unproblematically in the facts of the material world" and "the method of investigation is inductive, amassing data for the analysis of university-trained experts"¹². Fabyan saw himself as a *collector* and as a *connector*, as the instrument through which data could be gathered and compiled for that analysis by others, as evidenced by his invitation to Manly and other literature professors to analyze the findings of his team of amateur Shakespeare readers. In Fabyan's collaborative model, the privileged superiority of wealth and status should serve as the central conduit connecting trained specialists. Riverbank certainly did that, though its results would be more successful in fields like acoustics than in literary study.¹³

It is not the focus of this chapter to summarize the Bacon-Shakespeare theory that Elizabeth Wells Gallup worked tirelessly to prove for Fabyan, and for which Fabyan spent large sums of money to confirm, though he would insist multiple times that he did not care whether it was found true or false. Admittedly, by 1929, he had finally changed his mind.¹⁴ For this collection, what is most interesting about that project is its laboratory research model as applied to humanistic inquiry, its success in bringing together scholars who discovered a passion for cryptology, its influence as a cautionary tale for archival literary study driven by personal, corporate interests and nonspecialist agendas, and its role in contemporary developments in library science. However, it is useful to consider Fabyan's political and personal motivations for investing so much time and money into the theory that a working-class man named Shakespeare never existed or, at the least, could not write works like *Hamlet*.

As Veggian notes, Riverbank Laboratory was directly opposed to—was in a sense even created to counter—the political and educational reform efforts of Chicago activists like Addams, Dewey, and Ella Flagg Young. At Addam's Hull House, Shakespeare had become a core curricular figure. Recitations and plays were performed regularly. The vision was that the working class could not only access and enjoy sophisticated, complex works of literature but could also see themselves as having the potential for

talent and greatness, finding inspiration in the achievements of a figure from lower-class beginnings. Addams, who helped run the convention in Chicago in 1912 to confirm Theodore Roosevelt's nomination as a Progressive party presidential candidate, took the political opposite to Fabyan's Populist stance. Veggian argues that "Riverbank cryptology challenged the platform in American education that rested upon the understanding of Shakespeare as an author of vulgar social lineage," and the "anti-reformist reforms of Riverbank followed [Ignatius] Donnelly in opposing 'sacralization' of Shakespeare as a model of liberal education."¹⁵ Donnelly, who had written *The Great Cryptogram* in 1888, was candidate for U.S. Vice President for the Populist Party in 1900. Debunking Shakespeare was a decidedly Republican campaign. Alfred Kazin would call Donnelly's literary scheme, and the Populist adoption of the Shakespeare-Bacon theory that Fabyan would try to "prove," a sign of "Know-Nothing native fascism."¹⁶

But why invest so much of his political passion, time, and money into literary study, when he could have countered the reform efforts of figures like Addams in so many other ways? Fabyan realized that the teaching of literature, and the methods of humanistic inquiry used by literary scholars at that time, were at the center of liberal character. Disprove the very foundations of literary analysis, debunk the one figure who had come to represent working-class talent, propose an entirely new and largely quantitative way of doing humanities research, and one could completely dismantle the core beliefs of the liberal arts. The rising position of British literature in the university curriculum, and the establishment of core general education experiences that required the study of British literature, was in part a curricular consequence of the feud between the Social Darwinist and the Pragmatic philosophy. "The new home" of "the spirit of progress," Berlin finds, "was to be found in the language and literature of the Anglo-Protestant tradition." The debate over the "the correct study of the best literature" took place in universities and within Manly and Rickert's own department, certainly, but also well outside its walls.¹⁷

As Berlin finds, to the inherited wealthy without training in literary studies but aware of the political power of artistic legacies, Shakespeare, who had become an icon of middle-class talent, was an annoying anomaly in their belief that money is a measure of intelligence. This view is reflected even in what was once believed to be the earliest known manuscript to question Shakespeare's authorship and existence, a transcription of the 1805 lectures of James Corton Cowell. Allegedly, Cowell had been

convinced by the unpublished theory of eighteenth-century Oxford scholar, James Wilmot, that the plays exhibited more education, worldliness, and skill than any lower- or middle-class writer could possibly achieve. Both Wilmot's findings and the transcription of Cowell's lectures turned out to be forgeries created in the early twentieth century, as proven by James Shapiro, locating this class argument firmly in Fabyan's generation.¹⁸ Further, it was important to Social Darwinists that Shakespeare's writings *not* be taught as if they were accessible to everyone, no matter their social status. The ability to understand the complex language of Shakespeare should be reserved for privately educated aristocrats. While others might read his works for enjoyment, only those with the proper background could or should truly appreciate and critique them. However, this was not the trend in the public education movement.¹⁹

RESEARCH AT RIVERBANK LABORATORY: BUILDING NETWORKS

It was not the Shakespeare project that drew Manly and Rickert to Riverbank, though that was the impetus for Manly's first visit: it was the interdisciplinary network of scholars who developed creative, ground-breaking methodologies that were not bound by university restrictions. Though Fabyan's domineering presence and control of the finances certainly gave him great power, and he pushed for work on his own particular projects, it was the researchers who directed the resources and unlocked the vision of the laboratory. Many seemed to be much less influenced by Fabyan or his money than by their own curiosity. In the radiation laboratory, local physician and founder of Geneva's first hospital, Raymond G. Scott, assisted in cancer research. Wallace Clement Sabine made significant discoveries in the acoustics laboratory. Inspired by Bacon's idea for an acoustical levitation machine, Fabyan hired Sabine, at the recommendation of physicist B.E. Eisenour, to recreate it. Just as with Fabyan's failed attempt to prove that Bacon had authored Shakespeare's plays, Sabine could not build a working device, but the field of acoustic architecture would go on to influence a range of fields, including cryptography, during and after World War I. In the veterinary laboratory, hoof-and-mouth disease was investigated by specialists like A.M. Henderson, who had cleared the cows at the nearby school. There were also labs to study fire-retardant materials and, of course, the genetics research lab, with fields and greenhouses, where William Friedman was recruited to work alongside Karl Sax

in May of 1915. Breakthroughs were made in corn pollination, among other things.²⁰ Friedman would then moonlight on the Shakespeare project as a photographer, providing new methods for magnification.

Enlarged photographs were used in the lab run by Wells Gallup, who needed to closely scrutinize Shakespeare's first folio in order to separate the characters into two alphabetic types. Born in Paris, New York, in 1848, Gallup was well educated, trained at the University of Marburg with some coursework at the Sorbonne in Paris. She had been a teacher in Michigan and had become school principal. Inspired by mentor Orville Ward Owen, whose research Fabyan had already been funding, she published *The Bi-literal Cypher of Sir Francis Bacon Discovered in his Works and Deciphered by Elizabeth Wells Gallup* in 1899, with reprintings in 1900 and 1901.²¹ The book energized immediate controversy and vitriol, as well as some alliances and sympathies. Fabyan had supported Owen's exploration of the bottom of the Severn River, where Owen believed that Bacon had sunk important manuscripts in sealed containers. At the very same time, in a kind of competition, Owen's protégé, Wells Gallup—not yet introduced to Fabyan—was also in England searching for lost documents. She was on an expedition to break into a vault in Islington, U.K., to recover hidden Bacon manuscripts, the location for which she believed she had decrypted. Both treasure hunts failed; nothing was found in either location.²² Not long after, Kate Prescott, whom Smith Friedman would describe dramatically as the “woman of the Baconian underworld,” initiated a meeting between Fabyan and Wells Gallup.²³ He agreed to finance her research if she would move to Riverbank, which she did. She remained there and died on a pension from Fabyan in 1934. Her sister, Kate Wells, was also recruited to Riverbank. According to Smith Friedman, Fabyan felt that the only reason Wells Gallup's scholarship had not yet been accepted by the academic world was because it had not been properly marketed, which was his specialty.

Whether Wells Gallup was invested in the political significance of proving that a working-class author wrote *King Lear* or *Hamlet* is not clear, though there are suggestions of her class motivations in *The Bi-literal Cypher of Sir Francis Bacon* (1899). There, Wells Gallup tries to reassure the reader that disproving the existence of Shakespeare, allegedly a person of low birth, and proving that the plays were in fact written by an accomplished aristocrat, should not ruin the enjoyment of the works. “The plays of Shakespeare lost nothing of their dramatic power or wondrous beauty,

nor deserve the less admiration of the scholar and critic," she writes, "because inconsistencies are removed in the knowledge that they came from the brain of the greatest student and writer of that age, and were not the 'flash of genius' descended upon one of peasant birth, less noble history, and of no preparatory literary attainments."²⁴ It is perhaps important that the only audiences she says will still enjoy the plays are the scholar and critic—not the everyday, uneducated reader or one of "peasant birth." That Wells Gallup believed that she had found a real cipher, and was unlocking the secret of the plays' authorship, was not in doubt. "She believed everything that she did," Smith Friedman said.²⁵ It was because of this sincerity, and the Friedmans' desire to not hurt Wells Gallup as a person, that they waited until 1957, after Wells Gallup had passed away, to write *The Shakespearean Ciphers Examined: An Analysis of Cryptographic Systems Used as Evidence That Some Author Other Than William Shakespeare Wrote the Plays Commonly Attributed to Him* (1957).

Though contempt for lower-class literary aptitude may have been one impetus, and though Wells Gallup seemed to truly believe her theory, there were clearly other factors driving her lifelong obsession, which Manly and Rickert might well have understood and even shared. In the Afterword of *A Material History of Medieval and Early Modern Ciphers* (2018), Susan Kim and I argue that Wells Gallup had joined a network of scholars who seemed to be motivated by the need for inclusion, that this tireless work to decrypt Shakespeare is itself a symptom of the strains of scholarly isolation and the desire for connection and collaboration. Across the nineteenth-century history of the Baconian theory, one sees what Shapiro characterizes as "emerging notions of the autobiographical self." Nathaniel Hawthorne, for example, had attempted to link Delia Bacon's identity and scholarship to a *genealogy* of U.S. and British literary traditions.²⁶ Bacon, who was struggling for recognition by other scholars, hoped that if she could tie her identity to Francis Bacon, she would be accepted. As Shapiro points out, during the mid-nineteenth century critics were working toward a new conception of the narrating subject. Robert Willmott would promote the theory, in 1858, that the Shakespearean "sonnets are a chapter of autobiography, although remaining in cipher till criticism finds the key."²⁷ In other words, by discovering that Shakespeare was attempting to communicate secrets about his own biography—or another author, like Francis Bacon, was communicating those secrets in disguise as Shakespeare—scholars like Delia Bacon, and Wells Gallup after her, were connecting

their own lives to that discovery to legitimize their scholarship, asserting their position within a deep, rich history of literary criticism. They wanted to feel like they were part of something. The puzzle, the hunt, was itself an activity that gave them purpose. Wells Gallup says this explicitly in *The Bi-literal Cypher*: “Seeking for things hidden, the mysterious, elusive and unexpected, has a fascination for many minds, as it has for my own, and this often prompts to greater effort than more manifest and material things would command.”²⁸ Further, they wanted to believe that literary texts are *confessional*, that they can connect to readers of the future who are able and willing to read what is not on the surface.

Wells Gallup was also surrounded by scholars in need of employment, hungry for intellectual challenge, and excited about working as a team, which must have been invigorating for someone seeking inclusion. The Shakespeare authorship project began with about six or seven staff members to assist Wells Gallup and her sister, many of them unemployed past English literature majors. They carried out the tasks that Wells Gallup had set up for deciphering the First Folio. Some teams cut out letters and magnified them for close scrutiny, while others categorized and documented slight inconsistencies and differences in the typographies, looking for two alphabetic types that would represent Bacon’s biliteral method. Friedman assisted starting in 1915. In 1916, Elizebeth Smith joined the team which, according to a memo in the New York Public Library’s Bacon Cipher Collection, also included the physicist Eisenhower, R.G. Scott, C.J. O’Connor, A.M. Henderson, and Rita Curwell.

The narrative of Smith Friedman’s recruitment has been told many times now, and transcripts of Smith Friedman’s interviews are available at the Marshall Library. She notes, there, that she had visited the Newberry Library in Chicago to inquire about a position and to view the First Folio, a dream she had as an English major, when a staff member there alerted her to Fabyan’s search for Shakespeare scholars. Fabyan was called immediately, while Smith—as she was not yet married—waited at the Newberry. Fabyan showed up very quickly and immediately took her in a car, then on a train, to Geneva, where she toured the facility and learned about Wells Gallup’s project. Intrigued by the eccentricities of the place and its director, she agreed to join the staff. Smith was, like many of the scholars, wooed to Riverbank. She was an early career scholar in search of employment, young, open to new ideas, and eager to use her college training to explore exciting questions. She was driven by curiosity and the joys of the pursuit of knowledge. In-residence scholars at Riverbank often did not

have steady careers in progress. They were looking for academic positions or were drawn by the laboratory resources Fabyan could provide that their own universities could not. From their first invitation to Riverbank, they were dazzled by the estate's luxurious accommodations and attention to detail. Smith Friedman explains:

Well, at any rate the staff built up and we occupied two cottages on the estate, two frame houses that housed us all, and we were treated in a real manorial fashion. He always had Swedish or Danish servants. We had marvelous meals, beautiful food, our bed covers were always turned down at night. There was always a pitcher of ice water and a bowl of fruit by our bedside every night, and we were treated very well indeed.²⁹

However, she notes, these surface luxuries were deceptive. Scholars were provided with the nutrition and lodging they needed, but that served as a kind of trap that rendered them helpless to demand the salaries they had been promised:

... but he paid practically nothing. You could hardly have bought lunches off of what he was willing to pay, but practically everybody of the workers were, had the same characteristic I had, that I was so curious about all this, to see how it was all coming out, that I stayed on.³⁰

Smith Friedman received only \$30.00 a month. Fabyan would stress to them that they were also receiving "keep," or, the luxuries of their food and lodging. Fabyan was able to keep talented academics at Riverbank by ensuring that they never built up any personal savings, by providing food and lodging that they came to depend upon, by supplying their intellects with projects that kept them busy, and by tempting their imaginations with possibilities that were wild but just believable enough to be possible.

As the project proceeded, Fabyan realized that he needed not only energetic and impressionable early career literary scholars on staff, but also well-established veterans of the field to verify the credibility of Wells Gallup's methods and theory. This proved to be much more difficult than hiring struggling graduates eager for employment. In contrast to "how he treated us poor, lowly members of the place," Smith Friedman reports, "he would get the top people in the English department and bring them out to Riverbank and give them a grand time." Manly would have been one of those people who "would be treated like a king," as she describes it.³¹

FABYAN MEETS MANLY

Fabyan hoped to impress Manly, whose status as a literary scholar and chair of English at the prestigious University of Chicago could grant his Shakespeare-Bacon project the legitimacy he sought. The Guide to the John Matthews Manly Papers, held by the Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center at the University of Chicago, states that he first visited Riverbank in 1913, working for six weeks on Wells Gallup's method. This is unlikely, however, since Smith Friedman remembers his visit, and she was not hired until 1916. Given his correspondence with Fabyan in the papers appears to start in 1917, it is likely that Manly first visited in 1916 or very early in 1917.

Fabyan understood that the credibility of his campaign—for it very much was a campaign—was the main obstacle in his way. Though he had complete faith in Wells Gallup's methods, he knew enough about literary study to understand that scholars would not accept the results if they had not been consulted during the process and if the methods were not to their approval. He did not understand enough about literary studies to know, however, that all academics could not be as easily manipulated as politicians, business leaders, and the public. He confidently believed that good marketing, flashy presentations with slide shows, and entertaining performances would convince established scholars that his project was legitimate.

Though Manly had not worked in any official or even scholarly capacity with ciphers before, he had passing knowledge of the history of secret writing from his work in the archives. Smith Friedman notes that Manly did not arrive with much of an open mind about Wells Gallup's project, a theory which he would have heard about, and perhaps read scholarship on, previously. "When he came out to look at Mrs. Gallup's bilateral ciphers proving that Bacon wrote Shakespeare," she explains, "he damned them from the start. This was John M. Manly. He devised a test which would test her eyes—whether she really could see a difference between say two type forms of the letter E and so on and she failed the test."³²

Fabyan seemed to assume that Manly would be a pliable academic in awe of his wealth and power. However, he underestimated both Manly's own aristocratic family background and his experience dealing with

upper-class elitists. Manly was from a family of strong, confident leaders, and he often offered advice to his father and brothers as they navigated Southern politics. Prior to meeting Fabyan, Manly was also quite accustomed to confrontation. He had participated actively in the “Andrews Controversy” at Brown, leading passionate faculty to force President Elisha Benjamin Andrews’s resignation and dismissing those who ducked out of the affair as cowardly, proving that he could use both his writing and speaking skills to confront ethically questionable yet powerful men directly. He had also taken down top scholars in print, such as Alois Brandl. Manly also astutely negotiated the chair position at the University of Chicago when he was still a junior professor, proving his “strong will.”³³ Fabyan, with his rough language skills and privileged complacency, was no rhetorical adversary for Manly, and he certainly could not manipulate him to support irresponsible scholarship or put his name to any project that was not at the highest academic standards. While the Friedmans were in more vulnerable positions, Manly was secure in his career and in his confidence in his own work.

Manly was also a stickler for accuracy and rigor. In a sketch of Manly, Robert Morse Lovett describes how “he insists on that reverence which is the religion of scholarship and which consists in scrupulously accurate treatment of his material. How many times have I heard echoing in my mind, his pregnant epigram: ‘Milton’s name was John, not George.’”³⁴ Manly’s approach to scholarship—to any topic or problem that required thinking—was patient concentration, and he held everyone to the highest standards. Department colleague David H. Stevens quotes Manly as often saying, “I have often felt that while many of our first thoughts may be brilliant, we never learn the most important things that a problem or mass of materials can yield until we have lived with it and rejected theory after theory that accounted for most (not all) of the phenomena.”³⁵ Fabyan, in contrast, wanted answers *now*. He wanted industrial efficiency in problem solving, which he hoped that his concentrated lab and 24/7 academic staff, working without distractions from the outside world, with fruit at their bedsides, would promote. Manly knew that this is not how academic problem solving works. Projects take years, perhaps even lifetimes, and scholars must be willing to change their minds multiple times. True scholarship is not the pursuit of a predetermined answer.

Manly’s dismissal of Wells Gallup’s work was not personal. Though to Smith Friedman it looked like he already had his mind made up when he arrived, it is noteworthy that he did go, and he did look closely at Wells

Gallup's characters and methodology. She was one of many scholars Manly would treat with the same high standards of archival and philological rigor as those with which he treated all of his colleagues and students. After his visit, and while he was corresponding with Fabyan, building his interest in cryptography, and beginning to consider service to his nation during World War I, Manly published more on Shakespeare, perhaps to demonstrate how respectable scholarship on the plays should work. Perhaps he also feared that his communication with Riverbank sent the wrong message to his colleagues. In "Cuts and Insertions in Shakespeare's Plays," he is clearly responding to the kind of limited scholarship that Wells Gallup was performing at Riverbank when he analyzes key differences in scenes between the First Folio and the Second Quarto (copies that Wells Gallup did not use). He notes that there are a few lessons that come from comparing the documents that scholars attempting to study Shakespeare must realize, and though he does not say it, two would have been helpful for Wells Gallup:

1. They lead us to suspect that many metrical irregularities, the causes of which we cannot see, may perhaps be due—not to Shakespeare's original intention—but to some manipulation of the text after the time of original composition. We shall then be relieved of the necessity of trying to show that passages are metrical which clearly are not so.
2. They teach us that after composing his plays, Shakespeare treated them much as a modern dramatist does his own work—cutting where the stage manager needs a hastening of the action, making insertions to intensify hits or motive action or illuminate character or create atmosphere.

In short, he writes, "editors should learn that the different versions of the plays exist for different purposes and each has a right to be treated as a separate entity."³⁶ The broader point, here, is that even the first known printings are not the definitive or final models of the plays, that the works were continuously retouched, by a range of possible collaborators and editors. Irregularities were not signs of some political plot or secret mission but the typical differences that surface when texts have many copies, when many people were involved in their production, and when one reads a medium like a play, which was meant to be adapted to new audiences. None of this points to any conspiracy or oddity in literary history but to

the basic composition practice of any playwright. Without ever mentioning the Bacon theory or that he had been corresponding with Fabyan, Manly sends a firm reminder to his literary community, as well as to anyone else who may be reading: he will not compromise his training to entertain readings that are not rigorous.

THE MANLY-FABYAN CORRESPONDENCE

Of Fabyan's request for Manly to confirm Riverbank's theory of Bacon's authorship of Shakespeare, Lovett notes that

I have always thought it characteristic of Manly's tolerance, open-mindedness, and willingness to look into everything, human and divine, that he should have been willing to spend six solid weeks in going minutely into the old controversy and examining the alleged ciphers. Six weeks wanted? Not at all. Two years later the United States entered the world-war and Manly as the most proficient master of the art of cipher communication was enabled to perform a unique service to his country.³⁷

Manly did not seem to be at all interested in Fabyan's work on Shakespeare. However, he was intrigued by the historical sources Fabyan shared with him, such as John Wilkins's *Mercury; or the Secret and Swift Messenger* (1641) and the first edition of Trithemius's 1517 *Polygraphia*, and he also seemed to see potential in the practices of encryption and decryption as ways of reading. The two would enter into a correspondence that lets us see behind the scenes of corporate-academic networking. In it, a humanities professor tries to keep ties to a source of funding and resources who is politically antithetical to him, and he must support the academic freedom of research and speech, but without sacrificing his own professional ethics. At the same time, the two must find a common language. It is a kind of lesson on outreach and across-the-aisle dialogue that the humanities might benefit from today.

When Manly made clear that he did not believe Wells Gallup's research, Fabyan insisted he would pursue the project no matter what, however long it took to prove. He threatened to hire another English department chair from another university to support his efforts. Brilliantly, in a rhetorical move that politely excused him from the project yet did not push it (or Fabyan's resources) to any other competing department, Manly advised that what Fabyan needed was not an English department chair but

an expert in typography. Fabyan then hired J.A. Powell, a friend of Manly's who had been a typesetter for the University of Chicago Press. Since Powell knew nothing about sixteenth- and seventeenth-century typography or printing, Fabyan continued to mail questions to Manly. Manly could thus keep tabs on the project, and Riverbank, without being directly involved.

The correspondence between the men from February to June of 1917 reveals a tense relationship. Manly maintains his professionalism yet at times shows biting sarcasm made all the more effective by its politeness, and Fabyan becomes flustered by his multiple failed attempts to wrangle Manly into submission. On February 6, 1917, for example, Fabyan's temper, and his sense of injured self-worth, is on full display. After Manly generously sends a package of books to Riverbank, Fabyan huffs that "some of these are of interest, and some not" and says he is returning some of them, as "the possession of books that are not mine, and the danger of their being mislaid, misused, annoys me." His annoyance is not really about the books, however, but about Manly's persistent refusal to endorse the Shakespeare project. "I want you to understand that I feel that you are in on this thing with Mr. Powell and myself," Fabyan writes that day, trying to implicate Manly as a collaborator. "It is natural for me to satisfy myself in one way, while you require another method," he continues, before closing by emphasizing that he will convince Manly of the theory in the end.³⁸ Later that month Fabyan writes to Manly again, this time pretending to be worried that someone who attends his Riverbank presentations may steal the idea and publish on the Shakespeare-Bacon theory before them. Fabyan is clearly trying to bait Manly into participating and supporting the project, even if only passively. Fabyan writes on February 21, 1917 that

I have hesitated to write you concerning this lest you construe it as an effort on my part to hurry you in your deliberations, and force the issue. It would be a tremendous disappointment to me to have some aenemic professor in the scholarly world write a half-thought paper on the subject and start something which, putting myself in your place, would serve to take the edge off of your doing anything in that direction, even though said article carried little or no weight with it, furthermore your natural inference would be that I was a good deal like the politician who was ambitious to run as President of the United States, but considered himself lucky to be appointed Consul to Siam.³⁹

Fabyan's rhetorical tactic here, in which he takes several approaches all at once, would have been quite transparent to Manly. Feigning anxiety about someone running off to publish an announcement about their astounding discovery, Fabyan attempts to apply pressure—while emphasizing that he is not—to write in support of the project as soon as possible before he loses the opportunity. Flattering Manly's scholarly reputation as well as his manliness (he is not "aenemic"), he stresses that he wants no one else to endorse the project but Manly. He emphasizes, too, that he has plenty of options—other scholars are willing to write in support of the theory, but he only wants Manly, who he knows will write a thorough assessment. In the next paragraph, Fabyan takes yet another tactic. At the very least, could Manly simply publish an announcement in one of his papers that such a project is ongoing, and each month offer a brief update on Riverbank's progress? To do so would not be to endorse the theory but simply to alert the scholarly world that it exists so that others, if they are interested, can follow the work. It would seem to be a reasonable request, but Manly knows that any association of his name with the project is, on one hand, exactly what Fabyan needs to disguise it as credible and, on the other hand, a stain on his own reputation. Acknowledging the theory, and granting it the same forum as legitimate scholarly work, is professionally the same as supporting it.

Manly eludes Fabyan with the polite avoidance of an experienced administrator, which is incredibly frustrating to Fabyan. Manly always remains professional and kind, offering a generosity of resources, like the sharing of books, but not more of his own time or, more importantly, his *name* (though he does spend more of his hours on the project than he prefers). Manly's rhetorical approach to the situation forces Fabyan into a role and requires that Fabyan commit fully to the persona that he is pretending to be—a serious academic seeking knowledge. Fabyan attempts to speak like an academic, exchange the books of an academic, pretend to read those books and understand them like an academic. He must write Manly with the politeness that Manly establishes, though he cannot sustain it, and he often becomes visibly frustrated with writing in a way that is much different than how he speaks, often slipping into his genuine voice as he loses his temper. Manly controls the rules of the dialogue simply by maintaining professional courtesy.

This polite but tense dialogue continues into March 1917, as Fabyan becomes intent on forcing Manly to write a complete history of early works on ciphers. Their resource sharing, documented in their

correspondence as they sent seventeenth-century cryptology texts back and forth, inspires Manly to comment in February that a full collection of historical cipher works would be useful, and he thinks Fabyan has the resources to create one. In a sense, Manly is directing Fabyan toward more acceptable, and helpful, scholarship; Manly notes that he had previously told Fabyan “that you had fundamentally the instincts of a scholar in spite of your protests.”⁴⁰ Here was an opportunity to put that scholarly instinct to good use and set the Shakespeare project aside. Fabyan, however, immediately twists that suggestion to respond that he fully supports Manly taking on such a project, and that he will provide resources and support to help him. Manly resists. Then, on March 10, 1917, abiding by the rules of the academic discourse they have established, Fabyan thinks he has caught Manly in argumentative error. First, he cites his own previous letter of February 12, in which Fabyan had asked—or, rather, directed—Manly to collaborate with Riverbank in the writing of a historical and critical overview of ciphers, with the help of Powell. “I withdraw any ambitions which I had in that direction in your favor,” Fabyan writes, “God bless you, go to it. It will be honor enough for me to be permitted to help.” Fabyan then quotes Manly’s March 7 refusal to lead the project:

My studies in ciphers will continue in any event, and I shall, of course, be entirely unwilling to attempt a book summarizing the subject, as it appears from your letter of February 12th, that you already entertained the idea of publishing such a work. I shall, of course, be glad to contribute anything I can to your publication.

With his offer and Manly’s rejection side by side, Fabyan notes that “the paragraph above does not jibe with the paragraph below which was intended to convey to you how enthusiastic I was when I learned that you contemplated writing a book on the subject and all I wanted to do was to help you all I could.” Fabyan then dismisses Manly’s clear insistence that he will not write the book by saying, “Enough said on this. Please write the book, and let us help you.”⁴¹ Manly responded on March 19. “I have your letter of March 10th in which you insist that I shall prepare the book on Ciphers,” he writes.⁴² Manly goes on to repeat, as he had in his previous letters, that he is happy to provide summaries of the cipher works he has access to, and he will send those summaries to Powell. He is clear that he is not authoring the project, and with his own rhetorical turns, expresses satisfaction that Powell will be the leader and provide the rest of the

summaries and the descriptions. On March 21, Fabyan pushes once again, more politely than before. He is thankful for Manly's summaries, but he wants more than summaries—he wants “intelligent conclusions” drawn for each work, and he uses the same tactic as before with the Shakespeare project, warning that if the Riverbank edition is not thorough enough, some “other fellow” will take the idea and create a competitive version. Manly would not be bullied. He wrote back just three days later stating, in rather convoluted prose, that he wants to put the matter to rest:

I have just received your letter of March 21st and I am much interested in having this definite expression of what I have felt to be your attitude towards the investigation in which we are now engaged, namely, that we wish to make a thorough job of it, to reach the conclusions justified by the evidence, and to leave the “other fellow” no possible opportunity of successful attack upon the conclusions we reach.

In other words, as he goes on to say in the letter, without worrying about possible competitors, Manly will do what he agreed to, which is to dictate summaries of the cipher books he owns to Fabyan's stenographer, and he will also agree to provide some commentary on those particular works, and then he will send those to Powell. Very generously, he notes that except for time he needed to spend on vacation at Lake Zurich that week, he has been working on the project, and he will continue to do so until his contribution is complete. He is also clear that he has other, more important, projects in the works, including a proposal to the U.S. government concerning a cipher machine. He does not, and never will, agree to oversee the project. In fact, the collection of early cipher works was never written. For the second time, Fabyan was unable to coerce Manly to do his bidding.

Although Manly was interested in the subject, he was not a scholar who wrote on command. Fabyan's bullying no doubt made Manly even more resistant to take up the project, which while it would seem not to endorse the Bacon bilateral cipher project would still indicate that Manly had entered the conversation, granting it legitimacy. In the final paragraph of March 21, Manly's tone again reveals his annoyance at Fabyan. “I have, of course, no idea what was contained in the pamphlet which on the morning of March 9th took all the pleasure out of life for you,” he remarks sarcastically, addressing Fabyan's penchant for drama. Fabyan had been expressing paranoia that a recent pamphlet would put the Bacon project in

jeopardy. Manly is doubtful. "I do not think it very likely that anyone will publish anything which will seriously interfere with a thorough investigation of the whole subject of ciphers and their use," he muses, but if Fabyan has "evidence of any serious danger in this direction, I should be very glad to see it."⁴³ This is a good example of Manly's humor: he can appear to console Fabyan and the safety of his original, important project, but he is actually rolling his eyes—it is highly unlikely that a legitimate scholar has just written an entire history of ciphers, and in a pamphlet no less. If someone has, he would love to see it. Fabyan is clearly trying to pressure Manly into writing the cipher book, and Manly does not fall for it.

By the end of March 1917, Manly was still uninterested in Fabyan's literary project, but he had decided to volunteer his services to the war effort as a cryptanalyst. By October, he was commissioned as an officer in the Codes and Cipher Section after Parker Hitt had to turn down the role to go to France as a staff officer. Manly's letters of April and May show that he was increasingly interested in cryptography, actively trading and seeking out books on the subject, remaining polite to Fabyan, and even observing as Fabyan attempted to wrangle other University of Chicago English faculty, like Nathaniel Butler, into presenting on the theory at Riverbank. It is not clear whether Butler agreed.

David A. Hatch wonders why Manly stayed in touch with Fabyan: "It is not clear what motivated Manly to continue working for such a long time with an unscholarly and demanding person like Fabyan. It is possible he enjoyed the intellectual challenge of the puzzle. It is more likely he saw an opportunity to keep apprised of progress on a potential source of academic trouble, along with the opportunity to refute and thus end it."⁴⁴ Manly's correspondence with Fabyan indicates that this is likely not the case. Rather, Fabyan presented a timely test case for Manly, who was working through a new theory of English studies and the place of the humanities within higher education but also within the modern landscape of the twentieth century. How might the humanities, and English literary knowledge in particular, benefit the practical world of business, technology, economics, and even peace-keeping? What is the relevance of literary study in a world that increasingly values only tangible production? And Fabyan also offered a means of better understanding the place (or not) of private and corporate interests in academic research, and the potential effects of wealthy funders on academic freedom. In his 1920 presidential address to the Modern Language Association (MLA), he clearly, but indirectly, references Fabyan:

The cynical among you are still objecting that such undertakings cost money and that while money is being poured out in large sums for research in physics and chemistry and metallurgy and botany and every other branch of the physical sciences, this support of research is due to the fact that business men see immediate practical returns from the development of these subjects. That it is easier to obtain money for subjects of this kind is true, but it is far from being true that men and women of large wealth are interested only in subjects that pay money. They are interested in any subject that awakens their imaginations by its significance for the large problems of human history and destiny.⁴⁵

Manly would walk away from his relationship with Fabyan with an experienced point of view; he was clearly not naïve when he entered into it, but by his 1920 MLA speech, Manly had been obviously educated yet had not lost his optimism about the potential value of collaborations between the humanities and wealthy donors. If anything, Fabyan firmed his resolve in the desperate need for academic scholars to reach out to millionaires and educate them, to save them from wasting their wealth on frivolous projects that would only damage their intellectual reputations, and the reputations of others. Manly, too, was a businessman, inasmuch as running an English department was (and still is) a constant financial battle to stay relevant and functioning, appeal to students, maintain and increase enrollments, and pay for talented faculty, necessary technologies, and forward-thinking curricula. English departments have always struggled to stay afloat, and chairs like Manly have always needed to survey their changing local and global cultures to justify their existence. As Michael Matto and Susan Kim's essays in this collection also prove, Manly, Rickert, and other collaborators were also writing textbooks, readers, and anthologies for extra income as well as professional development.

Manly's correspondence with Fabyan reveals that he looked over the Shakespeare materials with as much attention as he cared to give, though whether it was a full six weeks, as Lovett describes, is unclear. He politely but firmly refused to validate Fabyan's theory, gained access to some rare documents, learned more about best (and worst) practices in decryption, and revived an interest in cryptography that he had in childhood and as a mathematician, earlier in his career. He also maintained some of the rich scholarly interactions he forged with Riverbank staff, like William Friedman, with whom he would continue to work when he left to work for the Code and Cipher Section in Washington, D.C. in October of 1917.

THE FRIENDSHIP OF MANLY AND WILLIAM F. FRIEDMAN

Perhaps the most important collaboration that resulted from the associations formed at Riverbank Laboratory was the friendship of Manly and William F. Friedman. Letters between the men, held at the Marshall Library, trace a deeply intellectual and mutually beneficial relationship. After Manly's service in the Code and Cipher Section, he continued to collaborate with those with whom he had forged connections. From 1921 to at least December of 1931, Manly and Friedman exchanged almost monthly feedback on one another's projects, networking tips, and pleasant, if brief, commentary about their personal lives. For example, Friedman notes humorously at the end of a letter dated September 9, 1926: "There is nothing new around here, except that we had a son born on July 28. He seems to be making good progress at his business of growing. Mrs. Friedman has quite recovered and is already thinking of doing some literary work."⁴⁶ Frequently, they shared their honest thoughts about Fabyan. On that subject, Friedman offered honest reflections on the intellectual drain of working there, and Manly was genuinely sympathetic and curious. Fabyan became a running joke throughout their letters, though with acknowledgment of the seriousness of that exploitation. What emerges from this correspondence is a kind of model of collaboration and networking. There is balance and equity in their help for one another—though both were highly respected and in positions of importance, there is no posturing, no envy or professional jealousy. They demonstrate a genuine respect for one another's expertise, ability, and interests. On New Year's Eve 1925, Manly expressed his admiration for Friedman's intelligence: "It may be that there are men capable of more accurate and profound analytical thinking, but I have certainly never met them."⁴⁷ On February 1, Friedman wrote back: "Your flattering comments upon my recent technical paper almost overwhelmed me. In return, I will say that the labor and sweat that was mine, in working it out, and then in putting it on paper, was only made worth while by your estimate of its value; for all the time I was writing the exposition I felt that it was practically useless."⁴⁸ The letters also showcase Manly's nimble interdisciplinarity and quick readiness to contact experts in a range of fields, as well as his generous sharing of resources. He frequently sent manuscripts, articles, and books that he thought would benefit Friedman.

Though not a trained literary scholar, Friedman was inspired by literature at a young age. His reading of Edgar Allan Poe's "The Gold Bug"

sparked his interest in codes and codebreaking. His interactions with Manly, and certainly his respect for the insights and methods of Elizebeth, gained from her literary training, kept his fascination with Poe and literary representations of cryptography alive. One of the livelier exchanges between Manly and Friedman concerns an essay that Friedman wanted to write about Poe after reading a study by Joseph Wood Krutch, *Edgar Allan Poe*. As he discussed in a letter to Manly on June 19, 1926, Friedman felt that an article on Poe by a cryptographer would be of public interest. He notes that after he drafted the essay, Elizebeth reminded him that Manly had expressed an interest in writing about Poe's ties to cryptography many years prior. She prompted him to find that correspondence, which Friedman discovered. Politely, he tells Manly that if he still wants to write about Poe, he would not hesitate to back away and let the trained literary scholar write it instead. "I would not want to trespass," he writes, "and I certainly could not do as good a job of it as you." If Manly has no plans to publish on Poe, however, Friedman asks if the scholar could "go over my manuscript and shoot holes through it?"⁴⁹ He notes that Yardley had visited him the previous day and read over the essay, and Yardley had felt as though at 10,000 words, Friedman was overly verbose and could have made the same argument in half the space.

Manly responds quickly, within the next week, writing back on June 26, 1926. He has just read the Krutch Poe biography upon Friedman's suggestion, indicating how seriously he takes Friedman's recommendations. He is writing back only seven days since Friedman composed his letter, which surely must have taken a day or so to reach him. Manly notes that he had indeed drafted an essay on Poe that he planned to send to *Harper's*, but he was hoping to find the lost material contained in Alexander's "Weekly Messenger" before publishing. Krutch's book makes the need for more information on Poe more urgent, however, so he decides he should publish his essay even without that additional information. This should not dissuade Friedman from publishing his own essay, however, Manly stresses. He is certain that Friedman's style and treatment will be very different from his own, such that the essays would not be competing with one another. Manly is able to support and encourage Friedman's work even as it ventures into his own disciplinary area; there is no hint of competition or jealousy, no sabotage or rivalry. Instead, Manly is absolutely supportive but without being overly polite—he admits that, indeed, 10,000 words is much too long for an academic essay as Yardley had already advised. Editors do not like more than 6000 or 7000 words, he

advises. Friedman writes back just three days later, on June 28, ready to send his manuscript for Manly's critique. He worries that it will be too controversial for the public and that his qualifications to write about a literary author will be questioned, but he is determined that his unique perspective will be useful. He also shares with Manly what he has recently discovered about the "Weekly Messenger."

Manly had apparently not responded with his critique by the first week of July, so Friedman contacts him again, asking that he return his review before a vacation to New York he has plans beginning July 12. He is asking for a very quick turn-around for the literary scholar; however, Manly must have made the deadline. A rushed night telegram from Friedman on July 13 indicates that he had received Manly's letter, and he asks for permission to quote from a resource that Manly apparently shared with him. Manly's letter is not in the Marshall Library archives, but in a letter that Friedman also writes on July 13, he thanks him for his helpful feedback and for networking with a "Dr. Mabbott," who provided some useful information on Poe that Friedman uses in his revision. This would be Thomas Ollive Mabbott, a Poe specialist. Like Manly, Mabbott had an open mind sensitive to the connections between disciplines, an approach to knowledge making in which all information was potentially useful.

Friedman's attempts to publish his article on Poe showcase the difficulties of even brilliant thinkers as they enter disciplines not their own. On September 9, 1926, Friedman had already received a rejection from his target magazine, *The American Mercury*. As Manly and Yardley had noted, the essay was too long. After shortening it, the editors still rejected it but for vague reasons. He immediately sent it to the *Atlantic*, who said it belonged in a literary journal, but then the agents he consulted for submission to literary journals said that it lacked "commercial appeal" and so would not be a good fit. Friedman is incredibly frustrated and expresses it to Manly: "I know that to liven it up I don't have to put any jokes in it, but somehow or other I lack the facility for popular writing, as is apparent from my short experience. I don't know what to do with the thing now. It isn't that I want to get this thing published. The fact is that I would like to develop a popular style of serious writing as a side-line to my source of income, and I ought to be able to do it." Here we see a rare sight: a vulnerable Friedman, uncertain of how to conquer a discipline that does not seem as though it should be all that difficult. Surely, writing an academic article, on a literary work, for publication, could not be as challenging as solving a complex cipher? How can such an intelligence not be able to

study, read other articles, and simply adopt a style to get published? And yet literary analysis proves to be incredibly challenging for him—he never publishes the article. Friedman confesses: “It takes me a long time to get my ideas down on paper, when I am not writing on a technical subject in a technical way, and I wonder if that is the usual experience. My work needs constant revision.”⁵⁰ He asks Manly for the secrets. Certainly, Manly had been trying to publish tips for writers like Friedman, as Michael Matto discusses in this volume.

The Marshall Library collection does not include any return letters from Manly to Friedman for nearly a year after this exchange. Friedman speculates that Manly must have either been traveling or feeling ill. On August 27, 1927, he notes that he has heard that Manly has returned to Chicago, and he regrets that Manly did not stop in to see him in Washington, D.C. on his way through. Manly does write back on August 31, however, noting how busy he had been all winter and since Christmas. Work on the Chaucer project had come to full swing; sixty extant manuscripts had arrived as photostats, and Manly had secured a grant from the General Education Board to hire a staff of twenty for the summer. Friedman’s letter reminds him that he had meant to inquire with *Harper’s* about their interest in his own Poe article, likely to the slight disappointment of Friedman, for whom *Harper’s* had been a top choice of publication for his own piece. Manly does not offer Friedman any advice about his writing or divulge the secrets of academic publication. He is surprised that *The American Mercury* did not want Friedman’s essay, but he says no more about his friend’s repeated rejections or how to approach the market differently. Manly does ask Friedman’s advice about an essay he is trying to publish but that has faced obstacles. It is an essay requested by *Collier’s* on Manly’s MID work, but his request to access the files he needed for the essay was refused due to classification and confidentiality reasons.

Discussions about publication lead the men to reminisce about Fabyan. Friedman mentions Fabyan’s dishonest practice of leaving the real authors’ names off of publications that came out of Riverbank. To appease the authors, Fabyan would have one copy printed with their name on it, to fool them into thinking that he had indeed given them attribution. Friedman discovers, however, that the copies that went out to the public listed only Fabyan’s name. In a listing of his *Index of Coincidence* paper written while at Riverbank, for example, Friedman sees clearly that his name is not given and thus he is not cited as the author.⁵¹ It is a lesson to all scholars who work for corporate-funded laboratories and think

tanks—be careful what you write and publish and ensure that you first create a written contract about who owns the work. Even strategic thinkers like Friedman were victim to Fabyan's exploitation.

There is rare tension between Manly and Friedman in June of 1931 following Herbert O. Yardley's publication of the highly controversial *The American Black Chamber*. Manly had been quoted by Yardley in an article in *The Saturday Evening Post* as supporting Yardley and agreeing with one of his points about the insecurity of American codes during World War I. Friedman takes issue with the quote, and with Yardley's article and book: "the version that he gives of the A.E.F. codes in his book is, in my opinion, much more inaccurate and is an unpardonably unwarranted reflection upon the A.E.F. codes and all who had anything to do with their preparation."⁵² Disappointed in Manly, Friedman writes that "it is difficult for me to understand how either you or Yardley obtain the very erroneous idea that the A.E.F. field codes were so poor as would seem from Yardley's remarks in his articles." He then proceeds to "refresh [Manly's] memory." A.E.F. stands for the American Expeditionary Force, units that used secret communication beginning in the summer of 1917. At first, the A.E.F. had to rely upon outdated methods, but as Friedman reports in his own 1942 paper on the unit's field codes, now declassified, they caught up quickly to the U.K. and France, even surpassing them in sophistication by November of the next year.⁵³ The codes were developed by Major H.R. Barnes, who had passed away by the time of Yardley's critique, but Friedman feels it his professional and personal duty to defend Barnes's work. In the confidential 1942 report, Friedman takes on Yardley's book directly, refuting Yardley's claims that the codes were weak and easily decrypted by a novice—whom he names directly as First Lt. J. Rives Childs. In that passionate rebuttal of *American Black Chamber*, Friedman stresses that Childs had not only been given a copy of the code, but was also told what encipherment system it was in and asked to solve only a single mixed alphabet. He was not, as Yardley made it seem, given forty-four secret messages that he simply solved entirely on his own. It was important to Friedman, even a decade later, to set this record straight, to preserve the reputations of those he worked with. And like Manly, he cared much about getting the facts straight for posterity.

Despite this disagreement over the seriousness of Yardley's accusation, Manly and Friedman's friendship and mutual respect were strong enough to endure. Immediately in that letter of June 30, Friedman goes on to share resources with Manly and ask advice. He is most curious about

Manly's thoughts about the ethics of Yardley's book. On July 24, 1931, Manly thanks Friedman for assistance with his analytical takedown of William Romaine Newbold, to be published in *Speculum*, and then responds to Friedman's concern about Yardley with a detailed response. It is an important letter that outlines Manly's honest opinion of Yardley's *American Black Chamber*. He apologizes to Friedman for the insinuation, in the quote he provided Yardley, that the A.E.F. codes were inferior to the codes in use by other nations, and he feels genuinely bad that he had given the impression that the hard-working U.S. cipherers who developed that code were at all flawed or producing sub-par work. He *does* feel as though, from his understanding of them, the codes were not secure enough, but he notes that this is based on the information that he had available to him at the time. He does not think that Yardley's intent was to insult the men and women who worked on the A.E.F. codes but to emphasize the importance of an absolutely secure system. Yet, Manly is clearly disappointed with Yardley's dramatization of events, in the liberties he has taken with the facts, and with the sensationalism he has resorted to for his own financial profit, though he does not believe Yardley did so "for the sake of personal aggrandizement." "I think he has made a serious mistake in not giving due credit to the men who actually did the work in many of the instances he relates," Manly writes, and has "distorted the facts" "with the aim of writing a dramatic story which would command attention and lead to some effective action on the part of the government to secure and maintain an effective code and cipher bureau." Manly takes no personal offense in his own depiction in Yardley's book, however; in fact, Manly thinks Yardley too kind to him, that "he has written of me in terms more complimentary than I deserve" and "I should, in fact, have preferred to receive the same treatment as other men who were equally deserving."⁵⁴

Manly's disappointment in Yardley's method is not forceful enough for Friedman, nor does it adequately condemn the whole project of disclosure with which Yardley participates, which to Friedman is a violation of the trust of the government and civilian communities who served the country through their service in intelligence. He seeks Manly's firm rebuke of Yardley's ethics. After opening paragraphs in an August 24, 1931 letter that politely discusses his return of a book and an apology for a broken binding, Friedman states matter-of-factly: "It is clear that you and I do not entertain the same views in the matter of [Yardley's] book."⁵⁵ It is a significant moral division between the men. Can their friendship weather such a disagreement about a fundamental issue of intelligence work—the

promise of confidentiality? Friedman attempts to convince Manly of Yardley's betrayal using an analogy:

Suppose a man entrusts his most secret and personal affairs to a lawyer for study and action; suppose further that after a certain number of years of a mutually profitable relationship the client finds it impossible to retain the services of the lawyer any longer. Is the latter justified in broadcasting his former client's affairs to the world, now that the relationship has terminated? Can it possibly be a legitimate, ethical reason for a most serious breach of confidence?⁵⁶

Friedman had apparently read Manly's critique of Yardley's sensationalism and inaccuracies as missing the larger point, that the book simply should not have been written and published. Yet Manly writes back immediately, four days later on August 28 and despite a very hectic schedule of travel for the Chaucer project, to emphasize that "I am not at all certain that we do not entertain the same views as to Yardley's book, its disclosures, his method of presentation, etc. I myself would certainly never have revealed any of the matters concerning the code and cipher work which I did not feel confident were not in the nature of secrets." He continues, noting that "I particularly would not have revealed the fact that we were at any time reading, or attempting to read, the messages of a friendly nation, and I urged him not to do this."⁵⁷ Still, however, Manly does defend what he believes to be Yardley's motive, which is not to raise his own status but to force the government to create a permanent code and cipher bureau and to support an intelligence effort equal to those of England, France, and Germany.

Manly looks at Yardley's decision from a literary scholar's unique perspective: the problems with Yardley's approach concern genre and rhetoric. He chose a public genre in which fiction is the wrong fit with his subject matter, and he chose the wrong manner of persuading his audiences of his point of view, in the process alienating the very people who could have helped him make his case. Manly implies that a better rhetorician, and a better writer, could have met the same goal but without sacrificing his ethics, betraying the trust of his colleagues, and erasing and belittling the achievements of those who put him in a position of knowledge. Friedman's next letter of November 11 does not continue the discussion; he comments kindly, and genuinely, on his hope that Manly had a productive research trip to the Huntington Library to look at new technologies in ultraviolet imaging, of which he believes his War Department's

“secret ink chemists” might also have knowledge. He notes how anxious he is to talk to Manly in person, perhaps referencing his note in the earlier letter that he would speak little of the Yardley affair in writing and would rather wait to converse directly. Yet the matter was clearly not out-of-mind for Manly, who tried again on December 12, 1931 to reiterate that he *does* feel the same way about Yardley’s book as Friedman. He, too, believes that Yardley’s “failure to keep his oath of secrecy” is disturbing, and that “I should certainly not, after leaving the War Department, have revealed any information which I thought would be either detrimental or against the wishes of the Department.” Manly reveals that it is his own life experience that has softened his condemnation of their friend: “I have learned from life, however, to be somewhat lenient toward the failure of other men in what I think their obligations require.”⁵⁸

This small moment, in a short note to Friedman, embodies Manly’s ability to forgive the shortcomings of others. Perhaps it is, in one way, an example of the neutrality with which literary scholars, and humanists, often approach their subjects, focusing on the narrative and rhetorical strategies that writers employ to reach their goals rather than judging the writers themselves. Critique the writing, not the author. Perhaps it is the attitude of a teacher and mentor, and particularly a teacher of writing and of history, who no doubt witnessed countless students make mistakes and errors of judgment before improving. Perhaps his own upbringing comes to his mind, his ancestral Confederate past and the active role that his own grandfather and family members had played in not only supporting, but rhetorically justifying, slavery and continued racial oppression in the South. He had commented before that the privilege of education had given him the opportunity to benefit financially from that legacy yet also gave him some of the tools he needed to leave it intellectually behind, to see the logical and moral flaws in his family’s theology. This last letter of December 12 in the Marshall Library archive ends with Manly clearing his desk, physically but perhaps also psychologically. He is bound for his annual trip to England to work on the Chaucer project, catching up with overdue correspondence. “I am now clearing off some letters—yours among them—which somewhat got hidden on my desk and came to light only yesterday when I was cleaning up,” he closes.⁵⁹

CONCLUSION

Riverbank is perhaps most famous as a “home” for U.S. cryptology. Yet the incidental, even lucky encounters of the Friedmans, Manly, and others who shared an interest in cryptography made the lab a nexus for unlikely collaborations and friendships. Over time and as the war began and then ended, the character of the staff—academic and social but also political—began to reshape the social and political character of Riverbank Laboratory. It may have started as a Social Darwinist think tank to support the Populist views of upper-class conservatives hoping to prove their superiority scientifically, but the scholars’ diversity of backgrounds and pursuit of knowledge and truth, driven by curiosity and credible methods, inevitably made it an environment more open to a range of views. As Veggian notes, this “political malleability” is reflected in Fabyan’s choice to involve Riverbank and its scholars in the war effort, volunteering services to the Democratic Wilson Administration even though he personally opposed it.⁶⁰ Though Manly operated from a different political and philosophical background, Fabyan was, in some ways, the model of what Manly wished the university could produce. In “Education That Educates,” Manly writes:

If we examine the careers of great and successful men, whether in the world of thought or in the world of action, we find in every case that the cause of their success is what we call emotional and moral. Uniformly they are men to whom their work is not a dull routine, but a series of problems calling aloud for solution. Uniformly they are men who carry to their tasks eagerness, enthusiasm, sincerity, and invincible determination. They do not let their minds crystallize into routine beliefs, routine attitudes, routine solutions of problems that have never been really solved. They are constantly striving for the real, the true, which lies behind or beyond the accepted opinion, the conventional way of doing a thing. They know that life—mental life—consists in keeping the mind plastic, and active, and ready for new impressions and ideas; and that crystallization means intellectual death.⁶¹

Whether Manly is thinking of Fabyan at this moment, or perhaps about William Friedman, or Elizebeth Smith Friedman, or Wells Gallup, is difficult to argue. But certainly, they and the other scholars at Riverbank endured Fabyan’s eccentricities and low pay because they did not see their research as dull routine. In this life experience, Manly and the scholars with whom he connected embraced the opportunity to engage with new problems. Though Rickert’s connection with Riverbank was less direct, as

Fabyan never invited her personally to the laboratory, her service in MI-8 had a deep influence on her literary scholarship. She adopted the experimental laboratory model not only in the Chaucer project but also in her own classroom.⁶² Rickert and Manly both *transformed* their classrooms into labs, and their graduate students in turn moved into their own classrooms, which they also taught with the same model, as sites of experimentation and collaboration. Rachel Sagner Buurma and Laura Heffernan, and critics of Rickert's own time as well, note that the classrooms of their own students became "countless experimental laboratories."⁶³ The collaborative framework by which Riverbank operated inspired Manly, and in turn Rickert, as they embarked on the massive Chaucer project, as they considered broader audiences for their writing manuals, and as they dreamed of archives more accessible to scholars from across social classes.

NOTES

1. Elizebeth Smith Friedman, Unpublished Memoirs, Elizebeth Smith Friedman Collection, Elizebeth Smith Friedman Memoirs, Transcript Tape 08, George C. Marshall Foundation, 54. She is referring not only to Fabyan but also to Edward Bell McLean, for whom the Friedmans were working on a two-part code and who was long delayed in his promised payment. McLean's father had given him the *Washington Post* and had married the equally wealthy Evelyn Welsh.
2. R. W. Clark, *The Man Who Broke Purple: The Life of the World's Greatest Cryptologist Colonel William F. Friedman* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977), 10.
3. I refer to Elizabeth Smith Friedman as "Smith Friedman" throughout the chapter, though she did not include her maiden name on documents, so that it is clear when I am referring to her and not her husband William.
4. Elizebeth Smith Friedman, "Tape #5: Fabyan, Riverbank, and the Biliteral Cipher" Elizebeth Smith Friedman Interviews, George C. Marshall Foundation, June 6, 1974. Smith Friedman is interviewed by Marshall Research Library Staff Members.
5. William Snell, "A Woman Medievalist Much Maligned: A Note in Defense of Edith Rickert (1871–1938)," in *Eminent Chaucerians? Early Women Scholars and the History of Reading Chaucer*, ed. Richard Utz and Peter Schneck, *Philologie im Netz* Supplement 4 (2009), 48.
6. "Schools for Dependent, Delinquent, and Truant Children in Illinois," *The American Journal of Sociology* IX, no. I (July 1903): 14. The school was also called The School for Delinquent and Dependent Girls, the State Home for Female Juvenile Offenders, and The Geneva Reformatory for

- Girls. While Riverbank was running, it was directed by Ophelia Amigh, who also wrote *The History of the Sex Trade* in 1910. Her “methods” were questioned, but she is one of the early experts on sex trafficking. For accusations that Riverbank was the site of “orgies” with girls from the school but with no evidence, see Andrea Nolen, “Imperial German ‘Active Measures’ and the Founding of the NSA,” *Andrea Nolen*, last modified October 15, 2020, <https://www.andreanolen.com/home/imperial-german-active-measures-and-the-founding-of-the-nsa>
7. Nolen, “Imperial German.”
 8. James A. Berlin, *Rhetorics, Poetics, and Cultures: Refiguring College English Studies* (Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1996), 31.
 9. F.W. Lincoln, “Annual Report of the Overseers of the Poor,” City Document No. 45, *Documents of the city of Boston for the Year 1871, Three Volumes*, Vol. II (Boston: Rockwell & Churchill, City Printers, 1872), 6.
 10. William F. and Elizebeth S. Friedman, *The Shakespearean Ciphers Examined: An Analysis of Cryptographic Systems Used as Evidence That Some Author Other Than William Shakespeare Wrote the Plays Commonly Attributed to Him* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), 205.
 11. To be fair, however, there are numerous instances in which Fabian proves that he has read widely on subjects or has been informed about those subjects and is able to recount information about them. In a 1915 Senate hearing on the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease, referenced in this chapter, Fabian is well researched and confident in his personal knowledge of the situation and possible solutions.
 12. Berlin, *Rhetorics*, 30.
 13. See Emily Ann Thompson, *The Soundscapes of Modernity: Architectural Acoustics and the Culture of Listening in America, 1900–1933* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2002).
 14. Friedman and Friedman, *Shakespearean Ciphers Examined*, 208.
 15. Henry Veggian, “Mercury of the Waves: Modern Cryptology and U.S. Literature” (PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2005), 80.
 16. Alfred Kazin, *On Native Grounds: A Study of American Prose Literature from 1890 to the Present* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1942), 21.
 17. Berlin, *Rhetorics*, 31.
 18. James Shapiro, *Contested Will: Who Wrote Shakespeare?* (New York and London: Simon & Schuster, 2010), 12.
 19. Like Dewey, Flagg Young, Addams, Manly, and Rickert, Fabian was also interested in early childhood education literacy reform, for which the anti-Stratfordian project directly contributed. He established a kindergarten at Riverbank—or, at the least, appointed a director, Dorothy Crain, and began publishing textbooks for his vision of a kindergarten—in which early literacy was to be taught using the biliteral cipher of Bacon. The Geneva

- History Museum has a note about it, and one publication is accessible entitled *Ciphers for Little Folks: A Method of Teaching the Greatest Work of Sir Francis Bacon* (1916), by Helen Louise Ricketts. Crain was indeed a real kindergarten educator. She was trained at the Pestalozzi Froebal Teachers College, a kindergarten training center in Chicago that had been founded by Bertha Hofer Hegner, one of the early promoters of kindergarten education (who had studied under a niece of Friedrich Fröbel).
20. See Irwin L. Goldman, "William Friedman, Geneticist Turned Cryptographer" *Genetics* 206, no.1 (2017): 1–8.
 21. Elizabeth Wells Gallup, *The Bi-literal Cypher of Sir Francis Bacon* (London: Howard Publishing Company, 1899).
 22. Shapiro, *Contested Will*, 127.
 23. Friedman, *Shakespearean Ciphers*, 205.
 24. Gallup, *Bi-literal Cypher*, 3.
 25. Elizebeth Smith Friedman, "Tape #2: History of the Friedmans." Elizebeth Smith Friedman Interviews, George C. Marshall Foundation, June 4, 1974, 14. Smith Friedman is interviewed by Marshall Research Library Staff Member Lynn Biribauer.
 26. Shapiro, *Contested Will*, 10.
 27. Qtd. in Shapiro, *Contested*, 55.
 28. Gallup, *Bi-literal Cypher*, 1.
 29. Friedman, "Tape #2," 4–5.
 30. Ibid.
 31. Ibid.
 32. Elizebeth Smith Friedman, "Interview with Mrs. William F. Friedman," interview by Dr. Forrest C. Pogue, Marshall Research Library, May 16–17, 1973, 34. A number of typos appear in the transcription of Smith Friedman's interview, which I have silently corrected.
 33. David A. Hatch, *The Dawn of American Cryptology, 1900–1917*, Vol. 7 (Fort Meade, MD: Center for Cryptologic History, National Security Agency, 2019), 19.
 34. Robert Morse Lovett, "Sketch of Manly," *The Daily Maroon* XXVII (Nov. 1917): 3.
 35. David H. Stevens, "Memorial Service for John Matthews Manly," Bond Chapel, University of Chicago (October, 11, 1940), 3.
 36. John Matthews Manly, "Cuts and Insertions in Shakespeare's Plays," *Studies in Philology* 14, no.2 (1917): 127–128.
 37. Lovett, "Sketch," 4.
 38. George Fabyan, "Letter to John Matthews Manly, Chicago," John Matthews Manly Papers, Box 2, Folder 10, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, February 6, 1917, 2.

39. Ibid., 1–2.
40. John Matthews Manly, “Letter to George Fabyan, Chicago,” John Matthews Manly Papers, Box 2, Folder 10, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, March 24, 1917.
41. George Fabyan, “Letter to John Matthews Manly,” John Matthews Manly Papers, Box 2, Folder 10, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, March 10, 1917.
42. John Matthews Manly, “Letter to George Fabyan, Chicago,” John Matthews Manly Papers, Box 2, Folder 10, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, March 19, 1917.
43. John Matthews Manly, “Letter to George Fabyan, Chicago,” John Matthews Manly Papers, Box 2, Folder 10, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, March 21, 1917.
44. Hatch, *Dawn*, 24.
45. John Matthews Manly, “The President’s Address: New Bottles,” *PMLA* 35 (1920): lii.
46. William F. Friedman, “Letter to John M. Manly,” George Marshall Foundation Research Library, September 9, 1926, 2.
47. John Matthews Manly, “Letter to William F. Friedman, Chicago,” George Marshall Foundation Research Library, December 31, 1925, 1.
48. William F. Friedman, “Letter to John M. Manly, London,” George Marshall Foundation Research Library, February 1, 1926, 1.
49. William F. Friedman, “Letter to John M. Manly, Chicago,” George Marshall Foundation Research Library, June 19, 1926, 1.
50. Friedman, “September 9, 1926,” 1.
51. William F. Friedman, “Letter to John M. Manly,” George Marshall Foundation Research Library, August 27, 1927, 1.
52. William F. Friedman, “Letter to John M. Manly, Washington, D.C.,” George Marshall Foundation Research Library, June 30, 1931, 1.
53. William F. Friedman, *American Army Field Codes in the American Expeditionary Forces During the First World War* (Washington, D.C.: War Department, June 1942).
54. John Matthews Manly, “Letter to William F. Friedman, Chicago,” George Marshall Foundation Research Library, July 24, 1931, 1–2.
55. William F. Friedman, “Letter to John M. Manly, Washington, D.C.,” George Marshall Foundation Research Library, August 24, 1931, 1.
56. Ibid., 2.
57. John Matthews Manly, “Letter to William F. Friedman, Chicago,” George Marshall Foundation Research Library, August 28, 1931, 1.

58. John Matthews Manly, "Letter to William F. Friedman, Chicago," George Marshall Foundation Research Library, December 12, 1931, 1.
59. *Ibid.*, 1.
60. Veggian, "Mercury," 80.
61. John Matthews Manly, "Education That Educates," *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors* (1915–1955) 14, no.4 (April 1928): 268. This article is based on a speech that Manly delivered at the 149th Convocation of the University of Chicago on December 20, 1927.
62. In a graduate class, and apparently also in at least one undergraduate course, she worked with students to identify the methods of cryptanalysis that could inform literary study of the twentieth century. The products of this pedagogy are outlined in her *New Methods for the Study of Literature*, published by the University of Chicago Press in 1927. In the preface to *New Methods*, "To Skeptics," she notes that "strangely enough," her experience in the Code and Cipher Section of MID persuaded her to use her graduate course to test "the belief that processes which served to bring content out of series of numbers and other meaningless symbols might also be applied to the analysis of literature."
63. Rachel Sagner Buurma and Laura Heffernan, *The Teaching Archive: A New History for Literary Study* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020), 106.

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John Matthews Manly and Edith Rickert: Cryptologists

John F. Dooley

John Matthews Manly and Edith Rickert wore many hats in their individual careers and in the more than 30 years that they worked together. Professors of English at the University of Chicago, textbook authors, researchers in medieval English literature, and cryptologists, their careers were interesting and varied. In this chapter, I will examine their work in cryptology during World War I and after. Working in the Code and Cipher Section of Military Intelligence, called MI-8, in Washington during World War I, Manly and Rickert were at the tail end of the “pencil and paper” era of codebreaking. As philologists, they were, in the first third of the twentieth century, among that last group of codebreakers who were linguists and students of the humanities and not mathematicians or lately, computer scientists. While they are not credited with new techniques for deciphering enemy messages, they did master and improve on existing methods, particularly for those systems used by German spies. After the war they were both interested and involved in attempts at the decipherment of a number

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of previously unsolved historical cryptograms, the most famous of which is the Voynich manuscript cipher. They were also closely acquainted with many of the people at the forefront of American cryptology at the time, among them, Herbert O. Yardley and William F. Friedman.

A FEW WORDS ON CODES AND CIPHERS

Every discipline has its own vocabulary, and cryptology is no different. Governments, the military, and people in business have desired to keep their communications secret ever since the invention of writing.¹ Spies, lovers, and diplomats all have secrets and are desperate to keep them. There are typically two ways of keeping secrets in communications. Steganography hides the very existence of a message. Secret ink, microdots, and typographical variation on printed pages are all ways of hiding a message from prying eyes. Cryptography, on the other hand, makes no effort to hide the presence of a secret message. Instead, it transforms the message into something unintelligible so that if the enemy intercepts the message they will have no hope of reading it. Cryptology is the study of secret writing. A cryptologic system performs a transformation on a message—called the plaintext. The transformation renders the plaintext unintelligible and produces a new version of the message—the ciphertext. This process is encoding or enciphering the plaintext. A message in ciphertext is typically called a cryptogram. The cryptogram is transmitted over an insecure communications channel from the originator to the destination. It is assumed that the message can be intercepted. To reverse the process, the cryptologic system performs an inverse transformation to recover the plaintext. This is known as decoding or deciphering the ciphertext. The science of cryptology can be broken down in a couple of different ways; one is that it is concerned with both the creation of cryptologic systems, called cryptography, and the techniques to uncover the secret from an intercepted ciphertext, called cryptanalysis. The science of decrypting messages is called cryptanalytics. A person who attempts to break cryptograms is a cryptanalyst.

William Friedman is largely responsible for this terminology, which he developed in the early 1920s while he was first at Riverbank Laboratories, and later as the Chief Cryptographer at the U.S. Army Signal Corps. Manly helped Friedman develop and publish this new vocabulary. It was Manly who proposed the term “cryptanalytics” to describe the science of breaking cryptograms.² These definitions first appeared in Friedman’s “Elements of Cryptanalysis,” a training manual he wrote for the U.S. Army

and which was published in 1923.³ Manly and Friedman engaged in a lively and interesting correspondence about different aspects of cryptology throughout the 1920s and 1930s. Manly also helped Friedman get his new terminology included in dictionaries.⁴

A complementary way of looking at cryptology is to divide things up by the types and sizes of grammatical elements used by the transformations that different cryptologic systems perform. The standard division is by the size of the element of the plaintext used in the transformation. A code uses variable sized elements that have meaning in the plaintext language, like syllables, words, or phrases. A code always takes the form of a book where a numerical or alphabetic codeword is substituted for a complete word or phrase from the plaintext. Codebooks can have thousands of codewords in them.

On the other hand, a cipher uses fixed sized elements like single letters or two- or three-letter groups that are divorced from meaning in the language. For example, a code will have a single codeword for the plaintext “stop,” say 37761, while a cipher will transform each individual letter as in $X = s$, $A = t$, $V = o$, and $W = p$ to produce XAVW. One could argue that a code is also a substitution cipher, just one with a very large number of substitutions. However, while ciphers typically have a small fixed number of substitution elements—the letters of the alphabet—codes have thousands of words and phrases to substitute. Additionally, the methods of cryptanalysis of the two types of system are quite different.

CIPHERS

Ciphers come in two general categories. Substitution ciphers will replace each letter in a message with a different letter or symbol using a mapping called a cipher alphabet. Transposition ciphers will rearrange the letters of a message, creating a permutation of the original plaintext, but will not substitute new letters for the existing letters in the message.

Substitution Ciphers

Some substitution ciphers can use just a single cipher alphabet for the entire message; these are known as monoalphabetic substitution ciphers. Cipher systems that use more than one cipher alphabet to do the encryption are polyalphabetic substitution ciphers. In a polyalphabetic substitution cipher, each plaintext letter may be replaced with more than one

cipher letter, making the job significantly harder for the cryptanalyst. The German Enigma cipher machine of World War II generated a polyalphabetic substitution cipher using tens of thousands of cipher alphabets.

All substitution ciphers depend on the use of a key to tell the user how to rearrange the plaintext alphabet into a cipher alphabet. If the same key is used to both encrypt and decrypt messages, then the system is called a symmetric key system.

Just like the security of a codebook, the security of the key is of paramount importance for cipher systems. And just like a codebook, everyone who uses a particular cipher system must also use the same key. For added security, keys are changed periodically, so while the underlying substitution cipher system remains the same, the key is different.

While most cipher systems substitute one letter at a time, it is also possible to substitute two letters at a time, in what is called a digraphic system, or more than two, in what is called a polygraphic system. It is also possible to avoid the use of a specific cipher alphabet and use a book to identify either individual letters or words. This is known as a book or dictionary cipher.

Transposition Ciphers

Transposition ciphers transform the plaintext into ciphertext by rearranging the letters of the plaintext according to a specific rule and key. The transposition is a permutation of all the letters of the plaintext message done according to a set of rules and guided by the key. Since the transposition is a permutation, there are $n!$ ⁵ different ciphertexts for an n -letter plaintext message. The simplest transposition cipher is the columnar transposition. In this system the plaintext is written horizontally in a rectangle that is as wide as the length of the key. As many rows as are needed to complete the message are used. Once the plaintext is written out the columns may then be filled with nulls until they are all the same length. For example, for the message “Second division advancing tonight” we can create a transposition table that looks like:

1	2	3	4	5	6
s	e	c	o	n	d
d	i	v	i	s	i
o	n	a	d	v	a
n	c	i	n	g	t
o	n	i	g	h	t

The ciphertext is then pulled off by columns according to the key and divided into groups of five for transmission. If the key for this cipher were 321654 then the ciphertext would be:

CVAII EINCN SDONO DIATT NSVGH OIDNG

Another type of columnar transposition cipher is the *route transposition*. In a route transposition, one creates the standard rectangle of the plaintext as above, but then one takes off the letters using a rule that describes a route through the rectangle. For example, one could start at the upper left-hand corner and describe a spiral through the plaintext, going down one column, across a row, up a column and then back across another row. Another method is to take the message off by columns, but alternate going down and up each column.

THE STATE OF U.S. MILITARY INTELLIGENCE PRIOR TO WORLD WAR I

Before the creation of MI-8 in July 1917, the U.S. Army had never had a permanent cryptologic organization. Starting during the American Revolution, in every conflict where the Army was involved, they would create an ad hoc intelligence organization, assign a few officers and enlisted men, and order them to encrypt and decrypt U.S. Army messages and to break intercepted enemy cryptograms. At the end of the war, the organization would be disbanded and intelligence would go into hiding until the next war.

In 1903 the U.S. Army finally decided to follow the modern European model of military organization and created a General Staff. The Second Division of the General Staff (G-2) was responsible for military intelligence, among several other things. However, its permanence was not to be. By 1908 the Second Division had been subsumed by the Third Division (later renamed the War College Division) and the Military Intelligence Section had been reduced to no personnel. Things stayed this way until April 1917 with the military intelligence organization on the organization chart, but not staffed, when Major Ralph Van Deman, who had been an intelligence officer in the Philippines and in Washington, began a campaign to create a real intelligence section in the General Staff. Van Deman tried to convince the Army Chief of Staff General Hugh L. Scott of the need for a separate military intelligence department. Scott replied that if the U.S. Army needed intelligence, they could just ask the

British and the French. Van Deman did not give up and used a couple of acquaintances (including the novelist Edith Wharton) to pressure the Secretary of War that creating a real intelligence organization was vital.⁶

Also in April 1917, Major Joseph Mauborgne (a future Chief Signal Officer) visited Riverbank Laboratories to discuss the possibility that the Riverbank Cipher Department (under William Friedman) would decrypt intercepted messages and train army officers in cryptanalysis. Van Deman, who by this time was the only intelligence officer in the Army, agreed, and Friedman and company began decrypting messages. In Fall 1917, Riverbank ran the first of four training classes for Army officers.⁷

Finally, on May 3, 1917, Van Deman was ordered to create a Military Intelligence Section within the War College Division, whose mission would be “the supervision and control of such system of military espionage and counterespionage as shall be established ... during the continuation of the present war.”⁸ One of the sections created by Van Deman was the Cable and Telegraph Section, later called the Code and Cipher Section and designated as Military Intelligence, Section 8—MI-8. MI-8 was formed on July 11, 1917 under freshly minted (he was commissioned on June 29) First Lieutenant Herbert O. Yardley. Van Deman started Yardley off with a couple of clerks and told him to create the organization himself.⁹ In October, Yardley hired Manly to be his second-in-command. Manly was commissioned a Captain and started work at the end of October, recruiting other faculty from the University of Chicago, including Rickert. By early 1918, MI-8 had taken over most training and nearly all decryption activities from Riverbank.

MANLY AND RICKERT’S MILITARY SERVICE

Manly’s vocation was academic, but his avocation was cryptology. From the time he was a teenager he was interested in secret codes and ciphers.¹⁰ While his only professional experience with cryptology was in MI-8 during the war, during his career Manly explored a number of theories and research problems that brought together literature and cryptology. One of these was the idea, popular in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, that someone other than William Shakespeare wrote the Shakespearean plays. Manly visited the Riverbank Laboratories in Geneva, Illinois as early as 1916 to talk to the owner, Colonel George Fabyan, about the alleged authorship of Shakespeare by Francis Bacon and the Baconian biliteral cipher. Fabyan was convinced that Bacon had written the Shakespearean plays and had employed a woman of like mind,

Elizabeth Wells Gallup, to prove the case. Wells Gallup was convinced that Bacon had left encrypted messages in his biliteral cipher inside the Shakespearean plays and that it was possible to find and decrypt these messages. She was first interested in this theory by a series of books (1893–1895) written by Dr. Orville Ward Owen, and later wrote her own book detailing her method for uncovering Bacon’s ciphers from Shakespeare’s First Folio and deciphering them.¹¹ Manly was unconvinced by Wells Gallup and the controversy was largely debunked four decades later by the Friedmans. Their book *The Shakespearean Ciphers Examined* looked at each of the theories behind the authorship controversy and demolished them one by one.¹² William Friedman would later head the Code Solution Section of the American Expeditionary Forces Intelligence organization in France during World War I, known as G2-A6. William and Elizebeth Friedman became two of the most influential people in American cryptology in the first half of the twentieth century. For more information on Manly and Rickert’s experiences at Riverbank Laboratories, see Katherine Ellison’s chapter in this collection.

Upon America’s entry into the First World War, Manly, then 51 years old and intrigued by his recent studies in cryptology through Riverbank’s Shakespeare-Bacon project, volunteered for service in the U.S. Army. He visited Major Ralph van Deman, the head of the Military Intelligence Section, as early as March 1917 to offer his services. Van Deman contacted him at the end of September, and Manly started work at MI-8 on October 3, 1917 and was commissioned a Captain on November 8, 1917 and later promoted to Major. He served in the Code and Cipher Section of the Military Intelligence Division, designated MI-8, under the leadership of First Lieutenant Herbert O. Yardley.

Manly was 24 years older than Yardley, and their relationship was close during the war and would remain close at least through the early 1930s. Manly was one of Yardley’s first cryptanalytic hires into MI-8.¹³ He immediately became Yardley’s second-in-command and chief cryptanalyst, so they were in constant contact. When Yardley was sent to France in August 1918 and later assigned to supervise the cryptographic section of the American delegation to the Peace Conference in early 1919, Manly became commander of the Code and Cipher Section for the rest of the war, and they had numerous communications while Yardley was overseas. Manly oversaw MI-8’s Code and Cipher Divisions demobilization after the Armistice, returning to the University of Chicago in mid-1919. Later, Manly wrote and Yardley edited the official history of MI-8 during the

war. They corresponded and visited each other throughout the 1920s and early 1930s. They also collaborated on Manly's *Collier's magazine* articles in 1927.¹⁴ Manly was the only person from MI-8 whom Yardley mentioned by name in *The American Black Chamber*. Yardley said that Manly "had the rare gift of originality of mind—in cryptography called 'cipher brains.' He was destined to develop into the most skillful and brilliant of our cryptographers."¹⁵ Manly was practically the only person who defended Yardley after the publication of Yardley's tell-all 1931 book, *The American Black Chamber*, made him a pariah in the American cryptologic community, as Ellison discusses in this collection.

In November 1917, when Manly joined MI-8, there were only a handful of cipher clerks and just a couple of cryptanalysts on the staff. Manly and Yardley took up the task of finding qualified people to become America's first cast of cryptanalysts. Manly drew on the people he knew, professors and graduate students from the University of Chicago, including part-time English instructor, novelist, magazine editor, and Manly's former student and current colleague, Rickert. Rickert joined MI-8 in late 1917 and immediately became an essential member of the cryptanalytic team. She and Manly would work closely together for the duration of the war, and Rickert was the key partner in decrypting the most important coded message of their tenure in MI-8.

Manly and Rickert's greatest achievement during the war was the solution of the Pablo Waberski cipher in 1918; a story told well, if not completely accurately, in Yardley's book.¹⁶ Waberski was a German spy who crossed into the United States from Nogales, Mexico, with a lengthy cryptogram in his possession. He was captured in Arizona on February 1, 1918 just after crossing the border, and the cryptogram was sent to MI-8 in Washington, where it languished unsolved for several weeks. Yardley stretches the truth about the incident in his telling of the story: in his book, Yardley gives the impression that he went straight off and started work on the cipher and that Major Van Deman, the head of Military Intelligence, wanted the solution as soon as possible.¹⁷ In actuality, because of a large volume of incoming messages to decipher and a continuing shortage of cryptanalysts in MI-8, the cipher lay on Yardley's desk for nearly three months before Manly and Rickert were asked to solve it. Several other people, including possibly Yardley, had looked at the message and been unable to solve it.¹⁸

In early May 1918, Manly and Rickert picked up the unsolved message and spent the better part of three days breaking the cryptogram. They

were later called to testify at Waberski's trial at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio. The solution of the cryptogram was the damning piece of evidence that convicted Waberski and earned him a death sentence, which was later commuted; Waberski was released from prison and deported to Germany in 1923.¹⁹

MANLY, RICKERT, AND THE WABERSKI CIPHER

Lothar Witzke (see Fig. 7.1), alias Pablo Waberski, was a German naval officer turned spy and saboteur who worked out of the German consulate in San Francisco in the period before America's entry into the war. Witzke is believed to have been involved in the explosion at Black Tom Island in New York Harbor in July 1916 that destroyed about three million pounds of ammunition intended for the Allies. He was also probably involved in a similar explosion at Mare Island in San Francisco Harbor in early 1917.²⁰ Agents of the U.S. Bureau of Investigation apprehended Witzke on February 1, 1918 as he was crossing the border from Mexico into the town of Nogales, Arizona.²¹ A 424-letter cryptogram was found in his clothing and immediately dispatched to MI-8 in Washington. Eventually the cryptogram landed on Manly's desk, and he and Rickert spent an

Fig. 7.1 Lothar Witzke in 1918.
(National Archives and Records Administration)



intense weekend solving the cryptogram, which turned out to be a double transposition cipher in German. The decrypted message identified Witzke as a German secret agent.

Manly tells the story of how they broke the Waberski cryptogram in an unpublished manuscript from 1927.²² The manuscript mirrors and expands upon his testimony at Witzke's trial. The original cryptogram that Manly and Rickert started to examine in May 1918 is:

15-01-18

seofnatupk asihelhbnn uersdausnn
 lrsegglesn nkleznsimn ehnesmppb
 asueasriht hteurmvmnm eaincouasi
 insnrnvegi esnbttnnrcn dtdrzbemuk
 kolseizdnn auebfbkpsa tasecisdgt
 ihuktnaeie tiebaeuera thnoieaen
 hsdaoaiakn ethnnneedc cdkkonesdu
 eszadehpea bbilsesooe etnouzkdm
 neuilurnrn zwhneegvcr eodhicsiac
 niuanrdnso drgsurriec egrcsuasp
 eatgrsheho etruseelca umlpaatlee
 clcxrnprga awsutemair nasnutedea
 erreheim eahktmuhdt cokdtgceio
 eefighlhre litfiueunl eelserunma
 znai

There are 424 letters in the cryptogram, arranged in groups of ten letters (which will not make any difference in the decryption).

When a cryptanalyst is approaching a new unsolved cryptogram, the first step is usually to identify the language of the plaintext. Manly and Rickert assumed there were three likely choices: German, English, and Spanish. German was a possibility because Witzke was a German, English was likely because he was traveling into the United States, and Spanish was also an option because he was traveling from Mexico. To make the language determination, Manly and Rickert did a frequency count of the letters in the cryptogram, totaling up how many times each letter appeared. Displaying this frequency count as a chart (see Fig. 7.2) told them two things: first, the language was likely German. They deduced that it could not be Spanish because the cryptogram contained no q's, and any message in Spanish without q's was very unlikely. It also contained too few w's and t's for it to be a likely English message.

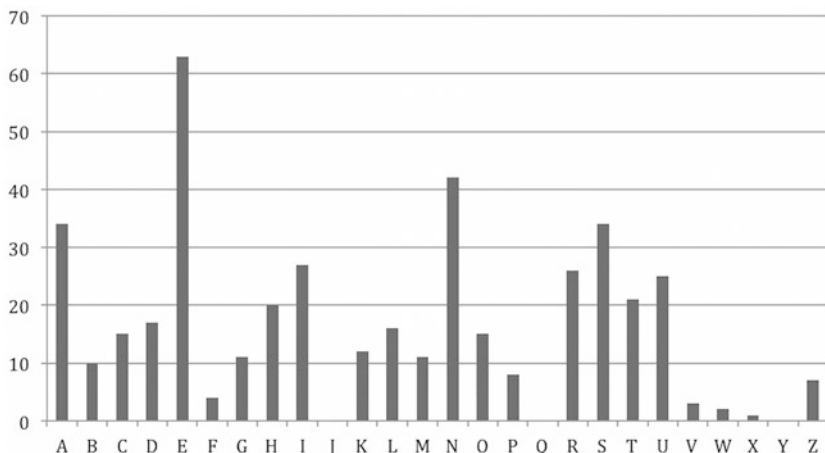


Fig. 7.2 Waberski cipher letter frequencies indicating a German cryptogram. Used by permission of the author

Because the frequency chart looked very close to the frequency graphs of plaintexts for several western European languages, especially German (see Fig. 7.3), the frequency chart also told them that the cryptogram was likely a transposition cipher.

Manly and Rickert also knew from experience that most German spy rings operating in the United States used a double transposition cipher to communicate. A double transposition cipher is created by using two keys (or sometimes using the same key twice) to provide the rules for rearranging a plaintext. The first key will define a rectangle that is then populated by the original plaintext and informs the user how to draw off the columns of the rectangle. The second key will define a second, different-sized rectangle that is populated with the output of the first transposition and tells the user how to draw off the columns of this new rectangle, producing the final ciphertext. In order to decipher the resulting cryptogram, the cryptanalyst works backward, using the second key and then the first to undo the transpositions. Since they were dealing with a transposition cipher, their next step was to identify the size of the rectangle into which the original message was written. One way to do this was to first look at the factors of the length of the cryptogram, 424. These factors are 1, 2, 4, 8, 53, 106, 212, and 424. However, because they were dealing with a double

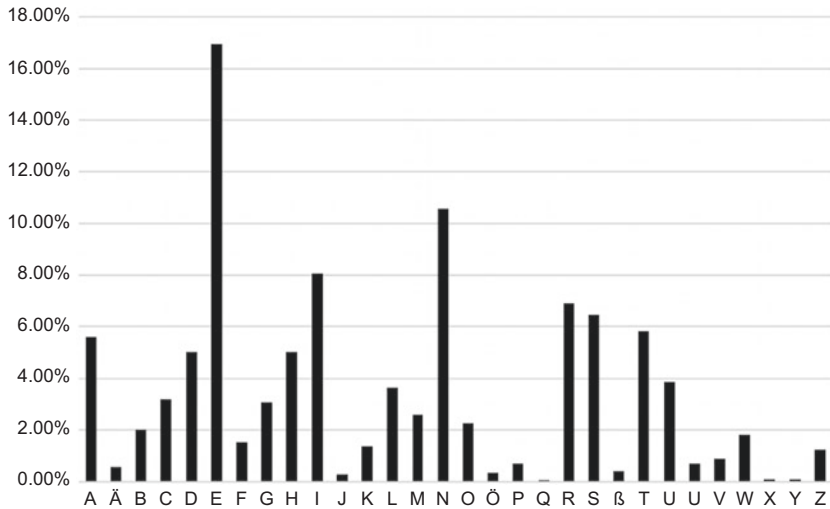


Fig. 7.3 German-language letter frequencies. Used by permission of the author

transposition, they were aware that they probably had two different rectangle sizes to consider. This made the problem much more difficult. Instead of just trying to find a rectangle size, Manly and Rickert used their knowledge of German (they were both fluent) in order to make some educated guesses about words in the message. Recall that in a transposition cipher all the letters of the original plaintext are still in the message but rearranged. So, it is sometimes possible to reconstruct one or more probable words using language characteristics. Knowing that the original message was in German, Manly and Rickert also knew that a characteristic of German is that for native words in the language, except possibly proper nouns, every “c” is always followed by either an “h” or a “k.”

Numbering all the letters in the cryptogram, Manly and Rickert discovered the letter *c* at locations 85, 109, 145, 199, 201, 259, 266, 270, 290, 294, 319, 331, 333, 381, and 387. The *h*'s occupied the following positions: 14, 17, 52, 56, 69, 71, 152, 172, 181, 193, 217, 253, 264, 307, 309, 367, 373, 378, 396, and 398. It was next discovered that the intervals between certain occurrences of the letter *c* matched exactly with the intervals between occurrences of the letter *h*. Thus, for the *c*, the interval between 85 and 109 is 24, and the interval between 109 and 145 is 36.²³ The *h* has the same intervals between numbers 193, 217, and 253. It

would seem probable, then, that these three appearances of *c* were originally joined with these three *h* letters, and this was confirmed by the fact that 54 letters further on in each case appeared another pair of equal intervals; that is, the *c* between 199, 201, and 259, and the *h* between 307, 309, and 367, the pair of intervals being 2 and 58.

So after this analysis, it was clear that six *c* letters had been correctly matched with six *h* letters. Subtracting the number of each *c* from that of the corresponding *h* revealed that there was an interval between them of 108. That is: 217 minus 109 equals 108; 253 minus 145 equals 108; 309 minus 201 equals 108; 367 minus 259 equals 108.²⁴ 108 is very close to 106, which is one of the factors of 424, so Manly and Rickert concluded they were on the right track. In this case the cryptogram is using what is known as an “incomplete columnar transposition.” Most of the columns are all the same length—108—but the last few are a different length. In the case of a “complete columnar transposition,” all the columns are the same length so the number of letters is just length multiplied by width. For an incomplete columnar, one cannot do the simple multiplication because some of the columns are shorter. In the Waberski cipher, Manly and Rickert’s first cut at finding the matching *c* letters and *h* letters gave them intervals of 108. Since 106 is close to 108 and is a factor of 424, they reasoned that the cipher was an incomplete columnar transposition, and it then followed that they could use their columns of 108 for the first three columns, with the last column being shorter. This left them with a string of 100 four-letter groups and a smaller string of eight three-letter groups.

To create the new rectangle, Rickert and Manly then wrote the cryptogram down in a rectangle of 108 rows vertically, giving them 100 rows with four letters and eight rows with just three letters (because 108 times 3 is 324, leaving just 100 letters for the final column and eight blanks). They then examined each of the four- and three-letter groups looking for probable partial words in German. They found many examples, including such quartets as *scha*, *iche*, *nder*, *bzus*, and so on. In addition, they also found several groups that suggested proper nouns, including the word *peso*, and most prominently the quartet *kmex* and a second, *ikop*. Together these suggested the German word *Mexiko*. Since they could identify parts of words, Manly and Rickert now started working on the cryptogram using the new groups of three and four letters instead of just considering single letters at a time. This allowed them to rearrange their 108 groups into a new rectangle. The most likely factors of 108 to use would be either

9 by 12, or 12 by 9. They decided on using a 12-row, 9-column rectangle, producing:

<i>scha</i>	enpa	odet	<i>ftal</i>	ndbe	arbe	tzic	ubli	pesc
<i>kmex</i>	ausr	skon	<i>ikop</i>	hoef	eleg	ista	hena	blow
<i>bzus</i>	ndzu	unkt	<i>ende</i>	ramm	sula	deni	aber	ufun
<i>skia</i>	nbis	npun	<i>lsru</i>	ramt	stre	eand	gszr	gewa
<i>iche</i>	einr	sser	<i>nder</i>	ngge	ktvo	lich	ehre	zuei
<i>nkom</i>	stde	inha	<i>maih</i>	neck	eist	heim	ntau	eich
<i>send</i>	hbit	mauc	<i>peso</i>	punk	berd	ardt	sang	utsc
<i>ehoe</i>	andi	soro	<i>rige</i>	iese	hauf	teri	herg	tnih
<i>chei</i>	usch	rder	<i>mage</i>	verl	naci	sist	mauf	ekai
<i>ansu</i>	iese	ntpu	<i>chen</i>	onal	unte	ange	serl	iess
<i>iche</i>	nder	schu	<i>nkon</i>	rdem	nkta	vorz	enun	gesa
<i>dsei</i>	ede	sul	<i>nec</i>	bsa	tzu	nam	ndt	rep

The two cryptanalysts then proceeded to rearrange columns in order to try to make more complete German words. Once they had an arrangement that seemed to work, they then transposed the rectangle into a 9-row by 12-column table in an attempt to undo the second transformation. This resulted in the following rectangle:

enpa	ausr	ndzu	nbis	einr	stde	hbit	<i>andi</i>	usch	iese	nder	ede
pesc	blow	ufun	gewa	zuci	eich	utsc	tnih	<i>ekai</i>	iess	gesa	rep
ubli	hena	aber	gsze	chre	ntau	sang	herg	mauf	<i>serl</i>	enun	ndt
scha	<i>kmex</i>	bzus	skia	iche	nkom	send	ehoe	chei	ansa	<i>iche</i>	dsei
ftal	<i>ikop</i>	ende	lsru	nder	maih	peso	rige	mage	chen	<i>nkon</i>	nec
odet	skon	unkt	npun	sser	inha	mauc	soro	rder	ntpu	schu	<i>sul</i>
<i>arbe</i>	<i>eleg</i>	sula	stre	ktvo	eist	berd	hauf	naci	unte	nkta	tzu
ndbe	<i>hoer</i>	<i>ramm</i>	ramt	ngge	neck	punk	iese	verl	onal	rdem	bsa
tzic	ista	<i>deni</i>	eand	lich	heim	ardt	teri	sist	auge	vorz	nam

One final step was to unravel this rectangle to recover the original message. Manly and Rickert noticed that the rectangle did not unravel in a straight column or row order, but diagonally. To figure out the proper columns and rows they had to find the starting place. It turned out that the eighth group in the top row is the starting point (and also the first number of the key). The groups in the first diagonal are highlighted above. Working diagonally and wrapping around as they went resulted in the final decrypted rectangle:

andi	ekai	serl	iche	nkon	sul	arbe	hoer	deni
nder	<i>rep</i>	<i>ubli</i>	<i>kmex</i>	<i>ikop</i>	unkt	stre	ngge	heim
ausr	ufun	gsze	iche	nder	inha	berd	iese	sist
einr	eich	sang	ehoe	rige	rder	unte	rdem	nam
empa	blow	aber	skia	lsru	sser	eist	punk	teri
stde	utsc	herg	ehei	mage	ntpu	nkta	bsa	tzic
hbit	tnih	mauf	ansu	chen	schu	tzu	ndbe	ista
ndzu	gewa	ehre	nkom	maih	mauc	hauf	verl	ange
nbis	zuei	ntau	send	peso	soro	naci	onal	vorz
usch	iess	enun	dsei	nec	odet	<i>eleg</i>	<i>ramm</i>	eand
iese	gesa	ndt	scha	ftal	skon	sula	ramt	lich
ede	pesc	hena	bzus	ende	npun	ktvo	<i>neck</i>	<i>ardt</i>

Separated into words, this yields the final decrypted message in German:

An die Kaiserlichen Konsular-Behoerden in
 Der Republic Mexiko Punkt
 Strenggheim Ausrufungszeichen
 Der Inhaber dieses ist ein Reichsangehoeriger
 der unter dem namen Pablo Waberski
 als Russe reist punkt er ist deutscher geheim
 agent punkt Absatz ich bitte ihm auf ansuchen
 schutz und Beistand zu gewahren komma ihm
 auch auf, Verlangen bis zu ein tausend pesos
 oro nacional vorzuschiesen und seine Code
 telegramme an diese Gesandtschaft als
 konsularamtliche Depeschen abzusenden punkt
 Von Eckardt

Translated into English, the message reads:

To the Imperial Consular Authorities in
 the Republic of Mexico.

Strictly Secret!

The bearer of this is a subject of the Empire
 who travels as a Russian
 under the name of Pablo WaberskiWaberski, Pablo (aka Lothar Witzke).
 He is a German secret agent
 Please furnish him on request
 protection and assistance,
 also advance him on demand up to one thousand pesos
 of Mexican gold and send his code
 telegrams to this embassy as
 official consular dispatches.

Von Eckardt²⁵

In August 1918, Manly and Rickert traveled to Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, and Manly testified at Witzke's court martial. Manly's story of how he and Rickert had solved the cryptogram was the key evidence that led to Witzke's conviction and death sentence. Witzke was the only German spy given the death sentence during the war. In 1920 President Wilson commuted Witzke's sentence to life in prison, and in 1923 clemency was granted and Witzke was released and allowed to return to Germany. Manly and Rickert's work on decrypting the Waberski cipher is masterful. Manly's essay is a classic explanation of how gifted cryptanalysts approach an unknown message and solve it. In the end they come up with a brilliant solution. Note, though, that Manly and Rickert's decryption is not a general solution of transposition ciphers. Even after their solution, they did not know all the details of how the cipher message was constructed. Confronted with another message of this type they would follow roughly the same procedure to tease out a decryption. Manly and Rickert's work on the Waberski cipher was the highlight of MI-8's accomplishments during the war.²⁶

MANLY, RICKERT, AND THE VOYNICH MANUSCRIPT

Manly and Rickert's work in cryptology did not end after their demobilization at the end of World War I. They continued to be interested in cryptology and worked on other problems over the period between 1919 and 1933, which included examination of the Voynich manuscript. The Voynich manuscript is a 204-page illustrated vellum codex that is written in an unknown language and alphabet (see Fig. 7.4). It is named after Wilfrid Voynich, a Polish book collector and dealer who acquired it from a Jesuit monastery outside Rome in 1912. Nearly every page is a combination of text and illustrations. It is thought that there were originally about 272 pages in the manuscript, bound in quires of 16 pages each. Over the centuries a number of pages have been lost, leaving the current 204-page manuscript. Of the approximately 170,000 letters in the manuscript, an alphabet of 20–30 symbols would account for most of them. The vellum has been carbon-dated to the early-to-mid-fifteenth century, and the ink in which the text is written traced to a slightly later date, giving a date range for the creation of the manuscript between about 1450 to 1550. After his acquisition of the manuscript in 1912, Voynich tried to get experts involved in deciphering the manuscript as soon as he acquired it and was particularly eager to get people involved in the first decade.²⁷ He made photostatic copies of many of the pages and sent them to various linguistic, paleographic, medieval literature, cryptologic, and medieval



Fig. 7.4 Page 78r from the pharmaceutical section of the Voynich manuscript (Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University)

history experts in an effort to find someone who could read the text of the manuscript.

Like many American cryptologists of the day, including Yardley and the Friedmans, Manly and Rickert became interested in the mystery of the Voynich manuscript.²⁸ Manly and Rickert were both taking at least a casual interest in the Voynich from about 1917 onward. In particular, Rickert corresponded with Wilfred Voynich several times in 1917, questioning some assumptions about letter positions in the manuscript. Manly corresponded with Voynich at about the same time.²⁹

Why did Manly and Rickert become interested in the Voynich manuscript? There is no concrete evidence, but there are two possibilities. In the period between 1912 and 1919, Wilfrid Voynich reached out to a number of scholars in U.S. universities asking for help deciphering the manuscript. Voynich may have contacted Manly and/or Rickert to ask for their help. That would explain Rickert's 1917 letters.³⁰ Alternatively, Manly may have seen William Newbold's early paper on the Voynich, and there is evidence that he went to a talk that Newbold gave in Philadelphia in 1921 at the American Philosophical Society on the Voynich.³¹ That talk, and Newbold's paper, may have piqued their interest. Regardless, both Manly and Rickert spent time over the period from 1917 through 1931 doing research and examining the Voynich manuscript.

Manly's interest in the Voynich manuscript as a ciphertext was heightened in early 1921. At an April 1921 meeting of the College of Physicians and Surgeons and American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia, Voynich read a paper on his discovery of the manuscript and related the history of the manuscript up to the current day.³² Voynich was immediately followed by Newbold of the University of Pennsylvania, who read his own paper and announced that the author of the manuscript was Roger Bacon, the thirteenth-century polymath, and advanced a possible solution to the mysterious cryptogram.³³ Manly attended Newbold's lecture and wrote a sympathetic description of it for the *American Review of Reviews* in July 1921.³⁴ In his lecture, Newbold described a convoluted process requiring microscopes and a process of rearranging deciphered letters until they produced understandable Latin that he then used to reach his decipherment. Manly began corresponding with Newbold and examining his claims, and he eventually came to the conclusion that Newbold's analysis was faulty and his decipherment incorrect. This led, later in 1921, to the publication by Manly of a second, more detailed paper on the Voynich, "The Most Mysterious Manuscript in the World."³⁵ In these papers Manly lays out the

various propositions about the manuscript and then analyzes Newbold's arguments and his process, raising some serious questions about Newbold's methodology. Ellison also goes into some detail about how Manly debunks Newbold's interpretation in this collection as well as in *A Material History of Medieval and Early Modern Ciphers: Cryptography and the History of Literacy*.

Newbold continued to work on the Voynich ciphertext for the next several years until his untimely death in 1926 at the age of 60. In 1928, Newbold's friend and colleague Roland Grubb Kent edited and published a multi-volume set of all of Newbold's conclusions on the manuscript as *The Cipher of Roger Bacon*.³⁶ In the book Newbold (and Kent) claimed to have deciphered the manuscript and described in detail a variation on the convoluted and obscure method for creating the decipherment that Newbold had proposed in 1921. Manly read Newbold's book and over the course of three years analyzed in detail all of Newbold's work, publishing a 47-page deconstruction of the decipherments and Newbold's system in 1931.³⁷

Manly's major problems with Newbold's work lay in his proposed system of decipherment. He believed that Newbold's work was not precise in terms of its rules for converting the ciphertext back into understandable plaintext. He also thought that Newbold was much too flexible in his decisions about the substitution of characters in the manuscript into a plaintext alphabet. It allowed Newbold's decipherments to produce more than one possible plaintext. A nice summary of Manly's arguments is found in a newspaper article written by Elizebeth S. Friedman some 30 years later:

The complex method used by Newbold was reducible to nine steps. The first and last of these, without any consideration of the intermediate abstruse and confusing processes, are utterly devoid of precision and are incapable of yielding one and only one plain language text—a rigid requirement of any legitimate cipher method. His first step was to convert the individual strokes of each symbol into Greek shorthand, a process of which Newbold himself said: "I frequently find it impossible to read the same text in exactly the same way." The reason for this, paleographers say, is that what Newbold saw as separate strokes of a symbol are merely the results of the cracking, uneven spreading and fading of the ink, and the condition of the vellum because of the manuscript's age. The final Newbold step, that of anagramming his many variant possibilities for the Roman letters he derived, can readily be found to yield other "decipherments."³⁸

To add a little detail to Friedman's summary, one can divide Newbold's system into three main parts. First, Newbold assumes that each letter in the Voynich manuscript is made up of some number of very small, short pen strokes, the entirety of which make up the whole letter. Newbold views this as a sort of shorthand—Friedman's "Greek shorthand"—out of which he derives a complete Roman letter or two using what is in effect a bilateral cipher.³⁹

In the second part he creates a substitution cipher that converts pairs of these letters into single Roman letters. This allows Newbold to have many homophonic pairs for each of the Roman letters; a total of 484 pairs for the entire 22 letter Roman alphabet.⁴⁰ It also makes the ciphertext twice as long as the plaintext. To alleviate this problem, Newbold claims that Bacon uses the rule that the second letter of each pair is also the first letter of the next pair. So, to use Manly's example, for a Latin word like UNIUS and if the cipher substitution *or* is used for U, then Bacon looked for a substitution for N that starts with r, say *ri*. Continuing, a scholar would get something like *or-ri-it-tu-ur* and since there are repeat letters, if one eliminates them to shorten the ciphertext, the ciphertext becomes *oritur*.⁴¹

Finally, Newbold claims that in order to hide the fact that the author has created a ciphertext message, these resulting sequences of Roman letters constitute anagrams of the real ciphertext in Latin. In order to select the correct letters for a Latin word, Newbold allows the encipherer to select letters from a range of up to 55 or more letters. The problem with this, Manly says, is that selecting the letters for an anagram from such a large set of possible letters allows for multiple decipherments. For example, for just the four letters EILV, we can recover in English LIVE, EVIL, VILE, LEVI, and VEIL. For longer letter sequences there are many more possibilities.⁴²

This last step of Newbold's puts the nail in the coffin of his proposed decipherment process for the Voynich manuscript. For a cryptologic system to be useful, it must create a single ciphertext from a particular plaintext and the decipherment of the ciphertext must result in only the original plaintext. If the decipherment can yield more than one possible plaintext result, it is not a correct cryptologic system. Also, while Newbold's decipherment process might produce some form of plaintext from the existing Voynich text, it appeared to Manly and others that there was no way to invert the process and take a new plaintext and encipher it into a valid ciphertext. In other words, Newbold's system could convert text one way, but not the other.⁴³

Manly proposed that the reason Newbold failed to recognize that his decipherment system was fatally flawed was “that he got messages containing statements which he supposed to be true and important and which he did not believe could have been supplied by his subconscious mental processes.”⁴⁴ In other words, Newbold was an example of a “scholarly mind so obsessed with its work that it invents its own false conclusions”.⁴⁵

Finally, Manly concludes,

In my opinion, the Newbold claims are entirely baseless and should be definitely and absolutely rejected. In the first place, the cipher system as expounded and worked by Professor Newbold is not a practicable means of communication, for the decipherer could never know that the message he got from the cipher was that intended by the encipherer. In the second place, the application of the cipher system to certain basic texts is open to objections of so grave a character as to make it impossible to accept the result.⁴⁶

While it is John Manly’s name on the 1931 Voynich article, the fact that Rickert corresponded with Wilfrid Voynich about the manuscript and that Manly and Rickert worked very closely together starting in 1917 at MI-8 easily lets us hypothesize that she also had input. Given their passion for medieval literature, the Voynich manuscript would have been a very tempting target for them both.

MANLY AND RICKERT’S IMPACT ON MODERN CRYPTOLOGY

Overall, Manly and Rickert’s cryptologic work during World War I in the first permanent cryptanalytic agency of the U.S. military set a lofty standard for ingenuity, precision, and completeness. Shortly after the end of that war, cryptology would begin to rely upon machine technologies for encryption and decryption. The new electro-mechanical rotor machines that dominated World War II, and the digital computers that evolved out of that second war, would largely eliminate the classical pencil-and-paper methods that Manly and Rickert used to break the Waberski cipher. But the techniques and processes they developed for the Waberski problem would continue to live on, even when programmed into machines. Manly and Rickert started with traditional techniques of solving transposition ciphers.⁴⁷ These techniques include frequency analysis, such as recognizing that the cipher is a transposition in German; text characterization; analyzing the text for peculiar German letter usage; anagramming, in

which sliding rows, columns, and diagonals are used to form words or parts of words; and divide and conquer, or dividing the work by transposition phases. Variations of all these techniques have evolved for the computer solution of transposition ciphers.

Their experience in MI-8 during the war would also inform their later work on the *Canterbury Tales*: “the exhaustive collection, collation, and analysis of all of the early manuscripts and fragments of the [Canterbury] Tales, evidenced in the 1940 publication of the eight-volume edition, display modes of intellectual training and networking also fundamental to the practice of cryptography and to work in intelligence.”⁴⁸ Cryptology also had an impact on Rickert’s future scholarly work in the teaching of both literature and writing, particularly her views of literary analysis, as documented in Henry Veggian and Michael Matto’s essays in this collection. As Veggian and Matto also cite, in the introduction to her 1927 book *New Methods in the Study of Literature*, Rickert writes,

This book has not been written; it has grown. Its root lies, strangely enough, in the methods of code analysis used in the Code and Cipher Section of the Military Intelligence in Washington, during the war. In the belief that processes which served to bring content out of series of numbers and other meaningless symbols might also be applied to the analysis of literature, an attempt was made in 1922, in a graduate course at the University of Chicago, to work out scientifically some of the phenomena of tone color and rhythm. Later, methods were found for the study of imagery, of words, of sentences, and of visual devices.⁴⁹

One can say that cryptograms are not really just a “series of numbers and other meaningless symbols” but are envelopes within which are real language constructs and meaning. Their contents are just as evocative as regular prose, because the plaintext is regular prose. The interesting thing about using the tools of cryptanalysis in the analysis of literature is that both cryptograms and literature are full of hidden meaning and the tools that Rickert describes can bring that out.

Finally, there is a story recounted in a short biography of Rickert by one of her former students, Fred Millett, that gives us a glimpse into Manly and Rickert’s continuing interest in cryptology even as they embarked on their Chaucer master work:

[S]ome years after the War he and Miss Rickert were still putting their enthusiasm for intellectual puzzles to good use, as a letter from Mr. Ralph

D. Kellogg (Chicago, '15) entertainingly indicates. The time was January 1926; the place, a cabin cruiser of the Blue Star Line, on an eleven-day crossing from New York to Liverpool. Miss Rickert, overhearing Mr. Kellogg talking with a young Spaniard from Havana, had asked him if he could lend her a Spanish dictionary. The purpose of the Spanish dictionary was not clear until Miss Rickert explained that she and Dr. Manly were not working on a crossword puzzle but were attempting to decipher a message written in code by Don Hernan Cortes in the sixteenth century. The writer proved to be a minor office holder in a remote part of the conqueror's realm. The original document, I believe, had been entrusted to Dr. Manly and his associate with the hope that some one might discover the secret code which had been used. Neither Dr. Manly nor Miss Rickert knew Spanish for purposes of conversation, but they did know the roots of most of the Spanish words, whether of Latin or Arabic origin, and apparently they also knew a good deal about the frequency of letters in the Spanish tongue. My own contribution was not great, as you can well imagine, but with the help of the dictionary Miss Rickert and Dr. Manly were able to decipher most of the code before our arrival in Liverpool.⁵⁰

This story gives us a glimpse at the most enduring aspect of Manly and Rickert's interest in cryptology—curiosity. Their talents and expertise made them both excellent cryptologists; their curiosity kept them wonderfully engaged.

NOTES

1. David Kahn, *The Codebreakers: The Story of Secret Writing* (New York: Macmillan, 1967), 84.
2. William F. Friedman, "Letter to John M. Manly," George Marshall Foundation Research Library, February 4, 1922.
3. William F. Friedman, *Elements of Cryptanalysis*, Training Pamphlet No. 3 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief Signal Officer, 1923).
4. John Matthews Manly, "Letter to William F. Friedman," John Matthews Manly Papers, Box 3, Folder 7, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, April 1, 1924; William F. Friedman, "Letter to John M. Manly," Friedman Collection, George Marshall Foundation Research Library, May 2, 1924.
5. $n!$ is the symbology for the factorial function. $n! = n * n - 1 * n - 2 * \dots * 3 * 2 * 1$. This function grows very quickly as n gets larger. The factorial function tells us the number of possible ways that n things, or in our case symbols, can be ordered. For example, $3! = 6$ tells us that three symbols

can be arranged in six different ways. $10! = 3,628,800$ tells us the number of different ways we can arrange ten symbols.

6. James Gilbert, *World War I and the Origins of U.S. Military Intelligence* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Ltd., 2015), 27.
7. J.O. Mauborgne, "Mauborgne to War Dept. Re: Riverbank Labs," National Archives (College Park, MD), April 11, 1917.
8. Gilbert, *World War I*, 28.
9. David Kahn, *The Reader of Gentlemen's Mail: Herbert O. Yardley and the Birth of American Codebreaking* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 21.
10. John Matthews Manly, "Transcript of John M. Manly Testimony in the Trial of Lothar Witzke (a.k.a., Pablo Waberski)," United States Army, William Friedman Collection, Item 811, George Marshall Foundation Research Library, 1918. "Q: Have you made any special study of codes and ciphers? A: Yes, sir. I have been interested in codes and ciphers from childhood almost—boyhood, from sixteen or seventeen years of age, and have read everything I could get on the subject" (126).
11. Elizabeth Wells Gallup, *The Bi-Literal Cypher of Sir Francis Bacon Discovered in His Works by Mrs. Elizabeth Wells Gallup* (Detroit: Howard Publishing Company, 1899).
12. William F. and Elizebeth S. Friedman, *The Shakespearean Ciphers Examined* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1958).
13. Kahn, *Reader*, 29.
14. John F. Dooley, *Codes, Ciphers and Spies: Tales of Military Intelligence in World War I* (New York: Springer Verlag, 2016).
15. *Ibid.*, 15.
16. Herbert O. Yardley, *The American Black Chamber* (New York: Ishi Press, 2018), 140–171. Yardley's book was originally published in 1931 in London by Faber & Faber, Ltd.
17. *Ibid.*, 142.
18. Kahn, *Codebreakers*, 354.
19. Kahn, *Gentlemen's Mail*, 41–43.
20. Dooley, *Codes*.
21. Charles H. Harris and Louis R. Sadler, "The Witzke Affair: German Intrigue on the Mexican Border, 1917–1918," *Military Review* 59, no. 2 (1979).
22. John Matthews Manly, "Waberski," William Friedman Collection, Item 811, George Marshall Foundation Research Library, 1927.
23. In Manly's original essay on the solution he erroneously uses the pairs 109 to 145 and 145 to 199, which do not match with differences of 24 and 36. These have been corrected.
24. Manly, "Waberski."

25. Ibid.
26. Ibid.
27. Kahn, *Codebreakers*, 866.
28. Elizebeth S. Friedman, "Voynich Manuscript," *Washington Post*, August 5, 1962; Kahn, *Codebreakers*, 863–872.
29. John Matthews Manly, "Manly Letter to Voynich," John Matthews Manly Papers, Box 2, Folder 8, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, July 9, 1921; Anne Nill, "Anne Nill Research Notes on Cipher Manuscript, 1962, accessed July 2019, http://www.as.up.krakow.pl/jvs/library/0-8-2008-05-23/nill_ring_binder.pdf
30. Edith Rickert, "Letter to Wilfred Voynich," John Matthews Manly Collection, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, November 3, 1917.
31. John Matthews Manly, "Roger Bacon's Cipher Manuscript," *The American Review of Reviews*, July 1921, 105–6; Manly, "Manly Letter to Voynich."
32. Wilfred Voynich, "a Preliminary Sketch of the History of the Roger Bacon Cipher Manuscript," *Transactions of the College of Physicians* 43 (1921): 415–30.
33. William Romaine Newbold, "The Voynich Roger Bacon Manuscript," *Transactions of the College of Physicians* 43 (1921): 431–74.
34. Manly, "Roger Bacon's."
35. John Matthews Manly, "The Most Mysterious Manuscript in the World: Did Roger Bacon Write It and Has the Key Been Found?" *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, July 1921.
36. William Romaine Newbold, *The Cipher of Roger Bacon*, edited by Roland Grubb Kent (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1928).
37. John Matthews Manly, "Roger Bacon and the Voynich MS," *Speculum* 6, no. 3 (1931): 345–91.
38. Friedman, "Voynich."
39. Manly, "Roger Bacon," 352–354.
40. A homophonic cipher is a substitution cipher where individual plaintext letters can be replaced by any of several different ciphertext letters. So, for example, using a homophonic alphabet an e can be replaced by an A or a 3 or a 9. The multiple possible replacements for some letters make homophonic ciphers much more difficult to solve.
41. Ibid., 349.
42. Ibid., 350.
43. Kahn, *Codebreakers*, 868.
44. Manly, "Roger Bacon," 373.
45. EllisonEllison, Katherine and KimKim, Susan M. 2018, 247.
46. Ibid., 355.

47. Helen Fouche Gaines, *Elementary Cryptanalysis; A Study of Ciphers and Their Solution* (Boston: American Photographic Publishing Company, 1939); Abraham Sinkov, *Elementary Cryptanalysis: A Mathematical Approach* (New York: Random House, 1968).
48. Katherine Ellison and Susan Kim, "Afterword: The Critical Legacy of Medieval and Early Modern Cryptography Before and After World War I," in *A Material History of Medieval and Early Modern Ciphers* (New York: Routledge, 2018), 241.
49. Edith Rickert, *New Methods for the Study of Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1927).
50. Fred B. Millett, *Edith Rickert – A Memoir* (Whitman, MA: Washington Street Press, 1944).

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“Do You Like to Write? Probably Not”: The Politics of Self-Expression in the Composition Pedagogy of John Matthews Manly and Edith Rickert

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When John Matthews Manly joined the new University of Chicago as head of the Department of English Language, Literature, and Rhetoric in 1898, his most visible and long-lasting work was still ahead of him: his editorship of *Modern Philology*, his work with military intelligence, and the Chaucer project. Less known is his history of writing composition textbooks and manuals of style between 1908 and 1923:

Grammar School and High School Textbooks

The Bailey-Manly Speller (with E. R. Bailey). 1908

Lessons in the Speaking and Writing of English (with E. R. Bailey). 2 vols. 1912

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Lessons in the Speaking and Writing of English, Rev. Ed. (with E. R. Bailey and Edith Rickert). 2 vols and 3 vols. 1922

College Textbooks

The Writing of English (with Edith Rickert). 1919. Revised edition 1920. Revised (3rd) edition, 1923

The Writer's Index of Good Form and Good English (with Edith Rickert). 1923

Professional Guidebooks

Manual for Writers (with J. A. Powell). 1913

Better Advertising (with J. A. Powell). 1921

Better Business English (with J. A. Powell). 1921

Better Business Letters (with J. A. Powell). 1921

What motivated Manly and his collaborators—including Edith Rickert in most of the school textbooks¹—to dedicate so much time to composition projects? Certainly there was money to be made in textbooks,² but their motives also included a dedication to the fundamental pedagogy and ideology that informed his and Rickert's careers as a whole. During this time, education theorists, college administrators, psychologists, politicians, and teachers all engaged in intensive public debate about the nature, purpose, and intended beneficiaries of college education. Manly, as chair of the University of Chicago's English department, is known for shifting the pedagogical emphasis of the literature courses away from aesthetics and toward history and sociology, but his place within the history of composition and rhetoric specifically has not received equal attention. Manly's collaborations with Edith Rickert and others on composition books reveal a belief in the power of education to foster upward mobility by combining John Dewey's progressive psychological approach to education with a more conservative aim of producing a homogeneous American culture.

The introductions and other apparatuses in the textbooks can be read as salvoes in these debates over proper pedagogy and as evidence of their developing positions. For example, in the first paragraph of the introduction to *The Writing of English* (1919), we can see Manly and Rickert's opinion of the popular theme-based approach to teaching writing. Addressing disaffected students, they ask:

Do you like to write? Probably not. What have you tried to write? Probably "themes."

The "theme" is a literary form invented by teachers of rhetoric for the education of students in the art of writing. It does not exist outside the world of school and college. No editor ever accepted a "theme." No "theme" was ever delivered from a rostrum, or spoken at a dinner, or bound between the covers of a book in the hope that it might live for centuries³

This introduction recognizes that school assignments are usually exercises in form and correctness, not occasions for real self-expression. Manly and Rickert go on to echo progressive educators by reassuring students that they do in fact have experiences worth writing and reading about. But the audience of this introduction is also college instructors who used the daily or weekly theme as the basis for teaching composition. Manly and Rickert mince no words in condemning the practice:

In a word, a 'theme' is first and last a product of 'composition'—a laborious putting together of ideas, without audience and without purpose, hated alike by student and by instructor. Its sole use is to exemplify the principles of rhetoric. But rhetoric belongs to the past as much as the toga and the snuffbox; it is an extinct art, the art of cultivating style according to the mannerisms of a vanished age.⁴

Because the key terms here, "composition" and "rhetoric," were so fraught during this period in college pedagogy, to recognize why Manly and Rickert dismiss rhetoric as beholden to "the mannerisms of a vanished age," and to understand what they are offering in its stead, we need to consider the role of rhetoricians in universities at the turn of the century.

The role of rhetoric and composition in colleges at this time was indirectly shaped by concurrent debates about the teaching of literature, which in turn were part of the larger conversation about the purpose of higher education in general.⁵ New and existing American colleges, following Johns Hopkins' lead in 1876, had begun adopting the German research model of higher education by departmentalizing college faculties and emphasizing faculty scholarship. It is in this environment that Manly found himself, as head of the University of Chicago English department, tasked with molding a research-based program. The Germanic model of the research institution, as Gerald Graff has outlined, resulted in tensions between "critics" and "scholars"; the critics focused on literary aesthetics or a general humanism, while the scholars researched such areas as literary

history, sociology and culture, and the history of the language.⁶ Graff quotes Martin Wright Sampson, chair of the English department at Indiana University, who advocated in 1895 for the “critics” over the “scholars”: “the study of literature means the study of literature, not of biography nor of literary history (incidentally of vast importance), not of grammar, not of etymology, not of anything except the works themselves, viewed as their creators wrote them, viewed as art, as transcripts of humanity, not as logic, not as psychology, not as ethics.”⁷ While reading literature as “art” and as a “transcript of humanity” are in fact quite different enterprises, Sampson unites them in opposition to popular positivist epistemological approaches including biographical, historical, sociological, and philological research.

As department chair in Chicago, Manly fell squarely on the side of scholarly research. His editorship of *Modern Philology*, the textual and historical research of the Chaucer project with Rickert, and papers invoking the scientific method (such as “Literary Forms and the New Theory of the Origin of Species”⁸) all modeled positivist research approaches as appropriate for an English department. In his 1920 Presidential Address to the Modern Language Association, he advocated for large-scale projects to be taken on not by individual scholars, but by organized and well-funded groups. He also suggested (successfully) that the annual meeting should divide and organize panel presentations by specific shared research interests, marking a shift in emphasis within the MLA from the generalist to the specialist.⁹ In 1930 he delivered a talk to the Mediaeval Academy in which he said that “humanistic studies, with the ideals and purposes which control them today, not only are akin to the so-called sciences but are in fact more dependent upon the fundamental conceptions of science for their very existence than are the natural sciences themselves.”¹⁰ His point was that the humanities had a much longer history of unscientific and outmoded habits of thinking (including religion and ethics) that needed to be dismantled by the scientific method than did the sciences themselves. Perhaps more telling is his observation that “only the typical is capable of formulation,” meaning that while the sciences study general *types* of phenomena, the humanities must overcome the *sui generis* nature of an individual artistic work, making general laws and principles much harder to formulate.¹¹ Manly thus advocated for research methods to study what Sampson had called the “transcript of humanity” while simultaneously questioning the value of studying an isolated work of literature as art.

The Chaucer project was certainly a clear example of the kind of scholarly research project Manly valued: historical, materialistic, scientific, collaborative, and promising a tangible cultural value. A slightly different approach is found in Edith Rickert's most extensive work of literary criticism, *New Methods for the Study of Literature* in 1927. While also the result of collaborative effort (with her graduate students), this book is not historical at all, but in fact anticipates the New Critics' focus on the artwork itself while developing a reading method akin to the structural analyses of the Russian formalists. Rickert pioneered a number of methodologies we would now call "stylistics," including what she terms "the statistical and the graphical" analysis of the words on the page.¹² Rickert anticipated resistance to her methods; the preface is titled "To Skeptics," and she uses much of the first chapter to refute the charge that the scientific analysis of literature "kills appreciation."¹³ One such refutation reveals her understanding of the relationship between the sciences and the humanities:

There is still another reply to the objection that scientific study kills appreciation. This objection rests upon a supposed antinomy between literature and science; and this antinomy, so far as it exists, applies to material only, not to method. The methods of study which in the past have been confined largely to the materials of science are the only known methods by which even an approximation to the truth can be reached. In the nineteenth century these methods were almost exclusively used for the interpretation of the external world; for the understanding of literature, there was only the formal rhetoric of classical and medieval theorists, and when this was abandoned, nothing was found to take its place. As a result of this situation, science progressed as never before and the study of literature lagged far behind. Is it not, then, reasonable to believe that the methods which have carried us so far toward an understanding of our external environment may help us to interpret the reflection of our inner life in literature?¹⁴

We can see clearly from this passage and from Manly's statements to the MLA and the Mediaeval Academy why they had to put the nail in the coffin of unscientific "rhetoric" in order to move the conversation about teaching literature forward. But one necessary consequence of this rejection of nineteenth-century rhetoric was a concomitant rethinking of the intellectual basis for writing instruction itself.

As with the debates between the scholars and the critics about literature, approaches to teaching writing were also framed by questions about the proper function of higher education and the public good that

universities performed. Then as now, opinions centered on whether colleges prepared students to be cultured citizens or to be productive workers. This question became more pressing as the number of students attending college rapidly grew. The Morrill Act of 1862 had resulted in the founding of new colleges across the United States, and between 1870 and 1930 the number of Americans earning bachelor's degrees increased more than ten-fold.¹⁵ Robert J. Connors, in tracing the move from oral "rhetoric" to written "composition" in colleges during this period, shows that the Morrill Act and the flood of new college students created the need for a proportionally large number of new writing courses.¹⁶ The explicit mission of the land-grant schools had been to prepare young Americans for careers in agriculture and mechanical engineering, but in a larger sense these schools were part of an ongoing response by American higher education to ever-increasing urbanization and industrialization. The Second Industrial Revolution required a managerial class to administrate a growing corporate economy and an educated working class who could function within it. As a result, prestigious colleges found themselves not only developing methodologies for pursuing knowledge in traditional and allied scientific disciplines, but also institutionalizing new schools of business to meet this administrative need.¹⁷ While the business schools were designed to train managers, the regular college curriculum also needed to produce administrative workers. Writers were needed who could both perform administrative tasks and produce documents (letters, reports, memoranda, operations manuals, advertisements) that met certain expectations of form and correctness. Because business administration was to take place largely in writing, new genres of business writing were formalized even as theories of management were being developed. To support this growth in writing, technologies were developed to produce, disseminate, and organize all these written documents—the late nineteenth century saw the invention of the ballpoint pen, the typewriter, and carbon paper; the development of such large-scale duplicators as mimeographs and ditto machines; and the production of filing cabinets to store all this writing within.¹⁸

While oral rhetoric had been a four-year course of study in every college in the mid-nineteenth century, and while most examinations had been performed through oral recitation, *written* compositions increasingly became the coin of the realm. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the new students were deemed unable to write good English. The perceived need for remediation inspired a widespread chorus announcing a national crisis of poor writing. Instruction in college writing was thus associated with

remediation from the start of the modern American university. Harvard's response in 1885 was "English A," the first freshman composition course, which introduced all the hallmarks of poorly designed remediation: daily and weekly "themes," overworked instructors, seas of corrective ink, content-less exercises, and resentful and self-conscious students.¹⁹ Between 1885 and 1910 schools experimented with various approaches to the "problem" of student writing, but after 1910 most programs had settled into what we now call "current-traditional" pedagogy. Along with theme writing, central to this method was a focus on the four "modes" of discourse: narration, description, exposition, and argument.²⁰ Such programs completed the widespread replacement of rhetoric, a discipline rooted in philosophy, ethics and style, with composition, a remediation exercise emphasizing correctness and rules. Those teachers who had studied rhetoric were not interested in teaching the rules of grammar, and those conscripted to the task of teaching composition did not know rhetoric. Predictably, the textbook industry filled the need with an array of course-books, workbooks, and manuals. These textbooks replaced the theoretical treatises that had once been assigned in the four-year course on rhetoric; soon any teacher could mark "themes" for correctness, using symbols keyed to a list of errors and their remedies.²¹

Manly's textbooks, produced with Rickert and others, arrived just as current-traditional approaches to teaching writing took hold. Like the current-traditional teachers, they challenged the "old rhetorical qualities" that privileged style over content, arguing that they had been superseded by a more pragmatic need for clear expression of thought. But rather than correctness, the hallmark of Manly and Rickert's writing pedagogy is a focus on the pragmatics of thinking. To compare, we can consider the definition of rhetoric offered by Adams Sherman Hill, one of the most successful college textbook writers of the previous generation: "Rhetoric ... does not undertake to furnish a person with something to say; but it does undertake to tell him how best to say that with which he has provided himself."²² Manly and Rickert, in contrast, were primarily interested in helping students learn to furnish themselves with something to say:

Without dwelling upon the old rhetorical qualities of style as such, clearness, force, elegance, and so on, [this book] tries to develop the power of clear and accurate observation, of straight thinking, of finding the words that most exactly fit the observation and the thought, and of arranging thoughts and words in clear and effective order.²³

Even the study of elementary grammar was seen in terms of “straight thinking.” In Book I of the 1912 *Lessons in Speaking and Writing in English* series (for primary schools), the authors justify the study of language as a critical thinking skill: “language, not as an instrument of use, but as an object of study, is unsurpassed for the development of the thinking powers.”²⁴ This focus on teaching “clear and exact thinking”²⁵ through writing instruction remains consistent in their textbooks for all levels of education, adjusted for age and developmental appropriateness.

By the time the 1921 *Better Business English* series was published, Manly and Powell virtually collapsed the distinction between thinking and writing: “Skill in writing is, in fact, skill in thinking. No skill is of practical use until it has become automatic—second nature, as we call it.”²⁶ This idea of writing being “automatic” or “second nature” echoes Manly, Bailey, and Rickert’s consistent use of the language of psychology to explain their pedagogical assumptions, advocating that students develop “unconscious” habits of good form. In this they were following the tenets of the progressive movement in education, a movement whose most prominent advocate, John Dewey, had arrived in Chicago four years before Manly. They remained colleagues until Dewey left for Columbia in 1904. We can see a developing commitment to the new progressive movement in the apparatus and design of Manly’s textbooks with Bailey and with Rickert. Even as early as Manly’s first textbook, *The Bailey-Manly Speller* in 1908, the introductory material alludes to the individual learning styles of students. The authors call the discovery of learning styles “among the most positive results of the inquiries which psychologists have made into the forms of memory.”²⁷ After listing a number of idiosyncratic ways students learn to spell, Bailey and Manly continue:

But we are all of us, perhaps, inclined to deal with spelling as if the minds of our pupils were exactly alike. In all subjects, doubtless, but in spelling certainly, there is for each pupil some method of approach that is easier and more effective than any other. Our business as teachers is to find this best method for each class as a whole, and, so far as possible, for each individual.²⁸

To consider the psychological predispositions of individual students in this way is a hallmark of Dewey’s progressive movement.

Insisting on the need for individualized education leads naturally to Manly, Bailey, and Rickert’s ongoing emphasis on fostering intrinsic motivation in students. Their *Lessons* series for primary and middle schoolers

relied on the student's internal desire for self-expression as intrinsic motivation for both developing ideas and learning rule-based correctness. This approach contrasted deeply with the current-traditional approach of theme-writing that was not about self-expression or the development of either ideas or individual growth, but rather was about adherence to a taxonomy of external forms and rules. We saw how the 1919 version of *The Writing of English* criticized theme writing; Book Two of the *Lessons* (for the middle school years) calls out the dominant current-traditional method as a whole, questioning the value of both imitative models and the "modes" of writing:

The composition work emphasizes the formation of habit, but it puts increasing stress upon the methods of getting definite results in self-expression. It aims to discourage imitation of models on the one hand, self-consciousness on the other. It aims to show that description, narration, and exposition are not three separate kinds of writing, practised independently, each without the aid of the others; but that all three work together in various combinations as means of expressing in words our thoughts and experiences.²⁹

We can compare this with the method of Sarah L. Arnold and George L. Kittredge in their competing textbook, *The Mother Tongue* (1900): "Accuracy in speaking and writing can be secured only by a process of *imitation*, and for this the essentials are a 'copy' and occasions for practice."³⁰ This is a traditional approach, stretching back to classical treatises on using imitation to learn rhetorical techniques. But such approaches were increasingly under fire for creating artificial occasions for writing that did not ask students to try to communicate their own ideas.

Manly and Rickert's college textbook *The Writing of English* similarly sets out to balance and synthesize a commitment to personal growth on the one hand and technical proficiency and correctness on the other. In their Preface, they acknowledge that students entering college in ever-increasing numbers demonstrated a variety of skill levels, and they approach the question of remediation through the lens of progressive education. They begin: "Our primary purpose in this book is to awaken in the student the desire for self-expression through the written and spoken word. Without this desire all teaching is futile; and with it learning is inevitable."³¹ After acknowledging that students might not be interested in what teachers have to teach them, Manly and Rickert go on to summarize the

problem of teaching writing as “the balancing of constructive practice over against the corrective drill necessary to eradicate the bad habits due to foreign birth, defective training, or indifference.”³² Rather than eschew drills, Manly and Rickert encourage them, but they understand drills will only be effective if the student sees them as a means to a personal end—not the extrinsic motivation of rules compliance and a high grade, but the intrinsic motivation of self-expression. Here they are charting a middle-path as compared with those who rejected rules and drills-based composition instruction completely. Gertrude Buck, for instance, with whom Rickert had taught at Vassar from 1897 to 1900, asserted in 1901 that “the trend of every recent reform in composition-teaching has been toward responsible freedom for the process of writing—a freedom from laws apparently arbitrary and externally imposed, a responsibility to the law of its own nature as a process of communication.”³³ Buck imagined a reorientation of writing instruction from teachers commenting on correctness to teachers and students commenting solely on effectiveness of communication. In this theory questions of style and correctness would emerge naturally out of discussions of meaning and intention. Manly and Rickert are obviously sympathetic to this reorientation of priorities, but they do not go so far as to reinvent rhetoric along Buck’s lines.

The 1922 revision of the *Lessons in the Speaking and Writing of English* series asserts Manly and Rickert’s developed views on composition in general, especially in the volume intended for the high school student. Referring to contemporary pedagogical and psychological research, they write in the introduction that “the following three facts are coming to be generally recognized”:

1. That the first condition of success is to stir pupils to active cooperation by the continual presentation of subjects that appeal to their interests and stimulate their ideas.
2. That the study of grammar should be limited to principles that can be assimilated into habitual speech.
3. That if English can be made the focal point for correlation with other studies, with other classes, with other schools, with home interests, with the opening world outside the home, it is thereby given an immediate practical bearing upon the conduct of life and becomes an agency for the making of good men and good citizens.³⁴

Here we see continued dedication to intrinsic motivation, limited time spent on didactic rules and pedantic style, and even forays into what we now call writing across the curriculum, experiential learning, and project-based learning. The redesign of the textbooks reflects these principles, with exercises in observation, creative thinking, critical thinking, and conventions of generic form intertwined throughout the year, not held out as isolated topics for practice and study. The entire structure assumes that students will only give attention to their writing if they are actively trying to communicate real ideas of their own to a real audience with a real purpose. An anonymous review of the revised series in *The Elementary School Journal* calls the books "thoroughly progressive" and predicts they will be prized by "anyone who believes that training in language is fundamentally training in correct and effective thinking."³⁵ Anything else is merely writing themes.

Manly and Rickert thus valued both the pragmatics of those who saw college as vocational training and the idealism of the progressives who followed Dewey's psychologically informed dedication to education as the development of the individual person. This ideal was of course antithetical to the social Darwinist position that only a certain breed or class of men were worthy of individual cultivation. Manly therefore consistently raises the question of whether writing is a craft or an art, and whether everyone can learn to write well or if writing well requires a certain cultural background, or perhaps an innate talent. This question is important for Manly, who had spent much time debunking the social Darwinist position that Shakespeare could not have written his plays since he was not of proper class or breeding.³⁶ Simply put, Manly's position was that while writing instruction cannot create artists, "every human being can be taught to express himself without grievous faults in English, clearly and simply and forcefully, upon subjects within his range of experience and thought."³⁷ Manly and Rickert expand this idea in *The Writing of English*:

No degree of manual dexterity will make an artist of a worker in clay; and no degree of mere cleverness in the manipulation of words and phrases will make a great writer. But, on the other hand, no artist ever became a sculptor without being sufficiently master of his clay to make it express his mind; and no writer ever attained any degree of excellence until he had learned in some measure the craft of fitting and adjusting his sentences to the form of his ideas. And it is further true that skill in the craft of writing goes far toward

removing obstacles to the very formation of the ideas that are required for self-expression.³⁸

This last point is key for understanding Manly's pedagogy. As a historian of language, he understood that calls for "correctness" in writing were often based on a misinformed, conservative understanding of a fixed and correct language. Correctness for Manly, however, was not an ethical or scientific matter but a pragmatic and social one. In *Better Business English* Manly is at pains to explain this point even to his professional audience: he calls language an "instrument" and a "tool" and says that "usage ... is the only law of correctness in English."³⁹ His reasons for teaching "correctness" are therefore rooted not in defending the purity of the language, but rather in helping students express their ideas without distraction for the reader. Furthermore, the earlier the writer develops the "habits" of good English (i.e., becomes able unconsciously to produce correct English), the sooner he can focus his attention on developing his *thoughts* which, once developed, will lead inevitably to clear writing.⁴⁰ In this way the psychology of progressive education comes together with the pragmatics of education as vocational training at the juncture of self-expression and communication. Correctness and effective writing are unconscious habits of mind whose purposes are to facilitate both writerly composition and readerly comprehension in terms of *ideas*, not merely style.

Manly and Rickert were committed to democratizing writing instruction so that it could help fulfill the college's mission of social advancement for students. Their focus on self-expression is therefore consistent with both the ideal of college as a haven for the culturally privileged and as a mode of advancement for those wishing to join them. As noted above, their first edition of *The Writing of English* in 1919 had opened with the question "Do you like to write?" followed by a condemnation of current-traditional methods of teaching composition. In 1920 they revised this edition and rewrote the introduction. This new introduction, while not necessarily in conflict with the 1919 arguments, radically shifts the emphasis as they take a much more pragmatic tack. The previous opening is replaced with this:

The man who would succeed today must be able to use his native tongue. If he can speak or write so that his words will have upon those who listen or read the effect which he desires, he is master of one of the great sources of power. To realize this fact is to see that the art of expression is not an

ornament for the few, but a tool without which no ambitious man can be properly equipped for life ...⁴¹

The source of intrinsic motivation has moved from a desire for self-expression to a desire for the cultural capital of powerfully persuasive writing. Persuasion, in this case, comes from clear communication, defined as the ability to use words to make a reader's mind understand what the writer's mind does: "The writer cannot show you his thoughts; he can only use combinations of words which he hopes will revive in your mind past emotions, ideas, and images similar to his own thought and experience."⁴² Manly and Rickert have shifted the point of view from the writer to the reader, but the lesson works in both directions—writing is an attempt to send information via a pattern that has been distilled from the contents of one mind, to be rebuilt from the materials of another similarly, but not identically, equipped mind.

Manly and Rickert borrowed this model of written communication directly from John B. Kerfott, whom they mention in the 1920 revision.⁴³ His 1916 book *How to Read* argued for something like an early version of reader-response theory, emphasizing the knowledge and experience a reader must bring to bear on a text in order to understand it. Readers use writer's words to recreate the writer's idea in their own minds by considering the various possible meanings of each word read in succession, narrowing possibilities and making corrections as context and their own experiences lead them to do.⁴⁴ This is a far cry from a more empirical idea of writing in which clarity and precision guarantees a reader's comprehension of and capitulation to the ideas of the writer. Sounding like the cryptographers they had become in the previous decade, Manly and Rickert tell us "the main point is that reading, like writing, depends upon thought and experience, and varies with the ability of the reader to reproduce by imagination the symbols of the writer's thought."⁴⁵ Good writers have an important power, but its effects depend on the reader's sharing the code being employed, whether the code is in the writing's imagery, references, vocabulary, or form.

Framing writing as a shared code implies that writing instruction can create good citizens if the code is informed by shared cultural knowledge and values. The issue of a shared culture matters because the postbellum industrial age in the United States saw some of the highest rates of immigration in the country's history. This, coupled with a growing sense among the academic elite that consumerism and industrialization were eroding

the national character, led to what Graff calls “the jeremiads of the MLA,” an unrelenting stream of formulaic complaints about the ongoing collapse of American culture.⁴⁶ The jeremiads were also laments over colleges’ own declining authority as the gatekeepers and preservers of that culture.⁴⁷ To the MLA, one of the clearest signs of this collapse was the ever-decreasing quality of writing and speaking in English. They pointed at the work not only of students, but of professional writers, public speakers, business leaders, and workers. Acknowledging that more and more students were entering college to provide workers for the new urban industrial economy, Lewis Freeman Mott, president of the MLA in 1912, complained that “an unbroken stream of immigration floods our cities with the confusion of Babel. Many of our newcomers largely forget their native tongue, yet never acquire proficiency in ours; so that, both of our own native progeny and of the progeny of the old world, we have amongst us, multiplied by thousands, the man without a language.”⁴⁸ Manly and Bailey’s first book in the *Lesson in the Speaking and Writing of English* series, also from 1912, addresses the broad issue in no uncertain terms in its opening paragraph:

The study of English is of supreme importance to the people of the United States. With no other subject is the national well-being so intimately connected. The very existence of the republic depends in no small measure upon the possession and use of a language that carries the same meaning clearly and unequivocally to every citizen, of whatever race or traditions [N]o language can be used habitually without modifying profoundly the forms of thought, the knowledge, the beliefs, the traditions, the ideals, and the character of anyone who uses it. The English language is therefore the most potent single force now transforming our heterogeneous population into a homogeneous and unified people.⁴⁹

This almost Whorfian idea about the cultural power of language likely reflects the nineteenth-century French historian Hippolyte Taine’s influence on early literary criticism. Taine had argued that the spirit of an age, or the soul of a nation, could be apprehended through examination of a culture’s writings.⁵⁰ Manly had written admiringly of such humanistic sciences as developed in the nineteenth century, mentioning Taine in particular: “With the growing interest in the evolution of human culture and the doctrine most brilliantly expounded by Taine that all art products, including literature, were inevitably determined in character and quality by time, race, and environment, arose the study of literature as a product

not merely of the individual author but of the whole social organism to which he belonged."⁵¹ Without necessarily invoking the fully Teutonic goals of nineteenth-century German philology, Manly intertwines American corporate professionalism with liberal arts education and the proper use of English, all under the banner of American civilization. Manly's position here, though, is proactive rather than historical, as he suggests using the study of literature to shape a nation's future (or to maintain its current shape) rather than to study its past. In those terms, Manly, Bailey, and Rickert's goal of personal growth for students becomes part of a larger social value of education:

In making this series of books, we have continually held before us the ideal of helping children—especially the children for whom the elementary school is the only preparation for life—to a richer personal experience, to happier and more serviceable dealings with their fellows, and to a desire for taking part in the building of such a state as alone can save our civilization from becoming like the dust heaps of Babylon.⁵²

The link between "a richer personal experience" and "saving our civilization" becomes clear when this kind of humanistic scientific thinking is coupled with a pragmatic ethics of American assimilation in the service of an industrializing economy.

That this assimilation was Manly and Rickert's goal is made evident in the preface to their college composition textbook *The Writing of English*. Here they explain that their methods of teaching were designed to tackle the problem of remediating new college students and claim that their methods brought two-thirds of underachieving students to minimum college readiness or better. While some of those underachievers were native speakers of English, Manly and Rickert also report satisfaction in reading "almost faultless English written by Russians, Poles, Lithuanians, Chinese, Japanese, and young people of many other nationalities, whose work in the beginning was almost unintelligible."⁵³ But Manly and Rickert envision a writing class doing much more than remediating native and immigrant student writers, even in the lower schools. The writing class becomes a kind of finishing school, preparing and validating students' upward mobility as they move into new strata of society. Henry Veggian argues that *The Writing of English* and *A Writer's Index* stress writing instruction as a "distinctly institutional intervention," meaning that students are empowered not primarily by their own effort and learning but more from

the imprimatur of the institution that has prepared them.⁵⁴ In other words, the America that Manly and Rickert envision as welcoming the poorly educated and immigrants is the American institution of higher education that they themselves inhabit. This is most clearly seen in *The Writer's Index* which, beyond being a grammar and style manual, also offers passages such as this on the proper choice of paper for letter-writing:

Cheap paper, lined paper, or paper not matched by its envelope may be due to carelessness or to deliberate indifference to such matters, but they suggest poverty and ill-breeding. Pink or lavender paper, gilt-edged paper, paper with a printed or stamped initial or ornamental device of any kind is inevitably associated with ill-breeding and bad taste. The use of gaily-colored ink or of any kind of perfume is generally regarded as vulgar.⁵⁵

Poverty here is a social failing, one revealed through either settling for cheap materials or overcompensating with too expensive ones. The choice matters because letter writing is critical to both the social and the business world, and it relies on purchasing the proper manufactured materials to signal one's desired (or achieved) social status. Writing understood in these terms becomes a fully transactional phenomenon, perfectly serving the needs of the age.

An example such as this allows us to see the complex nature of what was truly at stake for Manly and Rickert in teaching students to write well. Their pedagogical approaches were multiple and not always easy to align. They saw writing classes as both remediation and intellectual advancement; they believed in rote drills as well as fostering self-expression; they believed in positivist research and personal growth. Their ideals were both democratic and elitist: they were producing workers; they were helping students reach their individual potential; they were assimilating immigrants and the poor into urban society; they were preserving American culture; they were protecting the cultural value of the humanities. These apparent contradictions resolve, however, when we recognize that ultimately their composition pedagogy was part of a larger program of reshaping the humanities to foster positivist, science-based inquiries into human endeavors, but without losing the humanity within the humanities.⁵⁶

NOTES

1. While Rickert's name does not appear on the title page of the 1912 edition of the *Lessons in the Speaking and Writing of English* textbooks, she was in fact instrumental in their production. Manly hired Rickert and paid her half his royalties (resulting in a 25% share) to rewrite work done by Bailey that he felt was substandard or erroneous. Manly claimed in a series of increasingly frank letters to Bailey that Rickert's work was necessary to the success of the project, and that he felt that payments to Rickert should come from Bailey's share of the royalties rather than his own. Bailey declined Manly's requests to restructure the contract, a matter that became more acrimonious as the book became more lucrative and as work on revisions to the textbooks became necessary. The eventual result was a complete reworking of the *Lessons in the Speaking and Writing of English* series starting in 1922 (sometimes called simply *Lessons in English*) with Manly, Bailey, and Rickert all on the title page. See John Matthews Manly Papers, Box 1, Folders 11 and 12, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
2. According to Manly's papers, once *Lessons in the Speaking and Writing of English* was adopted by entire state departments of education, they earned as much as \$6000 per year in royalties combined, which is approximately \$160,000 in 2022 dollars. See John Matthews Manly Papers, Box 1, Folders 11 and 12, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
3. John Matthews Manly and Edith Rickert, *The Writing of English* (New York: Henry Holt, 1919), 3.
4. Ibid.
5. A good overview of the relationship between literature and writing instruction at this time is found in James A. Berlin, *Writing Instruction in Nineteenth-Century Colleges* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1984) and *Rhetoric and Reality: Writing Instruction in American Colleges, 1900–1985* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1987).
6. Gerald Graff, *Professing Literature: An Institutional History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 101–102.
7. Martin W. Sampson, "English at the University of Indiana," in *English in American Universities*, ed. William Morton Payne (New York: D. C. Heath, 1895), 96, quoted in Graff, *Professing Literature*, 123.
8. John Matthews Manly, "Literary Forms and the New Theory of the Origin of Species," *Modern Philology* 4, no. 4 (1906–7): 577–95.
9. John Matthews Manly, "The President's Address: New Bottles," *PMLA* 35, Appendix (1920): xlv–lx.

10. John Matthews Manly, "Humanistic Studies and Science," *Speculum* 5, no. 3 (July 1930): 247.
11. *Ibid.*, 246.
12. Edith Rickert, *New Methods for the Study of Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1927), 17.
13. *Ibid.*, 19.
14. *Ibid.*, 22–23.
15. The number of bachelor's degrees awarded in 1870 was 9371; by 1920 that number had increased five-fold to 48,622. The next decade saw it more than double again, to 122,484 by 1930. See Thomas D. Snyder, ed., *120 Years of American Education* (National Center for Education Statistics, 1993), <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs93/93442.pdf>. In a lecture titled "The Service of the Small College" delivered to Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina on their centennial celebration, Dec. 8, 1926, Manly himself commented on the end of the truly "small college," noting that Furman, his own alma mater, had enrolled only 25 students in 1881 but had ballooned to 500 students by 1926. While recognizing that this was still not a large number when compared with the over 8000 undergraduates at the University of Chicago in that year (<https://registrar.uchicago.edu/data-reporting/historical-enrollment>), Manly points out the irony that small colleges were boasting of both their intimate size and their ability to increase enrollments annually. This confusion of mission was just one symptom of the larger problem of defining the role of colleges and universities in turn of the century American culture. See John Matthews Manly, typescript of "The Service of the Small College," John Matthews Manly Papers, Box 11, Folder 2, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
16. Robert J. Connors, *Composition-Rhetoric: Backgrounds, Theory and Pedagogy* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997), 9.
17. The country's first business school, the Wharton School, was founded in 1881; Harvard introduced the first MBA as a degree in 1908.
18. David R. Russell, *Writing in the Academic Disciplines, 1870–1990: A Curricular History* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1991), 102–3.
19. For entertainingly terrifying first-hand accounts of teaching in this and similar programs, see John C. Brereton, ed., *The Origins of Composition Studies in the American College, 1875–1925: A Documentary History* (Pittsburgh: University Pittsburgh Press, 1995).
20. These modes continued to structure most college composition textbooks through the 1990s and still are found in many current textbooks and rhetorics.
21. Connors, *Composition-Rhetoric*, 81–101.

22. Adams Sherman Hill, *The Principles of Rhetoric and their Application* (New York: Harper, 1878), iv.
23. John Matthews Manly and Eliza R. Bailey, *Lessons in the Speaking and Writing of English, Book Two: Composition and Grammar* (New York: D. C. Heath, 1912), ix-x.
24. John Matthews Manly and Eliza R. Bailey, *Lessons in the Speaking and Writing of English, Book One: Language Lessons* (New York: D. C. Heath, 1912), iii.
25. Ibid.
26. John Matthews Manly and John A. Powell, *Better Business English* (Chicago: Frederick J. Drake, 1921), 13.
27. Eliza R. Bailey and John M. Manly, *The Bailey-Manly Speller* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1908), iv.
28. Ibid.
29. Manly and Bailey, *Lessons, Book Two*, ix.
30. Sarah L. Arnold and George L. Kittredge, *The Mother Tongue, Book I: Lessons in Speaking, Reading and Writing English* (Boston: Ginn, 1900), iv.
31. Manly and Rickert, *Writing of English*, iii.
32. Ibid.
33. Gertrude Buck, "Recent Tendencies in the Teaching of English Composition," *Educational Review* 22 (1901): 382.
34. John Matthews Manly, Eliza R. Bailey and Edith Rickert, *Lessons in the Speaking and Writing of English: Upper Grades* (New York: Heath, 1922), iv-v.
35. "New English Textbooks for the Grades," *The Elementary School Journal* 23, no. 10 (1923): 799.
36. See Henry Veggian, "From Philology to Formalism: Edith Rickert, John Matthews Manly, and the Literary/Reformist Beginnings of U.S. Cryptology," *Reader* 54 (Spring 2006): 67-89. Veggian's essay is reprinted in this collection.
37. Manly and Bailey, *Lessons, Book Two*, x-xi. Similar statements along these lines also appear in *A Manual for Writers, The Writing of English*, and the *Better Business English* series.
38. Manly and Rickert, *Writing of English*, 112.
39. Manly and Powell, *Better Business English*, 33.
40. A similar sense of the unconscious production of proper form underlies Rickert's defense of her analyses of literature: "It is not necessary that there should be present in [the writer's] consciousness every detail of the means by which he is to achieve his effects—or perhaps even of the means at all. If his artistic purpose is clear in his conscious mind, his unconscious processes will take care of the detail, provided that he is already equipped with sufficient technique to do what he wishes to do." Rickert, *New Methods*, 16.

41. John Matthews Manly and Edith Rickert, *The Writing of English*, 2nd ed. (New York, Henry Holt, 1920), 3.
42. Ibid., 7.
43. Ibid., 6–7.
44. John B. Kerfott, *How to Read* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1916).
45. Manly and Rickert, *Writing of English*, 2nd ed., 7.
46. Graff, *Professing Literature*, 113.
47. Graff quotes from James Taft Hatfield's speech "Scholarship and the Commonwealth"

where Hatfield laments "the complacent attitude of the contented Philistine toward the scholar, as though the latter were not more than a half-man, and by no means to be taken seriously." James Taft Hatfield, "Scholarship and the Commonwealth," *PMLA* 17, no. 3 (1902): 395, quoted by Graff, *Professing Literature*, 115.
48. Lewis Freeman Mott, "Disrespect for Language," *PMLA* 27, no. 4, appendix (1912): liii–liv.
49. Manly and Bailey, *Lessons, Book One*, iii.
50. Graff writes extensively on the influence of Taine's 1863 multivolume work *History of English Literature* on the shaping of literature and language departments as separate entities on the basis of national and linguistic divisions, and on defining the aims of historical and cultural approaches to the study of literature. Graff, *Professing Literature*, 70–74.
51. The Office of the President, Hutchins Administration, Records, Box 77, Folder 14, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library, quoted in Eric Powell, "A Brief History of the English Department at the University of Chicago," <https://english.uchicago.edu/about/history>.
52. Manly and Bailey, *Lessons, Book Two*, v.
53. Manly and Rickert, *Writing of English*, iv.
54. Veggian, "From Philology," 78.
55. John Matthews Manly and Edith Rickert, *The Writer's Index of Good Form and Good English* (New York: Henry Holt, 1923), 38.
56. The author would like to thank the Dean's Office of the College of Arts and Science at Adelphi University for research funding for this chapter, as well as the very helpful staff at the Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center of the University of Chicago.

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“Since Significant Contributions to Knowledge Are Not Expected in School Texts”: The Textbooks of John Matthews Manly and Edith Rickert

Susan M. Kim

“Not all of us are or can be geniuses, but all of us can, in our degree, acquire the habit of trying to see things as they are; of trying to think clearly and simply and sincerely; of refusing to stultify our intellects and destroy the powers with which we are endowed by parrot-like repetition of formulas we do not understand or believe. And education can be of profound effectiveness in promoting or hindering these results.”

—John Matthews Manly, “Education that Educates” (John Matthews Manly, “Education That Educates,” *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors* (1915–1955) 14, no.4 (April 1928): 269.)

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*“In his dictionary, Dr. Johnson defined network thus:
Anything reticulated or decussated, at equal distances, with interstices
between the intersections.*

See if you can make a simpler definition of network.”
—John Matthews Manly and Eliza R. Bailey, *Junior High School
English* (John M. Manly and Eliza R. Bailey, *Junior High School
English: Lessons in the Speaking and Writing of English* (Boston:
D. C. Heath, 1912, 1916), 127.)

In his 1940 memorial essay on John Matthews Manly, J. R. Hulbert explains, regarding Manly's 1928 edition of selections from *The Canterbury Tales*, that Manly, “unwilling to add merely another small school text to the many in print,” constructed a much more substantial edition than had been contracted for in addition to planning for a subsequent expansion of that edition. Hulbert continues,

Since significant contributions to knowledge are not expected in school texts, many scholars may not realize what Manly did in that volume. The truth is that the whole body of notes is with few exceptions original and entirely independent of earlier series of notes such as Skeat's and Hinkley's; and the interpretations and explanations found there can never be disregarded in the study of Chaucer's masterpiece—a fact attested by the frequent reference to them in Professor Robinson's splendid edition of Chaucer's works.¹

Given the attitudes toward the writing of textbooks, as opposed to scholarly monographs and articles that persist to this day within the academy, it is hardly surprising that Hulbert both devalues “school texts” and evidences the “significant contributions to knowledge” of this particular textbook in the often unacknowledged absorption of its “original and entirely independent” notes into those of a more scholarly and “splendid” edition.² In the immediate context of Hulbert's essay, however, the reflexive privileging of the “scholarly” over the textbook edition is all the more pointed for Hulbert's explicit discussion of the value of a number of Manly's textbooks.

Hulbert notes Manly's investment in the “production of new kinds of textbooks,” both anthologies like *Specimens of Pre-Shakespearean Drama* and *English Poetry (1170–1892)* and textbooks for use in primary and secondary schools; Hulbert considers as well the pedagogical impact of those

textbooks. The anthology of English poetry, for example, "enabled teachers for the first time to present the history of English poetry with the poems actually before the eyes of everyone in the classrooms." Furthermore, as the textbooks circulated, he writes, they influenced both directly and through imitation and adoption, "and so, indirectly, his ideas were broadcast throughout our educational systems."³ Hulbert here is explicitly, perhaps even scrupulously, cognizant of the profound scope of influence of the very materials he also acknowledges are least likely to be recognized, even in his own survey of Manly's contributions, as "significant contributions to knowledge." This simultaneous cognizance and dismissal manifests most obviously in his discussion of the textbooks that Manly co-authored for use not in colleges but in primary and secondary schools. Whereas representative literary anthologies are listed by title and sometimes discussed at greater length, Hulbert notes of *Good Reading*, the seven-volume basal reader series co-authored with Sarah Griswold, Edith Rickert, and Nina Leubrie and illustrated by Elizabeth M. Fisher and Blanche Greer, as well as the many manifestations of the early collaborations with Eliza Bailey, later joined by Edith Rickert, simply, "In collaboration with others he prepared for grade schools a series of textbooks based on new ideas."⁴

Hulbert's vague and reticent description of these textbooks certainly suggests an attitude toward educational materials that Manly himself would articulate, describing his own work on such texts, as Christina von Nolcken details in this collection, as "hack work" necessary to funding his research on other projects rather than of merit in and of itself.⁵ As he wrote in 1935 to David H. Stevens, in the absence of another plan to fund his research after retirement, as a last resort he would return to educational texts. He proposes a facetious ad soliciting support: "John M. Manly, Professor Emeritus of English, being desirous to devote at least half of each year to research, but being unable to live on his pension, wishes employment for not more than half of each year in literary or research work at a salary which will enable him to carry out his plans." In a handwritten addendum Manly continues,

If this isn't a good plan I suppose I shall have to do some elementary books for a year or so. I have a plan for a new type in that line. But new ideas, even if winners in the long run, don't sell at first. Pioneers rarely reap what they have sown.⁶

Manly's addendum strikingly articulates simultaneous dismissal and investment: the elementary textbooks are a last resort to support other scholarly endeavors, and dismissed as such ("I suppose I shall have to do some elementary books"). But at the same time texts "in that line" remained part of what Manly continued to put his mind to, even in the absence of an ongoing project: as he notes, before this moment of last resort he is already thinking about the texts. He already has "a plan for a new type in that line." Importantly, he is writing here to Stevens, his long-time colleague and friend in the Department of English at the University of Chicago and in military intelligence. Stevens, like Manly, published both scholarly articles and monographs in the areas of his expertise in British literature and books like *The Home Guide to Good Reading* (1920) and *The Stevens Handbook of Punctuation* (1923). That is, the exchange occurs in a context in which both the generation (ostensibly for profit) and the dismissal of such texts (as ostensibly simply for profit in order to support other scholarship) are a given for academics in an English department, with a history, for Manly, reaching back to his early mentors like George Lyman Kittredge⁷ and continuing through to his successors, like J. R. Hulbert, who himself collaborated with Viola Blackburn Hulbert to write the successful *Effective English*, first published in 1929 and eventually running to six editions in three languages.⁸

To his endorsement of *The Mother Tongue: Book III*, a collaboration between John Hays Gardiner, George Kittredge, and Sarah Louise Arnold, in a 1903 advertisement, Manly unabashedly imbues all the authority of his university position: "'*The Elements of English Composition* seems to me the most practical elementary treatise on English composition that I have ever seen,' John M. Manly, Head of Department of English, University of Chicago." While it is not at all unexpected that Manly would support Kittredge as his Harvard mentor and fellow medievalist, that he would provide such public and institutional support for Kittredge's work on a textbook of this sort again bespeaks the imbrication of these projects in scholarly and professional identities, however forcefully they are disavowed.

Manly certainly knew Kittredge from his days at Harvard and as an eminent scholar of medieval literature and language. But he also associated himself professionally with Kittredge through their work with these educational texts. That these lights of the scholarly world, renowned medievalists and leading figures in pre-eminent English departments, also and simultaneously worked together in other networks through which they thought, wrote, published, and influenced is manifest throughout the

literature on education. It is also explicit in the advertisements that literally represent the association of the intellectual labor of their generation with the commodification of that labor in the for-profit textbook market, and hence also what Jean W. LeLoup and Sheri Spaine Long call the "unseemly taint of royalties" which they suggest may underlie some institutional devaluation of the textbook.⁹ On one page of such advertisements for educational materials in the *Wisconsin Journal of Education*, for example, the ad containing Manly's endorsement for *The Mother Tongue* occurs immediately below an advertisement for *Language Through Literature, Nature, and Art*, a collaboration between H. Avis Perdue and Sarah E. Griswold. Griswold, then at the Chicago Normal School, would become the Director of Primary Education in the Colorado Springs Public Schools and Manly's collaborator on the first two volumes of the basal reading series. In this collection we are concerned with the collaborative networks that Manly and Rickert established. Here the impacts of these networks are considered in the overlapping and publicly proclaimed, even advertised, but also often nonetheless invisible collaborations within the world of textbook writing, in particular the writing of textbooks on reading.¹⁰

It is perhaps most clearly in the first two volumes of *Good Reading*, published in 1926 by Charles Scribner's Sons, that the "new ideas" to which Hulbert alludes are evident. Manly and Griswold, for example, from the first volume of the series, engage with training in silent reading with attention even to the physical components of eye movement, at the most introductory levels in a marked shift away from earlier models of reading instruction with a focus on oral reading. They explain, "The shorter line and greater regularity in the length of lines have been purposely used as recognized aids in forming and establishing desirable eye habits, and many of the lessons are well adapted for use in beginning silent reading."¹¹ Moreover, they control vocabulary in the readers with explicit reference to Edward L. Thorndike's *The Teacher's Word Book* (1921).¹² Vocabulary control is a feature of early reading and spelling texts long before Thorndike's publications. Even in 1908, *The Bailey-Manly Spelling Book* opened with an explanation of the choosing and grading of vocabulary items. But for those choices, the authors themselves were responsible. In the preface to the *Spelling Book*, Bailey and Manly explain,

The vocabulary has been chosen and graded with the utmost care. A large number of school books and written exercises were examined and from

them were selected the best 300 words for the first year, the best 400 for the second, and so on. The words were carefully catalogued and checked as used, so that the time of the pupil should not be wasted in useless repetition, and yet that certain especially refractory or elusive words should be repeated again and again until their mastery was assured.¹³

Although the importance of choice and grading is manifest here, Bailey and Manly do not have available a standardized and widely accepted reference for how such choice and grading might be conducted: they themselves seem to have combed “a large number of school books and written exercises” for the collections of words that they deemed “best,” though with the terms of the selection process undisclosed. *The Teacher’s Word Book* changed such grading dramatically by extending new models of statistical analysis to research, particularly in the developing field of educational science, and providing early educational materials with the support of not only its quantitative data but also the prestige of its scientific approach. The *Word Book*, in its own terms, is “an alphabetical list of the 10,000 words which are found to occur most widely in a count of about 625,000 words from literature for children; about 3,000,000 words from the Bible and English classics; about 300,000 words from elementary-school text books; about 50,000 words from books about cooking, sewing, farming, the trades, and the like; about 90, 000 words from the daily newspapers; and about 500,000 words from correspondence,” with range and frequency noted for each.¹⁴

In “From Author to Teacher,” the preface for the *Primer*, Manly and Griswold explain, as expected, “Much study has been given to the choice of vocabulary,” but here they are clear that they themselves are no longer responsible for generating the choices. Rather, they note, “By developing topics in related groups, desired repetition has been secured legitimately, together with emphasis of the thought. Of the 381 words used in the text, 302 are in the first 500 most widely used, as given in Thorndike’s *Word Book*.”¹⁵ Indebtedness to the *Word Book* continues into the *Second Reader* (the third in the series) as well, in which the Word List at the end of the volume is organized, “as in Thorndike’s Word List” with “derived forms” omitted as separate entries if the root form appears before they do in the text.¹⁶ Thorndike’s Word List without doubt provided a valuable resource for the writers of reading education materials. And as Allen Luke notes, “one can only marvel at his mind-numbing ten-year study of popular literature in which he singlehandedly recorded the frequency of words in

approximately a quarter of a million pages of text," an exertion of time and energy simply not available to all researchers in individual projects.¹⁷ But the use of that resource cannot be understood as recourse to a simply objective instrument any more than recourse to an encyclopedia or dictionary (and of course Thorndike also produced a series of dictionaries, beginning with the *Thorndike Junior Dictionary*, in 1935) allows for unmediated access to meaning or historical truth. Thorndike himself presents the Word List as an aid to teachers. He explains, "The conscientious and thoughtful teacher now spends much time and thought in deciding what pedagogical treatment to use in the case of the words that offer difficulty to pupils" but notes that the *Word Book* can intervene, increasing efficiency as it "helps the teacher to decide quickly which treatment is appropriate by telling her just how important any word is" and so the teacher ("she") "can thus obtain by a few hours of easy study what would have required months of difficult learning by class-room experimentation and the experiences of the class-room will be made much more instructive to her."¹⁸ Significantly, the Word List increases efficiency by "telling" the teacher "just how important any word is." That is, this seemingly scientifically objective resource coerces even as it assists. The List determines the importance of the word in the classroom and controls how not only the student but also the teacher will approach the material, and it is neither objective nor complete.

Thorndike's frequency list was unprecedentedly ambitious. It was revised and expanded significantly in the following decades, but it remained largely an individual effort and, as such, was necessarily limited by and reflective of the time, values, and perspectives of the individual. Even as Thorndike expanded to a list of 30,000 words in his 1944 collaboration with Irving Lorge, including the data from previous lists as well as "three other counts of over 4 1/2 million words each," he also recognized that this list, however exhaustive, could not be complete, given the introduction of new words, but also the choices he himself made and the omissions that resulted from those choices. On one hand, he recognizes,

This book is not final as a frequency count of English reading. New words will become important. Scientific and other erudite reading matter deserves a separate column, though it has its fair proportion of weight in the original Thorndike count and in the semantic count. A column for the vocabulary of modern fiction, or for new war terms, might be useful.¹⁹

But on the other hand, Thorndike and Lorge are transparent about the source materials for various lists. As they explain in the 1943 introduction, for example,

The T counts emphasized frequency in readers, textbooks, the Bible, and the English classics. The L counts included only recent and popular magazines. The J counts included only books for boys and girls in grades 3 to 8.²⁰

It is not possible that such materials might suffice for an actual frequency count. Asking, for example, what counts as “English classics,” or which magazines are to be counted (what makes a magazine “popular?”), immediately makes clear the necessary presence of personal and ideologically driven choices underlying the count.

That the writers of basal texts increasingly employed versions of Thorndike’s Word List meant that literally generations of young readers encountered the “control of vocabulary” in their reading in exactly the same ways. Even when Thorndike and Lorge seem to defer to the authority of teachers, claiming, “Those responsible for the teaching of English should set whatever standards they think best for word knowledge,” they still insist, “Standards may best be set in terms of our list.”²¹ In standardized public school curricula, basal readers would put not similar, or similarly selected, words but *the same* words into the mouths and minds of their young readers. And they did so with recourse to resources like the Word List and the rhetoric of the statistical support of educational research.²²

The influence of models of education articulated in the evocation of Thorndike in *Good Reading* is also extended indirectly through the detailed consultation throughout the early volumes of the series with William Scott Gray. Gray had been a student of Thorndike’s at Teachers College and developed his early work on reading assessment under Thorndike’s direction.²³ Gray joined the University of Chicago in 1915 and remained associated with the university until his retirement in 1950. He was, from 1917 until 1931, the Dean of the College of Education, as June R. Gilstad explains, “when, on the principle that teacher education was an obligation of the whole university, the College of Education was abolished.”²⁴ Gray was, by the time Manly and Rickert were involved with the *Good Reading* series, already a foundational figure in teacher education. Within a few years of his consultation with Manly and Griswold for the *Good Reading* series, Gray would become the co-author with William

H. Elson of the *Elson Basic Readers*, later the highly successful *Elson-Gray Readers*; eventually with Mary Hill Arbuthnot and other collaborators, Gray became the first author of the *Basic Readers* popularly known as the Dick and Jane readers, "one of the most successful basal reading series in the history of modern publishing,"²⁵ used throughout the United States well into the 1960s. Manly and Griswold provide a "special acknowledgement" to Gray, repeated though simplified in later volumes in the series. In the first four volumes of *Good Reading*, the authors (Manly and Griswold for the *Primer* and *First Reader*; Manly, Edith Rickert, and Nina Leubrie for the remaining volumes) acknowledge Gray for his insight into almost every aspect of the text, "for his helpful suggestions as to choice of vocabulary, grading of material, length of line, size of type, type page, and other important details of this book."²⁶

Although they do not acknowledge Gray for suggestions with respect to the illustrations, like Gray, Manly and Griswold also recognize the "vital concern" in the early volumes with the illustrations by Elizabeth M. Fisher (illustrator for the first four volumes of the series):

The illustrating of this book has been of vital concern, second only to the preparation of the text. The pictures have been made directly with reference to the subject matter of the lessons and without fussy details or vague ideas. Their simplicity consists first of lines that are essential in conveying the idea, with heavy outlines that appeal to young children, and second of little background or other features not essential that might divert attention from the main thought.²⁷

Advertisements for the series emphasize the illustrations as well: a 1926 advertisement in *The English Language Journal*, for example, lists the collaborators and describes the series as simply "A Series of Basal Readers for grades one to six, including a Primer and Teacher's Guides. The books are fully and beautifully illustrated in three colors."²⁸ Gray similarly addresses the importance of images with marked specificity in the prefatory material for the *Elson Basic Readers*, as, for example, in Book Three: "Illustrations in four colors permit harmonizing of illustrations with the text, so that the pictures are made a more valuable adjunct of comprehension, as well as of interest."²⁹ The bright and simple images of the *Basic Readers* would become one of their hallmarks.

Good Reading also employs images in exercises on observation. In the *Third Reader*, for example, a full-page illustration with the text "Autumn"

at its upper margins also contains the instructions “What do you see in the picture that you see outdoors in autumn? What have you seen in autumn that the picture does not show?”³⁰ While such exercises in observation were common in other texts and used as training in observation and memory, these exercises were also beginning exercises in critical analysis of the image.³¹ Gray would also write explicitly about the importance of illustrations as an aid to developing inference in reading,³² the importance of visual images not only for engaging young readers but also for training them in a number of reading-related skills from shape recognition to the observation of details. For Gray, given that text is visual, training with images is also training in skills associated with reading and writing, like spelling: “As soon as the child begins to learn to spell words, his ability to remember visual forms is further strengthened, and much of his success in spelling depends on this ability.”³³ The *Good Reading* series takes up this association between training in reading and the visual image and techniques of reading, including on more advanced levels of reading. The *Third Reader*, for example, includes embedded “funny question marks,” text-images containing the shape of a question mark in a squirrel’s tail, a man’s ears, a clock and pendulum; these “funny question marks” cue “Helps,” or exercises to accompany the texts. Here, with text literally as also visual images, text and visual image combined as the “funny question marks” also introduce the idea of how to read endnotes and indices.³⁴ For this reason it is particularly difficult to consider the illustrations solely “with reference to the subject matter of the lessons” without extending “the subject matter of the lessons” beyond the simple plots of the textual narratives. If the images are to provide associated training, instruction in observation and inference, as well as visual training relevant to reading, they also suggest the importance of their function well beyond that of a kind of reverse ekphrasis, including into critical analysis.

The first word of the *Primer*, for example, following “O,” is the repeated word “Mother.” One of the ways in which Manly and Griswold claim “educational value” beyond the teaching of reading alone is in the volume’s attempt to enrich and expand the child’s life experiences, including “to increase his love for home and family life.”³⁵ The word “mother” in the opening two pages is matched in occurrences (three) with the word “school”:

O mother, mother!
I am going to school.

I am going to school today.
 I must wash my hands.
 I must wash my hands, mother.
 I am going to school today.

The *Primer*, that is, opens not only with the introduction of the words themselves but also with the invocation of Mother ("O mother"), home and family life, the inclusive and ongoing movement from that domestic life to institutionalized instruction ("I am going to school"), the extension of the imperative habits of hygiene from home to school ("I must wash my hands"), and the anchoring of all of those in the child's present threshold moment.³⁶

While it is true that the two accompanying illustrations are neither "fussy" nor "vague," it is also the case that they, like all illustrations, do not simply represent what is conveyed by the text. Each of the two opening illustrations dominates the page, taking up three times the space afforded to the texts. In warm pumpkin-orange, brown, soft blue, and white, both depict a young boy in short trousers and a white shirt with a wide collar and tie, standing facing the viewer in front of an open door. In the first image, the boy stands with one hand in his pocket and his legs as if in mid-stride. In the second, he stands with his legs together and his hands extended. In the foreground and pictured from the rear is the profile of a woman, roughly twice the size of the figure of the boy, with her head bowed slightly in the second image as if to examine the boy's outstretched hands. The angle of profile for the woman allows for the representation of no facial features. Details like the curtains covering the window on the left side of the images identify the scene as inside, rather than outside the room with the open door.

Certainly these illustrations may provide the sort of training in inference Gray details. For example,

Specific training in the use of context clues to anticipate meaning may be provided at very early levels through the use of pictures. Since, in most modern reading series, pictures are a vital part of the context, it is important to teach children to use illustrations as meaning clues. One of the first steps in such training involves making inferences from general pictured context.³⁷

Gray provides an image of children looking up at a tree and explains that viewers can learn inference through work with the image, understanding

that the children in the image are likely looking at a squirrel and not a pig, for example. He continues, “Exercises of this kind provide training in logical thinking, in anticipation of probable meaning—and this is the very foundation of successful use of context clues in attacking new word forms.”³⁸ In these opening images, then, the open door may enable inference of the anticipatory departure also conveyed in “I am going to school.” Similarly, the boy’s extended hands and the mother’s slightly bent head suggest examination and enable the inference of hygienic obligation for the child’s movement into public spaces, as conveyed in the text by the modal “must.”

Viewing these images not as a child in the early twentieth century, but as a literary scholar a century later, and in light of the formational ideologies of early reading education in which these images were constructed, one might note that while the open door may represent the anticipatory departure conveyed in “I am going to school,” it also contains and confines the figure of the boy in a series of frames: the space of the open door, the frame of the door, and the frame of the image itself. Similarly, while the boy’s extended hands may represent the obligatory focus on hand-washing (to occur before the departure for school), the seemingly perfectly clean extended hands (the left hand having been removed from his pocket) and increasingly static pose of the boy, as well as his slightly reduced smile, also suggest his submission to the closer surveillance and monitoring of the mother’s gaze. Rather than the excitement of the departure conveyed by “O mother, mother! I am going to school,” the sequence emphasizes delay, stasis, and submission. Indeed, the warm orange tones of these opening images do not return until seven pages later, after the rehearsal of the child’s lengthy washing and brushing, when an illustration depicting children’s feet in motion accompanies the text: “This is the way we go to school”³⁹ The boy’s gaze is directed perhaps to the woman, perhaps behind her. Most obviously, the viewer here is intended to be the child reader, with the figure of the boy as the point of identification within the image. But the perspective is not that of the child; neither is the child the dominant figure within either image. The viewer is positioned as if *behind* the woman.

On one hand, the images suggest the inculcation of an early twentieth-century ideology of the middle-class family, with the mother as a mediating authority for the child, with the absent (working) father behind and authorizing her. In contrast to the word “mother,” “father” does not appear in the *Primer* until page 35, and then in the context of his return

from work and the necessity for the mother and children to rush to support him:

"Will you help me now?
 Father will soon be home.
 He will be hungry.
 We must all help get supper."
 The children ran to help.
 Do you know what they did?
 Can you help mother?
 What can you do to help?⁴⁰

But children were not the only readers, and they were certainly not the purchasers of these textbooks. Given that they follow the prefatory "From the Author to the Teacher," these images must also be read in the context of an address, with reference to the authorizing apparatus of educational science, from experts to practitioners, "the many teachers whose expressions of need and appreciation have stimulated its preparation."⁴¹ Looking over the mother's back in this image, then, might be not only father, but also teacher, author/expert, institution, publisher ... and the returned gaze of the child in the image thus suggests the role of these agents in the production of the child as a future reader and participant in the culture they manufacture, enforce, and sustain.⁴² The child in these opening pages declares, "I must wash my hands," but hardly as a singular event: the attitudes toward hygiene and public comportment are repeated throughout the series, as in the *Third Reader's* list of global efforts through which "children are learning what to do to grow into strong men and women," including writing lists of accomplishments like "This morning, and every morning last week I washed my face, hands, neck, and ears, and I cleaned my nails."⁴³ Learning to read in this series is also learning to associate reading with developing "social consciousness" and "with high ideals of personal conduct and of citizenship."⁴⁴

Such ideological inculcation is hardly unique to these textbooks. As Richard Venezky has noted, reading primers in this country dating back to the colonial past take as their first concern less literacy per se than social and cultural values—in the case of the early American primers, Christian literacy.⁴⁵ But for this series, in addition to the larger context of intra-war Progressivism, the more local pressures around the production of textbooks also makes their presence legible here. Stephen Tomlinson has

argued that Thorndike's employment of statistical analysis and other scientific methods in educational research developed in the context of "efforts at Teachers College to establish a corps of professionally trained educational administrators"⁴⁶; the many scales, tests, and statistical instruments—the science of the research—also supported a changing understanding of the role of the university-trained administrator or expert in education. Thomlinson continues,

On the whole, Thorndike cautioned, ordinary people were better off not thinking for themselves but following the wisdom of their intellectual superiors. Social progress depended upon the creation of a paternal society, cemented by sentiments of stewardship and deference, in which the cognitive elite were vested with the power to direct the masses towards the common good. In the case of schooling, this natural order was reflected in a system where researchers and administrators provided scientific knowledge and organizational control while teachers contributed their labor and unconditional loyalty.⁴⁷

Especially in the context of the explicit reference to Thorndike in the prefatory materials, the ideology inculcated in these images thus perhaps also involved a "new idea" about textbooks themselves and the power of their cultural positioning, especially given the possibilities for mass distribution and adoption. Although the authors address both teachers and students with gratitude and respect in all of the materials, they also dedicate the *Fifth* and *Sixth Readers* specifically to "L. L. Caldwell, Superintendent of Schools, Hammond, Indiana, and to many teachers in the Hammond schools ... for constructive suggestions and for the practical trying-out of this material in the classrooms of that city"⁴⁸; the series is directed not only to individual readers and teachers but also to the upper-level administrators who would facilitate their use and wider adoption.⁴⁹

Whereas the texts for the *Primer* and *First Reader* are, for the most part, either original or adapted by Manly and Griswold, the subsequent readers are more clearly anthologies and contain a number of texts written by and attributed in the Contents to Leubrie and Rickert, as well as several authors associated with Manly and Rickert in other contexts: Mabel Dean, for example, likely the same Dean from the Chaucer Laboratory, contributes a short story, "Wolf Cub's Three Days' Playing," and Elizabeth M. Fisher not only illustrates the *Third Reader* but also contributes the first entry of that volume, the poem "Bobby's Dream."⁵⁰ Furthermore,

Manly himself appears *in propria persona*, not only as the corporate "Author," but, in the *Third Reader*, in a letter addressed "Dear Children" and rather awkwardly signed "Yours for a good time, John M. Manly."⁵¹ In these later volumes, Manly, Rickert, and Leubrie appear not only as the invisible and corporate "Author" but also, alongside standbys like Hilda Conkling and Robert Louis Stevenson, as individual contributors.

Leubrie's hand is evident in the emphasis on both dramatic performance and representations of the natural world in the prefatory material for the *Third Reader* and throughout in the selection of materials as well as separate entries. She had published on her own classroom projects at the Francis Parker School regarding both as early as 1905.⁵² Leubrie's separate entries tend to be descriptions of animals and places: "Little Broom and the Mice," "How the Birds Fed," "Woodchuck Ways," "A Watch-Dog Goose," "The Town I Live In," "Chickadee and Titmouse," "How a Cricket Makes Its Sound," "The Goldenrod," "Finged Gentians," and "Closed Gentians."⁵³

Rickert's involvement in the project is more difficult to categorize. Certainly the inclusion of a version of "The Bojabi Tree," specially noted in Manly's introductory letter, suggests her influence (*Third Reader*, 11–18): Rickert's own version, with illustrations by Gleb Botkin, had been first published in 1922, as Elizabeth Pearce explains in this collection. Similarly, sections of a chapter entitled "Christmas" in the *Fifth Reader* (209–235) suggest her work with early English carols, first published in 1910.⁵⁴ As Margaret Rickert notes in her Foreword to *Chaucer's World*, Rickert was interested in children and in writing for children:

A love for children and an understanding of their minds are also evident in Edith Rickert's contributions to a series of readers, known as *Good Reading* (1926–28). Many of the selections supplied by her were her own translations of versions of old material, and she also found and adapted and even herself wrote some entirely new selections.⁵⁵

Oddly, however, Rickert's individual and original entries include narratives like "How the Milk Comes," with subsections like "Milk in Bottles," "The Cows," and "The Milkman," and "True Cat Stories," without any identifiable connection to her areas of professional expertise.⁵⁶

"True Cat Stories," however, provocatively, though perhaps unintentionally, provides commentary on the opening texts and images of the series, with their focus on "mother," the transition from the domestic to

the institutional, and surveillance and training associated for the child with coming into public space and social consciousness. Rickert's short stories here feature as main characters two black Persian cats, Jim and Jo. Jo, the female cat, is "a kind little cat" but also an assertive one, who slaps Jim, who is "not used to being slapped in the face," for disregarding her gift of a sparrow.⁵⁷ Most saliently, Jo is also "not a very good mother": Jo, unmoved by the needs of her kitten, Bogie, "did not seem to care whether Bogie was taught anything or not," including the equivalent of hand-washing for cats.⁵⁸ Maternal care is, however, provided by an uncle, the same Jim. The narrator interjects, "It was funny to see the uncle cat washing the baby kitten, while the mother cat sat by and watched."⁵⁹ It's possible for this story to be "funny" in this context because it's a cat story. The violation of the norms enforced throughout the series charges the humor, which registers as humor because it is diffused as concerned with subjects that need not be regulated by such norms: it's about cats and not humans, and the difference is emphasized by the immediately following and unattributed section, "How to Care for Cats."⁶⁰

But Rickert also introduces a storyteller's "I" at a number of moments in this largely third-person narration. Jim teaches the kitten "how to catch wood mice and water rats and rabbits, and, I am afraid, young birds."⁶¹ Another female cat takes on the care of the kitten after her own kittens are taken from her, and the "I" is inserted again: "I suppose she said to herself, 'Any kitten is better than no kitten.'"⁶² And finally, the kitten travels to London and the story concludes, "I wonder what Bogie thought of the journey," followed by the attribution to Rickert and one of the "funny question marks" featuring a seated cat with a question mark above its nose.⁶³ This "I" cannot be unambiguously understood as the "I" of Rickert speaking herself, but it does occur in the last sentence and in immediate proximity on the page to the attribution. And it occurs at sharp moments in the narrative, in the scene of instruction by the male mother-substitute, in that of the adoption by the bereaved mother, and finally in the musing as to the internal emotional life of the transported kitten. Although it is perhaps too much of a stretch to consider these sharp moments as positing an almost explicit and personal challenge to the ideologies the series itself reproduces and enforces, it is also the case that however much these stories diffuse potential challenges in "funny" stories about cats, they nonetheless accomplish in these moments the making-visible that is the first task of critique. Here is the possibility that mothers are not biologically or necessarily primarily concerned with their children,

or with the training of their children for movement into the world, that they might have other forms of work at which they excel and which they choose to pursue instead, that children can be taught by surrogates, including by men, that they can have thoughts that might be inaccessible to or even undisciplinable by the authorities around them.

Rickert herself does not advance these ideas explicitly, of course. But the fact that they occur in a text attributed to her in particular, rather than in a text attributed only to the blanket category of the authors of the series, also reminds us that the authorship here is both collective and individual. Manly's "Dear Children" letter in the *Third Reader* perhaps provides a similar emphasis, in which Manly is not simply part of "The Author" but an individual author with a particular character and focus that he wishes to convey.⁶⁴ While the collaboration produced this series of textbooks, the contributors did not cease in the work of this project to be the same scholars they were when they wrote in other fields. And all of the authors of this series were also themselves teachers. However much both Manly and Rickert wrote of their teaching responsibilities as detracting from the time they would have rather committed to their research, the devotion of both to their teaching is widely documented and also discussed in other chapters in this collection. In their own teaching, they also produced textbooks for their own classes. As Fred B. Millet explains of the genesis of the *Contemporary American Literature*, a collaboration between Manly and Rickert that Millet would very substantially revise,

In teaching contemporary literature at the University of Chicago, Professor Rickert became aware of the very serious need of a book containing essential biographical and bibliographical information concerning the authors whom she was discussing. Such information was first gathered in the form of work-sheets prepared by undergraduate and graduate students. Out of these work-sheets evolved the first slim edition of *Contemporary American Literature*, which she published in 1922 in collaboration with Professor John Matthews Manly.⁶⁵

That is, in her own work as a teacher, Rickert understood the production of the textbook she saw as a resource necessary to teaching her classes to be a matter of collaboration not only with the faculty with whom she taught, but also with the students she intended the textbook to serve. Rachel Sagner Buurma and Laura Heffernan consider Rickert's work on *New Methods for the Study of Literature* (1927) and her explicit

collaboration with the students in her classes. Her students, many of them schoolteachers, also took up the theories of collective reading in a subsequent project, later published as *A New Approach to Poetry*, a project that entailed further collaboration “with schoolteachers from Minneapolis, Chicago, San Antonio, Provo City, Seattle, and elsewhere to test the reading methods on grammar school students.”⁶⁶

If the *Good Reading* series reflects and reproduces some of the attitudes toward education and educational administration evident in its explicit indebtedness to Thorndike and later Gray, it also remains a collaborative project between scholars whose commitment to challenging those models is equally evident in the contemporary collaborative projects with students and teachers they initiated and sustained. Manly would call for and attempt to implement a number of approaches to collaboration among scholars through his leadership of organizations like the Modern Language Association (MLA) and the Modern Humanities Research Association, and as Buurma and Heffernan note, his calls would be repeated by contemporaries like Stanley Greenlaw.⁶⁷ But despite the influence of so many of the collaborations Manly and Rickert sustained on so many levels, collaborative work in the Humanities, especially between universities and primary and secondary schools, remains remarkably underdeveloped. Even within the last decade the MLA itself has recognized the need for such collaboration, and made one of its “strategic priorities” for 2014–15 the development of improved “communication among postsecondary humanities educators concerned with literacy instruction—in English and in other languages—and colleagues in primary and secondary schools in the United States and Canada,” particularly given the new Common Core State Standards Initiative.⁶⁸

During the month when I was completing this essay, the literature faculty at my institution (from which William S. Gray graduated and where he served as Principal of the laboratory school following his graduation) met to discuss a number of imperatives, among them dwindling resources for supporting faculty hires in literature, the apparent separation of the writing curriculum from the teaching of literature, and the evidence that students come to literature classes in college with vastly different reading habits and proficiencies than those in which we ourselves were trained. It was originally my hope to be able to focus for this collection on Manly and Rickert in their collaborative work with medieval and early modern ciphers, much of which still remains to be explored. But not only did no other scholar come forward to contribute a study of *Good Reading*, I also found

that almost nothing beyond mention of the series en route to discussion of other projects appeared in the critical and biographical resources. Certainly neither Manly nor Rickert presents their own work on the series as a particular achievement. But nonetheless, that a seven-volume set of educational materials could be elided in this way suggests that in continuing to pass over this material we continue to reproduce, implicitly, even if in explicit discourse we might eschew them, attitudes that are so easy to identify as elitist in moments like the dismissal from Hulbert with which this chapter begins.

The collaboration of *Good Reading* represents an effort to take responsibility not only for the necessary preconditions (going all the way back to kindergarten) for all of the scholarship we accord greater professional prestige, but also for ensuring the possibility that anyone other than literature professors might have reason to value what we do. Early in his career Manly had joked about facing a classroom of high school teachers: "In some respects my Providence class is the most to be feared, as it is composed of high-school teachers. I do not disturb myself about the matter, however; I shall give them what I've got and if they don't like it, I shall have the consolation of having done the best I could."⁶⁹ But, as the Chair of the Department of English at the University of Chicago, he engaged in exactly the kinds of collaborations the MLA would call for nearly a century later, with Rickert, a close research colleague in the English department, Leubrie, a long-time teacher at the Francis Parker School, and Griswold, a former teacher from the Chicago Normal School and subsequently the Director of Primary Education in Colorado Springs.

As the Afterword of the series, addressed now to the readers directly, puts it, the ultimate goal of the *Good Reading* series is to make what its authors considered to be good reading possible in the future: "You have reached the end of GOOD READING and you are only at the beginning of good reading. You can go on with good reading all your lives if you wish" (442). Without question the underlying evaluatives demand critique—what is "good literature" or "high ideals of personal conduct and of citizenship," or "the best things in life" or even "the real world" in these texts which are so clearly written for white, middle-class, American children, teachers, and administrators?—and critique along these lines continues to be essential in work with both historical and current basal readers to this day. But the *Good Reading* series is also insistent that effective critique carries with it an obligation of positive action. As the *Fifth Reader's* address, "Why We Read and How," explains,

So the way to learn to read is to begin by reading stories you like. For this reason the first stories in this book are some that children usually like because they are funny. If you don't like them, perhaps you will tell the class about other funny stories that you think are better.⁷⁰

There is certainly the potential for what we now read as shaming, silencing, and coerced participation here, as we will discuss in the conclusion to this volume, but at the same time the challenge is clear: if you don't like something, see if you can do it better, and be willing to show that you can do it better in front of everyone. *Good Reading* went through a number of editions and was adapted as part of the *Louisiana Readers* and later as part of the California State and Canadian reader series, and partnered with a number of associated manuals and guides for teachers.⁷¹ As Hulbert acknowledges, "broadcast throughout our educational systems" (3), *Good Reading* both circulated and influenced as Manly and Rickert's more "scholarly" publications could not.

That Manly and Rickert themselves did not seem to consider their work on the series to be at the center of their scholarly project in no way diminishes the force of the challenge their work on the series offers to us. As the "Study Helps" for the *Fifth Reader* makes explicit, the pleasures and achievements of research work are the result of having learned to read in particular ways in the first place:

No one enjoys football or checkers or dancing or singing unless he can do it well. It is the same way with reading and study. The only people who get much pleasure out of reading and study are those for whom they have become so easy that they are a sort of game.⁷²

For Manly and Rickert and their collaborators, investing their own energies into the education that was available to students well *before* they might potentially come to classrooms at the University of Chicago was also investing in the possibility for their work, and ours, to continue. That it has been easy to dismiss, including by Manly and Rickert themselves, and that it is important to critique, as are all such explicit investments, in the end underscores rather than mitigates the challenge that the project of *Good Reading* offers to us. The May 2021 issue of *PMLA*, written in the face of the pandemic and the heated increased awareness of systemic racism, documents a pressing sense that the study of literature in English departments "cannot be the same as its past," that we need "[m]ore

literatures, more art. More geographies, more peoples. More difference. More encounter."⁷³ One way to approach that sense of an urgent need for revision and expansion is also to take the risk of acknowledging—and *acting* on our acknowledgment—that we might need something other than simply more at the university itself, that for much of what we might value as “significant contributions to knowledge” to survive, we depend on an “education that educates” that begins long before the university classroom.

NOTES

1. J. R. Hulbert, “John Matthews Manly 1865–1940,” *Modern Philology* 38, no. 1 (August 1940), 4.
2. According to the *Report of the MLA Task Force on Evaluating Scholarship for Tenure and Promotion* (2007) in the results of its 2005 survey of 1339 departments, textbooks were dramatically de-valued as scholarly output, rated, in fact, “not important” in the evaluation of scholarship for tenure in 28.9% of departments in the survey, the “gold standard” remaining the scholarly monograph. “Report of the MLA Task Force on Evaluating Scholarship for Tenure and Promotion.” *Profession* 2007: 11. And from the Ad Hoc Committee on Scholarly Publishing, “The Future of Scholarly Publishing,” *Profession*, New York: MLA, 2002, 177: “As the book-length monograph has become the holy grail for achieving tenure, not only scholarly articles but also some kinds of book-length publication have undergone concomitant devaluation; tenure and promotion committees frequently accord editions and concordances—to say nothing of textbooks—considerably less weight than scholarly monographs, even though such general-usage texts are forming a larger and larger part of what scholarly presses themselves wish to publish.”
3. Hulbert, “John Matthews Manly,” 3.
4. *Ibid.*, 3.
5. John Matthews Manly, “Letter to Robert Lovett,” John Matthews Manly Papers, Box 1, Folder 13, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, January 12, 1922. “At least my hack work is producing royalties which make it unnecessary for me to do more of that kind and enable me to try to get some time for scholarship.” Von Nolcken contrasts the excitement of the Chaucer Project with the writing of textbooks for Rickert, and notes that Rickert similarly describes her work on textbooks as “drudgery.” Edith Rickert, “Letter to John Burroughs,” John Burroughs Papers, Box 41/5, Archives and Special Collections Library, Vassar College Libraries, January 21, 1921.

6. John Matthews Manly, "Letter to Stevens," John Matthews Manly Papers, Box 13, Folder 4, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, December 16, 1935.
7. Consistent with most discussions of these materials, Kittredge's biographer, Clyde Kenneth Hyder, describes Kittredge's work on educational texts as motivated largely by the need for money. He writes, "Like his revision of the English used in a translation of the Psalms for the Jewish Publication Society, finally issued in 1903, the textbooks which at various times Kittredge helped collaborators to prepare were intended partly to supplement his income. These included *The Mother Tongue* (1900, 1901), with Sarah Louise Arnold, who, after serving as supervisor in the Boston schools, became Dean of Simmons College; *Book III of The Mother Tongue*, entitled *Elements of English Composition*, in which John Hays Gardiner, a Harvard colleague, also collaborated, 1902; *Manual of Composition and Rhetoric*, with the same authors, 1907; *An Advanced English Grammar*, 1913, and *A Concise English Grammar*, 1918, both with Kittredge's former student F. E. Farley, who after his studies at Harvard became a college teacher, also at Simmons College and later at Wesleyan University." Clyde Kenneth Hyder, *George Lyman Kittredge: Teacher and Scholar* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1962), 85. Manly himself wrote in 1893 of Kittredge's increase in salary, "Kittredge is greatly delighted, as this will enable him to give up some outside work that he has been obliged to do to make both ends meet. He will have more time for study & also more money." John Matthews Manly, "Letter to Mary M. Manly," Manly Family Papers, University of Alabama Libraries Special Collections, March 5, 1893. The Manly Family Papers have many documents accessible online, such as at: https://cdm17336.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/u0003_0000900/id/10404/rec/11.
8. "Hulbert, James R. (James Root) 1884–1969," WorldCat Identities, accessed May 21, 2012, <http://worldcat.org/identities/lccn-no2002004230/>.
9. Jean W. LeLoup and Sheri Spaine Long, "To Text(book) or not to Text(book): A Primer for Members in Foreign Language Departments," *ADFL Bulletin* 43, no. 1 (2014), 45. That royalties were in fact a significant portion of Manly's income is clear. As Michael Matto notes in his chapter in this volume, a notice from Internal Revenue provides for Manly's 1920 income, for example, royalties amounting to \$5095.97 (Ginn and Company, \$1910.94; D. C. Heath and Company, \$1813.15; Henry Holt and Company, \$1371.88) at a time when his salary at the University of Chicago was \$6499.98. John Matthews Manly Papers, Box 1, Folder 13, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library. Gerald J. Alred and Erik A. Thelen describe

the idea of devaluation of textbooks as scholarly on account of their potential profitability as "simply bogus," as "it denies that 'scholarly worth' translates into financial value for both the individual and the institution" (467). Gerald J. Alred and Erik A. Thelen, "Are Textbooks Contributions to Scholarship?" *College Composition and Communication* 44, no. 4 (Dec 1993), 467.

10. The Good Reading series consists of seven volumes published between 1926 and 1928, with two sets of collaborators and two different illustrators. John M. Manly and Sarah E. Griswold, *Good Reading: Primer*, illus. Elizabeth M. Fisher (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926); John M. Manly and Sarah E. Griswold, *Good Reading: First Reader*, illus. Elizabeth M. Fisher (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926); John M. Manly, Edith Rickert, and Nina Leubrie, *Good Reading: Second Reader*, illus. Elizabeth M. Fisher (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926); John M. Manly, Edith Rickert, and Nina Leubrie, *Good Reading: Third Reader*, illus. Elizabeth M. Fisher (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926); John M. Manly, Edith Rickert, and Nina Leubrie, *Good Reading: Fourth Reader*, illus. Blanche Greer (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1927); John M. Manly, Edith Rickert, and Nina Leubrie, *Good Reading: Fifth Reader*, illus. Blanche Greer (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928); John M. Manly, Edith Rickert, and Nina Leubrie, *Good Reading: Sixth Reader*, illus. Blanche Greer (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928).
11. Manly and Griswold, *Primer*, 4.
12. Edward L. Thorndike, *The Teacher's Word Book* (New York: Teacher's College Press, Columbia University, 1921).
13. Eliza R. Bailey and John Matthews Manly, *The Bailey-Manly Spelling Book* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1908), ii.
14. Thorndike, *Teacher's Word Book*, iii. Richard L. Venezky notes, "Vocabulary control and the need for repeated exposure to new words slowly entered most textbook series through the middle of the nineteenth century" but that Thorndike's *Word Book* made that control and repetition fundamental, even "a fetish for basal reader design." Richard L. Venezky, "A History of the American Reading Textbook," *The Elementary School Journal* 87, no. 3 (Jan. 1987): 256. See also Richard L. Venezky, "From the Indian Primer to Dick and Jane: An Introduction to the UPA American Primers Collection," *American Primers: Guide to the Microfiche Collection* (Bethesda, Maryland: University Publications of America, 1990): xi-xxx.
15. Manly and Griswold, *Primer*, 3.
16. Manly, Rickert, and Leubrie, *Second Reader*, 269.
17. Allan Luke, "Making Dick and Jane: Historical Genesis of the Modern Basal Reader," *Teachers College Record* 89, no. 1 (Fall 1987): 373.
18. Thorndike, *Teachers Word Book*, iv.

19. Edward L. Thorndike, preface to *The Teacher's Word Book of 30,000 Words*, by Edward L. Thorndike and Irving Lorge (New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1944).
20. Edward L. Thorndike and Irving Lorge, *The Teacher's Word Book of 30,000 Words* (New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1944), x.
21. Thorndike and Lorge, *Teachers Word Book of 30,000 Words*, xi.
22. Responses to contemporary basal reading programs take the rhetorical support for such programs via educational research as enough of a given that it can be cited ironically. Peter Dewitz and Jennifer Jones, for example, open their article, "Using Basal Readers: From Dutiful Fidelity to Intelligent Decision-Making," with an anecdote about a teacher adopting a new basal reading program: "A third-grade teacher for nine years, Ms. Harriet Alvarez (pseudonym) has seen many instructional trends and programs come and go, but basal reading programs have been a constant throughout the years. Now in the current high-stakes environment, her school system has purchased a new core program and mandated that all teachers use it. After all, it is 'research based.'" Peter Dewitz and Jennifer Jones, *Reading Teacher* 66, no. 5 (Feb 2013): 391.
23. June R. Gilstad notes, "Working with Thorndike, Gray began to develop a test of oral reading, part of his master's dissertation (Gray, 1914). Thorndike included that early draft at the end of his first published report of his own work on reading tests (Thorndike, 1914, pp. 273–277)." June R. Gilstad, "William S. Gray, 1885–1960: First IRA President," *Reading Research Quarterly* 20, no. 4 (Summer, 1985): 510. Gilstad here cites Gray's dissertation: William S. Gray, *A Tentative Scale for Measuring Oral Reading*, unpublished Master's Dissertation, Columbia University, 1914.
24. Gilstad, "William Scott Gray," 510.
25. Allen Luke, "Making Dick and Jane," 96. Barbara Ruth Pelzman notes that the "reading series was a best seller and was used by over 86,000 schools at the height of its influence." Barbara Ruth Pelzman, *Reading Instruction in America* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Company, Inc., 2015), 58.
26. *Primer*, 4; *First Reader*, 4; *Second Reader*, 4; *Third Reader*, 3.
27. *Primer* 4; *First Reader*, 4; *Second Reader*, 4.
28. In contrast, the description for *Our English* that directly follows is "A Series of language and grammar texts for use in the grades, adopted for basal use for a period of five years in all public schools of the State of Indiana." *The English Journal* 25, no. 10 (Dec 1926), front matter.
29. William H. Elson and William S. Gray, *The Elson Basic Readers: Book Three*, Life Reading Service (Chicago: Scott Foresman and Company: Chicago, 1931), 8.
30. *Third Reader*, 49.

31. The *Junior High School English* volume of *Lessons in the Speaking and Writing of English*, for example, includes an exercise on "observation" with the Hermann Von Kaulbach *The Pied Piper of Hamelin* in which students are given time to consider the image and then asked to answer the following questions without re-consulting the image:

Of what material were the buildings that you could see? How can you tell?
 Was there a pair of scissors in the picture? Where?
 Did you see any milk? Where
 Was there a person with a toothache? Where?
 Where was the smallest child?
 Did you notice a doll's carriage? Could you see the doll?
 Which of the children had just run away from his dinner? How do you know?
 Which of the boys looks like a shoemaker's child? Why?
 How many rats were there? How many mice?
 How many of these details do you think have anything to do with the story which the picture illustrates? Why are the others given in the picture?
 Would they be given in the story?

John M. Manly and Eliza R. Bailey, *Junior High School English*, Junior High School Series (Boston: D. C. Heath, 1912, 1916), 22–24.

32. For example, "Specific training in the use of context clues to anticipate meaning may be provided at very early levels through the use of pictures. Since, in most modern reading series, pictures are a vital part of the context, it is important to teach children to use illustrations as meaning clues. One of the first steps in such training involves making inferences from general pictured context." William S. Gray, *On Their Own in Reading: How to Give Children Independence in Attacking New Words* (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1948), 59.
33. Gray, *On Their Own*, 73.
34. Manly's "Dear Children" introduction to the *Third Reader* explains, "At the ends of some of the stories are funny question-marks. If you wish to know what they are for, turn to page 263." Page 263 introduces the set of "Helps." *Third Reader*, 4. The series as a whole commits to learning not only how to read but also how to navigate books of all kinds. The final instruction in the *Sixth Reader* emphasizes the goal "Learn How to Use Books" with the following instructions:

This is a very important part of your work. It is like the workman learning to use his tools. Here are some of the things to learn how to use: the preface or introduction; table of contents; the index; appendix;

footnotes; the glossary; maps and illustrations. Learn how to use reference books; the dictionary; encyclopedias; yearbooks; atlases; magazines, and newspapers. *Sixth Reader*, 10.

35. *Primer*, 3.
36. The emphasis on the figure of “mother” is in and of itself an aim of the roughly contemporary Child-Library series: the “ethical content” included in the primer covers the range of “[k]indness, cheerfulness, contentment, industry, promptness, gratitude, love of Mother, and obedience.” William H. Elson and Lura E. Runkel, *Primer: Child-Library Readers*, The Elson Extension Series (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company: Chicago, 1929), 5.
37. Gray, *On Their Own*, 59.
38. *Ibid.*, 59.
39. *Primer*, 16. Many thanks to Asa Simon Mittman, Department of Art and Art History, California State University, for his insights regarding these images.
40. *Ibid.*, 35.
41. *Ibid.*, 4.
42. Annette Joyce Patterson, Phillip Anton Cormack, and William Charles Green consider the role of early modern reading texts in the production as well as repression of subjects. Noting, “The question of interest is not whether a text is ideological and, therefore, deceptive or repressive. The issue, rather, is how texts help form the type of citizen considered desirable at any particular point in time,” they survey readers through the Reformation and consider “the idea that organised practices involving texts (such as the teaching of reading) contribute to the management of both children and teachers.” Annette Joyce Patterson, Phillip Anton Cormack, and William Charles Green “The Child, the Text and the Teacher: Reading Primers and Reading Instruction,” *Paedagogica Historica* 48, no. 2 (April 2012): 186.
43. *Third Reader*, 47.
44. *Third Reader*, 3, and *Fourth Reader*, 4.
45. Venezky, “A History,” 248.
46. Stephen Tomlinson, “Edward Lee Thorndike and John Dewey on the Science of Education,” *Oxford Review of Education* 23, no. 3 (September 1997): 369.
47. *Ibid.*, 371–2.
48. *Fifth Reader*, 16; *Sixth Reader*, 16.
49. For an excellent reading of Thorndike’s influence in a Foucauldian analysis, see Antti Saari, “Knowledge without Context? A Foucauldian Analysis of E. L. Thorndike’s Positivist Educational Research,” *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 35 (2016): 589–603.

50. Mabel Dean, "Wolf Cub's Three Days' Playing," *Fourth Reader*, 105–119, and Elizabeth M. Fisher, "Bobby's Dream," *Third Reader*, 9.
51. *Third Reader*, 4.
52. Nina Leubrie, "A School Garden," *The Elementary School Teacher* 6, no. 3 (1905): 146–53; Nina Leubrie, "Oral Reading," Expression as a Means of Training Motive, *Francis W. Parker School Year Book* 3 (June, 1914): 37–49; Nina Leubrie, "A History Newspaper," Education Through Concrete Experience: A Series of Illustrations, *Francis W. Parker School Year Book* 4 (June, 1915): 163–83.
53. "Little Broom and the Mice," *Second Reader*, 120–125; "How the Birds Fed," *Second Reader*, 136–139; "Woodchuck Ways," *Fourth Reader*, 79–83; "A Watch-Dog Goose," *Fourth Reader*, 87; "The Town I Live In," *Fifth Reader*, 197–8, and as a different essay, *Sixth Reader*, 378–84; "Chickadee and Titmouse," *Sixth Reader*, 350; "How a Cricket Makes Its Sound," *Sixth Reader*, 362; "The Goldenrod," "Fringed Gentians" and "Closed Gentians," *Sixth Reader* 366–72.
54. "The Bojabi Tree," *Third Reader*, 11–18; "Christmas," *Fifth Reader*, 209–35.
55. Margaret Rickert, "Foreword," in *Chaucer's World*, comp. Edith Rickert, ed. Clair C. Olson and Martin M. Crow, illus. Margaret Rickert (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948), viii.
56. Rickert, "How the Milk Comes," *Second Reader*, 187–195; Rickert, "True Cat Stories," *Third Reader*, 85–92.
57. Rickert, "True Cat Stories," 85–6.
58. *Ibid.*, 87.
59. *Ibid.*, 88.
60. *Third Reader*, 93.
61. Rickert, "True Cat Stories," 88.
62. *Ibid.*, 90.
63. *Ibid.*, 92.
64. The *Elson-Gray Basic Reader* contains a similar letter to the reader in Book Four, but the address, while it contains many of the same ideas as Manly's letter, is not a letter from an individual author but an invitation in which the book speaks as itself as "Your Book Comrade." William H. Elson and William S. Gray, *Elson-Gray Basic Readers, Book Four*, Life-Reading Service, (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1931, 1936), 9.
65. Fred B. Millet, *Contemporary American Authors: A Critical Survey and 219 Bio-Bibliographies* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1940), x.
66. Rachel Sagner Buurma and Laura Heffernan, *The Teaching Archive: A New History for Literary Study* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021), 69, 101–3.

67. Ibid., 91.
68. "The MLA's Mission," Modern Language Association, accessed April 27, 2021, <https://www.mla.org/About-Us/About-the-MLA/The-MLA-s-Mission>.
69. John Matthews Manly, "Letter to Mary M. Manly," Manly Family Papers, University of Alabama Libraries Special Collections, October 4, 1891.
70. *Fifth Reader*, 4.
71. The *Louisiana Readers* paired *Good Reading* volumes with a series entitled *Real Life Readers*. Cora M. Martin, Patty Smith Hill, John Matthews Manly, Sarah E. Griswold, Edith Rickert, Nina Leubrie, *Louisiana Readers* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1926). The California State Series similarly employed the *Good Reading* volumes (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1935). The Canadian Readers employed *Good Reading* volumes 2, 3, and 4: *Good Reading: Supplementary to the Canadian Readers* (Toronto: Educational Book Company, 1930). Manuals include Sarah E. Griswold, Floro Torrence, John Matthews Manly, Edith Rickert, and Nina Leubrie, *Manual for Good Reading, First Year* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1929); Sarah E. Griswold, *Guide to Good Reading, First Year* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1926, 1927); Floro Torrence, *Guide to Good Reading, Second Year* (New York: Scribner's, 1927).
72. *Fifth Reader*, 5.
73. Kyla Wazana Tompkins, "The Shush," *PMLA* 136, no. 3 (May 2021): 422. Also in this issue, Jesse Alemán concludes with the fact of racist violence and political inaction in response to it in this country: "If the study of English cannot lead us to realize the reality of this fact and guide students and scholars to change it, then the discipline has reached its end" ("The End of English," 474). Similarly, Jorge Coronado: "The twin pandemics that we are living through have made it a simple thing to understand that the current organization and direction of the university must be made new" ("On Entrenched Inequalities in the Research University: Activism and Teaching for Tenured Faculty Members," 445).

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“Where the Bojabi Tree Grows”: Re-Seeing Modernist Words and Pictures in Edith Rickert’s Forgotten Children’s Books

Elizabeth Pearce

While Rickert’s contributions to and tireless work on Chaucer work have been, at the very least, underestimated and misunderstood, her work as a novelist, poet, short story author, and magazine editor has been largely ignored. As part of this creative work, she wrote three children’s books that have not received any significant critical or scholarly attention: *The Bojabi Tree* (1923), *The Blacksmith and the Blackbirds* (1928), and *The Greedy Goroo* (1929). In his biography of Rickert, Fred B. Millett (a former colleague at the University of Chicago), describes Rickert’s children’s book authorship as written “perhaps as a relief from the increasing tension of this enterprise [the Chaucer project].”¹ This casual dismissal (there are no other references to the children’s books in Millett’s biography and very few references in other sources) often happens in the world of children’s literature, which has been historically considered unimportant and connected to the women’s sphere of childhood and domesticity.² The three

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books listed above are long out of print and hard to find even with modern resources. There are physical copies of both *The Bojabi Tree* (1923) and *The Blacksmith and the Blackbirds* (1928), but *The Greedy Goroo* (1929) is only available from the Library of Congress in the United States. However, in 2019 Abela Publishing republished the text with the original illustrations (by Gleb Botkin). One of the purposes of this chapter is to reclaim these books for children's literature scholarship and to highlight Rickert's work within the context of other works for children that were published in the 1920s. The other purpose, and my core argument, is that Rickert's narratives demonstrate aspects of high modernism for children, not a common feature of books from this time period. The illustrations included in the three texts also display the importance of visual elements in modernist literature; the words and the pictures work together to tell a story. Rickert's work shows a sophisticated understanding of children and childhood while also playing with many of the modernist techniques other (more famous authors) used as well. Children and childhood are intertwined with modernism, but Rickert's books make that connection clear in a way that other contemporary works for children do not. Rickert's books demonstrate that children's literature can be high art just like adult literature. As modernism advocated for re-seeing the world, so I advocate for re-seeing the work Rickert created for children with her illustrator collaborators.

MODERNIST DEPICTIONS OF CHILDHOOD

Modernism was influential in children's literature of the 1920–1930s, but modernist authors most well known from the movement did not publish or engage with children's literature. Some of the most recognizable names in modernist literature—Joseph Conrad, T. S. Eliot, F. Scott Fitzgerald, E. M. Forster, Ernest Hemingway, Wallace Stevens, and D. H. Lawrence—wrote exclusively for adults. Modernist scholars also do not include children's literature when analyzing the work of the period, although the authors were writing under the same influences and in the same period as those writing for adults. Michelle H. Phillips argues that “a number of modernists actively sought to widen the ways that adults think about childhood, to change the way childhood is presented to children, and to open the fields of both modernist and children's literature to make room for some of their most experimental and most unconventional contributions to twentieth-century literature.”³ However, while W. E. B. Du Bois,

Gertrude Stein, Langston Hughes, J. M. Barrie, Djuna Barnes, and Henry James have received attention, Phillips notes that "it remains the case that neither students nor experts of modernism routinely study the culture of childhood" and that while "Stein, Hughes, and Du Bois regularly wrote for children, their children's literature is not regularly included in modernist considerations of their work."⁴ What might be more accurate, then, is acknowledgment that while modernism was absolutely affecting literature written for children, modernist scholars have not tended to study children's literature, even in the cases when modernist authors were specifically writing for children. As Kimberly Reynolds points out, "accounts of modernism in the broadest sense generally ignore children's literature" and "even those working in the field of Children's Literature Studies have done little to advance knowledge in this area." Reynolds sets out "to address this silence by demonstrating that far from turning its back on modernism...children's literature—and particularly in the form of the picture book—has actively explored its concepts and styles."⁵ Virginia Woolf's *Nurse Lugton's Golden Thimble* (1923–1924), James Joyce's *The Cat and the Devil* (1936), and Gertrude Stein's *The World is Round* (1939) are all texts explored by Reynolds as examples of works that have not been acclaimed or analyzed by scholars, even though they demonstrate how the authors conceived of the child reader. These three books are contemporaries of Rickert's work but are not as complex in tone or story. Woolf's book, about animals coming to life during a dream, has a chatty narrator (similar to Rickert's narrators) but does not play with language or adapt folktales. Joyce's book, transgressive in that it includes the Devil as a main character, does not play with language, style, or conventions as Rickert's texts do. Stein's book is the closest to Rickert's but is significantly longer and published well after Rickert's three children's books. Significantly, Stein's is the only book specifically written as a picture book to be published for children. *The Cat and the Devil* was written by Joyce as a letter to his grandson and later adapted into a picture book. Woolf's work was found in a manuscript of *Mrs. Dalloway*; the story "appears suddenly in the middle of the text of the novel, but has nothing to do with it. It was in fact written for Virginia Woolf's niece Ann Stephen when she, as a child, was on a visit to her aunt in the country."⁶ Writing for a specific child audience and then later publishing the work as a text for children is common in children's literature (A. A. Milne's *Winnie the Pooh* [1926] and Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* [1865] were both written this way), but a text specifically written to be published as a picture book has a

different intention and commitment to the larger readership of children and the importance of the literature they read. Both Joyce and Woolf's works were written during the late 1930s, and neither were published for a wider audience until much later. As Reynolds points out, this later publication allowed the works to be experienced "when modernist ideas had been widely assimilated."⁷ It is unfortunate that Edith Rickert's books have been lost to time, considering that she is of this era and her style absolutely fits with the style of other modernist tales for children, including setting in nature, playing with language, the importance of the illustrations, and appealing to the child reader. Where Rickert's work really shines, however, is in her ability to bring the challenges of modernist literature (like experimenting with time, having morally ambiguous characters, and often avoiding direct morality) into an accessible text for children that retains some of those features. This shows that in her work, Rickert took children seriously and avoided underestimating their ability to read different and challenging work.

Karin Westman notes in her introduction to a 2007 special issue of the *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, on children's literature and modernism, that "children's literature has been absent from many discussions of modernism."⁸ Similar to the modernist authors mentioned in this special issue and in other places (Woolf, Joyce, Du Bois, Hughes, James, Stein, Graham Greene, etc.), Rickert remains more known for her other work rather than her children's books. Indeed, Hope Howell Hodgkins notes that

we may smile at the thought of famously difficult, high-art modernists such as Woolf and Joyce writing picture books for children—and indeed neither of them wrote children's stories for illustration or publication. Nor have their stories, made into picture books, attracted much attention now. In fact, these writers' ambitious and esoteric fiction deliberately, but also inadvertently, 'puts away childish things,' so that children are significant only insofar as they impinge upon adult concerns. And this perspective appears also in their picture books, suggesting a lesson about children's literature in general: the higher the aesthetic ideal, the lower seems the calling to write for children.⁹

Texts created to appeal to the child audience are often associated with low, or popular, art. Work that is praised as difficult, challenging, or aesthetically significant often is only created and consumed by adults. Children's

literature has historically been dismissed as unimportant and insignificant, so it makes sense that many adult authors who are interested in challenging an entire field would not write for children. The continuum between writing for children and modernist trends does seem challenging but in her three picture books, Rickert is able to keep childish things in focus while also writing innovative stories with language that challenges traditional forms.

Although many scholars define modernism differently, there are a few characteristics that are fairly consistent across literature created during the period (approximately 1890–1930). David Lodge points out that the significance of WWI plays a part in the vast array of literature that falls under modernism, but there are also other commonalities. Most modernist literature is experimental in form, changing or challenging existing modes. Modernism as a whole is commonly concerned with consciousness, and also the subconscious and unconscious, which often is demonstrated by non-linear timelines. Allusions, mythical archetypes, and repeated motifs become much more important as a result. Finally, modernist fiction also often avoids the use of a “reliable, omniscient and intrusive narrator,” which was common in literature prior to this period (and is often still present in children’s literature of the time, like *Mary Poppins* and *Winnie the Pooh*).¹⁰ A recent article (2019) by Joann Conrad also argues that “[m]odernism as an aesthetic and political response to the pressure of modernity was also absorbed into the commercial and artistic production of picturebooks,” especially by those who emigrated into the United States (often from Europe and Russia) to become illustrators.¹¹ Thus, the “American picturebook subsumed and indigenised European avant-garde influences in an uneasy tension with the impulses of industrial capitalism.”¹² While Conrad includes several well-known illustrators who emigrated from Russia, she does not include Gleb Botkin, who illustrated Rickert’s first picture book and is another example of an artist who brought the influences of his past and his home country to his creative work in the United States. Some of the most well-known children’s literature produced during the modernist period is very different from Rickert’s work, which is another reason why her work should continue to be studied.

Modernists, however, were not completely distanced from the *idea* of child; or, perhaps, the “ideal” child would be a better way to put it. Rather than depict realistic images of children with flaws, desires, and needs like any adult, modernists (and the Romantics before them) tended to think only in terms of an idealized version of the child as a blank slate for their

ideas. Margaret R. Higonnet identifies “[t]he innocent child” as “an emblem of the future and, therefore, of modernity. For modernists, the child offered an aesthetic metaphor, an artistic model, and an ideal audience.”¹³ Rather than caring about and writing for the actual child, as I argue Rickert does, most modernists thought about children only as projections for their ideas about modernity in art and literature. In fact, “artists in the European movements elaborated ‘infantilist’ strategies of innovation” including collecting “drawings by their own children or others.”¹⁴ Artistic inspiration can come from many places of course, but it is interesting that adult artists were inspired by the *work* of children without consulting the children themselves. As Higonnet points out, “concepts associated with childhood as a model thus included naiveté, irrationality, and exuberant associative play” which are all stereotypes of childhood that exist today, often drawn from the Romantic ideal of childhood.¹⁵ Of course, while some of the characteristics might be seen in some children, real children are just as varied and different from each other as adults, with perspectives that change and adapt in different time periods, cultures, and environments. Rickert does not look to childhood as a model for artistic inspiration in her picture books, which sets her books apart from other books of the time period. Rather than using an idealized child to ponder the new or demonstrate associative thinking, Rickert experiments with visual styles and language that are suited to a child audience. She challenges the constraints of the artistic medium (usually seen as only for adults because modernism is difficult and not as accessible as previous movements) in an engaging way open to a wide range of readers, acknowledging difference among the children in her audience while also not dismissing their intelligence. Rickert follows many of the modernist techniques by playing with language, using non-linear time (characters and storylines appear and reappear) with much time for reflection on the part of the characters, but she also includes the intrusive narrator that many adult modernist authors avoided.

The Romantic ideal of childhood is much discussed in the history of children’s literature because the concept is such a foundational part of how many cultures consider childhood today, as a temporal space separate from adulthood. One of the first proponents of treating children differently from adults was scholar, philosopher, and political theorist Jean-Jacque Rousseau. Rousseau’s *Émile* (1762) is often cited as one of the most pivotal works to influence theories of education in the western world. In the preface, Rousseau himself admits that critics might claim that his

narrative "'is not so much a treatise on education as the visions of a dream with regard to education.' What can I do? I have not written about other people's ideas of education, but my own."¹⁶ Other educational theorists, including John Ruskin, Friedrich Fröbel, and William James drew some of their inspiration from Rousseau's work. Rickert's children's books, I find, interweave the ideas presented by these education theorists with the theories present in modernism. Rickert's picture books take place in nature and feature almost all animal characters (in the tradition of the Romantic child as Rousseau inspired), but also challenge conventions like having a moral lesson for the implied child reader. The stories in Rickert's books are fun to read, have morally ambiguous characters, but also have tidy endings with a clear story arc.

William James, older brother of one of the most well-known American modernist authors, Henry James, was a philosopher at odds with the idealized child presented in Rousseau's *Émile*. Phillips points out that "William James's philosophies of pragmatism and the conscious mind must be acknowledged as crucial influences on the representations of childhood in American modernism."¹⁷ In opposition to the methods of G. Stanley Hall (a colleague and former student of James's), who "urges teachers to keep children childlike as long as possible," "James does not presume that the child is a race apart, [so] the goal of his pedagogy is not the prolongation of childhood; quite the contrary, the goal is to develop what today might be referred to as 'noncognitive skills' such as persistence and resilience that help individuals (regardless of IQ) to struggle successively through dark, uncertain, and difficult times."¹⁸ James's emphasis on realistic goals for children, and awareness that they will have to deal with difficult situations, sets him apart from many theorists who tended to think about childhood as a state of natural peace and joy, unlike adulthood. James was also "appalled" by "Rousseau's choice to love the imaginary child at the cost of the living." In addition, "James also suggests that this choice may be a troubled side-effect of the philosophy itself ... such as choosing to rear the quintessential child rather than the children we actually have."¹⁹ This demonstrates again how James's ideas were so different from Rousseau's influences (which continue today). In addition to Phillips's focus on James and his influence on modernism, I would argue that Rickert's work demonstrates James's philosophies rather than the more Romantic ideals of Rousseau. Rickert's characters—children, animals, adults alike—are depicted as flawed and diverse beings: the Blacksmith is tricked by the Blackbirds in *The Blacksmith and the Blackbirds*, but it works out best for

everyone; Tommy Tortoise becomes a beloved ruler in *The Bojabi Tree* and reappears in *The Greedy Goroo*; and Goroo is ultimately consumed by his greed but is finally satisfied and no longer hungry. The characters, while depicted in nature and the natural world, are faced with realistic challenges (hunger, mostly) that resist “the mainstreaming of universal, priceless, and ahistorical ideas about childhood.”²⁰ Thus Rickert’s books stand out from the work of her contemporaries in that she depicts round, flawed characters meant to appeal to real children, rather than one-dimensional mouthpieces written by adults for an idealized child.

There are other aspects of educational theory that have impacted modernist art. Marilynn Strasser Olson explores the concept of primitivism in modern art, noting that “the Parisian fin-de-siècle moment ... drew on childhood as an inspiration. Painters who hoped to change the way the Academy defined art sometimes turned to the idea of the primitive to re-define what a Modern art should be doing.”²¹ Connecting primitivism to the theories of Rousseau, Olson notes:

the idea that the child falls into error when socialized by church, state, and fashion and that people living in circumstances that prevent this from happening live more authentic lives encourages the idea of uninstructed childhood or uneducated people as inspirational and true. The child-rearing method advocated by Rousseau in *Émile* inspired vast educational reforms in Europe and North America with far-reaching effects.²²

Rousseau, as explored above, is extremely influential in the field of children’s literature, and his praise of living outside of socialization led to an increasing interest in primitivism. This term can be extremely complicated, and controversial, but setting a dichotomy between civilized and primitive is at the heart of Rousseau’s influence on education and childhood. All three of Rickert’s picture books, too, are almost exclusively set in the natural world, which is still a common trend in the 1920s; many adults associate childhood with nature and the natural world due to the influence of Rousseau and a number of Romantic writers. In *The Blacksmith and the Blackbirds*, the one text with a human character, the human is tricked and only used for the good he can provide. Identifying people, places, and cultures as outside of civilization, thus outside of the canon and traditional art, primitivism can also be seen as an idealization of communities outside of the western (stereotypically white) world. Olson identifies modernist painters Paula Modersohn-Becker and Paul Gauguin as artists who “both

worked to understand and illustrate concepts of motherhood and childhood in communities cut off from the capitals of Europe, where authenticity might be found in human and spiritual relationships."²³ This idea of primitivism as connected to childhood and authenticity can be seen in Rickert's picture books, especially her noted inspiration from African folktales. However, I want to be careful to avoid automatically linking primitivism and setting a story in the natural world with the people, continent, and stories of Africa to avoid reinscribing colonialist terms; at the time of Rickert's writing, though, anyone not of the western/white world was often called "primitive." In the modernist artistic movement:

... avant-garde painters looked for inspiration to another artistic tradition rather than to the remote location or peoples themselves. In this case, the new way of seeing was specifically linked to the style of the artifacts of another place or time. The 'primitive' styles that were of interest in this era were more abstract or simplified or monumental than the naturalism of the European tradition. As Perry notes, the relation between the European artists and the artifacts of (often colonized) peoples is complex and not, probably, a matter of 'discovering' something from outside European culture. Again, this is an area where the Modernist painter is often implicated in the colonial fervor of the time, although it is at least conceivable that some painters' allusions to, say, African, motifs might be progressive political statements. The legitimacy of 'refreshing' or 'rejuvenating' the old world through exposure to a 'young' culture depends a great deal on how exposure to the young culture was acquired, as well as to the always present ambivalence of the term 'primitive.'²⁴

Olson's measured description demonstrates that the term primitivism is complicated by the artistic desires of the time and the search for ideas outside of the western world. Rickert's inspiration from an African folktale can be seen as that desire to discover something outside of western culture, but the use of the story by a white woman from the western world can also problematically reify colonialist narratives. Perhaps the most problematic element is that the story of *The Bojabi Tree* is attributed to the entire continent of Africa rather than a specific group or culture's traditional story. Seeing Africa as a monolith of primitivism to be explored and adapted by the western world is part of the horrific tradition of colonialism. There is no evidence that Rickert had any particular interest in Africa, or any specific country outside of the western world, so her adaptation of a folktale without recognition, research, or attribution for its origination

or people is cultural appropriation. This is not to say that her work should continue to be devalued or ignored; instead, I would argue that her work is more important to demonstrate, as Olson points out, the modernist urge to look outside of western culture for other kinds of stories and storytelling methods. Honestly exploring the history of children's literature to point out benefits and problems is a part of the necessary work we as scholars need to do with Rickert's picture books. Through a close reading of Rickert's three books for children, I argue that her sophisticated modernist play with language, characterization, and un-romanticized view of childhood needs to be seen along with the illustrations that supplement her adapted stories. As a type of literature meant to appeal to a young audience, re-seeing Rickert's texts can encourage those who study modernist literature to see how important children and childhood were to the modernist movement.

PERSONIFICATION AND THE CHILD HERO IN *THE BOJABI TREE*

The Bojabi Tree (1923), the first of Rickert's three picture books to be published, establishes a shared setting upon which the other books will expand. There are two versions of the text commonly available: the resurrected text from Abela Publishing with the original Gleb Botkin illustrations, and a 1958 version from Doubleday and Company with illustrations by Anna Braune. Botkin was, according to his obituary in the *New York Times*, the "son of the former court physician to Czar Nicholas II of Russia."²⁵ Most of the information available about Botkin focuses on him as a "tenacious champion" of Mrs Anna Anderson Manahan's claim to be Anastasia, the late Czar's youngest daughter. Botkin writes that "there is no mystery attached to the case ... I not merely believe her to be Anastasia—I know that she is."²⁶ Botkin's father, Yevgeny Botkin, was killed with the Czar's family in 1918; as a child Gleb Botkin grew up with the royal children as his playmates. Escaping Russia by way of a monastery, Botkin traveled to Japan and then arrived in the United States in 1923 where he worked in Brooklyn as a photo-engraver. In 1930, Botkin wrote about his experience of becoming a United States citizen, going from being a devoted monarchist who, "as a child, even before I could speak ... was taught to worship His Majesty Emperor Nicholas II and his whole family," to realizing that "Royalties are all alike." "They are, after all,

nothing but victims of circumstances," he concludes.²⁷ As an artist, Botkin got his start early: "Gifted with a strong sense of humor and the ability to translate his high-spirited view of the world to paper," from a young age Botkin "drew and painted animals exuding personality, many of them elegantly attired in military or court uniforms complete with shining medals and decorations."²⁸ While in exile with the royal family in Tobolsk (1917), Botkin created illustrations for the Mishka Toptiginsky stories he had heard with the royal children; Botkin's father snuck these illustrations to the children when they were isolated and imprisoned. These stories and Botkin's illustrations were later published as *Lost Tales: Stories for the Tsar's Children*.²⁹ These illustrations show the child artist as a loyal monarchist, devoted to the rule of the royal family. *Lost Tales* illustrations also feature animals as humans, standing fully upright and clothed, which also appears in the Rickert illustrations.

A later version of *The Bojabi Tree* was published in 1958, with new illustrations by Anna Braune. Anna Parker Braune (1908–1988) was born in Albany, New York, and spent much of her life as a librarian in Fairhope, Alabama.³⁰ Much of the current information about Braune exists because of her legacy to the Fairhope Public library, including copies of her books as an author and illustrator, photographs of her, and original illustrations.³¹ Braune was the author of two books, *Honey Chile* (1937) and *Wonderful Toys* (1990), and illustrated two other children's books besides *The Bojabi Tree: Timothy's Tune* by Adeline McCall (1943) and *Up Creek and Down Creek* by Esther Greenacre Hall (1936). Rickert died before the second version of the book was published, so it is unlikely that she had the opportunity to collaborate with Braune; it is possible that Rickert did collaborate with Botkin, but I was unable to uncover evidence of such a collaboration at this time. The two different versions of the story have the same words and page layout, but the illustrations vary widely.

The Bojabi Tree, with the original illustrations by Botkin, interweaves a moral message with an entertaining and unexpected story. The beginning of the book introduces a catalyst for the rest of the story: in "the land of All-the-Beasts there was a GREAT HUNGER."³² While the setting is not attributed to any specific geographic location, "the land of All-the-Beasts" points to the primitivism common in the modernist artistic movement. This first book is pastoral, taking place in the natural world with only animals as characters, which were illustrated by Botkin (the following books start to incorporate more civilization and human characters). Also introduced on the first page of *The Bojabi Tree* are several of the animal

characters, with alliterative names including “Tabby Tiger,” “Bruno Bear,” “Robin Rat” (also the name of the chapter), and the protagonist “Tommy Tortoise” (1). Rickert’s modernist style is evident on this first page as well; the use of all-capitals for “GREAT HUNGER” and the repeated “HUNGER” emphasizes the feeling/need behind those words. The animal characters listed are offset and staggered from the left to the right, as if the names are a visual poem, or standing in line, or meant to be read slowly to emphasize how many animals are hungry. Higonnet, specifically looking at picture books published for children during the modernist period, writes, “[f]or a broad range of Modernists, the child was a polyvalent model: their interest in picturebooks tended to stress visual effects, but children’s verbal play too was a key inspiration.”³³ Here, both visual effects (the placement of the list of animal names) and verbal play (alliteration) are demonstrated. The capitalization of “GREAT HUNGER” incorporates both elements: the phrase plays with visual effects but can also be read loudly for emphasis, appealing to the child audience. This is significant because Rickert is appealing to the child reader while also incorporating modernist trends; she sets up expectations for the rest of the book (and the other picture books set in the same world) that she will be playing with language, style, structure, and visual effects in a manner that both adults and children can enjoy.

The capitalization of “GREAT HUNGER/HUNGRY” continues throughout *The Bojabi Tree* but it is not the only word/phrase treated thus. Later in the book, “DELICIOUS” (10), “PADDLED” (11), “GREAT WOOD” (13), and “BOJABI” (15) are in all-caps, along with other words. Usually the capitalization is used for emphasis, but it is not always consistent—later, Bojabi is spelled with a traditional capitalization method, for example—which is another instance of the author’s desire to play with language and awareness that picture books are often read aloud dramatically to young children. There are many other elements in the book that demonstrate the author’s playfulness, too: when Robin finds a “Big Tree full of fruit” (9), he takes the delicious-looking fruit “to show King Leo” (10). When describing how the fruit looks, the author lists familiar (to the western world) fruits together (with no spaces between the letters) in all-caps: “APPLEORANGEPLUMPEARBANANA.”³⁴ Then the fruit’s smell is described as “like a BANANAPEARPLUMORAN GEAPPLE” (10). Connecting an unfamiliar object to something that many children can recognize shows that Rickert is again appealing to the child reader, but the playfulness with language in both visual and verbal

methods also demonstrates the experimental style common to modernists; as Higonnet describes, "playing with the sounds of letters, visual language, and narrative text" is often found in modernist stories.³⁵ Some of this play will only be available to a reader who sees the visual text; some can be interpreted verbally by the oral reader by saying the combined fruit words quickly. Rickert's text can thus be read in many different ways, depending on the situation; an older child reading on their own might see the playful visual text and/or an adult reading the book out loud might interpret the visual language play in an oral format. This gives the text a flexibility that allows it to grow with the audience and encourages multiple readings. The combination of familiar fruits creates the smell/taste of a new fruit, with context for the reader. This type of playful and form-challenging language happens in all three of Rickert's books and is one of the most engaging characteristics.

The level of personification of the animals in Rickert's books changes over the course of her writing. In *The Bojabi Tree*, the animals are given human characteristics (they speak English, e.g., and have a King for a ruler), but they are also illustrated (by both Botkin and Braune) in a natural setting with few actual human characters. Both illustrators use a simple hand-drawn black and white style, but Botkin's version has fewer illustrations. The frontispiece illustration from Botkin's version features all of the animals in a natural setting along with the quote (from later in the text) "ALL THE BEASTS WERE HUNGRY." The animals have human facial expressions (one appears to be crying, several have downturned mouths) and a bear is slumped over a tiger (not something that happens often in nature, I would say). The illustration of Robin Rat (7) is of a rat holding its tail, but with a crafted facial expression—again, a mixture of human facial characteristics on an animal in a natural setting. The first sign of more human characteristics in Botkin's illustrations appears when Robin Rat sets out to find food for his friends; he appears in a canoe with a paddle (see Fig. 10.1).

Robin Rat is still an animal (no human clothing, or facial expression) but is sitting upright in a canoe holding a paddle. Similarly, in Braune's illustrations, some of the animals sit upright, as in the illustrations of Pinky Pig and Kay Crocodile (8), but others look exactly as animals would appear in nature, like Robin Rat finding fruit (10). However, on the next page Robin is depicted bringing the fruit (secured by rope) back to King Leo in a "little canoe" which he paddles (standing upright) up the river while wearing a hat (11). The contrast of personification and natural animal



Fig. 10.1 Robin Rat from Botkin's illustration of *The Bojabi Tree*. *The Bojabi Tree*. (Illustrated by Gleb Botkin. 1923. Yateley, UK: Abela Publishing, 2018)

behavior is an interesting trend that continues throughout the book, suggesting that both illustrators were interested in using the animal characters as stand-ins for the implied child reader. When Robin Rat arrives to see King Leo with the fruit, King Leo is shown wearing a crown and Robin Rat appears to be bowing (see Fig. 10.2).

Botkin's King Leo is wearing a crown that is reminiscent of the Imperial Crown of Russia; it is not exactly the same but features a similar gem and cross at the top. For Botkin, it is clearly a reference to the monarchy he was most familiar with. In Braune's version, King Leo is even standing upright to greet Robin Rat (who is also upright) and his crown is missing the top gem/cross from Botkin's version (12). In the next illustration, though, both are shown peacefully curled up asleep on the floor of "the GREAT WOOD" with no human characteristics visible (although it is perhaps unusual for a rat to sleep so closely to a lion in the natural world) (13). This mix of animals in a natural setting and personification are common in other kinds of children's literature, especially Beatrix Potter's work. As Rickert's text progresses, in both versions, the animals demonstrate more human characteristics; some of the animals wear clothing, and (of course) they speak English. One of the more human moments in



Fig. 10.2 Robin Rat bowing to King Leo in Botkin's illustration of *The Bojabi Tree*

Botkin's illustrations is when Giddy Goat gets sick; Botkin draws him in bed in a room with wallpaper, being fed medicine by his wife (see Fig. 10.3). Both of the goats in the image are clearly animals but in a human setting, using human tools; the wife is even standing on her back feet only.



Fig. 10.3 Giddy Goat recovering from an illness in Botkin's illustration for *The Bojabi Tree*

As Perry Nodelman points out, “[a]n astonishing number of the characters depicted in picture books are not people at all, but animals—or rather, humans who look like animals.”³⁶ The personification of animal characters common in picture books makes sense historically because

"some of the first stories considered suitable for children were the fables of Aesop, in which supposedly characteristic animal attributes are identified with human behavior. These identifications still operate in picture books today."³⁷ As Higonnet argues, children are often contrasted to the civilized adult, so "the child as a figure for nature and the primeval can be assimilated to a critique of the industrialized and mechanized World War—in response to the juggernaut that in 1914–1918 rolled over nine million of the youth of Europe. Indeed, Dada artists adapted the nonsense sounds and rhymes of children, like the word 'dada' itself, to attack the hobbyhorses of an ossified society that fed on this carnage."³⁸ The use of children as an inspiration for adults is common in Romantic children's literature, a trend which continued into modernism. Using personification to humanize animals allows the characters in Rickert's text to function as adults (with all of the independence and agency allowed) but also be seen as representations of innocence and nature, just like the idealized Romantic child from Rousseau's work. At the beginning of the first book in the series, Rickert contrasts the personified animals with scenes of naturalism; this trend changes throughout the other books when the personified animals appear alone or alongside actual human characters. I find it compelling that the animal characters in *The Bojabi Tree* are shown in their natural state, contrasted to their personified characters in light of the modernist focus on contrasting the child to the civilized adult; rather than setting up a binary, Rickert seems to acknowledge that nature and civilization exist on a continuum.

Throughout the three picture books, differing characters (animal and human) are flawed, heroic, greedy, intelligent, and so on, which is not often true of the other children's literature of the time. Lofting's Doctor Dolittle series, published around the same time as Rickert's work, features many animal characters, but they are static, one-dimensional characters. Similarly, Margery Williams' *The Velveteen Rabbit* (1922) was published one year earlier than *The Bojabi Tree*, but the main character is defined exclusively by his desire to be real. One example of Rickert challenging the binary of nature/civilization through an animal character is Tommy Tortoise and the message behind his journey as a hero. Leo the Lion begins *The Bojabi Tree* as the ruler of the forest (and all of the animals in the forest), wearing a very human crown (12) but when Tommy Tortoise successfully brings back the name of the bojabi fruit for all of the other animals, "they made Tommy Tortoise their king. 'For,' they said, 'if he could remember the name of the bojabi tree, he can do anything.'" (45).

By replacing the stereotypical ruler of the forest—the lion—with the deserving character who both names and reclaims sustenance for the entire group, Rickert also challenges the stereotypes about children. As a representation of the child hero, Tommy Tortoise is persistent, faithful, and loyal. The last illustration in the original/Botkin version of the text shows Tommy Tortoise perched on a rock, wearing a smaller and slightly different version of Leo's crown (see Fig. 10.4).

Botkin's illustration shows that Tommy is now a ruler with status, using the rock to look down on his subjects while shaded by a bojabi tree heavy with fruit. The fencing behind him also hints at a creeping human presence, unless the creatures of the forest decided to build a fence on their own. I prefer Braune's version of the Tommy Tortoise dressed in royal regalia, but unlike Leo's regalia, Tommy's is a mix of personified objects (a crown, a cloak held by an emblem) and objects showing his connection to the natural world (the bojabi fruit perched atop a mushroom, a scepter made of what looks like flowers) (45). Thus, Tommy Tortoise demonstrates the natural child in animal form, the personified animal, and the civilized human, all in one character without vilifying any one aspect. Weaving together the child and nature, children's literature and modernism, experimentation and representation, Rickert's book is different from other children's work of the generation. Tommy, especially, exhibits that even with the problematic setting of the text, the author does work to challenge stereotypes—at least about children—in this narrative.

RICKERT'S ADAPTATION OF ANGOLAN FOLKLORE IN *THE BLACKSMITH AND THE BLACKBIRDS*

Vilification is the central theme of *The Blacksmith and the Blackbirds*, Rickert's next children's book (by the 1928 copyright date). This book is not so much a picture book, as Rickert's first children's book is, but a chapter book with accompanying pictures by James Daugherty. According to his obituary in the *New York Times*, Daugherty (1889–1974) was a well-known nonobjective artist, “who also won distinction as a writer and illustrator of children's books on American historical themes.” His artistic works are available in the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Museum of Modern Art, as well as in many other collections. Daugherty also took “great satisfaction” in writing and illustrating work for children, especially that featuring Americana and frontier tales.³⁹ His book *Daniel*

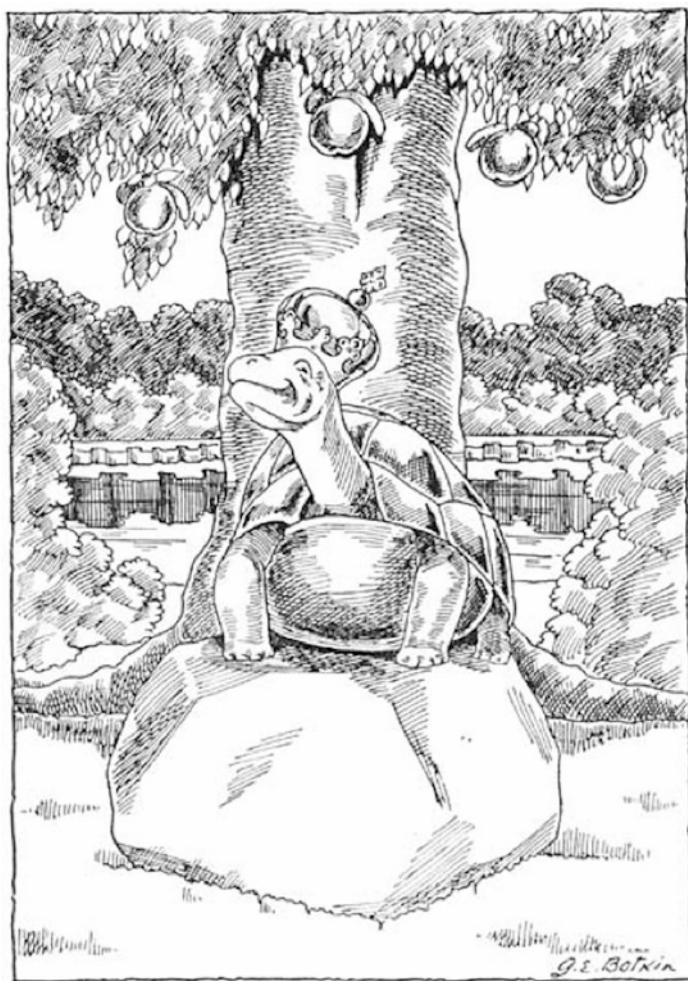


Fig. 10.4 Botkin’s illustration of Tommy Tortoise as the new king of “All the Beasts in the Great Wood to-day” in *The Bojabi Tree*

Boone (published 1939), which he wrote and illustrated, won the Newbery Medal in 1940. *Daniel Boone* is one of the few Newbery winners out of print and has a problematic reputation among current children’s literature scholars; at the 2021 Children’s Literature Association conference, a

paper titled “The Most Scorned of the Newbery Medalists”: James Daugherty’s *Daniel Boone*” was presented.⁴⁰ A painting by Daugherty, originally commissioned in 1935 by the Works Progress Administration to be hung at a school in Connecticut, was restored in 2006; unfortunately, “scrubbed of dirt, the painting became a richly colored scene of snarling animals, tomahawk-wielding American Indians and a half-naked General Putnam strapped to a burning stake.” Instead of returning to the school after restoration, due to complaints about the violence depicted, the community decided it should “remain in the library, in the reference section, where few children are likely to see it.”⁴¹ Daugherty’s illustrations in Rickert’s *The Blacksmith and the Blackbirds* continue the style seen in Daugherty’s later works, including muscular human and animal figures almost always engaged in movement with expressive faces. His work in Rickert’s book features words included in the images like “haha” (32), “no” (37), and “please” (14). This style of incorporating words into an image is defined as “montage” by Scott McCloud and is more often seen in comics and graphic novels.⁴² Daugherty’s illustrations in *Daniel Boone* do not include words in the images, so the style might have resulted from a collaboration with Rickert or the publisher, Doubleday. With the characters drawn in continual movement and the montage style, Daugherty’s illustrations in *The Blacksmith and the Blackbirds* are similar to a comic, which fits the comical and tongue-in-cheek language used by Rickert in the story.

The Blacksmith and the Blackbirds is a story of a blacksmith objecting to blackbirds eating all of his garden produce, but the didactic element of the text focuses on the blacksmith’s disparagement of the blackbirds and the repercussions of his prejudice. The story appears to be an adaptation of an Angolan folktale, also called “The Blacksmith and the Blackbirds,” although there are some significant changes. Angolan history is long and complicated by Portugal’s colonialist occupation between 1820 and 1975, with Portuguese posts established as early as the sixteenth century. During the nineteenth century, more than half a million Africans were taken to be enslaved in other Portuguese colonies. Despite the overthrow of the monarch in Portugal in 1910, the country continued to occupy and oppress Angola until November 11, 1975, when Angola declared independence.⁴³ The language in Rickert’s version is vastly different from the folktale version; Rickert continues to play with language while the folktale is translated from Kimbundu into a consciously old-fashioned formal English. The folktale uses “thee” and “thou,” perhaps as a way to make the story

appear older in the English translation. The other differences between the folktale and Rickert's version are that Rickert's book is much longer, there is a significant plot change, and of course Rickert's version has the illustrations done by Daugherty.

Rickert's book begins in a setting "Near the Great Wood where the Bojabi Tree grows," immediately placing it in the same world with the author's first children's book (1). The style of writing in this book is similar to the first, with certain words capitalized (often names of produce in this text, like "ASPARAGUS" and "WATERMELONS"), onomatopoeia as words and the visual representation of the sound ("Clank ... clank ... clankety-clank! *Clank-CLINK!*" is the sound of the blacksmith's "hammer on the anvil"), and repetition ("and all the other things that *must* be done to make ...") (1, 3, 4–5). As Higonet writes about El Lissitzky's *About Two Squares: A Suprematist Tale of Two Squares in Six Constructions* (published in 1922 in Germany), "[d]esigning a book like this for a child entails breaking the conventions of the codex and the traditional transparency of typography. Intonation becomes visual gesture, sound occupies space."⁴⁴ Visual representations of lists are also included in *The Blacksmith and the Blackbirds*, including the list of names for the blackbirds. When all of the birds gather together, the narrator notes that "they made all the meadow BLACK" (15). The birds are all named "Blacka" followed by a piece of their body: "Blackatop," "Blackatip," "Blackatoe," and so on, implying that all of the birds are interchangeable and all related (16). The narrator even interrupts the list of names, noting, "But I can't go on like this for pages and pages. If I do, there won't be any room for the story" (16). This narratorial intervention is a common hallmark of modernist children's literature (see Woolf's *Nurse Lugton's Golden Thimble* mentioned previously and Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh* especially), which also serves as an interrogating voice for the child reader. Often these books are meant to be read aloud, or read together with a child, so the narratorial interruptions can be used by the adult reader to interact with the child or to draw attention to the metafictional nature of the text. Rickert's writing in this book self-consciously allows the reader to note that this is a fictional book. This style of writing can also draw the reader's attention to the list of names and encourage the reader to look at the visual poetry/representation of all of the names and the repetition of the "Black" portion of the list of names. By adapting the story for a western audience, Rickert keeps the trickster structure of the Blackbirds from the original Angolan folktale while also expanding their part of the story. The tale becomes much more

about the Blackbirds and their plans rather than a story about the Blacksmith appealing to a higher authority. In the same tradition as her earlier book, *The Blacksmith and the Blackbirds* displays modernist literary features in an accessible way to the child reader. In adapting a folktale, Rickert does some interesting work in complicating the story while also removing a central character of the folktale.

In the Angolan folktale, the Blacksmith is traveling to villages to sell the hoes he has forged. He tries to sell some hoes to the Blackbirds, who agree to trade them for wax; when the Blacksmith returns for his payment, the Blackbirds ask, "To whom didst thou give thy hoes?" (151). The folktale emphasizes the importance of names and naming when the birds tell the Blacksmith, "A person is to be named, So and So; do not say only 'your-selves.' We all of us, who are here, we are Blackbirds. Our faces are alike; our color is alike. Whoever (it was) thou gavest him thy hoes, thou shalt name him, saying 'thou na Petele, or na Lumingu;' that he may pay thee for thy hoes" (151). Unlike Rickert's version, the birds in the folktale do not have "Black" in the first portion of their names. Because the Blacksmith cannot name the specific bird he made a deal with, he is unable to demand payment. In Rickert's book, however, the birds start the conflict by invading the Blacksmith's garden and eating all of the food, causing the Blacksmith and his family to chase the birds. The narrative shifts because it turns out that the blackbirds are mostly worried about everyone having indigestion from too much running around (especially "just after supper") (17). After a quick (very metafictional) reference to "Sing a Song of Sixpence" (specifically, the "Four-and-twenty blackbirds baked in a pie"), the blackbirds agree to a plan: get the Blacksmith to make them tools so they can make their own garden (19–21). When the Blacksmith comes to collect the payment for the tools he made, "Old King Blackallover" (a trickster hero) asks the Blacksmith to point out which blackbirds he made the tools for. The Blacksmith replies, "I don't know," because "All blackbirds look alike" (33). Because Old King Blackallover is a trickster, and very intelligent, he uses the Blacksmith's inability to tell the difference between different blackbirds against him. Ultimately, the Blacksmith realizes that the birds have been providing an important service to him (eating all of the bugs in his garden), and so they come to a truce: "From that time on the Blacksmith had the finest garden and orchard in all the countryside; and the blackbirds had a good dinner every day" (46).

When the Blacksmith is unable to collect payment from the birds in the folktale, he declares that he will "summon them," which the editor

footnotes as "to accuse and have summoned" (290). In other words, the Blacksmith decides to reach out to an authority figure (Na-Katete, "chief among birds") to force the birds to pay the Blacksmith, or seek punishment (153). Na-Katete cannot reach a decision, but Turtle-dove comes along (often a symbol of peace) to decide the matter. She tells the Blacksmith to bind some of the Blackbirds, and those who owe the debts pay him so that "the debts are finished." In Rickert's version, there is no authority figure outside of the Blackbirds; the King of the Blackbirds is one of them, and the lead trickster figure. There is no turtle dove or character of peace and reconciliation in Rickert's book; the Blacksmith is thoroughly outsmarted by the Blackbirds and at the end, they get to have the tools and "have a good dinner every day" (46). The folktale ends with a summary and a reminder to the listener that when they hear a dove cooing, she is "judging the case of Blacksmith" (153). The story in Rickert's version is about the Blackbirds and their desire to eat the Blacksmith's food rather than the Blacksmith seeking justice for a wrong committed against him. Rickert's version highlights both sides of the disagreement and adds the lead trickster character of the King to provide a figure equal in narrative weight to the Blacksmith. Daugherty's illustrations show the facial expressions of all of the characters, providing personality to the relatively flat characters from the original folktale. Instead of an authority coming in to settle a dispute, Rickert's version ends with the best outcome for everyone: all of the characters get what they need and no one is forced to lose their ground.

THE GREEDY GOROO AND A DIDACTIC MESSAGE

The last of Rickert's children's books, *The Greedy Goroo*, was first published in 1929 and is the hardest text to access. The narrative returns to a similar style to *The Bojabi Tree*, with the author's focus on mostly animals with only a few human characters appearing. The illustrations are done by Elizabeth M. Fisher, who, as discussed by Kim in this volume, had worked with Rickert, John Matthews Manly, and other collaborators on the first four volumes of *Good Reading*, a basal reading series (1926). Fisher's style in *The Greedy Goroo* is similar to the style of Anna Braune in the 1958 printing of *The Bojabi Tree*. Using only black and white illustrations was probably a specific decision by the publisher to avoid expensive color printing, but both Braune's and Fisher's styles are similar to that of other children's illustrations published at the time. Both portray static

characters, drawn as if posed for the moment of text they accompany. This is different from James Daugherty in *The Blacksmith and the Blackbirds*, who has a distinct woodcut style featuring characters in motion rather than the simpler black and white drawings from the first and third books (chronologically).

The text of *The Greedy Goroo* is longer, similar in length to *The Blacksmith and the Blackbirds* (42 and 46 pages, respectively). The setting also remains the same: the protagonist “went away and lived alone in a little house near the Great Wood where the Bojabi Tree grows” (1). This clearly sets the book in the same world as the previous stories, especially important because this text features a cameo from *The Bojabi Tree*. The author’s writing style also remains similar to the previous two books, with capitalization used for emphasis, lists of things set out as visual poetry (33), and alliterative names (39). The continued use of modernist style in the text allows the reader to experience “the process of reading [which] engages active translation between the verbal and visual.”⁴⁵ This story is more overtly moral than the other two books, in that the main message (and title) shames/punishes the protagonist for being greedy and eating too much. *The Greedy Goroo* moves away from the trickster characters in *The Blacksmith and the Blackbirds* but also has some interesting issues with anthropomorphizing the characters, especially the protagonist.

The animal characters in *The Bojabi Tree* are illustrated with a blend of human and animal characteristics; the animal characters in *The Blacksmith and the Blackbirds* are mostly without human characteristics (except the noted top hat that King Blackalover wears). In *The Greedy Goroo*, the animal characters are extremely humanized. Most of the characters retain their animal bodies in the illustrations but wear human clothes, have human expressions, and frequently sit/stand upright. The main character, the Goroo (as his name appears in the book), appears upon first glance as a very round child; he is, however, a very round pig. Expecting children to associate themselves with animal protagonists is common in picture books; Higonet notes that “[c]hild-figures in the narrative [can often] appeal to the child audience.”⁴⁶ A child/pig taking on the symbolism of greed is common in children’s literature; as Perry Nodelman argues, animals are often associated with human behavior in picture books.⁴⁷ This particular case of the Goroo as a pig symbolizing greed gets concerning because of the blurry line between interpreting the text and the illustration. Toward the beginning of the text, the Goroo is invited to the King’s table for a

feast (this is the cameo character from *The Bojabi Tree*—Tommy Tortoise). At the feast, the King asks the Goroo, "What's here for you?/A roast elephant—or two?" in rhyme (7). The Goroo replies, "Oh, no, thank you, Your Majesty ... A roast pig will be quite enough—only one and a quite small one. I can't honestly say I'm hungry" (8). The Goroo then proceeds to eat the entire pig—"all but the bones"—and this activity is illustrated on the same page. As a reminder, the Goroo is illustrated *as a pig* throughout the text, making this a case of cannibalism that the narrative does not comment on or seem to recognize. The text never states that the Goroo is a pig, so this decision could have been left to the illustrator. The Goroo is anthropomorphized throughout, usually wearing a button-down shirt, cravat, shorts, and sometimes even a bib. He also uses flatware to eat his food, walks on his two hind legs, lives in a house, carries a basket, and speaks English clearly (as do most of the other animal characters in Rickert's books). The decision to show the Goroo eating a pig (both in the text and the illustration) makes him a cannibal, and casts an interesting shadow on reading him as a metaphor for a human child.

The text's focus on shaming the Goroo for eating too much is in service of a decisive moral ending that Rickert's first two children's books lack. Readers may anticipate the trickster hero of *The Blacksmith and the Blackbirds* or the patient and persistent hero of *The Bojabi Tree*, but *The Greedy Goroo* has no such hero. Instead, the Goroo is punished for his greed and desire to consume. The Goroo is given chance after chance to not eat so much (including a run-in with a man who might be a magician), but he fails the test every day. At the end of the story, when faced with "the biggest ... and the fattest and the strongest" cheese possible, the Goroo is yelled at and chased by the cheese (34–5). The Goroo's focus on consumption echoes the other texts' concerns as well; in *The Bojabi Tree*, the animals are hungry, so Tommy brings back the Bojabi fruit. In *The Blacksmith and the Blackbirds*, the birds are hungry and trick the Blacksmith into allowing them to feast on his garden (mostly the bugs). The desire and need to consume food is also commonly associated with children and childhood; using a symbolic child to embody greed is didactic and places the blame on a figure with little societal power. In fact, the Goroo is consumed himself at the end of the story. After a chase scene, the cheese "SWALLOWED the Goroo WHOLE!" (37) The large cheese ball then rolls past most of the characters previously mentioned in the text and finally "GAVE A GREAT JUMP!" to become, what is clear in the illustration, the moon (42). Allowing the child character to become a cannibal

and then be consumed himself goes beyond a modernist metanarrative and shows a very different style of children's literature than Rickert's other books. Whereas her first two books lack a clear didactic message, *The Greedy Goroo* is a preview of changing attitudes about children and an increasing emphasis on the need to include moral lessons (leaning more strongly on the instruction part of instruction and delight).⁴⁸ The Goroo, last shown consumed and barely visible "in the sky" inside "the Big Yellow Round Cheese," no longer has agency or the ability to consume anything (42). He is permanently punished for his greed and ostracized from the planet for his sin. The narrator's tone remains playful, but modern readers might be horrified by the severe price the Goroo pays, leaving them uncertain about the author's overall message. The reader's confusion can also be seen as another modernist motif: "[j]ust as the child is Janus-faced, so too is Modernism itself, standing on the threshold and looking backward as well as forward."⁴⁹ This story also follows the folklore tradition of explaining natural events, so a child reader can be encouraged to look for Goroo in the moon—it is clear from the last page of the text that the wheel of cheese has become the moon—thus providing a different, perhaps more ambiguous, way to absorb the ending of the book. The very last illustration shows a smiling face in the circle of the moon with Goroo's body seen above and below the face: a literal depiction of two faces.

CONCLUSIONS

Writing about Rickert's three children's books is difficult, in some ways, because the plots and messages of the books are so different. However, throughout their narratives, Rickert demonstrates her understanding of, and participation in, modernism in a way that is accessible to both a child and an adult reader, which is rare in the 1920s. Later, much more famous children's literature authors like A.A. Milne use some of the same techniques Rickert does to great acclaim. Rickert writes for a real child, not the Romanticized version promoted by Rousseau and other writers, and the silly language, both visual and verbal, is part of that appeal. There are certainly issues with the books, especially with cultural appropriation and stereotypes, but recognizing this history is also important to the world of children's literature and the legacy of the modernist tradition. Rickert's three books, then, show that modernism was a dynamic and changing approach to literature and art, embracing different kinds of stories and consciously responding to previous narrative and artistic traditions. The

illustrations included in the three books also show the value of looking at not just the words, or the pictures in a picture book, but how the words and the pictures work together to tell a complete story. Each illustrator (Botkin, Daugherty, Fisher, and Braune) had a different style, but they all adhered to black and white images that enhanced Rickert's language play and natural setting with mostly animal characters. As adaptations, Rickert changes African folktales to stories for a modern child reader in the United States, which demonstrates the changing world of the 1920s. The different backgrounds of all of the illustrators helps these picture books to show a kind of global collaboration that changed the status quo in art and literature, offering different perspectives on the stories Rickert tells. By using the more challenging styles in modernism, Rickert demonstrates that children can be engaged with entertaining folktales while also learning about different topics. In many ways, Rickert's picture books are a model of the modern world, at the time of publication and today.

NOTES

1. Fred B. Millett, *Edith Rickert: A Memoir* (Whitman, Massachusetts: Washington Street Press, 1944), 10.
2. In a 1988 introduction to an issue of the *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, Perry Nodelman writes that "children's literature is most certainly primarily an activity of women. Most writing and editing of children's books is done by women, most children's librarians are women, and most scholars of children's literature are women." He continues, "[C]hildren's literature might well have much in common with the specific characteristics of women's writing. Children's literature as a genre might be a sort of feminine literature which shares generic characteristics with writing for adults by women." Beverly Lyon Clark also notes in *Kiddie Lit* that "most of those who write, edit, buy, and critique children's literature, at least in this century, are women." Clark continues, "Given the receptiveness of the field to women, it is not surprising that children's literature has addressed some women's concerns." Perry Nodelman, "Children's Literature as Women's Writing," *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 13, no. 1 (1988): 32; Beverly Lyon Clark, *Kiddie Lit: The Cultural Construction of Children's Literature in America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 5.
3. Michelle H. Phillips, *Representations of Childhood in American Modernism* (London: Palgrave, 2016), 4.
4. Ibid.
5. Kimberly Reynolds, *Radical Children's Literature: Future Visions and Aesthetic Transformations in Juvenile Fiction* (London: Palgrave, 2007), 24.

6. Virginia Woolf, Foreword to *Nurse Lugton's Golden Thimble*, illus. Duncan Grant (London: Hogarth Press, 1965), 4.
7. Reynolds, *Radical*, 26.
8. Karin Westman, "Introduction: Children's Literature and Modernism: The Space Between," *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 32, no. 4 (2007): 284.
9. Hope Howell Hodgkins, "High Modernism for the Lowest: Children's Books by Woolf, Joyce, and Green," *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 32, no. 4 (2007): 355.
10. David Lodge, "The Language of Modernist Fiction: Metaphor and Metonymy," in *Modernism: 1890–1930*, ed. Malcom Bradbury and James McFarlane (London: Penguin, 1978), 481.
11. Joann Conrad, "Modernity and Modernism in Twentieth-Century American Picturebooks," *International Research in Children's Literature* 12, no. 2 (2019): 127.
12. *Ibid.*, 128.
13. Margaret R. Higonnet, "Modernism and Childhood: Violence and Renovation," *Comparatist: Journal of Comparative Literature Association* 33 (2009): 86.
14. *Ibid.*, 87.
15. *Ibid.*, 88.
16. Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Émile*, trans. Barbara Foxley (New York: J.M. Dent & Sons, LTD, 1911), 2.
17. Phillips, *Representations*, 15.
18. *Ibid.*, 17.
19. *Ibid.*, 13.
20. *Ibid.*, 15.
21. Marilyn Strasser Olson, *Children's Culture and the Avant-Garde: Painting in Paris, 1890–1915* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 1–2.
22. *Ibid.*, 5–6.
23. *Ibid.*, 7.
24. *Ibid.*, 8.
25. "Gleb Botkin, 69, of Czar's Court: Backer of 'Anastasia' Claim Died—An Engraver Here," *New York Times*, December 30, 1969, 33.
26. Gleb Botkin, "This Is Anastasia," *The North American Review* 229, no. 2 (1930): 193.
27. Gleb Botkin, "An American in the Making," *The North American Review* 229, no. 1 (1930): 23, 28.
28. Greg King, "Foreword," in *Lost Tales: Stories for the Tsar's Children*, by Gleb Botkin (New York: Villard, 1996), v–vi.
29. *Ibid.*, vii.
30. "Braune, Anna Parker, 1908–1988," The University of Alabama Libraries, *Alabama Authors*, accessed May 21, 2021, https://www.lib.ua.edu/Alabama_Authors/?p=834.

31. "Fairhope's Anna Braune," Fairhope Public Library, YouTube, uploaded July 29, 2020, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4k_QnssywRQ.
32. Edith Rickert, *The Bojabi Tree*, illus. Gleb Botkin, 1923 (Yateley, UK: Abela Publishing, 2018), 1.
33. Higonnet, "Modernism," 89.
34. Juliet Dusinberre's work in *Alice to the Lighthouse: Children's Books and Radical Experiments in Art* explores the roots of modernism in Lewis Carroll's nonsense novels *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass*. I cannot help but see many similarities between Rickert's desire to play with language and Carroll's texts.
35. Ibid., 91.
36. Nodelman, "Children's Literature," 113.
37. Ibid., 114.
38. Higonnet, "Modernism," 92.
39. James Daugherty, Artist, Dead: Children's Book August Was 84." *New York Times* (February 22, 1974).
40. A modern review of *Daniel Boone* calls the illustrations "just plain creepy" and notes especially the images of "wickedly muscular Indians terrorizing cowering settler maidens." Sandy D., "Daniel Boone," *The Newbery Project*, last modified February 26, 2008, <http://newberryproject.blogspot.com/2008/02/daniel-boone.html>.
41. Matthew J. Malone, "Painting Called Too Violent for Children Won't Return," *New York Times* (September 29, 2006), https://www.nytimes.com/2006/09/29/nyregion/29mural.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=James%20Daugherty%202006&st=cse.
42. Scott McCloud, *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1994), 154.
43. See David Birmingham, *A Short History of Modern Angola*.
44. Higonnet, "Modernism," 97–98.
45. Higonnet, "Modernism," 97.
46. Ibid., 100.
47. Nodelman, "Children's Literature," 114.
48. See Patricia Demers's *From Instruction to Delight: Anthology of Children's Literature to 1850*.
49. Ibid., 105.

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Chaucer Laboratory or Vaudeville House? John Matthews Manly and Edith Rickert's Chaucer Project, and their University of Chicago Assistants

Christina von Nolcken

In what follows I will be considering a fragmented part of a much larger story.¹ Especially thanks to Roy Vance Ramsey's *The Manly-Rickert Text of the Canterbury Tales* (1994), we are now relatively familiar with this story.² It concerns the eight-volume *Text of the Canterbury Tales* edited by John Matthews Manly (1865–1940) and Edith Rickert (1871–1938).³ That the edition was ever completed represents Manly and Rickert's great

My thanks to the editors of this volume, to Cynthia Barry, and to very many reference librarians. I dedicate this chapter to the Librarians in the Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

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achievement. But when it appeared in early 1940 Rickert had already died, on May 23, 1938, her life shortened, hagiography holds, by the edition's demands. As Manly put it shortly after her death:

It is a great pity that we could not get Miss Rickert to listen to our warnings years ago with regard to overwork, for I have no doubt that she might have lived several years longer if she had not damaged both her heart and her other organs by overwork. (June 16, 1938, to Sir Sydney Cockerell)⁴

Manly lived to see the completed edition, but only just. He died on April 2, 1940. We are familiar mainly with this death-defying aspect of the edition's story. But there are other, happier, aspects. They notably include what I will be considering here, the part concerned with Manly and Rickert's University of Chicago assistants. Our knowledge of them remains highly fragmented. But even the little we have bears tellingly on the larger story. And were it not for these assistants, as Manly knew well, the rest could never have happened.⁵

But first, a brief introduction to the edition and its demands⁶:

(I)n a conversation between Professor Manly and Associate Professor Rickert, at the University of Chicago, an idea was born. It was first phrased very simply: 'I wish we could make an edition of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*?' 'Why can't we?' (EDR 18/11, undated)

The conversation must have taken place in 1922 or 1923, after Manly and Rickert's return from the Cryptographic Bureau of the State War Department where they had been working during World War I.⁷ Manly was back to chairing the University's English Department. And Rickert was again "plunged into the old bookmaking":

I love making books if they are the kind of books I like to make; but my enthusiasm for textbooks, which at first was strong enough, has worn out a good deal these last eight years. I want to be writing novels and poems and essays, and doing research work. I think I have had almost my share of the drudgery. (January 21, 1921, to John Burroughs)⁸

The projected edition saved her. In 1924 she was appointed Associate Professor, initially on a half-time basis, in the University of Chicago's English Department. This freed her to think about how to teach literature more "scientifically." She also produced articles on Shakespeare and

Chaucer and started gathering materials on Chaucer's life and times.⁹ Predictably, in 1930 she would become one of the University's first eight women full professors.¹⁰

In the early 1920s Manly and Rickert were already well-established medievalists. Rickert was responsible for what remains the most important edition of the Middle English romance *Emaré*, as well as learned articles, collections of early carols and lyrics, and translations from medieval English, French, and Provençal.¹¹ Manly had worked extensively on early English drama as well as on Chaucer and Langland, and he was currently preparing selections from the *Canterbury Tales* for schools; this, dedicated to Rickert, would appear in 1928.¹² Both were also already immersed in editorial controversies about how to retrieve the most authoritative versions possible of classical and medieval works currently extant only in later copies.¹³

There were at the time two principal schools of thought about how best to retrieve such versions. The first, the "best text" method, involved selecting what seemed the "best" (often simply the most convenient) copy of a work, and then correcting, or "emending," any errors one thought one found in it, either through comparison with other early copies, or thanks to one's own instincts. This was the method that previous *Canterbury Tales* editors had employed. Walter W. Skeat had used it, for example, in his seven-volume *The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, edited from numerous manuscripts* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1894–1897), and Manly was using it in his selections.¹⁴ The other method, termed "recension," claimed to be more "scientific." It first identified all extant copies of a work that had not been copied directly from any other extant copy; it then looked from these primary "witnesses" toward ever more "authoritative" reconstructed versions of the work in question. This was the route that Manly and Rickert chose to take. They wanted, they said, to test the method's viability when there were multiple witnesses.¹⁵ Their project, they hoped, would have significance well beyond the Chaucerian sphere.

Even when there are only a few witnesses, and Manly and Rickert would be dealing with more than eighty of these,¹⁶ recension is extremely labor-intensive. It requires collating *all* the witnesses against some arbitrarily chosen base text (Manly and Rickert would use Skeat's *The Student's Chaucer, being a complete edition of his works ed. from numerous manuscripts* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1894]) and recording *all* variant forms. It is, after all, theoretically possible that the scribe of a seemingly

inferior manuscript might sometimes have had access to a text relatively close to the author's original: Manly and Rickert believed this, for example, of a short passage in Chaucer's "Tale of Melibee" that appears only in two late (1440–1460) and somewhat eccentric manuscripts, namely Oxford, Bodleian Library Rawlinson Poetry MS 141 and University of Chicago MS 564.¹⁷ Then, once the collations had been completed and the variants recorded, editors had to group the witnesses according to their shared errors—agreement over good readings, as Manly and Rickert were key in demonstrating, is ultimately unhelpful.¹⁸ Then the groupings had to be tabulated into a kind of family tree, the *stemma codicum*. And then, at last, editors could push toward the archetypal copy from which all later copies derived (the model here being the printer's copy text). Some editors contemplated pushing further, by correcting any errors they thought the first copyist had made or even ones they thought the author had made. Manly and Rickert restrained themselves. They sought only to retrieve the scribal archetype, although they also projected an annotated "Library Edition" in which they would present their conception of what Chaucer himself had intended.¹⁹

That Manly and Rickert could even think of editing the *Canterbury Tales* in this super-demanding way was thanks to a new technology familiar to them from the War Office. This was the photostat. Armed with this, they realized, they could enormously cut down on time spent in the many collections containing witnesses of the *Tales*. As Manly explained to his friend Emil C. Wetten:

[C]opies of absolute accuracy can now be made with comparative cheapness by the use of the photostat. My plan is to bring together here at the University photostatic copies of all the manuscripts and from them to construct, according to the best scientific principles, the authoritative text. (EDR17/17, November 26, 1924)²⁰

Instead of laboriously transcribing all the witnesses and then repeatedly returning to collections to check results, Manly and Rickert could now simply gather photostatic copies into a single location, in this case at the University of Chicago, before getting on with their further editorial work. Obviously, they couldn't do all of the work themselves: for this they needed help. So, even before all the photostats—some 12,000 sheets in all—had reached Chicago, they organized a seminar in which they and some students did some experimental collating and classifying.²¹ Manly

declared repeatedly—and astonishingly unrealistically—that even without funding he and Rickert would simply do the work themselves, as in a proposal dated December 14, 1925, to the Secretary of the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation:

As I told you during our conversations, Miss Rickert and I intend to carry on these researches whether we receive any financial aid or not. The only advantage in receiving financial aid would be that we should be thereby enabled to hire assistants and carry out the work more rapidly than we could unaided. If, therefore, your foundation is disposed to aid us, we shall be pleased. If not, we shall carry on the work anyhow. (EDR 17/17)

Funding finally materialized, however, though not as much as originally hoped for. It came mainly thanks to the Rockefeller Foundation via the General Education Board.²² It meant, among other things, that in summer 1927 Manly and Rickert had four paid assistants and fifteen seminar students working on the photostats (EDR 17/18, Manly to Mrs. F. I. Carpenter, August 3, 1927).

Manly and Rickert had already taken on more than enough to keep a good many people busy for a good long time. Yet they became so optimistic once things were under way that they anticipated also editing the rest of Chaucer's works (EDR 17/18, Manly to Mrs. Carpenter, August 3, 1927). This, of course, they would never do. But in 1927 they did take on another large Chaucer-related project, the Chaucer Life-Records. They had realized that the Chaucer Society's multi-volume *Life Records of Chaucer* (London: Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1875–1900) needed revision. This they proposed to do, and not merely via a supplementary volume. Rather, they planned to bring together old and new into a volume where the materials would be “both more intelligible and more easily usable” (EDR 17/18, Manly to Kenneth Sisam, November 3, 1927).²³ Believing, perhaps illogically, that their edition depended on a thorough knowledge of Chaucer the man, they considered this project integral to their work. As Manly wrote to his long-time friend and colleague David H. Stevens, on April 21, 1930:

I am somewhat troubled about what you say of Hutchins [Robert Maynard Hutchins, Fifth President of the University of Chicago]. I saw too little of him in the autumn to be able to guess his plans or his policy. The most disturbing incident to me personally was his query whether we couldn't make

the Chaucer text without taking up all the subsidiary investigations [i.e., the Life-Records] on which we are spending time and money. Of course I told him that we could but that, in the first place, if we did neglect them, someone else would come along and do them and make a better text than ours, and further that one of the reasons why the Chaucer job was worth doing at all was that it offers an opportunity for throwing light on a host of questions concerning text, criticism, palaeography, and the processes of book-making in the period before the invention of printing that are now obscure or misunderstood. (EDR 18/3)²⁴

Rickert, who loved archives,²⁵ would especially concentrate on this project. But professional British archivists also came on board, notably Lilian J. Redstone and her father Vincent B. Redstone, as well as Catherine M. Jamison, Mabel H. Mills, and occasional others. They were, according to Manly in 1934, the best record workers in their class (EDR18/7, to Stevens, May 29, 1934). Their job was to search out and transcribe materials bearing on Chaucer's life and then send their transcriptions to be sorted and edited by Rickert and her Chicago-based assistants. Chief among these assistants would be Ramona Bressie (1894–1970), about whom more below.

* * *

Editorial work began as soon as the photostats started reaching Chicago. At first this was at 5820 Woodlawn Avenue (EDR 17/17, Manly to Martin A. Ryerson, September 14, 1925), then in a classroom in Cobb Hall. Finally, in October 1927, the materials were moved to the pleasingly scientific-sounding “Chaucer Laboratory” in Room 410 in brand new Wieboldt Hall (EDR 17/18, Manly to Sir William McCormick, August 25, 1927).²⁶ At its peak, the Laboratory housed some eight paid assistants together with a stenographer or two, some students and volunteers, and, of course, the principals when they were in Chicago (see Fig. 11.1).

Pay was good: as James R. Hulbert, who chaired the department when Manly was away, observed, even half-time remuneration provided more than the assistants could earn from teaching a course (EDR 18/1, to Manly, May 10, 1928).²⁸ At first, they put in six hours a day, five days a week; later, three hours a day at half-pay became the norm (EDR 18/1, Hulbert to Manly, May 10, 1928). Manly, fearing the negative effects of overwork, also restricted the number of courses a student could take while



Fig. 11.1 From left: B. W. Stevenson, Lucy Glasson (standing), Ruth Jackson, Florence Ziegler, Walter Hendricks, Mabel Dean, Helen McIntosh, Manly (standing), Rickert, Florence Teager, Ramona Bressie (University of Chicago Photographic Archive, [apfl-01681], Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, Archival Photographic Files, University of Chicago Library)²⁷

employed in this way (EDR 18/1, Manly to Mrs. Martin M. White, August 9, 1928).

At first the assistants worked on the collations, apart from one or two who were engaged on the Life-Records and Robert L. Campbell who charted the order of the *Tales* in the manuscripts. It took a while before a satisfactory rhythm was reached: Manly noted that the early collations were very inaccurate and had to be rechecked (EDR 18/1, Manly to Florence E. White, December 13, 1928). But after things had settled, each full-time assistant was expected to collate fifty lines and check fifty (per week) (EDR 8/10, Manly to Hulbert, December 12, 1929); in the event, the assistants thought they could collate about forty lines a week and check seventy-five (EDR 18/3, Hulbert to Manly, April 10, 1930). They noted the variants, involving some half million entries, on what

would become 60,000 index cards, and they marked in red any mistakes they found on each other's cards, a practice that Manly considered "of great psychological value" (See Figs. 11.2, 11.3, and 11.4).²⁹



Fig. 11.2 The Card Cabinet from EDR 18/11 (University of Chicago Photographic Archive, [apf1-05435], Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library)

A3200 No. 1

Ind by his girdel being a pure of leather

Ad ¹	Ad ²	Ad ³	Bo ¹	Bo ²	Bw	Ch	Cn	Cp	Cx ¹	Cx ²	Dd
De	El	En ¹	En ²	En ³	Fi	Gg	Gl	Ha ¹	Ha ²	Ha ³	Ha ⁴
Hg	Hk	Ht	Il	La	Lc	Ld ¹	Ld ²	Ln	Ma		
Mg	Mm	Ne	Ni	Ps	Pw	Py	Ra ¹	Ra ²	Ra ³	Ry ¹	
Ry ²	Se	Si ¹	Si ²	Tc ¹	Tc ²	To					

A. b. h. g. hangeth a p. o. l. Ad² Cx¹ Cx² He Ne To²

A. b. h. cote ther h. a. p. o. l. Bo¹ Cx²

A. b. h. g. ther h. a. p. o. l. He¹ Cx²

A. b. h. g. ther hangeth a p. o. l. He¹

A. b. h. p. g. h. a. p. o. l. Ld²

A. b. h. p. g. h. a. p. o. l. Ld² To¹

A. b. h. p. g. h. a. p. o. l. Rv¹

A. there hangs a p. o. l. his girdel h.

Leaves Out: Bo¹ He² Ld¹ Ra² Ma² Ne

Tale Out: He¹ Ma¹ Ph³

Passage Out:

Line Out:

h. g. h. a p. o. l. Se

~~see next card~~

No.

Ad ¹	Ad ²	Ad ³	Bo ¹	Bo ²	Bw	Ch	Cn	Cp	Cx ¹	Cx ²	Dd
De	El	En ¹	En ²	En ³	Fi	Gg	Gl	Ha ¹	Ha ²	Ha ³	Ha ⁴
Ha ⁵	He	Hg	Hk	Ht	Il	La	Lc	Ld ¹	Ld ²	Ln	Ma
Mc	Mg	Mm	Ne	Ni	Ps	Pw	Py	Ra ¹	Ra ²	Ra ³	Ry ¹
Ry ²	Se	Si ¹	Si ²	Tc ¹	Tc ²	To					

Leaves Out:

Tale Out:

Passage Out:

Line Out:

Figs. 11.3 and 11.4 A Collation Card, front (in color) and back (photographs my own)

They also wrote monthly individual progress reports. When Manly and Rickert were on their annual six-month stints in England these were mailed to them in batches.³⁰

On April 6, 1930, in a letter to the “Chaucer Family,” Rickert encouragingly responds to a batch of reports:

Miss Dean [Mabel Alice Dean (1882–1969)] wrote as if she was getting rather tired of collating and checking; but she wrote just before vacation. You must take fresh courage from the undoubted fact that this part of the job is approaching its end. And think of the value of our material to scholars of the future! When I remember what has been accomplished in less than three years, I feel encouraged. (ERP 1/10)³¹

As Rickert anticipates, the collations were indeed largely completed by late 1930. Remaining assistants and students were then set to comparing closely related manuscripts (EDR 18/3, Manly to Campbell, October 29, 1930), in projects that sometimes coincided with their PhD dissertations.³² Finally, only two paid assistants were left, Dean and Helen Marie McIntosh (d. 1962).³³ Their job was to verify the collations and prepare camera-ready copy for the published edition.³⁴ For persisting to the end they would be particularly acknowledged on the edition’s title page:

The Text of the Canterbury Tales. Studied on the Basis of all Known Manuscripts, by John M. Manly and Edith Rickert, with the aid of Mabel Dean, Helen McIntosh, and Others. With a chapter on Illuminations by Margaret Rickert.

Manly had asked that the text read “Many Others” (EDR 18/10, to Dean, January 21, 1939), but somehow his “Many” was dropped. I suspect that this was because of Dean, who, as we shall see, was quite possessive of the Laboratory and therefore, presumably, of the edition itself.

In 1987, Virginia Everett Leland recalled working in the Chaucer Laboratory, “the center of the universe” for those using it, from 1933 to 1936 and again during the summers of 1937 and 1939.³⁵ She was present, therefore, when it was populated mainly by volunteers and students, as well as after Rickert’s death and when Manly’s declining health had already taken him to Arizona.³⁶ She nevertheless represents life in the Laboratory as if it were invariably idyllic. A brass knocker in the shape of a Canterbury pilgrim marked the door³⁷—from November 1929 Campbell’s chart was

just inside the first entrance (EDR 18/2, Manly to Campbell, November 20, 1929). Dean and McIntosh typed away at the edition's copy. Prestigious visitors came and went: these included, among others, the Chairman of the University Grants Committee, Sir William McCormick (1859–1930), to whom the edition would be dedicated; Harvard and Berkeley Chaucerian J. S. P. Tatlock (1876–1948); President of Vassar College Henry Noble MacCracken (1880–1970); and Keepers of Manuscripts at the British Museum Arundell Esdaile and Robin Flower. There was also a varied and changing group of workers: Leland remembers F. M. Salter (for a time Manly and Rickert's principal assistant in England, financed by Manly himself (EDR 14/15, Manly to Emory Holloway, January 28, 1938; to R. K. Gordon, November 1, 1938)); "soft-spoken and diligent" Martin M. Crow; Sister Mary Aquinas Devlin; Clair C. Olson and his wife Grace; "golden haired" Mary Giffin; Eva Golson; Bob Caldwell; and Germaine Dempster who audited a seminar in Fall 1935.³⁸ Never, it seems, were Manly and Rickert too preoccupied to engage in casual conversation. "Neither was tall," Leland remarks, "neither was slim; both had *presence*."³⁹

These were surely unmatched years for Chaucer studies at the University of Chicago or, indeed, anywhere. Chaucer-related PhD dissertations proliferated.⁴⁰ Many who worked in the Laboratory already were or soon would become professors at universities and colleges, Salter at the University of Alberta, Sister Devlin at Rosary College, Crow at the University of Texas at Austin, Olson at the College of the Pacific, Giffin at Vassar College, Campbell at Hendrix College, Leland at Bowling Green State University, McIntosh/Coulborn at Clark Atlanta University, and so on. Yet Leland provides a misleading picture: the Laboratory was never quite the idyllic place that she recalls. Things may have started well: on November 14, 1927, Manly tells McCormick that the staff were working together smoothly (EDR 17/18), and on December 27, 1927, he adds that they were averaging about thirty lines a day apiece "without at all attempting to make a record" (EDR 17/18). But already in May 1928 Hulbert was remarking on a "sort of nervous tension and disagreement" among the assistants (EDR 18/1, to Manly, May 10, 1928). And although Manly repeatedly told the assistants that accuracy was "many times more important than speed" (EDR 17/18, Manly to McCormick, December 27, 1927), there was some racing.

We know about the racing thanks to a major disturbance in the Laboratory in early 1928. Hulbert and Manly had evidently discussed this

disturbance in letters that haven't survived. But Hulbert returns to it in a letter dated April 19, 1928 (EDR 18/1). It seems that some of the staff, notably Dean and Florence E. White, had accused Mr B. W. Stevenson of working too slowly: to their 800 lines, they had claimed, he was managing only 600. He had responded that he had wanted to be accurate; in his opinion, Dean and White had been "more or less racing with each other." Other commitments had then kept Hulbert from fully investigating the goings-on in Wieboldt 410. He had been missing quite a show. For, according to Walter Hendricks (1892–1979), who was in the Laboratory at the time but merely as "an onlooker and onhearer," "the laboratory was a bedlam whenever Miss D. and Mr. S. would get to fighting. Miss D. would rage and scream, and come out of the fight foaming at the mouth" (JMP 1/21, Hendricks to Manly and Rickert, March 6, 1931).

We have no record of Manly's immediate response to this disturbance. But he finally downplayed things. Not only did he continue to employ all the staff, but a year later he offered to testify to Stevenson's "fine work" in the Laboratory (EDR 18/3, Manly to Stevenson, April 17, 1930).⁴¹ He also recalls the incident indulgently in the edition:

Even with the checks that operate during the process of collation, and in spite of the most conscientious efforts of our staff of collators, it was impossible entirely to avoid the occurrence of errors. These were especially numerous in the early stages of the work, because the collators were eager to work too fast and too long. They had to be warned that accuracy is the first requisite of collation and that accuracy is incompatible with haste or fatigue. (*Text of CTII*, 9)

But he was being knowingly disingenuous. For by the time he wrote these words there had been another disturbance in the Laboratory, and this time one that could not be dismissed so readily.

It occurred in Spring 1931, with Hendricks now the victim. He believed that he had always gotten along well with people, for three years in a newspaper office, three in a law office, seven at Armour Institute (later Illinois Institute of Technology), and as a Flying Officer in the Army (JMP 1/21, Hendricks to Manly and Rickert, March 6, 1931). But thanks to Dean plus four of the other women on the staff (McIntosh, Cloantha Copass, Constance M. Stockwell, and Lucy G. Wheeler), he was reduced to a state that Hulbert considers "almost pitiful" (JMP 1/21, to Manly, March 11, 1931). The women had been "in a great deal of indignation" because they

thought Hendricks had been skimping on his hours and “surreptitiously” doctoring cards from the file (JMP 1/21, McIntosh et al. to Hulbert, March 2, 1931). Hendricks had sworn “before God” that he had been doing his full amount of work. He had then burst out passionately “to the effect that the women engage in improper conversation.” Hulbert didn’t quite understand what Hendricks had meant by this, but he considered “the boy” so excited and full of emotion that “probably he was unable to represent the talk satisfactorily” (JMP 1/21, to Manly, March 5, 1931). He had accordingly urged him to present his side of the story to Manly and Rickert. And although he found Hendricks’ letter “much more violent” than he could conceive of writing himself, he nevertheless thought it should be sent (JMP 1/21, to Manly, March 11, 1931).

I quote from Hendrick’s five-page, single-spaced letter, dated March 6, 1931 (JMP 1/21):

Up to the moment I received the news from Mr. Hulbert, news which struck me you may believe with terrible force, the laboratory had been a very gay place to be in, a kind of vaudeville house, really a burlesque show. [...]

I have referred to the laboratory as a burlesque show. It is also a chatter-box. At times I have not been able to work because of the annoyance of senseless conversations. And twice in the week before last I left the room in disgust and went down to the reading-room. I could not sit and listen to their lascivious stories. These are typical: Miss M. enters, and in a loud voice, asks, ‘I wonder what Lucy will say when she wakes up and finds that I wasn’t at home last night.’ And it develops that she got home at 3.00 and left before Lucy had awakened that morning. Then she gives some sort of account of herself, all utter nonsense. Another morning: Miss M. enters and calls out, ‘Think of it, Mr. Thiele asked me to sit at his desk for five minutes. I asked him who he thought I was.’ Then follows a conversation in which all join, each one expressing an opinion of Mr. T. Miss D. says, ‘Whenever I pass through his room he looks at me as if I were a thief. I don’t steal any of his books, though I have taken out a few without having them charged.’ Another evening: Miss D. announces that she is going to have dinner with a bachelor in his apartment. Miss M. raises her loud voice louder, and says, ‘Now look out Mabel, you can’t tell what will happen in a bachelor’s apartment.’ ‘O, that’s nothing,’ Miss D. replies, ‘I lived with a married man for four months and all his wife worried about was that he wouldn’t have enough to eat.’ Another morning: Miss D. has read from an old book of etiquette or manners. They all call to mind something that has been read, each one contributing to the clamor. ‘A young lady should wash her stock-

ings so many times per week, and her feet, and anything else. When a young lady goes out with a gentleman and they are to sit on the grass under a tree, he is supposed to do certain things,' and they add something about other matters, all adding to a general confusion. Miss G. returns from a visit with her husband, and she is very tired, and she sits and stretches herself. Miss M. announces to the public that Lucy is thinking only in rhythms! Is it any wonder that I pick up and leave, with all this going on?

Hendricks then accuses Dean of plotting to hurt him in Manly's eyes. He thinks she has brought the accusation because she was afraid of her own incompetence:

Last summer I checked a block of her work and found over 300 mistakes, putting it below the work of a novice. And there is more to it than that. Miss M[cIntosh], in going over Miss D.'s checked cards in work for Miss [Eleanor Prescott] Hammond found errors of all kinds, some of them very serious, so serious in fact that Miss M. worried about it and said she must talk to you concerning it. [...] I carried this thought as a burden and wanted to tell you about it in the interest of the work; but I should be doing something I have never done. I knew that if she missed readings in collation, she would miss errors in checking. But for her sake, and because I pitied her, and I didn't want to hurt her in any way, I tried to forget and think that the work wasn't as bad as I had fears of it being. In the matter of relationships of MSS, she ran about babbling.⁴²

He sees Dean as, among other things, "friendless," "insincere," "uncollected in mind," "abnormal mentally and physically," and a "psychopathic case." She thinks, he thinks, that Mrs Stevenson thinks Dean wants to steal her little boy. She thinks Mrs Hulbert doesn't want Hulbert to work with her. She is almost childishly possessive of the Laboratory:

She resents it if a student goes to anyone else for advice; soon she resents the students' asking. She is almost childish. She explains who she is, how long she has been in the laboratory, what are her powers.

And, startlingly, she "just simply can't stand" Rickert:

What a dumb-show Miss M. and Miss D. carried on behind Miss Rickert's back last summer [this would refer to summer 1930; as we shall see, Hendricks probably meant summer 1929]. If Miss Rickert did not notice it,

it was not because it was not very obvious but because Miss R. was absorbed in her work.

Hendricks ends in a flurry of agitation:

The letter that has been sent you causes me great pain. I can not be calm under the blow of it. I feel it is only Fate that puts me into this predicament. I know that I have done nothing wrong. I almost detest myself for saying anything about anyone, but I feel that I must tell you the truth. I am excited, so forgive me if I have done wrong.

Yours sincerely,

Walter Hendricks

A typed postscript follows, to the effect that Hendricks is sending the letter to Rickert (hardly judicious, given what he has just revealed about Dean's attitude toward her), but that he has no objection should she choose to show it or part of it to Manly. This he has then replaced with a handwritten note to Manly, saying that "upon second thought" he is sending the letter to him instead of to Rickert, "who may become too excited about it and have her health affected."

This time round, Manly considered letting everyone go (JMP 1/21, to Hulbert, March 31, 1931). Yet he again finally downplayed things. He wrote a letter addressed to "The Staff" at "The Chaucer Work Shop" (did he now consider the more scientific-sounding label inappropriate?) in which he tells them they were like "naughty children when the nurse is away." He had always known, he says, that the large amount of leeway he gave was open to abuse and that they "loafed" a good deal. But their reports had indicated that they had been doing a reasonable amount of work. He suspects, therefore, that the work's "long and trying" nature had meant that they had gotten on each other's nerves. He asks them to "forgive and forget" (JMP 1/21, March 19, 1931). In a second letter, to Dean, he confirms that he knew from Hendricks' report (which Hendricks, distrusting the others, had sent separately) that Hendricks had been working faithfully and well. Half a dozen men and women, he then observes, "ought to be able to work together on so simple a job as the Chaucer work, without requiring the oversight of a person in authority" (JMP 1/21, March 23, 1931). In a letter to Hendricks Manly further confirms his belief that the charges had been mainly due to "an overwrought condition of nerves resulting from the long continuance of the conditions in the Work Shop." He tentatively wonders whether what Hendricks had heard from "the girls" had perhaps not meant all that Hendricks thought it did.

“We are engaged in a great work,” he resoundingly concludes, “and should not allow personal misunderstanding to interfere with [its] success” (JMP 1/21, March 23, 1931).

Manly was surely well advised to downplay these disturbances, given how dependent he and Rickert were—and how increasingly dependent he would be—on their assistants.⁴³ But he was again being disingenuous when, in the letter to Dean, he describes the Chaucer work as “simple.” The assistants were dealing with not-always-easy-to read photostats of not-always-easy-to-read fifteenth-century manuscripts. They were recording several kinds of variant, including corrections, deletions, and transpositions. And they were officially spying on each other. When Manly refers to the work in his letter to the staff as potentially leading to “an overwrought condition of nerves,” therefore, he comes rather closer to the mark. But Hulbert probably comes closest. He thinks “continuous work of this minute character gets on people’s nerves and makes them abnormal” (JMP 1/21, to Manly, March 5, 1931), and that people long engaged in it were “likely to lose some of their sanity” (JMP 2/1, to Manly, April 18, 1931). A glance at the cards (Figs. 11.3 and 11.4) supports his diagnosis.

We don’t know whether Stevenson lost any of his sanity, merely that he made no further progress on his PhD (EDR 18/3, Manly to Stevenson, April 17, 1930, April 21, 1930). White proved more fragile. Her mother, Mrs Martin M. White, was adamant that her daughter had loved working in the Laboratory (EDR 18/1, to Hulbert, May 28, 1928; 18/6, to Manly, August 12, 1933). Yet it seems hardly coincidental that White left the university without notice on April 28, 1928 (EDR 18/1, Hulbert to Manly, May 10, 1928; Hulbert mistakenly dates her departure to May 28).⁴⁴ At first influenza and overwork were held responsible (EDR 18/1, Mrs. White to Hulbert, May 28, 1928). But when White spent four months in a sanatorium for nervous diseases (EDR 18/1, Florence White to Manly, November 12, 1928), the terms “breakdown” and “nervous breakdown” enter the discourse (Manly to Mrs White, EDR 18/1, August 9, 1928; to Florence White, December 13, 1928).⁴⁵ Hendricks did better, although his letter hardly bespeaks his sanity. But he completed his PhD—after decamping to Northwestern University—and then went on to a long, productive, and apparently sane, career.⁴⁶ As for Dean (b. 1882), she seems to have been driven half-crazy by intransigent young men like Stevenson and Hendricks (or not so young: Hendricks was born in 1892 and Stevenson probably shortly after).⁴⁷ She may not have foamed at the

mouth quite as virulently as Hendricks maintains, but Hulbert describes her as “quite obviously quivering all over” on the subject of Hendricks (JMP 1/21, to Manly, March 18, 1931). She is a far cry from the “always-reliable” Mabel Dean of Ramsey’s narrative.⁴⁸

On this occasion, Manly’s letters seemingly did the trick: when Hulbert read them to the staff, he says Dean “chuckled” and Hendricks “took it in thoroughly good spirit” (JMP 2/1, to Manly, April 2, 1931). Yet gender politics were clearly in play, of a kind that surely simmered on. Manly, it seems, always “treated a woman precisely as he did a man.”⁴⁹ But this was in what was still very much a man’s world: when Rickert became one of the first eight women to become full professor 200 men had this rank. In this world “the girls” may well have felt “a great deal of indignation” when they thought they saw a man falling short and getting away with it. As always, it is Hulbert who most clearly senses this. His solution was to suggest that men no longer be employed on the staff (JMP 1/21, to Manly, March 5, 1931). It was hardly a solution that made for gender equality, but the archive reveals no further upsets of quite this kind.

* * *

That there is no record of other upsets doesn’t mean the Chaucer Laboratory now became the idyllic place that Leland recalls, however—far from it. For one thing, these were Depression years and funding was increasingly problematic.⁵⁰ Already on May 22, 1931, Manly was warning the Dean of Humanities, Gordon J. Laing, that lack of funds would spell “the disaster of a cessation of the work or its removal elsewhere.” He could not trust himself, he movingly exclaims, to express what either event would mean to him (JMP 2/2). His health was also collapsing. He indicates as much on June 20, 1938, when appealing for \$600 from the next Dean of Humanities, Richard P. McKeon:

I wish I could hasten the end by working harder, but I am already feeling very seriously the strain under which I have worked for so many years and find that I can now neither work so many hours a day nor accomplish as much per hour as I once could. My physician says that I must not overdo, and indeed I suffer almost immediately the penalty of any overwork that I inadvertently allow myself to do. (EDR 18/10)

Moreover, he wrote this when Rickert had recently died, after nearly a decade of debilitating illness.⁵¹

When Hendricks wrote his letter in March 1931, Rickert had already had a breakdown in November 1929. Manly says this had left her with a pulse of only forty-six and blamed it on her “unremitting and violent work” (EDR 10/13, to McCormick, December 4, 1929). She had another in Spring 1930. This delayed her return from London until October (EDR 18/3, Manly to Stevens, April 21, 1930). But then, when she did return, she characteristically insisted on teaching the summer courses she had missed in addition to her autumn load (JMP 2/2, Manly to Laing, May 22, 1931). She continued relentlessly pushing herself—and doubtless her assistants—in the following years. Manly describes her as “somewhat” overdoing things on January 30, 1931 (JMP 1/19, to Hulbert), and as working “twenty-five hours a day” on April 11, 1934 (JMP 13/4, to Stevens). Finally, in March 1936, she had a heart attack that left her “for the most part a helpless invalid” (EDR 14/3, Manly to Cockerell, June 16, 1938). After this she seemed often “at the point of death” (EDR 14/3, Manly to Flower, May 27, 1938). Yet even then she “insisted upon doing some work” (EDR 14/3, Manly to Cockerell, June 3, 1938):

For nearly two years longer her strong constitution and her unconquerable will-power enabled her to live and, when she was at all able to do so, to take part in the work. (*Text of CT I*, viii)⁵²

So determined was she, indeed, that three days before she died, she handed Manly her chapter on “Early and Revised Versions of the *Canterbury Tales*.” Manly at first describes the chapter as “daringly speculative” yet “sane, temperate, and well expressed” (as EDR 14/3 to Flower, May 27, 1938). But he suppressed some parts in the edition (*Text of CT II*, 495–518 at 501–514). Some of her arguments, he had decided, were “too subtle and forced to win her point” (*Text of CT II*, 514).⁵³

Rickert had long been an inspired and inspiring presence in the English Department. Particularly eloquent is her youngest sister Margaret, in a volume published partly in Rickert’s memory:

(I)nto [her students] she poured her own joyous enthusiasm which lightened what must have seemed to them at first the drudgery of research; with them she shared her own exciting intellectual and personal experiences and discoveries; in each new student she sought to find a new recruit for the

ranks of distinguished scholars and teachers. And running through all these stimulating mental contacts was her deep and sympathetic interest, even in their personal problems, and her genuine desire to help them in any way possible. Probably every one of her students cherishes the memory of some personal kindness shown to himself.⁵⁴

More detached testimony comes from Professor David Bevington (1931–2019), who told me in 2016 of the delight his mother, Helen Smith Bevington (1906–2001), felt when she took a class with Rickert shortly after Rickert’s appointment to the University:

The experience changed Helen’s life. She was so thrilled and enlightened by studying with Edith Rickert that she determined there and then to become herself a professor and teacher of English literature. She eventually did just that, at Duke University, until her retirement around 1971. Helen ranked Edith Rickert along with Millicent McIntosh, Dean and then President of Barnard College in 1947 and afterward, as the greatest and most inspiring of women in America. (Personal Communication)

It is particularly distressing, therefore, and especially for those familiar with Rickert’s early writings, that toward the end Rickert seems to have alienated those around her. Even her close friend and colleague, Fred B. Millett (1890–1976), hints as much, in a memorial essay he published some years after her death (World War II was responsible for the delay):

Toward the end of her life, she seemed to feel as though the great work on which she was engaged would not and could not be completed without her last exhausting efforts. Her energy, industry, and tremendous will-to-work inspired not only admiration but something like dismay and awe. I am sure that I should have enrolled as a student in one of her courses if I had not feared being swept up into the course of her tornado-like progress.⁵⁵

It was perhaps irritation at Rickert’s “tornado-like progress” that explains the “dumb-show” on the parts of Dean and McIntosh that Hendricks refers to so scornfully.⁵⁶

* * *

If Hendricks is correct that Dean “just simply couldn’t stand” Rickert, she was not the only assistant who felt like this.⁵⁷ There was also Ramona

Bressie. Bressie's story has been well told, and with considerable sympathy, by Thomas H. Bestul ("Ramona Bressie").⁵⁸ It centers on her attempts to keep working on the Life-Records after Rickert's death. But it also looks back to the very beginning of the assistants' story. Bressie arrived as a graduate student in the University's English Department in 1923 and completed her PhD under Rickert's direction in 1928. During the summer of 1927 she also became one of the first full-time assistants in the Laboratory. We know she initially worked on the collations partly because, in early 1929, she took a leaf out of Dean's book and asked for more money on the grounds that she worked more quickly and accurately than her two co-workers (EDR 8/10, Hulbert to Manly, March 13, 1929) — ironically, the co-workers must have been Dean and Stevenson. She later shifted to working closely with Rickert on the Life-Records, being paid out of a special appropriation from the Chaucer budget (JMP 1/20, Manly to Hulbert, February 3, 1931). In 1929–30 she worked on the Life-Records with the professional archivists in London. And in 1933–34 an American Council of Learned Societies Fellowship again took her to London where she concentrated, ultimately unsuccessfully, on her own projects.⁵⁹ After this she remained an independent scholar.

Bressie at first seems to have gotten along just fine with Rickert. "The old girl will do me for a while yet," she declares in about 1927, but also while adding "when I'm in the doldrums I get sort of provoked at her" (RBP 2/4, on that torn-up part of a letter [above, note 44]). Rickert also thought highly of Bressie, who indeed was responsible for some seminal work.⁶⁰ She recommended her as "fully competent" to lead the graduate students studying documents in Spring 1929 ("Palaeography and Study of Documents for Revised Edition of the Life Records," EDR 18/11). On a postcard dated June 2, 1930, she praised Bressie's good ideas (RBP 2/4), and on September 22, 1929, she wrote enthusiastically about Bressie as "a promising patient" to Lilian Redstone.⁶¹ Furthermore, on March 12, 1936, Bressie drafted a letter to Rickert that starts, "It is a very great pleasure to hear from you" (RBP 2/4). But by the time she wrote this Bressie had come to hate Rickert, and with a vengeance. She would nurse this hatred for decades.

We know Bressie came to feel like this thanks to diaries that she kept between 1957 and 1964. As Bestul has cautioned, she never intended these for any eyes but her own; that they ever reached the archive, indeed, was very much by chance.⁶² Although written so much later, they show Bressie constantly mulling over earlier times. She always writes well of

Manly, who seems to have thought reciprocally well of her: "It is a pleasure to be able to write about a candidate whose claims are so strong as yours are," he assures her (RBP 2/4, June 16, 1937). She otherwise has nothing good to say about just about anyone I have mentioned in this discussion. We have already seen what she thought of White.⁶³ Crow, her "mortal enemy no. 1" (RBP 1/3, *Diaries* December 15, 1957), she considered "a typical example of narcissism as defined by psychologists" (RBP 1/3, *Diaries* August 25, 1957).⁶⁴ Margaret Rickert was "a spiteful, childish grabber" (RBP 1/5, *Diaries* November 22, 1962), who had insulted Bressie so atrociously when they first met that Bressie can no longer remember what she (the pronoun is ambiguous) had said (RBP 1/4, *Diaries* September 12, 1961). Hulbert, "a parasite without a gleam of intelligence or humanity" (RBP 1/7, *Diaries* August 12, 1963), hated Rickert for blocking his way to Manly's position, and he hated Bressie because he hated Rickert (RBP 1/4, *Diaries* September 7, 1961). Vincent Redgrave was a pretentious bore and not even semi-educated (RBP 1/5, *Diaries* June 8, 1962).⁶⁵ Dean, whom Bressie particularly disliked, was constantly collecting and disseminating deprecatory remarks about others (RBP 1/1, *Diaries* April 7, 1959). And, worse, she was quite remarkably inaccurate:

Elderly professor with stomach that sticks out like a mezel ball in library, sifting out errors in Manly text, and I bet Dean made some! My sake what a lot of mistakes some folks make! (RBP 1/3, *Diaries ca.* July 18, 1959)

Bressie didn't reserve her special venom for Dean, however, or even for her mortal enemy no. 1. She reserved it for Rickert:

I'm reading *Macbeth* for another look at Lady Macbeth. [...] My idea of an arch villainess is somebody like Miss Rickert who can't achieve her ambition--to hog-tie Prof. M. in matrimony--and takes her revenge out on simple rather silly women infatuated with what to them in Miss R. seems the ultimate in the rewards of this life—good looks, good job, kudos, etc. wh. they could never hope for. I'm going to write an essay on this someday. (RBP 1/6, *Diaries* March 3, 1963)⁶⁶

According to Bressie, Rickert killed all naturalism and spontaneity in seminars (RBP 1/3, *Diaries* under April 9 but written about September 10, 1957): so much for Rickert's teaching. She pilfered all her research:

Yesterday felt so baffled—thought of Miss R.—at my age or alleged to be my age [Bressie was 67], old, heavy, frumpy minded—romantic notions still rife in her mind about marrying Prof. M. Fantastic and pitiful and nothing ahead of her in following up research because all she ever had was pilfered from others. At our last encounter she was trying to maneuver me into yielding up my work on Life Record no. 34 for her to publish as *hers*. (RBP 1/4, *Diaries* November 22, 1961)⁶⁷

She had no sense of humor (RBP 2/1, *Diaries* March 6, 1964). She couldn't comprehend even the concept of loyalty (RBP 1/6, *Diaries* January 25, 1963). Her Victorian diet had caused her to weigh some 200 pounds (RBP 2/1, *Diaries* March 6, 1964). As a result, the British Museum had had to make special chairs for her (RBP 1/1, *Diary Notebook* beg. December 30, 1958, fol. 8v., January 1959). Her eyes were pale blue, like Hitler's, although they sometimes shone a luminous pale red (RBP 1/6, *Diaries* January 28, 1963). She wouldn't admit her deafness (RBP 1/3, *Diaries* under April 9, 1925 but written on about September 10, 1957). Already in 1935 she was in a "hysterical hurry":

This [a document started by Rickert and Lilian Redstone] is dated 1935 when E.R. was on the downgrade into the hysterical hurry that was the climax of her illness—arteriosclerotic craziness which induced her to write four novels and try to push Manly into matrimony and write me a letter claiming she had first rights in all my research. (RBP 1/3, *Diaries* August 29, 1959)

Finally she became so "peculiar" and "mixed up in her head" that she wasn't fit for anything (RBP 1/3, *Diaries* September 14, 1959).

Bestul has suggested that Bressie envied Rickert's professional success.⁶⁸ Certainly, she is always very scornful of the "meek, unassuming, undemanding women" who admired Rickert "without envy" (RBP 1/4, *Diaries* October 8, 1961). And she definitely considered herself a better scholar than Rickert (given what she has said about Rickert's pilfering, this wouldn't have been difficult). When she told Manly that Rickert and her sister Margaret were teaming up against her, for example, she reports him as having said he was sure of Bressie, and that he would almost never be sure of a student (RBP 1/4, *Diaries* September 12, 1961). Even better, he had once told her, it seems, that she took criticism better than Rickert: "Mr. M. would never let her publish anything without revising. He told me, 'Now *you* can take criticism and profit by it. But she just cries'" (RBP

1/3, *Diaries* ca. September 16, 1957). And when Bressie had consulted him about her dissertation (behind Rickert's back?), he had apparently said (is this possible?), "*She doesn't know as much as you think she does*" (RBP 1/1, *Diaries* April 23, 1959, emphasis Bressie's). So much for Rickert. Yet despite Manly's several efforts on Bressie's behalf, she never found employment.⁶⁹ And after his death, when she wanted to keep working on the Life-Records, she was continually thwarted by her (male) ex-peers.⁷⁰

We can surely dismiss many of Bressie's assertions as driven by envy. We can also dismiss some as patently untrue. Rickert's input on students' work in the 1930s is clear and to the point (as ERP 1/11, to Robert Caldwell, July 10, 1936; to Deane W. Starrett, August 26, 1936). The readiness with which she revised and re-revised her work also emerges from the diaries that she kept until early 1906 as well as in notes like the following, written probably in the late 1920s: "[I]f the theme is worth doing and if my doing of it shows promise, I am willing to work the book over as often as need be, even to forty and four times" (ERP 4/1). Also, on September 9, 1937 she tells Lilian Redgrave that as far as she could tell, her head was all right. "That's something!" (CRPR 58/5). Certainly, she is not at all confused in the eight-page "My Book" that she penciled at about this time:

And now I am near the last reality as we in our ignorance call it; & it seems as if all that the little doctor said is a mere formula. We all know that we must die some day—that we may die any day; that any night we may fail to see the morning, any morning fail to see the night. Yet we live daily on the assumption that we shall go on forever. All that has happened to me is that the limits have been set up. [...]

But I am glad that when I heard the news, my impulse was to laugh, and that the only foreshadowing of death is an immense relief. (ERP 4/1)

Moreover, it is quite out of the question that Rickert was trying to "hogtie" Manly into matrimony at this point. To be sure, she had once hoped they might marry. But she had always recognized that there were "many obstacles in the way."⁷¹ Some of these were surely personal. But a University Trustee Ruling also loomed large that University President William Rainey Harper had unearthed when Manly was trying to extricate himself from his 1903 engagement to the Contessa Lisi Cipriani (b. 1862).⁷² It held that when faculty couples announced their engagement

one member had to resign. The Ruling also remained firmly in place even after Manly had extricated himself from the Cipriani engagement in 1906 or 1907. When in 1931 a faculty member in English, [Wilma?] Anderson, announced that she had married faculty member Kerby Miller Hulbert, who wanted to retain Anderson, was told that the rule was invariable (EDR 8/10, to Manly, July 21, 1931). Clearly, there could be no marriage while Manly and Rickert were both on the faculty.

Even so, although we can easily dismiss many of Bressie's assertions, there surely remains a kernel of truth here and there. As we have seen, Bressie was not the only one to comment on Dean's inaccuracy. And even if Rickert's eyes never shone a luminous pale red, her 1896 passport application confirms that they were blue.⁷³ Also, because Bressie was writing for her own eyes only, she sometimes reveals what others preferred to suppress. While Leland merely indicates that Rickert wasn't slim, for example, it is Bressie who reveals how unhealthily overweight she in fact became. Bressie's account of Rickert's final "hysterical hurry" too, while shockingly callous, is not so very far removed from some of what Millett more tactfully implies. Bressie may well have been correct, therefore, when she says Rickert drafted four novels in this period: we know from a letter that Rickert wrote to Helen Waddell as late as April 14, 1934 (ERP 1/10), that she still hoped to return to her writing.⁷⁴ Given the nature of her illness too, Rickert may indeed have sometimes been confused over who was responsible for which Life-Record. Even Manly admits that, when "only her indomitable will-power" was keeping her going, her work was not as fine as when she was fresh and strong (*Text of CT I*, vii).

* * *

By focusing on Manly and Rickert's assistants we could not but learn something about graduate student life at the University of Chicago in the late 1920s and early 1930s, not least about the students' gender politics, their liking for a pseudo-psychological discourse, the inventiveness with which the women sometimes got at the men. Thanks especially to Hendrick's letter, we also see a very different Chaucer Laboratory from the one Leland recalls. An even more different Laboratory emerges from Bressie's *Diaries*: we can only hope that it was never populated by quite such caricatures as Bressie provides. We have also been learning about the principals. Perhaps most importantly, as Bestul points out, Bressie's story challenges the emerging consensus on Rickert, whose reputation, as Bestul also points

out, has “been burnished, particularly in feminist accounts.”⁷⁵ I myself am a devoted admirer of Rickert, but I too have had—reluctantly—to admit the plausibility of some of Bressie’s assertions. I also note that the burnishing has sometimes been at Manly’s expense.⁷⁶ Even Elizabeth Scala, usually even-handed, has observed that although Rickert shared almost all her students with Manly, she is the one singled out in their dissertation acknowledgments and memoirs.⁷⁷ While this is true of Everett/Leland in her dissertation and doubtless of others, Scala here overlooks the respect and affection felt toward Manly by many of those he corresponded with. I think of Salter, for example, for whom there was no person “whose good opinion” he valued more than Manly’s (EDR 14/13, to Manly, October 20, 1929): “No man but you has ever inspired in me that strange mixture of gratitude and fear and devotion that must be, I suppose, the essence of son-to-father” (EDR 14/15, to Manly, July 24, 1933). Surely telling, too, are the many accolades in *The Manly Anniversary Studies*. After reading through Manly’s extant correspondence, indeed, I have been much struck by how caring and considerate he was of all his students, women as well as men. I am also now very aware of the invariable courtesy with which he dealt with some very difficult people and situations.⁷⁸

AFTERWORD

That the edition finally made it to press was Manly and Rickert’s great, indeed almost miraculous, achievement.⁷⁹ As Kemp Malone of Johns Hopkins University put it shortly before Manly’s death, the edition represented “a landmark of American literary scholarship.”⁸⁰ A review in the *Times Literary Supplement* (June 22, 1940), under the heading “Heroism in Scholarship: Colossal Labour on Chaucerian Text,” concurred:

‘[P]rodigious’ ... The great merit of this vast accomplishment does not consist merely in the fact that it makes possible a better text of the *Canterbury Tales* than any which has hitherto been published. It marks an epoch in the development of the art of editing a classical text from a large number of manuscripts.⁸¹

Moreover, many of Manly and Rickert’s particular findings, not least that the Hengwrt manuscript (Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales MS Peniarth 392D) comes closer to Chaucer than anything else extant,⁸² have since proved of considerable importance to Chaucerians.⁸³ But the scribal

archetype that Manly and Rickert—and their assistants—worked so hard to retrieve has just about never been used. This is partly because its presentation is disconcertingly complicated: had Manly and Rickert lived to work through the project again and produce their annotated “Library Edition,” future Chaucer scholarship might have read rather differently. More damagingly, the edition is conceptually flawed. Manly and Rickert had set out to recover the archetypal copy from which all later copies of the *Tales* descended. But along the way they came to believe that there had never been such an archetype⁸⁴: as Manly observed to Campbell as early as December 18, 1926, “I myself am being led towards the belief that the extant manuscripts are derived from two or more different revisions by Chaucer himself” (EDR 3/7). So, they proceeded *as if* there had been such an archetype.⁸⁵ They were completely transparent about what they were doing (*Text of CT II*, 39–41). But the methodological inconsistency opened them to criticism, some of it severe.

The severest came in 1984 in an essay by George Kane.⁸⁶ He questioned—and, indeed, undermined—just about every feature of the edition. His concluding sentence can convey the tenor of the whole:

[I]t will be judicious to abstain from using the propositions of this edition as bases for further argument, especially about the prehistory of the manuscript tradition of *The Canterbury Tales* or about the superiority of this or that manuscript.⁸⁷

Kane had long thought about how to edit texts like the *Canterbury Tales*—he was, after all, partly responsible for our most important editions of all three versions of *Piers Plowman*, another Middle English work extant only in multiple witnesses—and many of his criticisms deserve respect.⁸⁸ So demeaning did his criticisms seem at the time, however, that they spurred Ramsey to embark on the nearly 700-page response contained in his *Manly-Rickert Text*.⁸⁹ Ramsey thereby saved the edition from offhand dismissals, like that of Jill Mann in her 2005 *Canterbury Tales*:

Unfortunately, the defects of Manly and Rickert’s editorial assumptions and methods, which have been analysed with devastating thoroughness by George Kane, deprive it of the authoritative status to which it might seem to be entitled.⁹⁰

But even Ramsey could not fully counter Kane: the edition is too deeply flawed for this.

On one front, however, Ramsey was resoundingly successful. For Kane had, amid everything else, questioned the reliability of the edition's collations:

[T]he Manly and Rickert collations, which survive, will have to be checked for correctness: we know nothing about the training of the 'very large staff' who produced them, and not all fifteenth-century Chaucer manuscript hands are easy.⁹¹

Given the early inaccuracies Manly complains of as well as what we have learned of Dean, Kane might seem to have had a point. But, as we have seen, he was utterly mistaken when he said we know nothing of the training of the staff. Moreover, Ramsey was able to adduce work begun in 1979 by the editors of the *Variorum Chaucer* that decisively demonstrates how remarkably accurate the collations in fact are: he counted a rate of "just over 3.4% of errors in data running to thousands of variants."⁹² Such an assessment is confirmed by the *Variorum Chaucer's* then General Editor, Paul Ruggiers, in a letter dated January 14, 1988, to Daniel Meyer, then Director of the Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library:

[T]he cards have enabled us both to correct Manly and Rickert's relatively few errors and to rectify the errors that slipped into the printed record of their edition in the transition from card to print. The card will be right, but the printed version will be wrong. (Personal Communication)

To be sure, the assistants made mistakes, sometimes lots of them. But these must have been mostly sifted out, by the assistants themselves as they marked each other's cards, by Manly and Rickert who carried cards wherever they went, by Bressie's "elderly professor with stomach like a mezel ball," by McIntosh, and even, at the end, by Dean herself.⁹³ The Chaucer Laboratory may indeed have sometimes resembled a Vaudeville House. Its players may have sometimes mislaid their sanity. Yet in essence they were extremely conscientious about maintaining the accuracy of their work—and that of those around them. This was their not inconsiderable achievement.

NOTES

1. As Daniel Wakelin has observed, editions can be “subjects for stories.” Daniel Wakelin, “‘Maked na moore’: Editing and Narrative,” *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 32 (2010): 373.
2. References will be in the text under Ramsey, and to his work’s later edition prepared after his death in 2007: Roy Vance Ramsey, *A Revised Edition of the Manly-Rickert Text of the Canterbury Tales*, with a Foreword by Henry Ansgar Kelly (Lewiston NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2010).
3. *The Text of the Canterbury Tales, Studied on the Basis of all Known Manuscripts*, by John M. Manly and Edith Rickert, with the aid of Mabel Dean, Helen McIntosh, and Others. With a Chapter on Illuminations by Margaret Rickert (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 1940). Volume One describes the manuscripts; Volume Two treats their relationships; Volumes Three and Four provide Manly and Rickert’s reconstructed archetype, with selected variants; Volumes Five through Eight list textual variants. References will be in the text under *Text of CT* by volume and page.
4. John Matthews Manly, “Letter to Sir Sydney Cockerell,” Department of English Language and Literature, Records, Box 14, Folder 3, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, June 16, 1938. References to this archive will be in the text under EDR by Box, Folder, and, where relevant, writer, recipient, and date. Quotations from collections held by the Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center are with the kind permission of the University of Chicago Library. It should be noted that such archives consist mainly of carbon copies.
5. Manly frequently conveys his gratitude to these assistants, as in a letter dated January 30, 1931, to Mabel Dean, “I intended to say to you all before I left [for his annual six months in England], how much I appreciate the faithful and enthusiastic work which all of you have done” (John Matthews Manly, “Letter to Mabel Dean,” Papers, Box 1, Folder 19, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, January 30, 1931. References to this archive will be in the text under JMP by Box, Folder, and, where relevant, writer, recipient, and date. For similar acknowledgments, *Text of CT* V, vi; Ramsey, *Revised Edition*, 144–145.
6. On the history and methodology of the edition, *Text of CT* I, 1–9; Ramsey, *Revised Edition*, 57–88.
7. There, working together, they had cracked what David Kahn has described as “perhaps the most important of the MI-8 solutions.” David Kahn, *The Codebreakers: The Story of Secret Writing* (London and New York:

- Macmillan Co., 1967), 353. For biographical information, James R. Hulbert, "John Matthews Manly, 1865–1940," *Modern Philology* 38, no. 1 (1940): 1–8; Phyllis Franklin, "Edith Rickert at Vassar and the University of Chicago" (paper presented at the Modern Language Association, Washington DC, December 29, 1984: 1–10), archived under "Rickert, Edith," Archival Biographical Files, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library; Elizabeth Scala, "John Matthews Manly (1865–1940); Edith Rickert (1871–1938)," in *Medieval Scholarship: Biographical Studies on the Formation of a Discipline*, Volume 2: Literature and Philology, ed. Helen Damico with Donald Fennema and Karmen Lenz (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1998), 297–311; Scala, "Rickert, Edith, July 11, 1871–May 23, 1938. Medievalist, University Professor, Writer," in *Women Building Chicago 1790–1990: a Biographical Dictionary*, ed. Rima Lunin Schultz and Adele Hast (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 746–49; Scala, "'Miss Rickert of Vassar' and Edith Rickert at the University of Chicago (1871–1938)," in *Women Medievalists and the Academy*, ed. Jane Chance (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005), 127–145.
8. John Burroughs Papers, Archives and Special Collections Library, Vassar College Libraries, Box 41/5. Also, the letter dated April 26, 1915, to Rickert's Vassar mentor and friend, Lucy Maynard Salmon (Lucy Maynard Salmon Papers, Archives and Special Collections Library, Vassar College Libraries, Series II, f. 15.5). My thanks to Dean M. Rogers, Special Collections Assistant, Vassar College Library, for providing these materials. Rickert had resorted to such work after returning from England in 1909, as with D. C. Heath & Co. in Boston and the *Ladies Home Journal* in New York and Philadelphia. After moving to Chicago in 1911, besides doing some summer teaching at the University, she became involved in Manly's textbook-related activities. On these textbooks see chapters by Michael Matto and Susan Kim in this volume. To these years belong *The Writing of English* (with Manly; New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1919, revised more than once); *Contemporary British Literature: Bibliographies and Study Outlines* (with Manly; New York: Brace and Co., 1921, revised more than once, as by Fred B. Millett, 1935); *Lessons in the Speaking and Writing of English* (with Manly and Eliza R. Bailey; Boston: D. C. Heath & Co., 1922, in multiple volumes for several grades); *Contemporary American Literature, Bibliographies and Study Outlines* (with Manly; New York: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1922, revised by Millett, 1929); *The Writer's Index of Good Form and Good English* (with Manly; New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1923); *Good Reading* (with Manly and others; 1926, to be followed by manuals published variously).

9. She alludes to these academic projects in letters to Salmon dated July 4, 1923, and August 10, 1924 (Salmon Papers, Series II, f. 15.5). Publications from this period include "A New Interpretation of *The Parliament of Foules*," *Modern Philology* 18, no. 1 (1920): 1–29; "Political Propaganda and Satire in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*," *Modern Philology* 21, no. 2 (1923): 53–87, 136–154; "Was Chaucer a Student at the Inner Temple?" in *The Manly Anniversary Studies in Language and Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1923), 20–31. Much of what Rickert gathered on Chaucer's life and times, which she seems originally to have hoped to place in a volume for Scribner's (March 24, 1922, to Salmon; Salmon Papers, Series II f. 15.5), would eventually be included in *Chaucer's World. Compiled by Edith Rickert, Edited by Clair C. Olson and Martin M. Crow. Illustrations selected by Margaret Rickert* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948). Rickert's thinking about the "scientific" teaching of literature underlies her *New Methods for the Study of Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1927).
10. Press clipping under "Rickert, Edith," Archival Biographical Files, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
11. For bibliographical details, Scala, "John Matthews Manly," 308–11.
12. John Matthews Manly, *Canterbury Tales. By Geoffrey Chaucer. With an Introduction, Notes and a Glossary by John Matthews Manly of the University of Chicago* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1928).
13. *Text of CT II*, 12–20; Ramsey, *Revised Edition*, 63–68.
14. On Skeat's and other earlier editions, Ramsey, *Revised Edition*, 3–22. Manly based his text on the Ellesmere manuscript, "departing from it only when a study of the other MSS seemed clearly to prove that it was in error" (*Canterbury Tales*, vii).
15. Ramsey, *Revised Edition*, 8, 86, 149.
16. Missing from the witnesses that Manly and Rickert located seem only to have been some fragments: Kate Harris, "Unnoticed Extracts from Chaucer and Hoccleve: Huntington MS HM 144, Trinity College, Oxford MS D 29 and *The Canterbury Tales*," *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 20 (1998): 167–99. On the initial search for witnesses and its complications, *Text of CT I*, 6–8; Ramsey, *Revised Edition*, 73.
17. *Text of CT I*, 357.
18. *Text of CT II*, 15–16; Ramsey, *Revised Edition*, 163.
19. Ramsey, *Revised Edition*, 91–92.
20. Even so, obtaining such copies was time-consuming. See "Camera-Based Photocopying Machines," under "Antique Copying Machines," <http://www.earlyofficemuseum.com/copy_machines.htm>. Retrieved 2019-07-14.
21. *Text of CT I*, 3.

22. Ramsey, *Revised Edition*, 72–76.
23. This would be completed only in 1966, as *Chaucer Life-Records*, edited by Martin M. Crow and Clair C. Olson from materials compiled by John M. Manly and Edith Rickert with the assistance of Lilian J. Redstone and others (Oxford: Clarendon Press; Austin: University of Texas Press, 1966). On the project's genesis, Thomas H. Bestul, "Ramona Bressie, the Study of Manuscripts, and the Chaucer Life-Records," *Medieval Feminist Forum* 45, no. 1 (2009): 75–81; *Chaucer Life-Records*, v–xii.
24. On Stevens, see the Biographical Note in the University of Chicago Library, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center's *Guide to the David H. Stevens Papers 1903–1976*. This anxious moment is partly quoted in Ramsey, *Revised Edition*, 81.
25. Ramsey, *Revised Edition*, 133.
26. On attempts to recast literary studies in a scientific mode, Sealy Gilles and Sylvia Tomasch, "Professionalizing Chaucer: John Matthews Manly, Edith Rickert, and the *Canterbury Tales* as Cultural Capital," in *Reading Medieval Culture: Essays in Honor of Robert W. Hanning*, ed. Robert M. Stein and Sandra Pierson Prior (Notre Dame IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005), 364–383. Also, for example, Manly, "Literary Forms and the New Theory of the Origin of Species," *Modern Philology* 4, no. 4 (1906–7): 577–595.
27. In addition to assistants and students named in Figure 11.1 and elsewhere in this discussion, I have noted Mary Gafford; Jackson Jenkins; Dorothy Smith; Ruth Weeks; Leila Whitney; and Mrs Janet E. Heseltine, Sir William McCormick's assistant, of whom James R. Hulbert observed to Manly that "there is a great difference in the way in which she sticks to work and the way in which the other women apply themselves" (JMP 1/21, March 5, 1931).
28. On Hulbert (1884–1969), see the Biographical Note in the University of Chicago Library, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center's *Guide to the James R. Hulbert Papers 1912–1936*.
29. *Text of CT II*, 9.
30. Manly refers to the arrival of batches for February 1 and March 1, 1931 (JMP 1/21, to Dean, March 16, 1931). One such report certainly survives, from Walter Hendricks, dated April 4, 1931 (JMP 2/1).
31. Edith Rickert Papers, Box 1, folder 9, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library. References to this archive will be in the text under ERP and, where relevant, writer, recipient, and date.
32. PhDs included, for example, Martin M. Crow, "Scribal Habits [later "Corrections and Unique Variants"] in the Paris Manuscript of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*" (1934); Thomas F. Dunn, "The Manuscript Source of

- Caxton's Second Edition of *The Canterbury Tales*" (1939); Virginia Thornton Everett (later Leland), "A Study of Scribal Editing in Twelve Manuscripts of *The Canterbury Tales*" (1940); Eva Olivia Golson, "The Spelling System of the Glasgow MS of *The Canterbury Tales*" (1942); Robert A. Caldwell, "The Scribe of the Chaucer MS Cambridge University Library Gg 4. 27" (1944); there was also Walter Hendricks' MA, "The Relationship of the Chaucer MSS, McCormick and Rawlinson 141" (1930).
33. On McIntosh (from 1937 Mrs. Rushton Coulborn), who completed her PhD, "The Literary Background of the *Tale of Beryn*" in 1931, and who met her husband while assisting Manly and Rickert in London, see Lucy C. Grigsby, "Phylon Profile, XXIV: Helen McIntosh Coulborn," *Phylon* 24, no. 1 (1963): 13–19 (doi:10.2307/274219).
 34. On the decision to use camera-ready copy, *Text of CT I*, xiv.
 35. Virginia Everett Leland, "Miss Rickert, Mr. Manly, and the Chaucer Laboratory," *The Chaucer Newsletter* 9, no. 2 (Fall 1987): 1, 7–8.
 36. Manly, for whom Chicago winters were "very dangerous" (EDR 17/18, Manly to F. C. Woodward, November 9, 1927), moved to Arizona in late 1938. An inveterate smoker, he had long suffered from high blood pressure (EDR 14/13, Manly to Salter, December 13, 1929) and a chronic bronchitis (JMP 2/4, letter from Harry L. Huber MD, December 21, 1933). He died of a stroke and emphysema. Stevens recalls someone remarking shortly before Manly's death that cigarettes can cause emphysema, "and Manly's wordless comment through a quick smile and his characteristic quick glance at the speaker that said he had heard and had no comment" (JMP 13/4).
 37. Leland, "Miss Rickert," 7
 38. Ibid. On Germaine Dempster (1898–1970), whose claim to be Manly's "principal collaborator" Leland refutes ("Miss Rickert," 7), see the *Guide to her Collection* (MS 98), 1940–1970, 1945–1960 (University of Colorado at Boulder Libraries, Special Collections Department). Ramsey vehemently criticizes Dempster's 1940s explanations of the classifications in *Text of CT II* (Ramsey, *Revised Edition*, 627–638) and sees her as over-looking Rickert's part in the edition (*Revised Edition*, 59, 631).
 39. Leland, "Miss Rickert," 7; emphasis hers.
 40. Chaucer-related PhDs produced in this period include, for example, in addition to those listed above (notes 32 and 33), Ramona Bressie, "A Study of Thomas Usk's *Testament of Love* as an Autobiography" (1928) and Clair C. Olson, "A Study of the Music of the Fourteenth Century with especial Reference to Chaucer" (1938); MAs also include Robert L. Campbell, "*The Digby Mary Magdalene*" (1920). Manly refers to Campbell's "brilliant" unpublished PhD on the order of the tales, probably completed in summer 1925 (*Canterbury Tales. By Geoffrey Chaucer*,

- viii); and Grace Anderson Olson, "The Peculiar Features in the Fifth Book of Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*" (1940).
41. Stevenson had also worked with McCormick and MacCracken on the classification of the manuscripts (*Text of CT I*, 9).
 42. On Hammond (1866–1933), see Derek Pearsall, "Eleanor Prescott Hammond," *Medieval Feminist Forum* 31, no. 1 (2001): 29–36. She received her PhD at the University of Chicago in 1898, the year before Rickert received hers and the year in which Manly arrived at the University. She frequently visited the Laboratory, and in her retirement worked on her own projects there (Ramsey, *Revised Edition*, 79). Manly refers to her revising her *Manual* there (EDR 18/2, to Campbell, October 9, 1929). He thought very highly of her and consulted her in the early stages of the edition, as in a letter dated June 29, 1925 (EDR 17/17).
 43. How valuable Dean especially would prove, for example, is evidenced by the several letters Manly wrote to her from Arizona (EDR 18/10, January 21, 1939, April 4, 1939, May 2, 1939, May 4, 1939, May 29, 1939, September 22, 1939, November 2, 1939, etc.).
 44. In the same year, White started publishing a three-part article representing work she had presumably done toward her MA, "Chaucer's Shipman," in the journal that Manly had helped found (*Modern Philology* 26, no. 2 (1928): 249–55; no. 3 (1929): 379–84; and 27, no. 1 (1929): 123–128). Bressie refers to White as "just swelled up pretty near as big as a real live PhD with getting that article in *Modern Philology*," and thinks White had misinterpreted Manly's encouragement as an acceptance (Ramona Bressie Papers, Box 2, Folder 4, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library; on a torn-up part of a letter, probably to her sister, written in about 1927. References to this archive will be in the text under RBP by Box, Folder, and, where possible, date).
 45. White would briefly return to work on the *Tale of Gamelyn*, but her sister soon had to take her back to Texas (EDR 18/4, Margaret W. Gerard MD to Manly, July 14, 1931). The doctors said overwork was not the cause of whatever was wrong with her (EDR 18/6, Mrs. White to Manly, August 12, 1933), but the disturbance in the Laboratory and Bressie's scorn can't have helped.
 46. That Hendricks intended to complete his PhD at the University of Chicago is suggested by the subject of his 1930 MA thesis (above, note 32). He had previously studied with Robert Frost at Amherst College and already published two collections of poetry: *Flames and Fireflies* (Chicago: Robert Packard, 1926) and *Spires and Spears* (Chicago: Robert Packard & Co., 1928). He had also just published or was just about to publish a third: *Double Dealer* (Chicago: Robert Packard & Co., 1931). "Specialization," in *Flames and Fireflies*, encapsulates some of his problems: "I think there

should be two of me:/ A living soul, a Ph.D" (p. 4). He would chair English at Armour Institute of Technology, and establish Marlboro College in Vermont in 1946 and then two further liberal arts colleges, Windham and Mark Hopkins, also in Vermont. He would also establish a publishing company, Hendricks House, in Chicago in the 1930s. <https://www.nytimes.com/1979/10/03/archives/walter-hendricks-is-dead-at-87-teacher-began-marlboro-college.html>.

47. Dean may also have resented these men's presence in the PhD program. She had received her MA in English in 1926 with a thesis entitled "Parallels in the Views of Ireland," and been admitted to the PhD program in 1928, the year of her run-in with Stevenson. Beyond her taking a few classes, there is no evidence that she proceeded any further. Much later she would receive a BSc from the University of Chicago's Graduate Library School in 1944. In 1946 she became the University's first archivist. For information about Dean my thanks to Daniel Meyer.
48. Ramsey, *Revised Edition*, 91
49. Hulbert, "John Matthews Manly," 7.
50. On Manly and Rickert's ever-decreasing funding, *Text of CT I*, 4–6; Ramsey, *Revised Edition*, 84–90.
51. Rickert, who had more than fifty stones in her gall bladder when she died (EDR 14/3, Manly to Cockerell, June 16, 1938), had probably also inherited a heart condition from her mother, Josephine née Newburg (1848–1893).
52. Quoted in Ramsey, *Revised Edition*, 60.
53. Just before publication Manly also reconsidered and finally dismissed Rickert's suggested genealogical tree (Ramsey, *Revised Edition*, 61). On how lovingly he remembered Rickert, see his many letters to friends after her death (EDR 14/3); it is a point movingly made by Scala, "Scandalous Assumptions: Edith Rickert and the Chicago Chaucer Project," *Medieval Feminist Forum* 30, no. 1 (2000): 27–37, esp. 35. Also, Tomasch, "Editing as Palinode: *The Invention of Love* and the *Text of the Canterbury Tales*," *Exemplaria* 16, no. 2 (2004): 457–476.
54. *Chaucer's World*, viii. On Margaret Rickert (1888–1973), see the Biographical Note in the University of Chicago Library, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center's *Guide to the Margaret Rickert Papers 1918–1967*.
55. Fred Millett, *Edith Rickert* (Whitman, MA: Washington Street Press, 1944), 13–14. Millett, a prolific writer, had been an assistant professor in the English Department from 1927 and he earned his PhD in 1931, largely thanks to work done while he was a Fellow in the Department in 1916–1918. He was promoted to Associate Professor in 1933. For his biography, "Millett, Fred," in Archival Biographical Files, Hanna Holborn

- Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library. He helped Rickert revise *Contemporary American Literature* in 1929, and he and Rickert maintained a friendly correspondence, as indicated by letters she wrote to him from Paris on January 31, 1929, and from London on Christmas Day 1932 (ERP 1/10).
56. In his 1931 letter Hendricks indicates that this occurred in Summer 1930. He must have meant 1929. In summer 1930 Rickert was in England, recovering from her second breakdown.
 57. Dean addresses her reports only to Manly (as JMP 1/21, March 3, 1931; March 6, 1931), even though Manly invariably includes Rickert in his replies (as JMP 1/17, May 26, 1929; 1/18, February 26, 1930; 1/19, January 30, 1931; 1/21, March 16, 1931; JMP 2/4, June 2, 1933, February 17, 1935).
 58. See also the Biographical Note in the University of Chicago Library, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center's *Guide to the Ramona Bressie Papers 1900-1965*.
 59. Bestul, "Ramona Bressie," 72-75.
 60. *Ibid.*, 69-71.
 61. Chaucer Research Project, *Records*, Box 58/5, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library. References to this archive will be in the text under CRPR by Box, Folder, and, where relevant, writer, recipient, and date.
 62. Bestul, "Ramona Bressie," 78, 84, and note 65.
 63. Above, note 44.
 64. Quoted in Bestul, "Ramona Bressie," 80. Because Bressie mainly worked on the Life-Records, she clashed especially with Crow and Olson (Bestul, "Ramona Bressie," 78-80). She inveighs at particular length against Crow for being, among other things, an Iago to her Othello (RBP 1/3, September 15, 1957).
 65. Yet on October 10, 1929, Manly describes Bressie as "bubbling with enthusiasm and with delight over her visit" in London and especially over her relations with the Redstones (CRPR 57/13, to Lilian Redstone).
 66. The overriding nature of Bressie's obsession with Rickert also emerges from the several revealing dreams she records about her (Bestul, "Ramona Bressie," 90, note 51).
 67. See also Bestul, "Ramona Bressie," 81.
 68. *Ibid.*
 69. As in his letter supporting her application to the American Council of Learned Societies (EDR 2/13, October 26, 1932).
 70. Bestul, "Ramona Bressie," 75-83.
 71. As she indicates to Salmon and Adelaide Underhill, on December 22 and 24, 1910 (Salmon Papers, Series II, f. 15.4).

72. See, for example, the letter to Harper from Harry Pruitt Judson dated September 17, 1903, and especially the one to him from Cipriani dated January 11, 1905 (University of Chicago. Office of the President. Harper, Judson and Burton Administrations. Records, Box 33 Folder 9, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library).
73. Traceable via <https://www.familysearch.org>
74. *Lost Legions* and *While Breakfast Waits* (ERP 4/5–8 and 12, 5/1–3) may belong here. In these Rickert returns to the Ohio of her first, prize-winning, short story “Among the Iron Workers,” *Kate Field’s Washington* 2 (1890): 121–124. “Art Sketches,” which Rickert partly wrote with Manly (ERP 5/9, 6/1–3), was returned by a London publisher in 1934 (ERP 5/9).
75. Especially in those of Franklin, Scala, and Tomasch. Bestul, “Ramona Bressie,” 81.
76. See, for example, William Snell, “A Woman Medievalist Much Maligned: A Note in Defense of Edith Rickert (1871–1938),” *PhiN-Beiheft*, Supplement 4 (2009): 41–54.
77. Scala, “John Matthews Manly,” 302.
78. Something of a negative picture seems to have leached into more popular contexts: I here think of Jason Fagone’s *The Woman Who Smashed Codes* (New York: Dey Street Books, 2017), in which Fagone writes of “the great John Manly” who, “baffled and upset” that anybody might challenge him, raised his voice sharply and pushed Elizebeth Friedman on the shoulder” (p. 55—I refer to the 2018 paperback edition). This bears no relation to the measured figure who emerges from the archives and whose courtesy an early roommate likened to that of Chaucer’s Knight (in a volume of John Saunders’ 1889 New and Revised edition of Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* currently in the University of Chicago Libraries). I note too that on March 31, 1916, William F. Friedman sent Manly a card inscribed “To Professor Manly, with the author’s renewed assurances of respect and esteem” (JMP 2/9), and a letter on February 12, 1921, with a note from Elizebeth Friedman commenting on their earlier relationship: “I never dared let our admiration for you be known at Riverbank; but fortunately we can bury all that sort of thing now” (JMP 3/1). Manly certainly received the Friedmans’ distinctive Christmas cards in 1930 (JMP 1/18), and 1933 (JMP 2/4), and they continued to correspond (JMP 3/3, 5). See Katherine Ellison’s chapter in this collection on Manly’s ongoing correspondence and friendship with William F. Friedman.
79. For the clearest description of the edition that I know, Robert K. Root, “*The Text of the Canterbury Tales*,” *Studies in Philology* 38, no. 1 (1941): 1–13.

80. Quoted in Ramsey, *Revised Edition*, 1.
81. *Ibid.*, 58.
82. *Ibid.*, 100–101, 463–471, 493–518.
83. On Manly and Rickert's most important findings, Dorothy Everett, "Middle English I. Chaucer," *The Year's Work in English Studies* 21 (1940): 46–50.
84. Ramsey, *Revised Edition*, 99–100.
85. Their difficulties are incisively discussed by Gilles and Tomasch, "Professionalizing Chaucer," 374–376.
86. George Kane, "John Matthews Manly (1865) and Edith Rickert (1871–1938)," in *Editing Chaucer: The Great Tradition*, ed. Paul G. Ruggiers (Norman OK: Pilgrim Books, 1984), 207–29, 289–291.
87. *Ibid.*, 229.
88. Kane's edition of the A Version of *Piers Plowman* had appeared in 1960 (London: Athlone Press). He had collaborated with E. Talbot Donaldson on a similar edition of the B Version (Athlone Press, 1975), and he would with George Russell on the C Version (Athlone Press, 1997).
89. Ramsey, *Revised Edition*, 653.
90. Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales. Edited with an Introduction and Notes by Jill Mann* (London: Penguin Books, 2005), lxi. Mann has since considered Ramsey's response, but without yielding much ground ("'Learning, Taste and Judgment' in the Editorial Process: Vance Ramsey and Manly-Rickert," *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 32 (2010): 345–55).
91. Kane, "John Matthews Manly," 291, n. 36, quoted, with incorrect page reference, Ramsey, *Revised Edition*, 125.
92. Ramsey, *Revised Edition*, 126–128.
93. *Ibid.*, 154–155.

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Academic Exhaustion and the Afterlife of John Matthews Manly and Edith Rickert

Susan M. Kim and Katherine Ellison

It is perhaps fitting that, as we conclude this collection about two scholars who worked so tirelessly throughout their careers that they suffered from exhaustion, we are ourselves writing after two years of incredible academic fatigue and during a period that is now beginning to be called, in education, “The Great Disengagement.”¹ This collection was scheduled to be finished in the fall of 2020, when educators and researchers, already under such heavy loads, suddenly experienced the unprecedented—in-person classes were suddenly moved online, library collections were closed for quarantine from the COVID-19 pandemic, university administrations and faculty battled over openings and closures and employee and student safety. Academics certainly felt overworked before, as teaching and service requirements have increased, research time has decreased, salaries have remained stagnant, and new job openings have dwindled across the humanities disciplines, but 2020 and its aftermath have shone a bright

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light on the physical limits of university educators struggling to balance scholarship, pedagogy, and their personal lives.

The answer to surviving the pandemic, for universities, has been to depend entirely upon the technologies that allow academics to teach and research from a distance. These are the technologies that were just being imagined when Edith Rickert and John Matthews Manly began streamlining their archival methodologies with Photostats, and then microfilm, and when Manly proposed an interlibrary loan system that would allow scholars to share and access resources from afar without expensive and time-consuming travel, documented in more detail in this conclusion. The digital materials that we have relied upon this past year, for this collection, would not have been possible if Manly and Rickert, and others, had not advocated for the international sharing of intellectual resources. The digitized resources might not have been possible if Rickert had not worked with students to develop the methodology that we today call meta-tagging, in which the seemingly trivial minutiae of texts are marked, categorized, and catalogued. From those details, documents can become searchable, patterns traced and quantified. Thanks in part to Rickert and Manly's decision to turn both research projects and graduate seminars into sites for experimentation, scholars today are able to rely upon computing technologies not only to access but also to understand the resources they need for archival research. Technology and computation brought them closer to one another, closer to their students, and closer to colleagues in their fields and across disciplines. Clarissa Rinaker, reviewing Rickert's *New Methods for the Study of Literature*, wrote: "Professor Manly praises his colleague's method for the 'delight' it offers its users 'of sharing in the very processes of creative thought.' But from Professor Rickert's text it appears that this is a pleasure they share chiefly with one another."² Rinaker offers this observation about shared pleasure as a point of critique, but for us it is also a statement of affirmation for our project on collaboration. Discussion of alienation, disenchantment, and exhaustion within our profession abounds. While we recognize this reality, we also trace in the essays in this collection commitments to collaboration that provided sustained intellectual, professional, and personal fulfillment as they made possible the astonishing contributions of Manly and Rickert and their many networks. For us, completion of this project, or this phase of this project (as we understand now how much more is still to be done), has made explicit that collaboration is not only about sharing work, but also about sharing

pleasure in our work with one another, and that shared pleasure *should be* both central in this profession and acknowledged as such.

THE COSTS OF PRODUCTIVITY IN ACADEMIC WORK

It must be noted that the very technologies that have been designed to lighten the academic workload, and to make “pivoting” as educators and scholars easier, seem to have caused greater fatigue. For example, in 2020 the term “Zoom fatigue” described the mental tiredness one feels when video conferencing on the computer using the platform of the same name. Manly and Rickert were pioneers in experimenting with new technologies to ease the physical and mental burdens of scholarly work and to counter the problem of distance in the acquisition and sharing of knowledge. However, as they experienced as well, organizing collaborative technologies and models, like the laboratory, was itself exhausting. Already in 1934, Manly had acknowledged to David H. Stevens, “It was perhaps too much to undertake both the text and the record” in the Chaucer project.³ In the same letter, about the difficulties of funding and completing the project, Manly recognizes the toll of the project on his own and Rickert’s health: “As to the whole work, I feel this way. If it had never been begun, the financial reasons for not beginning it now might be valid; but it has been begun, and Miss Rickert and I have not merely devoted these last years of our lives to it, but have endangered our healths and lives by working excessively, beyond human endurance.”⁴

Perhaps the one comment that is repeated most often about both Rickert and Manly, more than any critique or praise of their Chaucer project or WWI service, is that they worked too hard, even while that excessive work is described as heroic or evidencing their extraordinary and commendable commitment. They themselves *are* the early figures of the overworked scholar described ironically in the *Manly Anniversary* volume as being part of Manly’s legacy: the “host of students who have become widely known as scholars or who have rendered valuable, if local, service in the routine of the traditional overworked teacher of English.”⁵ Manly himself wrote to Stevens in April 1934 to note that “Miss Rickert is working twenty-five hours a day, as usual, and is on the verge of a breakdown, but she won’t break. She never does.” Of his own exhaustion and overwork, Manly noted in the same letter, “I have trouble with my breathing and use four handkerchiefs a day, but I don’t cough much and I am working better than for several years.”⁶ A year later, Manly wrote, again to

Stevens, that he “rather overdid in trying to write a critical history of recent work on text criticism and had to go to a nursing home for ten days of rest.”⁷ Ramsey notes that “Fatigue, if not the cold of the Public Record office, took an inevitable toll on Rickert’s health.”⁸ Rickert’s youngest sister Margaret also described her fatigue in the preface to *Chaucer’s World*, written in October 1947. Her sister worked until her hands were numb, she says, fifteen hours a day, seven days a week, teaching and working in the laboratory. To continue the Chaucer project, Margaret then notes that Edith “found at the end of her life the sheer force of will to dominate the crippling illness that drained her physical strength, but could not conquer her mind and spirit.”⁹

The Chaucer volume has been the most cited source of Manly and Rickert’s fatigue, but it is by no means the first or only project that tested their physical stamina. In fact, Manly identifies exhaustion as an accepted but uncomfortable condition of scholarly life throughout his personal correspondence since at least the 1880s. Even in his youth, when he wrote his mother in 1887 while teaching mathematics at William Jewell College in Missouri, Manly commented frequently on his own exhaustion from overwork. On June 25, 1891, he again wrote to his mother to express how hard he was working to prepare a new course in eighteenth-century literature, which he felt required that he learn absolutely everything about the period. He was “reading everything I can get my hands on,” he notes.¹⁰ He stresses that all of this class prep was distracting him from the project that needed to be his priority, his scholarship in linguistics. In fact, teaching would often rank high in both Manly’s and Rickert’s lists of tiring responsibilities. Manly often discusses the great pressure he felt to change lives in the classroom. “A poor teacher can never atone for the injury he does,” he wrote to his mother.¹¹ Fred B. Millett notes that Rickert

was an amazingly stimulating teacher; she worked tirelessly herself, and she expected her students to work as incessantly and eagerly as she did. Not content with her regular assignment of courses, she volunteered to assist groups of students interested in developing their acquaintance with paleography and the reading of mediaeval manuscripts. Even during the half-year which she spent abroad, she found time to keep up a correspondence with students who needed her advice with their personal projects.¹²

Rickert and Manly were not alone in this experience of exhaustion. Although many of us feel today that we are more burdened than ever

before, repeated examples in descriptions of academic work in the early twentieth century suggest that the profession at that time appears to have been as physically and psychologically stressful as it is in the twenty-first century. In 1919, Manly wrote a memorial essay in *Modern Philology* for his friend and colleague Francis Barton Gummere. "Although it was widely known that for more than ten years he had suffered from broken health and was obliged to guard himself very carefully from overworking," Manly explains, "few except his immediate circle of friends realized the seriousness of his condition."¹³ Gummere had "nervous overstrain" and the loss of vision in his right eye "brought to an end his research work in libraries and the close reading of manuscripts." The pressure for productivity, however, was too great for Gummere, who kept working anyway. Manly admires Gummere's ability to sustain prolific publication even during suffering, reinforcing the problematic image of the heroic scholar who works himself to death, but he also confronts that image and tries to make that suffering visible. "This continued productivity kept distant scholars from appreciating the seriousness of his condition," he notes.¹⁴

In a rare move, Manly then calls out the academic status system in which Gummere worked. A question had apparently been circulating about Gummere: if he was such a distinguished, hardworking scholar, why did he remain at Haverford College, a small liberal arts school without the prestige of the large research universities? Manly notes that Gummere was offered the chair of the Department of English at both the University of Chicago (before Manly was recruited) and later at Harvard University. Gummere declined both offers and, Manly notes, had told Manly personally that "he believed the ideal life of the productive scholar was more nearly attainable in a small college with a well-equipped library than in a great university." Manly says that he understands this logic, and though he wishes more students could have had access to Gummere's teachings, writes "I knew only too well [a chair position at Harvard] would consume large amounts of his time and energy in administrative machinery."¹⁵ While in this brief essay Manly does still glorify the idea of academic productivity, he also begins to question publicly the standards that academics themselves had constructed. In order to be considered a serious scholar, one was supposed to work up to the requirements of Ivy League universities, to have administrative and leadership ambitions, and to always want to publish.

In "Education that Educates," his passionate 1927 convocation address, Manly considers the reforms necessary in higher education, beginning

with an exposition on aging and productivity that might at first seem unusual. By the time one is thirty years old, he observes, one only has about thirty-six or so years left to live, given how exhausting modern living is. Much of one's life, as a scholar, is spent as a student, preparing to be a scholar, so that by the time one has mastered the foundation of a discipline, there are not many years left to be productive. Added to this, he notes, is the unfortunate idea that the human mind's "capacity to acquire new modes of action and new types of knowledge—practically ceases as a rule before the age of thirty."¹⁶ He observed this "rule" in his own family, as recorded in his personal letters. He was continuously concerned about the well-being of his family and friends as they aged, whom he described as often tired and, in today's terms, immuno-compromised. He felt, acutely, the exhaustion of others and the disappointments of their decreased productivity at young ages. On October 30, 1887, he asked about a family member, Hellen, worried that she was "not yet entirely strong," and added, "She must take care of herself; it will not do for her to be breaking down at the starting-post of life. She has too much work to worry with her numerous societies etc."¹⁷

Concerns about his own productivity plagued him. Manly was overcome with a feeling of sadness that he directly connected to what he perceived as unproductive periods. In 1887, he noted, "I have accomplished so little in this month of September that is so soon to be a part of the irrevocable past." Continuing, he mused: "I sometimes fear that my constant realization that time is slipping away oh! So fast & I am doing nothing, makes me a very uncongenial companion; for even when I am thinking of something else this realization is present, below-consciousness, giving tone & color to all my thoughts."¹⁸ The sentiment will be familiar to academics working in any discipline; indeed, it is a common feeling in careers without boundaries between the personal and professional. Graduate students today would relate, too, to his lament later, in 1892, "I have been trying all this week to get to work on my dissertation, but haven't had time to do anything. Yet the things that have taken up my time have been such little things that it seems as if I had had nothing to do& might have done anything I chose to do." In an interesting reflection for 1892, though, he shifts to acknowledge that the distribution of domestic labor, which impedes research time, is unequal in his culture. "I have no doubt that it is this sort of feeling that makes a woman's life so hard," he wrote, "Yet the little things are the important things, after all. Life is made up of them & moves on largely by means of them."¹⁹

COLLABORATION AND NETWORKING: EXACERBATING AND HEALING FROM ACADEMIC EXHAUSTION

If Manly and Rickert drove themselves and others to exhaustion, they also seem to have recognized that such sustained exhaustion became dangerous, to use a mild word, and that relief from it could not be provided solely by the documented, periodically necessary visits to warm climates and rest facilities. Manly wrote in 1931 to J. R. Hulbert, for example, that Rickert “has very clearly admitted that she cannot afford to work as violently as she has done in the past. It is true that from time to time she is hard to control in this respect, but nevertheless, I think it is a clear gain that she is willing to admit that there is such a thing as working too constantly.”²⁰ Of course, as Ramsey observes, the same “regularity with which Manly commented on Rickert’s health, however, showed how temporary were such respites for her from what was very literally a killing schedule.”²¹ As Christina von Nolcken notes in this volume, after Rickert’s death, Manly acknowledges, starkly, that he has “no doubt that she might have lived several years longer if she had not damaged both her heart and her other organs by overwork.”²²

One way to approach the motivations for the collaborations of both Rickert and Manly may be to consider them in the light of the search for more resourceful ways to overcome fatigue, even as the methods developed may also have exacerbated that fatigue. For example, while the collaborative model of the Chaucer lab may have decreased some aspects of the workload for Rickert and Manly and distributed it more efficiently across a large staff, given the frequent descriptions of their exhaustion, it did not adequately compensate for the volume of work the project would entail. As von Nolcken notes, Manly also recognized the potential dangers of overwork for the student workers in the lab, and attempted to ameliorate this by reducing the number of courses students could take while working. Outside of academia, too, Manly found different models of work and study, but those models did not supply relief from exhaustion or overwork. In the Code and Ciphers Division during WWI, as described in his *Collier’s* essays, Manly frequently notes the long hours of their work, the laboriousness of their challenges, and the need to keep working even when tired. Providing relief from this kind of workload was perhaps one of Fabyan’s goals in creating Riverbank Laboratory, but its collaborative environment and large staff were also still not enough. Before Riverbank, Wells Gallup begins her book on Bacon by discussing exhaustion: “The

discovery of the existence of the Bi-literal Cipher of Francis Bacon, found embodied in his works, and the deciphering of what it tells, has been a work arduous, exhausting, and prolonged.”²³ The writer of the “Publishers’ Note” of the third edition of *The Bi-literal Cypher of Sir Francis Bacon* notes, too, that “overstrained eye-sight, from the close study of the different forms of Italic letters, and consequent exhaustion on the part of Mrs. Gallup, compelled a cessation of the work before all that would have been desirable to know concerning that early period was deciphered.”²⁴ Assistants hired to help Wells Gallup at Riverbank Laboratory may have helped her strained eyes, but they then, in turn, felt overworked. Elizebeth Smith Friedman mentions the long hours, for example. Though they performed research without the extra responsibilities of teaching and administration, could sleep on site, and were provided meals, work went on ceaselessly from morning until night.

The very rigor which underlies so many of the collaborative projects and methods itself often relied on relentless and public criticism within the collaborative group. In the Chaucer laboratory, for example, von Nolcken observes that student workers were responsible not only for creating the collation cards, but also for checking each other’s work, and clearly marking any mistakes in red (see von Nolcken’s Fig. 11.3) and that Manly considered this particular form of correction to be “of great psychological value,” despite the fact that it may have had as a consequence the frayed and untenable relations that developed in the laboratory.²⁵ That Manly was committed to such practices of correction is clear as early as the 1908 textbook with Eliza Bailey, in which Bailey and Manly explain, “Every error creates a tendency, and if repeated soon becomes a habit.” Bailey and Manly advise that in order to teach students both how to spell and how not to repeat an error, teachers should address and record each misspelled word from each student and that finally the errors, corrected, “besides being made the basis of the lesson, should be written neatly on the board and allowed to remain there for several days.”²⁶ The “psychological value” may well be in the motivation to learn from error not to make errors. However, like the suggestion in the basal readers that students who do not find the “funny” stories presented there particularly funny should attempt their own better versions in front of the class, as discussed in Kim’s chapter, methods of this sort might easily also encourage defensiveness, competitiveness, recalcitrance, or even paranoia, rather than the “loyal” exchange of information that seems to have developed in the cryptanalysis work during WWI, as Ellison notes in this collection.

Perhaps ironically, then, the most effective means of relief for academic exhaustion that Manly and Rickert offer explicitly is the reorganization of large topics and periods to make them manageable for study, easy access to archives, and the development of assistive technologies, even as that reorganization itself clearly overtaxed both. In the prefatory materials for volume 2 of the *Text of the Canterbury Tales*, for example, Manly and Rickert detail the almost incomprehensively complex methods for constructing the physical collation cards, with all details precisely and intentionally controlled:

The cards are of thin yellow cardboard, 5" x 8", preferably ruled. The top margin is cut away so as to leave three projections: one at the left to receive the group letter and line number, as A 56; one at the right to receive a notation of the number of cards devoted to the collation of the particular line, as 5, and of the order of the card in the series, as 3 (thus '5 No. 3' means there are five cards devoted to this line, of which this is No. 3); the third projection is a small tab capable of bearing the last figure of the line-number. These small tabs, numbered from 0 to 9, are 'stepped' across the top margin of the cards in such a way that when the cards are properly filed (with numbered guide cards at 20, 40, 60, and 80 in each hundred) the card or cards for any desired line can be found immediately. Furthermore, if any card gets out of place, the tab makes it possible to find it very quickly.²⁷

Manly and Rickert acknowledge the rigidity and complexity of the system but also the fact that this highly detailed and systematic organization ultimately saves time by enabling the efficient recording and retrieving of data. They explain, "Such things are minutiae, but they are not trifles; nothing is more wasteful of time and temper than a misplaced card without a guide, unless it be uncertainty whether there has been a loss of any card belonging to a given line. This last becomes a matter of great importance when, as in some lines of the prose, 10, 20, or even 30 cards are devoted to a single line."²⁸ The rigidly controlled "minutiae" are always in the service of later efficiency, of saving "time and temper" by ensuring usability in the future.

Like the Chaucer project, all of the approaches to reorganization with which Manly and Rickert were associated were possible only with support from other scholars through networking and teamwork. Even in the 1880s and 1890s, as he began his academic career, Manly found solace in these collaborative models of scholarship, from institutional and generic to methodological. Perhaps remembering the experience he had while trying

to learn everything about the eighteenth century in order to teach a one-time semester course on the period, for example, Manly believed that anthologies could be key pedagogically to managing large volumes of literature. Not only were academics now required to master an incredible range of texts across their specialized periods, but they also needed to understand the movements under way within the time period of their own teaching, movements influencing the direction of literature and the arts in the first decades of the twentieth century *and* the thinking and ideologies of their colleagues and students. Manly and Rickert took it upon themselves to digest and assess the state of literature in the 1920s in *Contemporary British Literature* (1921), and *Contemporary American Literature: Bibliographies and Study Outlines* (1922), to select the works that they thought most represented contemporary thought and style, and to summarize and present those works in accessible, affordable anthologies for use in university classrooms. These anthologies are not constructed as “scholarship” so much as well-organized and synthesizing guides to accessing literature. As Manly and Rickert’s long-time Chicago colleague Percy H. Boynton wrote in his review of *Contemporary American Literature: Bibliographies and Study Outlines*, “This is a type of book at which it is easy to turn up one’s nose. ‘For women’s clubs,’ says the jacket, ‘teachers, in fact, for anyone who wants to keep up with contemporary writing.’ But one would better do his eyebrow lifting and shoulder shrugging before taking up the book.” He concludes, “And I have not only examined it; I am referring to it all the time.”²⁹ The volume, that is, was *useful*, including to a well-respected scholar in the field. Matto and Kim discuss the readers and textbooks that Manly and Rickert developed, too, that demonstrated how new kinds of resources could assist in the teaching of writing and literacy, compiling a breadth of information in one place. Because such compilation, organization, and concern with usability and access underlay not only the accuracy but also the larger commitment to collaboration as well as the effort to save “time and temper” and mitigate exhaustion, we turn in this conclusion to a focus on their often invisible but nonetheless vital imbrication in pioneering work in library science.

COUNTERING FATIGUE BY BUILDING ACCESSIBLE ARCHIVES

Manly may have had no interest in working or being associated with the Riverbank Shakespeare-Bacon project, but Riverbank’s laboratory experiment shed light on how significantly access to resources can lead to

breakthroughs and innovation in any field, not only humanistic ones. The Code and Cipher Division depended upon—the war effort depended upon—access to texts and connecting disciplinary experts to those texts. In an increasingly global economy and as American universities worked to establish reputations as respected as those in Europe and the United Kingdom, scholars also needed to see the rich resources that could enhance their work and teaching, and those resources were largely located outside of the US. Watching Fabyan so easily purchase rare books from across the world and amass these in his own personal collection, with little intent to use them for productive scholarship, affirmed to Manly that unequal scholarly access to rare and special books and archives was one of the key problems that needed to be addressed by his academic generation. The private acquisition of rare books, and the hoarding of texts and artifacts by wealthy investors, may benefit scholars if they are “connected” enough, but otherwise, those works were largely lost for study. Manly and Rickert would spend an enormous amount of time and money, later, traveling, purchasing books, having libraries purchase books, and collecting Photostats of sources. Fabyan only openly shared his books with scholars like Manly from whom he wanted validation, seeking admiration for his collection as a means of feeding his own ego, but he did not seem to share to promote serious scholarship. Smith Friedman notes that she and her husband repeatedly asked Fabyan to gift his own collection to a public library so that it could be used widely, but he scoffed at the idea (after his death, Fabyan’s wife did finally agree to donate his collection to the Library of Congress).

Manly’s sensitivity to issues of access, and to the financial realities of the privileged and the unprivileged in academia, was central in his vision of humanities reform. He notes that, first, scholars across the nation should be made more aware that they can borrow books from other public institutions through what we today know as interlibrary loan. But what of rare books and special collection manuscripts? he asks. In his President’s Address to the Modern Language Association (MLA) on December 28, 1920, he hopes that the MLA will intervene in this problem with access, offering funding for scholars who live in remote areas to travel to foreign collections. This funding would not come from MLA members themselves but from wealthy citizens who could be reached by the MLA, and the MLA would shoulder the responsibility of learning about new and valuable work and getting the word out to donors about projects in need of funding. This would help not only scholars, but also the wealthy who

otherwise might put their money foolishly into projects that sound good but are not sound ventures, or provide support to scholars who are persuasive about need rather than genuinely credible. Manly does not name any particular donors who had been duped, but he is clearly referring, at least in part, to Fabyan and his investment in Wells Gallup's theory. With its team of credible experts, the MLA was poised to evaluate projects and mediate donor networks. Research centers like Fabyan's Riverbank Laboratory would not need to rely upon biased letters of recommendation from individuals; they could fund projects that had already been thoroughly vetted and prioritized by a more objective committee.

Manly's goal was a true support system for humanities scholarship. He saw the MLA as the one organization with the potential for growth and international networking. While there are those who do their research individually and in isolation, as is necessary to work in most disciplines, there are also those whose talent is to build the infrastructures to support that work, to identify donors, to see connections and bring individual scholars to the money they need to finish good work. Researchers should stay focused on their work, he noted, and be able to rely upon colleagues in the field to promote their work. He saw this to be his job in the MLA. Of course, Manly was also a research scholar himself, and just four years after his speech, he and Rickert would launch the Chaucer project, putting into action aspects of the cooperative plan he envisions in "New Bottles."

Manly continued his efforts to build and support libraries and wider access to materials throughout his career. In 1934, he wrote to Stevens to discuss his idea for a circulating loan library that would allow retired faculty to continue to check out materials relevant for their continuing research.³⁰ Ideally, he explains, libraries will employ staff to photograph the pages of the journals so that reproductions can be sent on demand. He mentions a desire to also provide a way for faculty at small colleges to access the resources at large research institutions as well. Finally, he outlines his main goal to establish a national network of libraries joined by a central office that coordinates the Photostat duplication of materials needed by academics at any college or university internationally. Manly's motivation is not only greater accessibility for all researchers no matter their affiliations but also a deep concern for the physical and mental demands of academic study. He repeatedly describes the exhaustion to which he and his colleagues are working in order to publish their work quickly enough for their fields and their universities. The financial and physical strains of travel are particularly worrisome to him; if he could

devise a system that allowed researchers to access materials in distant libraries without spending time and money to get there, he could greatly reduce their stress and allow them to complete much of their research from home. Travel to special collections could then be maximized for only that work that could not be done remotely.

Manly and Rickert were part of a generation of scholars dedicated to building accessible, specialized library collections and on particular subjects and authors. Kathy Peiss notes that the field of library science emerged in these early decades of the new century, and scholars of that field “had begun to explore new approaches to information and technologies of reproduction such as microfilm, which could be used to disseminate enemy publications for intelligence purposes.”³¹ The American Library Association, which had been founded in 1876, moved its headquarters to Chicago in 1909, when it also created an Executive Board, employed its first salaried secretary, and expanded its operations. Arguments for a national public library, too, had long been in circulation but were often voted down.³² In 1883, George Marsh, English scholar and member of the House of Representatives, made the case before Congress for a federally supported research library that would counter the hoarding that Manly would observe later in Fabian: “We need some great establishment, that shall not hoard its treasures,” he argued, “which locks up the libraries of Britain.”³³ Marsh is suggesting here that UK libraries at the time, while they housed massive collections, did not allow scholars of all classes to access them. While US scholars rallied behind Marsh’s speech, Members of Congress were not persuaded. To them, the current state of the Library of Congress was fine. It was established in 1800 with \$5000 for books; in 1802 a Librarian of Congress was appointed, and after attack and the loss of its collections in the War of 1812, Thomas Jefferson donated his private collection to rebuild. To the Congress of 1883, this was enough. One could do scholarship if one had the money to buy the books; there was no national obligation to provide those resources to all US scholars for free. Architectural plans for a separate building for the library were already in the works, as advocated by Ainsworth Rand Spofford, but it was not until 1897 that it opened. Marsh would have to try other approaches to build a national library *collection*, not just a building, that was open access to all classes. Using his political position, he appointed men in support of his plan to the boards of the Smithsonian museums, and he and other scholars at Harvard spent a great deal of money buying collections. He also gave public lectures that increased

general interest in the English language and in literature. As the Library of Congress website notes, it was the period between 1901 and 1928 that Congress, and the public, began to support libraries and provide the funding they needed to build large publicly available collections.³⁴ Solon Buck, hired as the first official US Archivist, called the 1920s and 1930s an “archival awakening.”³⁵ In 1934, the National Archives was created to house the many bureaucratic documents of federal business, and the Library of Congress grew to become a national library. Manly and Rickert were both participants in this new era, pioneers in what is now known as the beginning of information science.

Manly also helped those outside of academia to appreciate the importance of building accessible archives. The Friedmans agreed with his vision, and both became committed to collection, preservation, and accessibility. Smith Friedman notes how William had in turn tried to convince Fabyan to donate his library to the Library of Congress, but Fabyan “sneered at the whole idea.” She notes that “after he died and had done nothing about disposing of the library my husband began working on Mrs. Fabyan, and she lived only three years I think it was after he died.”³⁶ Thanks to his efforts, Fabyan’s library is now part of the rare book collection at the Library of Congress. The Friedmans, too, carefully considered where to leave their own collections and documents, and access was their first priority. After seeing how the Library of Congress failed to accurately catalogue Fabyan’s work, and also recalling how they had seen the valuable papers of Edwin Gaudi strung across some wire shelves, the Friedmans decided to donate their books and papers to a small, accessible library that respected books and their handling.³⁷ While William had been contacted by the Newberry, Princeton, Harvard, and other major institutions like the NSA library, he preferred a location in which his collection could be easily found and used and would not be lost among a large volume of other collections. “He had a feeling that he just wanted somewhere where there would be a fairly large number of persons who would be interested in the real truth about certain things,” Smith Friedman notes, and “he was always interested in anything in the world that could get young students interested in really thinking.”³⁸ They chose the Research Library of the George C. Marshall Foundation.³⁹

TECHNOLOGICALLY ASSISTED RESEARCH AND THE PROMISE OF REST

Creating anthologies to help fellow pedagogues and students of literature manage and assess the large volumes of new work being published was one approach to information proliferation and fatigue. So too was advocacy for institutional systems for sharing resources. Manly and Rickert's experiences working in cryptology presented other, technological, options as well. Some of the first creative technologies for textual analysis that they observed were at the innovative Riverbank Laboratory and then in their service for the Military Intelligence Division. One of the productive results of Fabyan's anti-Stratfordian project was experimentation with reading and copying machines that could speed up the work of sharing and analyzing large numbers of words and pages. The lab did not invent these, but researchers like William Friedman would improve them, and even Wells Gallup pushed their limits and imagined new uses. Orville Ward Owen's "Owen Wheel," also nicknamed the "Shakespeare Mangle," was used at Riverbank, too, to read multiple facsimiles of manuscripts at the same time. Two large cylinders fed over 1000 feet of oilcloth, upon which were glued pages from the plays. The idea was that seeing across many pages simultaneously, removed from the manuscript and able to be assembled in various orders, would allow them to find patterns in the alleged hidden ciphers. Of course, it did not work for those purposes of discovering hidden message in the plays, but the idea behind it was part of a larger move toward new visualization strategies and the recognition of patterns as a mode of analysis.

Machines like the Owen Wheel were designed to be helpful, save time, and preserve one's eyesight, and in some sense they might have helped cryptologists think more about the kinds of technologies that could assist in breaking ciphers. One problem with such technologies as they were taken up in humanistic scholarship, however, was, and remains, a vulnerability to the deferring of authority to the technology itself rather than to the interpretive methods of the researchers. Stanley Fish would level this criticism at the "Big Data" movement in humanities scholarship in 2012, insisting that digital humanists use computers to decontextualize and disassemble texts in the search for patterns, then draw conclusions based on that data so that "the method, if it can be called that, is dictated by the capability of the tool."⁴⁰ Friedman's new photographic magnification method, too, which he was reassigned to create to look more closely at the

a and *b* alphabets of the alleged biliteral cipher, was similarly flawed. It only blurred the alphabets even more, revealing that the saturation of the manuscripts' inks further complicated the categorization. In the long run, of course, this magnification would be beneficial, the trial and error part of the learning process. Manly was later able to use this knowledge of the properties of early modern inks, and how they bleed through paper in different ways, to disprove other claims of encrypted literary texts.

During his work with MI-8, Manly observed that communication technologies were the future of war, and those technologies could be used well beyond the military. In the *Collier's* essays, his introduction to cryptology is in one sense an ode to the importance of developing new technologies for the collection, management, and interpretation of large quantities of textual data. Together, these innovations created what he calls "new methods of listening." He learned about and then later applied knowledge about telegraph and wired communication technologies, including wire-tapping. "This method of listening-in played a great part in the war and was of untold value as a source of information," he notes. Some technologies he underestimated, however. In "Overview of Cryptology and the Army," Manly writes that "Whether the wireless telephone can ever be of great service in war can well be doubted."⁴¹ This was because wireless technologies could be tapped so easily. He seemed to fear the dominance of technologies that could be easily hacked—a prescient worry.

It would be difficult to argue that MI-8 taught Manly and Rickert how to value the small details of textual analysis, as both were already scholars with eyes for the importance of minutiae and the ability to explain how that detail leads to a macro-level analysis. Dooley's description of how they cracked the Waberski cipher, in this collection, is testament to their meticulous close reading and strategic analytical and organizational skills. As Dooley notes, that achievement was one highlight of the war for the Code and Cipher Division. However, working in MI-8 certainly did affirm for the scholars the ways in which small details, together, build an interpretation, leading a reader to a significant, and even life-saving, conclusion about authorship, intent, and meaning. The work students did in Rickert's graduate seminars following her MI-8 experience was very much like the coding she was engaged with for the military, and it is also much like what digital humanists engage in today. Rickert and her students "tagged" words and images, categorizing them so they could be statistically and graphically represented to find patterns. Imagery, they found, was of one of seven types, and scholars can find the proportions of an author's

reliance upon those types of imagery as a means of understanding style, quantifying the number of images against non-imagist language, as a ratio. Basically, she created frequency charts much like what cryptanalysts used in decryption. Those frequency charts, though, were themselves adaptations of literary notation methods. The cycle of influence energized Rickert's work. Rickert used charts and other pictograms and infographics in *New Methods* and her influence was extended by *A New Approach to Poetry*, edited by her students, Elsa Chapin and Russell Thomas, and published in 1929. Her suggestions in *New Methods* indicate a bold, futurist imagining of visualization in literary study that would not be realized until the digital breakthroughs of the 1990s and the first decades of the early twenty-first century.

CONCLUSION: COUNTERING THE ISOLATION OF HUMANISTIC INQUIRY

It is ironic that a scholar who would go on to forge so many historically significant networks, who connected brilliant minds across disciplines, would write in a heartfelt, raw letter of October 14, 1894, to his mother, that "there are about a dozen people in New England for whom I do care very much, but for the most part I feel myself entirely alien to the people & the customs. I make friends very slowly." Yet, in the same letter, he reflects that "my affections cling less to places than to persons."⁴² Manly may have perceived himself challenged in making new friends, but already by 1894, he had built a large network of scholars who respected his work and his character and would stay in touch throughout their careers. It is true that his contact with some of these scholars, indeed his admission to the Harvard PhD program in Philology, was thanks to the privilege he enjoyed as the son of a university president and the white, male descendent of a wealthy, politically powerful Southern family. Yet he did forge his own connections. Rickert, too, though she is often pictured, especially in her later life, as a driven scholar always bending over her work, built a staggering number of contacts across her creative writing career, involvement in children's education, undergraduate and graduate teaching, the Chaucer project, the textbook industry, and military intelligence.

We hope that this collection has countered a dominant narrative, in humanities research, of historically isolated scholarship, and portraits of the scholar—quarantined even when there is no pandemic—who must

forge ahead alone in order to be successful. Indeed, Manly's and Rickert's careers also give us pause as we consider what it even means to be successful in higher education. At what costs do we work long hours and publish prolifically, and what can we learn from Manly and Rickert about recognizing the wealth of human resources around us? Their vision of collaboration has perhaps never been as relevant, and as vital to remember, as it is today, as humanities departments are dismantled and not only the implicit valuation of techniques like close reading but more broadly even historical knowledge and critical thinking skills as they have developed in the humanities are under continuous threat. Their journeys remind us that political and corporate influences have always exerted pressure on academics and that scholars have experimented with a range of models to advance knowledge within under-resourced frameworks. In his MLA speech, Manly noted that "scholarship does not consist entirely in what is commonly called research" and being a scholar is not just about doing research and publishing: it is about being "a more interesting human being."⁴³

When at long last the *Text of the Canterbury Tales* comes to publication, Manly opens the Preface, "Our pleasure at reaching the end of a long and difficult task is marred by the loss of our beloved co-worker, Edith Rickert." He continues,

It would be difficult to exaggerate the loss to the work during these three years of final revising and preparing for publication of her wonderful familiarity with the details of every part of it, her vigilant eye, her keen critical faculty, and her faultless taste. She had brought to the work a marvelous equipment—broad and accurate scholarship, the temperament and training of an artist, the intuition of a woman with a woman's capacity for enormous drudgery in assembling and verifying all the facts concerned in each case. (8)

The sexism of "the intuition of a woman with a woman's capacity for enormous drudgery" is not to be elided. At the same time, however, we recall that Manly even as quite a young man wrote in 1892 that "I have no doubt that it is this sort of feeling that makes a woman's life so hard," and "yet the little things are the important things, after all. Life is made up of them & moves on largely by means of them." Manly describes Rickert's passing almost fully here within the context of that drudgery of detail, of "work" and as a "loss to the work," but this is clearly not what pains him. The turn to work and to her as "beloved co-worker," and to memorializing Rickert in terms of her attention to detail, her eye, her faculty, and her

taste as the mechanisms of that “marvelous equipment” that allowed her to labor to exhaustion, is also a means of circling around the otherwise inarticulable grief of losing a dear friend and genuine collaborator with whom, for decades, he endured exhaustion but also celebrated the pleasures of studying and becoming more interesting human beings. It is a grief that he simply says here is “too deep and too personal to be expressed.” It has been the aim of this collection to consider the many collaborative networks that Manly and Rickert established and maintained. In engaging with this project, and in the shared work with the contributors to this volume and with each other, we have glimpsed with profound gratitude the pleasure and sustaining power of such collaboration.

NOTES

1. See, for example, Kevin R. McClure and Alisa Hicklin Fryar, “The Great Faculty Disengagement,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, January 19, 2020, <https://www.chronicle.com/article/the-great-faculty-disengagement>.
2. Clarissa Rinaker, review of *New Methods for the Study of Literature*, by Edith Rickert. *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 27.1 (January 1928): 133–135.
3. John Matthews Manly, “Letter to David H. Stevens,” John Matthews Manly Papers, Box 13, folder 4, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, May 29, 1934. The passage is quoted as well in E.C. Armstrong, J.D.M. Ford, Francis P. Magoun, et al. “Memoirs of Fellows and Corresponding Fellows of the Mediaeval Academy,” *Speculum* 16, no. 3 (1941): 380.
4. John Matthews Manly, “Letter to David H. Stevens,” John Matthews Manly Papers, Box 13, folder 4, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, May 29, 1934.
5. John Matthews Manly, *The Manly Anniversary Studies in Language and Literature* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1928), vii.
6. Roy Vance Ramsey, *The Manly-Rickert Text of the Canterbury Tales* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1994), 77.
7. John Matthews Manly, “Letter from John Matthews Manly, to David H. Stevens,” John Matthews Manly Papers, Box 13, folder 4, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, April 16, 1935.
8. Ramsey, *Manly-Rickert*, 133.
9. Margaret Rickert, “Preface,” in *Chaucer’s World*, ed. Edith Rickert (New York: Columbia University Press), ix.

10. John Matthews Manly, "Letter from John Matthews Manly, Cambridge, MA, to Mary M. Manly," Manly Family Papers, University of Alabama Libraries Special Collections, June 25, 1891. The Manly Family Papers have many documents accessible online at: https://cdm17336.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/u0003_0000900/id/8607/rec/7.
11. John Matthews Manly, "Letter from John Matthews Manly, to Mary M. Manly," Manly Family Papers, University of Alabama Libraries Special Collections, October 14, 1894, 9.
12. Fred B. Millett, *Edith Rickert—A Memoir* (Whitman, MA: The Washington Street Press, 1944), 4.
13. John Matthews Manly, "Francis Barton Gummere, 1855–1919," *Modern Philology* 17, no. 5 (1919): 241.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid., 246.
16. John Matthews Manly, "Education That Educates," *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors* (1915–1955) 14, no. 4 (April 1928): 266. This article is based on a speech that Manly delivered at the 149th Convocation of the University of Chicago on December 20, 1927.
17. John Matthews Manly, "Letter from John Matthews Manly, Liberty, Missouri, to Mary M. Manly," Manly Family Papers, University of Alabama Libraries Special Collections, October 30, 1887, 5.
18. John Matthews Manly, "Letter from John Matthews Manly, Liberty, Missouri, to Mary M. Manly," Manly Family Papers, University of Alabama Libraries Special Collections, September 25, 1887, 1–3.
19. John Matthews Manly, "Letter from John Matthews Manly, to Mary M. Manly," Manly Family Papers, University of Alabama Libraries Special Collections, January 10, 1892, 1–2.
20. John Matthews Manly, "Letter to J. R. Hulbert," John Matthews Manly Papers, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, Feb 3, 1931.
21. Ramsey, *Manly-Rickert*, 77.
22. John Matthews Manly, "To Sir Sydney Cockerell," Department of English Language and Literature, Records, Box 14, Folder 3, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, June 16, 1938.
23. Elizabeth Wells Gallup, *The Bi-Literal Cypher of Sir Francis Bacon Discovered in His Works by Mrs. Elizabeth Wells Gallup* (Detroit: Howard Publishing Company, 1899), 1.
24. Ibid., 77.
25. John Matthews Manly, Edith Rickert, Mabel Dean, Helen McIntosh, and Margaret Josephine Rickert. *The Text of the Canterbury Tales: Studied on*

- the Basis of All Known Manuscripts*, Vol. I (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1940), 9.
26. John M. Manley and Eliza R. Bailey, *The Bailey-Manly Spelling Book*. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin: 1908), iv-v.
 27. Manly, Rickert, et al., *Text of the Canterbury Tales*, 3–4.
 28. Ibid, 4.
 29. Percy H. Boynton, “American Literature of the Present Day,” *The New Republic* 33 (January 3, 1923): 155.
 30. John Matthews Manly, “Letter to D.H. Stevens, London,” John Matthews Manly Papers, Box 13, Folder 4, Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, April 11, 1934.
 31. Kathy Peiss, *Information Hunters: When Librarians, Soldiers, and Spies Banded Together in World War II Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 7.
 32. American Library Association, “About ALA.” Created 1996. Accessed December 5, 2020. <http://www.ala.org/aboutala/1910s>.
 33. Quoted in Phyllis Franklin, “English Studies: The World of Scholarship in 1883,” *PMLA* 99, no. 3 (1984): 359.
 34. “History of the Library of Congress,” Library of Congress, accessed December 21, 2020, <https://www.loc.gov/about/history-of-the-library/>.
 35. Quoted in Peiss, *Information Hunters*, 20.
 36. Elizebeth Smith Friedman, “Orientation to the Friedman Collection,” Elizebeth Smith Friedman Interviews, Tape 1, no. 8, George C. Marshall Foundation, June 4, 1974. Smith Friedman is interviewed by Marshall Research Library Staff Members Tony Crawford and Lynn Biribauer.
 37. Elizebeth Smith Friedman makes this observation about the papers of a designer named Edwin Gaudi on Tape #1 of the Elizebeth Smith Friedman Interviews available through the George C. Marshall Foundation. However, Gaudi is not listed in the Library of Congress catalogue, and no information is available online. It is possible that she means Edwin Gould, President of the St. Louis Southwestern Railway Company, who solicited design ideas for a new airplane.
 38. Ibid, 11.
 39. The William F. Friedman Papers are at <https://www.marshallfoundation.org/library/collection/william-f-friedman-papers/#!/collection=85> and the Elizebeth Smith Friedman Collection is at <https://www.marshallfoundation.org/library/collection/elizabeth-smith-friedman-collection/#!/collection=84>.
 40. See Stanley Fish, “Mind Your P’s and B’s: The Digital Humanities and Interpretation,” *The New York Times*, January 23, 2012. http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/01/23/mind-your-ps-and-bs-the-digital-humanities-and-interpretation/?_r=0.

41. John Matthews Manly, "Overview of Cryptology and the Army," in *Codes, Ciphers and Spies: Tales of Military Intelligence in World War I*, ed. John F. Dooley (New York: Springer, 2016), 32, 33.
42. John Matthews Manly, "Letter from John Matthews Manly, to Mary M. Manly," Manly Family Papers, University of Alabama Libraries Special Collections, October 14, 1894, 7, 10.
43. John Matthews Manly, "The President's Address: New Bottles," *PMLA* 35 (1920): xlvii–lx, liv.

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¹ Note: Page numbers followed by 'n' refer to notes.

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