“AN EXCELLENT CORE”: RUTGERS’ MILTON COLLECTION

BY FERNANDA H. PERRONE

In creating this bibliography, I am indebted to Special Collections cataloger Silvana Notarmaso, who cataloged and re-cataloged the Milton Collection in conjunction with the 2011 exhibition, John Milton and the Cultures of Print. The information in the checklist was largely drawn from her careful research and knowledge of rare book description. I would also like to thank Thomas Fulton of the Rutgers Department of English for many helpful suggestions.

Introduction

Special Collections and University Archives at Rutgers University Libraries is fortunate to hold a significant collection of early editions of works by John Milton. Numbering fifty-six books, it is the fifth-largest Milton collection at a public university in the United States. Originally known as Queen’s College, Rutgers was chartered in 1766 as a small private institution affiliated with the Dutch Reformed Church. In the early records of the college, John Milton’s name appears in 1782, when members of the Athenian Society, the student literary society that started Rutgers’ first library, debated his work at one of their meetings. The work of the Society—and that of the college as a whole—was disrupted by the American Revolution, and no one knows what became of this fledgling library.

By the early nineteenth century, the college had a small library chiefly consisting of theological works. Two new literary societies, the Peithessophian and the Philoclean were founded in 1825. These societies built their own libraries, which compared favorably to the college library and were focused on literature. When the societies declined in popularity in the late nineteenth century, their libraries were integrated into that of the college, forming the nucleus of the current library. Indeed, the 1821 edition of the Poetical Works of John Milton bears the stamp of the Peithessophian Society. Unfortunately, early library accession records are incomplete, but apparently
the library began collecting rare books seriously in the 1930s. In 1937, the Associated Friends of the Library of Rutgers University was founded to encourage gifts of books and manuscripts and raise funds for special needs. The Journal of the Rutgers University Libraries, founded in the same year, included a regular column on notable acquisitions, as well as scholarly articles based on the library’s holdings. The Milton collection grew gradually through donations and judicious purchases. Some of these acquisitions were shepherded by J. Milton French, Milton scholar and chair of the Rutgers English Department.

Joseph Milton French was born in Randolph, Massachusetts, in 1895 (see Figure 4.1). He received a B.A. from Harvard in 1917. After serving in the American Expeditionary Force during the First World War, he returned to Harvard, where he studied with the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century specialist Hyder E. Rollins, receiving a Ph.D. in 1928. French taught at Lafayette College, New York University, Dartmouth, Harvard, University of Akron, and Queens College before coming to Rutgers in January 1940. As Kathryn James’s essay in this volume vividly illustrates, the Second World War had an extraordinarily impact on academic life, and French committed himself, as department chair, to building up the faculty and graduate programs that had languished during the war. The English department’s offerings increased from two graduate courses with three or four students to thirteen courses and nearly one hundred graduate students by French’s retirement in 1960. J. Milton French died in 1962, leaving a wife, Elva Plunkett, two children, David P. French and Jane Lumley, and several grandchildren. His son, who also studied with Hyder Rollins, became a professor of eighteenth-century English literature at the University of Oklahoma.

In 1930, J. Milton French began working on his what became his life’s work, the five-volume Life Records of John Milton, published by the Rutgers University Press from 1949 to 1958. In addition to his monograph Milton in Chancery (1939), French worked on several other landmark multivolume works. He was contributing editor of The Works of John Milton, published from 1931 to 1938 by Columbia University Press, and served on the editorial board of The Complete Prose Works of John Milton. French was selected as an Honored Scholar by the Milton Society of America in 1956. French seems to have begun working with Rutgers Librarian George Osborn on acquiring books for Rutgers almost immediately
upon his arrival in New Brunswick. (George has no relation to the scholar-curator James Marshall Osborn at Yale, whom he also worked with, as Kathryn James discusses in her essay.) In a 1940 article in *The Journal of the Rutgers University Libraries*, French writes,

> Since last February we have acquired original editions of three of Milton’s divorce tracts (*The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* of 1644, *Tetrachordon* of 1645, and *Colasterion* of 1645), three political works (*the Defensio* of 1651, a later edition of the same work of 1692, and *Eikonoklastes* of 1649), and several other books (*An Apology* of 1642, *The History of Britain* of 1670, and *the Letters of State* of 1694). Among various useful companion books in this field which have been added are the rare index to Masson’s *Life*, Aldis Wright’s fine facsimile of Milton’s Cambridge Manuscript, and Helen Darbishire’s recent facsimile of the manuscript of Book I of *Paradise Lost*. With the Columbia set of Milton and other editions and critical works which we already have, these give us an excellent core of a working Miltonic library.¹

1940 was obviously an extraordinary year for collecting Miltonia. We unfortunately lack the sort of precision reported in this article for the exact dates of acquisition for much of the collection, or just where the funds for this ambitious rate of acquisition came from—though such works were a great deal less expensive than they are now. It is possible that French donated some of these works himself or contributed funds for their purchase. We do know that they were obtained from a book dealer, Barnet J. Beyer of New York, whose bookseller descriptions have been tipped into each volume. In fact, in 1941, both French and Beyer are listed as having made gifts to the library.² *Tetrachordon* also bears a Rutgers Library bookplate stating that it was given by Albert Stanburrough Cook. Cook was a Rutgers graduate of the class of 1872, who became the Chair of the English department at Yale, which he joined in 1889 after teaching at the University of California. After a highly influential and prolific career in the early years of English as an academic discipline, Cook died in 1927, a bit too early to be part of French’s scholarly and professional network.
Little is known about the provenance of the other early Milton editions in Rutgers’ collection. Several titles were received as gifts from alumni, faculty members, or others whose identities could not be determined. Our excellent copies of *Areopagitica* (1644) and *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (1643) were given by New Jersey resident Ogden White in 1954. This information has been noted on the checklist when available.

While I have tried to include standard bibliographical information on each book in the checklist, additional details can be gleaned through searching the Rutgers University Libraries public online catalog. The books have been arranged chronologically by year, and alphabetically within years, with a few logical exceptions. Titles have been transcribed as they appear on the title page, with the addition of some marks of punctuation to render them more readable. Question marks have been inserted where information was deduced from other sources, or, in case of handwriting, was not completely legible.

**Checklist**

*An apology against a pamphlet call’d A Modest confutation of the animadversions upon a remonstrant against Smectymnuus.* London: Printed by E.G. [i.e. Edward Griffin] for Iohn Rothwell, and are to be sold at the signe of the Sunne in Pauls Church-yard, 1642. [4], 58, [1] p.; 19 cm (4to).

A reply to: Hall, Joseph. *A modest confutation of a slanderous and scurrilous libell.* This is the fifth of Milton’s pamphlets written in support of the five Protestant ministers in the Smectymnuus controversy. Smectymnuus is a pseudonym composed of the initials of the authors who used it, viz. Stephen Marshall, Edmund Calamy, Thomas Young, Matthew Newcomen, and William Spurstowe. Wing 2090

ESTC R12880

Bookseller description from Barnet J. Beyer tipped in.

*The doctrine and discipline of divorce, restor’d to the good of both sexes, from the bondage of canon law, and other mistakes, to Christian freedom, guided by the rule of charity, wherein also many places of Scripture, have recover’d their long-lost meaning, seasonable to be now thought on in the reformation intended.* London: Printed by T.P. [i.e. Thomas Paine] and M.S. [i.e. Matthew Simmons] in Goldsmiths Alley, 1643. [2],
First edition, 2nd state.
Special Collections copy imperfect: Last blank leaf wanting; head margins closely cropped, all page numbers and first line of text on some pages cut into.
Special Collections copy bound with A new invention, or, A paire of cristall spectacles [London]: Printed according to order for G. Bishop, 1644; and Milton, John. Brief notes upon a late sermon, titl’d, The fear of God and the King. London: [n.p], 1660.
Wing M2092
ESTC R210022
Presented by Ogden White.
Acquired in 1954

The doctrine & discipline of divorce, restor’d to the good of both sexes, from the bondage of canon law, and other mistakes, to the true meaning of Scripture in the law and gospel compar’d, wherein also are set down the bad consequences of abolishing or condemning of sin, that which the law of God allows, and Christ abolisht not, now the second time revised and much augmented, into books, to the Parliament of England, with the Assembly, the author J. M. London: [Thomas Payne(?) and Matthew Simmons], imprinted in the yeare 1644. [8], 82 p.; 19 cm (4to).
Wing M2109
ESTC 11274
Bookplate of John Camp Williams.
Acquired 1940 upon advice of J. Milton French.

The judgement of Martin Bucer, concerning divorce, writ’n to Edward the sixt, in his second book of the kingdom of Christ, and now English, wherein a late book restor’g the Doctrine and discipline of divorce, is here confirm’d and justify’d by the authoritie of Martin Bucer, to the Parliament of England, publish by authoritie. London: Printed by Matthew Simmons, 1644. [16], 24, [2] p.; 19 cm (4to).
Translation of “De coniugio et divorcio” from “De regno Christi” by Bucer, in support of “The doctrine and discipline of divorce” by Milton. Includes post-script.
Wing B5270
ESTC R3964

Colasterion, a reply to a nameless answer against The doctrine and discipline of divorce, wherein the trivial author of that answer is discover’d, the licencer conferr’d with, and the opinion which they traduce defended, by the former author, J. M. [London: Matthew Simmons], printed in the year, 1645. [4], 27, [1] p.; 19 cm (4to).
Wing 2099
ESTC R212205

Tetrachordon, expositions upon the foure chief places in Scripture, which treat of mariage, or nullities in mariage … wherein The doctrine and discipline of divorce, as was lately publish’d, is confirm’d by explanation of Scripture, by testimony of ancient fathers, of civill lawes in the primitive church, of famousest reformed divines, and lastly, by an intended act of the Parlament and Church of England in the last yeare of Edvward the Sixth, by the former author J. M. London: [n.p.], printed in the yeare 1645. [8], 40, 37–98, [2] p.; 20 cm (4to).
Printed by Thomas Payne and Matthew Simmons. Coleridge identifies 3 states of signature A. Special Collections copy: Coleridge state 2, all errors corrected except A2, line 16 "perswaston"; last blank wanting.
Wing M2184
ESTC R212199
Bookseller description of Barnet J. Beyer tipped in. Presented by Professor Albert Stanburrough Cook.

Eikonoklastēs in answer to a book intitl’d Eikōn basilikē, the portrature of his Sacred Majesty in his solitudes and sufferings, the author I.M.; published by authority. London: Printed by Matthew Simmons, next dore to the gilded Lyon in Aldersgate street, 1649. [14], 242 p.; 19 cm (4to).
A reply to Gauden, John. Eikōn basilikē. Authorship of Eikōn basilikē
was originally attributed to Charles I, but according to Madan (pp. 126–133), it was written by John Gauden who probably included some authentic writings of the King.
Special Collections copy has armorial bookplate of Thomas Brooke, F.S.A., Armitage Bridge.
Bookseller’s description from Barnet J. Beyer tipped in.
Wing (1996 ed.) M2112
ESTC R202156
Acquired 1940 on advice of J. Milton French.

4.2 Title Page, *Eikonoklastēs*, 1649.
The grand case of conscience concerning the engagement stated & resolved, or, A strict survey of the Solemn league & Covenant in reference to the present engagement. London: Printed by John Macock for Francis Tyton, and are to be sold at his shop at the three Daggers neer the Inner Temple, Fleetstreet, 1650. 22, [2]p.; 19 cm (4to).
ESTC 206308
Formerly attributed to John Milton.

First edition, third issue (with errata leaf).
Title vignette: Arms of the Commonwealth of England. In the third issue the title page vignette is a square metal block of the Commonwealth Arms instead of a round woodcut found in the first issue, and the initial blank of the first two issues “is folded round, so as to follow the title-page, and has on the recto seven lines of errata, with a publisher’s note asking the reader to correct minor defects.”
M2166
ESTC R32430
Bookseller description of Barnet J. Beyer tipped in.
Leather bookplate of John Camp Williams.
This copy may be the one acquired in 1940 on the advice of J. Milton French.

Ioannis Miltoni Angli Pro populo Anglicano defensio, contra Claudii anonymi, aliàs Salmasii, defensionem regiam. Londini [i.e. Amsterdam]: Typis Du Gardianis [i.e. Louis Elzevier], anno Domini 1651. 283. [5] p.; 14 cm (12mo).
The imprint is false. Actually printed in Amsterdam by Louis Elzevier.
Wing (1996 ed.) M2168C
ESTC R40028
Special Collections copy 1: Contemporary vellum over boards; ms. title on spine: Miltoni Defensio pop. Angl. co[ntra] [Salmasius]; bookseller description tipped in.
Special Collections copy 2: Contemporary vellum over boards; ms. titles, printer name on spine, ms. notes in French on front free endpaper.

*Ioannis Miltoni Angli Pro populo Anglicano defensio, contra Claudii anonymi, aliàs Salmasii, defensionem regiam.* Londini [i.e. Utrecht?]: Typis Du-Gardianis, anno Domini 1651. [20], 244 p.; 13 cm (12mo).

The imprint is false. One of seven duodecimo continental reprints, probably printed at Utrecht. Actual printer’s name unknown.
Wing (2nd ed.) M2168D
ESTC R31234

Special Collections copy: Contemporary vellum over boards with double gilt fillet border; and two pin (upper board) and strap/clasp (lower board) fastenings.
Acquired with the Ralph G. Wright Book Fund, which was established in 1937.


The imprint is false. Actually printed in Amsterdam by Louis Elzevier.
Includes index.
Wing (1996 ed.) M2168B
ESTC R21409

*Ioannis Miltoni Angli Pro populo Anglicano defensio, contra Claudii anonymi, aliàs Salmasii, defensionem regiam.* Londini [i.e. Gouda?): Typis Du Gardianis [i.e. G. de Hoeve?], anno Domini 1652. 192 p.; 14 cm (12mo).

A reply to Saumaise, Claude. *Defensio regia pro Carolo I.*
The imprint is false. Possibly printed in Gouda by G. de Hoeve.
Wing (1996 ed.) M2169
ESTC R18974

Cut-out bookseller listing for Milton’s *Pro populo Anglicano defensio* affixed to front pastedown.

Special Collections copy 2: Ink stamp of Sir Robert Harry Inglis (1786–1855), British Conservative politician.

_Joannis Miltoni Angli Pro populo Anglicano defensio, contra Claudii anonymi, aliàs Salmasii, defensionem regiam._ Londini [i.e. Utrecht]: Typis Du Gardianis [i.e. Theodorus ab Ackersdijck and Gisbertus à Zijll], anno Domini 1652. 276, [12] p.; 13 cm (12mo).

The imprint is false. Actually printed in Utrecht by Theodorus ab Ackersdijck and Gisbertus à Zijll.

Page 248 misnumbered 148.


Wing (1996 ed.) M2169A
ESTC R31897

Special Collections copy 1: Contemporary vellum over boards with double blind fillet border (ties lacking).

Special collections copy 1: Manuscript note indicating that Milton had been released from prison in contemporary hand on rear flyleaf.

Acquired in 1967.


A reply to the tract by Pierre Du Moulin, which Milton had mistakenly attributed to Alexander More, its editor.

Wing 171
ESTC R208486

_Joannis Miltoni Defensio secunda pro populo Anglicano, contra infamen libellum anonymum, cujus titulus, Regii sanguinis clamor adversus parricidas anglicanos, accessit Alexandri Mori, Ecclesiastae sacrariumque litterarum professoris, Fides publica contra calumnias Ioannis MiltonI scurrae._ Hagae-Comitum: Ex typographia Adriani Vlacq, MDCLIV [1654] [16], 128 p.; 13 cm (12mo).

“Lectori” (pref.) signed: Georgius Crantzius S.S. Theol. D.
First issued in London, also in 1654, under the title: *Pro populo anglicano defensio secunda*. Special Collections copy without [2nd pt.] More’s *Fides Publica contra calumnias Ioannis Miltoni*. Not in ESTC.


Frontispiece portrait signed: Gul. Faithorne ad vivum delin. et sculpsit.
Includes index. With a final errata leaf.
Wing 2119
ESTC R13663
Ownership inscriptions/autographs of Judeth Piggott, T.F., Silas Cook, Judeth Hyde and Anne Vivian.
Acquired 1940 on the advice of J. Milton French.

Engraved portrait: W Dolle sculpsit.
ESTC R3322

Wing 2117
ESTC R13511
Special Collections copy: First and last blank leaves and advertisement leaf at end wanting.

Many copies of this edition include a copy of the Dolle engraving of the Faithorne portrait as a frontispiece.

ESTC R13351
Special Collections copy imperfect: Leaves A3 (bearing Andrew Marvell’s poem “On Paradise lost”) and Y8 (final blank) wanting; without frontispiece portrait (as issued?).

A surreptitious publication of dispatches written by Milton in his capacity of Latin Secretary to the Council of State, between the years 1649 and 1659.

ESTC R16771.
Special Collections copy: Contemporary vellum over boards; red sprinkled edges.

This is the first issue of the second edition.

Wing M2121
ESTC R16523
Special Collections copy: Contemporary panelled calf(?) with blind tooled corner fleurons, red stained edges.
The history of Britain, that part especially now call’d England from the first traditional beginning, continu’d to the Norman Conquest, collected out of the antientest and best authours thereof by John Milton, 2d ed. London: Printed by J.M [i.e. John Macock] for Mark Pardoe, and are to be sold at the Black Raven over against Bedford-House, in the Strand, 1678. [2], 5–357, [59] p.; 18 cm (8vo). Includes index.

Wing 2122
ESTC R32429
Autograph of Charles Augustus West, Esq., 1785.


Wing 2145
ESTC R19396
Autograph L. J. Papillon.


Wing (2nd ed.) M2153
Special Collections copy imperfect: last leaf of advertisements wanting.

One of three imprint variants of this edition. Issued on ordinary paper (double inner margin measures 65 mm., predominantly with foolscap watermark) and on large paper...
Eikonoklastēs in answer to a book intitul’d Eikon basilike, the portraiture of his Sacred Majesty King Charles the First in his solitudes and sufferings, by John Milton. Amsterdam: [n.p.], printed in the year, 1690. [16], 207, [1] p.; 19 cm (8vo).


Letters of state, written by Mr. John Milton, to most of the sovereign princes and republicks of Europe, from the year 1649, till the year 1659; to which is added, an account of his life, together with several of his poems, and a catalogue of his works, never before printed. London: [n.p.], printed in the year, 1694. [6], xlvi, [6], 336 p.; 16 cm (12mo).

A translation, by Edward Phillips of Literae pseudo-senatûs Anglicani, Cromwellii....

“The life of Mr. John Milton,” was written by Edward Phillips.
Acquired 1940 upon advice of J. Milton French.

ESTC T134615

“The life of Mr. John Milton” is by Elijah Fenton. Most plates engraved by John Lightbody; frontispiece plate signed Jacobus Smith. Title in red and black.
ESTC T133921
Special Collections copy bound with: Addison, Joseph. Notes upon the twelve books of Milton’s Paradise Lost. London: Printed for a Company of Stationers, [1739?]

Comus: a masque, (now adapted to stage) as alter’d from Milton’s masque at Ludlow-castle, which was first represented on Michaelmas-Day, 1634, before the Right Honourable the Earl of Bridgewater, Lord President of Wales …; the music was composed by Mr. Hen. Lawes, who represented the attendant spirit. London: Printed for A. Millar, opposite to Katharine-Street, in the Strand, MDCCL [1750] 58, [2] p.; 21 cm (8vo).
ESTC T31078
Special Collections copy imperfect: Final advertisement leaf wanting.

ESTC T133903
Special Collections copy: Contemporary calf with gilt pineapple/dog-tooth roll border; rebacked in red sheep; gold tooled spine in six compartments, lettered direct; inscriptions: “The gift of the Earl of Exeter, 1755,” “Autograph of my dearest and most venerable
father (T. Rennell, Dean of Winton, 1825); For Charlie and Augusta, with my love and best wishes for many years of abiding happiness, always fondly, Kate.”

Paradise regain’d: a poem in four books, to which is added Samson Agonistes, and Poems upon several occasions, the author John Milton, from the text of Thomas Newton, D.D. Birmingham: Printed by John Baskerville for F. and R. Tonson in London, MDCCLVIII [1758] [2], lxix, [4], 6–100, 102–163, [3], 166–390 p.; 22 cm (8vo).
ESTC T134224
Special Collections copy imperfect: xlxix preliminary pages containing “The life of Milton” wanting.
Special Collections copy with subscribers’ list (18 p.) and two poems on Paradise Lost by Samuel Barrow and Andrew Marvell bound in after title page.
Special Collections copy contemporary calf with single gilt fillet border; book plate of Robert Williams.

Frontispiece portrait by J. Miller often bound in.
No punctuation after “Birmingham” in imprint. Variant title page in some copies has a colon after “Birmingham”.
ESTC T133905

ESTC N19462
Presented by Professor Albert Stanburrough Cook.

Comus: a masque, as it is acted at the Theatres-Royal in Drury-Lane and Covent-Garden, altered from Milton. London: Printed for J. Wenman, no 144, Fleet-Street, and sold by all other booksellers in town and country, MDCCLXXVII [1777] 12 p., [1] leaf of plates, ill.; 22 cm (8vo).
Adaptation by John Dalton.
ESTC T31076

ESTC T134607

Appendix containing Remarks on the Greek verses of Milton by Charles Burney.
ESTC T2380

Paradise lost by John Milton, with notes selected from Newton and others, to which is prefixed the life of the author, with a critical dissertation on the poetical works of Milton and observations on his language and versification by Samuel Johnson, L.L.D. 2 vols. London Printed for J. Parsons, 21, Paternoster Row, 1796. ill., port.; 25 cm (8vo).
Engraved title pages. Title page for v. 2 is same title page used for v. 1 (reads “Vol. 1”).
With a list of subscribers in v. 1.
ESTC 134624
Special Collections copy (v. 1–2): Contemporary tree calf (or sheep).

Edited by Francis Henry Egerton, Earl of Bridgewater; translation into French by De La Bintinaye and into Italian by Gaetano Polidori.
Added title page in Italian; text in French and Italian on opposite pages.


Acquired 1940 upon the advice of J. Milton French.


*Paradise regained / John Milton, decorated by Thomas Lowinsky*. London: The Fleuron, 1924. [10], 80 p. illustrations; 23 cm. This edition is limited to 350 copies. Issued with an extra set of Lowinsky’s 3 illustrations, enclosed in an envelope and inserted in a pocket on the inside back cover. Special Collections has copy no. 17.


Notes


4. The library book plate stating that this edition was presented by Albert S. Cook may have been placed in error. This edition of *Tetrachordon*, the only one owned by the library, was among the books described by J. Milton French as acquired in 1940 (see note 1) – Cook died in 1927.

References:


