

A SWINBURNE GALLIMAUFRY 
Selections from the John S. Mayfield Papers

An Exhibition October 5, 2009 through January 8, 2010

Curated by LISETTE MATANO

With the assistance of KAREN O'CONNELL

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FOREWORD

This exhibition marks the centenary of the death of the great Victorian lyric poet, Algernon Charles Swinburne. More exactly, it is a celebration of his work, as well as of the accomplishments of one of the—if not *the*—most devoted of his collectors, John S. Mayfield. The title of the exhibition pays homage to a collection of articles by Mayfield on Swinburne published as *Swinburneiana: A Gallimaufry of Bits and Pieces about Algernon Charles Swinburne* (1974), which incorporates one of Mayfield's favorite and frequently used words, "gallimaufry." That is to say, in Old French, "a ragout"; and in modern English, "a motley assortment." Arranged thematically, the exhibition highlights some of Swinburne's major inspirations, works, and relationships. Selections of rare and limited editions of Swinburne's works from Mayfield's library are included.

John S. Mayfield (1904–1983)

Born in Meridian, Texas, John Mayfield was the son of former U.S. Senator Earle B. Mayfield and Ora Lumpkin. He received a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Texas in 1930, a Master of Arts from Southern Methodist University in 1932, and studied for a doctorate at Columbia University from 1932 to 1935.

Mayfield's early career was with the U.S. military and government. From 1935 to 1942, he worked in the General Accounting Office, Washington, D. C., as an auditor and eventually became chief of recruitment, training and placement. During the Second World War he was a lieutenant commander in the Pacific with the U. S. Navy (1942–1946). Afterwards, he spent three years at the War Assets Administration, Washington, D. C. (1946–1949), in various capacities including Congressional liaison, deputy administrator for the Office of Administrative Services, and assistant deputy administrator for the Office of Management. From 1949 to 1950, Mayfield was the director of personnel at the Department of Defense.

During the 1950s, Mayfield worked in the private sector, most notably becoming vice-president of the American Rail and Steel Company, Washington, D. C., in 1951. His primary responsibility was the management of relations and projects with federal agencies, as well as the company's operations in Asia and Latin America.

By the 1950s, Mayfield had already garnered a reputation as a bibliophile and collector, not only of rare books, but of manuscripts by American and English poets and writers such as Lord Byron, Robinson Jeffers, Sidney Lanier, Amy Lowell, Algernon Charles Swinburne, Booth Tarkington, and Mark Twain, among others. It followed that he became the curator of the division of manuscripts and rare books at the Syracuse University Library (1961–1971).

After retirement in 1971, Mayfield served as vice-chairman of trustees, chairman of the program committee, and member of the executive committee of the Georgetown University Library Associates.

Recognized as one of the leading collectors of Swinburne, Mayfield amassed the largest private collection of the poet's works. In 1929, he bought his first item, *Rosamund, Queen of the Lombards*, published in 1899. A highlight of his career as collector was the discovery, in 1967, of two missing pages for the manuscript of Swinburne's novel, *Lesbia Brandon*, which had been published with the omission in 1952. Mayfield donated the pages to the British Museum, owner of the rest of the manuscript.

Mayfield's greatest achievement as a bibliophile was his collection of first editions of Swinburne's first critically acclaimed published poem, *Atalanta in Calydon* (1865). Goaded by a note by Thomas J. Wise, in his bibliography of Swinburne's works, asserting that only one hundred copies were issued of the first edition, Mayfield embarked on a more than thirty-year quest, from 1943 to 1976, to collect them all and disprove Wise's claim. In 1977, he was presented with the one hundred and first copy of the first edition as a gift from his friend, Georgetown University Library's manuscripts librarian, Nicholas Scheetz.

Algernon Charles Swinburne (April 5, 1837–April 10, 1909)

Swinburne was the son of Lady Jane Henrietta, daughter of the third Earl of Ashburnham, and of Admiral Charles Henry Swinburne whose family was one of the oldest in Northumberland. He had five younger siblings: Alice, Edith, Charlotte Jane, Isabel, and Edward. Although born in London, Swinburne spent his childhood on the Isle of Wight, where he received his early education at the Brook Rectory preparatory school (1848). Following this he studied at Eton (1849 to 1854), and matriculated at Balliol College, Oxford University, in January 1856. To the disappointment of his family, Swinburne did not distinguish himself at university, managing to pass only the Moderations examination in 1858, and failing to take the final ("Greats") examination necessary for completion of a Bachelor of Arts degree. He left Oxford in June 1860.

The circle of intellectual and artistic friends that Swinburne developed at Oxford continued to flourish in London where he embarked on his career both as poet and young man of independent means partaking of the usual offerings of city life, both refined and otherwise. A slight, delicate man who likely suffered from a degree of epilepsy, Swinburne was more the victim of his own excesses—particularly of liquor—than the commonly promulgated image of the cavalier "bad boy" of the Victorian era. In fact, Swinburne's reputation was largely founded on, and cemented by, the publication of a single volume of poetry, *Poems and Ballads*, in 1866. In the words of biographer Rikky Rooksby, the book struck "Victorian poetry [and society] with the force of a tidal wave

... [and made Swinburne] into an international figurehead for sexual, religious and political radicalism."

Frequently ill throughout the London years, Swinburne's health crises came to a head in 1879, which prompted his friend and agent Theodore Watts-Dunton to remove him from the iniquities of the city to the house known as The Pines in Putney, where he lived the remainder of his days.

Watts-Dunton was criticized, most notably by Victorian biographer Edmund Gosse, for isolating Swinburne and destroying his artistic spirit. However, Watts-Dunton's wife Clara asserted that seclusion was Swinburne's own choice, and that "It is as well to say here that Swinburne's intense love of privacy has given rise to a vast amount of foolish and sometimes spiteful talk about his inaccessibility at The Pines." Whatever the truth, Swinburne remained aloof from his former London connections for thirty years!

Swinburne died of pneumonia at The Pines, just a few days after his seventy-second birthday. His entire estate was left to Watts-Dunton, his sole executor. Swinburne was buried in Bonchurch on the Isle of Wight. Contrary to his wishes, but in keeping with family tradition, and with protests from the clergy, the funeral was Anglican. Later, the vice dean of Canterbury Cathedral pronounced that "much lustral water and the most precious of all precious blood were needed to do away with the pollution which Swinburne's poetry introduced into English literature."

A hundred years after his death, the moderate aspect of his character notwithstanding, Swinburne's reputation is still that of a rebel.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

An exhibition of this size and depth is always a collaborative effort, and many people on the Georgetown University Library staff were involved in its creation and execution. I am, first and foremost, grateful to Lisette Matano, the exhibition's curator, and to Karen O'Connell, Preservation Coordinator and Rare Books Librarian, who worked with the books on display and contributed two of the catalogue sections. Thanks also to LuLen Walker, Art Curator; Christen Runge, Assistant Art Curator; and David Hagen, Graphic Artist and Photographer. A debt of gratitude is owed to Mark Samuels Lasner for the generous loan of items from the Mark Samuels Lasner Collection at the University of Delaware Library. (Mark is also responsible for the design and typesetting of this publication.) The exhibition is dedicated to our esteemed colleague, Nicholas Scheetz, Manuscripts Librarian, Special Collections Research Center, Georgetown University Library—a friend of John S. Mayfield and a friend to all who cherish manuscripts and books.

JOHN BUCHEL

*Head, Special Collections Research Center
Georgetown University Library*

THE EARLY YEARS 🐼

Isle of Wight and the Sea

Although born in London, Swinburne grew up on the Isle of Wight, located off the southern coast of England, where he resided and went to school until he entered Eton at age twelve. Childhood memories of playing along the shore with siblings and cousins imprinted deeply in his imagination and colored the landscape of the mature poet's works.

In a letter to Edmund Clarence Stedman (February 20, 1875), Swinburne describes his early relationship with the sea: "As for the sea, its salt *must* have been in my blood before I was born. I can remember no earlier enjoyment than being held up naked in my father's arms and brandished between his hands, then shot like a stone from a sling through the air, shouting and laughing with delight, head foremost into the coming wave ... I remember being afraid of other things but never of the sea."

For Swinburne, who was also nicknamed "Seagull" as a boy, the sea came to symbolize a youthful freedom, the loss of which he would forever regret.

1.1 GEORGE RICHMOND (1809–1896). Algernon Charles Swinburne and his sisters Edith and Alice as children. Watercolor, 1843. Postcard reproduction of original in the National Portrait Gallery, London. (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Swinburne Research Correspondence.*)

1.2 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. "The Seaboard." Autograph manuscript poem. (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #218.*)

Northumberland and Mary Queen of Scots

Swinburne's second childhood home was in Northumberland where he spent many holidays at Capheaton Hall near Cambo, the house of his grandfather Sir John Edward Swinburne (1762–1860), and the family seat since the twelfth century. Sir John was born in France a Catholic, but converted to Protestantism in 1786. Nevertheless, his poet grandson was forever proud of the fact of his Catholic and Northumbrian heritage. In a letter to Edward C. Stedman (February 20, 1875), he wrote of: "Sir John Swinburne, a person whose life would be better worth writing than mine. Born and brought up in France ... my grandfather never left [that country] until called away at 25 on the falling in of such English estates ... as confiscation had left to a family which in every Catholic rebellion from the days of my own Queen Mary to those of Charles Edward had given their blood like water and their lands like dust for the Stuarts."

The proximity of Capheaton to Scotland, and stories told by Sir John himself, contributed to Swinburne's passion for the legends of Mary Stuart and English Border ballads. He shared the latter interest with his cousin Mary Gordon Leith and later with Elizabeth Siddal, wife of Pre-Raphaelite artist and poet Dante Gabriel Rossetti. According to William A. McInnes, editor of *Ballads of the English Border* (1925), one of Swinburne's pet projects "from 1858 onwards [was the] rewriting of certain ballads."

- 1.3 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. "Northumberland." Printed proof with accompanying signed autograph letter, dated January 10, 1900, to W.H. Galloway Kyle, regarding prospective publication in the *North Counties Magazine* (October 1900). The poem was also included in *A Channel Passage and Other Poems* (1904). (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #354.*)
- 1.4 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. *Border Ballads* (Boston: Privately printed by the Bibliophile Society, 1912). (*From the library of John S. Mayfield.*)
- 1.5 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. "Murder of Rizzio." Autograph manuscript. (*Purchased by Georgetown University Library.*)
- 1.6 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. *Mary Stuart: A Tragedy* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1881). First edition. Includes dedication to Victor Hugo. (*From the library of John S. Mayfield.*)
- 1.7 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. *Chastelard: A Tragedy* (London: John Camden Hotten, 1866). The first edition of this title was published by Edward Moxon & Co., in 1865. (*From the library of John S. Mayfield.*)

Eton (1849–1853)

The practice of corporal punishment at Eton fostered the sado-masochism that later manifested itself in Swinburne's life-long attraction to the novels of the Marquis de Sade, in Swinburne's poetry, and in some of the company he kept. Flagellation was an interest Swinburne shared with George Augustus Howell (whom he met through Dante Gabriel Rossetti in 1864); George Powell (who sought Swinburne's acquaintance after the publication of *Atalanta in Calydon* in 1865); and the painter Simeon Solomon (whom Swinburne knew from the Cheyne Walk days at Rossetti's house where the former two reputedly chased each other naked). Together (in the words of Mollie Panter-Downes), "the randy, rackets companions" frequented an establishment in the Circus Road, St. John's Wood,

“where, in luxurious rooms, a couple of blonde Amazons flagellated the customers who were prepared to pay handsomely for such special pleasures.”

- 1.8 JAMES LEIGH JOYNES (1824–1908). Signed autograph letter to Algernon Charles Swinburne, dated April 23, 1866. (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #383.*)

The Reverend James Leigh Joynes and his wife were in charge of the students, including Swinburne, who resided in Keate House at Eton. Joynes was considered a good housemaster and able tutor, although he was also rumored to have been the perpetrator of the school floggings that obsessed Swinburne for the rest of his life.

The letter acknowledges Joynes’ receipt of Swinburne’s published poem, *Atalanta in Calydon*: “I was certainly very pleased with your thinking of me again now that your literary pursuits have withdrawn you so much from Eton. Yet why should they? Can not you now resume your friendship for us? ... We may not have much in common now, as our pursuits are so different, but ... I was attached to you in former times & I believe that you were attached to me ...”

- 1.9 SPY [SIR LESLIE MATTHEW WARD] (1851–1922). *Jimmy*. Original lithograph published in *Vanity Fair* (July 16, 1887). Caricature of Eton tutor Rev. James Leigh Joynes. The accompanying caption reads: “He is old-fashioned in his notions, has a pious horror of modern innovations, has handled the birch with an unsparing hand, and has usually accompanied his stripes either with a grim word of warning or a biting jest to the victim at the block; so that he has left a lasting impression on many generations of little boys.” (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series.*)

- 1.10 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. “Walter Errington.” Fragment of an autograph manuscript of a flogging poem, undated.

From all the broad red mass of naked flesh
Where the full cheeks behind divide, afresh
The blood spins out & spreads beneath the rod
And all the [broken?] twigs are bathed in blood.
The master seeing his whipping work well done:
“You may get up now, Walter Errington.”

(*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #277.*)

- 1.11 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. Autograph notebook, ca. 1857. Consists of drafts of a drama about the Borgias; poems (including “Hide and Seek” and “Shelley”); part of a poem, “The Birch, Book II”; and part of a prose tale about Edward at the “Switchester School, Birchhampstead.” (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #339.*)

IDOLS (LITERARY AND POLITICAL)

As a youth, Swinburne was always drawn to the work of notable individuals who represented, in varying degrees, a departure from the established order in art, literature, politics, or society. His lifelong political support of republicanism was engendered partly by his grandfather, Sir John Swinburne, who, according to Edmund Gosse, “encouraged him to adopt extreme views in politics, telling the lad how, in years long past, he had ‘repeatedly’ made himself ‘liable to be impeached and executed for high treason’ by the outspoken republicanism of his sentiments.”

As a student at Oxford, his rebellion was fanned by friendship with John Nichol, a proponent of intellectual freedom and a disciple of the Italian revolutionary Giuseppe Mazzini. It was also at Oxford that Swinburne met Dante Gabriel Rossetti and members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, rebels against convention, who arrived in November 1857 to paint murals in the new Oxford Union Society debating hall. The ensuing close friendship with the Pre-Raphaelites was to have a deep and lasting impact on Swinburne’s development as a poet.

- 2.1 WILLIAM BELL SCOTT (1811–1890). *Algernon Charles Swinburne*. Oil on canvas, 1860. Reproduction of original at Balliol College, Oxford. (*Reproduced with permission from Balliol College, Oxford.*)

William Blake (1757–1827)

Swinburne and the Rossettis were great admirers of Blake’s poetry, and his support of the French and Italian revolutions appealed to their own republican ideals. Swinburne’s *William Blake: A Critical Essay* (1868) grew out of the collaboration, in 1859, with William Michael and Dante Gabriel Rossetti on editing the manuscript of Blake’s biography by Alexander Gilchrist (unfinished at death and continued by Gilchrist’s widow, Anne).

- 2.2 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. Signed autograph letter to Anne Gilchrist, dated December 1, [1865]. Swinburne refers to his own writing on Blake with the comment: “On first reading of Blake’s strange & great poems, I felt a groundless sort of indignation that they should have been so wholly ignored as it seemed to me they had been; for indeed they must seem to most people, & to the best judges possible, too incoherent & preposterous for any serious criticism ...” (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #130.*)

Walter Savage Landor (1775–1864)

The English poet, essayist and critic had been admired by Swinburne since his student days at Eton. In March 1864, Swinburne met Landor for the first time in Florence. Of the meeting, Swinburne wrote to Monckton Milnes (later Lord Houghton), who was a long-time friend of Landor's and who had provided the introduction, that he found the almost ninety-year old poet "as alert, brilliant and altogether delicious as I suppose others may have found him twenty years since ... There is no other man living from whom I should so much have prized any expression of acceptance or goodwill in return for my homage ... I should like to throw up all other things ... and devote myself to playing valet to him for the rest of his days. I should black his boots if he wore any – moi. He has given me the shock of adoration which one feels at thirteen towards great men. I am not sure that any other emotion is so durable and persistently delicious as that of worship, when your god is indubitable and incarnate before your eyes." This was to be the first and only meeting with Landor, who died on September 17, 1864.

- 2.3 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. Signed autograph letter to Edmund C. Stedman (1833–1908), dated February 23, 1874. Expressing his admiration for Walter Savage Landor: "I have often ardently wished I could have been born ... earlier, that my affection and reverence might have been of some use and their expression found some echo while he was yet alive beyond the rooms in which he was to die ..." (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #146.*)
- 2.4 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. *Studies in Song* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1880). First edition. The first poem is dedicated to Landor: "Song for the Centenary of Walter Savage Landor." (*From the library of John S. Mayfield.*)

Giuseppe Mazzini (1805–1872)

Another of Swinburne's political heroes in the realm of revolutionary freedom was the Italian patriot Giuseppe Mazzini, a key figure in the Risorgimento (Italian unification movement, ca. 1815–1871). Mazzini was idolized by Swinburne and his friends of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, founded in 1848 by Dante Gabriel Rossetti whose father, the poet and scholar Gabriele Rossetti, had been forced into exile in 1821 for his support of Italian revolutionary nationalism. Swinburne's poem *A Song of Italy* (1867) was written for Mazzini; and many of the poems in the collection *Songs Before Sunrise* (1871) owe their inspiration to the revolutionary political climate in France and Italy.

- 2.5 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. *Songs Before Sunrise* (London: Chatto and Windus for the Florence Press, 1909). Limited edition,

number 25 of 650 on hand-made paper. The opening poem pays homage to Joseph Mazzini. (*From the library of John S. Mayfield.*)

- 2.6 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. *A Song of Italy* (London: John Camden Hotten, 1867). First edition issued in green cloth boards. Includes Swinburne's dedication: "With all devotion and reverence, to Joseph Mazzini." According to Wise a number of remainder copies were bound in blue or red cloth boards. (*From the library of John S. Mayfield.*)

Victor Hugo (1802–1885)

The French novelist, poet and playwright who stood against Napoleon III and was subsequently exiled for his anti-monarchical writings inevitably drew the adulation of Swinburne, whose own republicanism and revolt against tyranny found expression in essays and verse dedicated to Hugo.

Swinburne had begun reading Hugo's works while at Eton; but the poets did not meet until 1882. The latter, returned from exile after the death of Napoleon III, invited Swinburne and Theodore Watts-Dunton to Paris to attend a performance of his play *Le Roi s'amuse* at the Théâtre Français. At a dinner afterwards, Swinburne reportedly returned a toast from Hugo and "in the old aristocratic manner threw the glass over his shoulder. Not understanding the gesture, Hugo was left muttering long after about the destruction of one of his best glasses."

At Hugo's death, Swinburne wrote to Eliza Lynn Linton, on May 25, 1885:

I am trying to work off the first sense of stupid bewilderment by writing a short account of my dear Father's and Master's work ... (If you think it is conceited or affected of me to call Victor Hugo "my dear father" I must excuse myself by saying that almost his first words to me when we met were "mon fils" ... Only, I cannot quite understand yet how the sun manages to go on rising ... I know all about his immortality, and the survival of his essential part—but I am selfish and childish, and I do so want the man—the hand that pressed mine, the mouth that smiled on me, the glorious eyes that deigned to rest on mine with such unspeakable kindness.

Swinburne's love of French literature can be attributed in part to his grandfather's capacious library at Capheaton, rich with books from the Continent. The poet was also fond of recounting to friends and prospective biographers the tale of his French lineage through his paternal great-great grandmother, although this might have been an exaggeration.

- 2.7 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. Notes to "A Birthday Ode" written for Victor Hugo. Signed autograph manuscript. Published in *Songs of the Springtides* (1880) and in *A Study of Victor Hugo* (1886). (*Purchased by Georgetown University Library, 1987.*)

- 2.8 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. "July 14th 1880." Signed autograph manuscript. Published as "The Fourteenth of July," in *Studies in Song* (1880), this was Swinburne's homage to Hugo's efforts to seek amnesty for the surviving exiles of the Paris Commune of 1871. (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #202.*)

James McNeill Whistler (1834–1903)

For the most part, Swinburne admired the great American artists and poets of the day, including Walt Whitman, whose *Leaves of Grass* he had first encountered in 1859; and especially James McNeill Whistler, with whom Swinburne was personally acquainted. Later in life, however, Swinburne seemed to revoke much of the favor he had shown in earlier days. His relationship with Whistler notwithstanding, he wrote a denunciatory critique in response to the painter's 1885 *Ten O'Clock Lecture*, entitled, "Mr. Whistler's Lecture on Art" (published in the *Fortnightly Review*, June 1888). According to Edmund Gosse, Swinburne was encouraged in his attack by Theodore Watts-Dunton who had never liked either Whistler or Whitman and considered the latter "a bit of a charlatan."

- 2.9 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. *Mr. Whistler's Lecture on Art*. ([Boston: Bibliophile Society, 1914]). Facsimile of the autograph manuscript (1888). (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Unnumbered Manuscripts.*)
- 2.10 JAMES MCNEILL WHISTLER. Signed autograph note to Algernon Charles Swinburne, undated. "As you won't "come in without an order" I send you one! Though I think it shockingly mean to have kept away from the show while it is so very hot! Do look round tomorrow about 2 to half past." The note is signed with Whistler's famous butterfly signature. (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #194.*)

Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809–1892)

Lord Tennyson resided at Farringford, on the western side of the Isle of Wight, and was therefore acquainted with the neighboring Swinburne family. Moreover, Swinburne was neither immune to the reputation of the Poet Laureate nor insensitive to the influence Tennyson's poetry had on the choice of artistic subjects by his friends in the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.

- 2.11 ALFRED LORD TENNYSON. Signed autograph note to Algernon Charles Swinburne, dated November 21, 1865. Acknowledging receipt of a copy of the latter's *Chastelard* (1865). (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #310.*)

SIGNIFICANT OTHERS ❧

Adah Isaacs Menken (1835–1868).

Menken was a world-famous actress when she arrived in London, in October 1864, to perform in an adaptation of Byron's *Mazeppa*. Born in New Orleans, she was a celebrity in America and Europe, as well as in England. She had been married five times, had lost a child in infancy, and enjoyed writing poetry in the style of Whitman. The role in *Mazeppa* cemented her reputation for outré behavior as she rode bareback on a horse in a costume that gave the illusion of nudity. "It was a role that provoked similar outraged feelings to those drawn by *Poems and Ballads*. One reviewer wrote of her performance that 'the attraction ... lies undoubtedly in its impurity.'"

Among those attracted to Menken were many of the literary luminaries of the day including Charles Dickens, Théophile Gautier, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and Mark Twain. In February 1868 she met Swinburne, with whom she reputedly carried on an affair lasting several months. There are vague and at best conflicting stories about the affair. Legend is that Rossetti and Richard Burton gave Menken £10 to seduce Swinburne. Another version had it that Rossetti and Giuseppe Mazzini wanted Menken to "exert a positive sexual and domestic influence on the increasing chaos of Swinburne's life." However, Rikky Rooksby suggests another reason that Menken would have sought Swinburne's company: "Intelligent and independent, [she was] looking for editorial help with her poems."

Rumors of the affair spread and were fueled further by the publication of photographs of Swinburne with Menken in January 1868. The most famous (exhibited here) shows "a slightly stunned-looking Menken seated, while Swinburne stands holding her hand, gazing at the camera with proprietorial complacency ... Given their celebrity status, the pictures were soon visible in London shop windows. In modern terms, the liaison could only be paralleled by Arthur Miller and Marilyn Monroe, or Madonna photographed on the lap of a dissolute Booker Prize novelist."

In May or June of 1868, Menken departed for Paris, where she died a few months later, not much older than thirty. On receiving the news, Swinburne told George Powell, "I am sure you were very sorry on my account to hear of the death of my poor dear Menken – it was a great shock to me and a real grief – I was ill for some days. She was most lovable as a friend as well as a mistress."

- 3.1 Photograph of Adah Isaacs Menken and Algernon Charles Swinburne, ca. January 1868. Reproduced from *Uncollected Letters of Algernon Charles*

Swinburne, Volume 1: 1848–1874, ed. Terry L. Meyers (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2005), with kind permission from Terry L. Meyers.

Theodore Watts-Dunton (1832–1914)

A solicitor with literary ambitions, Watts-Dunton (who added his mother's surname, Dunton, in 1897), was a major contributor of literary criticism, particularly on poetry, to the *Athenaeum*, for which he was also editor from 1876 until 1898. He was well-acquainted with Tennyson and many in the Pre-Raphaelite circle.

Swinburne first met Watts-Dunton in 1872. As recounted by E. F. Benson in *As We Were: A Victorian Peepshow* (1930), Watts-Dunton paid a visit to Swinburne in his rooms, armed with a letter of introduction from mutual friend Dante Gabriel Rossetti:

His tappings at the door met with no response, and he entered to find an empty sitting room. But from the bedroom (presumably) beyond there were sounds of stirring, and after having again tried to procure permission to penetrate further, he opened the door. He found Swinburne stark naked with his aureole of red hair flying round his head, performing a Dionysiac dance, all by himself in front of a large looking glass. Swinburne perceived the intruder, he rushed at him, and before Mr. Watts-Dunton could offer any explanation or deliver his letter of introduction, he was flying in panic helter-skelter down the stairs, and was driven by the enraged Corybant off the premises.

This introduction notwithstanding, Watts-Dunton was to become the poet's agent, advocate and life-long friend. He was to be simultaneously blessed for rescuing Swinburne from the iniquities of London life and reviled, especially by Edmund Gosse, for quashing the creative spirit of the poet by removing him, in 1879, to seclusion at The Pines, in Putney, where he lived out his latter years, in Edmund Gosse's words, "as if within a Leyden jar ... [in which] nothing could be more motionless than the existence of 'the little old genius, and his little old acolyte, in their dull little villa.'"

When Swinburne died in 1909, Watts-Dunton was the sole heir of his entire estate, which included over twenty-four thousand pounds, his library, manuscripts and copyrights.

- 3.2 Photograph of Swinburne and Theodore Watts-Dunton at The Pines, undated. Reproduced from Jean Overton Fuller, *Swinburne: A Critical Biography* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1968).
- 3.3 THEODORE WATTS-DUNTON. Signed autograph letter to the editor and publisher Lewis Melville (1874–1932), dated June 29, 1909. Concerning permission to publish poems by Watts-Dunton and Swinburne,

probably for *Full Fathom Five: A Sea Anthology in Prose and Verse*, which Melville published with his wife Helen in 1910.

Dear Mr. Melville,

Publishers all are setting their faces against anthologies. They say that they are ruining the sales of the poets' books ...

(*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #307.*)

- 3.4 SIR MAX BEERBOHM (1872–1956). *No. 2, The Pines*. Etching, 1921. One of a handful of known examples of Beerbohm's sole original print, a version of a caricature of Algernon Charles Swinburne and Theodore Watts-Dunton. According to an autograph note made by Beerbohm beneath the print, twelve impressions were printed. (*Mark Samuels Lasner Collection, on loan to the University of Delaware Library.*)

Clara Watts-Dunton (1876–1938)

Clara Reich met Theodore Watts-Dunton (whom she preferred to call by his first name, Walter), in 1892 when her mother, a friend of Watts-Dunton's, brought her to The Pines for a visit. An admirer of Swinburne's poetry, which she described as "caviare," Clara, aged sixteen at the time, was nevertheless overcome by shyness, declining a subsequent invitation to meet Swinburne at dinner.

Within a year, a romance developed with Watts-Dunton, and Clara was a frequent visitor at The Pines. She had yet to be formally introduced to the poet in residence whom she had thus far only encountered in the hallways without ever exchanging a word: "although he did not appear to see me, he would stand like a sentinel while I passed; his arms stiff against his sides, with the palms presented outwards, gave him a curiously mechanical appearance—as of a toy-soldier ... [He] would look at me with such a wondering look, as much as to say—'Who are you, and what are you doing here?' Then he would bow very courteously, and disappear into his room." They were finally introduced a year after her initial visit to The Pines.

After a lengthy courtship, Clara married Theodore Watts-Dunton on November 29, 1905. In 1922, she published *The Home Life of Swinburne*, a memoir of her life at The Pines with Watts-Dunton and the poet.

- 3.5 Photograph of Clara Watts-Dunton, ca. 1905, when she married Theodore Watts-Dunton. Reproduced from Mollie Panter-Downes, *At the Pines: Swinburne and Watts-Dunton in Putney* (Boston: Gambit, 1971).
- 3.6 CLARA WATTS-DUNTON. Signed autograph letter to writer Louise Chandler Moulton (1835–1908), dated July 8, 1904, expressing a wish to see her friend. From 1876, Moulton traveled from her home in Boston to

Europe and London during summers and autumns and was acquainted with, among others, Robert Browning, Thomas Carlyle, Thomas Hardy, George Meredith, Richard Monckton Milnes, Walter Pater, Swinburne, and the Watts-Duntons, as well as many of the Pre-Raphaelite artists including Ford Madox Brown, Edward Burne-Jones, Holman Hunt, and Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

My dear Mrs. Moulton,

So you are not with us this season. I have been asking all round if you were coming but nobody seemed to know ... I am so sorry & I have missed you so ... It has been a wretched season anyway as far as I am concerned. To begin with the weather has been quite awful. It is almost like winter & then again it has been quite dull. I should so love to have a "good time" somehow—but I suppose it isn't for me ...

(*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series.*)

Mary Gordon Leith (1840–ca. 1924)

Mary Charlotte Julia Gordon (born July 9, 1840) was Swinburne's first cousin: the daughter of Sir Henry and Lady Mary Gordon, the latter being sister to the poet's mother, Lady Jane Henrietta Swinburne. Young Mary lived with her family at Northcourt on the south-west side of the Isle of Wight, and it has been supposed that the choice of East Dene for the Swinburne home, after moving from London, was its proximity to Lady Mary Gordon.

The cousins, Algernon and Mary, were frequently in each other's company; the latter, "making practically a fifth sister ... was to become far the most important person in Swinburne's life; and it is to her memoir, *The Boyhood of Algernon Charles Swinburne* [1917] ... that we owe almost all the details we have concerning the poet's early childhood."

Biographer Jean Overton Fuller asserted that Mary Gordon was also the poet's one great love and the inspiration for some of his most passionate and admired poems, including "The Triumph of Time." Fuller also claimed that unrequited love of his cousin awakened the poet's darker aspect which led him to write such "diabolic poems" as "Dolores" and "Faustine"—all published in the controversial volume *Poems and Ballads* (1866).

Mary Gordon married Colonel Robert William Disney Leith (twenty-one years her senior), on June 14, 1865. Early biographers have surmised that it was the announcement of her engagement to the colonel, perhaps at a moment when Swinburne had or was about to declare his own sentiments, that caused the latter's heartbreak. A mother of six children, Mary also wrote ten novels and a volume of poetry—all remarkably involving a heroine who must choose between a romantic but unreliable young suitor and a more established older man.

An extension of the Mary myth is the identity of the protagonist in Swinburne's unpublished poem "To Boo," consisting of "three light but charming stanzas" about a young girl who was clearly adored by the author. Boo was the pet name of Jane Faulkner, the niece of Dr. and Mrs. John Simon whom Swinburne met through his friend Edward Burne-Jones. Early biographers, including Edmund Gosse, attributed the inspiration of Swinburne's recurring theme of rejected love in this poem, and "The Triumph of Time," as well as in others, to Faulkner. However, research by John Mayfield has shown that when Swinburne met Faulkner in 1862, she would have been only ten years old. Therefore, for those who must ascribe a name to the poet's muse, Mary Gordon's becomes a most compelling choice.

- 3.7 MILDRED LEITH (1894-?). Signed autograph letter to John S. Mayfield, dated June 26, 1974. This letter from the granddaughter of Mary Gordon Leith includes references to Jean Overton Fuller's biography and the belief that Mary Gordon was Swinburne's love interest:

I have been much interested in the new life of Swinburne by Philip Henderson and for me has solved the problem of how the subject of "The Triumph of Time" could have been my grandmother Mary Leith (nee Gordon) I having ... denied this possibility when I first read of it in Jean Overton Fuller's book as my grandmother had denied explicitly any Romance between them in "The Boyhood of Swinburne"—but on page 75 of Henderson's book he points out as Dr. Cecil Lang has emphasized "it is stated explicitly that the speaker did not declare his love & that the Innominata had no suspicion of its existence."

(*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Swinburneiana Correspondence.*)

- 3.8 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. *Hide-and-Seek: Privately Printed with Notes by John S. Mayfield* (London: Stourton Press, 1975). This is number 1 of 250 copies. Cast, set and printed by Fairfax Hall on Joseph Batchelor's Kelmscott hand-made paper in the Aries types designed for the Stourton Press by Eric Gill. (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series.*)

The poem was included in a notebook of autograph verses by Swinburne dating from his student days at Oxford (1856–1860). In his notes, Mayfield cautions against the tendency to identify the two young dramatis personae as Swinburne and Mary Gordon. The little girl might have been any one of Swinburne's numerous cousins or sisters, and her "identity ... may remain a matter of speculation for a long time."

- 3.9 Photograph of Mary Gordon Leith on horseback, undated. Reproduced from Jean Overton Fuller, *Swinburne: A Critical Biography* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1968).

- 3.10 Photograph of Mildred Leith and John S. Mayfield, ca. 1971. It was for Mildred Leith that Swinburne wrote the poem, "To A Baby Kinswoman" (May 1894). Leith was born in April 1894. (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts, Curatorial File #188.*)

Herbert ("Bertie") Mason (1874–1947)

One of the brightest of Swinburne's experiences after his removal to The Pines to live with his friend Theodore Watts-Dunton was the arrival of the latter's five year-old nephew, Herbert Mason (nicknamed "Bertie"), who made an unaccountably deep impression on the poet, even owing to the latter's natural affection for young children.

It became Swinburne's habit to jot down all of Bertie's observed activities, as well as to write many poems about him, including, "Six Years Old," for the child's sixth birthday on February 4, 1880; "Seven Years Old" (1881); and poems published in *A Midsummer Holiday and Other Poems* (1884), which brought the total number of published poems by Swinburne about Herbert Mason to fifty.

In May 1881, Bertie departed on a holiday with his mother Mrs. Wilhelmina Miranda Mason (sister of Theodore Watts-Dunton). His absence plunged Swinburne into a state of depression and his only solace was to write a poem for each day that Bertie was away. The sequence, "A Dark Month," totaled thirty-one poems. The child's return in September prompted a new outpouring of verse under the heading, "Sunrise."

The delight in childhood, perhaps referencing his own joyful pastimes, persisted in much of Swinburne's later work. Approximately a quarter of the poems in *A Century of Roundels* (1883) are about children. *The Springtide of Life: Poems of Childhood* was published in 1918. Jean Overton Fuller recounts a reminiscence of a Mrs. Skrimshire living as a child in the neighborhood of Wimbledon where Swinburne, in later years, was a habitual visitor of the Rose and Crown pub: "He loved children and used to keep sweets for them in his pockets. I remember him once taking a baby out of its pram—much to the horror of its nurse, and making up a little verse, holding the baby in his arms."

- 3.11 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. "Roundel." Autograph manuscript of a poem in three parts for Herbert Mason's ninth birthday. The first (shown) is dated January 24, 1883; the second and third are dated January 25, 1883. Published as "A Ninth Birthday / February 4, 1883," in *A Century of Roundels* (1883). (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #71.*)
- 3.12 Photograph of Herbert Mason as a child with his dog Dido, undated. This photograph was reproduced by Mayfield from the original belonging to

Mrs. Hilda Mason. (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts Curatorial File #274.*)

- 3.13 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. Autograph notes on scraps of paper and backs of envelopes on his observations of Bertie's (Herbert Mason) activities around the house and garden of The Pines, at Putney. (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #74.*)
- 3.14 Assortment of signed printed cards from Algernon Charles Swinburne to Herbert Mason, dated 1897 and undated. (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #75.*)
- 3.15 Photograph of Herbert Mason as a young man, undated. This photograph was reproduced by Mayfield from the original belonging to Mrs. Hilda Mason. (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts Curatorial File #274.*)

Simeon Solomon (1840–1905)

Solomon trained at the Royal Academy of Art and had designed stained glass for the decorating firm established by William Morris, Charles Faulkner and P.P. Marshall. Through his friendship with Dante Gabriel Rossetti, whom he met in the late 1850s, he became friends with Edward Burne-Jones and Swinburne, the latter two with whom he exchanged considerable correspondence, dating from 1861, on flagellation, a shared subject of interest.

Solomon may be considered “a kindred spirit to Swinburne” and “just as Swinburne has been cast as an innocent corrupted by [Lord] Houghton [Richard Monkton Milnes] and [Richard] Burton, so in turn Swinburne has been portrayed as the corrupter of innocents like Solomon.” However, Solomon did not need a mentor “to get into deep water.” Openly homosexual, he was arrested a number of times for improper public behavior from 1873 through 1884 when he ended up painting from a workhouse. Solomon died in 1905 from alcohol-related complications.

- 3.16 SIMEON SOLOMON. *A Venetian Study*. Crayon on paper, 1892. (*Georgetown University Art Collection, from the collection of John S. Mayfield.*)

ATALANTA IN CALYDON (1865)

Atalanta in Calydon, published by Edward Moxon in 1865, was Swinburne's first critically successful work of poetry. According to Thomas J. Wise only one hundred copies were printed of the first edition, which appeared in cream buckram covers with three gold roundels designed by Dante Gabriel Rossetti. The book was financed in part by the poet's father, Admiral Charles Henry Swinburne. Wise's claim of the limited print run has been disproved by bibliographers and scholars, including John S. Mayfield. Rikky Rooksby surmises that the first printing was probably 500 copies.

John S. Mayfield acquired the first copy of *Atalanta in Calydon* for his collection of works by Swinburne in 1943. This turned out to be a rebound copy of the 1865 Moxon edition. A close examination revealed a number of printing errors which prompted Mayfield to further research into the publication. However, much to his consternation, he found no reference to the irregularities in any bibliography of English literature. Ultimately, he reported, "[this] situation intensified my determination and the longer I pondered the matter the more my magnified curiosity impelled me onward. I had to have another copy of the book, preferably in the original binding ... I wanted a copy in its original, virgin state. I wanted to see what had happened in connection with the printing of this rare book."

It was not until receiving his ninth copy of the first edition, in 1944, that Mayfield was able to "satisfy [his] curiosity and determine what the errors were before they had been corrected." He surmised that his ninth copy was quite probably the one belonging to Richard Barrett, the printer of the poem: "In this copy were pencil markings next to the errors I had noted [in other copies], and in addition throughout the book were numerous notations relating to other errors, small though not entirely inconsequential, I had failed to detect. It was as if Richard Barrett, the printer himself, had gone through this particular copy and marked all the errors he had noticed."

In 1949, Mayfield added the twenty-fifth copy of the first edition to his collection. He wrote, "It was time to take stock. It was incredible that I had collected one-fourth of the entire edition of this rare book over a hundred years after its publication. Never one to believe anything just because it was in print, I began to suspect and to wonder about the often-made statement that the original edition consisted of 100 copies. All the important authorities called for 100 copies, but search as I did, I could find no proven evidence to support the statement of this limitation. Some kind of action was definitely indicated."

Thus began the second lap of Mayfield's self-described "hunt for the wild boar of Calydon," which "took the form of an inquiry sent out to 500 libraries, public, private, university, college, institutional, and any other place which appeared

to have a collection of books, here and in England, asking whether they had copies of the first edition of *Atalanta in Calydon*.” The results of this census showed 164 recorded copies, which “definitely squashed the notion about the 100 copies limitation, but I kept this fact to myself and continued the hunt. What better way, I concluded, to explode the myth of the 100 copies limitation visibly and conclusively than to be able to exhibit in one place my own 100 copies of the book. It was an extravagant idea, a foolhardy fantasy impossible to accomplish, but an inner voice dictated a continuation of the search, and I kept on pelting the dealers with requests for copies.”

The quest continued for an additional twenty-seven years, until on March 19, 1976, Mayfield was able “to put on the shelf copy no. 100, and breathed an immense sigh of relief,” vowing not to pursue any further copies. That is, until “friends who knew I had reached 100 suggested ... that it was really necessary and desirable to have 101 copies, and that only then could I really show that I had blasted the limitation of 100, so long believed. I stood my ground, said that I should not buy any more copies ... and offhand declared that if I ever acquired another copy, it would have to be as a gift.”

So it was that in 1977, Nicholas Scheetz, Georgetown University Library’s manuscripts librarian, presented Mayfield with his one hundred and first copy of the first edition of *Atalanta in Calydon*. “This was indeed a beau geste, and certainly one calculated to seal a friendship for at least 101 years,” wrote Mayfield.

A summary describing Mayfield’s copies is provided at the end of his article, “A Swinburne Collector in Calydon” (1980). Acquisitions were made from England (52), the United States (46), as well as from Canada, Ireland, and Uruguay. Seventy-eight of them remained in their original bindings, while twenty-three had been rebound. Presentation copies included one inscribed by Swinburne to Mary Gordon, as a wedding present.

In 1980, in answer to Mayfield’s query at the conclusion of his article: “what to do with these 101 copies,” Georgetown University Library opened an exhibition celebrating Mayfield’s collection of the first editions of *Atalanta in Calydon*.

- 4.1 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. *Atalanta in Calydon: A Tragedy* (London: Edward Moxon & Co., 1865). First edition. Issued in cream-colored buckram boards, beveled, with gold lettering on the spine. The front cover is impressed with three ornaments in gold, designed by Dante Gabriel Rossetti. This copy bears the name of the Pre-Raphaelite artist Val Prinsep (1838–1904) written on the front fly-leaf and full-title page. (*Copy #85 acquired 1972. From the library of John S. Mayfield.*)
- 4.2 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. *Atalanta in Calydon: A Tragedy* (London: Edward Moxon & Co., 1865). First edition. This copy includes a tipped-in autograph manuscript fragment by Swinburne. (*Copy #98 acquired 1976. From the library of John S. Mayfield.*)

- 4.3 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. *Atalanta in Calydon: A Tragedy* (London: Edward Moxon & Co., 1865). First edition. (Copy #102 acquired 1981. From the library of John S. Mayfield.)
- 4.4 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. *Atalanta in Calydon: A Tragedy* (London: Edward Moxon & Co., 1865). Edward Moxon issued a second edition of *Atalanta in Calydon* in 1865, “but,” as Thomas J. Wise noted, “with no statement upon its title-page to denote that it was other than the first edition.” Issued in straight-grained cloth boards with gold lettering on the spine. “In some copies the colour of the cloth is bright blue; in others it is bright red.”
- 4.5 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE, *Atalanta in Calydon: A Tragedy* (London: Edward Moxon & Co., 1865). A second copy of the second edition.
- 4.6 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. *Atalanta in Calydon: A Tragedy* (London: James Camden Hotten, 1868). Fourth edition. In 1866, the publication of *Atalanta in Calydon* was transferred to John Camden Hotten, who reissued the work with a new title page bearing his own imprint. “In the same year a new edition, the third, was called for. For this the book was re-set throughout, but again no statement appeared upon the title-page (which was identical with that employed to accompany Moxon’s sheets) to notify that it was other than the first edition.”
- This fourth edition was issued in 1868, which included the notification “Third Edition” on the title page. Wise wrote: “Whether this mis-statement was really an error upon Hotten’s part, or whether the actual third edition of 1866 had been produced for his own material benefit instead of to the advantage of the author, and thus needed to be disregarded, must remain a matter for conjecture.” This edition was issued “in cloth boards, uniform with those of the two preceding editions.”
- A fifth edition was published in 1875 by Chatto and Windus, which continued to issue the work under its imprint from 1879 to 1917. William Heinemann acquired the copyright in 1917.
- In May 1894, William Morris issued a Kelmscott Press edition of *Atalanta in Calydon*, “in limp vellum covers, with silk strings to tie. Lettered ‘*Atalanta. Swinburne*’ in gold up the back. Two hundred and fifty copies were printed on hand-made paper, and a few copies upon vellum.”
- Between 1878 and 1912, the poem was also published in translation in German, Polish and Swedish.
- 4.7. JOHN S. MAYFIELD. “A Swinburne Collector in Calydon,” in the *Quarterly Journal of the Library of Congress*, Volume 37, Number 1 (Winter 1980), describing his decades-long quest for the first editions of *Atalanta*

in Calydon by Algernon Charles Swinburne. (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series.*)

- 4.8 JOHN S. MAYFIELD. Transcript of an interview of John S. Mayfield by National Public Radio (NPR) about his collection of first editions of Swinburne's *Atalanta in Calydon*. Published in *Every Night at Five: Susan Stamberg's All Things Considered Book*, with a foreword by Charles Kuralt (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982). When asked why he collected so many copies of the same title, Mayfield replied, "I collect them because I like them." To the remark, "You didn't say you love them," he responded: "Well, the word bibliophile has been described by appropriate authorities as a 'lover of books.' I don't agree with the word 'lover' because that belongs to an entirely different category. How can you be a lover of books? You can't love something that cannot return that love ... although some rare books do return a great deal of love." (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series.*)
- 4.9 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. *The Holy Spirit of Man* ([Port Hueneme, Ca.: John S. Mayfield], 1945). Special printing of lines from the poem, *Atalanta in Calydon* by Algernon Charles Swinburne, selected and privately printed by John S. Mayfield. "So far as it is known this is the first time these lines have ever appeared separately." (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series.*)
- 4.10 *Atalanta in Calydon* by Algernon Charles Swinburne (London, 1911). Program for the first performance of a stage adaptation of the poem in aid of the Poetry Society, April 1911. First edition with printed wrappers bearing a front cover illustration by Henry Holiday. Includes a note by the producer, Elsie Fogerty; an extract from the poem; a prose argument; and the text of the play and music. The invitation slip, inserted along with the note, indicates that this rare program is from the library at The Pines, Putney. Only one other copy is apparently known. (*Mark Samuels Lasner Collection, on loan to the University of Delaware Library.*)

THE PRE-RAPHAELITES 🌿

Swinburne and the Pre-Raphaelites

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was founded in 1848 by painter/poet Dante Gabriel Rossetti and his brother William Michael Rossetti, with honorary membership to their sister, the poet Christina Rossetti. Other members included artists James Collinson, William Holman Hunt, John Everett Millais, Frederic George Stephens, and Thomas Woolner.

The PRB—as the Pre-Raphaelites became known by the initials used to sign their works—held that art must express genuine and heartfelt ideas, represent a close study of nature, and return to a pre-sixteenth century non-idealized style of painting. Christopher Wood wrote that “The Pre-Raphaelite movement is a blend of romantic idealism, scientific rationalism and morality. This typically mid-Victorian mixture is, like so much in the Victorian age, full of paradox. How else can one explain a group of artists and intellectuals whose idea of modernity was to paint the Middle Ages? The Pre-Raphaelites were modern and medieval at the same time, and to understand them is to understand the Victorians.”

The first exhibited PRB works, shown at the Royal Academy in 1849, were generally well received. In 1850, Millais’ painting *Christ in the House of His Parents* stirred considerable controversy as many critics, including Charles Dickens, charged Millais with blasphemy. Shortly afterward, a succession of events effectively marked the end of the Brotherhood: Millais was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy of Art in 1853, Hunt began planning a trip to the Middle East in 1854, and Collinson gave up membership.

Following the brotherhood’s disbandment, individual members continued to produce well-recognized works, and as a phenomenon Pre-Raphaelitism had many associates and followers well into the next century, including Ford Madox Brown, Edward Burne-Jones, Arthur Hughes, William Morris, and Frederic Sandys. The Pre-Raphaelites had considerable influence on Aestheticism and the Arts and Crafts movement, of which Morris was the leading figure.

Swinburne was so long and closely associated with the Pre-Raphaelites that he was often criticized along with them and still is commonly regarded as a Pre-Raphaelite poet.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828–1882)

The first meeting between Swinburne and Rossetti took place during the former’s student days at Oxford University, in November 1857, when Rossetti and several friends, including Edward Burne-Jones and William Morris, arrived to

paint Arthurian murals in the new Oxford Union Society debating hall. “For the rest of his undergraduate career,” writes Rikky Rooksby, “Swinburne idolized Morris, Rossetti, and Burne-Jones. At a stroke he made three friends for life.” The relationship with Rossetti continued beyond Oxford, and during the early 1860s it was probably Swinburne’s closest friendship. On Rossetti’s part, there was an attempt to mentor the young poet: to nurture as well as to temper his artistic energy through books the latter had not read and the example of Rossetti’s own works.

Swinburne was a frequent visitor at Chatham Place in Blackfriars, Rossetti’s home with his wife Elizabeth Siddal (1829–1862), who was not only the artist’s model but also a poet in her own right who shared an interest with Swinburne in English Border ballads. Swinburne formed an affectionate tie with Siddal, and frequently visited to read to her and lighten her spirits. Siddal’s delicate constitution and red hair may have reminded him of his sister Edith who had died of consumption in 1860.

After Siddal’s death in 1862, Rossetti relocated to Tudor House at 16 Cheyne Walk, made famous for the literary company he entertained, along with the menagerie of exotic animals that were kept there. Swinburne was invited to keep two ground-floor rooms, where he lived until the summer of 1863. The other two housemates were George Meredith and William Michael Rossetti, although the latter never actually took up residence. “Images of a happy Pre-Raphaelite menagerie of artists, models and animals have often exaggerated the cohesion of the household. Swinburne, it is alleged, got on Rossetti’s nerves, and whilst it may not be true that he slid down the bannisters or chased Simeon Solomon naked around the house, [the biographer Georges] Lafourcade believed that Swinburne had annoyed Rossetti by passing nude from one room to another.” Another source of tension would have been the presence of Rossetti’s new model, Fanny Cornforth, whom Swinburne evidently resented for replacing Siddal, and whom he compared “as a clot of dung in the gutter at nightfall to the splendour of the evening star.”

Towards the end of Rossetti’s life, as his health declined with evidence of mental instability, the two friends became estranged. Swinburne did not attend Rossetti’s funeral.

- 5.1 HENRY TREFFRY DUNN (1838–1899). *Dante Gabriel Rossetti; Theodore Watts-Dunton* [in the drawing room of Rossetti’s house at 16 Cheyne Walk, London]. Gouache, 1882. Reproduction (privately purchased photographic print) of the original at the National Portrait Gallery, London.
- 5.2 DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI. Signed autograph letter to Algernon Charles Swinburne, dated January 7, 1866. Written on letterhead stationery for 16 Cheyne Walk. (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #370.*)

- 5.3 W. AND D. DOWNEY. Photograph of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Albumen, ca. late 1860s. (*Mark Samuels Lasner Collection, on loan to the University of Delaware Library.*)
- 5.4 CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI (1830–1894). Signed autograph letter to Algernon Charles Swinburne, undated [ca. 18 December 1879]. Acknowledging receipt of Swinburne’s new book, *A Study of Shakespeare* (1880): “I feel gratefully the kindness which recollects me, & makes me a valued present of your ‘Shakespeare’ volume ... Already I have obtained & enjoyed little glimpses in the course of page-cutting, & soon I hope to know much more of its contents.” (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #276.*)
- Christina Rossetti, younger sister of Dante Gabriel and William Michael Rossetti. Often admired for her religious poetry, she was, and still is, probably best known for her quintessentially Pre-Raphaelite poem, “Goblin Market.”
- 5.5 LEWIS CARROLL [CHARLES LUTWIDGE DODGSON] (1832–1898). Photograph of the Rossetti family in the garden of Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s house at 16 Cheyne Walk, London. Albumen, 1863. Dante Gabriel (standing, left); Christina Rossetti (seated on steps, left); their mother, Frances Rossetti (seated, right); and William Michael Rossetti (standing, right). Reproduction (privately purchased photographic print) from the original at the National Portrait Gallery, London.
- William Michael Rossetti (1829–1919) was a co-founder, with his brother, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. He edited the Brotherhood’s serial publication, the *Germ*, and was a literary critic whom Swinburne deeply respected and often consulted.
- 5.6 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. Signed autograph letter to William Michael Rossetti, dated December 9, 1889. Swinburne extols Wordsworth and discourses on various other authors including Byron, Chaucer, Coleridge, Shelley, and Tennyson: “I regard W. W. as essentially and differentially one of the absolute great poets—far higher above Byron, for instance, than Shelley can possibly be ranked above him. He has written verse which simply never was or will be surpassed in some of the highest & most glorious & precious qualities possible to human speech.” (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #402.*)

William Morris (1834–1896) and Sir Edward Burne-Jones (1833–1898)

The two artists, who nicknamed one another Topsy and Ned, respectively, were friends from student days at Exeter College in Oxford (1853–1855). “They became the centre of a group of high-minded and idealistic young men, united

by their enthusiasm for poetry, the Middle Ages, and gothic architecture, and by their hatred of the industrial revolution, materialism, trains, and just about everything created in the nineteenth century” (Christopher Wood). Literary idols included Keats, Shelley, Tennyson and especially Chaucer and Malory’s *Morte d’Arthur*, all of which informed their work as painters and poets. The great Victorian writers of the day, Thomas Carlyle and John Ruskin, were also admired, and it was through Ruskin that Burne-Jones and Morris came to know Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.

Mutual friend Edwin Hatch introduced Swinburne to William Morris at Oxford, in 1857, when the latter arrived with Burne-Jones, Rossetti and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood to paint the murals in the Oxford Union Society debating hall. Along with Rossetti, Morris and Burne-Jones became Swinburne’s instant idols. Their friendship would be consistent and lifelong. After Oxford, Swinburne was a regular visitor to Morris and his wife Jane Burden at their home, the celebrated Red House in Upton, Bexleyheath, London.

The Red House was Morris’s realization of Tennyson’s “Palace of Art”; a response to the unaesthetic and poor-quality products of contemporary craftsmanship. Together with Burne-Jones, and the architect Philip Webb, Morris filled his house with furniture, tapestries, carpets, stained glass and metal works of their own design and creation. In a similar spirit, the Kelmscott Press, which Morris founded in 1891, reflected his ideals in the art of bookmaking with a focus on beauty, practicality and hand-made products. Morris often sent Swinburne presents of his Kelmscott books, including the famous *Chaucer* in 1896. He also produced an edition of Swinburne’s *Atalanta in Calydon* in 1894. Morris’s involvement as an artist in design and decorative work made him a leading proponent of the Arts and Crafts movement of the late nineteenth century.

When Morris died on October 3, 1896, Swinburne remarked, “My friendship with him began in ’57—think of that! ... and was never broken or ruffled for a moment ... I felt stunned all the day after his death.”

Edward Burne-Jones was (in the words of Christopher Wood) “the most important artist of the second generation of Pre-Raphaelites, and one of the major English artists of the nineteenth century. [He] was internationally famous in his own lifetime.” However, like Morris, he was disillusioned at the end of his life. “His conception of art as a lofty, noble calling, whose duty was to uplift and inspire mankind, had done little or nothing to check the spread of materialism and ugliness in the nineteenth century ... The art of his last years is overwhelmingly nostalgic, wistful and melancholy; it is obsessed with the greatness of the past and with the lost traditions of European art ... It is passive, brooding, introspective ... The world of Burne-Jones is a Victorian dream world, and epitomizes the spirit of late Victorian civilization ...”

5-7 WILLIAM MORRIS. Signed autograph letter to Algernon Charles Swinburne, dated May 10, 1894. Acknowledging receipt of the gift of the latter’s

newest publication, *Astrophel and Other Poems* (1894), which Swinburne dedicated to Morris. (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #367.*)

- 5.8 MAY MORRIS (1862–1938). Signed autograph letter to Theodore Watts-Dunton, dated April 11, 1909, from the daughter of William Morris, expressing grief at the news of Swinburne's death: "It is not necessary to say to you, who know well, how we all feel when one or more of the old circle passes away. We have little but memories to live on nowadays." She also refers to *Atalanta in Calydon*: "Only the other evening a young friend was reading the *Atalanta* to me, very beautifully & worthily. What a thing it is, that they leave all *this* behind them, to live with us." (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #293.*)
- 5.9 SIR EDWARD BURNE-JONES. Signed autograph letter to Algernon Charles Swinburne, undated. With reference to the latter's opinion on an undisclosed subject: "It's the first time I have not been wholly of one heart with you; and I can't reconcile myself to it at all ... but everything you say or think must weigh with me and I look expectantly if a little dolefully at what you will say. But if we differed in every mortal thing we should agree in one. Ever your loving friend, Ned." (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #419.*)

POEMS AND BALLADS (1866) AND THE “FLESHLY SCHOOL OF POETRY” ❧

Robert Buchanan coined the phrase “Fleshly School of Poetry” in the title to his critique of Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Pre-Raphaelites, published in the *Contemporary Review* in 1872. The phrase was inspired by Swinburne’s use of the word “fleshly” in his reviews of Rossetti’s poems. Although the article was aimed particularly at Rossetti, Buchanan attacked both poets for their “hysterical tone and over-loaded style.”

Poems and Ballads (1866), the breakthrough volume that brought Swinburne fame and notoriety, was the most likely subject for Buchanan’s criticism. Early reviews of *Poems and Ballads* decried Swinburne’s portrayal of the animal side of human nature, and even decades later, Edmund Gosse wrote for his entry on Swinburne in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1910–1911):

Walt Whitman preaches very much the same gospel of the “body electric” and the glory of human nature; but Whitman’s attitude is far saner, far more satisfying than Swinburne’s, for it is concerned with the human spirit realizing itself in accordance with the unchangeable laws of nature, while Swinburne’s enthusiasm is ... directed to a spiritual revolution which sets the laws of nature at defiance. It is impossible to acquit his poetry entirely of the charge of an animalism which wars against the higher issues of the spirit—an animalism sometimes of love, sometimes of hatred, but, in both extremes, out of centre and harmony.

As a later biographer, Rikky Rooksby, writes:

The cultural impact of *Poems and Ballads* was immense. Not only did it strike Victorian poetry with the force of a tidal wave ... It confirmed and darkened the literary reputation Swinburne had gained with *Atalanta*. It made him an international figurehead for sexual, religious, and political radicalism ... His very name was now a flame of inspiration even to those who never read him and a beacon for change among liberal-minded people, just as it became charged with a satanic aura for the timid and conservative ...

- 6.1 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. *Poems and Ballads* (London: John Camden Hotten, 1866). Reissue of the first edition. Edward Moxon & Co., under the management of James Bertrand Payne, was actually the first publisher of the volume in 1866; however, when it became the focus of public controversy Payne felt compelled to remove the book from circulation and resign as Swinburne’s publisher. The poet then transferred the unsold copies to Hotten, who issued the book with a replacement title page. Similar to the Moxon issue, the Hotten issue is in green cloth boards with gold-lettered spine. The Moxon issue bears a gold stamped emblem on the

front cover; the Hotten issue shows the emblem on the spine. (*From the library of John S. Mayfield.*)

- 6.2 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. "The Leper." Autograph manuscript. Includes quotation by Swinburne from *Les Grandes Chroniques de France, 1505*, published with the poem in *Poems and Ballads* (1866). (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #214.*)
- 6.3 APE [CARLO PELLEGRINI] (1839–1889). *Before Sunrise*. Original lithograph. Caricature of Algernon Charles Swinburne, which appeared as a full-page insert in the November 21, 1874 issue of *Vanity Fair*, accompanying an article on Swinburne by Jehu Junior who wrote:

For imagination, for variety and force of fleshly images, and for agility and ingenuity in the ordering of the bits of coloured glass of the poetic kaleidoscope, Mr. Swinburne has no equal. Himself by nature erotic, if not erotomaniac, he is the only modern poet of the flesh, as which he has appropriately reminded his contemporaries that there are still men and women in the world as well as church-goers and tax-payers ... Admirable in many great things he is lamentable in many small, sometimes merely a poet, he is often a seer and a revealer of deep-lying truths; and, taking him for all in all, is a figure of a man interesting, wonderful and admirable because he is quite unlike all other men ...

(*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #353.*)

SWINBURNE AND THE “SPASMODIC SCHOOL OF POETRY”

The Spasmodic School consisted of a loosely affiliated group of poets, from working- or lower middle-class backgrounds, “who were linked by critics because of their penchant for lengthy subepic poems, often featuring a tormented poet-hero and with a focus on unusual imagery, extremes of emotion, insanity, violence, and sexual desire.” The leading Spasmodic poets included Philip James Bailey, J. Stanyan Bigg, Sydney Dobell, and John Westland Marston.

As a literary trend, from the late 1840s until the 1850s, Spasmodic poetry was short lived. In 1854, followers were devastated by the publication of a parody, *Firmilian*, by W.E. Aytoun; and by the 1860s, the genre had faded from the literary scene. However, the influence of the Spasmodic poets was lasting and informed not only contemporary and future poets, but also the critical appreciation of their work. Spasmodism was read into Matthew Arnold’s “Empedocles on Etna,” Lord Tennyson’s “Maud,” Robert Browning’s *Sordello*, Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s *Aurora Leigh*, and Walt Whitman’s *Leaves of Grass*, all admired by Swinburne. His formative years at Eton and Oxford were influenced by the Spasmodics: he had certainly read Alexander Smith’s quintessential Spasmodic poem, *A Life-Drama* (1853–1854); and at Balliol, Swinburne’s friend John Nichol was a fervent advocate of the Spasmodic poets, as well as a friend of Smith’s.

There is little doubt of the Spasmodic flavor of *Poems and Ballads* (1866); however, Swinburne was well aware of the style’s pitfalls, for as early as 1858, he had written a parody, inspired by *Firmilian*, entitled, “*The Monomaniac’s Tragedy and Other Poems*,” by the author of “*Eve, A Mystery*.” Later in life he was inclined to favor his political poems and those in keeping with classical Greek literature. In a letter to Gabriel Mourey (dated April 22, 1888), he encouraged the editor to select, for French translation, poems from what is considered one of Swinburne’s most politically minded collections, *Songs Before Sunrise* (1871), rather than use one, such as “Dolores,” from *Poems and Ballads*. He wrote (translated from French): “I do not find ‘Dolores’ worthy of the honor that you give it ... I prefer to be represented by ... songs from times of order and from times of revolution” (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #295.*)

- 7.1 THOMAS POWELL (1809–1887). Review of a performance of the play *The Patrician’s Daughter: A Tragedy in Five Acts* (1841) by John Westland Marston. Published in *Our Boys and Girls*, edited by Oliver Optic, December 12, 1868. (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Manuscripts by Others.*)

John Westland Marston (1819–1890) wrote verse melodramas and literary reviews including one for Swinburne's *Atalanta in Calydon* (which appeared in the *Athenaeum*, April 1, 1865). His son, Philip Bourke Marston, was a poet whose volumes of verse, most notably *Song-Tide and Other Poems* (1871), and *Wind-Voices* (1883), were styled after the Pre-Raphaelites, especially Swinburne and Dante Gabriel Rossetti. When just sixteen, Philip Bourke Marston sent "some enthusiastic verses to Swinburne and thought almost as much of him as Swinburne did of Mazzini." For his part, Swinburne pitied the younger man, blind from the age of three: "I gave him chocolate bon-bons ... and read ... unpublished things of mine ... It was really very touching to see the face that could just see where I was across the table looking at me ... And he did seem to enjoy himself so much that I really felt it was worth living, to give so much pleasure to a poor boy afflicted as he is from birth."

- 7.2 PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON (1850–1887). Signed autograph letter to Algton Charles Swinburne, dated July 3, 1884. Reference to "looking forward with very keen pleasure" to reading the latter's poem, "On a Country Road" (published in the *Nineteenth Century*, July 1884); and to reading various contemporary books, including Olive Schreiner's *The Story of an African Farm* (1883), which "gave me more pleasure than anything I have read in a long time." Bourke also comments on "Miss Robinson's last book, about which "there is much ... that I like and a very great deal that I dislike. I loathe this realism." The reference is likely to *The New Arcadia and Other Poems* (1884), by Agnes Mary Frances Robinson (1857–1944). (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Philip Bourke Marston files.*)

SWINBURNE MANUSCRIPTS AND EPHEMERA

- 8.1 G[EORGE]. R[OLAND]. HALKETT (1855–1918). Swinburne at the exhibition of Dante Gabriel Rossetti's works, Burlington House, London, May 16, 1883. Watercolor. Reproduction. John Mayfield, who owned the original, used the caricature for the frontispiece of his book *Swinburneiana: A Gallimaufry of Bits and Pieces about Algernon Charles Swinburne* (1974), where he noted: "In the early summer of 1872 the intimate friendship of Swinburne and Dante Gabriel Rossetti was abruptly and mysteriously broken off; and to this day the reason has never been discovered or resolved. It is significant that Swinburne took the time and made the effort to visit and view this exhibition of the work of his one-time friend, held a little over a year following the artist's death in April 1882."
- 8.2 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. "A Christmas Carol." Autograph manuscript. Published in *Poems and Ballads* (1866), with note to the poem: "Suggested by a drawing of Mr. D. G. Rossetti's." (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #221.*)
- 8.3 ELLIOTT AND FRY. Carte de visite photograph of Algernon Charles Swinburne. Albumen, ca. 1860s. (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series.*)
- 8.4 Porcelain napkin ring, ca. 1880–1900. Initial "S" on the outside. Attached is an autograph note: "This serviette ring was used by Algernon Charles Swinburne all the years he lived in The Pines, Putney Hill, SW11 with Theodore Watts-Dunton. It was given to me after his death by my Aunt Theresa. Given to Sonia Price Hawkins." (*Mark Samuels Lasner Collection, on loan to the University of Delaware Library.*)
- 8.5 DAME ELLEN TERRY (1847–1928). Signed autograph letter, dated September 1, 1904. The actress requests a copy of "Mr. Swinburne's new book (A Channel Passage & Other Poems) ... if only I cd have the book for my train journey it wd give me some happy hours." Written on stationery from the Imperial Hotel in Bristol where Miss Terry stayed while playing at the Prince's Theatre as part of her autumn tour in 1904. Also shown is a post card with her printed itinerary. (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #308.*)
- 8.6 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. *A Channel Passage and Other Poems* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1904). Wise notes that a "Sec-

ond Edition also appeared in 1904, and again a *Third* in the same year.” If Wise’s bibliographic notes are reliable, the present copy is likely a first edition. (*From the library of John S. Mayfield.*)

- 8.7 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. Preface to *Essays and Studies* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1875). Autograph manuscript, bound with typed transcription following. (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #2.*)
- 8.8 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. “On the death of Thomas Carlyle and George Eliot.” Signed autograph manuscript, dated April 24, 1881. Originally published in the *Athenaeum*, April 30, 1881; then published in *Tristram of Lyonesse and Other Poems* (1882). (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #346.*)
- 8.9 Photograph of Algernon Charles Swinburne. Silver print, ca. 1900? From Swinburne’s photograph album. (*Mark Samuels Lasner Collection, on loan to the University of Delaware Library.*)
- 8.10 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. Note to essay on Shakespeare’s play *King Edward III*. Signed autograph manuscript. Published in *A Study of Shakespeare* (1880). (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Unnumbered Manuscripts.*)
- 8.11 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. “A Century of English Poetry.” Autograph manuscript. Published as Part II of Swinburne’s volume of literary essays *Miscellanies* (1886). The manuscript is incomplete, running only from pages 25 through 48 of the original publication which ended on page 49. The present manuscript ends: “... & by no means excepting the quaintly incongruous name of Byron’s favourite Casti ...” (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Unnumbered Manuscripts.*)
- 8.12 R[AYMOND]. HUNTINGTON WOODMAN (1861–1943). Printed music score of the poem “A Birthday” by Christina Rossetti (New York: G. Schirmer, 1909). Set to music are the famous lines beginning, “My heart is like a singing bird.” (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Numbered Manuscripts #479.*)
- 8.13 SIR EDWARD ELGAR (1857–1934). “Roundel [The little eyes that never knew Light] / A.C. Swinburne.” Autograph musical score, May 1887.
Elgar’s song for voice and piano of Swinburne’s poignant “A Baby’s Death” is among the most distinguished of the many settings of Swinburne poems by various composers. The poem was first printed in *A Century of Roundels*, dedicated to Christina Rossetti, in 1883. (*Leon Robbin Collection.*)

SWINBURNE SCHOLARSHIP

This section concerns biographers and scholars of Swinburne who were also friends of—or closely connected to—John S. Mayfield.

Sir Edmund Gosse (1849–1928)

Gosse, poet, biographer and critic, librarian of the House of Lords, and author of the celebrated autobiography, *Father and Son* (1907), was the son of the English naturalist and innovator in the study of marine biology, Philip Henry Gosse (1810–1888). Gosse first met Swinburne at an evening party given by the artist Ford Madox Brown, in 1870/71. He already regarded the poet as a literary idol:

In some ways he fulfilled, and more than fulfilled, the promise of my hero-worship ... He was not quite like a human being ... the dead pallor of his face and floating balloon of red hair, had already, although he was but in his thirty-third year, a faded look. As he talked to me, he stood, perfectly rigid, with his arms shivering at his sides, and his little feet tight against each other, close to a low settee in the middle of the studio. Every now and then, without breaking off talking or bending his body, he hopped onto this sofa, and presently hopped down again, so that I was reminded of some orange-crested bird ... The contrast between these sudden movements and the enthusiasm of his rich and flute-like voice was very strange ...

When Swinburne went to live with Theodore Watts-Dunton in Putney in 1879, Gosse became the latter's harshest critic. Gosse's biography, *The Life of Algernon Charles Swinburne* (1917), was the first and most influential written on the poet. Gosse's pronouncement on the deleterious effect of what he perceived as essentially Swinburne's removal not just from central London, but also from the sources of his creative inspiration, gave Watts-Dunton a long-lasting reputation of being the poet's keeper and guardian rather than a friend and agent. In fact, retirement from society was most likely Swinburne's own choice, and the resentment of former acquaintances, including Gosse, who felt deprived of easy access, was aimed unfairly at Watts-Dunton.

Gosse's son, Philip Henry Gosse (1879–1959), a naturalist like his grandfather, as well as a historian of piracy, was a good friend of John S. Mayfield's and a prolific correspondent—many of his letters are included in the John S. Mayfield Papers.

- 9.1 SIR EDMUND GOSSE. *The Life of Algernon Charles Swinburne* (New York: Macmillan, 1917). (*Georgetown University Library.*)

Jean Overton Fuller (1915–2009)

More than any other of Swinburne's biographers, Fuller posed a compelling argument for identifying the inspiration of Swinburne's famous poem of rejected love, "The Triumph of Time," as his cousin Mary Gordon Leith. Fuller's biography is also unique, providing, in its final chapters, first-hand testimonials by those "who met or saw Swinburne."

- 9.2 JEAN OVERTON FULLER. Signed typed letter to John S. Mayfield, dated February 13, 1969. Written on letterhead stationery of the newly formed partnership with antiquarian book dealer Timothy d'Arch Smith: "Do send me a copy of your review of my Swinburne, when it appears. I shall treasure it." (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Swinburne Research Correspondence.*)

Mollie Panter-Downes (1906–1997)

Best known for her "Letter from London" column for the *New Yorker*, in which she described English life to American readers (from 1939 to 1984), Panter-Downes also wrote a three-part article on Swinburne's years with Watts-Dunton and his family at The Pines. Published in the *New Yorker* (January 23 and 30; and February 6, 1971), the piece was later issued in book form as *At the Pines: Swinburne and Watts-Dunton in Putney* (1971), and is notable for the insights provided into the relationships among the inhabitants of Number 2 Putney Hill. Panter-Downes particularly pointed out the fact that Watts-Dunton's sister, Mrs. Wilhelmina Miranda Mason, disliked Clara Reich, his wife, and that "it must have been a sad abdication" the day the household keys were handed to the new Mrs. Watts-Dunton who very quickly proceeded to rearrange and renovate the old home, "running up and downstairs from the tower-room to the kitchen, energetically flinging open sash-windows, directing a great banging of brooms and thwacking of rugs, and retiring the ugliest bits of Victorian furnishings."

- 9.3 MOLLIE PANTER-DOWNES. *At the Pines: Swinburne and Watts-Dunton in Putney* (Boston: Gambit, 1971). (*From the library of John S. Mayfield.*)
- 9.4 MOLLIE PANTER-DOWNES. Signed autograph letter to John S. Mayfield, dated August 19, 1971. She refers to the relationship between Clara Watts-Dunton and Mrs. Mason, as well as to a letter from writer Rebecca West who happened to stay in the house of a woman whose "cousin's daughter ... has married a Mr. Watts-Dunton and they live with the poet Swinburne." (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Mollie Panter-Downes files.*)

Cecil Y. Lang (1920–2003)

A recognized authority on Swinburne, Lang was editor of *The Swinburne Letters* (1959–1962). The six-volume edition is the most comprehensive collection of Swinburne's published correspondence, preceded only by letters edited by Edmund Gosse and Thomas J. Wise, published as volume 18 of *The Complete Works of Algernon Charles Swinburne* (1927), with a date span from 1858 to 1909. Lang's edition begins in 1854. Lang, who held a chair in English literature at the University of Virginia, also produced distinguished editions of the letters of Matthew Arnold and (with Edgar Shannon, Jr.) of Alfred Lord Tennyson.

It was characteristic of John S. Mayfield to contact all of the Swinburne scholars he could find and make them his life-long friends. Lang was no exception. The earliest extant letter in Mayfield's papers is dated April 11, 1963, when he wrote to "Dr. Lang," with a solicitous request to perform the mission of reuniteing a letter at the British Museum, from Swinburne to William Michael Rossetti (dated February 10, 1902), with the envelope acquired by Mayfield. By the end of 1964, Lang had become "Dear Cecil" and Mayfield was often addressed as "Caro Giovanni."

- 9.5 CECIL Y. LANG. Signed autograph letter to John S. Mayfield, dated June 6, 1974. Lang refers to Mayfield's forthcoming book, *Swinburneiana* (1974), the manuscript of which Lang agreed to read. The latter also asks to borrow Mayfield's copy of Philip Henderson's biography of Swinburne and makes reference to the possibility of a reprint by the Oxford University Press of Lang's book, *The Pre-Raphaelites and Their Circle* (1968), an anthology that included William Morris, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and Swinburne. (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Research Correspondence.*)

John S. Mayfield (1904–1983)

- 9.6 JOHN S. MAYFIELD. *Swinburneiana: A Gallimaufry of Bits and Pieces about Algernon Charles Swinburne* (Baltimore: Waring Press, 1974). A collection of articles and ephemeral information about Swinburne, written or edited by Mayfield, dating ca. 1961 to 1971. Privately printed in a limited edition of 500 copies, each bearing the unique feature of the author's thumb print on the recto side of the frontispiece. The Waring Press was founded by devotees of fine printing. *Swinburneiana* was its first publication. (*From the library of John S. Mayfield.*)

Swinburne scholar and Mayfield friend Terry L. Meyers wrote: "Perhaps the best way to know [John Mayfield] is through his engaging publications, many of them gathered in ... *Swinburneiana*."

- 9.7 Photograph of John S. Mayfield in his office at Syracuse University, 1970.
(*John S. Mayfield Papers.*)

Terry L. Meyers (1944–)

Terry L. Meyers, professor of English at the College of William and Mary, is the editor of *Uncollected Letters of Algernon Charles Swinburne* (2005), which was dedicated to his friends and fellow Swinburne scholars, John S. Mayfield and Cecil Y. Lang. The John S. Mayfield Papers contain several years of correspondence between Mayfield and Dr. Meyers (ca. 1973 to 1983).

- 9.8 TERRY L. MEYERS. Journal kept during a trip to England, in 1975, to research Swinburne. The notebook was given to Dr. Meyers by John S. Mayfield in order that he might record everything discovered on the subject of their common interest. The entry for July 25 provides some of the many fascinating anecdotes:

... today I finished up in The Ashley Collection [of the British Library]
... I was touched to read a description of Swinburne's death which I don't recall having seen in print. On August 6, 1920, Mrs. Mason scoffed at the idea of Mrs. Watts-Dunton doing a book on Swinburne, and was especially anxious to make it clear that Clara was not present when he died. "The only persons beside the two nurses, were my late sister and myself. We were told he was passing away and went in to the bedroom. He was lying almost unconscious, I took hold of his hand which was getting cold, and he gave just a little pressure, then slowly seemed to be passing away ... I went up to my brother who was in bed, and told him ... he turned and thanked me in very pathetic terms for what I had done for them both, in all the 30 years we were together ..."

(*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series, Research Correspondence.*)

SWINBURNE AND HIS BOOKS

These selections display Algernon Charles Swinburne's relationships with books and the people who read them. Through books—which he read, wrote, enjoyed, and even hated—Swinburne wove a rich tapestry of correspondence.

- 10.1 THOMAS HOPE (1770–?1831). *Costume of the Ancients* (London: Printed for William Miller, 1809). Inscribed “Algernon Chas. Swinburne / from Edwd. Swinburne Senior / 10th March 1844.” Algernon Charles Swinburne's uncle gave him this book when Swinburne was about seven. In 1878, Swinburne asked his friend Theodore Watts-Dunton for advice on a delicate matter: how to recover books that he had loaned to the poet Mathilde Blind, including this copy of *Costume of the Ancients*:

Some years ago I was unwise enough to lend Miss Blind my copies of Matthew Arnold's earliest publications ... which I valued far beyond their money's worth as rarities (though that is now very considerable), as books I had had when a boy and carried about in my pocket on holidays—and which are not now to be had for love or money. I mentioned this matter once to her with all possible delicacy, and she “was very sorry” they had not been returned—which was not very satisfactory. Can you suggest anything? but I fear the question will baffle even your resources. I would give anything in reason to have the books back—I have hardly any I should be so sorry to have lost. Except indeed the book so many years detained by Gabriel Rossetti, which I positively must and will have back, as I know that at all events cannot have been mislaid—Hope's “Costumes of the Ancients” (one volume, folio, boards, first edition)—which also was given me (when I was a child) by one of my family long since dead, of whom I have no other memorial.

(From the library of John S. Mayfield.)

- 10.2 WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770–1850). *The Prelude, or, Growth of a Poet's Mind: An Autobiographical Poem* (London: Edward Moxon, 1850). Inscribed “Algernon Charles Swinburne / April 5th, 1851 / from his affect. mother / JHS”; with bookplate from The Pines. Given to Swinburne on his fourteenth birthday; he mentions reading this volume of Wordsworth in a letter to John Nichol (February 11, 1857):

I hope you will admire my powers of endurance when you hear that in the Christmas vacation I read *The Prelude* through from one end to the other. I can only say that I should be sorry to do it again, fine as many passages are ...

(From the library of John S. Mayfield.)

- 10.3 RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803–1882). *Poems* (London: Chapman Brothers, 1847). With bookplate from The Pines. In an interview that appeared in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* (January 3, 1874), American philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson purportedly criticized Swinburne harshly, prompting Swinburne to respond in an equally severe letter (copied to his friend George Powell and then given to the New York *Daily Tribune*). In a later (1877) letter to the American poet Paul Hamilton Hayne, Swinburne mentions Emerson's *Poems*:

I presume my unfortunate name would have been in still worse odour than ever among the good citizens of Massachusetts. And certainly ... an assault with a copy of Emerson's "Poems" would be a danger liable to quell the hardiest courage. Though I must in common honesty and candour—as I cannot be suspected of any personal tenderness or respect for a man who has indecently exposed himself (with reference to myself) a foul-minded and foul-mouthed old driveller—make so much reserve in his favour as to admit that I think one or two of those poems exceptionally beautiful and powerful; portions, for instance, if not all, of the poem on a son who died in boyhood—and most especially the noble, manly, and pathetic Threnody on his brothers. I always think not to ignore or deny whatever there may be of genuine merit in the work of an enemy or back-biter, however virulent or abject in his filthy malignity, is to lower one's own self for the moment to the base level of even such a currish and venomous dastard as the calumniator. And I always wish to make this known as my opinion by the simple process of trying to act up to it.

(*Special Collections Research Center, Rare Books Collections.*)

- 10.4 J[OHN]. W[ILLIAM]. MACKKAIL (1859–1945). *The Sayings of the Lord Jesus Christ: As Recorded by His Four Evangelists* (London: Reeves and Turner, 1894). With bookplate from The Pines. (*From the library of John S. Mayfield.*)
- 10.5 MARGARET MACKKAIL (1866–1953). Signed autograph letter to Algernon Charles Swinburne, undated. Presenting her husband's book, *The Sayings of the Lord Jesus Christ*. Margaret Mackkail describes her own children to Swinburne and also remembers how kind he was to her when she and her brother "Phil" were young. Margaret Mackkail and Philip were the children of Pre-Raphaelite painter and friend of Swinburne, Edward Burne-Jones. (*John S. Mayfield Papers, Swinburne Series.*)
- 10.6 GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON (1788–1824). *A Selection of the Works of Lord Byron, Edited and Prefaced by Algernon Charles Swinburne* (London: Edward Moxon, 1866). Inscribed "W. M. Rossetti / from A. C. Swinburne / March 1866." Edward Moxon (1801–1858) published the works of major nineteenth-century poets, notably William Wordsworth

and Alfred Tennyson. After Moxon's death, Bradbury and Evans oversaw the publishing firm for his widow and son, employing John Bertrand Payne as manager. In a letter to William Michael Rossetti, Swinburne discusses the essay he wrote for this book of *Selections* (1866) and asks for advice on whether to proceed with a similar project on Keats. Incidentally, the "illustrious Scotch person by the name of Buchanan" Swinburne mentions is none other than Robert Buchanan, whose 1871 "Fleshly School of Poetry" appeared in the *Critical Review* under his pseudonym Thomas Maitland.

Now I am going to ask your help and advice in a matter of business regarding only my own interest. I have made for this Miniature series of Moxon's a book of selections from Byron, with a critical essay prefixed which has cost me some time and trouble. It will appear on the first of next month; and today Payne writes to ask what he is to pay into my banker's hands on this account. What do you think I ought to say? An illustrious Scotch person by the name of Buchanan has done, it seems, a like office for Keats, and received £10 in return. This sum the publisher is willing to lose, and to cancel the poor devil's work, if I will do Keats instead on those terms: and won't I? and wouldn't I gratis? This forthcoming Scotch edition of Keats, who hated the Scotch as much as I do (Scotus I consider Northumbrian by adoption and Scotch no longer) has long been a thorn in my side: and apart from the delight of trampling on a Scotch Poetaster, I shall greatly enjoy bringing out a perfect edition of Keats with all his good verses and none of his bad. But all this does not help me to see what under the circumstances I ought in justice demand for the Byron, a work less delightful and more laborious.

(From the library of John S. Mayfield.)

- 10.7 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. *Charles Dickens, Edited by Theodore Watts-Dunton* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1913). Swinburne had a life-long admiration for Charles Dickens, and he loved nothing more than to read Dickens aloud. Chatto and Windus published posthumously two previously written essays by Swinburne and edited together by Swinburne's long-time friend and agent, Theodore Watts-Dunton. The first essay appeared in John Murray's periodical, the *Quarterly Review* (July 1902). Swinburne wrote the second essay solely on *Oliver Twist* for a deluxe, 56-volume edition of Dickens's complete works to be published in New York and London by G.D. Sproul. *Oliver Twist* had been proposed for volumes 28 and 29; however, only fifteen volumes were ever published. In the preface to this book Watts-Dunton wrote of Swinburne:

He could recite long passages from Dickens and Jane Austen from memory—that prodigious memory of his. In order to introduce Charles Dickens to a child who lived with us, he spent scores of evenings in giving him an oral epitome of Dickens's novels, omitting the portions that were be-

yond juvenile comprehension. During a long and painful malady, which had stricken the son of a dear friend of his, Swinburne used to walk over to Wimbledon with a novel by Dickens in his pocket to comfort and amuse the invalid by reading out to him. Reading aloud, indeed, was one of Swinburne's greatest pleasures.

(From the library of John S. Mayfield.)

10.8 CHARLES DICKENS (1812–1870). *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1890). Inscribed “Walter Theodore Watts-Dunton / from Algernon Charles Swinburne.” *(From the library of John S. Mayfield.)*

10.9 G[EORGE]. A[LFRED]. HENTY (1832–1902). *The Bravest of the Brave, or, With Peterborough in Spain* (London: Blackie and Son, 1887). Inscribed “Herbert Walter Mason / from his affectionate friend / A. C. Swinburne / Twelfth Day 1887.”

Swinburne loved children, and especially Theodore Watts-Dunton's nephew “Bertie” Mason, who lived at The Pines. In an 1889 letter to children's writer Mary Louisa Molesworth, Swinburne mentions Bertie's reading habits at that time:

It is funny that he and I, who are such good friends, should be so unlike in our respective capacities. Bertie has no turn for languages—the only thing I had any turn for as a schoolboy, and has a great delight for mechanics, geography and arithmetic—subjects on which, during all the five years of my stay at Eton, I was in an acknowledged condition of not intermittent but perpetual disgrace as the lowest boy in the lowest form of the lowest division—till at last they gave up expecting me to do a decent sum or a decent map: Bertie's triumphs in sums I cannot of course appreciate, but I can admire the beautiful drawing and colouring of maps, which he sometimes brings to show me. ... Do you see the two monthly magazines for boys—“The Sea” and “The World of Adventure”—that I take in for Bertie? He likes them very much and I always read them with interest; they are all made up of real events—which Bertie and many other boys are stupid enough to prefer to fiction—and very well illustrated. Boys could not have wholesomer reading.

(From the library of John S. Mayfield.)

TWO SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS

Among the notable holdings in John S. Mayfield's collection are publications that demonstrate the art of the book. Here are two special books—the King Library Press edition of Swinburne's poem "On the Cliffs," and a copy of *Rosamund, Queen of the Lombards* in a lavish binding by Cedric Chivers—that exemplify the beauty of fine printing, illustration, and bookbinding.

- 11.1 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. *Songs of the Springtides* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1880). "On the Cliffs" appears in this volume, beginning on page 37. (*Special Collections Research Center, Rare Books Collections.*)

Swinburne wrote of this poem to his friend Edmund Gosse in 1879:

I want ... to read to you my last new poem of more than 400 lines—"On the Cliffs." It is in the irregular Italian metre of *Lycidas*. Watts—as I possibly may have told you—says (what a man generally likes to hear of his latest work) that it is *the* best poem I ever wrote.

- 11.2 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. *On the Cliffs: With a Visual Interpretation Cut by John Regis Tuska* (Lexington, Ky.: King Library Press, 1980). Limited to 75 numbered copies; this copy is unnumbered. Displayed with the prospectus for the book. (*From the library of John S. Mayfield.*)

- 11.3 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. *Rosamund, Queen of the Lombards: A Tragedy* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1899). Two copies, both as issued in straw-colored buckram, one with an early review slip. (*Special Collections Research Center, Rare Books Collections.*)

- 11.4 ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. *Rosamund, Queen of the Lombards: A Tragedy* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1899). (*From the library of John S. Mayfield.*)

According to T.J. Wise's *Bibliography of the Writings in Prose and Verse of Algernon Charles Swinburne* (1927), 1,500 copies of the first edition were printed. Of these, British bookbinder Cedric Chivers of Bath, England specially bound 25, of which this is number 14.

- 11.5 C[HRISTOPHER]. W. J. HARRIS. *100 Years of Bookbinding in Bath* (Bath: Cedric Chivers, 1978). (*Privately purchased.*)

The Seaboard.
1900

The sea is at ebb, & the sound of her utmost word
Is soft as the least wave's lapse in a still small reach
From bay into bay, on quest of a goal deferred,
From headland ever to headland & beach to beach
Where earth gives ear to the message that all days preach
With changes of gladness & sadness that cheer & chide,
The lone way lures one along by a chance untried
That haply if hope dissolve not & faith be whole,
Not all for naught shall I seek, with a dream for guide,
The goal that is not, & ever again the goal

The trackless ways are untravelled of sail or bird;
The hour wave hardly recedes from the soundless beach.
The silence of instant noon goes nigh to be heard,
The viewless void to be visible: all reach,
A closure of calm or clamour of storm can breach
Concludes & confines & absorbs them on either side,
All forces of light & of life & the live world's pride.
Sands hardly ruffled of nipples that hardly roll
Seem ever to show as in reach of a swift brief stride
The goal that is not, & ever again the goal.

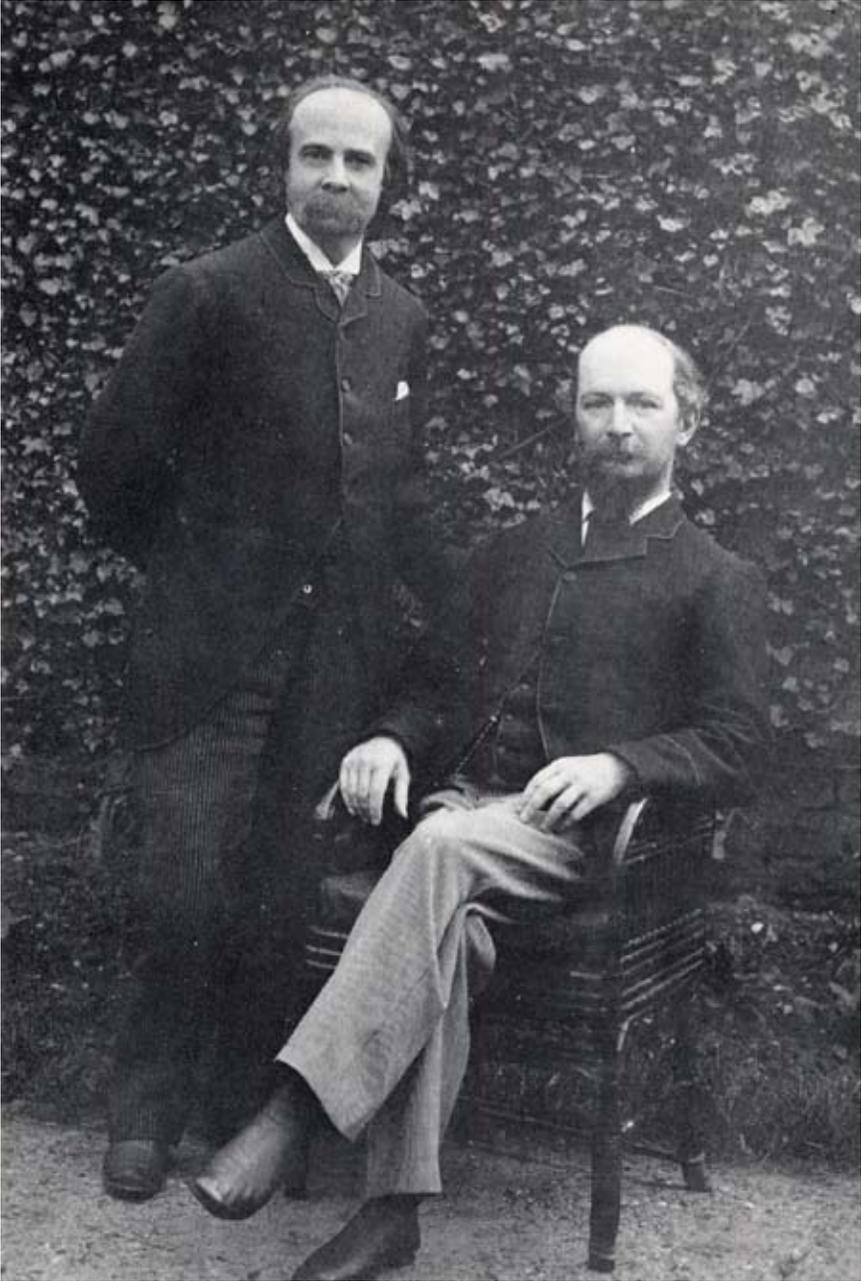
ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. "The Seaboard."
Autograph manuscript. [item 1.2]



SIMEON SOLOMON. *A Venetian Study*.
Crayon on paper. [item 3.16]



G. R. HALKETT. Swinburne at the exhibition of Dante Gabriel Rossetti's works, Burlington House, London, May 16, 1883. Watercolor. [item 8.1]



Photograph of Swinburne and Theodore Watts-Dunton at The Pines.
Reproduced from Jean Overton Fuller,
Swinburne: A Critical Biography (1968). [item 3.2]