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Ian Ousby



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A Beckett, Gilbert (Abbott) 1811–56 Humorist. He combined a distinguished legal career with comic writing, particularly for *PUNCH*, of which he was a founding member. *The Comic History of England* (1847) and *The Comic History of Rome* (1852), both illustrated by JOHN LEECH, were his most successful works. He also wrote over 50 plays.

À Wood, Anthony See WOOD, ANTHONY À.

Abbey Theatre A Dublin theatre, named after the street in which it stood and opened in 1904 as headquarters of the Irish National Theatre Society, originally founded as the Irish Literary Theatre by YEATS, GEORGE MOORE and EDWARD MARTYN in 1899. Productions of work by the Abbey's directors, Yeats, LADY GREGORY and SYNGE, quickly made it the focus of the new Irish drama. A second phase, dominated by the work of O'CASEY, began with *THE SHADOW OF A GUNMAN* (1923) and ended with the rejection of *THE SILVER TASSIE* in 1928. The theatre was sustained by the work of lesser dramatists, like LENNOX ROBINSON and GEORGE SHIELDS, until its destruction by fire in 1951. A second Abbey opened in 1966.

Abbot, The See SCOTT, SIR WALTER.

Abercrombie, Lascelles 1881–1938 Poet and critic. His poetry, which belongs to the Georgian period before the revolution brought about by POUND and ELIOT, was collected in 1930; the posthumous *Lyrics and Unfinished Poems* appeared in 1940. His criticism includes an important study of HARDY (1912), *The Idea of Great Poetry* (1925) and *Principles of Literary Criticism* (1932). Abercrombie was appointed professor of English literature at Leeds University in 1922 and Goldsmith's Reader in English at Oxford in 1935.

Abrahams, Peter 1919– South African novelist. He has settled in Jamaica. Black deprivations under apartheid are vividly detailed in *Mine Boy* (1946) as well as in his account of a return visit to South Africa, *Return to Goli* (1953), and an autobiography, *Tell Freedom* (1954). His understanding of Third World politics informs: *Wild Conquest* (1950), a historical novel; *A Wreath for Udomo* (1956), *A Night of Their Own* (1965) and *This Island Now* (1966), three remarkably prescient works; and *The View from Coyaba* (1985).

Absalom, Absalom! A novel by WILLIAM FAULKNER, published in 1936. From their room at Harvard, Quentin Compson (see *THE SOUND AND THE FURY*) and Shreve McCannon reconstruct the story of Thomas Sutpen's failed attempt to found a dynasty in Jefferson, Mississippi. Sutpen manages to build a mansion but is finally defeated by the complex pattern of miscegenation embodied in his sons, Henry and Charles. Dividing its attention between Sutpen and Quentin's attempt to understand him, the novel is about the decay of the old South.

Absalom and Achitophel A poem by DRYDEN, published in 1681. It adapts characters and story from the Old Testament (2 Kings) to create an allegory satirizing contemporary politics. Dryden's main target is the efforts of Lord Shaftesbury and his party to exclude the future James II, a Catholic, from the succession in favour of Charles II's bastard son, the Duke of Monmouth. The poem is famous for its verse portraits of Monmouth (Absalom), Shaftesbury (Achitophel),

BUCKINGHAM (Zimri) and Charles II (David). A second part (1682) was written chiefly by TATE and revised by Dryden, who contributed 200 savage lines about two of his rivals, SHADWELL (Og) and SETTLE (Doeg).

Abse, Dannie (Daniel) 1923– Poet. His anthology *Mavericks* (with Howard Sergeant; 1957) was designed to advocate 'the image and Dionysian excitement' and expose the MOVEMENT as limited. His own work, from *After Every Green Thing* (1949) to *White Coat, Purple Coat: Collected Poems 1948–88* (1989) and *Remembrance of Crimes Past: Poems 1986–89* (1990), remains within the English tradition of intimate address but seeks to include his wider range of experience as a doctor and Jewish cultural outsider. *A Poet in the Family* (1974) and *There was a Young Man from Cardiff* (1991) are autobiographical.

Absentee, The A novel by MARIA EDGEWORTH, published in the second series of *Tales of Fashionable Life* in 1812. It is set on a large landholding in Ireland, whose absentee landlord, Lord Clonbrony, is finally persuaded to return to his responsibilities by his son.

Absurd, Theatre of the Literally meaning 'out of harmony', absurd was Albert Camus's designation for the dilemma of modern man, a stranger in an inhuman universe. Martin Esslin's influential *Theatre of the Absurd* (1961) applied the term to contemporary playwrights who presented man's metaphysical absurdity in an aberrant dramatic style mirroring the situation. His main examples were Adamov, Ionesco, Genet and BECKETT, whose *WAITING FOR GODOT* brought international acclaim to the Theatre of the Absurd. ALBEE and PINTER received less attention. Journalists soon seized upon the term, confusing it with the everyday meaning of absurd as outrageously comic and applying it to almost every non-realistic modern dramatist.

Abt Vogler A DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE by ROBERT BROWNING, published in *Dramatis Personae* (1864). The speaker is the Abbé Georg Josef Vogler (1749–1814), advocate of a new system of harmony based on mathematics and precursor of the musical theories of Liszt and Wagner.

Academy, The A periodical founded by Charles Edward Cutts Birch Appleton in 1869. Covering a wide range of topics in art, literature and the sciences, it included MARK PATTISON, MATTHEW ARNOLD and THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY among its contributors and LORD ALFRED DOUGLAS among its editors.

accentual metre See METRE.

Achebe, Chinua 1930– Nigerian novelist, short-story writer, essayist, editor and writer of CHILDREN'S LITERATURE. His first novel, *THINGS FALL APART* (1958), has been recognized as an African classic. It was followed by *No Longer at Ease* (1960), *Arrow of God* (1964, revised 1974), *A Man of the People* (1966), and *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987), about the failures of African politicians and intellectuals. He has also published *The Sacrificial Egg and Other Stories* (1962), *Girls at War and Other Stories* (1972) and children's books: *Chike and the River* (1966), *How the Leopard Got His Claws* (1972), *The Flute and The Drum* (1977). His many other works, expressing his commitment to African literature and society, include: editions and co-editions of contemporary writing; *Morning Yet on Creation Day: Essays* (1975) and *Hopes and Impediments:*

Selected Essays, 1965–87 (1988); and *The Trouble with Nigeria*, a political statement written during the 1983 elections.

Ackerley, J(oseph) R(andolph) 1896–1967 Literary editor. As literary editor of *THE LISTENER* from 1932 to 1959 he published work by many distinguished writers, including FORSTER and ISHERWOOD. *Hindoo Holiday* (1932) records his experiences in India. *My Dog Tulip* (1956) and the novel *We Think the World of You* (1960) are about his relationship with a pet Alsatian. *My Father and Myself* (1968) gives a fascinating account of his father, who managed to live a secret life behind the trappings of respectability.

Ackroyd, Peter 1949– Novelist and biographer. His lives of POUND (1980), T. S. ELIOT (1984) and DICKENS (1990) have been acclaimed. Literary and biographical criticism also informs much of his fiction: *The Great Fire of London* (1982), about the filming of *LITTLE DORRIT*; *The Last Days of Oscar Wilde* (1983), a pastiche of WILDE's final diary; *Hawthorne* (1985), about the architect; and *Chatterton* (1987), about THOMAS CHATTERTON. Subsequent novels are *First Light* (1989), *English Music* (1992), *The House of Doctor Dee* (1993) and *Dan Leno and the Limehouse Golem* (1994).

acrostic A poem in which letters in successive lines make a word or pattern. A true acrostic, like the 'Argument' at the beginning of JONSON's *VOLPONE*, forms the word from the first letter of each line. Variants are the mesostich, using the middle letters, and the telestich, using the final letters. See also PALINDROME.

Acton, Sir Harold (Mario Mitchell) 1904–94 Poet, novelist and 'aesthete'. He accepted the label in two volumes of autobiography, *Memoirs of an Aesthete* (1948) and *More Memoirs of an Aesthete* (1970), while stressing that he meant by it a 'citizen of the world' with a duty to 'remind ... fellow creatures of what they are fast forgetting, that true culture is universal'. Of his early volumes of poetry, *Aquarium* (1923) and *This Chaos* (1930), the first appeared while he was still an Oxford undergraduate. A special affinity with China, which he visited in the 1930s, resulted in a novel, *Peonies and Ponies* (1941), translations of Chinese poetry and writings on Chinese art and culture. His connection with Italy – Acton was born and later settled at the family villa near Florence – is expressed in *The Last Medici* (1932) and *The Bourbons of Naples* (1957), historical studies. He also published short stories and a 'memoir' of NANCY MITFORD.

Acton, Sir John (Emerich Edward Dalberg), 1st Baron Acton 1834–1902 Historian. From the 1860s he acquired a reputation as a writer and teacher of liberal Catholic ideas, many of which brought him into conflict with the ecclesiastical authorities, notably his rejection of Papal infallibility in *Letters from Rome on the Council* (1870). In 1886 he was instrumental in founding the *English Historical Review*, to which he contributed the article 'German Schools of History'. He was appointed Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge in 1895, and became first editor of the *Cambridge Modern History* (1899–1900). His influential lectures on modern history and the French Revolution were published posthumously in 1906 and 1910.

Acts and Monuments A work of Protestant history and propaganda by FOXE, formally entitled *Acts and Monuments of These Latter and Perilous Days, Touching Matters of the Church in its first English edition* (1563), but soon popularly known as 'Foxe's Book of Martyrs'. It had been published in Latin at Strasburg and Basle while

Foxe was in exile during Queen Mary's reign, a period which supplied part of its subject and fuelled its fervent tone. Expanded in 1570 and many times reprinted, *Acts and Monuments* proved enormously popular, especially in Puritan households. Its account of Roman Catholic persecution and Protestant martyrdom, illustrated with graphic woodcuts, helped to shape anti-Catholic – particularly anti-Spanish – sentiment in the 16th century and afterwards.

Adam Bede GEORGE ELIOT's first full-length novel, published in 1859. Adam Bede, a carpenter in the Midland village of Hayslope, is in love with Hetty Sorrel, niece of the farmer Martin Poyser. The squire, Arthur Donnithorne, is attracted to Hetty and she is vain enough to dream of becoming his wife. Adam watches the flirtation with growing anxiety and tries unsuccessfully to intervene. Arthur abandons Hetty after seducing her. Adam earns the reward of his loyalty to Hetty when, heartbroken at Arthur's desertion, she agrees to marry him. But she finds herself pregnant and flies from home in a desperate search for her lover. Adam is supported in his grief by Dinah Morris, a young Methodist preacher, with whom his brother Seth is hopelessly in love. Unable to find Arthur, Hetty is arrested, charged with the murder of her child and convicted. Dinah becomes her comforter and the close of the novel describes how Hetty, with Dinah's help, faces her final ordeal. But she is reprieved and her sentence commuted to transportation. Adam later marries Dinah. The novel was exceptionally well received by contemporary reviewers, who praised its evocation of English rural life and its character studies, particularly Martin's wife, Mrs Poyser.

Adams, Andy 1859–1935 American novelist. He spent much of his life in the Texas cattle country and the mining centres of Colorado. He is best known for *The Log of a Cowboy* (1903), an authentic, unsentimental depiction of life on the open range. Other works include *The Outlet* (1905), *Cattle Brands* (1906), *Reed Anthony, Cowman* (1907), *Wells Brothers* (1911) and *The Ranch on the Beaver* (1927).

Adams, Arthur Henry 1872–1936 Novelist and poet. Novels and stories with an Australasian background include *Tussock Land* (1904), *The New Chum and Other Stories* (1909), *Galahad Jones* (1910), *The Australians* (1920) and *A Man's Life* (1929). His verse included a war poem, *My Friend, Remember* (1914). He also wrote *Three Plays for the Australian Stage* (1914) and light fiction under the pseudonyms of Henry James James and James James.

Adams, Douglas (Noël) 1952– Script-writer and novelist. *The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy* began as a BBC radio serial in 1978 before becoming a best-selling novel (1979). It was followed by *The Restaurant at the End of the Universe* (1980), *Life, the Universe and Everything* (1982), *So Long, and Thanks for All the Fish* (1984) and *Mostly Harmless* (1992). The series uses SCIENCE FICTION to satirize human delusions of significance. *Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency* (1987) and *The Long Dark Tea-Time of the Soul* (1988) are absurdist DETECTIVE FICTION.

Adams, Francis William Lauderdale 1862–93 Australian poet. Educated in England, he went to Australia in 1884. *Henry and Other Tales* (1884), *Poetical Works* (1887) and *Songs of the Army of the Night* (1888) were admired by WILLIAM MICHAEL ROSSETTI for their 'intensity and fierceness of tone'. Adams also wrote novels, including *John Webb's End: Australian Bush Life* (1891), and two volumes of essays, *Australian Essays* (1886) and *The Australians* (1893).

Adams, Henry (Brooks) 1838–1918 American historian and man of letters. He was born in Boston, the grandson of John Quincy Adams, the sixth President of the United States, and the great-grandson of John Adams, the second President. He studied and taught history at Harvard (1870–7), edited the *THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW*, observed the political scene at first hand in Washington and, partly out of discontent with life in America, travelled widely in Europe, the Orient and the Sierras. His nine-volume *History of the United States of America during the Administrations of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison* (1889–91) was the most ambitious of his many studies of history and politics. He is chiefly remembered, however, for *MONT-SAINT-MICHEL AND CHARTRES* (privately printed 1904, published 1913), a study of 13th-century culture, and *THE EDUCATION OF HENRY ADAMS* (privately printed 1907, published 1918), an autobiographical exploration of his heritage and a critical examination of the age in which he lived. In *The Education* he self-consciously presents himself as representative of the American mind at a particular historical moment; he has taken his place as such in the literary and critical tradition.

Adams, Richard (George) 1920– Novelist and writer of CHILDREN'S LITERATURE. *Watership Down* (1972) – his first and most famous book, about the wanderings of a group of rabbits – was rejected by many publishers before appearing to acclaim from both children and adults. *Shardik* (1974), about a humanized bear, reflects his preoccupation with man's cruelty to beasts. He has also written humorous ballads for children but otherwise moved towards adult fiction with *The Plague Dogs* (1977) and *The Girl in a Swing* (1980), his first exclusively adult book. *Day Gone By* (1990) is his autobiography.

Adcock, Fleur 1934– New Zealand/English poet. She has lived in Britain since 1963. Her poetry is notable for its unsentimental treatment of personal and family relationships, its psychological insights and its interest in classical themes. Volumes include *The Eye of the Hurricane* (1964), *Tigers* (1967), *High Tide in the Garden* (1971), *The Scenic Route* (1974), *The Inner Harbour* (1979), *Selected Poems* (1983), *The Incident Book* (1986), *Hotspur* (1986), *Meeting the Comet* (1988), *Time Zones* (1991) and several translations. She has edited *The Oxford Book of New Zealand Verse* (1982) and *The Faber Book of Twentieth Century Women's Poetry* (1987).

Adding Machine, The A play by ELMER RICE, first produced in 1923. Among the earliest and most successful American experiments with EXPRESSIONISM, it depicts the over-mechanized, joyless existence of Mr Zero. He murders his boss when the department store where he works replaces him by an adding machine. Condemned to death and executed, he goes to a pastoral heaven but is unable to adjust until he is set to work on a giant adding machine. Finally the authorities send him back to earth, to operate an even more efficient machine.

Addison, Joseph 1672–1719 Essayist, poet and playwright. Son of the Dean of Lichfield, he was educated at Charterhouse (where he first met STEELE) and at Magdalen College, Oxford, of which he became a fellow. *The Campaign* (1704) is a poem in HEROIC COUPLETS celebrating the English victory at Blenheim. Whig friends in London, where he joined Steele as a member of the KIT-KAT CLUB, secured him a succession of public appointments, as Commissioner of Excise (1705), MP (from 1708 until his death), secretary to Lord Wharton, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1709), Chief Secretary

for Ireland (1715) and a Lord Commissioner of Trade (1716). He married the Countess of Warwick in 1716. One of the leading editorial journalists of his age, Addison wrote urbane and familiar prose, a model of the 'middle style' so admired in the period. He contributed papers to Steele's *THE TATLER* between 1709 and 1711, when he joined his friend in founding *THE SPECTATOR*. He also contributed to Steele's *THE GUARDIAN* in 1713 and founded his own political newspaper, *The Freeholder* (1715–16). His last journalistic venture, *The Old Whig*, showed a growing estrangement from Steele. His BLANK-VERSE tragedy, *CATO* (1713), scored a great success at DRURY LANE but his later prose-comedy, *The Drummer* (1715), failed.

Ade, George 1866–1944 American humorist, short-story writer and playwright. He made his mark with *Fables in Slang* (1899), *Forty Modern Fables* (1901), *People You Know* (1903), and *Hand-Made Fables* (1920). His musical and dramatic comedies include *The Sultan of Sulu* (1903) and *The College Widow* (1904).

Adelphi, The A journal founded by JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY in 1923 and edited by him until 1930, chiefly as a forum for his ideas and those of D. H. LAWRENCE. It appeared monthly until 1927 and quarterly thereafter, being known as *The New Adelphi* from 1927 until Murry handed over the editorship to Max Plowman and Richard Rees in 1930. Before it ceased publication in 1955 it had counted AUDEN, T. S. ELIOT, ORWELL and YEATS among its contributors.

Admirable Crichton, The A comedy by BARRIE, first produced in 1902. A model butler in the household of Lord Loam, Crichton becomes lord of the island when the family is shipwrecked. After supervising the rescue in the last act, he reverts to his subservient role.

Adonais: An Elegy on the Death of John Keats SHELLEY's lament for his fellow poet, published in 1821. Written in SPENSERIAN STANZAS, the ELEGY moves from an account of the mourning at KEATS's bier to a triumphant affirmation of his immortality.

Advancement of Learning, The A treatise (1605) by FRANCIS BACON, constituting the preliminary section of his great scheme for intellectual and scientific reform, the *Instauratio magna* ('Great Instauration'), continued in *NOVUM ORGANUM* (1620). *The Advancement of Learning* itself was extended in the Latin version, *De augmentis scientiarum* (1623). It begins by disposing of objections to the idea of learning and championing its advantages. Bacon goes on to attack the various methods of education currently in practice, based on the Aristotelian structures of knowledge, and to suggest the student work from experiment and observation rather than theory. The principal subdivisions of knowledge (history, poetry and philosophy) are then considered.

AE [A. E.] See RUSSELL, GEORGE WILLIAM.

Aelfric fl. c. 955–c. 1010 Aelfric *Grammaticus*, 'the grammarian', studied with the Benedictines at Winchester under St Aethelwold, whom he followed in promoting monastic reform. His best-known works were written while he was teaching at Cerne Abbey: a Latin *Grammar* and *Glossary*, and the *Colloquy*, a primer with a parallel Old English/Latin text which gives a vivid picture of everyday life. Other writings included: two sets of homilies in English, largely based on the works of BEDE, Augustine, Jerome and Gregory; a translation of Bede's *De temporibus*; a collection of SAINTS' LIVES; and translations from the Old and New Testaments (see BIBLE IN ENGLISH). As abbot of Eynsham, he wrote a life of

Aethelwold and several minor treatises. His lucid style and wide interests ensured Aelfric's lasting popularity: copied throughout the Middle Ages, his writings became the first in Old English to be printed.

Aelred [Ailred] of Rievaulx 1110-67 Abbot of Rievaulx from 1147. Born of a long line of married Benedictine priests from Northumbria, he spent his boyhood in Hexham, went to school in Durham, and entered the household of David I of Scotland, whose steward he became. At Rievaulx, which he entered as a novice in 1134, he wrote: *Speculum caritatis*, inspired by two friends, with an introductory letter by Bernard of Clairvaux; *Genealogia regum anglorum* (1152-3), containing a eulogy of King David; an account of the saints of Hexham (1155), to celebrate their translation; sermons on Isaiah and *De spirituali amicitia*, about monastic friendships (1158-63); *De institutione inclarorum*, for his sister; and a life of Edward the Confessor (1163). *De anima* was apparently unfinished at his death. Walter Daniel, who entered Rievaulx in 1150, wrote Aelred's biography.

Aesthetic Movement A movement of mind, or shift in sensibility, arising in the 1880s. Its credo of 'Art for Art's sake' ran counter to high-Victorian optimism, UTILITARIANISM and the belief that art should be moral. Touched with melancholy and pessimism, and stirred by exotic art forms, novel precepts and remote cultures, it was shaped by the work of PATER as well as by contemporary activities in France. OSCAR WILDE, LIONEL JOHNSON, ERNEST DOWSON, MAX BEERBOHM, ARTHUR SYMONS, AUBREY BEARDSLEY, RICHARD LE GALLIENNE and the young YEATS were attracted to various phases of the movement. *THE YELLOW BOOK* and *The Savoy* were important outlets and the RHYMERS' CLUB was an important nucleus.

Agate, James (Evershed) 1877-1947 Drama critic. His reviews for *The Sunday Times* from 1923 until his death established him as the most feared and most courted of theatrical judges. The very title of *Ego* (1938-47), his nine-volume selection from his diary, confesses that he became too conscious of his own personality. Volumes of selected criticism include *Brief Chronicles* (1943), *Red-Letter Nights* (1944) and *Immoment Toys* (1945).

Age of Innocence, The A novel by EDITH WHARTON, published in 1920 and awarded a PULITZER PRIZE. It is mainly set in New York during the 1870s. Newland Archer, a lawyer, falls in love with Ellen Olenska, the wife of a Polish count, but marries her cousin, May Welland. His continuing interest in Ellen prompts May to tell her that she is pregnant. Ellen leaves New York for Paris. Visiting the city 30 years later, the widowed Newland decides to preserve his idealized memories rather than call on her.

Age of Reason, The A tract by THOMAS PAINE, published in 1794-6. Showing his inclination towards DEISM, it makes a stark critique of accepted religious belief and practices. The first part argues that a rational knowledge of God does not accord with traditional conceptions of the Deity; the second illuminates inconsistencies in the Bible in order to invalidate both literal and figurative readings of the text. The book estranged Paine from many of his more orthodox American friends.

Agee, James 1909-55 American journalist, social critic, poet and novelist. He is perhaps best known for *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (with photographs by

Walker Evans, 1941), describing the plight of three rural Alabama families during the Depression. His novels, *The Morning Watch* (1951) and *A Death in the Family* (1957; PULITZER PRIZE), are partly autobiographical, the first dealing with religious piety and the second with the effects on a family of a father's early death. He also wrote filmscripts, including *The African Queen* (with John HUSTON, 1951), *The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky* (based on STEPHEN CRANE's short story, 1953) and *The Night of the Hunter* (1955). Agee's poems and short stories were collected and edited by Robert Fitzgerald (1968).

Agnes Grey A novel by ANNE BRONTË, published in 1847. It is based on her experiences as a governess. Agnes Grey, a rector's daughter employed by the Murray family, is badly treated and her loneliness is relieved only by the kindness of the curate, Weston, whom she eventually marries.

Ahlberg, Alan 1938- Writer of CHILDREN'S LITERATURE. With his illustrator-wife Janet, he has produced many successful picture-books for small children. They include: *Each Peach Pear Plum* (1978); the *Happy Families* series stretching from *Mr Biff the Boxer* (1980) to *Mr Creep the Crook* (1988); the inventive *Peepo!* (1981); and most successfully of all, *The Jolly Postman* (1987).

Aidoo, Ama Ata 1942- Ghanaian playwright, novelist, short-story writer and poet. Her first play and still her best-known work, *The Dilemma of a Ghost* (1965), is a serious comedy about a black American girl who marries into a Ghanaian family. She has also written: *Anowa* (1969), a play based on a traditional legend; *No Sweetness Here* (1970), short stories; *Our Sister Killjoy* (1977) and *Changes* (1991), novels; *Someone Talking to Sometime* (1985), poems; and CHILDREN'S LITERATURE. She is one of the leading writers to be concerned about the position of women in modern Africa.

Aiken, Conrad (Potter) 1889-1973 American poet, short-story writer and novelist. His fiction and poetry both reflect his interest in psychology, and his reading of Freud, WILLIAM JAMES and French SYMBOLISM, as well as of POE, his most obvious American antecedent. Volumes of poetry include *Earth Triumphant, and Other Tales in Verse* (1914), *Turns and Movies* (1916), *The Jig of Forslin; A Symphony* (1916), *Selected Poems* (1929), *And in the Human Heart* (a SONNET sequence, 1940), *Collected Poems* (1929) and *Thee* (1967), a book-length poem. His short stories include *Bring! Bring!* (1925), *Costumes by Eros* (1928) and *Among the Lost People* (1934); his five novels were gathered in *The Collected Novels* (1964).

Aiken, Joan (Delano) 1924- Novelist and writer of CHILDREN'S LITERATURE. The daughter of CONRAD AIKEN, she began with a collection of stories, *All You've Ever Wanted* (1953). A series of vividly imaginative children's novels, beginning with *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase* (1962) and including *Black Hearts in Battersea* (1964) and *The Cuckoo Tree* (1981), invent whole new periods of history. Other children's novels include *Midnight is a Place* (1974), an evocation of Victorian industrialism, and supernatural tales such as *The Shadow Guests* (1980), *A Goose on Your Grave* (1987) and *A Foot on the Grave* (1989). Her writing for younger children includes *A Necklace of Raindrops* (1968). She has also written many adult novels.

Aikin, John 1747-1822 Essayist and physician. He collaborated with his sister, ANNA LAETITIA BARBAULD, on *Miscellaneous Pieces* (1773) and the six-volume *Evenings at Home* (1792-6), and wrote several reports on prisons for the reformer John Howard, whose literary executor he became.

Ailred See AELRED.

Ainger, Alfred 1837–1904 Essayist, editor and critic. He was particularly drawn to the work of CHARLES LAMB, contributing a *Life* to the English Men of Letters series (1882) and editing the *Essays* (1883), the *Poems and Plays* (1884) and the *Letters* (1888, 1904). He also wrote a *Life* of CRABBE for the English Men of Letters series (1903). His collected *Lectures and Essays* were published in two volumes in 1905.

Ainsworth, William Harrison 1805–82 Novelist. *Rookwood* (1834), a romanticized account of the highwayman Dick Turpin, was a great commercial and popular success. *Jack Sheppard* (1839) features another notorious criminal and so helped to fuel the controversy about the NEWGATE NOVEL. Other historical romances included: *The Tower of London* (1840), about the short reign of Lady Jane Grey; *Old St Paul's* (1841), which uses the Plague and Great Fire of London; *Windsor Castle* (1843), set in the reign of Henry VIII; and *The Lancashire Witches* (1849), set in Pendle Forest.

Akenside, Mark 1721–70 Poet. Most of his work is minor, but *The Pleasures of Imagination* (1744) – revised as *The Pleasures of the Imagination* in 1757 – is remembered for anticipating the concerns of later Romantic poets.

Alabaster, William 1567–1640 Divine, scholar, mystical exegete and poet. His life saw extraordinary religious vacillations, conversions, reconversions and recantations, beginning with his conversion to Roman Catholicism in 1597 and ending with his appointment as Anglican chaplain to JAMES I in 1618.

JOHNSON praised his Senecan tragedy *Roxana* (performed c. 1592, printed 1632) as the only Latin work by an Englishman worthy of note before MILTON's elegies, and SPENSER praised *Elisaeis*, his unfinished Latin epic glorifying Elizabeth I. Alabaster's interest in mystical theology, particularly eschatology and the Apocalypse, was expressed in *Apparatus in revelationem Jesu Christi* (1607), *De bestia Apocalypsis* (1621) and *Ecce sponsus venit* (1633). His devotional poems, unpublished in his lifetime, are METAPHYSICAL in their tone and use of paradox and typology; many resemble DONNE's religious poems.

Alastor; or, The Spirit of Solitude A poem by SHELLEY, published in 1816. It reflects his interest in the figure of the contemplative idealist, condemning his attitude as self-centred while at the same time lamenting the condition of the real world.

Albee, Edward (Franklin) 1928– American playwright. He rose to prominence with *The Zoo Story* (1959), *The Death of Bessie Smith* (1960), *The Sandbox* (1960) and *The American Dream* (1961), angrily disenchanted with American middle-class values and influenced by the THEATRE OF THE ABSURD. His reputation was confirmed by *WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?* (1962), about marital conflict and reconciliation, and the enigmatic *Tiny Alice* (1964). Later work, aiming at formal elegance rather than emotional intensity, has not always been so highly acclaimed. It includes experimental chamber pieces and more substantial work, notably *A Delicate Balance* (1966; PULITZER PRIZE), *Seascape* (1975; Pulitzer Prize), *The Lady from Dubuque* (1980) and *Three Tall Women* (1990), which won him a third Pulitzer Prize. Albee has also dramatized CARSON MCCULLERS's *Ballad of the Sad Café* (1963), JAMES PURDY's *Malcolm* (1966) and NABOKOV's *LOLITA* (1981).

Alchemist, The A comedy by JONSON, first produced in 1610 and published in 1612. Lovewit leaves his servant Face in charge of his London house during an outbreak

of plague. A confidence trickster, Face introduces Subtle and Doll Common to make the house a centre for frauds. Trading on Subtle's alleged powers as an alchemist, the trio dupes a succession of victims: Sir Epicure Mammon, a greedy voluptuary; Abel Druggier, a meek tobacconist; Dapper, a lawyer's clerk; Ananias and Tribulation Wholesome, hypocritical Puritans; and young Kastril, newly rich and quarrelsome, looking for a suitable match for his sister, Dame Pliant. Surly, a gambler, sees through their imposture and the villains are finally confounded by Lovewit's unexpected return. Subtle and Doll take to their heels, but Face cleverly makes peace with his master by arranging his marriage to Dame Pliant, comely as well as rich.

Alcott, (Amos) Bronson 1799–1888 American educationalist and father of LOUISA MAY ALCOTT. Founder of the Concord School of Philosophy (1879–88), he applied the doctrines of TRANSCENDENTALISM to education, rejecting mechanical discipline and attempting to instil the joy of learning in his students. His ideas have had a lasting influence, though his books are no longer widely read. They include *Observations on the Principles and Methods of Infant Instruction* (1830), *Record of a School* (with ELIZABETH PEABODY, 1835), *The Doctrine and Discipline of Human Culture* (1836) and *Tablets* (1868). *Sonnets and Canzonets* (1882) was written in memory of his wife.

Alcott, Louisa May 1832–88 American novelist and writer of CHILDREN'S LITERATURE. Although she was only 16 when she finished her first book (later published as *Flower Fables*, 1855) and went on to produce nearly 300 titles in a variety of genres, she is best known for *LITTLE WOMEN*. It originally appeared in two parts, as *Little Women: or, Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy* (1868) and *Good Wives* (1869), though both are now generally published together under the same title. The story follows the fortunes of the March sisters, who live in a small New England town and struggle to increase the family's small income. In womanhood Meg and Mary marry, Beth dies, Jo becomes a successful novelist and marries a professor, Dr Bhaer. *Little Men: Life at Plumfield with Jo's Boys* (1871) and *Jo's Boys and How They Turned Out* (1886), about the school founded by Jo and Dr Bhaer, are among Alcott's other wholesome domestic tales. *Work: A Study of Experience* (1873) is a feminist and autobiographical novel. When she became 'tired of providing moral pap for the young', Alcott wrote *A Modern Mephistopheles* (1877), in which an innocent young woman resists seduction by the diabolic genius with whom her port-husband has made a Faustian pact; *Whisper in the Dark* (1889) has a similar theme. She died on the day her father, BRONSON ALCOTT, was buried.

Alcuin [Albinus] c. 735–804 Theologian and educationalist. His Anglo-Saxon name was Ealhwine. In 781 he went from the episcopal school in York to head Charlemagne's palace school at Aachen, where he supervised educational reforms which quickly spread throughout France and Europe. His *quadrivium* and *trivium* shaped the pattern of education throughout the Middle Ages. Study centred on religious texts and Latin – the remnants of classical culture preserved by Boethius, St Augustine, Isidore, Capella and Cassiodorus, and the grammar of Priscian and Donatus. By revising the liturgy, introducing the sung Creed, re-editing the Vulgate Bible and arranging votive masses for days of the week, Alcuin played an influential part in the development of Catholicism. His writing

includes handbooks for teaching Latin, religion, arithmetic and computation; dialogues on rhetoric and dialectic; studies in theology and philosophy; biblical commentaries; several SAINTS' LIVES; and some mediocre Latin verses. Over 300 of his letters survive, a valuable source. Alcuin retired to be abbot of Tours in 796 and built up the reputation of the school there, remaining its head until his death.

Aldhelm, St d. 709 or 710 Writer of Latin prose and verse. As abbot of Malmesbury (from 675) and then bishop of Sherborne, he was an enthusiastic and sympathetic churchman as well as a famous scholar partly responsible for the resurgence of learning in England. He wrote Latin treatises, letters and verse, and probably some verses in English which no longer survive. The treatises include *De laude virginitate*, about virginity; a version of it in verse; a work about writing verse which includes a collection of riddles in Latin; and an examination of the Pentateuch. Though Aldhelm's language is repetitious, bombastic and difficult, showing frequent evidence of his Celtic knowledge and training, it set the style for the Anglo-Latin poets who came after him.

Aldington, Richard 1892–1962 Poet, novelist and biographer. A member of the group which pioneered IMAGISM, he published *Images 1910–1915* (1915) and *Collected Poems* (1928). He was married to the imagist poet HILDA DOOLITTLE (H. D.) from 1913 to 1937. His novels include the savage *Death of a Hero* (1929), deriving from his experience of World War I, *The Colonel's Daughter* (1931), satirizing English village life, and *All Men are Enemies* (1933). He also wrote controversial biographies of D. H. LAWRENCE (*Portrait of a Genius, But ...*, 1950) and T. E. LAWRENCE (1955). *Life for Life's Sake* (1941) is an autobiography. His correspondence with LAWRENCE DURRELL, *Literary Lifelines*, was published in 1981.

Aldiss, Brian W(ilson) 1925– Writer of SCIENCE FICTION. Novels like *Non-Stop* (1958) and *Greybeard* (1964) develop stock themes. Other work pushes the conventions of the genre to new limits: *Hothouse* (1962) is a fantasia of the far future; *The Primal Urge* (1961) and *The Dark Light-Years* (1964) are satires; *Report on Probability A* (1968) is an anti-novel; and *Barefoot in the Head* (1969) is an extravaganza influenced by JOYCE. His most sustained exercise in invention is a trilogy, *Helliconia Spring* (1982), *Helliconia Summer* (1983) and *Helliconia Winter* (1985). Several short-story collections confirm his versatility. Non-fantastic fiction includes *The Hand-Reared Boy* (1970), *Life in the West* (1980) and *Forgotten Life* (1989). He has also written a history of science fiction, *Billion-Year Spree* (1973; revised with David Wingrove as *Trillion-Year Spree*, 1986).

Aldrich, Thomas Bailey 1836–1907 American novelist and journalist. His best-known work is *The Story of a Bad Boy* (1870), a novel based on his childhood. Other notable works are *Marjorie Daw and Other People* (1873), a collection of short stories, and *The Stillwater Tragedy* (1880), a detective novel. He was editor of *THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY* in 1881–90.

Alexander, Sir William, Earl of Stirling c. 1567–1640 Poet and playwright. Courtier to JAMES I and Charles I, he became Secretary of State in 1626 and Earl of Stirling in 1633, but died in poverty. *Aurora* (1604), his best-known work, is a book of songs and SONNETS. Other works include *The Monarchick Tragedies* (1603–7), four plays on the theme of destructive ambition, and a long poem, *Doomsday* (1614); these have been described as 'unactable plays' and 'an unreadable poem'.

Alexander of Hales c. 1170 or 1180–1245 Philosopher and theologian. Born at Hales in Gloucestershire, he held various church offices before joining the Franciscan order and founding the Schola Fratrum Minorum in Paris. Occupying the first Franciscan chair in the university, he was largely responsible for establishing the order as a teaching body. Although his name was traditionally attached to the *Summa theologica*, ROGER BACON denies his authorship; it is a composite work of which Alexander wrote some sections. His works include a commentary on the *Sententiae*, part of an *Expositio regulae*, and sermons. His work influenced St Bonaventure among others, and earned him the title *doctor irrefragabilis*.

alexandrine See METRE.

Alfred, King c. 848–99 King of Wessex (871–99), largely responsible for the restoration of learning in England after the decay which the Norse raids had accelerated. From his work as translator, the following texts survive: Gregory the Great's *Cura pastoralis*, a manual of instruction for the clergy, with a preface outlining his own educational plans; the *Historia adversus paganos* of Paulus Orosius, a textbook of universal history, to which he added accounts of the experiences of contemporary travellers; a version of Boethius' *De consolatioe philosophiae*, originally in prose but with verse renderings of Boethius' metrical passages added later; Augustine's *Soliloquia*, probably Alfred's final work. The last two include a good deal of extra material. He probably had a hand in translating a shortened version of BEDE's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*, once attributed wholly to him, and may have been instrumental in planning the *ANGLO-SAXON CHRONICLE*, begun during his reign, though there is nothing to suggest he was involved in writing it. His friend and teacher ASSER left a personal account of the king in *De rebus gestis Aelfredi Magni*, sometimes naive, subjective and fulsome in its praise, but nevertheless an invaluable source.

Alger, Horatio 1832–99 American novelist and writer of CHILDREN'S LITERATURE. His adult novels were largely unsuccessful, in striking contrast to more than 100 novels he wrote for boys, most of them based on a rags-to-riches theme and the moral that a boy can rise from poverty to wealth if he has a good character. The most popular were *Ragged Dick* (1867), *Luck and Pluck* (1869) and *Tattered Tom* (1871). In the same vein as his fiction he wrote several biographies of famous self-made men, under such titles as *From Canal Boy to President* (about Abraham Lincoln; 1881) and *From Farm Boy to Senator* (about James Garfield; 1882).

Algerine Captive, The A novel by TYLER, published in 1797. It makes a satiric commentary on American pretension and quackery through Underhill's narrative of his adventures. His experience of the South and of work as a doctor on board a slave ship prompts a sharp condemnation of slavery. Abandoned in Africa, he is himself made a slave by the Algerians but finally gains his freedom and returns to America.

Algren, Nelson 1909–81 American novelist. He is best known for his novel about drug addiction, *The Man with the Golden Arm* (1949). Other books are *The Neon Wilderness* (1947), *Chicago: City on the Make* (1951), *A Walk on the Wild Side* (1956), *Who Lost an American?* (1963), *Notes from a Sea Diary: Hemingway All the Way* (1965), *The Last Carousel* (1973) and *The Devil's Stocking* (1983).

Ali, Ahmed 1912– Indian/Pakistani novelist. Born in India, he moved to Pakistan after Partition. *Twilight in*