

Joby Topper. Francis Douce and His Collection: An Antiquarian in Great Britain, 1757-1834. A Master's paper for the M.S. in L.S. degree. April, 2002. 76 pages. Advisor: David W. Carr.

This paper is a study of the English antiquarian Francis Douce and his collection of books, prints, drawings, coins, and artifacts. The major theme of the collection—the manners, beliefs, and customs of the world—is connected to three of Douce's most remarkable collecting interests: children's books and games; fools and jesters; and the sublime, including his collections of death, demonology, and witchcraft. The collection, divided between the Bodleian Library and the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, remains an invaluable resource for scholars in a wide variety of fields. It is hoped that this paper will emphasize the vision according to which Douce developed a distinctive collection; that it will shed additional light on British collecting and collectors of Douce's lifetime, 1757-1834; and that it will serve as a lesson in collecting that might be used by librarians and non-librarians alike.

Headings:

Douce, Francis, 1757-1834.

Collectors and collecting—Great Britain.

Antiquarians—Great Britain—History—19th century

FRANCIS DOUCE AND HIS COLLECTION:
AN ANTIQUARIAN IN GREAT BRITAIN, 1757-1834

by
Joby Topper

A Master's paper submitted to the faculty
of the School of Information and Library Science
of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Science in
Library Science.

Chapel Hill, North Carolina

April, 2002

Approved by:

Advisor

Acknowledgments

This paper is the result of a seminar in librarianship co-sponsored by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the University of Oxford and held at Rewley House and the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, May 20-June 2, 2001. I wish to thank our seminar director Wilma Minty and the rest of the Bodleian staff for making our stay so pleasant. Special thanks to Clive Hurst, Head of Rare Books & Printed Ephemera, for planting the seed of this paper in my mind, for emailing answers to my various questions, and for sending me photocopies from the typescript of Douce's acquisitions notebooks.

I am grateful also to David Carr, UNC-CH faculty advisor for the Oxford seminar and advisor to this paper. The focus and development of this study was largely the result of his careful reading and guidance. I also wish to thank Charles McNamara, Curator of the Rare Book Collection at UNC-CH, and Leana Topper, my wife, for reading drafts and for offering constructive advice.

I wish finally to acknowledge my great debt to two publications: *The Douce Legacy: An Exhibition to Commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the Bequest of Francis Douce (1757-1834)* (Oxford: Bodleian, 1984), edited by S. G. Gillam, and *Connoisseurs and Medieval Miniatures, 1750-1850* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), by A. N. L. Munby. These were especially valuable to my research, as a glance at my footnotes will prove.

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| List of Illustrations..... | 4 |
| Introduction..... | 5 |
| A Brief Biography..... | 7 |
| The Collecting Environment..... | 16 |
| Douce’s Collecting Habits..... | 23 |
| The Douce Collection: Theme & Subjects..... | 27 |
| Conclusion..... | 47 |
| Appendix A: Organization, Management, & Exhibition..... | 57 |
| Appendix B: Access..... | 64 |
| Bibliography..... | 69 |

List of Illustrations

Pages 51-56:

Fig. 1. **Francis Douce, age 55**

Engraving by William Henry Worthington after Mary Turner's etching from Cristoforo Prospero's sculptured medallion, 1812. Reproduced from *Reminiscences of a Literary Life* (London: J. Major, 1836), Vol. 1, by T. F. Dibdin.

Fig. 2. **The Dog and the Ox**

Etching after Francis Barlow. Reproduced from *Les Fables D'Esop*e (Amsterdam: D'Etienne Roger, 1714), "Du Chien envieux & du Boeuf," p. 65.

Fig. 3. **Jester, late 16th century**

Engraving by J. Berryman. Reproduced from *Illustrations of Shakspeare, and of Ancient Manners*, by Francis Douce (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1807), Plate V. Douce notes that this image is from a print by Brueghel.

Fig. 4. **The Abbess**

Engraving by G. W. Bonner and John Byfield (1833) after the design of Hans Holbein (1547). Reproduced from *Holbein's Dance of Death* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1890), by Francis Douce, Plate XV.

Fig. 5. **The Gamblers**

Engraving by G. W. Bonner and John Byfield (1833) after the design of Hans Holbein (1547). Reproduced from *Holbein's Dance of Death* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1890), by Francis Douce, Plate XLI.

Fig. 6. **Beelzebub and other demons**

Reproduced from T. F. Dibdin's *Reminiscences*, vol. 2, facing p. 770, after engravings in *Le Livre de la Vigne Nostre Seigneur* (ca. 1450-70).

Introduction

We paused at the collection almost by accident. On our tour of the Bodleian Library, as we browsed aisle after aisle of rare printed books, I happened to spy a shelf-tag with the name “Douce” on it.¹ I realized this was an aisle marker for the “Douce” collection, but, since I had no idea who he or she was, I asked the curator, Clive Hurst, to identify this mystery person. He told us that Francis Douce was an English antiquarian who in 1834 donated to the Bodleian his massive collection of books, manuscripts, coins, medals, prints, and drawings, including the fifteen thousand volumes on the shelves all around us. He pointed out some of the collection’s distinctive features—the thousands of illustrated books showing the history of dress, manners, beliefs, and customs all over the world; the large set of children’s books, a genre rarely collected in Douce’s time; the many comments and cross-references that Douce wrote on the endpapers of nearly all of his books; and the extraordinary number of works on the Dance of Death. As a student of rare books and of cultural history, I felt an affinity with Douce and decided to investigate the man and his collection.

What began, however, as a study of Douce and his collection became a study of a collector among collectors during an extraordinary period of collecting. It is hoped that this paper will emphasize the vision according to which Douce developed a distinctive and cohesive collection; that it will shed additional light on British collecting and

¹ The name rhymes with “house.” His father’s last name was alternately spelled “Dowse” (*The Douce Legacy: An Exhibition to Commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the Bequest of Francis Douce (1757-1834)*, ed. S. G. Gillam (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 1984), 1—hereafter, *Douce Legacy*).

collectors of Douce's lifetime, 1757-1834; and that it will serve as a lesson in collecting that might be used by librarians and non-librarians alike. The first section, *A Brief Biography*, outlines the major events of Douce's life and offers a description of his rather eccentric character that might illuminate his collecting tastes. *The Collecting Environment* is intended to place the reader in Douce's shoes by presenting a broad view of the political and economic scene in Britain and in Europe as a whole, and by noting significant changes that were taking place within the antiquarian market itself. Some of his interactions with fellow antiquarians and bookdealers are briefly described in *Douce's Collecting Habits*. In *The Douce Collection: Theme and Subjects*, the major theme of the collection—the manners, beliefs, and customs of the world—is connected to three of his most remarkable collecting interests: children's books and games; fools and jesters; and the sublime, an eighteenth-century aesthetic that encompassed his collections of death, demonology, and witchcraft. A final analysis of Douce and his collection appears in the *Conclusion*. The *Appendices* are intended for those who enjoy imposing order on chaos, and for those who may wish to someday use the collection. The organization, storage, catalog production, and exhibitions of the Douce Collection at the Bodleian are discussed in *Appendix A*. How researchers gain access to the Douce Collection, including the use of print and online catalogs and the digital availability of certain Douce items, is described in *Appendix B*.

A Brief Biography

I leave my Library of printed books, my collection of prints and drawings, my illuminated manuscripts, and all my other books and manuscripts ... and my collection of coins and medals, with their cabinets, to the Bodleian Library at Oxford.²

With these words Francis Douce (see Fig. 1, p. 51) bequeathed to the Bodleian one of its most valuable and most heavily used collections.³ The donation was immense and included printed books, manuscripts, and one of the finest collections of prints, drawings, coins, and medals that the Bodleian has ever received.⁴

The man who so greatly enriched the Bodleian was born in London on 13 July 1757, the youngest of the four children of Francis and Ellen Douce. Douce remembered his youth as a series of frustrations. Though his mother encouraged his interest in books and music, his father preferred domestic peace and quiet to the sounds of his son's early efforts at the piano. Douce recalled his father shouting, "*Don't let the boy spoil the piano!*" He blamed his father's ill temperament on his grandfather, who, he claimed, "was a domestic despot, who tyrannized over my father, who thought proper to retaliate upon me."⁵ Though Douce began a classical education at a school in Richmond, he was eventually transferred to a French academy with a vocational-technical curriculum, where he despised his lessons in accounting. Later Douce wished to pursue a university

² Quoted from the reprint of Douce's will in *Gentleman's Magazine* (August 1834): 216.

³ Clive Hurst (clive.hurst@bodley.ox.ac.uk), (2001, August 1), *Re: Douce Collection*, e-mail to Joby Topper (toppj@ils.unc.edu).

⁴ Alan Coates, "The Bodleian's Incunabula in the Late Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: Their Acquisition, Cataloguing and Housing," in *Bodleian Library Record* 15, no. 2 (April 1995): 113; *Douce Legacy*, 130.

⁵ Quoted in A. N. L. Munby, *Connoisseurs and Medieval Miniatures, 1750-1850* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 36.

education, but instead, his father, an attorney of the Six Clerks Office, directed him to Gray's Inn in 1779. He was later admitted an attorney of the King's Bench.

Though he was miserable working with his father, Douce found solace in reading, music, and collecting. His frequent visits to libraries and bookshops all over London put him in contact with prominent antiquarians. In 1779 he was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries.⁶ Two years later, he was admitted to use the British Museum Library.

Douce married Isabella Maria Corry, the widow of Rev. Henry Price of Bellevue, Ireland, in November 1791. He moved out of his small apartment in Gray's Inn and, with his new wife, settled at 13 Upper Gower Street. Apparently the marriage was not particularly happy. Though attributed by some of Douce's friends to Isabella's occasional rudeness and her "peculiarities of disposition," the conjugal tension could equally have been the result of his collecting addiction. As the late scholar A. N. L. Munby has aptly stated, Isabella "belonged to that sorely tried category, the wives of collectors."⁷ Douce's collecting probably took more than its share from his modest

⁶ Antiquarians, or antiquaries, were collectors who sought to use their collections for the advancement of historical and literary scholarship. Antiquarians published their own research, and they also acted as consultants for the publications of other scholars. The formation of the Society of Antiquaries in 1717 was an attempt to promote this enterprise by developing a network of scholar-collectors. After the Royal Society, it is the second oldest learned society in Britain. Its journal, *Archaeologia*, to which Douce was a frequent contributor, was first published in 1770 (Drabble, 917; *Douce Legacy*, 65). In 1781, shortly after Douce became a Fellow, the Society moved from its relatively small home in Chancery Lane to the Strand front of Somerset House (Bernard Nurse, "The Library of the Society of Antiquaries of London: Acquiring Antiquaries' Books Over Three Centuries," in *Antiquaries, Book Collectors, and the Circles of Learning*, eds. Robin Myers and Michael Harris (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 1996), 153-8). It was once widely assumed that British antiquarianism had enjoyed its heyday from the 1660s until about 1730, and that the influence of the Society and the quality of its publications declined during the late eighteenth century, but Rosemary Sweet argues persuasively that, under the able direction of Richard Gough (one of Douce's colleagues who will be mentioned in the following section), the Society remained a vital part of English scholarship during this period (Rosemary Sweet, "Antiquaries and Antiquities in Eighteenth-Century England," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 34, no. 2 (2001): 181-206). Several of its members and their publications are mentioned and described in the following section, *The Collecting Environment*.

⁷ Munby, *Connoisseurs*, 36.

salary. Moreover, their homes were not particularly large and therefore must have been stuffed, floor to ceiling, with antiquities of all shapes and sizes. According to Munby, “if Mrs. Douce did not look askance at an ‘ancient rolling pin’ or parts of the painted rood-screen from Southwold, she may have been less acquiescent in giving house-room to ‘parts of a mummied Ibis, and a piece of the outer painted coating of a human mummy,’ a ‘Gnostic crocodile,’ or a plaster cast of a hermaphrodite.”⁸

Douce’s parents died in 1799. Though his father left him £3,000 in cash, rents in Grafton and Hertford streets worth nearly £2,000, and his own former post at Six Clerks, Douce was disappointed with the inheritance. He blamed his oldest brother, Thomas, the primary beneficiary, who, he claimed, “used to say [to our father] that it was of no use to leave me money, for I should waste it in books.”⁹

It was at about this time that Douce retired from the clerkship that he had always despised and focused entirely on his research, writing, and collecting. In 1807, he published *Illustrations of Shakspeare* [sic] *and of Ancient Manners*. The book strengthened Douce’s reputation as an expert on old English manners, dress, customs, and games.¹⁰ It received favorable reviews—except for one. *The Edinburgh Review* called it a collection of “tedious dissertations” and “laborious trifling” by an author who

⁸ *Douce Legacy*, vii-viii; Munby, *Connoisseurs*, 36-7. Louis B. Wright tells a story of the bibliomaniac Thomas Rawlinson (d. 1725), whose house was “so full of books that he had to sleep in the hallway.” Rawlinson was a bachelor until the very end of his life, when he married one of his servants, “in order to insure,” said the gossips, “that his books were dusted” (Louis B. Wright, “The Book Collector as Public Benefactor,” in *The Private Collector and the Support of Scholarship: Papers Read at a Clark Library Seminar, April 5, 1969*, by Louis B. Wright and Gordon N. Ray (Los Angeles: UCLA, William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, 1969), 15-16).

⁹ *Douce Legacy*, ix.

¹⁰ *Douce Legacy*, 64. For more on Douce’s *Illustrations of Shakspeare*, see the section on fools and jesters in *The Douce Collection: Theme and Subjects*.

was “very feeble and very dull.”¹¹ Douce did not accept the critique gracefully. In a fit of stubbornness, he simply refused to publish anything of book length for the next twenty-five years.

After several years of living on a small income from rents and investments, Douce seems to have recognized the tenuousness of his situation, for in 1807 he accepted an offer from the Trustees of the British Museum to be Keeper of Manuscripts. At the library, Douce contributed to two massive cataloging projects: the description and reorganization of the Harleian and Lansdowne collections, two of the library’s most valuable manuscript collections. There can be little doubt that working every day with such fine examples of medieval manuscript illumination improved his already keen sense of artistic quality.¹²

Unfortunately, Douce was a proud man with an aversion to authority.¹³ He resigned his post at the museum library in April 1811 after the Board of Trustees

¹¹ Quoted in A. N. L. Munby, “The Pains of Authorship: Francis Douce and the Edinburgh Reviewers,” in *Eighteenth-Century Studies in Honor of Donald F. Hyde*, ed. W. H. Bond (New York: Grolier Club, 1970), 342. The attack of *The Edinburgh Review* was largely, if not entirely, the result of an ongoing feud between *The Edinburgh Review* and Douce’s publisher, Longman. Douce knew about the feud, so it seems strange that he took the review so personally. The simplest and best explanation is that he was hypersensitive (*Douce Legacy*, xi; Munby, *Connoisseurs*, 40). For a more recent evaluation of Douce as a Shakespearean scholar, see Arthur Sherbo, *Shakespeare’s Midwives: Some Neglected Shakespearians* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1992), 132-53.

¹² Munby, 37. Other scholars before Douce had honed their bibliographical skills by working with the Harleian treasures, notably Samuel Johnson (Joseph Rosenblum, “Samuel Johnson,” in *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, vol. 213, 190). The collection was built between 1705 and 1741 by Robert and Edward Harley, the 1st and 2nd Earls of Oxford. In 1753, the 2nd Earl’s widow sold the collection of 7,639 manuscripts to the government for a mere £10,000. The first catalog was completed in 1759. Douce and his associates published a second, more complete edition in four volumes, 1808-1812 (Seymour De Ricci, *English Collectors of Books & Manuscripts (1530-1930) And Their Marks of Ownership* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1969, c1930), 35-36). In 1807, Parliament bought the collection of Lord Shelburne, 1st Marquess of Lansdowne, for £4,925. The Lansdowne Collection includes the Cecil Papers among its many high-spots (De Ricci, 66).

¹³ Douce’s friend T. F. Dibdin said that the Latin motto, *Nullius addictus iurare in verba magistri* (“Bound to swear allegiance to no master”), was “the pivot upon which [Douce’s] intellectual machinery turned.” Dibdin added: “He would neither bend nor bow to any man breathing. Freedom of thought and of action was his birthright, and he was determined to show it upon all occasions” (Thomas Frognall Dibdin, *Reminiscences of a Literary Life*, vol. 2 (London: J. Major, 1836), 763).

requested a report on the work of a “Mr. Bean,” who apparently had been appointed to the manuscripts department without Douce’s consent. Douce had already assembled a list of fourteen complaints against the Museum, including the “fiddle faddle requisition of incessant reports” and having to live in an apartment that was “dangerously cold in winter & like an oven in summer.”¹⁴ He considered the Bean report the last straw. Several librarians and trustees tried to convince him to stay, but he was not to be dissuaded.

Once again, Douce and his wife returned to a frugal existence dependent on rents and investments in public funds. Living on a fixed income was especially difficult in Douce’s time because of the high taxes and inflation that resulted from Britain’s long and expensive war against France. Douce held Prime Minister William Pitt personally responsible for England’s financial woes. As Douce knew, from the time Pitt had assumed his post in 1783, he had indeed been instrumental in creating new taxes and increasing old ones in order to recover from the American Revolution and, later, to finance the war against Napoleon. Douce, a radical liberal, considered Napoleon a great republican hero, which only added to his hatred for Pitt. Douce was particularly chagrined by the additional luxury taxes and by the higher tax on incomes of citizens, like himself, who earned £200 or more per year.¹⁵ After all, these taxes targeted his closest

¹⁴ Quoted in Munby, *Connoisseurs*, 38-9. In fairness to the British Museum, Douce was irritable and, according to Munby, “something of a hypochondriac.” Thus it is nearly impossible to determine the legitimacy of Douce’s complaints (Munby, *Connoisseurs*, 38-41).

¹⁵ *Douce Legacy*, 70. William Pitt (1759-1806), known also as Pitt the Younger, served twice as Prime Minister, 1783-1802 and 1804-06. When he first assumed the post in 1783, he became Britain’s youngest prime minister at the age of 24. Though extremely unpopular in Douce’s circle, he was hailed by many as the savior of Britain, particularly in the wake of Admiral Nelson’s great victory at Trafalgar (October 1805). Wartime taxation and inflation were the banes of Douce’s generation. He and his family and friends had probably felt a similar pinch during and just following the American Revolution (Robin Reilly, *William Pitt the Younger* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1979), 136-40, 355-7).

friends. Moreover, the higher taxes threatened Douce's book budget, and this was intolerable.¹⁶

By a stroke of bittersweet luck, Douce was able to live the last years of his life a rich man because of the death in 1823 of his friend, Joseph Nollekens. Nollekens, having made a fortune as a sculptor and in the stock exchange, left Douce over £50,000.

Unfortunately, Douce was not able to immediately enjoy his inheritance: the will was bitterly contested in court. It was not until 1827 that Douce finally received his share of the estate.¹⁷

¹⁶ Douce's devotion to Napoleon shows itself clearly in his reaction to his hero's defeat at Waterloo, which, in Douce's words, was "the death warrant of national freedom which the new legislative powers in France (admirably checking the military and despotic abuses of the sovereign) had just endeavored to establish" (*Douce Legacy*, 8). Second to Napoleon on Douce's list of great statesmen was Thomas Jefferson, also a Francophile and, for a short time, an admirer of Napoleon. Douce was very proud of the color aquatint of Jefferson that he acquired shortly after Jefferson's retirement from national politics in 1810. Douce's radical liberalism was also evident in his religious views. Like Jefferson, he was a deist, and he was wary of political and ecclesiastical power. Douce sharply criticized the spread of western culture: "We have carried the pox, war and gunpowder, and methodism to the South Sea Islands and destroyed the natural happiness of the people" (*Douce Legacy*, 9, 31).

¹⁷ Most of Douce's friends credited his shrewd lawyer, J. H. Markland, for securing the inheritance. Sadly, though Douce was able to significantly add to his collection with the Nollekens windfall, he told Dibdin that he was certainly not happier being rich: "How strangely things go in this incomprehensible world! You keep up your spirits amidst occasional adversity. I lose mine in the bosom of that *prosperity* which men falsely call *happiness*" (quoted in *Douce Legacy*, x). During the suit, Douce was anxiety-ridden and, as a result, suffered physically and mentally. Yet, a somewhat comical event took place during this stressful period, in April 1825, that involved his next-door neighbor, the renowned editor of the *Political Register*, William Cobbett (in 1810, Cobbett had become a martyr among English liberals when he was jailed for writing an article attacking the cruelty and injustice of floggings in the military). Douce may have appreciated Cobbett's radicalism, but he hated the constant barking of Cobbett's dogs. One day Cobbett complained that snails and slugs from Douce's property had crawled over the short wall separating their backyards and had eaten substantial portions of his vegetable garden, and he threatened, perhaps in jest, to sue for damages. It is certainly possible that Cobbett was fully aware of the ongoing Nollekens dispute and was trying to break the tension by making a joke of senseless litigation. In any case, Douce seems to have been confused about how to interpret Cobbett's threat, for he quickly related the incident, albeit with a sense of humor, to his lawyer, J. H. Markland: "Cobbett complains that he has suffered immense loss by the *migration of the snails and slugs* from my garden into his; and that I do not feed them at home by cultivating my ground in a proper manner. I really imagined I was starving the enemy to absolute destruction by *not* feeding him, and that he would die at home. ... Pray be kind enough to look into *Bridgman's Index*, article *snails*, if it be there, and tell me the law on the subject. I must apply to some Catholic priest to sprinkle them with holy water, or, what is perhaps better, to exorcise or curse them by 'bell, book, and candle'" (Dibdin, *Reminiscences*, vol. 2, 767-8).

After the Nollekens settlement, Douce was able to spend the final years of his life collecting as all collectors wish to collect—with little or no regard for expense.¹⁸ The end result was one of the most coveted collections in all of Britain. There can be little doubt that, as Douce got older, many friends, acquaintances, and librarians pondered the fate of his magnificent collection. After all, he had had no children, and his estrangement from his family was well known.¹⁹ Besides the question of *who* might get it, there was the question of *how*—by sale or by donation, in pieces or in its entirety?

Though few people could have known it at the time, the answer came in July 1830, when Douce and his friend Isaac D’Israeli paid a visit to the Bodleian Library.²⁰ There they met Bulkeley Bandinel, Bodley’s Librarian, who guided them through the Library.²¹ Bandinel showed them the recently acquired libraries of two of Douce’s friends, Edmund Malone and Richard Gough. D’Israeli later wrote a brief and telling account of their visit:

The idea of [his collection’s] dispersion was very painful, for [Douce] was aware that the singleness of design which had assembled such various

¹⁸ *Douce Legacy*, x, 135. Of Douce’s buying habits after the Nollekens settlement, A. N. L. Munby writes: “It is good to observe the old man, to whom money at last was no object, rising to the occasion and finishing the course at a splendid canter, outstripping his competitors in the acquisition of the finest items which came on to the market” (*Connoisseurs*, 53-4).

¹⁹ Incidentally, though Douce was not close with his siblings, he was fond of his nephews, especially Thomas, who shared Douce’s interest in collecting and would often visit and borrow books. To Thomas he left £2,000 and all of his family pictures. He left his nephews William and Henry £1,000 each (Samuel Weller Singer, “Obituary—Francis Douce, Esq., F.S.A.,” *Gentleman’s Magazine* (August 1834): 216; *Douce Legacy*, 14-5).

²⁰ *Douce Legacy*, x. Douce first met Isaac D’Israeli (probably about 1790) at the British Museum Library, where both men spent a great deal of time immersed in studies. D’Israeli (1766-1848) was a respected author, known especially for *The Literary Character* (1795) and *Commentaries on the Life and Reign of Charles I* (1828-30). He was the father of Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881), the famous statesman (Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee, eds., *Dictionary of National Biography* (hereafter, *DNB*), in 22 vols. (London: Oxford University Press, 1921-22), 1022-23; Margaret Drabble, ed., *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*, 5th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985; reprinted with corrections, 1993), 277).

²¹ Bulkeley Bandinel, D.D. (1781-1861) served as Bodley’s Librarian from 1813 to 1860. He was very active in collection development—the acquisition of the Douce Collection is considered one of his greatest achievements—and widely respected for his thorough knowledge of the library’s collections (*DNB*, 1033). He was also blessed with an unforgettable name.

matters together could never be resumed by another. He often regretted that in the great national repository of literature [the British Museum Library] the collection would merge into the universal mass. It was at about this time that we visited together the great library of Oxford. Douce contemplated in the Bodleian that arch over which is placed the portrait of Selden, and the library of Selden preserved entire; the antiquary's closet which holds the great topographical collections of Gough; and the distinct shelves dedicated to the small Shakespearean library of Malone. He observed that the collections of Rawlinson, of Tanner, and of others, had preserved their identity by their separation. This was the subject of our conversation. At this moment Douce must have decided on the locality where his precious collection was to find a perpetual abode; for it was immediately on his return home that our literary antiquary bequeathed his collection to the Bodleian Library.²²

Douce noticed how individual collections were kept together, how they were nicely organized and beautifully displayed. According to D'Israeli, Douce believed that his collection had a distinct identity; at the Bodleian, he apparently found a place where this identity might be preserved, and not “merge into the universal mass.”

Not long after Douce returned to London, his wife Isabella died. He wrote his will shortly thereafter. Four years later, on 30 March 1834, Douce died, leaving his books, manuscripts, prints, drawings, and coins to the Bodleian. His cabinet of antiquities—that is, his collection of miscellaneous artifacts, from Italian paintings to Egyptian amulets, which will be referred to hereafter as “the museum”—he left to his wealthiest friend, Sir Samuel Rush Meyrick, who displayed Douce's museum in his spacious mansion at Goodrich Court next to his own, in accordance with Douce's wish. His family pictures he gave to his nephew, Thomas. To the British Museum, Douce bequeathed the portion

²² Quoted in James Ogden, *Isaac D'Israeli* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), 161. By including this quote from D'Israeli, I do not mean to dismiss entirely Bandinel's warm welcome as a factor in Douce's decision. No doubt it was important: Douce could have found another place for his beloved collection. Like any donor, he probably wanted his books to be looked after by someone who shared an appreciation for them.

In this passage, D'Israeli refers to the collections of John Selden (bequeathed in 1659), Richard Gough (beq. 1809), Edmund Malone (beq. 1822), Dr. Richard Rawlinson (beq. 1755), and Bishop Thomas Tanner (beq. 1735). Gough will be mentioned again in relation to antiquarian scholarship (Sir Edmund Craster, *History of the Bodleian Library, 1845-1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), 95-7).

of his collection of Albrecht Dürer prints that he had inherited from Joseph Nollekens, according to Nollekens's wish, along with a box of letters, notebooks, and unfinished essays, not to be opened until January 1900. And, as Nollekens had done for him in 1823, Douce left a substantial sum (about £25,000) to his good friend Samuel Weller Singer, who was thus able to retire from his post as librarian at the Royal Institution and devote the rest of his life to research and collecting.²³

On the other hand, there were some who were deeply disappointed by the will. Sir Frederic Madden, a friend, a fellow collector, and a librarian at the British Museum, was among those disappointed: "Douce certainly has not behaved to me as I had reason to believe he would from our extreme literary intimacy, & his often repeated voluntary [sic] expressions of regard and respect. Fate is clearly against me."²⁴ Madden vented further in a letter to Sir Thomas Phillipps in which he ridicules Douce's decision to leave his collection to the Bodleian:

Seriously speaking, I am quite vexed at Douce's disposition of his collections. To leave them to the Bodleian is to throw them down a bottomless pit! They will there be neither catalogued, bound or preserved, but suffer to sleep on with the Gough, Rawlinson & Tanner collections undisturbed above once in a lustre by some prying individual of antiquarian celebrity.²⁵

²³ Singer, "Obituary," 216-7; Munby, *Connoisseurs*, 51. Singer lived until 1858. In 1860, the Sotheby's sale of his massive collection lasted twenty-three days (*Douce Legacy* 15).

²⁴ Quoted from Madden's journal (2 April 1834) in *Douce Legacy*, 15. Sir Frederic Madden (1801-1873), a respected palaeographer and collector, was, at the time of Douce's death, a manuscripts librarian at the British Museum. He served as Keeper of Manuscripts from 1837 to 1866, the post that Douce had held from 1807 to 1811. Madden was understandably disappointed that his department did not get Douce's collection. Yet, ironically, it was Madden himself who, in July 1830, had arranged Douce and D'Israeli's fateful visit to the Bodleian; in fact, he wrote the letter of introduction to Bodley's Librarian, Bulkeley Bandinel (Arundell Esdaile, *The British Museum Library: A Short History and Survey*. With an introduction by Sir Frederic G. Kenyon (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1946), 328; *Douce Legacy*, 12).

²⁵ An excerpt from the letter (4 April 1834) is quoted in *Douce Legacy*, 17. Madden has been proven wrong: the collection was catalogued, albeit with some difficulty, and it is one of the Bodleian's most heavily used collections (*Douce Legacy*, 17).

British Museum administrators, despite Douce's bitter departure over the "Mr. Bean affair" in 1811, surely hoped for more than simply a box of letters, unfinished essays, "rolls of impressions from monumental brasses," and memo books. In 1946, however, Arundell Esdaile, another former librarian at the British Museum, claimed diplomatically that, when collections are lost to the Bodleian, "it matters little [to the BM] in which of two great libraries less than a hundred miles apart a collection is preserved."²⁶

The Collecting Environment

One can only imagine the convoy of wagons and horses required to transport Douce's collection from his London home to Oxford. The Douce bequest included over 15,000 printed books, nearly 500 manuscripts, 27,000 prints, 1,500 drawings, and thousands of coins, tokens, and medals.²⁷ It was probably not an easy day for the movers who pushed and dragged and hoisted the coin cabinets and crates of books up the stairs and into place at the Bodleian. The next task was for the librarians—to sort and process the collection. This was a monumental challenge, not only because of the collection's size, but because Douce had never written a catalog for the collection that the librarians would have used as a guide. He apparently knew his books from memory and thus never perceived the need for a list.²⁸

Obviously, despite the resulting labor, libraries like the Bodleian were grateful for donors like Douce. And in Douce's time, there were plenty of potential donors in Britain.

²⁶ Esdaile, 60. By the terms of the will, the British Museum had the option to refuse the box and allow it go with the other material to the Bodleian. Instead, they kept the box and, according to Douce's wish, did not open it until 1 January 1900, whereupon it was decided that the contents were not valuable. At the request of the Bodleian, the box was at last transferred from the British Museum to the Bodleian in 1930.

²⁷ John Whiteley, "The Douce Collection," *Apollo* 145 (May 1997): 58; *Douce Legacy*, 130; William Dunn Macray, *Annals of the Bodleian Library, Oxford*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1890), 326.

²⁸ *Douce Legacy*, 162. For more on the organization of the collection, see Appendix A.

Douce had many friends who were collectors, and some of these, as of 1834, had donated, or were planning to donate, their collections to one library or another. Clayton Mordaunt Cracherode, for example, gave his magnificent library of Greek and Latin classics to the British Museum in 1799.²⁹ Richard Gough donated his famous topographical collection to the Bodleian in 1809. Edmond Malone's library of rare quarto and folio editions of Shakespeare was given to the Bodleian in 1821.³⁰ These men were among Douce's correspondents, a circle that also included such renowned collectors as Joseph Ritson, George Steevens, and Roger Wilbraham.³¹ Douce was part of a

²⁹ C. M. Cracherode (1730-1799) had been a Trustee of the British Museum since 1784. His library filled a gap in the British Museum's collection of the earliest editions of the classics and products of the first printing presses. Cracherode was very shy and followed a strict daily routine that included stops at Elmsley's bookshop in the Strand, at Payne's bookshop at Charing Cross, and finally at a small coffee house near Payne's where he would be found with friends discussing books. It is said that he had never mounted a horse, nor had ever ventured more than ten miles from his home (Esdaile, 56, 183-5).

³⁰ These editions of Shakespeare, although certainly the highlights of Malone's library, were part of a much larger collection of prints, engravings, personal letters, and early English drama and poetry. Malone died in 1812. By the terms of his will, his Shakespearean library was to either remain in the family or be donated to a public library of the executor's choice. Lord Sunderlin, Malone's brother and chief executor, lent the library to Malone's friend, James Boswell, Jr., who continued Malone's work on the third variorum edition of Shakespeare. Meanwhile, in 1815, Lord Sunderlin notified the Bodleian of his decision to donate the library after Boswell was finished. Thus, in 1821, Boswell turned over the library to the Bodleian (Peter Martin, *Edmond Malone, Shakespearean Scholar: A Literary Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 277-9).

³¹ Joseph Ritson (1752-1803), by most accounts a peevish, difficult man, was widely known for his knowledge of early English poetry and songs. His collection of broadside ballads and song-books was one of the finest of the day. Ritson was also a strict vegetarian (he believed that killing animals was murder, and published, in 1802, *An Essay on Abstinence from Animal Food as a Moral Duty*) at a time when this practice was relatively uncommon. It is this peculiar habit that, according to legend, indirectly brought about the end of Douce and Ritson's friendship. The story, in the words of the man who initiated it, the aforementioned Sir Frederic Madden, is as follows: "Ritson was sitting in Mr. Douce's house eating some bread and cheese for luncheon, when a little girl [in Dibdin's version of the story, she is Ritson's niece] who was in the room, very innocently looked up in Ritson's face and said 'La! Mr. Ritson, what a quantity of mites you are eating!' Ritson absolutely trembled with passion—laid down his knife—and abruptly quitted the room! On Mr. Douce following him, he said in a tone of excitement, 'You have done this on purpose to insult me.' The only answer Mr. Douce made was, 'Sir, there is the door, and I never wish to see you again within it!'" (quoted in Bertrand H. Bronson, *Joseph Ritson: Scholar-at-Arms*, Vol. 1 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1938), 267). In this paper, see also the upcoming section on children's books and games for more on Douce and Ritson.

George Steevens (1736-1800) was a noted collector and editor of Shakespeare. Steevens's chief rival was Edmund Malone (1741-1812), with whom he did not get along, and whose donation to the Bodleian has already been mentioned (De Ricci, 62-3; Martin, 42-3). Joseph Ritson was another of his competitors in Shakespearean scholarship. Steevens, like Ritson, was a notoriously difficult person, and, also like Ritson, had a rather strange break with Douce. One of Steevens's many odd habits was to immediately

community of antiquarians, men of the middle and upper classes who sought to combine the collecting of books and antiquities with scholarly research and publication. By means of collecting artifacts, publishing and reviewing books and articles, and regularly assembling and corresponding to discuss topics of antiquarian interest, they tried to instill a shared methodology and establish a bona fide discipline. Many of these men, like Douce, were Fellows of The Society of Antiquaries. Considering the wide variety of collectibles that were part of a typical antiquarian's collection, from manuscripts to coins to mummies, consultation with friends and fellows was almost a necessity if one wished to make wise purchases.³² When, for example, Douce wished to buy prints, he usually consulted his friends Thomas Kerrich and C. M. Cracherode; for broadside ballads, George Ellis and Joseph Ritson; and for Italian drawings, William Young Ottley. Conversely, whenever these collectors needed advice on, say, medieval French romances, they turned to Douce.³³

In the early nineteenth century, this community of antiquarians was very active. This period is often called Britain's "golden" or "heroic" age of collecting. Books and antiquities of all shapes and sizes were available on the English market in unprecedented numbers. This phenomenon was in part an effect of the French Revolution and

sever all ties with male friends if and when they married. And so, according to Samuel Weller Singer, when Douce married in 1791, the Steevens-Douce friendship was over (Singer, "Obituary," 214).

Unlike Ritson and Steevens, Roger Wilbraham (1743-1829) was a life-long friend of Douce, and an original member of the Roxburghe Club. Italian and Spanish books were the strengths of his impressive library (De Ricci, 100). The Wilbraham letters form one of the largest sets of correspondence in the Douce collection (187 leaves, MS Douce d. 40).

³² John Carter, *Taste & Technique in Book Collecting* (London: Private Libraries Association, 1970), 92-3.

³³ *Douce Legacy* 58, 115. Thomas Kerrich (1748-1828) was Librarian of the University of Cambridge. An art connoisseur and himself a painter and etcher, Kerrich was, with Douce, co-executor and residuary legatee of Joseph Nollekens's will. Though referred to him by Douce, Kerrich had little respect for the opinions of the abovementioned William Young Ottley. Despite Kerrich's estimation, Ottley (1771-1836), a great collector of Italian art, is noted among art historians as having led the rediscovery of the Italian primitives in England. Like many of Douce's friends, Ottley sometimes borrowed books from Douce, and, according to Douce's notebooks, he was not especially punctual in returning them (Munby, *Connoisseurs*, 42, 46-9).

Napoleonic Wars.³⁴ The Revolution had forced French aristocrats to flee the country and, in many cases, to sell their collections of books, manuscripts, ivories, and portraits for cash. Many monastic collections were similarly released onto the market. It was extremely difficult, however, and, in fact, illegal, for Englishmen to saunter into France during the war to take advantage of this rare opportunity. But, where there is a will, there is a way: many items from the Continent were smuggled into England by covert agents, or in the luggage of the French exiles themselves.³⁵

Transporting these collections to England made perfect economic sense. Compared to most European countries, England was wealthy and stable. First, it was not in the process of complete political upheaval as in France; second, money was pouring into the national treasury from every corner of its vast empire; and third, it was full of enthusiastic buyers.³⁶ And so, as incunabula, books in fine bindings, and medieval manuscripts entered the British market in numbers never before seen, some of the greatest collections in the history of Britain were assembled.³⁷ Two of the most magnificent were those of Richard Heber and William Beckford. Heber built a massive library of nearly 150,000 volumes, filling eight houses, and including a rich collection of early English poets and Greek and Latin classics. His collection was sold over a four-year period, 1834-37, for a total of £57,554, twelve shillings. Beckford's famous library at Fonthill was best known for its rare and beautiful bindings, including Grolier and

³⁴ Louis B. Wright and Gordon N. Ray, *The Private Collector and the Support of Scholarship: Papers Read at a Clark Library Seminar, April 5, 1969* (Los Angeles: UCLA, 1969), 15-18; E. J. O'Dwyer, *Thomas Frognall Dibdin: Bibliographer & Bibliomaniac Extraordinary, 1776-1847* (Pinner, Middlesex, U.K.: Private Libraries, 1967), 7.

³⁵ Henry B. Wheatley, *Prices of Books: An Inquiry into the Changes in the Price of Books Which Have Occurred in England at Different Periods* (Detroit: Gale Research, 1970), 16-17.

³⁶ Wright, 15; Wheatley, 22-3.

³⁷ John Feather, "Robert Triphook and Francis Douce: A Bookseller and One of His Customers," in *Bodleian Library Record* 15, no. 5/6 (October 1996): 469; James G. Mann, "Francis Douce as a Collector," in *Bodleian Quarterly Record* 7, no. 81 (1934): 360.

Padeloup, and those bearing the arms of Francis I of France, Louis XIII, and Anne of Austria. The sales of his collection between 1882 and 1884 brought a total of £73,551, eighteen shillings.³⁸

Although great treasures were certainly available to British antiquarians during this period, they were not necessarily affordable. It should be noted that Heber and Beckford were extraordinarily wealthy men. Some items were extremely scarce, in great demand, and thus astronomically priced. Moreover, the war had caused severe inflation, and, as mentioned above in the context of Douce's intense dislike of William Pitt, taxes were high. It is telling that, in the 1780's, the average cost of a new novel was three shillings, six pence. By 1820, it was ten shillings, six pence. A book over ten shillings was generally considered a luxury item; a book that cost thirty shillings was simply out of the price range of all but members of the middle and upper classes. Periodic depressions—in 1819, 1825-26, and 1829-32—made life even more difficult for the average collector.³⁹ These economic obstacles did not stop determined bibliophiles from pursuing their hobby, but they certainly squeezed the limited budgets of men of middling

³⁸ William Younger Fletcher, *English Book Collectors* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1969, c1902), 318-9, 339-41. The novelist Sir Walter Scott once described Richard Heber (1773-1833) as "Heber the Magnificent, whose library and cellar are so superior to all others in the world" (quoted in Fletcher, 336). Munby relates a story of Heber that serves as a lesson in developing one's personal library—follow your interests and instincts, regardless of current tastes and trends: "There is a well-known story which Thomas Rodd, the book-seller, used to tell of the first old book bought by Heber, which, so the collectors had once affirmed, was a copy of Henry Peacham's *The Vallie of Varietie*, 1638. The youth is said to have shown it to the veteran connoisseur of early English literature, James Bindley, and to have asked him if it were not a curious book, to which the expert was said to have replied, without great enthusiasm: 'Yes: not very, but rather a curious book.' This anecdote presumably marks the young collector's dawning interest in the literature of the Tudor and Stuart periods, which in due course led to the accumulation of a collection in that subject which rivaled those of his friends, Steevens and Malone" (A. N. L. Munby, "Father and Son: The Rev. Reginald Heber's vain attempt to stem the rising tide of his son Richard's bibliomania," in *Essays and Papers: A. N. L. Munby*, ed. Nicolas Barker (London: Scholar Press, 1977), 233).

³⁹ James Barnes, "Depression and Innovation in the British and American Booktrade, 1819-1939," in *Economics of the British Booktrade, 1605-1939*, eds. Robin Myers and Michael Harris (Alexandria, VA: Chadwyck-Healey, 1985), 209-12.

wealth like Douce. Only the very wealthy could collect during this period of war and financial crisis without feeling the pinch.

Some of the greatest collectors of Douce's time were noblemen for whom collecting had once again become fashionable. After 1720, few noblemen had been active in the antiquarian market.⁴⁰ Their interest began to rise, however, near the end of the century, and in 1812, their return was made brilliantly and decadently apparent at the Roxburghe sale. The Duke of Roxburghe's great library was sold, over a period of eight weeks, for a total of £23,341, a startling sum for the time. In fact, this sale marked the very first time that a four-figure price was paid for a single printed book: £2,260, paid by the Marquess of Blandford (later the 5th Duke of Marlborough) for the "Valdarfer Boccaccio" of 1471.⁴¹ The record price, and the success of the sale in general, was made possible through a bidding war between Blandford, the 2nd Earl Spencer, and the 6th Duke of Devonshire. Thomas Frognall Dibdin, the primary agent and bibliographer of the 2nd Earl Spencer, witnessed the events of the sale and wrote a dramatic account in *The Bibliographical Decameron* (1817). A close friend of Douce, Dibdin co-founded the first book-club—the famous Roxburghe Club—soon after the sale.⁴²

⁴⁰ De Ricci, 44.

⁴¹ £2,260 was the record until 1884 (Brian Hillyard, "John Ker, 3rd Duke of Roxburghe," in *Dictionary of Literary Biography* 213, 196).

⁴² Dibdin also wrote *Bibliomania* (1809-11), very popular in its time, in which he describes in romanticized detail personal libraries, major sales, and extravagant collectors. Douce thoroughly enjoyed it. He wrote a letter of congratulations to Dibdin in which his satisfaction with the book is mixed with his bleak view of life: "Your book has much amused me the last week, and transported me to scenes of imaginary pleasure, which is all I expect in this world, where there is very little in reality" (quoted in Dibdin, *Reminiscences*, vol. 1, 308). Dibdin claimed that his book reinvigorated the rare book trade and thus paved the way for the Roxburghe sale's great success (O'Dwyer, 21). It is worth noting, however, that Dibdin's reputation has suffered over the years as bibliographers have found inaccuracies and exaggerations scattered liberally through his works (David A. Stoker, "Thomas Frognall Dibdin," in *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, vol. 184: *Nineteenth-Century British Book Collectors and Bibliographers* (Detroit: Gale, 1997), 72). Nevertheless, as Munby notes, Dibdin was an enthusiastic recorder of contemporary tastes and wrote much about the collecting scene that remains useful (*Connoisseurs*, 8-9).

Besides the fact that the Roxburghe sale spawned the book-club, which became, like the Society of Antiquaries, a forum to exchange ideas and refine tastes, a second point emerges from the sale. Moderately wealthy people like Douce—who, incidentally, was not a member of the original club—could not compete with the likes of Blandford, Spencer, and Devonshire.⁴³ Douce had to be very selective, and selective within areas not in great demand. Fortunately, and as he himself may have predicted, today’s trash is often tomorrow’s treasure. Thus, from a modern perspective, it appears to have been his good fortune to have been financially unable during most of his life to collect at the Blandford-Spencer-Devonshire level.

The Roxburghe sale became a symbol for bibliomania, that mode of book collecting characterized by an insatiable desire for books. This book-buying frenzy attracted a great deal of satire. From the humorist’s perspective, the bibliomaniac was concerned only with the book as an object—content was irrelevant.⁴⁴ Prominent collectors were thus often divided into those who *read* their books and those who did *not*—that is, “scholar-collectors” and “bibliomaniacs.” Douce’s friend Isaac D’Israeli referred to the latter group, and echoed at least three hundred years of bibliomania satire, when he wrote: “Bibliomania, or the collecting of books without intelligent curiosity, has, since libraries have existed, infected weak minds, who imagine that they themselves

⁴³ For a complete list of the original thirty-one members of the Roxburghe Club, see Dibdin’s *Reminiscences*, vol. 1, 379. Besides Dibdin, several of Douce’s other friends were members, including George Hibbert, James H. Markland, and Roger Wilbraham. Though Douce edited three Roxburghe Club publications, each one was formally presented to the Club by listed members, namely Peregrine Towneley, Henry Drury, and Lord Blandford (*Douce Legacy*, 65). New members were added as members died, but, since Douce’s membership is never mentioned—not even by the meticulous Dibdin—it is unlikely that he was ever an official member.

⁴⁴ See Munby, “Caricatures,” for an interesting historical overview of this satire.

acquire knowledge when they keep it on their shelves.”⁴⁵ Undoubtedly there were many collectors, noblemen and commoners alike, who were far more interested in accumulation than scholarship. Some simply loved the thrill of the chase in the auction house. Yet, while D’Israeli’s definition is clever, it is in fact too neat to be true. Beckford and Heber, for example, were known to be avid readers and note-takers, but they were also notorious spendthrifts whose uncontrollable passion for books denotes bibliomania.

Douce’s Collecting Habits

By D’Israeli’s definition, Douce was not a bibliomaniac. He used his collection extensively. One of the most curious details of his collection is that nearly every volume in his library contains his notes. This is unusual, and it reveals extraordinary energy and curiosity. His annotations concern not only the book itself, but also its relation to other books in his collection or in other public and private collections that he knew—and he was familiar with many.⁴⁶

Many of the private collections with which Douce was so familiar belonged to friends. Being aware of each other’s collection strengths and areas of expertise surely helped broaden collectors’ knowledge of the antiquarian market. One can also imagine, albeit in a morbid vein, how important this knowledge would have been when these collections were released onto the market as a result of the owner’s death or the owner’s

⁴⁵ Rob Kaplan and Harold Rabinowitz, eds., *Speaking of Books: The Best Things Ever Said About Books and Book Collecting* (New York: Crown, 2001), 61. See the upcoming section on fools and jesters (in *The Douce Collection: Theme and Subjects*) for a similar comment on bibliomaniacs in Sebastian Brant’s *Ship of Fools* (1497).

⁴⁶ *Douce Legacy*, 132. Readers who cringe at the thought of making notes in old books might be comforted to find that Douce wrote only on the fly-leaves or on scraps of paper, never in the margins of the text (S. G., “Douce Bookbindings,” in *Bodleian Quarterly Record* 7, no. 81 (1934): 373).

decision to sell in order to clear debts. The great twentieth-century collector A. S. W. Rosenbach once said: “Book-collectors are buzzards who stretch their wings in anticipation as they wait patiently for a colleague’s demise; and then they swoop down and ghoulishly grab some long-coveted treasure from the dear departed’s trove.”⁴⁷ The extent to which Douce may have resembled Rosenbach’s buzzard is beyond the scope of this paper, but let us assume that Douce was no more ready to “swoop down” on the “dear departed’s trove” than the average collector. More important here is the simple fact that he (and, according to Rosenbach, many other collectors before and since) built his collection, in part, with items from the libraries of friends. Perhaps this collecting method has always been at the heart of provenance: the preceding owners’ tastes in collecting are in a sense transferred to, even if already shared by, the buyer.

At any rate, Douce attended many sales, and, in fact, his collection of sale catalogs forms the foundation of the Bodleian’s remarkable sale-catalog collection.⁴⁸ Douce’s annotations make his catalogs particularly valuable. He often wrote opening bids beside entries and sometimes added the price he ultimately paid. They are an excellent source of information on Douce as a collector and on his collecting environment. For example, the catalogs show that Douce was an inveterate under-bidder. One clear example of his unrealistically low bidding comes from the Lang sale catalog of November 1828. For lot 2337, a rare romance of Theseus of Cologne, Douce’s bid was

⁴⁷ Kaplan, 202.

⁴⁸ *Douce Legacy*, 162. Unfortunately Douce did not keep all of his catalogs, so there are some gaps in our knowledge of his collecting history. From letters and other records, it is known that he attended certain sales not represented by his sale catalogs at the Bodleian, including the Campbell (1776), Farmer (1798), Stace (1808), Johnson (1817), Dijonval/Morel Vindé (1823), Hone (1827), Edwards (1828), Higgs (1830), Renouard (1830), and Hanrott (1833) sales. Incidentally, Douce attended few if any sales in-person after 1820, so he often wrote opening bids in the catalogs for the benefit of his agents (*Douce Legacy* 136-7).

£2.10s. The manuscript sold to Sir Thomas Phillipps for £45.3s.⁴⁹ It is true that Phillipps was a formidable opponent—he is widely considered the greatest manuscript collector of all time⁵⁰—but the fact remains that Douce’s opening bid was very low, so low that it may have momentarily confused the auctioneer.

Douce kept a notebook of his antiquarian purchases, exchanges, and gifts from 1803 until the month before his death that provides another glimpse of his collecting habits. In the notebooks, to which Douce assigned the Latin title *Collecta*, acquisitions are recorded by month, and each month includes an average of about ten entries. The typical entry includes a brief description of the item with the name of the dealer, friend, or sale. The completeness and clarity of the entries, however, varies. One of the clearest concerns a purchase of Hellenistic coins: “Odenarii et tetradrachm of Seleucus 2. Young.”⁵¹ Another clear entry shows Douce keeping close watch on his accounts: “Serenius’s Swed. Dict. 2d vol. Bewicke’s birds, White, exchange 18,12 = 1:10:0 so that deducting this from Withering 2.2.0 there is due to me 12 shillings.”⁵² Some of the most informative notes concern gifts. These entries show us Douce’s circle of friends and also

⁴⁹ David Rogers, “Francis Douce’s Manuscripts: Some Hitherto Unrecognized Provenances,” in *Studies in the Book Trade in Honour of Graham Pollard* (Oxford: Oxford Bibliographical Society, 1975), 322-3.

⁵⁰ De Ricci, 119-30. Sir Thomas Phillipps (1792-1872) collected in almost every imaginable category, but he was especially fond of vellum manuscripts, charters, and deeds. Unfortunately his collecting habit drove him deeply into debt. As early as 1832, Phillipps began to hint that he might be willing to part with his library, at the right price. This he made very clear in a letter to Henry Ellis, Principal Librarian at the British Museum: “You expressed a wish that I would consent to part with my library of manuscripts to the British Museum. It cannot be expected that I should make a gift of them after the enormous sum I have paid for them, but I am willing to cede them if the Nation will pay my debts, which I now owe” (quoted in De Ricci, 126). Ellis could not arrange a deal, nor could his successor, Anthony Panizzi. Bulkeley Bandinel and Henry O. Coxe made similarly unsuccessful attempts to acquire the collection for the Bodleian (Munby, *Portrait*, 192-201). A concerted effort was made in 1880, several years after Phillipps’s death, to purchase the entire collection for the British Museum, the Bodleian, and Cambridge, but again without success. And so, starting in 1886, the collection was broken up and sold by private contract or through Sotheby’s (De Ricci, 126). For an excellent account of Phillipps’s life, see A. N. L. Munby, *Portrait of an Obsession: The Life of Sir Thomas Phillipps, the World’s Greatest Book Collector*. Adapted by Nicolas Barker from the five volumes of *Phillipps Studies* (London: Constable, 1967).

⁵¹ Douce, “Typescript,” May 1803.

⁵² *Ibid.*, February 1805.

remind us that the gift was another important means by which antiquarians added new material to their collections: “Benj. D’Israeli gave me a fine medal of the Doge Cornelius and a copper chasing of a fool brought by him from Italy,”⁵³ and “Dr. Dibdin gave me a limoges patera with the bath scene in Cupid and Psyche.”⁵⁴ But some of the notebook entries are so abbreviated as to be almost meaningless: “Several coins from Walker;”⁵⁵ “Several curious books at Ritson’s sale;”⁵⁶ and “Parcel of books, Thorpe.”⁵⁷ Moreover, unlike his sale catalogs, prices are rarely mentioned.

The role played by booksellers in the development of Douce’s collection is subtly suggested in these notebook entries. “Parcel of books, Thorpe,” for instance, indicates that Thomas Thorpe, a London bookseller, had purchased books for Douce, possibly according to a list of specific requests, and had sent them to Douce by mail. Having booksellers act as agents was not an unusual practice among collectors. They also served as consultants. They had likely seen multiple copies of the titles sought by their customers and were therefore prepared to make informed condition and authenticity assessments of copies on hand. They would also occasionally recommend books based on their customers’ general areas of interest. Booksellers made it their business to know exactly what their patrons were looking for. Many would keep desiderata lists on file that had been given to them by patrons. Often they sent catalogs to their regular customers

⁵³ Ibid., January 1827. This is the famous British statesman, Benjamin Disraeli, son of Douce’s friend Isaac. In the letter that accompanied this gift (1 January 1827), Disraeli wrote: “[The medal] was given me by a noble Venetian and as you will instantly perceive is an old ducal Coronation medal. The execution is very bold; and according to him among the ducal series, singular” (*Benjamin Disraeli: Letters, 1815-1834*, edited by John Matthews, et al. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 95).

⁵⁴ Ibid., August 1827. A *patera* is a flat dish or saucer.

⁵⁵ Ibid., April 1803.

⁵⁶ Ibid., December 1803.

⁵⁷ Ibid., February 1827.

well in advance of an auction in order to give them an opportunity to place orders.⁵⁸

Then, with individual wish-lists in hand, they would attend the auction, buy the selected items—plus a few not on anyone’s list for which buyers could easily be found—then mark up the price to incorporate their labor fees, a practice that essentially continues to this day.

Of course, the mark-up had to be done very carefully in a market full of shrewd and crotchety veterans like Douce who held fixed opinions on fair and unfair labor fees. As for Thorpe, Douce had little respect for his practices: “His charges are excessive, & his constant procession of catalogues, not to be accounted for on fair principles, are absolutely annoying.”⁵⁹ On the other hand, Douce enjoyed doing business with Robert Triphook, John Thomas Payne and Henry Foss, James Christie, and Thomas Rodd. In fact, he remembered Christie and Rodd in his will with gifts of £100.⁶⁰

The Douce Collection: Theme & Subjects

With advice from friends and booksellers at his fingertips, Douce built his collection according to an overarching theme: the manners, beliefs, and customs of humanity, including dress, sports and games, and secular and religious activities of all kinds. As a general collecting guideline, this was not unusual. English antiquarians since the mid-seventeenth century had been collecting books and other artifacts in order to improve their understanding of civilization. By Douce’s time, antiquarians were

⁵⁸ Carter, *Taste*, 16-7, 92; Feather, 468-9, 472-5.

⁵⁹ Quoted in Munby, *Connoisseurs*, 44.

⁶⁰ Singer, 216-17; Munby, *Connoisseurs*, 44. Wheatley states that “no bookseller has ever been held in higher esteem than Thomas Payne, who was honourably known as ‘honest Tom Payne’” (Wheatley, 33). For more on Robert Triphook’s influence on Douce’s collecting, see John Feather, 468-79.

realizing the importance of the physical artifact, whether a print, a coin, or a monument, in piecing together the history that the extant written sources did not address.⁶¹

Several of Douce's friends, Richard Gough, Joseph Strutt, Francis Grose, and John Brand, were among the earliest antiquarians to use this methodology in writing their own cultural histories. Gough, who served as Director of the Society of Antiquaries from 1771 to 1797, spent much of his time editing and publishing the articles of fellows like Douce in the Society's journal, *Archaeologia*, but he also published significant works of his own, namely *British Topography* (1768) and *Sepulchral Monuments of Great Britain* (3 volumes, 1786-99).⁶² Douce admired Gough's work and his great topographical collection, and, after the bulk of it was deposited by the terms of Gough's will at the Bodleian in 1809, he attended the sale of the remainder of Gough's collection and bought eleven lots.⁶³ Thus, through the Douce bequest of 1834, a greater part of the collection made its way to the Bodleian than Gough had imagined. Joseph Strutt published several important works on English manners and customs, including *Dresses and Habits of the English People* (1796-99) and *Sports and Pastimes of the People of England* (1801). Francis Grose, author of *The Antiquities of England and Wales* (1773-76) and *A Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue* (1785), and John Brand, author of *Observations on Popular Antiquities* (1777) and *The History and Antiquities of the Town and County of Newcastle upon Tyne* (1789), also shared Douce's interest in the history of manners and customs. All of these men corresponded regularly and tapped one another's expertise.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Rosemary Sweet, "Antiquaries and Antiquities in Eighteenth-Century England," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 34, no. 2 (2001): 187-88, 194.

⁶² Sweet, 183-92.

⁶³ *Douce Legacy*, 136.

⁶⁴ Munby, *Connoisseurs*, 45, 50; *Douce Legacy*, 23, 70-1. Joseph Strutt (1749-1802) was one of the foremost authorities in England on the subject of medieval miniatures. His *Regal and Ecclesiastical Antiquities of England* (1773) was the earliest work of its kind published in England (Munby,

Douce was therefore not alone in building a collection for the purpose of cultural-historical scholarship—but this is certainly not to say that his collection is unremarkable. As it was in his lifetime, it is still widely admired and heavily used. Though a paper of this size cannot possibly do justice to every special aspect of such a vast collection, the goal of this chapter is nevertheless to give the reader a sense of the collection’s importance by highlighting three of Douce’s collecting interests that are extraordinary: children’s books and games; fools and jesters; and the sublime, including death, demonology, and witchcraft.

Douce built an impressive collection of books and prints made for or depicting children. Iona and Peter Opie, the well-known folklorists who donated their extraordinary library of children’s books to the Bodleian in 1988, spent many hours with the Douce collection while writing their dictionaries and anthologies of nursery rhymes and children’s games.⁶⁵ The Opies recognized the important role of the early collectors of children’s literature, including Douce and his friend Joseph Ritson. In the case of Douce and Ritson, their role was not only preservation, but also compilation and publication. Both men were fascinated by nursery rhymes. In 1781, Ritson bought a copy of *Mother Goose’s Melody, or Sonnets for the Cradle*, published in 1765 by the famous John Newbery, and possibly written by Newbery’s friend Oliver Goldsmith. Ritson was so impressed that he compiled a new collection of his own, *Gammer Gurton’s Garland, or The Nursery Parnassus* (1784), which incorporated and augmented *The*

Connoisseurs, 28). The library of John Brand (1744-1806) was especially strong in old English literature, and contained “some curious works on witches” (Fletcher, 275-6). Singer noted that Douce “was exceedingly attached [to Brand], and their studies being in the same direction, cemented this union” (Singer, 213-4).

⁶⁵ “Early Children’s Books in the Bodleian Library: An Exhibition,” in *Bodleian Library Record* 15, no. 3 (October 1995): 152. The Opies’ use of the Douce children’s books was also a topic of conversation with Clive Hurst at the Bodleian, 29 May 2001.

Melody. From his vast collection of ballads, song-books, and other printed ephemera, he added such well-known nursery rhymes as “London Bridge,” “A diller, a doller,” and “There was an old woman, she lived in a shoe.” A second edition of *Gammer Gurton’s Garland* appeared in 1799, but the work did not reach the height of its popularity until the third edition was published in 1810, several years after Ritson’s death, under the direction of Douce, who contributed additional nursery rhymes from his own storehouse of material on the subject, some of which he had in fact bought at the Ritson sales in 1803.⁶⁶

Of these many treasures owned by Douce, one is *King Pippin’s Delight* (ca. 1825), a series of rhymes about games. It is one of eighteen chapbooks bound in a single volume by Douce. Chapbooks are rather flimsy booklets made from a single folded sheet of paper and sometimes given rough wrappers. They were distributed by street peddlers called chapmen (hence the name of the format), generally contained poems, ballads, or fables, and usually sold for a farthing (one quarter of a penny). Chapbooks were essentially ephemeral—that is, they were made cheaply, used hard, and then forgotten and thrown away. Few antiquarians had the foresight to collect them. They are now extremely rare, especially in the fine condition of the many examples in the Douce collection. Their remarkable condition suggests that Douce bought the chapbooks in the street and almost immediately had them bound for better protection.⁶⁷

Another rare item from the children’s collection is *A Lytyll Treatyse Called the Booke of Curtesye, or Lytyll John* (1492), a short verse reading book for schoolchildren

⁶⁶ Bronson, v. 1, 98-9; Iona and Peter Opie, “Nursery Rhymes,” in *Bibliophile in the Nursery: A Bookman’s Treasury of Collectors’ Lore on Old and Rare Children’s Books*, ed. William Targ (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Reprint Corp., 1969, c1957), 306-10; Douce, “Typescript,” f. 5; Joseph Ritson, *Gammer Gurton’s Garland: or, The Nursery Parnassus*, a reprint of the 1810 edition (Norwood, PA: Norwood Editions, 1973), 4-5, 21, 23.

⁶⁷ *Douce Legacy*, 119.

printed at Westminster by Wynckyn de Worde, the assistant of the great William Caxton, shortly after Worde had inherited the shop on Caxton's death in 1491. It is amazing that this book survived until Douce's time. Like chapbooks, schoolbooks were meant to be short-lived: most would be heavily used by children who were not always careful with them. The same applies to other school materials like grammar and spelling cards. Douce owned several sets of these cards, including cards of the mid-seventeenth century for instruction in heraldry, and another set from the same period to teach Latin grammar. He also kept a set of spelling cards from the time of Queen Anne.⁶⁸

The collection is also very strong in children's fables. Douce loved Aesop. He collected over ninety editions of Aesop in various languages and formats, from the birth of printing to his own day; in fact, it is the most developed single subject in his entire collection. By Douce's time, Aesop was a cultural institution, a basic element of popular wisdom. Thus, like the other parts of the whole, his collection of Aesop represents his interest in the manners, beliefs, and customs of humanity. In the narrower context of children's literature, editions of Aesop were often illustrated (see Fig. 2, p. 52), and many were used as school textbooks. Douce's edition of Aesop entitled *Vita ex Maximo Planude desumpta & fabellae iucundissimae*, printed in London in 1535 by the aforementioned Wynckyn de Worde, is a pocket-sized schoolbook intended for both

⁶⁸ Samuel Rush Meyrick, "Catalogue of the Doucean Museum," *Gentleman's Magazine* (October 1836): 383. As mentioned at the close of *A Brief Biography*, Douce left his museum to his friend, Sir Samuel Rush Meyrick. In 1836, Meyrick published, for the benefit of scholars, a catalog of the Doucean Museum in six consecutive issues of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Douce's museum remained in the Meyrick family until the 1870s, when the entire collection was finally dispersed in sales and donations. Nearly seven hundred items from the Meyrick-Douce collection were presented to the British Museum in 1878, about one hundred of which had belonged originally to Douce (*Douce Legacy*, xi, 14; Munby, *Connoisseurs*, 37).

Latin and moral instruction. It is complete and in near-perfect condition—and no other copy is known.⁶⁹

Douce owned an extraordinary number of prints, mainly Dutch, German, and French, of children's games. One of the earliest is by the Dutch artist Jacob Cats (ca. 1640). Children are shown trundling hoops, blowing bubbles, walking on stilts, flying kites, arranging tiny furniture in a doll's house, and inflating a soccer ball. There is also a woodcut (ca. 1450) showing Saint Dorothy with the infant Christ, riding a hobbyhorse and carrying a basket of flowers. Other Douce prints show children playing marbles, cricket, and blind-man's bluff.⁷⁰

Related to his interest in games is his fascination with fools and jesters. For evidence of Douce's keen interest in fools, one has only to look at Douce's very short list of book-length publications, the first being *Illustrations of Shakspeare, and of Ancient Manners, with Dissertations on the Clowns and Fools of Shakspeare* (1807). Besides explicating the roles of the fools and clowns in various plays, Douce describes the court jester, one of the most distinctive features of the typical European court of centuries past. The jester's customary role in the king's circle—coining sarcastic jokes, singing naughty songs, and dancing wildly about the house in a striped suit with bells—is clearly odd, and it is little wonder that a collector so interested in manners and customs would find the jester so intriguing.

⁶⁹ *Douce Legacy*, 91-2.

⁷⁰ S. Gibson, "Children's Games: An Exhibition," *Bodleian Library Record* 1, no. 11 (October 1940): 182-7. St. Dorothy, "the Virgin Martyr," was a Christian executed for her beliefs in 303 in the time of Diocletian. According to legend, a cruel man named Theophilus mocked her as she was led away to execution, saying, "Send me some fruit and roses, Dorothea, when you get to Paradise." Later that day, an angel appeared to Theophilus with a basket of apples and roses—"From Dorothea in Paradise." It is said that Theophilus was instantly converted (*Benet's Reader's Encyclopedia*, 3rd ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), 269). It is interesting to speculate whether this legend had any effect on the writing of *The Wizard of Oz* (1900). In the 1939 movie, Dorothy is shown more than once with a basket of flowers.

Jesters figure in many of his books and prints (see Fig. 3, p. 53). One of the best examples is the Latin edition of the famous *Narrenschiff* of Sebastian Brant, published by Johann Bergmann in 1497. This is Brant's "Ship of Fools," an instant best-seller, a story of fools of all countries being shipped off together to a Fool's Paradise. A woodcut from the first canto shows a great collector surrounded by books, wearing behind his doctoral hat a fool's cap with bells. This is considered the very first caricature of a bibliomaniac—"The Book-Fool."⁷¹ In fact, the fame of Brant's work was more due to the work's illustrations, generally ascribed to a young Albrecht Dürer, than to the text. Douce owned several editions, in German, Latin, French, English, and Dutch. Much as he prized his editions of Brant, he regarded the *Stultiferae navis additamentum de quinque virginibus* (1500) of Badius as an even greater rarity. Badius published the work as a supplement to Brant's *Narrenschiff*, adding a rather misogynistic tale of five foolish women to the plot. Douce also owned a 1570 English edition by Alexander Barclay that begins, similar to Brant's version, with a fool surrounded by his books that he never reads ("But fewe I rede, and fewer understande"), a scene that was meant to satirize men of Barclay's era, but, as Douce surely recognized with a smile, characterized many bibliomaniacs of his own time.⁷²

⁷¹ A. N. L. Munby, "Some Caricatures of Book-Collectors: An Essay," in *Essays and Papers: A. N. L. Munby*, ed. Nicolas Barker (London: Scholar Press, 1977), 1-3. Munby reproduced the woodcut of "The Book-Fool" on page two.

⁷² *Douce Legacy*, 96-100; Drabble, 899. For a connection of Brant's "Ship of Fools" with our perception of insanity, see *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, by Michel Foucault (New York: Vintage, 1988, c1965). Foucault uses Brant's *Ship of Fools* and Erasmus' *Praise of Folly* to help illustrate the evolution of our notion of insanity during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries (3-37).

Douce also owned an extensive collection of works by the celebrated Dutch scholar Erasmus.⁷³ He was especially fond of Erasmus' most popular work, *The Praise of Folly* (*Moriae Encomium*, 1511), a satire directed at haughty scholars, lawyers, and theologians. Erasmus, the consummate humanist, links foolishness and "madness" not to Lucifer and his demons, but to the inherent weaknesses and twisted notions of mankind. This transition in thought regarding foolish human behavior, as an intellectual and cultural phenomenon in the western world, may have interested Douce as much as the work's wonderful illustrations. Of which, as a final note, one begins to realize the power and appeal of Dürer's engravings on finding that the woodcuts used in an early French edition of Erasmus' work, *De la Declamation des Louenges de Follie* (1520), are actually reproductions of Dürer prints from the 1497 Latin edition of Brant's *Ship of Fools*.⁷⁴

Fools and jesters are also well represented in Douce's collections of antiquities and miscellaneous cuttings. In his museum, Douce kept copper plates and bronze figurines and candlesticks decorated with fools. He owned a fool's bauble made of silver, with an ivory handle, and a thirty-four-piece wooden girdle worn by a jester in the time of Edward IV (1461-83). Douce owned a map of the world (ca. 1600) enclosed within a fool's cap. He recorded its acquisition in his notebook for October 1811: "Mr. Sharp of Coventry gave me a curious old print of the world as a fool's head."⁷⁵ He also collected initial letters, frontispieces, title-pages, and tail-pieces cut from books and manuscripts that featured fools. With the historiated letters, he created alphabets of fools. He assembled well over a hundred of these illustrations, mostly from the sixteenth

⁷³ Erasmus was a friend and patron of Hans Holbein, and was also an acquaintance of Albrecht Dürer, who greatly admired Erasmus' ideas (Drabble, 323; *Douce Legacy*, 31).

⁷⁴ *Douce Legacy*, 99.

⁷⁵ Quoted in *Douce Legacy*, 99; Meyrick, "Catalogue," *GM* (June 1836): 588; Meyrick, "Catalogue," *GM* (October 1836): 383.

century. Some of these images are grotesques, emphasizing the bizarre motley or the mischievous, even wicked, expressions of the jesters. One of the initials, a large letter A, shows a jester struggling against Death, a depiction that the reader will soon see was of special interest to Douce.⁷⁶

There is but a short step from these grotesque images of jesters to the next collecting area to be explored. Douce encapsulated a dominant aesthetic of the mid-to-late eighteenth century by collecting items that evoked intense emotion, particularly terror. In the terminology of his time, this material represents the sublime—an idea associated with vastness, religious awe, horror, and darkness—as opposed to the beautiful—an idea associated with smallness, smoothness, delicacy, and light. Although an emerging definition of the sublime can be traced to the first century, the aforementioned distinction between sublimity and beauty was not crystallized until 1757, in Edmund Burke’s *Philosophical Enquiry into the Sublime and the Beautiful*. Burke called terror “the ruling principle of the sublime” and called death “the king of terrors.”⁷⁷ The ascendance of the sublime signaled the end of neo-classicism and the beginnings of romanticism, though in its time it was certainly not regarded as a mere transition.⁷⁸ The immensely popular “graveyard poetry” of Robert Blair (*The Grave*, 1743) and Edward Young (*Night Thoughts*, 1742-45), the macabre paintings of monsters and ghouls by James Barry and Henry Fuseli, and the Gothic tales of Horace Walpole (*The Castle of*

⁷⁶ Douce *Legacy*, 99.

⁷⁷ Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 36, 54. Burke is perhaps better known as a politician, particularly for his leading role in pursuing the impeachment of Warren Hastings, Governor-General of British India, and for his eloquent statement against the French Revolution, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790).

⁷⁸ Samuel H. Monk, *The Sublime: A Study of Critical Theories in XVIII-Century England* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1960; first published 1935). Near the end of the century, the great philosopher Immanuel Kant, even more precisely than Burke, distinguished the sublime from the beautiful in his *Critique of Judgment* (1790). For more on the sublime, see S. H. Monk.

Otranto, 1765), William Beckford (*Vathek*, 1786) and Ann Radcliffe (*The Mysteries of Udolpho*, 1794) were all part of this rather eerie cultural phenomenon.⁷⁹

Strangely, though all of Douce's commentators mention his taste for the grotesque and macabre, all stop short of connecting him to the cult of the sublime: in fact, the term "sublime" is simply not mentioned. In his *Catalogue of the Collection of Drawings in the Ashmolean Museum*, Sir Karl T. Parker, former Keeper of the Department of Fine Art, wrote: "Douce's approach to the collection of drawings was that of a scholar and antiquary rather than an enthusiast for the beautiful for its own sake; and there can be little doubt that some of his greatest treasures appealed more to the researcher, learned and 'curious,' than to an aesthetic sense in him, whether consciously or otherwise."⁸⁰

While Parker is surely correct in saying that Douce was no "enthusiast for the beautiful for its own sake," clearly there is evidence of an aesthetic sense—the sublime—that transcends the merely "curious." Douce's collection holds a frightening number of works on Death, Burke's "king of terrors." One fine example is *A Knight, Death, and the Devil*, an etching by Albrecht Dürer, and signed with the author's monogram. *The Pleasures of the World* (ca. 1496), a pen and ink drawing by Dürer, shows in the foreground a large group of people feasting, singing, fighting, and dancing; at the right,

⁷⁹ The artist James Barry was a friend of Edmund Burke and of Douce. In 1803, Barry did a pen and ink drawing of Douce, which was reproduced as the frontispiece for *The Douce Legacy* (1984).

William Beckford (1759-1844), author of *Vathek*, is the same Beckford mentioned earlier in the context of great collectors of the period. His taste for the Gothic extended to the design of his mansion, Fonthill Abbey, which was considered one of the most spectacular examples of Gothic architecture in England.

Horace Walpole (1717-1797) was also a great collector. His library at Strawberry Hill was one of the finest and most eclectic of its time. Like Douce and others after him, he read and heavily annotated his books. Walpole's library was dispersed in 1842, forty-five years after his death, but part of the collection was eventually reassembled (Wilmarth Sheldon Lewis, *Horace Walpole's Library* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958)).

⁸⁰ K. T. Parker, *Catalogue of the Collection of Drawings in the Ashmolean Museum*. Vol. 1: Netherlandish, German, French, and Spanish Schools (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1938), xi.

peering from behind a tree, is a jester, and at the extreme right is Death.⁸¹ This image captures several of Douce's interests, from the dress and customs of the people to jesters and death. Here it is also worth noting that Douce amassed a huge Dürer collection, made even larger in 1823 on the death of his friend Joseph Nollekens, who left Douce his own impressive set of Dürer prints.⁸² Both men were ahead of their time as collectors of German Renaissance prints: they would not become popular with art collectors in England for another hundred years.

Another sample from Douce's Death collection, this from his own time, is Thomas Rowlandson's pen and ink drawing, *Death in the Bowl* (ca. 1815), also known as "Death and the Drunkards." Death is shown attacking one of the men sitting at a table drinking beer in a tavern. Only one other man sees what has happened; the others seem not to notice. Inscribed in ink are the words, "Sooner or later the luck Turns." Douce called the work "a very spirited and masterly performance." He was apparently a fan of Rowlandson's style—his collection included twenty-seven of the artist's drawings. Strangely, though Douce and Rowlandson were almost exact contemporaries and frequented some of the same places, there is no evidence of the two men ever having met.⁸³

Douce's collecting interest in Death also appeared in his museum. Some of his finest representations of death are Egyptian. He possessed a monumental stone tablet from the tombs at Thebes on which is shown the soul of a woman, under the shadow of

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 124.

⁸² *Douce Legacy*, 31. Nollekens's Dürer prints, however, did not make it to the Bodleian. Douce honored Nollekens's request that these items be donated to the British Museum. For more details on Douce's collection of German and Dutch woodcuts, see Campbell Dodgson's *Catalogue of the Fifteenth Century Woodcuts in the Ashmolean Museum*. Most of these woodcuts belonged to Douce (Mann, 363).

⁸³ *Douce Legacy*, 29.

protective wings, making offerings to Isis, Osiris, and Athor. He owned at least fifty figures of Anubis, the jackal-headed god who escorted the dead to judgment, made of bronze, red and yellow wax, clay, porcelain, and silver. Douce also kept a small collection of mummies and mummy accessories, both animal and human, including part of a mummied fox-head, a mummied ibis, various imitations of mummies in porcelain and wood, as well as crowns, beads, glass eyes, and gilt ornamental collars taken from human mummies. In sum, these items represent not only death, but also Egyptian burial customs, and were therefore an integral part of the collection's overarching theme.⁸⁴

Douce's interest in Egyptian burial practices led him in April 1833 to Charing Cross Hospital, where he observed the opening of a mummy. Douce described the event in his copy of Thomas Greenhill's *Art of Embalming* (1705):

On the 6th of April, 1833, I was present at the opening of a mummy at the Charing Cross Hospital by Mr. Pettigrew and assistants. ... The body was in a dried state, with much of the flesh in a shriveled state, and extremely perfect and free from any dislocation of the limbs. ... On the feet and head were spots of gold leaf, but it had not been gilt all over, as Mr. P. seemed to think had been the case. The flesh had become black. Nothing was found in the mummy, at least during the process of opening.⁸⁵

Douce also noted some of those in attendance: "Sir Henry Halford, Ottley, Hawkins and Barnwell of the British Museum, Dr. Richardson, Mr. Gage." It is likely that this was an event sponsored by the Society of Antiquaries. "Mr. Gage" is John Gage, Director of the Society from 1829 until 1842. In 1833, British Egyptology was a fledgling science, but one that was quickly gaining momentum among antiquarians like Douce. Witnessing the opening of a mummy would have been an extraordinary experience. Even so, Douce, the ever-vigilant student of beliefs and customs, was not so awed that he would overlook Mr.

⁸⁴ Meyrick, "Catalogue," *GM* (November 1836): 494.

⁸⁵ [William Dunn Macray], "Douceana," *Notes and Queries*, 2nd series, No. 38 (September 20, 1856): 226.

Pettigrew's "mistaken" belief that the entire body had been coated in gold. He also questioned Pettigrew's opinion that coins were found in the mouths of mummies: "The coin of Hadrian, said to have been found in a mummy, . . . is of a very doubtful nature."⁸⁶

As the tablets, statuettes, and mummies symbolize the religious beliefs and customs of ancient Egypt, so Douce's notable collection of breviaries and books of hours represent the religious beliefs and customs of Europe. Breviaries and books of hours are liturgical books that specify the hymns, offices, and prayers for the seven canonical hours—matins (with lauds), prime, tierce, sext, nones, vespers, and complin. One of these offices was the "Office of the Dead," a ceremony either sung or spoken before a burial mass. One richly illuminated breviary produced in Italy in 1563 contains a full-page figure of Death resting his hand on a skull. Another, a book of Hours of the Virgin Mary, produced in France in the first half of the sixteenth century for the use of Rome, features a "Dance of Death" that begins with the Office of the Dead.⁸⁷

The Dance of Death forms an important subcategory of his death collection. The Dance of Death—also called *Le Danse Macabre*, *Der Totentanz*, and *La Danca de la Muerte*—was originally a public performance of dance and song, often performed in cemeteries by people dressed in skeleton costumes. It was, in a sense, a celebration of the inevitability and ubiquity of death. The typical image of the Dance shows a skeletal figure, usually playing an instrument, leading a procession, a kind of conga line to the Great Beyond. The Dance became very popular during and after the Great Plague of the

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Another of Douce's favorite liturgical manuscripts was a book of Hours of the Virgin, written in Latin and French and produced in the early fifteenth century for the use of Paris, that contained a series of grotesques playing games, one of Douce's primary interests (Falconer Madan, *A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford*. Vol. 4 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1897), 509, 533; *Douce Legacy*, 46). The Office of the Dead is, I believe, still performed, but is only required on All Souls' Day.

late fourteenth century. Of Douce's main interests, the Dance of Death seems to have been an obsession. He collected and published on the subject. In fact, his final publication was *Holbein's Dance of Death* (1833), a book-length version of an essay that he had written in 1794 (see Fig. 4 and 5, pp. 54-55). His fascination is evident in his own description of the Dance:

In the dark ages of monkish bigotry and superstition, the deluded people, seduced into a belief that the fear of Death was acceptable to the great and beneficent author of their existence, appear to have derived one of their principal gratifications in contemplating this necessary termination of humanity, yet amidst ideas and impressions of the most horrible and disgusting nature.⁸⁸

Douce's collection holds many Dance of Death items, one of which is John Lydgate's *The Daunce of Machabree*, published in London in 1554, the first printed English translation of the gruesome poem anonymously inscribed and illustrated on the walls of the cemetery of the Holy Innocents in Paris. Equally important is *Les Simulachres et Historiées Faces de la Mort*, published in Lyon in 1538. This is the famous Holbein series of illustrations—that is, the images of Death designed by German artist Hans Holbein and engraved by Hans Lützelberger. It was one of the most popular illustrated books of the sixteenth century. Holbein depicts Death as an uninvited and most unexpected visitor, and he emphasizes Death's cold impartiality. Death is shown with kings, soldiers, judges, peasants, and duchesses. Death takes everyone, rich and poor, and at any time, from infancy to extreme old age.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Francis Douce, *Holbein's Dance of Death, Exhibited in Elegant Engravings on Wood, with a Dissertation on the Several Representations of that Subject ...* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1890), 4.

⁸⁹ Kristin Lohse Belkin and Carl Depauw, *Images of Death: Rubens Copies Holbein* (Antwerp: Snoeck-Ducaju & Zoon, 2000), 7; Fritz Eichenberg, *Dance of Death: A Graphic Commentary on the Danse Macabre Through the Centuries* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1983), 14.

In his museum, Douce kept an oval medallion of the late sixteenth century on which was embossed a Dance of Death, with the arms of Death in the center—a skull and snake, with an hourglass between the two arm-bones that support the skull. This may be the “singular cast in lead of a D.D.” from Thomas Rodd that Douce recorded in the final line of his notebook of purchases in February 1834. Another fine piece was an early sixteenth-century Italian ivory tablet, about ten inches high and five inches wide, showing Death in his chariot, drawn by two oxen over the bodies of the Pope, a king, and a number of other unfortunate men and women, and decorated with a Dance of Death.⁹⁰

Douce’s keen interest in the Apocalypse might be considered another subcategory of his Death collection: it is, after all, the ultimate death of the world as described in the Book of Revelation. In the Douce collection, probably the most famous item is the illuminated manuscript of the Book of Revelation known as “The Douce Apocalypse.” Douce bought this manuscript from Thomas Thorpe in February 1833. The names of the scribe and artist are unknown, and no production date is given, but scholars are reasonably certain that it was produced in Westminster sometime between 1260 and 1270.⁹¹ The oldest manuscript in the Douce collection is the commentary of Primasius on the Apocalypse, a Hiberno-Saxon text written in England in the late seventh or early eighth century. It was also his greatest bargain at two pounds, nine shillings: it had sold over a century earlier for twenty-six pounds, seventeen shillings. With great satisfaction Douce noted on the fly-leaf: “Not the tenth part of its value.”⁹²

⁹⁰ Douce, “Typescript,” f. 124; Meyrick, “Catalogue,” *GM* (October 1836): 379; Meyrick, “Catalogue,” *GM* (June 1836): 588.

⁹¹ Munby, 55; *Douce Legacy*, 39-41; A. G. Hassall and W. O. Hassall, *The Douce Apocalypse* (London: Faber & Faber, 1961), 6-7. See Hassall for a focused analysis of this important manuscript.

⁹² Munby, 52-3; *Douce Legacy*, 149-50. Douce had no such luck at the Hurd sale in April 1832. There he paid £137.11s. for the Book of Hours of Louis Quarré, produced in Flanders, ca. 1488. This is the highest price Douce is known to have paid for a manuscript (*Douce Legacy*, 171-3).

Douce also collected works on demonology and witchcraft, additional representatives of the sublime. Douce's friends John Brand and T. F. Dibdin also collected in these areas, possibly because, as ministers, they considered demonology and witchcraft to be comfortably within the realm of their vocation. Whatever their reasons, their interest seems not to have led them to accumulate such a large collection as Douce's.⁹³ Images of demons and devils abound in his collection, and certainly in *Le Livre de la Vigne Nostre Seigneur*, an illustrated work on the Antichrist, the Last Judgment, Heaven and Hell, produced in France, ca. 1450-70. It had been in the library of Dibdin, who so admired the detail and execution of the prints that he reproduced the images of Beelzebub and several lesser demons in his book, *Reminiscences of a Literary Life* (see Fig. 6, p. 56).⁹⁴ Douce may have known of this particular copy from having seen it on Dibdin's shelf during a friendly visit. Dibdin recalled Douce's reaction to the work's devilish imagery:

Here is Beelzebub himself at full-length; an upright figure, with a head-attire which should seem to be a Tower of Babel! ... My deceased friend used to chuckle aloud on expatiating upon these oddities. Great was the surprise, and the murmur not small, on the bequest of *such a library* to the Bodleian!⁹⁵

Douce bought the manuscript for £31.10s. from one of his favorite booksellers, John Thomas Payne, in June 1832. In his notebook, he describes it as "The very curious diabolical Vigne spirituelle."⁹⁶

Other striking portrayals of demons in Douce's collection concern the life of Christ. *Christ Healing the Man Possessed of Devils* (1667), a drawing by Cornelis

⁹³ Fletcher, 275-6; Singer, "Obituary," 213-4.

⁹⁴ Dibdin, *Reminiscences*, vol. 2, facing 770.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 769.

⁹⁶ Quoted in *Douce Legacy*, 172. After Dibdin sold the book, it passed through two other owners before reaching Douce.

Saftleven in black and red chalk with watercolors, shows a band of newly-expelled demons seizing a herd of pigs and rushing headlong into the sea, while many other demons are flying away with their luggage—three carrying off a ship of fools—in search of a new host.⁹⁷ Another fine example is a painting from the Douce museum, *Christ's Descent into Hell* (1625), by Pieter Brueghel the Younger, nicknamed “Hell” Brueghel for his many depictions of devils and witches. Douce recorded another Brueghel acquisition in his notebook for July 1827: “A picture of Witchcraft by Brueghel in exchange for prints with Tiffin.” In October of the same year, Douce noted a purchase, also from Mr. Tiffin, of a rare work by the seventeenth-century Dutch artist Jan Both: “Both’s scarce etching of S. Antony and Devil.”⁹⁸

Douce’s collection of tarot cards brought together several of his interests: games, witchcraft, devils, jesters, the Apocalypse, and death.⁹⁹ Of the twenty-two high-cards, or *atouts*, in a typical tarot deck, number thirteen is Death, fifteen is the Devil, twenty is the Last Judgment, and twenty-two (usually unnumbered) is the Joker.¹⁰⁰ Douce collected tarot and other playing cards also because he perceived their importance in the history of illustration and printing. In Germany, for example, engravers had traditionally honed their skills designing and making prints for cards since the mid-fifteenth century. His collection of cards was not large, but it was distinctive enough to provide rare

⁹⁷ Christopher Lloyd, *Dürer to Cézanne: Northern European Drawings from the Ashmolean Museum*. A catalog of an exhibition at The Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers University, September 12-October 24, 1982, and at The Cleveland Museum of Art in Cleveland, Ohio, November 16-January 2, 1983 (New Brunswick: The Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum in association with the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, 1982), 62-3.

⁹⁸ Meyrick, “Catalogue,” *GM* (March 1836): 252-3; Douce, “Typescript,” ff. 104, 105.

⁹⁹ *Douce Legacy*, 121-3. “Not all Douce’s playing cards, however, came to the Bodleian; some went to Meyrick and were listed under ‘Miscellaneous antiquities’ ... and others may have been dispersed” (*Douce Legacy*, 121).

¹⁰⁰ Catherine Perry Hargrave, *A History of Playing Cards and a Bibliography of Cards and Gaming* (Mineola, NY: Dover, 2000, c1966), 31-3.

illustrations for two of his friends' publications on the subject: Joseph Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes of the People of England* (1801) and Samuel Weller Singer's *Researches into the History of Playing Cards* (1816).¹⁰¹ Douce owned a pack of German cards of the early sixteenth century with hand-colored woodblock prints by Hans Sebald Beham, a protégé of Dürer. Douce also owned Beham's fine pen and ink drawing of *The Temptation of Christ* (ca. 1522), in which Satan is depicted as a kind of griffin, fully equipped with feathers, beak, and talons.¹⁰²

A Witches' Sabbath (ca. 1600), a pen and ink drawing by Jacques de Gheyn, is a grisly example of Douce's witchcraft collection. Two witches, one holding a candle and the other pointing, are staring into a freshly-disemboweled human body that lay open at their feet; a third witch is kneeling near the body and appears to be studying a book of spells.¹⁰³ In Giuseppe Cades's pen and ink drawing, *The Incantation* (1785), a witch is reading from a spell-book and drawing a magic circle with her wand in a cave full of bats, lizards, and snakes, while her cat is surprised by the sudden appearance of ghosts.¹⁰⁴ In the collection, incantations were not confined to imagery alone: Douce possessed hundreds of manuscript pages of magical incantations, formulae, and experiments. His determined pursuit of items in this genre is evidenced also by the list of books on witchcraft that he had given to one of his most trusted booksellers, Thomas Rodd, who, after Douce's death, gave the list to Bodley's Librarian, the aforementioned Bulkeley Bandinel, to be added to the Douce collection.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ *Douce Legacy*, 121-3.

¹⁰² Lloyd, 19.

¹⁰³ Lloyd, 42-3.

¹⁰⁴ *Douce Legacy*, 30.

¹⁰⁵ Madan, 527 (MS Douce 116), 621 (MS Douce d. 1, f. 125).

Returning to illustrations, Douce also owned a pair of late eighteenth-century pencil sketches by Henry Fuseli that seem to presage the classic comic-book series, *Tales from the Crypt*: namely, *The Mandrake: A Charm* and *The Witch and the Mandrake* (1812), both of which require some explanation. For centuries the mandrake plant was believed to hold great medicinal and magical powers, perhaps because the plant does indeed have a narcotic and purgative effect, and perhaps also because the forked root is often shaped like the human body. According to legend, it could only be pulled up by moonlight. Many believed that the mandrake screamed as it was pulled from the ground, and that its shriek drove people insane. Thus, in the first picture a witch is shown digging up a mandrake at the foot of a tombstone while another woman crumples to the ground in pain, apparently driven mad by the sound. In the second drawing, the witch offers her breast to a freshly pulled mandrake.¹⁰⁶

Douce collected the artwork not only of Fuseli, but also of Fuseli's good friend William Blake. Douce recognized similarities in their style. In 1811, he recorded in his notebook (labeled "Miscellanies II") that "Blake's figures are as if, like Procrustes' men, they had been stretched on a bed of iron," similar to those drawn by "Stothard, Flaxman, & Fuseli."¹⁰⁷ Douce collected works by all of these artists, whom scholars would later group with Blake under the general title "mannerists." Douce's interest in Blake was unusual: few people appreciated Blake's work during his lifetime.¹⁰⁸ Most of those who

¹⁰⁶ *Douce Legacy*, 30.

¹⁰⁷ J. B. Mertz, "A Contemporary Reference to William Blake in the Notebooks of Francis Douce," *Notes and Queries* 47, no. 3 (September 2000): 308. Incidentally, Stothard, Flaxman, and Fuseli were all Blake's friends.

¹⁰⁸ *Douce Legacy*, 89; Drabble, 44, *passim*. The rise of Blake's reputation has been traced to an 1863 biography co-authored by Alexander and Anne Gilchrist, who called Blake *Pictor Ignotus*—"the unnoticed painter." Blake scholars also cite Algernon Swinburne, who wrote an influential review of Blake's poetry in 1868. The art critic William Michael Rossetti helped popularize Blake's illustrations in 1874 (Mertz, 308; Drabble, 44, *passim*).

were familiar with Blake knew him best for his illustrated editions of Edward Young's *Night Thoughts* (1797) and Robert Blair's *The Grave* (1808), works of "graveyard poetry" that were hugely popular in their time, and that have already been mentioned as prime examples of the eighteenth-century sublime. One Blake scholar has noted that perhaps Douce saw in Blake's work "the same challenge to the hegemony of politeness he relished in the antiquities he collected."¹⁰⁹ It is also significant that several of Douce's friends were Blake fans, including Isaac D'Israeli, T. F. Dibdin, George Cumberland, and Richard Twiss. It is likely that Cumberland and Twiss were the greatest influences on Douce as he first considered Blake's work.¹¹⁰

In addition to the possible influence of peer pressure, one might consider Douce's taste for the sublime to which Blake's colorful depictions of angels and devils would have appealed. For example, in Douce's copy of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (ca. 1790), on the final page of the segment entitled "Proverbs of Hell," Satan is shown dictating his proverbs to two women scribes who are seated on either side of him. In a

¹⁰⁹ John Mee, *Dangerous Enthusiasm: William Blake and the Culture of Radicalism in the 1790s* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 112-3.

¹¹⁰ According to Joseph Viscomi, Isaac D'Israeli may have begun collecting Blake on Dibdin's or Douce's advice ("The Myth of Commissioned Illuminated Books: George Romney, Isaac D'Israeli, and "ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY designs ... of Blake's," *Blake: An Illustrated Quarterly* (Fall 1989): 56). Of Douce's friends, though it may have been George Cumberland who finally persuaded him to collect Blake, his first known opportunity to purchase Blake's work came in 1794 when his friend Richard Twiss wrote to him about "two curious works of Blake ... one 'the gates of Paradise,' the other 'Songs of innocence.'" Of their author, Twiss said: "I suppose the man to be mad, but he draws very well—have [you] anything by him?" (Joan K. Stemmler, "'Undisturbed above once in a Lustre': Francis Douce, George Cumberland and William Blake at the Bodleian Library and Ashmolean Museum," *Blake: An Illustrated Quarterly* (Summer 1992): 10). Twiss's was not an unusual assessment of Blake's mental state. Wordsworth, for example, is supposed to have said, "There was no doubt that this poor man was mad, but there is something in the madness of this man which interests me more than the sanity of Lord Byron and Walter Scott" (Drabble, 106). At any rate, Douce's reply to Twiss is unknown, but apparently he expressed some interest, for a few days later Twiss offered to lend him *For Children: The Gates of Paradise*, probably his own copy, or perhaps the copy of another early Blake collector, Rebekah Bliss, who very likely introduced Twiss to the books. Unfortunately no record has been found of Douce's reaction to the book, or whether he subsequently purchased his own copy (Mertz, 307; Keri Davies, "Mrs. Bliss: A Blake Collector of 1794," in *Blake in the Nineties*, eds. Steve Clark and David Worrall (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 216, 226). If Douce bought *Gates of Paradise* or *Songs of Innocence*, he either sold, lost, or traded them before his death—they were not part of his gift to the Bodleian (Stemmler, 10-11).

later section, a huge dragon is shown swimming in what appears to be Hell's lake of fire.¹¹¹ In this work, Blake associates God, Heaven, and Good with reason, materialism, and restraint, and Satan, Hell, and Evil with imagination, poetic inspiration, and free energy. Though Douce may indeed have been fascinated with Blake's philosophy, his interest was undoubtedly piqued by the illustrations of hell and its devils that complemented his vast collection on the subject.¹¹²

Conclusion

The Douce Collection includes the new as well as the old, from Blake's *Marriage of Heaven and Hell* to the mummied ibis of ancient Egypt. In the collection, there seems to be no distinction between "scholarly" and "popular" materials. There are ivory carvings, Italian paintings, and illuminated medieval manuscripts, but there are also chapbooks, jester's baubles, and tarot cards. This is the goal of the collection—to represent the dress, customs, beliefs, and manners of the people, rich and poor, refined and vulgar, and everyone between.

Its presence in the Bodleian is in itself a lesson for collectors. Several other great collections have been mentioned in this paper—those of Roxburghe, Heber, Beckford,

¹¹¹ William Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, a facsimile edited by Geoffrey Keynes and published for the William Blake Trust (London: Trianon Press, 1960).

¹¹² The four other Blake items in the Douce bequest were Blake's print of the Chaucer prospectus; Blake's print of the Canterbury pilgrimage; *A Descriptive Catalogue* of Blake's 1809 exhibition, "Sir Jeffrey Chaucer and the nine and twenty Pilgrims;" and *The Book of Thel* (Mertz, 307). Of these, the two most remarkable are *The Book of Thel* and the *Descriptive Catalogue*. Douce's copy of *The Book of Thel* (1789) is one of only two copies with the third and fourth lines from the end crossed out and replaced with a design in Blake's own hand; the other copy was the property of his friend, T. F. Dibdin. Douce's *Descriptive Catalogue* was also corrected by Blake himself, suggesting that Douce was among those few visitors who paid the two shillings and six pence to view the exhibit. Yet, in his notebooks, and in letters to his friends and fellow Blake collectors, Dibdin and D'Israeli, he never mentions having attended the exhibition (Stemmler, 12). In 1826, Cumberland's son, George Jr., wrote a letter to Douce in which he clearly assumes Douce's prior knowledge of the location of Blake's shop; but, admittedly, even this cannot qualify as indisputable evidence of a meeting. Though circumstantial evidence abounds, there is no clear indication that Douce and Blake ever met (Stemmler, 9-12, 14; *Douce Legacy*, 89-90, 91-5, 123-29).

and Phillipps, to name a few. These were larger and more valuable than the Douce collection, at least by the standards of the time, but all were dispersed, either during the collector's lifetime to clear debts, immediately following the collector's death, or sold by the collector's descendants. When Douce bequeathed his collection to the Bodleian, he bequeathed a collection with a definite identity. This did not escape the notice of Bodley's Librarian, Bulkeley Bandinel, who sought to ensure the collection's integrity by giving it its own room, renamed in Douce's honor.¹¹³ Certainly the names of Heber, Beckford, and Phillipps live on, but scattered in the provenance of many modern collections, forever detached from the great libraries of distinction that were once their own.

One might recall, however, that the Bodleian did not receive the *entire* Douce collection. His vast museum, for instance, went to Sir Samuel Rush Meyrick, who, though pleased to have been remembered in Douce's will, was among the first to lament the division of Douce's great collection. In the first installment of his "Catalogue of the Doucean Museum" that he prepared for the *Gentleman's Magazine* of 1836, Meyrick wrote: "I have little doubt that, had [Douce] supposed his end so near, and had leisure and ability to make another will, he would have left me all his illuminated MSS as tending in an eminent degree to illustrate the collection of antiquities he has bequeathed."¹¹⁴ More recently, art historian John Whiteley issued a similar complaint: "The division of the collection and the inevitable tendency of scholars to specialize in ever-narrowing fields

¹¹³ Craster, 15-17; *Douce Legacy*, 11, 18. Bandinel acted wisely. It has been aptly noted that "simply putting a name on a room, putting a plaque up on a wall, or somehow keeping the donated collection intact (though possibly a problem) might be all that is needed to secure the donation" (Nicholas Basbanes, "Collectors and Libraries: Some Studies in Symbiosis," *Rare Books & Manuscripts Librarianship* 8, no. 1 (1993): 38.

¹¹⁴ Meyrick, "Catalogue," *GM* (March 1836): 246. On the other hand, Dr. Bandinel probably wished for the reverse—that the antiquities given to Meyrick would have come to the Bodleian as a complement to the manuscripts.

has somewhat undermined the value Douce attached to his collection as an encyclopaedic source of texts and images illustrating the history of popular beliefs and customs.”¹¹⁵

Clearly, like Meyrick before him, Whiteley understands that the various parts of Douce’s collection can be fully appreciated only when united. Sadly, a complete reunion is hardly possible: the museum was dispersed by Meyrick’s descendants in the 1870’s, and even the coins, medals, prints, and drawings that were originally deposited at the Bodleian have since been moved to the nearby Ashmolean Museum.¹¹⁶

Despite these separations, the bulk of the collection resides in Oxford and can therefore be studied at a single institution, even if not in a single building. The Douce collection remains an invaluable resource for scholars in a wide variety of fields, from German Renaissance art to eighteenth-century children’s games—even to British book collecting. In summarizing Douce’s legacy, the great bibliographer A. N. L. Munby wrote: “His chief claim to our attention must be his position as one of the earliest of those collectors who can be studied in detail, to assemble a really representative series of illuminated manuscripts of all periods, including those least fashionable in his day. In his lifetime Douce commanded respect, and his recognition of quality in unfamiliar areas of connoisseurship commands it still.”¹¹⁷ Douce can indeed be “studied in detail.” Through his library, museum, notebooks, sale catalogs, and letters, one gets a glimpse of bookmen like Steevens, Dibdin, and Heber; of prominent statesmen like Pitt, Napoleon, and Disraeli; and even of an aesthetic that incorporates the grisly and the grotesque.

Douce’s collection was to a great extent a collaborative effort. Douce and Ritson enjoyed each other’s company and advice as they searched London high and low for

¹¹⁵ Whiteley, 58.

¹¹⁶ See Appendix A for details.

¹¹⁷ Munby, *Connoisseurs*, 56.

children's nursery rhymes. Douce shared opinions with Nollekens on Dürer and other northern European engravers. With Strutt and Singer, he traded words of wisdom on playing cards. Cumberland, Twiss, and D'Israeli were available if he wished to discuss the artwork of Blake. For Douce and his friends, building a great collection required a lively exchange of ideas and experiences.

However, while the collection is undeniably the result of cooperation, it reflects the peculiar tastes of Douce. Other collectors sought, like Douce, to piece together a story of civilization, but each followed his own special interests as he developed his collection. For Douce, telling a satisfactory history of human culture meant collecting in such subjects as children's games, jesters, death, and demonology, and as comprehensively as possible. The result of his labor is arguably the most valuable collection at the Bodleian.

Fig. 1**Francis Douce, age 55**

Engraving by William Henry Worthington after Mary Turner's etching from Cristoforo Prospero's sculptured medallion, 1812. Reproduced from *Reminiscences of a Literary Life* (London: J. Major, 1836), Vol. 1, by T. F. Dibdin. From the Rare Book Collection, Wilson Library, UNC-CH.

Fig. 2

The Dog and the Ox

Etching after Francis Barlow. Reproduced from *Les Fables D'Esop*
(Amsterdam: D'Etienne Roger, 1714), "*Du Chien envieux & du Boeuf*," p. 65.
From the Rare Book Collection, Wilson Library, UNC-CH.

Fig. 3**Jester, late 16th century**

Engraving by J. Berryman. Reproduced from *Illustrations of Shakspeare, and of Ancient Manners*, by Francis Douce (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1807), Plate V. Douce notes that this image is from a print by Brueghel. From Davis Library, UNC-CH.

Fig. 4

The Abbess

Engraving by G. W. Bonner and John Byfield (1833) after the design of Hans Holbein (1547).
Reproduced from *Holbein's Dance of Death* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1890),
by Francis Douce, Plate XV. From the Sloane Art Library, UNC-CH.

Fig. 5

The Gamblers

Engraving by G. W. Bonner and John Byfield (1833) after the design of Hans Holbein (1547).
Reproduced from *Holbein's Dance of Death* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1890),
by Francis Douce, Plate XLI. From the Sloane Art Library, UNC-CH.

Fig. 6**Beelzebub and other demons**

Reproduced from T. F. Dibdin's *Reminiscences*, vol. 2, facing p. 770, after engravings in *Le Livre de la Vigne Nostre Seigneur* (ca. 1450-70). From the Rare Book Collection, Wilson Library, UNC-CH.

Appendix A: Organization, Management, & Exhibition

The sheer size and remarkable diversity of the collection must have awed the Bodleian librarians responsible for its organization. If they were not shocked by all of the items pertaining to witches, demons, and death, they were no doubt horrified when they found that Douce had never made a catalog for his collection.¹¹⁸ At any rate, with a mountain of manuscripts, books, prints, drawings, and coins in front of them, there was clearly a job to do.

With processing underway, Bulkeley Bandinel, Bodley's Librarian, described the state of the Douce Collection and the progress of the catalog production to T. F. Dibdin, who reprinted Bandinel's comments in his *Reminiscences*:

The Bibliotheca Douceiana is now enclosed within the walls of the Bodleian Library. It occupies a noble room of 44 feet in length by 24 in width; with six extra presses, double shelved, three on each side of the room; and two huge oak tables, with shelves to hold the prints. ...When all of the books and papers, on which they are catalogued, are numbered, we shall instantly go to press.¹¹⁹

Henry Symonds and Arthur Brown cataloged the printed books. Henry O. Coxe, who would, in 1860, succeed Bulkeley Bandinel as Bodley's Librarian, cataloged the manuscripts, charters, and fragments. The catalog was published in 1840, a fine example of organizational skill and plain hard work. It had been finished within five years of the

¹¹⁸ *Douce Legacy*, 7.

¹¹⁹ Dibdin, *Reminiscences*, vol. 2, 768.

bequest, a remarkable achievement considering the size and variety of the collection, and that it was compiled by only three people.¹²⁰

A less successful enterprise was the cataloging of Douce's prints and drawings. The library had commissioned Thomas Dodd, a retired London print-seller, to accomplish this great task. Dodd had personally sold Douce many prints and drawings and was thus already familiar with much of the collection. Unfortunately for Dodd, Bodleian administrators hoped for faster production than he could provide and dismissed him from service in 1842. The problem was complicated in 1863 when the majority of Douce's prints and drawings were transferred from the Bodleian to the Ashmolean Museum on the reasonable assumption that the Ashmolean's art experts were better prepared to handle them. But somehow the prints remained largely unprocessed until 1913.¹²¹ Perhaps the Ashmolean staff had assumed that, since they had been at the Bodleian for thirty years, someone there must have prepared a detailed record of the contents. Whatever the rationale, an entire generation had passed before the prints and drawings were finally catalogued.¹²²

The smaller portion of the prints and drawings collection that remained at the Bodleian was kept in the Douce Room in boxes, folders, and albums. They were arranged in three groups: the Douce Boxes, which include about 10,000 items cataloged by points on a compass (e.g., Douce Prints N.1.1); the Douce Portfolios, numbered 133-142, which include roughly 6,800 items; and the published collections of prints. In 1915, some of the drawings and prints that had been transferred to the Ashmolean in 1863 were

¹²⁰ Macray, 328.

¹²¹ Campbell Dodgson, *Woodcuts of the fifteenth century in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford ... with notes on similar prints in the Bodleian Library* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1929), 6.

¹²² Mann, 364-65; Macray, 328; Craster, 224, 314; Parker, ix-xi.

returned to the Bodleian. Transfers in either direction were still being made as late as 1977.¹²³

Bandinel decided that the Douce collection, like other important donations before it, would be given its own room. The Old Astronomy School (now the Patristics Reading Room on the First Floor), which had been annexed to the Bodleian in 1828, was shelved for the purpose. The walls were lined with shelves such that the window looking into the quadrangle was blocked, as was the entrance from the stairs. One row of shelves divided the room into northern and southern sections. The southern section was later called “The Spanish Room” and housed the Douce manuscripts. The entire room was known as “The Douce Museum” or “The Douce Room;” or, for those who preferred the official Latin name, “*Museum Francisci Douce Armigeri.*”¹²⁴ Little else is known about the original room. Fortunately, one researcher, Mary Arnold Ward, recorded her observations of the room from a visit she had made in 1868:

[The treasures of the Douce collection] shone like jewels in the golden light of the room. That light was to me something tangible and friendly. It seemed to be the mingled product of all the delicate browns and yellows and golds in the bindings of the books, of the brass lattice work that covered them, and of reflections from the beautiful stone-work of the Schools Quadrangle outside.¹²⁵

¹²³ *Douce Legacy*, 28-34.

¹²⁴ As of 1995, the original plaque bearing the Latin inscription still hung in the Patristics Reading Room (Coates, 115).

¹²⁵ Quoted in *Douce Legacy*, xii-xiii. The editors of the *Douce Legacy* added an important note to Mary Arnold Ward’s recollections: “The reference to the reflections from the Schools Quadrangle is probably a flight of fancy. Mary Arnold would have been 17 years old in 1868 but the window facing the Quadrangle was not unblocked until the 1880s” (xiii).

Disregarding for a moment its value to scholarship, the Douce collection was surely a magnificent decoration for the Old Astronomy School.¹²⁶

At about the same time that Symonds, Brown, and Coxe were compiling the first Douce catalog, Bodleian librarians were also preparing a general collection catalog. This was finished in 1843 after roughly thirty years of work.¹²⁷ Unfortunately, the new general catalog was immediately outdated, so a supplement was published in 1851.¹²⁸ Besides its immediate need for a supplement, the new catalog also failed to incorporate such major individual collections as those of Gough and Douce. One of Henry O. Coxe's first campaigns as Bodley's Librarian was for the unification of the library's collections in one general catalog. His plan was finally realized in 1878.¹²⁹

After the publication of the new general catalog in 1878, the Douce collection did not receive considerable attention from Bodleian librarians until the mid-1890s, when Falconer Madan began to reorganize the Douce manuscripts. Madan assigned numbers (21575-22071) to the manuscripts, all of which had been given a shelf-mark (e.g., MS Douce 8) by Coxe in 1843. He also made numerous corrections to Coxe's descriptions. Madan's work was published in 1897 as volume four of *The Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts*.¹³⁰

¹²⁶ Esther Potter, "'To Paul's Churchyard to treat with a bookbinder,'" in *Property of a Gentleman: The Formation, Organisation, and Dispersal of the Private Library, 1620-1920*, eds. Robin Myers and Michael Harris (Winchester: St. Paul's Bibliographies, 1991), 25.

¹²⁷ Sir Edmund Craster, *History of the Bodleian Library, 1845-1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), 344.

¹²⁸ Craster, 51.

¹²⁹ Craster, 53. The problem, even after 1878, was that many of the old errors from previous catalogs were perpetuated. For the most part, the entries were simply copied from the 1843 catalog, which had in turn been copied from the 1738 edition. Despite the errors, Coxe could still rest assured that the library's various collections were at last united in a single catalog.

¹³⁰ Falconer Madan, *A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford ... Vol. IV (collections received during the first half of the 19th century) Nos. 16670-24330* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1897), 488-9; Craster, 207. In 1975, David Rogers published a list of corrections to Madan's work. See David Rogers, "Francis Douce's Manuscripts: Some Hitherto Unrecognized Provenances," in *Studies in the Book Trade in Honour of Graham Pollard* (Oxford: Oxford

Douce's coins, medals, and tokens were originally housed in the Bodleian's Coin Room on the Second Floor. His donation is considered one of the finest additions to the Bodleian's coin collection since its founding by Archbishop Laud in the early-seventeenth century. In 1920, the entire Bodleian coin collection was transferred to the Ashmolean. Douce's coins are kept in the Heberden Coin Room.¹³¹

It has been briefly noted that, in 1900, the box of notebooks and letters that Douce bequeathed to the British Museum was opened. These were dismissed as insignificant and transferred to the Bodleian in December 1930.¹³² This was subsequently shown to be an inaccurate assessment of their worth. Although Douce's notebooks do not offer detailed provenance or prices paid, they gave Bodleian librarians valuable information such as place and date of purchase to add to their catalog records. They arranged Douce's letters chronologically (from 1790), and the undated letters alphabetically. His most regular correspondents were given separate volumes.¹³³

In 1934, the Bodleian and the Ashmolean created an exhibit to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Douce bequest. The display of collection highlights, some of which are described above in *The Douce Collection: Theme and Subjects*, opened April 2, 1934. Manuscripts were displayed in Arts End, while printed books and examples of fine bindings were shown in the Picture Gallery. The drawings exhibition was in the first bay of the drawings gallery at the Ashmolean. A permanent display of prints remained at the south end of this gallery. Douce's medals and coins were shown in the Ashmolean's

Bibliographical Society, 1975). In 1991, Mary Clapinson and T. D. Rogers published a summary catalogue for manuscript acquisitions from 1916 to 1975 that includes the 1930 transfer of Douce items from the British Museum Library.

¹³¹ *Douce Legacy*, 17, 110-14; Craster, 12.

¹³² *Douce Legacy*, 16.

¹³³ *Douce Legacy*, 8; Munby, *Connoisseurs*, 43.

Eldon Room. *The Bodleian Quarterly Record* devoted its entire Spring 1934 issue to the Douce collection and the exhibit. The articles cover all of the major categories of the collection.¹³⁴

During the planning and display of the Douce centenary exhibition, plans for library expansion were also underway. By 1934 the Radcliffe Science Library had been expanded to receive some of the main building's overflow of books, but more space was still needed. Construction of the New Bodleian began in December 1936. In November 1939, two months after Britain declared war on Germany, a reinforced brick enclosure was constructed in the basement of the nearly-finished new building to protect about sixty thousand of the library's most valuable books and manuscripts from the anticipated bombings. A special room was also set aside for the general catalog, an item that the Bodleian, like any library, could hardly afford to lose. Bodleian administrators formed a fire brigade of library staff and undergraduate volunteers. Eventually the entire collection (about 1.5 million volumes) was removed to the relative security of the New Bodleian Stacks. Many of the books, including the Douce collection, have remained at the New Bodleian ever since.¹³⁵

Bodleian librarians put extraordinary effort into preserving the collection during the Second World War. Though nearly half of the library staff had left for active military service, about fifty people managed to shift 1.5 million books to more secure quarters during the early months of the war. Fortunately, the main shift of the books was accomplished before the Battle of Britain began in July 1940. The intensive bombing of

¹³⁴ *Bodleian Quarterly Record* 7, no. 81 (1934): 359-86.

¹³⁵ Craster, 329-34, 341-3. Though Craster does not specify which items were among the sixty thousand carried quickly to the brick enclosure, one might safely assume that at least one of these was from the Douce Collection.

Kent and the city of London began in mid-August and continued through mid-September. Oxford was not a primary target, yet the possibility of stray bombs hitting in or near the city was certainly real. The Bodleian survived unscathed. It would be wonderful to hear stories from Bodleian staff and Oxford undergraduates who helped move and protect the collection during the war. The Bodleian's effort shows librarians at their best, preserving cultural heritage.

In 1984, the Bodleian once again produced a Douce exhibition, this time to honor its 150th anniversary. The project included not only the Bodleian and the Ashmolean, but also the Victoria and Albert Museum, the British Museum, and the British Library, since the collection had, after all, been partially dispersed through Douce's will, and again through the Meyrick family's dispersal of the Douce Museum during the 1870's. The exhibit catalog was published as *The Douce Legacy* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 1984). Like the Spring 1934 issue of *The Bodleian Quarterly Record*, *The Douce Legacy* includes chapters on all major categories of the Douce collection. It also contains illustrations of frontispieces, title-pages, bindings, and coins. Although Bodleian curators and other scholars have since published catalogs and articles on Douce and his collection, the 1984 exhibition is the most recent large-scale presentation and re-interpretation of the collection.¹³⁶

According to Clive Hurst, Head of Rare Books & Printed Ephemera and a contributor to the 1984 exhibit catalog, two or three exhibits are displayed in the Bodleian each year, and these often contain items from the Douce collection. Moreover,

¹³⁶ *Douce Legacy*, v-xv, 1-176. For publications since 1984, see, for example, Alan Coates; John Feather; John Whiteley; Mary Clapinson and T. D. Rogers; and Giles Barber, "Francis Douce and Popular French Literature," *Bodleian Library Record* 14, no. 5 (October 1993): 397-411; Laurel Braswell, *The Index of Middle English Prose (Handlist IV): a handlist of Douce manuscripts containing Middle English prose in the Bodleian Library*, Oxford (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1984).

the Bodleian's 400th anniversary exhibition, which began in February 2002 and will continue in stages throughout the year, will feature Douce treasures.¹³⁷

Appendix B: Access

There remains the issue of access. Who may use the Douce collection? What print and online search tools are available, and how are they used? How exactly do items from the collection get to the researcher's study table? What items, if any, are digitally accessible? These are the central questions of this section.

To gain access to the Douce collection, applicants must present written recommendations that "confirm their need and their suitability for admission," and they must be engaged in "serious study which they cannot easily do elsewhere."¹³⁸ If Bodleian authorities accept the application, a "Reader's Card" is issued to the researcher at the Admissions office of the Clarendon building.

The Bodleian's admission policy is similar to the policies of comparable American institutions. As mentioned above, for students to use any part of the collection, the Bodleian requires a usage fee and a written recommendation from a scholar familiar with the library's unique holdings. In America, the Morgan Library and the Huntington Library have access requirements almost identical to those of the Bodleian, but, admittedly, these institutions are special collections libraries not directly affiliated with universities.¹³⁹ The libraries at Harvard and Princeton are perhaps better points of

¹³⁷ Clive Hurst (clive.hurst@bodley.ox.ac.uk), (2001, August 1), *Re: Douce Collection*, e-mail to Joby Topper (toppj@ils.unc.edu).

¹³⁸ *A General Guide to the Bodleian Library & Its Dependent Libraries, 2000/2001* (Oxford: printed by the Nuffield Press Ltd., 2000), 3 (hereafter, *General Guide to Bodleian*).

¹³⁹ Morgan Library (No date), *Research/Resources: Reading Room* [Online], Available: <http://www.morganlibrary.org/research/html/index.html> [2001, September 2] ; Huntington Library (2000),

comparison because, like the Bodleian, they are private university libraries with renowned research collections. The Widener Library at Harvard requires a special application and a usage fee.¹⁴⁰ On the other hand, the Houghton Library, Harvard's special collections repository, requires only a photo I.D. and proof of current address.¹⁴¹ At Princeton, the Firestone Library requires two forms of I.D. (at least one with a photo), proof of current address, and a usage fee.¹⁴² Although admissions policies vary from university to university, and sometimes, as at Harvard, from library to library at the same institution, the point here is simply that the Bodleian's admissions policy is not extraordinary.¹⁴³

Once researchers have proven their scholar-status and have sworn an oath not to damage the collection, they are allowed to enter the library and begin their search for items in the Douce collection. Let us first assume that they are looking for printed books. As in most modern libraries, they have two general options: search tools in print and search tools online. Two print catalogs are helpful. The first has already been mentioned: the original catalog of Douce books and manuscripts by Symonds, Brown, and Coxe published in 1840. One copy is kept in Duke Humfrey's Library (R. 6. 92); the

Information for Readers [Online], Available: <http://www.huntington.org/ResearchDiv/ResReader.html> [2001, September 2].

¹⁴⁰ Harvard OnLine Library Information System (HOLLIS) (2000), *Widener Library* [Online], Available: <http://lib.harvard.edu/libraries/0074.html> [2001, September 2].

¹⁴¹ Harvard OnLine Library Information System (HOLLIS) (2000), *Houghton Library* [Online], Available: <http://lib.harvard.edu/libraries/0005.html> [2001, September 2].

¹⁴² Princeton University Library (2001), *About the Library—Access Policy, 2001-2002, Firestone Library, Princeton University Library* [Online], Available:

http://libweb.princeton.edu/about_the_library/access_policy.html [2001, September 2].

¹⁴³ I have not seen statistics showing the percentage of applicants refused by the Bodleian Library (I'm assuming these statistics exist), so I cannot judge how strictly their admissions rules have been interpreted and enforced. This might be an interesting study. Incidentally, the admissions policy of the Rare Book Collection at Wilson Library is, as one might expect from a public institution, less restrictive than that of the Bodleian. Researchers must present a photo I.D., provide name and current address, and sign a statement to follow department rules (do not damage the collection, no eating or drinking in the reading room, etc.). The same requirements apply at the University of Virginia.

other is in Room 132 of the New Bodleian (X. 1. 28). Or, researchers might prefer to search the pre-1920 general catalog that is kept in the Lower Reading Room Catalogue and General Reference Section on the First Floor. The pre-1920 catalog is also available online at <http://www.lib.ox.ac.uk/olis/>, or by telnetting directly to library.ox.ac.uk.¹⁴⁴

Books in the Douce collection will have a “BOD Bookstack” location code, meaning that the items are shelved in the closed stacks of the New Bodleian. Researchers fill out a green book order slip for each item requested. The slips can be found in any reading room. The slip must include the author, title, date, and shelfmark of the book, the researcher’s ticket number, printed name, and signature, and the reading room to which the researcher prefers to have the book delivered. Books ordered after 4 p.m. or on Saturdays will not be retrieved until the next working day.

On receiving the order slip at the New Bodleian, librarians pull the book and send it by underground conveyer to the Old Library, unless, of course, the item was ordered to be sent to a reading room in the New Bodleian itself, in which case the item is hand delivered. The books are delivered to the reserve counter of the reading room indicated on the slip. There is, however, no choice of reading rooms for books printed before 1641. These must be read in Duke Humfrey’s Library. Also, oversize books from the Douce and all other named collections must be read in Room 132 of the New Bodleian.¹⁴⁵

Finding and ordering Douce manuscripts is a slightly different process. Three print catalogs are helpful—Coxe’s original list of manuscripts from 1840 (Room 132, X. 1. 28); volume four of *The Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts*, by Falconer Madan, published in 1897 (Room 132, X. Cat. 1); and volume one of the *Summary*

¹⁴⁴ *A Guide to the Central Bodleian Library: the Old Library, New Library, & Radcliffe Camera, 2000/2001* (Oxford: printed by the Nuffield Press Ltd., 2000), 4-10 (hereafter, *Guide to Central Bodleian*).

¹⁴⁵ *Guide to Central Bodleian*, 9-10.

Catalogue of Post-Medieval Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, by Mary Clapinson and T. D. Rogers, published in 1991. The Douce manuscripts are not searchable through the library's online catalog. However, Madan's *Summary Catalogue* is available, though not text-searchable, online.¹⁴⁶ Access the site and click on "summary catalogue" to learn how to use the catalog. Click on "this folder" to see a list of scanned-page images from the catalog. Other print manuscript guides can be found in Duke Humfrey's Library. In fact, Duke Humfrey's is the best place to go for assistance with manuscript location and retrieval. Order slips for manuscripts are completed as described above and sent to the New Bodleian. Like books printed before 1641, most manuscripts must be read in Duke Humfrey's. All oversize manuscripts from named collections must be read, like their printed counterparts, in Room 132.¹⁴⁷

Locating Douce's prints and drawings requires visits to two Oxford institutions, the Bodleian and the Ashmolean. To find the Douce prints and drawings kept at the Bodleian, go to Room 132 of the New Bodleian and ask for assistance. The great majority of his prints and drawings are in the Ashmolean Museum. For access, go to the Print Room and ask for assistance. It is also advisable to consult one or more of the principal catalogs of western prints and drawings in the Ashmolean. These are listed on the Ashmolean website. One of the most helpful is the *Catalogue of the Collection of Drawings in the Ashmolean Museum* by Sir Karl T. Parker, particularly volume one.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Bodleian Library, University of Oxford (1999), *MSS. Douce: manuscripts from the collection of Francis Douce (1757-1834)* [Online], Available: <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/wmss/medieval/mss/douce.htm> [2001, August 2].

¹⁴⁷ *Guide to Central Bodleian*, 4, 8-10.

¹⁴⁸ Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, Department of Western Art (1999), *Principal Catalogues and Studies of Prints and Drawings* [Online], Available: <http://www.ashmol.ox.ac.uk/ash/departments/western-art/w000700.html> [2001, August 3]. There is nothing in the available literature about access to Douce's coins. After being given a reader's card at the

Some Douce material is available in digital form. His collection of broadside ballads, for example, is available online. To generate a list of only the Douce ballads, enter “douce” in the “Display from” field, select “6 Shelfmarks” from the Index drop-down menu, then click on “Submit Search.” Select a ballad from the list of hits (e.g., “Douce Ballads 2 (137a)”). Images of the broadsides can be zoomed in or out.¹⁴⁹

Besides the broadside ballads, very few Douce items are internet accessible. One noteworthy webpage includes JPEG files of single leaves from *MS Douce d. 19*, a Book of Hours produced in Holland, ca. 1420-30.¹⁵⁰ The images were scanned from a filmstrip, which in turn had been made from photographs produced at the Bodleian since about 1960. Portions of another illuminated manuscript, *MS Douce 381*, are on the web,¹⁵¹ as are other JPEGs of medieval illuminations, some of which are from Douce manuscripts.¹⁵²

Bodleian, one might ask a Bodleian librarian for a referral. Perhaps it would also work to go directly to the Heberden Coin Room at the Ashmolean, show one’s credentials, and ask for assistance.

¹⁴⁹ Bodleian Library, University of Oxford (2000), *Bodleian Library Broadside Ballads* [Online], Available: <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/ballads/> [2001, July 30]. The Bodleian’s “Broadside Ballads Project” began in 1995 with funding from the NFF Specialised Research Collections Initiative.

¹⁵⁰ Bodleian Library, University of Oxford (2000), *MS. Douce d. 19, fols. 41-62* [Online], Available: <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/wmss/medieval/mss/douce/d/019.htm> [2001, August 4].

¹⁵¹ Bodleian Library, University of Oxford (2000), *MS. Douce 381, fols. 20-23* [Online], Available: <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/wmss/medieval/mss/douce/381.a.htm> [2001, August 4].

¹⁵² Bodleian Library, University of Oxford (1999), *Browse images of manuscripts* [Online], Available: <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/wmss/medieval/browse.htm> [2001, August 4].

Bibliography

- Aesop. *Les Fables D'Esopé*. De Monsieur le Chevalier L'Estrange, avec les Figures dessinées & gravées par F. Barlow. Amsterdam: Roger D'Etienne, 1714.
- Barber, Giles. "Francis Douce and Popular French Literature." *Bodleian Library Record* 14, no. 5 (October 1993): 397-411.
- Basbanes, Nicholas. "Collectors and Libraries: Some Studies in Symbiosis." *Rare Books & Manuscripts Librarianship* 8, no. 1 (1993): 37-48.
- Barnes, James. "Depression and Innovation in the British and American Booktrade, 1819-1939." In *Economics of the British Booktrade, 1605-1939*, eds. Robin Myers and Michael Harris. Alexandria, VA: Chadwyck-Healey, 1985.
- Belkin, Kristin Lohse, and Carl Depauw. *Images of Death: Rubens Copies Holbein*. Antwerp: Snoeck-Ducaju & Zoon, 2000.
- Benet's Reader's Encyclopedia*. 3rd ed. New York: Harper & Row, 1987.
- Blake, William. *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. A facsimile edited by Geoffrey Keynes and published for the William Blake Trust. London: Trianon Press, 1960.
- Bodleian Quarterly Record* 7, no. 81 (1934): 359-86 [Douce Centenary Issue].
- Braswell, Laurel. *The Index of Middle English Prose, Handlist IV: A Handlist of Douce Manuscripts Containing Middle English Prose in the Bodleian Library*, Oxford. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1984.
- Bronson, Bertrand H. *Joseph Ritson: Scholar-At-Arms*. In two volumes. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1938.
- Burke, Edmund. *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- Carter, John. *Taste & Technique in Book Collecting*. London: Private Libraries Association, 1970 (first published by Cambridge University Press, 1948).
- Clapinson, Mary, and T. D. Rogers. *Summary Catalogue of Post-Medieval Western*

Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. Acquisitions 1916-1975. Volume 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991.

- Coates, Alan. "The Bodleian's Incunabula in the Late Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: Their Acquisition, Cataloguing and Housing." *Bodleian Library Record* 15, no. 2 (April 1995): 108-18.
- Craster, Edmund, Sir. *History of the Bodleian Library, 1845-1945.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952.
- Davies, Keri. "Mrs. Bliss: a Blake Collector of 1794." In *Blake in the Nineties*, ed. Steve Clark and David Worrall, 212-30. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999.
- De Ricci, Seymour. *English Collectors of Books and Manuscripts (1530-1930) and Their Marks of Ownership.* Burt Franklin Bibliography & Reference Series 268. New York: Burt Franklin, 1930; reprinted 1969.
- Dibdin, Thomas Frognall. *Reminiscences of a Literary Life.* In Two Volumes. London: J. Major, 1836.
- Disraeli, Benjamin. *Benjamin Disraeli: Vol. 1: Letters, 1815-1834.* Edited by John Matthews, et al. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982.
- Dodgson, Campbell. *Woodcuts of the fifteenth century in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford ... with notes on similar prints in the Bodleian Library.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1929.
- Douce, Francis. *Holbein's Dance of Death, Exhibited in Elegant Engravings on Wood, with a Dissertation on the Several Representations of that Subject ...* London: George Bell & Sons, 1890.
- _____. *Illustrations of Shakspeare, and of Ancient Manners: with dissertations on the clowns and fools of Shakspeare; on the collection of popular tales entitled Gesta Romanorum; and on the English Morris dance.* In two volumes. London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1807.
- _____. "Typescript of 'Collecta' notebooks of antiquarian purchases, 1803-10, 1811-23, 1824-34 (MS Douce d. 63)." TMs (photocopy). Bodleian Library, Oxford.
- The Douce Legacy: An Exhibition to Commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the Bequest of Francis Douce (1757-1834).* Edited by S. G. Gillam. Oxford: Bodleian Library, 1984.
- Drabble, Margaret, ed. *The Oxford Companion to English Literature.* 5th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985; reprinted with corrections, 1993.

- “Early Children’s Books in the Bodleian Library: An Exhibition.” *Bodleian Library Record* 15, no. 3 (October 1995): 152-54.
- Eichenberg, Fritz. *Dance of Death: A Graphic Commentary on the Danse Macabre Through the Centuries*. New York: Abbeville Press, 1983.
- Esdaile, Arundell. *The British Museum Library: A Short History and Survey*. With an introduction by Sir Frederic G. Kenyon. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1946.
- Feather, John. “Robert Triphook and Francis Douce: A Bookseller and One of His Customers.” *Bodleian Library Record* 15, no. 5/6 (October 1996): 468-79.
- Fletcher, William Younger. *English Book Collectors*. New York: Burt Franklin, 1969, c1902.
- Foucault, Michel. *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*. New York: Vintage, 1988, c1965; first published 1961.
- A General Guide to the Bodleian Library & Its Dependent Libraries, 2000/2001*. [Oxford]: Printed by the Nuffield Press Ltd., 2000.
- Gibson, S. “Children’s Games: An Exhibition.” *Bodleian Library Record* 1, no. 11 (October 1940): 182-7.
- A Guide to the Central Bodleian Library: the Old Library, New Library, & Radcliffe Camera, 2000/2001*. [Oxford]: Printed by the Nuffield Press Ltd., 2000.
- Hargrave, Catherine Perry. *A History of Playing Cards and a Bibliography of Cards and Gaming*. Mineola, NY: Dover, 2000, c1966.
- Hassall, A. G., and W. O. Hassall. *The Douce Apocalypse*. London: Faber & Faber, Ltd., 1961.
- Hillyard, Brian. “John Ker, 3rd Duke of Roxburghe.” In *Dictionary of Literary Biography* Vol. 213: *Pre-Nineteenth-Century British Book Collectors and Bibliographers*, eds. William Baker and Kenneth Womack. Detroit: Gale, 1999.
- Kaplan, Rob, and Harold Rabinowitz, eds. *Speaking of Books: The Best Things Ever Said About Books and Book Collecting*. New York: Crown, 2001.
- Lewis, Wilmarth Sheldon. *Horace Walpole’s Library*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958.
- Lloyd, Christopher. *Dürer to Cézanne: Northern European Drawings from the*

Ashmolean Museum. A catalog of an exhibition at The Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers University, September 12-October 24, 1982, and at The Cleveland Museum of Art in Cleveland, Ohio, November 16-January 2, 1983. New Brunswick: The Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum in association with the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, 1982.

Macray, William Dunn. *Annals of the Bodleian Library Oxford*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1890.

[Macray, William Dunn]. "Douceana." *Notes and Queries*, 2nd series, No. 38 (September 20, 1856): 225-6.

Madan, Falconer. *A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford*. Vol. 4 (collections received during the first half of the 19th century) Nos. 16670-24330. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1897. *Also available online at <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/wmss/medieval/mss/douce.htm>.

Mann, James G. "Francis Douce as a Collector." *Bodleian Quarterly Record* 7, no. 81 (1934): 360-65.

Martin, Peter. *Edmund Malone, Shakespearean Scholar: A Literary Biography*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Mee, Jon. *Dangerous Enthusiasm: William Blake and the Culture of Radicalism in the 1790s*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992.

Mertz, J. B. "A Contemporary Reference to William Blake in the Notebooks of Francis Douce." *Notes and Queries* 47 (New Series), no. 3 (September 2000): 306-8.

Meyrick, Samuel Rush. "Catalogue of the Doucean Museum." *Gentleman's Magazine* (March, April, June, August, October, November, December 1836).

Monk, Samuel H. *The Sublime: A Study of Critical Theories in XVIII-Century England*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1960; first published 1935.

Munby, A. N. L. *Connoisseurs and Medieval Miniatures, 1750-1850*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972.

_____. "Father and Son: The Rev. Reginald Heber's vain attempt to stem the rising tide of his son Richard's bibliomania." In *Essays and Papers: A. N. L. Munby*, ed. Nicolas Barker. London: Scholar Press, 1977.

_____. "The Pains of Authorship: Francis Douce and the Edinburgh Reviewers." *Eighteenth-Century Studies in Honor of Donald F. Hyde*, ed. W. H. Bond. New York: Grolier Club, 1970.

- _____. *Portrait of an Obsession: The Life of Sir Thomas Phillipps, the World's Greatest Book Collector*. Adapted by Nicolas Barker from the five volumes of *Phillipps Studies*. London: Constable, 1967.
- _____. "Some Caricatures of Book-Collectors: An Essay." In *Essays and Papers: A. N. L. Munby*, ed. Nicolas Barker. London: Scolar Press, 1977.
- Nurse, Bernard. "The Library of the Society of Antiquaries of London: Acquiring Antiquaries' Books Over Three Centuries." In *Antiquaries, Book Collectors, and the Circles of Learning*, eds. Robin Myers and Michael Harris, 153-8. New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 1996.
- O'Dwyer, E. J. *Thomas Frognall Dibdin: Bibliographer & Bibliomaniac Extraordinary, 1776-1847*. Pinner, Middlesex, U.K.: Private Libraries, 1967.
- Ogden, James. *Isaac D'Israeli*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969.
- Opie, Iona and Peter. "Nursery Rhymes." In *Bibliophile in the Nursery: A Bookman's Treasury of Collectors' Lore on Old and Rare Children's Books*, ed. William Targ. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Reprint Corp., 1969, c1957.
- Parker, K. T. *Catalogue of the Collection of Drawings in the Ashmolean Museum*. 7 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1938-56.
- Potter, Esther. "'To Paul's Churchyard to Treat with a Bookbinder.'" In *Property of a Gentleman: The Formation, Organisation and Dispersal of the Private Library, 1620-1920*, eds. Robin Myers and Michael Harris. Winchester: St. Paul's Bibliographies, 1991.
- Reilly, Robin. *William Pitt the Younger*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1979.
- Ritson, Joseph. *Gammer Gurton's Garland; or, The Nursery Parnassus*. A reprint of the 1810 edition. Norwood, PA: Norwood Editions, 1973.
- Rogers, David. "Francis Douce's Manuscripts: Some Hitherto Unrecognized Provenances." In *Studies in the Book Trade in Honour of Graham Pollard*. Oxford: Oxford Bibliographical Society, 1975.
- Rosenblum, Joseph. "Samuel Johnson." In *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, vol. 213: *Pre-Nineteenth-Century British Book Collectors and Bibliographers*, eds. William Baker and Kenneth Womack. Detroit: Gale, 1999.
- S. G. "Douce Bookbindings." *Bodleian Quarterly Record* 7, no. 81 (1934): 373-75.
- Sherbo, Arthur. *Shakespeare's Midwives: Some Neglected Shakespeareans*. Newark:

University of Delaware Press, 1992.

[Singer, Samuel Weller.] "Francis Douce, Esq., F. S. A. – [Obituary]." *Gentleman's Magazine* (August 1834): 212-17.

Stemmler, Joan K. "'Undisturbed above once in a Lustre': Francis Douce, George Cumberland and William Blake at the Bodleian Library and Ashmolean Museum." *Blake: An Illustrated Quarterly* 26 (Summer 1992): 9-18.

Stephen, Leslie, and Sidney Lee, eds. *Dictionary of National Biography*. 22 vols. London: Oxford University Press, 1921-22.

Stoker, David A. "Thomas Frognall Dibdin." In *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, vol. 184: *Nineteenth-Century British Book Collectors and Bibliographers*. Detroit: Gale, 1997.

Sweet, Rosemary. "Antiquaries and Antiquities in Eighteenth-Century England." *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 34, no. 2 (2001): 181-206.

Viscomi, Joseph. "The Myth of Commissioned Illuminated Books: George Romney, Isaac D'Israeli, and 'ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY designs ... of Blake's.'" *Blake: An Illustrated Quarterly* 23 (Fall 1989): 48-74.

Wheatley, Henry B. *Prices of Books: An Inquiry into the Changes in the Price of Books Which Have Occurred in England at Different Periods*. Detroit: Gale Research, 1970.

Whiteley, John. "The Douce Collection." *Apollo* 145 (May 1997): 58-9.

Wright, Louis B., and Gordon N. Ray. *The Private Collector and the Support of Scholarship: Papers Read at a Clark Library Seminar, April 5, 1969*. Los Angeles: UCLA, 1969.

Electronic Resources

Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, Department of Western Art (1999). *Principal Catalogues and Studies of Prints and Drawings* [Online]. Available: <http://www.ashmol.ox.ac.uk/ash/departments/western-art/w000700.html> [2001, August 3].

Bodleian Library, University of Oxford (2000). *Bodleian Library Broadside Ballads* [Online]. Available: <http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/ballads/> [2001, July 30].

Bodleian Library, University of Oxford (1999). *Browse images of manuscripts* [Online].

Available: <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/wmss/medieval/browse.htm> [2001, August 4].

Bodleian Library, University of Oxford (2000). *MS. Douce d. 19, fols. 41-62* [Online]. Available: <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/wmss/medieval/mss/douce/d/019.htm> [2001, August 4].

Bodleian Library, University of Oxford (2000). *MS. Douce 381, fols. 20-23* [Online]. Available: <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/wmss/medieval/mss/douce/381.a.htm> [2001, August 4].

Bodleian Library, University of Oxford (1999). *MSS. Douce: manuscripts from the collection of Francis Douce (1757-1834)* [Online]. Available: <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/wmss/medieval/mss/douce.htm> [2001, August 2].

Harvard OnLine Library Information System (HOLLIS) (2000). *Houghton Library* [Online]. Available: <http://lib.harvard.edu/libraries/0005.html> [2001, September 2].

Harvard OnLine Library Information System (HOLLIS) (2000). *Widener Library* [Online]. Available: <http://lib.harvard.edu/libraries/0074.html> [2001, September 2].

Huntington Library (2000). *Information for Readers* [Online]. Available: <http://www.huntington.org/ResearchDiv/ResReader.html> [2001, September 2].

Hurst, Clive (clive.hurst@bodley.ox.ac.uk). (2001, August 1). *Re: Douce Collection*. E-mail to Joby Topper (toppj@ils.unc.edu).

Morgan Library (No date). *Research/Resources: Reading Room* [Online]. Available: <http://www.morganlibrary.org/research/html/index.html> [2001, September 2].

Princeton University Library (2001). *About the Library—Access Policy, 2001-2002, Firestone Library, Princeton University Library* [Online]. Available: http://libweb.princeton.edu/about_the_library/access_policy.html [2001, September 2].