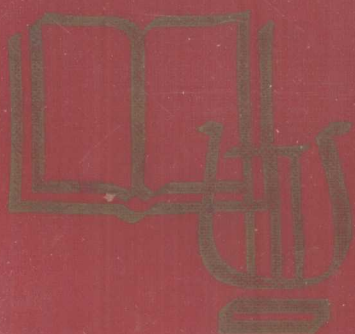


AMERICAN
POETRY
AND
PROSE



FOERSTER · FALK NEW SHORTER EDITION

POETRY AND PROSE

New Shorter Edition

Edited by NORMAN FOERSTER
and ROBERT FALK

of the University of California, Los Angeles

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY · BOSTON

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PREFACE


American literature deserves to be studied as the finest expression of an idealized national myth or tradition which is as difficult to define as it is valuable to possess. Without such a tradition a people might rapidly become absorbed in the mass pressure for lesser and easier goals. We have endeavored to place the best literature of this tradition in its proper cultural and historical background, including the important influences of European thought and the American scene. We have tried to present it in such a way that the student will find his own emotional and intellectual discovery of it encouraged and stimulated. It has been a fundamental aim to avoid usurping the prerogative of teacher and student to interpret and evaluate the literature for themselves.


Three years ago, when the more detailed and inclusive Fourth Edition was published, the editor's preface stated that the book was "designed to serve both the historical and the critical approaches to our literature." The present New Shorter Edition has carried on this purpose, combining the methods of historical scholarship with the more recent aesthetic and analytical criticism. We have sought to provide a significant historical framework *and* useful critical commentary without allowing either to dominate and leaving room for the instructor to place the emphasis where he prefers.


 *The Text.* Designed for a general, introductory course in American literature, as well as for the increasing number of single-semester or quarter offerings in various limited aspects, the present edition contains in one volume a generous representation of the masters while still retaining the broad outline and development of our literature from its beginnings. One of our organizing principles has been to preserve the best of the major authors together with adequate selections from lesser writers in whose work the student may see certain trends of thought and expression not always apparent from a reading of masterpieces alone.

The eight leading writers of the nineteenth century have come through almost unscathed from the larger edition, with few omissions, and only minor cuts in such longer works as "Nature," "Song of Myself," and "Old Times on the Mississippi." In the twentieth century, where omissions and inclusions are the most problematical, we have been careful to guide our own judgments by the best recent critical taste and opinion. Within the restrictions of copyright availability, we have tried to represent by at least one or two characteristic pieces the work of the writers of fiction who seem most likely to endure. In verse, it was possible to include full selections from widely recognized figures like Frost and Eliot and still add several poems of Pound and extend "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley" to the length of the entire Part I. Otherwise, aside from necessary reductions of space, the recent poetry section remains substantially the same as in the Complete Edition.

The principal change from the 1957 edition is in the section on modern criticism. Malcolm Cowley, Lionel Trilling, and Cleanth Brooks have been included to broaden the representation of recent critical approaches. While exemplifying the points of view of these newer critics, we have chosen essays that serve to illuminate such complex contemporaries as Eliot and Faulkner and such controversial topics as the influence of Freud and of symbolism upon literature. In the work of Faulkner, we have had to omit the long fourth section of "The Bear." His "Dry September" is, however, a new addition.

 *Periods and Movements.* The division into basic intellectual and historical periods — Puritanism, Neo-Classicism, Romanticism, and Realism — has remained as the shaping principle of the book, and the introductions elucidating these periods and movements have been changed only by reducing portions of their illustrative detail. Social and political backgrounds have been abridged in favor of the discussions of literary methods, types, and individual authors. The prevailing "literary tone" of the Fourth Edition has thus been further accentuated.

 *Notes and Bibliographies.* As in the Fourth Edition the notes immediately precede the text. However, in two instances, Eliot and Pound, it has seemed desirable to have footnotes explaining the allusions to remote literary names and places and the many literary echoes in such poems as "The Waste Land," "Ash Wednesday," "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley," and "The Cantos." The biographical sketches have been brought up to date. Some have been slightly expanded. All names, dates of composition, references, and other historical data have been checked. The suggestions for "further reading" have been scanned for their most recent relevance, and a completely revised "Guide to Scholarship," based on the 1957 version prepared by Roger B. Stein, has been appended.

 *Acknowledgments.* The editors are grateful once again to all those friends and colleagues, scattered throughout the nation, whose assistance, invaluable in the larger work, is of course reflected in the New Shorter Edition. The editors wish also to acknowledge the careful reading and correction of the notes to Pound and Eliot by Professor John Espey of the University of California, Los Angeles.

NORMAN FOERSTER

ROBERT FALK

CONTENTS



THE PURITAN AGE

INTRODUCTION	3	The Reflection	34
		The Experience	35
PURITANS			
WILLIAM BRADFORD	11	SAMUEL SEWALL	36
Of Plymouth Plantation:		Diary:	
<i>Arrival at Cape Cod</i>	12	<i>Courtship of Madam Winthrop</i>	36
<i>First Spring, First Thanksgiving</i>	13		
<i>Communal Farming Fails</i>	14	JONATHAN EDWARDS	42
<i>Dancing and Frisking and Worse</i>	15	Sarah Pierrepont	42
<i>Pequot War, and a Murder</i>	17	Personal Narrative	43
		Passages from Sermons:	
JOHN WINTHROP	20	God Glorified in Man's Dependence	50
Christian Experience:		A Divine and Supernatural Light	53
<i>A Happiness Better than All the World</i>	20	Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God	56
Letters to (and from) His Wife	21	Religious Affections	58
Journal:			
<i>Control of Wages and Prices</i>	23		
<i>Harvard Commencement</i>	23	QUAKER	
<i>Trial for Adultery</i>	23		
<i>A Little Speech on Liberty</i>	24	JOHN WOOLMAN	61
		Journal:	
ANNE BRADSTREET	26	<i>A Young Quaker's Inward Life</i>	61
The Author to Her Book	26	<i>Uneasiness as to Slavery</i>	64
The Flesh and the Spirit	27	<i>A Plain Way of Living</i>	64
Contemplations	28		
To My Dear and Loving Husband	29		
		ANGLICAN GENTLEMAN	
EDWARD TAYLOR	30		
The Preface	31	WILLIAM BYRD	66
The Soul's Admiration	31	Secret Diary:	
The Joy of Church Fellowship	32	<i>Life of a Virginia Gentleman</i>	67
Upon a Wasp Chilled with Cold	32	History of the Dividing Line:	
Upon a Spider Catching a Fly	33	<i>The Dismal Swamp</i>	71
Housewifery	33	<i>The Alligator</i>	72
The Ebb and Flow	34	<i>Plantation Life in North Carolina</i>	73
		<i>A Visit to the Indians</i>	74

THE NEO-CLASSIC AGE

INTRODUCTION	75	Notes on Virginia:	
		<i>No Dictators</i>	145
THE AGE OF REASON INCARNATE		<i>Religious Freedom</i>	146
		<i>Negro Slavery</i>	147
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN	86	First Inaugural Address	148
Autobiography:		Letters:	
<i>Family</i>	87	<i>Advice to a Young Daughter</i>	150
<i>A Bookish Inclination</i>	88	<i>Reason is the Only Oracle</i>	151
<i>I Became a Deist</i>	91	<i>Thrown on a Wide World</i>	152
<i>The Reverend Mr. Whitefield</i>	98	<i>Aristocracy, Natural versus Artificial</i>	153
The Way to Wealth	100	<i>An Aristocrat</i>	155
Rules by Which a Great Empire May			
Be Reduced to a Small One	104	ALEXANDER HAMILTON AND JAMES MADISON	156
An Edict by the King of Prussia	108	The Federalist:	
The Ephemera	110	<i>A Strong Central Government.</i>	
Dialogue Between Franklin and the Gout	111	(Hamilton)	157
Letters:		<i>Interests and Passions of Majorities</i>	
<i>Faith, Hope, and Charity Upside</i>		and Minorities. (Madison)	159
Down	114		
<i>A Deistic Creed</i>	115	THE CONNECTICUT WITS	
AGRARIAN SENTIMENTALIST			
ST. JEAN DE CRÉVECOEUR	117	JOHN TRUMBULL	164
Letters from an American Farmer:		The Progress of Dullness:	
What is an American?	118	<i>Tom Brainless as Student and Preacher</i>	165
		<i>Harriet Simper Has Her Day</i>	165
		<i>An Amorous Temper</i>	167
DEISM AND REVOLUTION			
THOMAS PAINE	124	TIMOTHY DWIGHT	168
Common Sense:		Greenfield Hill:	
Thoughts on the Present State of		<i>Sweet Simplicity</i>	168
American Affairs	125	<i>Two Ways of Visiting</i>	170
The Crisis:			
<i>The Times That Try Men's Souls</i>	132	FROM CLASSIC TO ROMANTIC	
The Age of Reason:			
<i>A Deist's Belief</i>	137	PHILIP FRENEAU	171
<i>Revelation</i>	137	To the Memory of the Brave Americans	172
<i>The Order of Nature</i>	138	The Hurricane	172
<i>God and Human Reason</i>	139	The Wild Honeysuckle	173
<i>The World-Machine</i>	140	The Indian Student	173
BUILDING A NEW NATION		The Indian Burying Ground	174
THOMAS JEFFERSON	142	To an Author	175
Declaration of Independence	143	On a Honey Bee	176
		To a Caty-Did	176
		On the Uniformity and Perfection of	
		Nature	177
		On the Religion of Nature	177

THE ROMANTIC MOVEMENT

INTRODUCTION 179

EARLIER ROMANTICS

WASHINGTON IRVING 194

- Knickerbocker's History of New York: 194
- The Golden Reign of Wouter Van 196
- Twiller 196
- Chronicles of the Reign of William 207
- the Testy 207
- The Sketch Book: 213
- The Author's Account of Himself 213
- Rip Van Winkle 215

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER 223

- Notions of the Americans: 224
- American Literature* 224
- Preface to the Leather-Stocking Tales 226

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT 228

- Thanatopsis 229
- The Yellow Violet 230
- Inscription for the Entrance to a Wood 231
- To a Waterfowl 231
- Green River 232
- A Winter Piece 233
- O Fairest of the Rural Maids 234
- A Forest Hymn 235
- To Cole, the Painter, Departing for 236
- Europe 236

ROMANTIC ARTIST

EDGAR ALLAN POE 237

- Romance 239
- To Science 239
- A Dream Within a Dream 239
- To Helen 239
- Israfel 240
- The City in the Sea 241
- Lenore 241
- The Valley of Unrest 242
- The Sleeper 242

To One in Paradise 243

- Dream-Land 244
- The Raven 244
- Ulalume 247
- For Annie 248
- Annabel Lee 249
- Eldorado 250
- The Philosophy of Composition 250
- Hawthorne's Twice-Told Tales 256
- Ligeia 260
- The Fall of the House of Usher 267
- The Purloined Letter 277
- The Cask of Amontillado 285

ROMANTICISM ON PURITAN SOIL

RALPH WALDO EMERSON 289

- Journals 291
- America, My Country 297
- The Rhodora 297
- Each and All 298
- Concord Hymn 299
- The Humble-Bee 299
- The Problem 300
- Woodnotes, I 301
- The Snow-Storm 303
- Grace 303
- Ode Inscribed to W. H. Channing 303
- Merlin 305
- Bacchus 306
- Give All to Love 307
- Hamatreya 308
- Days 309
- Two Rivers 309
- Brahma 310
- Seashore 310
- Terminus 311
- Nature: 311
- Introduction 311
- I. Nature 312
- II. Commodity 313
- III. Beauty 314
- IV. Language 317
- The American Scholar 320
- Self-Reliance 329
- Thoreau 342

HENRY DAVID THOREAU	350	Nuremberg	545
Letters to Emerson	351	The Arsenal at Springfield	546
Journals	354	The Day is Done	547
Civil Disobedience	358	The Fire of Drift-Wood	548
Walden:		The Jewish Cemetery at Newport	548
Economy	370	My Lost Youth	549
Where I Lived, and What I Lived For	379	Sonnets:	
Sounds	386	Mezzo Cammin	551
Conclusion	392	Divina Commedia	551
Sic Vita	397	Chaucer	552
Smoke	398	Milton	553
NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE	398	Venice	553
Note-Books:		The Three Silences of Molinos	553
<i>Brook Farm</i>	400	The Cross of Snow	553
<i>Concord Friends</i>	400		
<i>Hints for Stories</i>	401	JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL	554
My Kinsman, Major Molineux	402	A Fable for Critics:	
Roger Malvin's Burial	411	<i>Emerson</i>	555
The Maypole of Merry Mount	420	<i>Whittier</i>	556
Young Goodman Brown	426	<i>Hawthorne</i>	556
The Artist of the Beautiful	432	<i>Lowell</i>	557
Rappaccini's Daughter	444	The Biglow Papers:	
Ethan Brand	458	A Letter	557
HERMAN MELVILLE	466	What Mr. Robinson Thinks	559
The Great Art of Telling the Truth	468	The Courtin'	560
Bartleby the Scrivener	470	Emerson the Lecturer	562
The Portent	487		
Malvern Hill	487	OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES	566
On the Grave of a Young Cavalry Officer	488	The Ballad of the Oysterman	567
Far Off-Shore	488	My Aunt	568
The Maldive Shark	488	The Last Leaf	568
Art	488	The Chambered Nautilus	569
Billy Budd	488	Contentment	569
		The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table	570
JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER	528		
Proem	529	ROMANTIC AND REALIST	
Song of Slaves in the Desert	529		
Ichabod	530	WALT WHITMAN	582
First-Day Thoughts	530	Preface to Leaves of Grass	584
Skipper Ireson's Ride	531	One's-Self I Sing	588
Laus Deo!	532	Song of Myself	588
Snow-Bound	532	There Was a Child Went Forth	611
Abraham Davenport	540	Crossing Brooklyn Ferry	612
HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW	541	Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking	616
Hymn to the Night	543	Once I Pass'd Through a Populous City	620
The Skeleton in Armor	543	When I Heard at the Close of the Day	621
		A Glimpse	621
		A Noiseless Patient Spider	621

When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer	622
Cavalry Crossing a Ford	622
Come Up from the Fields Father	622
A March in the Ranks Hard-Prest, and the Road Unknown	623
A Sight in Camp in the Daybreak Gray and Dim	624
When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd	624
Pioneers! O Pioneers!	629
On the Beach at Night	632
Passage to India	633
To a Locomotive in Winter	638
To the Man-of-War-Bird	639
Democratic Vistas:	
<i>American Democracy, Actual and Ideal</i>	640
<i>What Is an American?</i>	642
<i>An American Literature</i>	643

THE RISE OF REALISM

INTRODUCTION	661
FOLK SONGS AND BALLADS	
Sweet Betsy from Pike	674
O Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairie	675
Whoopee, Ti Yi Yo, Git Along, Little Dogies	676
Casey Jones	677
Go Down, Moses	677
Swing Low, Sweet Chariot	678

MARK TWAIN — AMERICAN

SAMUEL L. CLEMENS	678
The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County	680
Innocents Abroad:	
<i>Italian Guides</i>	683
<i>We Were Americans!</i>	686
Roughing It:	
<i>Trouble Will Begin at 8</i>	687
Baker's Blue-Jay Yarn	689
Life on the Mississippi:	
The Boys' Ambition	692
I Want to be a Cub-Pilot	693
A Cub-Pilot's Experience	695

CIVIL WAR AND AFTER

ABRAHAM LINCOLN	645
Autobiography	645
Reply to Horace Greeley	646
Gettysburg Address	647
Letter to Mrs. Bixby	647
Second Inaugural Address	647
HENRY TIMROD	649
Ethnogenesis	649
The Cotton Boll	650
Charleston	652
Ode	653
SIDNEY LANIER	653
The Symphony	654
Song of the Chattahoochee	658
The Marshes of Glynn	658

A Daring Deed	698
Perplexing Lessons	701
Continued Perplexities	704
The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg	707

NATIVE HUMOR AND LOCAL COLOR

GEORGE WASHINGTON HARRIS	730
Blown Up With Soda	730
BRET HARTE	734
The Outcasts of Poker Flat	735
JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS	740
Mr. Benjamin Ram and His Wonderful Fiddle	741

SARAH ORNE JEWETT	743
Miss Tempy's Watchers	743

THE ART OF FICTION

WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS	749
Criticism and Fiction:	
<i>Criticism and Realism</i>	750
<i>The English Novel since Jane Austen</i>	752
<i>Democracy and the American Novel</i>	753
<i>Decency and the American Novel</i>	753

HENRY JAMES	756
Hawthorne:	
<i>The Thinness of American Life</i>	757
✓ <i>The Real Thing</i>	760
<i>The Death of the Lion</i>	773
Maud-Evelyn	790
<i>The Art of Fiction</i>	803
EDITH WHARTON	814
<i>The Choice</i>	814

NEW ENGLAND RECLUSE

EMILY DICKINSON	821
Four Letters to T. W. Higginson	823
Poems:	
67 (<i>Success is counted sweetest</i>)	825
76 (<i>Exultation is the going</i>)	825
89 (<i>Some things that fly</i>)	825
126 (<i>To fight aloud</i>)	825
189 (<i>It's such a little thing to weep</i>)	825
210 (<i>The thought beneath</i>)	825
✓ 214 (<i>I taste a liquor</i>)	825
249 (<i>Wild Nights</i>)	826
254 (<i>"Hope" is the thing</i>)	826
258 (<i>There's a certain Slant</i>)	826
265 (<i>Where Ships of Purple</i>)	826
303 (<i>The Soul selects</i>)	826
304 (<i>The Day came slow</i>)	827
✓ 338 (<i>I know that He exists</i>)	827
410 (<i>The first Day's Night</i>)	827

435 (<i>Much Madness</i>)	827
441 (<i>This is my letter</i>)	827
465 (<i>I heard a Fly buzz</i>)	827
466 (<i>'Tis little I — could care</i>)	828
511 (<i>If you were coming</i>)	828
526 (<i>To hear an Oriole</i>)	828
585 (<i>I like to see it lap</i>)	828
609 (<i>I Years had been</i>)	829
632 (<i>The Brain — is wider</i>)	829
640 (<i>I cannot live with You</i>)	829
701 (<i>A Thought went up</i>)	830
✓ 712 (<i>Because I could not stop</i>)	830
739 (<i>I many times thought Peace</i>)	830
✓ 747 (<i>It dropped so low</i>)	831
764 (<i>Presentiment</i>)	831
816 (<i>A Death blow</i>)	831
✓ 986 (<i>A narrow Fellow</i>)	831
1030 (<i>That Such have died</i>)	831
1052 (<i>I never saw a Moor</i>)	831
1075 (<i>The Sky is low</i>)	831
1078 (<i>The Bustle in a House</i>)	831
✓ 1100 (<i>The last Night</i>)	832
1176 (<i>We never know how high</i>)	832
1207 (<i>He preached upon "Breadth"</i>)	832
✓ 1463 (<i>A Route of Evanescence</i>)	832
1510 (<i>How happy is the little Stone</i>)	832
1587 (<i>He ate and drank</i>)	832
✓ 1593 (<i>There came a Wind</i>)	833
1624 (<i>Apparently with no surprise</i>)	833
✓ 1732 (<i>My life closed twice</i>)	833
1755 (<i>To make a prairie</i>)	833
1760 (<i>Elysium</i>)	833

THE REALISTIC MOVEMENT AND NEW DIRECTIONS

INTRODUCTION	835
--------------	-----

THE NATURALISTIC REVOLT

HENRY ADAMS	851
<i>The Education of Henry Adams:</i>	
<i>Chaos</i> (1870)	852
<i>The Dynamo and the Virgin</i> (1900)	857
<i>Vis Nova</i> (1903-1904)	862
STEPHEN CRANE	865
<i>The Open Boat</i>	865
<i>War Is Kind</i>	877
<i>A Man Said to the Universe</i>	877

THEODORE DREISER	878
<i>The Lost Phoebe</i>	879

THE REVIVAL OF POETRY

EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON	887
<i>The Children of the Night</i>	888
George Crabbe	888
John Evereldown	888
Cliff Klingenhagen	889
Richard Cory	889
Luke Havergal	889

Credo	890	The Return	931
Isaac and Archibald	890	The River Merchant's Wife	931
Miniver Cheevy	894	In a Station at the Metro	932
For a Dead Lady	895	The Rest	932
Ben Jonson Entertains a Man from Stratford	895	A Pact	932
The Man Against the Sky	899	From Hugh Selwyn Mauberley	933
Flammonde	902	Canto I	937
Cassandra	904	Canto II	938
Mr. Flood's Party	904		
Karma	905	T. S. ELIOT	941
✓ ROBERT FROST	905	✓ The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock	942
Mowing	906	The Hippopotamus	944
The Tuft of Flowers	907	Gerontion	945
✓ Reluctance	907	The Waste Land	947
The Death of the Hired Man	908	Animula	955
Dust of Snow	910	Ash Wednesday	956
Mending Wall	910	Four Quartets:	
✓ The Pasture	911	The Dry Salvages, V	960
✓ Home Burial	911	The Metaphysical Poets	961
The Black Cottage	912	Literature and the Modern World	966
Birches	914		
The Road Not Taken	914	ROBINSON JEFFERS	969
✓ An Old Man's Winter Night	915	Roan Stallion	970
Not to Keep	915	Gale in April	981
✓ The Oven Bird	915	To the Stone-Cutters	981
✓ "Out, Out —"	915		
✓ Fire and Ice	916	ARCHIBALD MACLEISH	982
New Hampshire	916	Ars Poetica	982
Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening	921	You, Andrew Marvell	983
✓ Once by the Pacific	921	American Letter	983
✓ Tree at My Window	921	Frescoes for Mr. Rockefeller's City:	
✓ Desert Places	921	Landscape as a Nude	985
Two Tramps in Mud Time	922	Burying Ground by the Ties	986
Departmental	922	Speech to Those Who Say Comrade	986
A Considerable Speck	923	Pole Star	987
The Gift Outright	923		
Come In	924	WALLACE STEVENS	988
		Domination of Black	989
CARL SANDBURG	924	The Emperor of Ice-Cream	989
Nocturne in a Deserted Brickyard	925	Sunday Morning	990
Fog	925	Peter Quince at the Clavier	991
Chicago	925	The Death of a Soldier	992
I Am the People, the Mob	926	The Idea of Order at Key West	993
Cool Tombs	926	A Postcard from the Volcano	993
Grass	927	Study of Two Pears	994
The People, Yes:		Of Modern Poetry	994
The Man in the Street is Fed	927		
The People Will Live On	928	HART CRANE	995
		The Bridge:	
EZRA POUND	929	To Brooklyn Bridge	995
A Virginal	930	Van Winkle	996
Sestina: Altaforte	930	The River	997
		Cutty Sark	999

THE PLAYS OF O'NEILL

EUGENE O'NEILL	1000
The Emperor Jones	1002

FICTION OF THE TWENTIES AND LATER

WILLA CATHER	1016
Neighbor Rosicky	1017
SHERWOOD ANDERSON	1032
"Queer"	1033
SINCLAIR LEWIS	1038
The Man Who Knew Coolidge	1039
F. SCOTT FITZGERALD	1056
May Day	1056
ERNEST HEMINGWAY	1080
A Clean, Well-Lighted Place	1081
THOMAS WOLFE	1083
You Can't Go Home Again:	
Enter Mr. Lloyd McHarg	1084
What Is Man?	1088
KATHERINE ANNE PORTER	1091
María Concepción	1091
WILLIAM FAULKNER	1101
The Bear (Parts 1, 2, 3, 5)	1102
Dry September	1132

AN AGE OF CRITICISM

H. L. MENCKEN	1138
Footnote on Criticism	1138

IRVING BABBITT	1144
The Critic and American Life	1145
EDMUND WILSON	1153
Symbolism	1154

CLEANTH BROOKS	1162
The Waste Land: An Analysis	1162

LIONEL TRILLING	1177
Freud and Literature	1178

MALCOLM COWLEY	1187
William Faulkner's Legend of the South	1188

THREE POETS

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS	1196
Tract	1196
The Yachts	1197

MARIANNE MOORE	1198
The Steeple-Jack	1198
In Distrust of Merits	1200

E. E. CUMMINGS	1202
20 (a wind has blown)	1202
30 (in Just-spring)	1202
31 (Buffalo Bill's defunct)	1203
225 (somewhere i have never travelled)	1204
312 (may my heart always)	1204
XXXIX (all ignorance)	1205



SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	1207
-----------------------	------

PICTURE CREDITS	1217
-----------------	------

INDEX OF AUTHORS AND TITLES	1219
-----------------------------	------



AMERICAN POETRY AND PROSE



