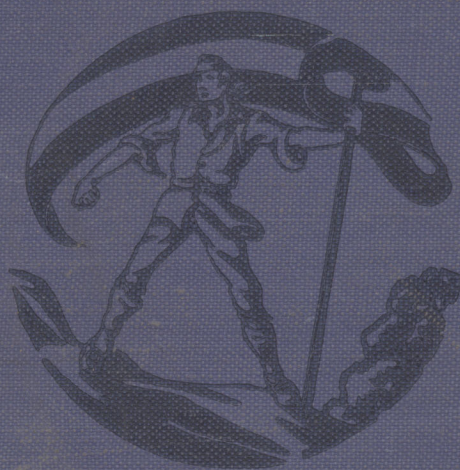

ADVENTURES
IN AMERICAN
LITERATURE



Standard Third Edition

ADVENTURES

in American Literature



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Preface

THERE has been much talk and countertalk about objectives for the high school course in American literature. But through all of the verbal storm, three purposes remain unshaken: (1) to improve the student's capacity to comprehend and enjoy the printed page; (2) to provide the kind of information and vicarious experience which will enrich his personality; and (3) to broaden his understanding of how present-day American ideas and ideals have developed through the years. The new 1941 revision of *Adventures in American Literature* recognizes and promotes these three objectives.

This Third Edition is a part of a five-book series for the senior high school, the other volumes being *Adventures in Reading: Second Edition*, *Adventures in Appreciation: Second Edition*, *Adventures in English Literature: Third Edition* and *Adventures in Modern Literature*. The present volume differs from its predecessors in three important respects:

(1) *It offers a 250-page section showing the relationship of American literature to the life from which it sprang.* Thus Part Two, the last 250 pages, traces, with a continuous narrative and appropriate selections, the growth of American ideas and ideals. The student sees that literature is really an expression of human experience; he acquires a better understanding of his country and a deeper appreciation of its institutions; he gets a new viewpoint on his problems and responsibilities as a future citizen.

Here in Part Two are literary classics like Samuel L. Clemens's *Life on the Mississippi*, Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast*, and Rølvaag's *Giants in the Earth*; leaders like Washington, Jefferson, Lee, and Lincoln, the last presented full length in a chapter from Sandburg's *The War Years*; picturesque figures of the western expansion like John Colter and Jedediah Smith; the old South in the books of Lyle Saxon; new scientific advances in the achievements of Dr. Carver of Tuskegee Institute and the sketch of "The Man with a Tractor." There are serious discussions of modern problems, like Lippmann's "The Paradox of Poverty and Plenty," John Erskine's "Invent Your Own Career," and a final challenge for the future in a radio address to youth by the Kansas sage, William Allen White.

All the way through this section of 250 pages, the various selections are linked together with a running narrative — a narrative which traces the development of American culture and institutions.

(2) *It contains 64 selections not found in the previous edition.* Some replace older selections and others represent additions. The short story section has been enlarged from fifteen to seventeen stories, with such important writers as Nobel prize winners Pearl Buck and Sinclair Lewis and such distinctively American figures as John

Steinbeck and Jesse Stuart among the new authors represented. New essay selections bring to the young reader a chapter from Clarence Day's phenomenally popular *Life with Father* and such varied writers as J. Frank Dobie, E. B. White, and Anne Lindbergh. The additions in biography introduce a great patriot, a great artist, and a busy country doctor to bring greater strength and interest to the section. Three new poets who have recently won assured positions are added, Robinson Jeffers, James Weldon Johnson, and Archibald MacLeish; and a generous selection is included from Sandburg's recent *The People, Yes*, in addition to minor changes among the works of other poets already represented.

The readings in drama have been completely overhauled to permit the inclusion of Thornton Wilder's Pulitzer prize play *Our Town*, one of the most notable plays of the past decade, interesting for its innovations in dramatic technique, for its tremendous popular appeal, and for its embodiment of wholesome ideals and lovable characters. With this play are included Eugene O'Neill's one-act drama *Where the Cross Is Made* and the radio play *Textiles* by Sherwood Anderson, representing the newest expansion of the field of drama.

In making the new selections the editors have been mindful of the need for balance between the best works of the past and the most interesting works of the present, and also of the need to provide reading of varying difficulty so that neither progress in reading skill nor pleasure in rapid reading need be sacrificed.

(3) *New study aids have been added.* For example, at the end of Part One (the first 500 pages in which the selections are arranged by types) there is a review project labeled "A Backward Glance." This project is based on centers of interest modeled after those in the National Council of English Teachers' *Experience Curriculum*. In reviewing these selections from the standpoint of interest centers, the student is led to think of them and to interpret them in terms of his own life and his own thought.

New also is a series of "guides" for the more difficult literary types. They provide a brief discussion — always from the student's standpoint — of the distinctive characteristics and standards of excellence of the particular literary type. It is the opinion of the editors that these guides should be read thoughtfully and not studied exhaustively before the reading selections. Then, after the student has read the selections, the guides may be studied in greater detail.

Many suggestions for outside reading and special reports are incorporated in the new section of study suggestions labelled *For Ambitious Students*. There the teacher will also find thought questions and composition subjects for the exceptional student to pursue according to his own bent and his own abilities.

Another new feature is the vocabulary-building program. At the end of many of the selections appear study sections under the heading *For Your Vocabulary*. In these sections the editors have chosen for treatment some 200 words from the selections which, on the basis of their judgment and teaching experience, (1) may present a problem of difficulty to students or (2) will enrich their vocabularies. The editors have set as a lower limit for their words those commonly known to students

below the tenth grade as listed in the *Combined Word List*.¹ The upper limit was set by excluding from the vocabulary studies any words beyond the 20,000 most frequently used words in the language. Only in some few cases have the editors, on the basis of classroom experience, decided to treat a word which does not fall within these limits.

Using this refined list, a program for increasing the student's power over words has been established. This is not an artificial listing of words whose definitions a student must memorize in isolation from their context. A word's meaning is invariably determined by its total setting. The words in these exercises are discussed not only in relation to other words but also with reference to experiences which are meaningful to high school students. Insofar as possible, each word study unit is handled as a problem in thinking, and words are treated as ideas, not as stimuli for rote memorization.

Some of the foregoing basic changes were demanded by the new plan for Part Two — the plan for integrating the selections with the development of American life and culture. But no features of the older editions which have proved invaluable in the classroom were sacrificed. The popular selections in the old sections on "Folk Lore" and "Humor" were redistributed in the new organization, where they afford pleasant variety. The older section "The Growth of the American Spirit" has been interwoven with the history of American literature, and most of the readings are retained with the new narrative.

The editors wish to point special emphasis to the value of the type organization of the selections in Part One, the first 500 pages. The literary types represented, the teaching aids provided, and the general tone and viewpoint of this section are similar to those of the older editions. And it is right that this should be so. After all, over a period of ten years, the older books have gone through a rigorous classroom test in thousands of classrooms. Changes have been made only when recommended by classroom teachers who have actually used the older books with all kinds of students and groups. Hence, in Part One the student, as before, continues to meet the great personalities of American literature and becomes acquainted with a wide variety of their best writings. Likewise, the type organization is retained because it fosters the steady growth of the student's critical and perspective faculties.

In accordance with the purpose of the book, the completely new illustrations have been selected to present other American arts and American ways of life, and to go a step further with the aim of integrating literary experience with American life in general. For additional visual aid, the literary history is accompanied by a new set of time-charts, making clear at a glance the chronological relationships of authors' lives and of important events in the development of the country.

In pursuing the plan which seemed to them to offer the finest opportunity for rich experience in American literature, the editors have not forgotten the many experienced teachers who have developed highly effective methods based on other

¹ *A Combined Word List* by B. R. Buckingham and Edward W. Dolch, Ginn and Co., 1936.

organizations of the course. With the literary history in Part Two are included lists of readings in Part One, so that the teacher who achieves best results with the chronological organization can base his work on the history, with frequent excursions into the readings listed at the end of each section. For the teacher who prefers to organize his course around centers of interest, the review project "A Backward Glance" serves to group the selections from the types division into sections for original study, and the readings in Part Two constitute a splendid unit on the growth of the American spirit.

So we give you *Adventures in American Literature: Third Edition!* May it prove a stepping stone to richer enjoyment of life in America!

THE EDITORS

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