Robert Lee Wolff:
A Preliminary Inventory of his Collection of 19th Century Fiction in the Manuscript Collection at the Harry Ransom Center

Descriptive Summary

Creator: Wolff, Robert Lee (1915-1980)
Title: Robert Lee Wolff Collection of 19th Century Fiction
Dates: Circa 1800s-1984
Extent: 59 document boxes (29.40 linear feet), 5 card boxes, 1 oversize box (osb), 2 oversize folders (osf)
Abstract: This collection contains correspondence, manuscripts, proofs, review clippings, and other pre- and post-publication materials associated with particular Victorian-era authors and works, as well as some of Wolff's own manuscripts and academic papers.
Language: English
Access: Open for research

Administrative Information

Acquisition: Gifts, 1990 (G8697), 1996 (G10506), 1999 (G11493)
Processed by: Katy Hill, Stephen Mielke, 2008
Repository: The University of Texas at Austin, Harry Ransom Center
Scope and Contents

Robert Lee Wolff, a professor of history at Harvard University, assembled a library of more than 18,000 volumes of Victorian fiction published in Britain between 1820 and 1910. The library consists of "triple deckers" (novels in three volumes), issues in monthly parts, yellowback and other reprint editions, and magazine appearances. Acquired by the Ransom Center in 1984, these published materials are listed in the University of Texas online library catalog and are available for viewing in the Harry Ransom Center reading room.

Along with Wolff's library of published materials, the Ransom Center acquired Wolff's collection of correspondence, manuscripts, proofs, review clippings, and other pre- and post-publication materials associated with particular Victorian-era authors and works. This collection, which also contains some of Wolff's own manuscripts and academic papers, is also available for viewing at the Ransom Center and is described in this preliminary inventory.

The Wolff Collection is arranged in five series: I. Materials Described in Wolff Bibliography, II. Materials Not Described in Wolff Bibliography, III. Book Withdrawals, IV. Mary Elizabeth Braddon, and V. Wolff Works and Research. The bulk of the material is located in Series I. and consists of original Victorian-era materials described in the five volume *Nineteenth-Century Fiction: A Bibliographical Catalogue Based on the Collection Formed by Robert Lee Wolff* (1981-1986). Series II. also contains Victorian-era materials, but these are not listed in the Wolff bibliography.

Series I. and II. materials are in alphabetical order by author. Materials from individual authors may be located in both Series I. and II., as well as in other series in the collection. The Series I. container list includes the unique number associated with each item's entry in the Wolff bibliography. The collection includes materials from major Victorian writers, such as Wilkie Collins, H. Rider Haggard, and George MacDonald, but also contains material from minor writers. Women authors are well represented, with materials from authors Anna Eliza Bray, Marie Corelli, and Marie Louise de la Ramée, who wrote under the pseudonym Ouida. Original drawings and prints from illustrators such as Hablot Knight Browne (known as Phiz), Harry French, John Leech, and Frederick H. Townsend are also present in the collection.

Series III. Book Withdrawals is the smallest series in the collection and, as its title indicates, contains materials such as letters or inserts removed from the Wolff Library books. It is in alphabetical order by author and arranged in two parts: items listed in the Wolff bibliography and items not listed.

Series IV. Mary Elizabeth Braddon contains materials similar in type to those in Series I. and II., but focuses solely on Braddon and contains original Braddon diaries, journals, photographs, drawings, and correspondence. Included in the correspondence are letters from Wilson Barrett, J. M. Barrie, Herbert Beerbohm Tree, Arthur Conan Doyle, Thomas Hardy, Henry Irving, Henry James, and Arthur W. Pinero. This series reflects Wolff's particular interest in Braddon and includes copies and transcripts of original Braddon material as well as Wolff's research, correspondence, and drafts related to his...

Wolff's other academic pursuits and writings are documented with drafts, research, and correspondence located in Series V. The bulk of this series consists of correspondence, invoices and catalogs from rare book dealers. Also present are correspondence, research files, and other materials related to several of Wolff's published works. Of special significance are Wolff's bibliographic note cards which provided the descriptive text used in Nineteenth-Century Fiction: A Bibliographical Catalogue Based on the Collection Formed by Robert Lee Wolff (1981-1986). The cards contain the typed text replicated in the published bibliography, but also contain extensive handwritten annotations by Wolff, which do not appear in the published work. Also of note in the series is a fan letter from Maurice Sendak describing Sendak's appreciation of Wolff's The Golden Key: A Study of the Fiction of George MacDonald and MacDonald's influence on Sendak's own work.

Related Material

### Series I. Materials Described in Wolff Bibliography

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<th>Author</th>
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Fraser, Patrick

Freeland, William

Frere, B.

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Gissing, Algernon

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Wolff, Robert Lee (1915-1980)

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Schreiner, Olive
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Shorthouse, Joseph Henry
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Sterry, J. Ashby
Stevenson, Mrs. R. L.
Tauchnitz
Tinsley
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Trollope, Frances
Ward, Mrs. Humphry
Warren, Samuel
Watts, Alaric A.
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Wood, Mrs. Henry
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Wolff, Robert Lee (1915-1980)

Unidentified correspondence and collage album  Container 24.7-8
Series III. Book Withdrawals

Described in Wolff bibliography

- Ainsworth, William Harrison [contains original illustrations by Hablot Knight Browne] (60a)- Fullerton, Lady Georgia (2370)  Container 25.1

- Fullerton, Lady Georgia (2371)- Peard, Frances Mary (5502)  Container 25.2

- Pigott, Mrs. Harriott (5564)- *Tinsley's Magazine* (7918)  Container 25.3

Not described in Wolff bibliography  Container 25.4
### Series IV. Mary Elizabeth Braddon

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Subseries B. Braddon Journals

"M. S. S. volume IV," March 1889

"M. S. S. volume V," August 1874- October 1884

Circa 18 May 1892

Circa 1892

Pre 1895

Pre 1909

Undated

Subseries C. Braddon Works

Listed in Wolff bibliography

Aurora Floyd (625f)

Aurora Floyd (625i)

The Good Hermione (648)

Joshua Haggard's Daughter (658)

Lady Audley's Secret (660m)

Lady Audley's Secret (660p)

Lady Audley's Secret (660u)

Mary (669; * two envelopes removed to oversize box 60)

Mohawks (672b)

Run to Earth (684)

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Wolff, Robert Lee (1915-1980)
Wolff, Robert Lee (1915-1980)

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*Carleton Newsletter*, 1972-1974
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Collins correspondence photoduplicates, undated  
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