

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE  
Melissa Cain; July 1985

I. DESCRIPTION

A. Purpose: To support teaching and research in American and British literature, rhetoric and composition, creative writing and English language studies. These programs are part of the English Department in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and include all levels of study from the B.A. through the Ph.D. degree. In addition to supporting the interests of the English Department, the collection serves the School of Humanities on a general basis, especially the Unit for Criticism, the Unit for Cinema Studies, and the Department of Comparative Literature.

B. History of Collection: Since the University Library first opened, a collection of materials relating to British and American literature has been in place. Over the years this collection has grown in size and stature, making it one of the largest and best in the United States today. As the collection grew, so did demands for service, and in 1911 the English Library, as a departmental unit, was established. Today the collections developed by the English Library include books on language, literature, rhetoric, and composition.

C. Estimate of Holdings: 700,000 volumes.

D. State, Regional, and National Importance: The University of Illinois Library's American literature collection is ranked among the first five universities in the country, especially for the 19th century. The English literature collection also ranks among the nation's leading collections in its field, with all periods, from the medieval forward, extensively covered, generally in first editions. The 16th and 17th century collections are superb, outranked by few, if any, other libraries. Particularly noteworthy are a number of special collections acquired by the Library: The Meine collection of American humor (excellent on Twain); the H.G. Wells collection; the Sandburg collection; the Merwin Archives; the Baldwin collection of Elizabethan literature; the Ingold Shakespeare collection; and the John Milton Collection. (See Rare Book & Special Collections Library Statement for descriptions of these special collections.)

E. Unit Responsible for Collecting: English Library.

F. Location of Materials: Of the approximately 700,000 volumes in the Library, about 30,000 of these are held in the English Library, with most of the remaining volumes housed in the Bookstacks. The Rare Book and Special Collections Library holds expensive and valuable material, as well as special collections.

G. Citations of Works Describing the Collection:

Downs, pp. 10, 62, 64-65, 66-67, 71, 139, 281, 285, 370-71.

Major, pp. 3-4, 9-10, 15-17, 24-25, 34-35, 37, 41-43, 46, 53.

Non Solus, Volumes 1-10, include articles on the English collection at Illinois.

Various exhibit catalogues available in the Rare Book and Special Collections Library describe materials used in special collection exhibits.

## II. GENERAL COLLECTION GUIDELINES

- A. Languages: Standard statement.
- B. Chronological Guidelines: No restrictions.
- C. Geographical Guidelines: United States, Great Britain, Canada, Australia and other Commonwealth nations.
- D. Treatment of Subject: Standard statement. The collection includes the following: works of fiction and non-fiction; poetry; critical studies of literary genres and figures; studies on critical theory; history of the English language; autobiographies and biographies of literary figures; materials relating to the expository and creative writing process; the history of literary movements or significant historical time periods in literary history; and materials relating to the teaching of English and composition. The English Library and the Modern Languages and Linguistics Library both collect works on critical theory and literary aesthetics, so duplication of materials in these libraries is inevitable and usually desirable. The Undergraduate Library's literature collection is a strong complement to the English Library, with special emphasis placed on critical works as well as on popular fiction. The Illini Union Browsing Room also collects works of popular literature. The Communications Library collects stylebooks and handbooks on writing technique which augment similar material acquired by the English Library.
- E. Types of Materials: Standard statement.
- F. Date of Publication: Standard statement. Regular retrospective collection development is undertaken.
- G. Place of Publication: No restrictions.

## III. COLLECTING RESPONSIBILITY BY SUBJECT SUBDIVISION WITH QUALIFICATIONS, LEVELS OF COLLECTING INTENSITY, AND ASSIGNMENTS

<u>SUBJECTS</u>	<u>ES</u>	<u>CL</u>	<u>DL</u>	<u>ASSIGNMENTS</u>
AMERICAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE				
Primary works	4	4	4	ENGLISH
Secondary works: history, criticism, genre studies	4	4	4	ENGLISH
W.S. Merwin	5	5	5	ENGLISH/RB&SCL
Carl Sandburg	5	5	5	ENGLISH/RB&SCL
ANGLO-IRISH LITERATURE	4	4	4	ENGLISH

<u>SUBJECTS</u>	<u>ES</u>	<u>CL</u>	<u>DL</u>	<u>ASSIGNMENTS</u>
<b>COMMONWEALTH LITERATURE</b>				
Australian	2	3	4	ENGLISH
Canadian	2	3	4	ENGLISH
Indian	3	3	4	SOUTH ASIA/ English
South African	3	3	4	AFRICA/English
<b>ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE</b>				
Medieval	4	4	4	ENGLISH
Renaissance	4	4	4	ENGLISH
Shakespeare	5	5	5	ENGLISH/RB&SCL
Seventeenth century	4	4	4	ENGLISH
Milton	5	5	5	ENGLISH/RB&SCL
Eighteenth century	4	4	4	ENGLISH
Romantic	4	4	4	ENGLISH
Victorian and Modern	4	4	4	ENGLISH
H.G. Wells	5	5	5	ENGLISH/RB&SCL
<b>ENGLISH TEACHING</b>	3	3	3	ENGLISH/ education
<b>LITERARY FOLKLORE</b>	4	4	4	ENGLISH/ comparative literature
<b>LITERARY THEORY AND AESTHETICS</b>	4	4	4	ENGLISH/ COMPARATIVE LITERATURE
<b>RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION</b>	3	3	4	ENGLISH

NOTE: RB&SCL means Rare Book and Special Collections Library