

JOHNMASEFIELD: A STUDY



Vikash kumar

M.Phil., Roll No. :150233; Session: 2015-16

University Department of ENGLISH, B.R.A. Bihar University, Muzaffarpur, India.

E-mail : oxford.vikashsir@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

In 1958, John Masefield made the observation that out of three hundred million readers of English, three read his work and four criticized it. In 1978, a later Poet Laureate named John Betjeman made the observation that "Sea-Fever" and "Cargoes" would be "remembered as long as the language lasts." In 1958, John Masefield made the observation that out of three hundred million readers of English, three read his work and four criticized it. These instances represent two perspectives during the collapse of a reputation for Masefield, who was once a best-selling author and a publishing sensation. During this time period,

Masefield's reputation was falling. He received accolades from the academic community as well as honors on a global scale. The downward trend may have reached its end as of today. An important character in the history of literature is only remembered now in old-fashioned poetry collections. Masefield's prolific productivity, Edwardian multiplicity, and success in the past all work against him now. His books are, for the most part, no longer in print, and academic circles pay him little mind. It was not necessary for it to occur. Masefield was a writer who, notably in the 1920s, made an effort to reinvent himself. However, in the process of

repressing (or trying to hide) his work, he committed a number of mistakes.

Keywords: Novels, Themes, Writing, Feminism

INTRODUCTION

In addition to this, he realised that he was unable to act since he was tied down by contracts and unable to purchase back early titles. Masefield was well aware that his self-perception ran counter to the preferences of his early publishers as well as the preferences of the general public. As a result, the author had to make compromises or give up some of his rights, and the effort he made to reinvent himself was unsuccessful. In the process of producing new works, he adhered to a plan that, in his opinion, was neither Edwardian nor Modernist. As a result, he evolved into a hybrid of intensely creative artist and popular balladeer. This combo is what's doing the most harm to his reputation right now. Masefield, who had already had a successful career, was given a second opportunity during the 1960s when the prevalent publishing culture sought to accept him. Now an elderly laureate, he continued his pattern of making poor choices by turning his back on the current populist market.

It is possible that Masefield's current position is not the consequence of literary success or failure; rather, it is the product of an inability to manage economic or publishing trends and, as a direct result of this incapacity, an inability to demand scholarly or general public recognition.

It is true that Masefield is an overlooked character, yet he may also be seen as a gateway into the publication history of popular literature throughout the 20th century. W.B. Yeats, Thomas Hardy, Philip Larkin, and A. Alvarez were all admirers of Thomas Hardy's and A. Alvarez's poetry. Both George Bernard Shaw and Graham Greene were enthusiastic in their admiration of his plays and books. ^ There were very few authors who lived throughout the 20th century who were first read during the late Victorian era and who passed away at the height of the nuclear cold war. He had seen the arrival of the railroads at the edge of his boyhood yard, and he had also memorialized the assassination of John F. Kennedy in rhyme at the time of its 50th anniversary. Masefield gives us a publishing backdrop or figure to compare in the twentieth century, and as a prolific author, he presents a paradigm for other authors to follow in the market for literature.

My introduction is broken up into three different parts. I will begin by providing a narrative history of Masefield's publishing career, and then I will focus on a number of topics that help place this history in its proper perspective. The fact that Masefield strove to re-create his creative identity illustrates that the author is constrained by previous commitments. An investigation of the function that his literary agent plays as a mediator between authors and publishers is presented in this debate. After that, the author is placed in a setting that is apart from the world of commerce as a result of Masefield's interest in private publishing. The guidance that Masefield received from other authors, most notably Shaw and Hardy, demonstrates that he sought counsel on the business side of his line of work. The writer is described as being in the process of writing or searching for a topic when there is a hint of a new chronology and an explanation of intentions that were abandoned. The economics of writing are discussed once a preliminary examination of Masefield's finances have been completed. Second, I will discuss the need for a new bibliography of Masefield and provide some insights into the benefits of contemporary computer technology. In this last section, I will describe my bibliographical process in more depth and explain its many steps.

Masefield was the son of George Masefield, an attorney, and his wife Caroline, who gave birth to him in the town of Ledbury in Herefordshire. When Masefield was six years old, his mother passed away while giving birth to his sister. After her death, he moved in with his aunt. After suffering a mental collapse, his father passed away not long after that. [source: missing citation] After receiving an unsatisfactory education at what is now known as Warwick School, formerly known as the King's School in Warwick, where he was a boarder between the years of 1888 and 1891, he left to join the crew of HMS Conway in order to prepare for a career at sea and to break his reading addiction, which his aunt did not think much of. He was on this ship for a number of years, and he discovered that he could pass a significant portion of his time by reading and writing. Masefield's enthusiasm for telling tales blossomed throughout his time spent on the Conway. While he was aboard the ship, he continued to read, listened to the tales that were told about the history of the sea, and came to the conclusion that he would one day become a writer and storyteller himself. In his book "New Chum," Masefield provides an account of his time spent living aboard the Conway. In the year 1894, Masefield embarked on the ship Gilcruix, which was going to Chile. His first journey gave him the opportunity to suffer motion sickness; nonetheless, the journal he kept of his adventures while sailing in terrible weather reveals that he had great pleasure in seeing flying fish, porpoises, and birds. During this journey, he saw an unique midnight rainbow, which was one of

the many breathtaking natural phenomena that left him in amazement. After arriving in Chile, he had sunstroke and had to be taken to the hospital. In the end, he made his way back to England, this time as a passenger on a steamer.

In 1895, Masefield embarked on a new voyage at sea, this time on a windjammer bound for New York City. However, the drive to become a writer and the futility of life as a sailor overpowered him, and he jumped ship at New York in order to travel around the countryside. While he was away, he wrote a few short stories and novels. After living on the streets for a number of months and doing a variety of odd jobs, he eventually made his way back to New York City and found employment as an assistant bartender there. In the weeks leading up to Christmas in 1895, he took the time to read "The Piper of Arll," a poem written by Duncan Campbell Scott and published in the December issue of *Truth*, a magazine published in New York. [2] In a letter that he sent to Scott ten years later, Masefield explained what the experience of reading that poem had meant to him: "I had never (up until that time) cared very much about poetry, but your poem affected me strongly, and set me on fire." Since that time, poetry has been the one significant influence in my life, and I owe all of my friends and the position I occupy today to the fact that I have such an appreciation for poetry.

Between the years 1895 and 1897, Masefield worked at the massive Alexander Smith carpet factory in Yonkers, New York. There, workers were required to put in long hours, and the working conditions were less than ideal. He consumed both contemporary and historical works of literature voraciously, purchasing up to 20 volumes every week. His reading at this period includes works by authors such as George du Maurier, Dumas, Thomas Browne, Hazlitt, Dickens, and Rudyard Kipling, as well as R. L. Stevenson. His interests at this time were varied. During this time period, Chaucer, along with Keats and Shelley, emerged as some of his most significant literary influences. In the year 1897, Masefield boarded a vessel as a passenger in order to make his way back to England.

Constance de la CheroisCrommelin was born on February 6, 1867, and passed away on February 18, 1960, in Rockport, County Antrim, Northern Ireland. She was a sister to Andrew Claude de la CheroisCrommelin. When Masefield was 23 years old, he met his future wife, Constance de la CheroisCrommelin, who was 35 years old and of Huguenot descent. They were married on June 23, 1903, at St. Mary, Bryanston Square. Despite the age gap between them, Constance was an excellent match for him since she had a background in mathematics and was educated in classics

as well as English literature. Judith, who was born Isabel Judith on April 28, 1904 in London and passed away in Sussex on March 1, 1988, and Lewis Crommelin, who was born in London in 1910 and was killed in action in Africa on May 29, 1942, were the couple's two children.

Masefield photographed by E. O. Hoppe in 1915

Masefield was already an established and well-respected writer when the 1920s began. Masefield became interested in beekeeping, goat herding, and poultry keeping when his family was fortunate to find a permanent home on Boar's Hill, a rather rural area located not too far from Oxford. He continued to enjoy great success, as shown by the fact that almost 80,000 copies of the first edition of his *Collected Poems* (1923) were purchased. *Reynard the Fox* (1920), a narrative poem written by Masefield, has been critically likened to the works of Geoffrey Chaucer. However, this comparison is not always to Masefield's credit. [9] After this came *Right Royal* and *King Cole*, both of which are poems that place an emphasis on the link between humans and their natural surroundings.

After *King Cole*, Masefield returned to writing novels and moved away from writing large poetry. Between the years 1924 and 1939, he published a total of 12 novels. These novels cover a wide range of topics, including tales of the sea (*The Bird of Dawning*, *Victorious Troy*), social novels about modern England (*The Sawbucks*, *The Square Peg*), and tales of an imaginary land in Central America (*Sard Harker*, *Dota*), as well as fantasies for children (*The Midnight Folk*, *The Box of Delights*). During the same time period, he penned a significant number of works for the stage. The majority of these were based on Christian themes, and Masefield was astounded to discover that there was a prohibition on the performance of plays based on biblical subjects. This prohibition dated back to the Reformation and had been revived a generation earlier to stop production of Oscar Wilde's *Salome*. However, a compromise was made, and in 1928, his play *The Coming of Christ* became the first drama since the Middle Ages to be produced in an English cathedral.

Encouraging the speaking of verse

In 1921, Masefield was honoured with both an honorary doctorate of literature from the University of Oxford and the right to deliver the Shakespeare Lecture at the British Academy. In 1923, he founded the Oxford Recitations, an annual competition with the objective of "discovering excellent speakers of poem and encouraging 'the lovely speaking of poetry'." The quantity of individuals who participated in the contest, the fact that the event encouraged the use of natural speech in

poetical recitations, and the amount of people who learned how to listen to poetry all contribute to the idea that Oxford Recitations was a successful event. In the same vein, Masefield participated in the establishment of the Scottish Association for the Speaking of Verse in the year 1924. Later on, he began to wonder if the events at Oxford should continue to be staged in the form of a competition, contemplating the possibility that they might be more successfully organised as a festival. However, he parted ways with the competitive aspect of the Oxford Recitations in 1929, which was the year that they were finally discontinued. On the other side, the Scottish Association for the Speaking of Verse continued to expand under the influence of related people like as Marion Angus and Hugh MacDiarmid, eventually becoming what is now known as the Poetry Association of Scotland.

Later years and death

After Robert Bridges passed away in 1930, there was a vacancy for the position of Poet Laureate. Masefield was nominated by King George V based on the advice of the Prime Minister at the time, Ramsay MacDonald. Masefield continued to serve in this capacity until his passing in 1967. Tennyson, also known as Lord Alfred, is the only person in history to have held this position for a longer amount of time. In a piece congratulating him on his new position, *The Times* said that "his poetry could touch to beauty the simple words of ordinary existence." Masefield took his role very seriously and as a result created a huge number of poems for royal events. These poems were then submitted to *The Times* in order to be published. The humility of Masefield was shown by the fact that he included a stamped and self-addressed envelope with each entry. This allowed for the poem to be returned in the event that it was deemed to be undesirable. Later on, he was given a commission to write a poem that would later be set to music by the Master of the King's Musick, Sir Edward Elgar, and performed at the unveiling of the Queen Alexandra Memorial by the King on June 8, 1932. The poem was titled "The Unveiling of the Queen Alexandra Memorial," and it was composed specifically for this occasion. The homage read as follows: "There have been so many genuine Princesses who have passed away.

After being appointed, Masefield received multiple honorary degrees and the Order of Merit from many British colleges. King George V also gave him the Order of Merit. In 1937, he was chosen to lead the Society of Authors in the role of President. Masefield was a proponent of the continuous growth of English literature and poetry. He initiated the practise of bestowing the Royal Medals

for Poetry on an annual basis. These medals are given to a poet under the age of 35 whose first or second published edition of poems receives the prize. Even though he was had to travel farther for his speaking engagements and go on tours that were often considerably longer, he managed to generate a considerable body of work over a broad range of genres. In addition to the techniques he had previously utilised, he now included autobiography in his work, which resulted in the production of *New Chum*, *In the Mill*, and *So Long to Learn*.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

My friend, who at the beginning of his career as a critic wrote usefully about Synge and the Irish dramatic movement, soon decided to abandon the contemporary field and to take up eighteenth century writers, for the simple reason that he felt safer in the more familiar territory. He wrote about Synge and the Irish dramatic movement in his early career as a critic. I don't dare accuse him of being too cautious; in fact, the creative sympathy he exhibits with these earlier persons seems to support his decision. I dare not accuse him of being overly cautious. To be sure, it is a great deal more challenging to actually see a living, moving scene (in which we ourselves are jittery actors, or stuttering prompters, or coerced scene-shifters), than it is to sit back in cosy armchairs and watch the unfolding of the pageant of the Past with whatever assistance we can conjure up from our imaginations. It is my assumption that the majority of authors consider present criticism to be of relatively low importance and, like to Browning's character Strafford, look to Time to do them justice.

Sidney Lanier was somewhat taken aback by what he referred to as "the timid solitudes" that his immediate detractors displayed when they "rarefy in one line all enthusiasm they may have distilled in another." He was under the impression that the majority of his detractors seemed "to be perpetually appeasing the yet-to-emerge ghosts of potential errors." When asked about his thoughts on a critical study of John Masefield that, as far as I can tell, had been sitting on his shelves for a number of months, the subject of this piece merely responded that he had not read the book in question. In spite of this, finding one's way through criticism is a process, just as it is in every other area of human endeavour. And I am not certain that the familiar Elizabethan Age, or the Restoration period, or the Romantic period, may not easily become too departmentalized, may not lose at least some aspects of the familiar that only the contemporary spirit could hope to feel as natural and necessary. This is something that I am not sure will not happen. To be sure, it is possible for us to be persuaded, by personal attraction and agreement, or the converse, to

overpraise or underpraise the politicians, the social reformers, and the poets of our own day; nonetheless, it is at least something to recognise them, to recount them, and to assess their intents. In addition, there are two more factors to take into account. The critical method of approaching literature cannot afford to disregard any expression, either in the past or in the present, of the creative spirit, even if it is admittedly difficult to attain an effective concentration in the latter scenario. And once again, essential pathfinding is somebody's job and may be a lot of fun on its own, despite the fact that it may seem to need a certain type of audacity that borders on foolhardiness.

PUBLISHING IN MASEFIELD

Masefield is an important character in the literary business and is symbolic of a lot of different publishing concerns. The year 1899 saw the publication of his first poem in a magazine, and the year 1967 saw the release of his last collection of poetry to be released during his lifetime. Since 1972, there have been publications of posthumous works. Masefield was regarded as one (of three) 'firm favourites' with the book buying public of 1912, according to Joseph McAleer's research on Popular Reading and Publishing in Britain 1914-1950. A cultural historical assessment of Masefield would, I suggest, construct a major figure with a large influence and a popular readership that caused his works to out-sell many of his contemporaries. Nevertheless, as people's preferences and technological capabilities evolved, so did Masefield's demands on the public awareness.

A NARRATIVE HISTORY

When John Masefield came back to England from the United States in July 1897, he made a solemn commitment "to become a writer come what may." At the time, he saw his immediate future in journalism and making literary contributions to journals.

His first poem to be published was in June 1899 in *The Outlook*, and at this time, W.B. Yeats served as his major tutor. During this time, he also through a phase of growth. Journalism and periodical contributions provided Masefield with a living during the following decade, and beyond. The traditional biographical view that Masefield's first published volume of poetry in 1902 marked his arrival on the literary scene is incorrect; journalism was Masefield's primary source of income during this time. Masefield was a member of the permanent staff of *The Manchester*

Guardian for a period of time and during that time he produced an incredible amount of book reviews. His work was published in *The Speaker* on a consistent basis. It was not until September 1905 that a book was released that did not owe its birth to content previously published in a medium that was less permanent than magazines or newspapers. In point of fact, Masefield placed such a high level of significance on these types of publications. Each of the nine poems that were printed in *The English Review* between June 1911 and September 1914, including four important narrative poems, was only published in a book by Masefield following the periodical publication of the poem.

MASEFIELD AND RE-INVENTION

The conception of Masefield that is held by the majority of people is that he was a writer whose lengthy career resulted in the publication of a large number of successful titles, many of which were reprinted on a regular basis. However, Masefield's own reflections on how he evolved as a writer have been left out of this account. In a letter that he sent to Henry W. Nevinson in the 1920s, Masefield expressed his agreement with one of William Rothenstein's viewpoints, which was as follows: Rothenstein was known for making insightful comments, such as "A man's only adversary is his early work." (John Masefield, in a letter to H.W. Nevinson, dated October 31, 1928) After achieving financial success in the 1920s, Masefield now felt in a position to look back on his earlier work and evaluate it critically for the first time. His judgements were quite damning in their assessment. The self-criticism was written in the style of banal couplets and included in copies of early titles that were assumed to have been dedicated to the Lamont family in the late 1920s. Couplets that rhyme give the impression that the works are not up to the level of quality necessary for knowledgeable assessment. Margaret Masefield wrote the following in one of the copies of *Captain* that she owned: "Forget this narrative, forget it, merely say He did it wearily on a dreary day."

In contrast to J.M. Dent, Grant Richards did not readily comply with the author's whims and desires. After achieving both financial success and extensive critical acclaim, by the 1920s, Masefield was worried about the effect that some of his earlier work may have on the reputation that he had worked so diligently to establish. He was forced to sell numerous titles at a loss due to previous publication obligations, but he did so nevertheless. This fact alone gives detail in Masefield's bibliography; for example, the author did not want reproductions of *Captain Margaret*

and Multitude and Solitude, and fresh material indicates that multiple efforts were made to conceal them. A detailed history reveals the efforts that Masefield made to exert control over his early work. In a letter that he sent to G.H. Thring, Masefield stated, "I do not know how Mr. Richards' business stands, nor whether he would be disposed to deal, but there are several books of mine on his list which I would be quite glad to get from him if it could be arranged." This letter was written in the midst of rumours that Grant Richards' company would file for bankruptcy once again. Would you be able to tell me in complete confidence whether or not the company is believed to be close to another collapse and whether or not, in such a scenario, the Society could bargain on my behalf? (From a letter sent by John Masefield to G.H. Thring on January 13, 1924).

THE LITERARY AGENT

At the tail end of the nineteenth century, literary agencies first began to see commercial expansion. During the early 20th century, the role experienced substantial growth (and debate about it), despite the fact that it was often thought of as a parasite on an author and frequently seen as a booster and vital ally against the publishing profession. H.G. Wells, for example, led an assault against the "growing annoyance of agents"® in 1913 (inside the letter pages of *The Author*), and then, in 1926, he complimented the company of A.P. Watt for its "huge and rising worth." Masefield was represented by the Literary Agency of London at a period when people had a negative perception of the writing industry (and C.F. Cazenove in particular). The available evidence reveals that the approximate periods for the collaboration were from 1906 to some time between 1914 and 1915. This is the time period in which Masefield is thought to have made his appearance on the literary scene. The ad firm itself was established in 1899, and it was acquired by another company in 1916. After doing a cursory investigation of the working relationship that existed between Masefield and Cazenove, one may deduce that Cazenove was an important contributor to the development of Masefield's writing and publishing career. There are letters, or copies of letters, from Masefield to Cazenove located in the University of Arizona Library, Harvard University Library, New York Public Library, the State University of New York Library, Columbia University Library, Indiana University (Lilly Library), the British Library, the Bodleian Library, and the Wigan Record Office. Reconstructing the history of Masefield and his literary agent is made more difficult by the dispersed nature of the material.

There is a good chance that Masefield made his initial approach to Cazenove in the year 1906. In his book, Arthur Ransome mentions that the encounter may have taken place as a consequence of a personal suggestion, or at the very least, acquaintance: At the end of Henrietta Street that was closest to Covent Garden were a number of literary agencies. My first buddy among them was C.F. Cazenove, and I brought up his name in conversation with Masefield, who eventually hired him as his agent. I wasn't much use to any agency, and they weren't much use to me, so they couldn't really do anything for me.

PRIVATE PUBLICATIONS AND PRESSES

Not just for the written works they had produced, but also for the ways in which they had spread their literature, William Blake and William Morris maintained a place of great regard in Masefield's estimation. Both authors, by printing their own writings, created products that have artistic value in addition to their literary value; this is because there is an aesthetic impulse behind the creation of their works. Masefield expresses his enthusiasm for Blake throughout his work by mentioning the etching, printing, and colouring of Blake's prophetic books. It is clear that Masefield is a fan of Blake. In addition to his close friendships with Charles and Janet Ashbee (of The Essex House Press) and C.H.O. Daniel of the Daniel Press, Masefield had a strong personal interest in private presses. In 1902, Elizabeth C. Yeats established the Dun Emer Press, which would eventually become the Cuala Press. Therefore, a best-selling author used both private publishing and private presses in his or her work. When analysing Masefield's idea of audience and determining appropriate platforms for the dissemination of content, this particular facet is of utmost significance.

The Cuala Press was where Masefield made his first legitimate foray into the world of private publishing. In June of 1915, that press in Ireland published John M. Synge's work there (Masefield had previously contributed the entry on the writer to the Dictionary of National Biography). The subject matter and the tastes of the Cuala in Ireland were completely complementary, although it is possible that some constraints (either in printing or just desirability) were imposed throughout mainland Britain because of the war.

ADVICE FROM OTHERS

After taking into account Masefield and his publishers (both commercial and private), in addition to Masefield and his literary agency, a further significant background should be discussed. This context relates to Masefield's contemporaries and their influence on his writing. Masefield got queries from writers seeking advice on how to improve their work and how to have it published when he was Poet Laureate as well as previously. Masefield provided assistance to J.M. Synge in getting his work published, and Judith Masefield claims that her father was partially responsible for Beatrix Potter's standing as a published author. Evidence that Masefield sought and received counsel from other people of his day is, nevertheless, of particular relevance. I will provide two instances and explain them shortly.

On July 27, 1907, George Bernard Shaw sent a letter of condolence to Masefield. In the letter, Shaw tried to console Masefield after a poor performance of *The Campden Wonder*. After complimenting the play in and of itself ('...there is nothing in all writing like the scene before the execution'), he then provides specific recommendations for publishing by asking whether or not the C.W. has been published. In that case, you should put it on wait until you have a few more plays to go along with it, and then you should create a prologue as I do. When it comes to six shillings, the bookbuyer can only afford it on the condition that the book lasts him (and probably his family) a fairish time. This is because plays do not circulate widely enough as of yet to make really cheap editions commercially practicable. The reason for this is because plays do not circulate widely enough as of yet to make really cheap editions commercially practicable. If he has to purchase a new book the next day, then he will spend more money than he has coming in. Quantity is the key to the success of my six shilling volumes of plays, which I sell. Publish the C.W. on its own, and the purchaser, who will constantly be wondering, "How long will it last?", will set it down mournfully in the store and instead purchase a book written by Mrs. Humphrey Ward.

MASEFIELD'S CANON - A NEW CHRONOLOGY

The business, manoeuvres, and liabilities of writing in the twentieth century have been the subject of much research using original sources, which has produced a wealth of new information. It is possible that the only way this information may be accessible and analysed is via the history of the book as a discipline and the archives of the remaining publishing houses. In this section, I would want to discuss two distinct aspects: first, the chronological order of works that were produced up to the year 1911, and second, discarded ideas and proposals made by publishers that were never

put into print. In light of them, we may discern an author who is concerned with authorship and who is more than just a writer who has a canon of published works. Research of Masefield's manuscripts has uncovered dates that indicate when he began new projects and dates that occurred while the work was in progress. In light of the newly discovered evidence, which is just in its preliminary stages at this point, a new chronology is starting to take shape, as will be described in more detail below. For the sake of illustration, I will focus here on the early era all the way up to 1911. ^{^^^} A new chronology sheds light on the gestation periods of a great number of works for the very first time. The evidence that has been given comes from a wide variety of various sorts of places. They vary from the most innocuous ideas of new work to definitive agreements with publishers, and they may be as casual as remarks made to personal friends or as formal as commercial conversations with publishers. The chronology should thus be seen as a fluid framework, and it is extremely probable that significant alteration will occur as a consequence of evidence that has not yet been discovered.

MASEFIELD'S FINANCES

In 1950, John Betjeman asserted that Masefield was the first poet since Tennyson to earn a living out of poetry. Betjeman made this statement. At the height of his popularity, Masefield commanded large payments; for example, in June 1930 the New York *Cosmopolitan* magazine paid £2,000 for the serialisation rights of *The Wanderer*. A cursory examination suggests that Masefield's financial success was built upon his prodigious output and, especially in the beginning, upon work for periodicals. He left a total of £92,404 gross when he passed away in 1967. In fact, Masefield was deemed to have been financially successful in later life. Masefield was forced into homelessness after returning to England from the United States in 1897 with just six pounds in his possession. He was eventually able to find work as a junior bank clerk for one pound per week. After that, he moved, which resulted in a raise in compensation; nonetheless, by the summer of 1901, he had made the decision to begin a career as a freelance writer. The beginning of 1902 finds Masefield contributing to *The Speaker* on a regular basis, but finances were evidently a source of concern to family and friends (his sister Ethel sent £25 while Binyon arranged for Masefield's assistance on his Keats edition and helped secure a temporary position working on the Wolverhampton Art Exhibition). Babington Smith notes that Masefield determined he would need to earn £75 a year in order to survive. Because of his commitment to Constance de la Cherois

Crommelin, whom he had just met at the tail end of 1901, Masefield was compelled to evaluate the state of his finances. Masefield discussed his impending marriage in a letter that he sent to Mrs. Jack Yeats. In the letter, he said, "I am now going to pound out work like a barrel-organ..." Throughout the month of July, I will do my best to accompany her to the parsonage. Sadly, the amount of money at stake is the primary consideration at this point.

Masefield was motivated to pursue a career in journalism after learning from a friend who worked for *The Speaker* that he could earn between \$250 and \$300 annually through journalism and that the publication of the occasional book could bring that total up to \$400. As a result, Masefield committed himself to the field and, in 1903, gained a position on *The Speaker*. Journalism was going to be the first pillar of Masefield's income, initially with *The Speaker* and subsequently with the *Manchester Guardian*. This was going to be the case all throughout Masefield's career. Given the vast number of book reviews he wrote, one might deduce that this was a significant source of money for him (302 individual book reviews have been traced between August 1903 and December 1911 in the *Manchester Guardian* alone and there are likely to be a similar number in the *Daily News*). Unfortunately, if archives for journals still exist, they do not give very much information about profits. The case of *The Times Literary Supplement* stands out as an exception to this rule. Masefield received the following salaries between June 1904 and June 1905: £3.18.0, £3.0.0, and £1.17.0. It seems likely that these payments are connected to the first three book reviews that Masefield wrote for that publication. (Despite the fact that published reviews in *The Times Literary Supplement* are anonymous, authorship can be confirmed by contemporary marked-up copies held in *The Times* archives.) Using these figures (an average of £2.18.2 per review), Masefield would have needed to have reviewed 86 books each year in order to produce an income of £250; however, these figures are problematic. There is a possibility that the payments were not solely for book reviews; different periodicals would have offered different rates of pay (the income from *A Broad Sheet* and *A Broadside* must have been minimal, if any at all), and Masefield contributed a great number of articles, poems, and book reviews in addition to other things. Due to the absence of concrete numbers, we are forced to rely on Masefield's biographer to summarize his financial situation in late 1903 (taking note of her descriptive expressions such as "clutching" and "pushed"): Being forced to depend on his wife's salary, he drove himself ruthlessly. He churned out articles for the *Speaker* and 64 the *Manchester Guardian* (especially narratives based on his experiences at sea and *I'm America*), while at the same time contributing

to the Daily News and various other newspapers and magazines. He was grasping at anything he could in the way of journalism. Additionally, he reviewed an incredible quantity of books, the most of which were novels. In a letter that was sent around this time, he said that he had received 'a page of evaluating 20 books weekly.' In other letters, he made reference to '24 volumes to review at once.' and 'nearly 80 books to review.'

JOHN MASEFIELD AND THE INTERNET: A REVISED BIBLIOGRAPHY

The study of books in their material form gives birth to the kind of bibliography that is traditionally written and published. The medium that transports text evolves into an essential item in its own right, separate and apart from the information it conveys. Our society believes that books are valuable items and treats them as such. Books are seen as having holy worth, most often because they contain religious content. The compilation of a bibliography is often considered the highest form of respect for the work. This is connected to the reverence of words; the carrier may provide assistance to people who seek to go behind the physical codex in order to face the text, the author, the author's intentions, an alternative textual condition, or any number of other agendas. The gap between the author and the audience is typically maintained through a succession of intermediaries, which may include publishers, economists, distributors, printing technology, and books. In light of this, the provision of a bibliography in an electronic and computerised form is an incongruous aberration. It is to worship a thing while at the same time rejecting that object.

The concept that the printed book is on its way out has been grossly overstated, yet there are certain aspects of electronic text that the conventional book cannot replicate. Hypertext, an abundance of illustrative material, the opportunity to compare different things, and other features all show that electronic text is well equipped to take the place of conventionally written bibliographies. If we take the most basic definition of a bibliography, which is just a list, then the construction of an intelligent list that includes expandable elements is made possible by the use of electronic text. The text ends up being layered with several degrees of investigation, and there are virtually an unlimited amount of different ways in which it may be read and studied. A bibliography does not need to only transcribe a titlepage anymore; instead, it might offer a picture of the titlepage from one of the copies that was examined. It is not necessary to only mention a textual state; rather, it is possible to show it alongside other states (with extra freedoms of comparison). The age of information glut has arrived, and when dealing with a prolific author, a comprehensive

bibliography may be achievable only via the means of electronic publishing. Therefore, a bibliography presented in an electronic format is a celebration of the book, but in its very existence, it implies that it will replace the book in at least one form. In 1952, L.A.G. Strong referred to Masefield as "a prolific writer," and the most notable quality of Masefield's bibliography is its breadth. A conservative enumeration of Masefield's works, which includes 46 volumes of poetry or verse plays, 21 novels, 8 prose plays, and over 30 volumes of other prose, does not take into account the immense amount of material that Masefield contributed to journals and to the work of others (introductions and prefaces, for example). We find more evidence of a prolific production in the manuscripts, particularly in the letters that he wrote. For instance, he wrote over 2000 letters to Florence and Thomas Lamont, and he wrote over 1000 letters to Audrey Napier-Smith. Because of this, any bibliographical endeavour that seeks to incorporate both Masefield's published and unpublished work not only needs support from computer technology, but also may be seen as only being feasible with the use of computer technology.

CONCLUSION

In an article he wrote on W.H. Auden, B.C. Bloomfield made the observation that "bibliography, aside from its legitimate job, may also furnish data for the literary and textual critic." The purposes and functions of bibliographies are quite diverse, and a bibliography devoted to a single author ought to provide a well-informed position from which all subsequent work may get started. According to Handley-Taylor, "a bibliography very seldom becomes the subject of a headline, but... it does draw the perpetual footnote..." Therefore, bibliographies are enabling, and the study of Masefield calls for the greatest number of things that may be considered enabling. When it comes to individual writers, there is probably a hierarchy of authors, with the most well-known authors at the top and the least well-known authors at the bottom. For example, John Milton is not the same as John Todhunter. However, it would be a mistake to impose more labels on the same table as the previous ones. Despite the fact that there could be a lot of parallels, I believe that there need to be a separate table for the 'literary quality' of an author, the 'commercial power' of a writer, or any other aspect that might come into play. Each one is unique and may be hard to describe precisely; for example, how can one judge the "greatness" of a writer when there are so many other aspects to take into consideration? Is Shakespeare really that much more superior than Marlowe? Or, does what we think of Shakespeare change because of the "Shakespeare business," which includes the theatre, the movie theatre, the bookstore, and the tourist trade? In a league table with

the authors who have sold the most copies of their books at the top and the writers whose works are no longer in print at the bottom (or the renowned at one end and the great unread unknowns at the other), there is a middle ground. Between John Milton and John Todhunter is John Masefield. Because of how academic, commercial, and social forces have reacted, avoided, and coexisted with one another, he is positioned in the centre of everything.

REFERENCES

1. L.A.G. Strongs John Masefield, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1952, p.7.
2. Evidence within the archives of Sidgwick and Jackson suggests that the bibliographical listing was compiled by Rupert Hart-Davis (see Bodleian Library, MSS.Sidgwick and Jackson.228, f.178).
3. British Library, Department of Manuscripts, Add.Mss.56605, ff. 142-43.
4. G. Thomas Tanselle, Literature and Artifacts, The Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va., 1998.
5. G. Thomas Tanselle stated in reply to my enquiries that ‘the phenomenon ... [of] signatures that do not match the actual gatherings is a fairly common one in American books of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries’.
6. G. Thomas Tanselle, ‘A System of Color Identification for Bibliographical Description’, ed. Fredson Bowers, Studies in Bibliography XX, 1967, pp.203-234
7. Philip W. Errington, John Masefield's Laureateship Verse Published In The Times - A Chronological Listing, The John Masefield Society, Ledbury, 1995.
8. Private Collection (Rosemary Magnus).
9. Constance Babington Smith., John Masefield - A Life, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1978, p.88. Ann Saddlemyer gives the range October 1904 to March 1905 for Masefield's responsibility over the column (see The Collected Letters of John Millington Synge, ed. Ann Saddlemyer, two volumes. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1983-1984, volume one, p.97).
10. The BBC began as a commercial company: The British Broadcasting Company. After four years of existence it became The British Broadcasting Corporation in December 1926.
11. The poem, simply entitled ‘Ossian’, was published within The Bluebells and other Verse in 1961.
12. Private Collection (Rosemary Magnus).

13. B.C. Bloomfield, W.H. Auden - A Bibliography. The Early Years through 1955^
Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia, University Press of Virginia,
Charlottesville, Va., 1964, p.xv.
14. Masefield's first published poem ('Nicias Moriturus') was published in The Outlook on 3
June 1899. The volume In Glad Thanksgiving was published by Heinemann on 13 March
1967.
15. The Twenty-Five Days was published by Heinemann in October 1972.
16. Joseph McAleer, Popular Reading and Publishing in Britain 1914-1930^ Clarendon Press,
Oxford, 1992, pp.33-34.
17. Archives of Grant Richards (Chadwyck-Healy microfilm, A16, f.256)