

PUBLICATION AND THE WRITER'S CRAFT

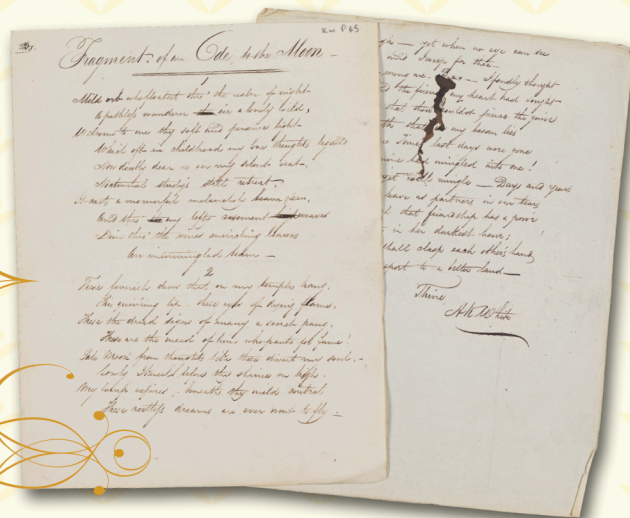
COLLECTED
WORDS



from the Literary Collections at the University of Nottingham

"We cannot hold out to you any hopes of publication, on the strength of these chapters as they stand. I am sorry to be so discouraging: but it is only fair to tell you this before you get too deep into the book."

Extract from a rejection letter written by Cecil Day Lewis of publishers Chatto and Windus, 1954
Madge Hales Collection MH 8/1/24



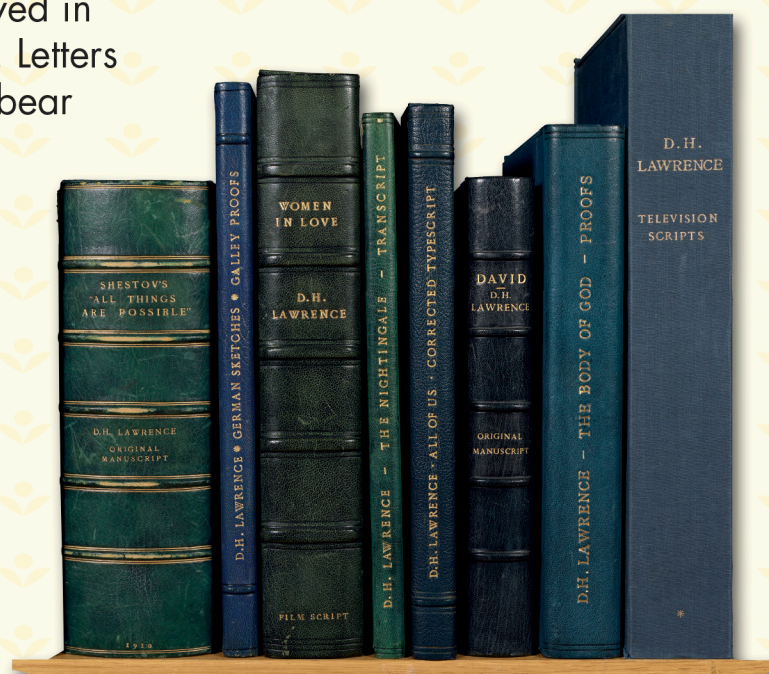
A selection of manuscript poems in the hand of Henry Kirke White, showing revisions.
Kirke White Collection Kw P

The archives of writers are particularly rich sources of evidence of their working lives and the effort involved in attempting to get published. Letters exchanged with publishers bear

witness to the years of rejection that some had to endure before their work was accepted. Even after a deal had been secured, a lot of effort was required to steer their work successfully through the publication process.

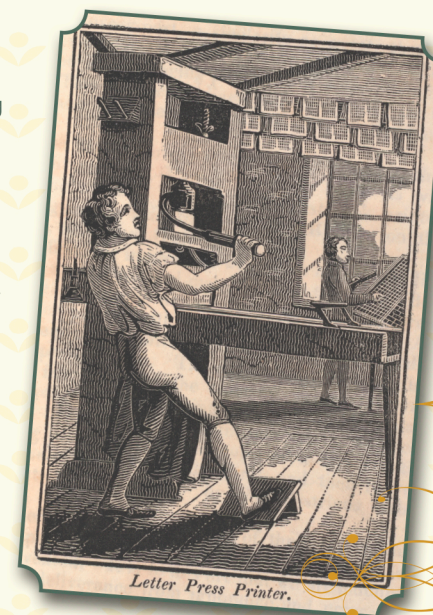
Their archives often contain initial handwritten drafts showing the writer's revisions, and later proof copies (typescript versions produced from the writer's manuscripts) which had to be checked and rechecked before printing could begin. Such drafts and proofs are now much prized by scholars who pore over them to find clues about the writer's thought processes as their work developed.

The DH Lawrence archive collection features manuscripts, typescripts and proofs.
DH Lawrence Collection La Z



Correspondence with fellow writers or trusted friends reveals the way that authors would alter their work in response to feedback and constructive criticism. Scrapbooks and files full of reviews show how the writers valued the opinions of reviewers and critics, who could make or break the success of a book and thus have a material impact on the writer's fortunes. It is also clear from their archives that some writers were active members of vibrant literary circles, with a few editing their own literary publications which enabled them to support themselves and assist their literary friends.

This exhibition showcases material from the archives of a selection of Nottinghamshire writers, but the University also holds papers relating to Jack Hilton, Colin Wilson, Catherine Carswell, Edith Sitwell and Coventry Patmore, as well as correspondence from major literary figures such as Percy Shelley, Maria Edgeworth, Caroline Norton, and Amelia Opie.



Engraving entitled 'Letter press printer'.
From Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (Great Britain), *The book of English trades and library of the useful arts: with seventy engravings* (London, 1821)
Briggs Collection LT210.T/B6



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