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Front cover: item 2

In the TLS [July 22 2016], Pamela Clemit reviewed a posthumously published work by Marilyn Butler (1937-2014, the first woman King Edward VII Professor of English Literature at Cambridge, before being appointed Rector of Exeter College, Oxford). The book was entitled, *Mapping Mythologies. Countercurrents in eighteenth-century British poetry and cultural history*, CUP, 2015. In the review, Clemit writes, “Butler’s account of the editor and ballad-collector Joseph Ritson . . . is a tour de force.”

In *Mapping Mythologies*, Butler discusses how succeeding generations have regarded him, but “it gives a more useful insight into Ritson if we accept him as a historian of culture, a shrewd if hardly disinterested commentator of its sociology in his own day and a learned, insightful historian of its transmission from pre-literate times to his own age of emergent mass culture and mass literacy,” [p. 145], “Many in his own generation and the next venerated him for his editorial rigour. He has not had his deserts from posterity – the price to be paid for making the later academic profession uncomfortable.” [p. 147], “He did for literary history what Paine, Cobbett and Spence in the next generation did for political commentary, and Horne Tooke and Cobbet for grammar.” [p. 140].

Joseph Ritson (1752-1803) was born at Stockton-on-Tees, co. Durham. Aged seventeen, he was indentured to a local solicitor before his articles were transferred to Ralph Bradley, a prominent local lawyer who specialized in conveyancing. It is speculated that this area of the law both suited Ritson and was probably the origin of his antiquarian interests. In 1773 he made a walking tour to Edinburgh, dividing his time between the secondhand bookshops, sightseeing, and the Advocates Library. Marriage to Catherine Masterman was reported in the *Newcastle Chronicle* in June, 1774. What happened to his wife is unreported, but he moved to London alone, and possibly through family connections on his wife’s side took up a position managing the conveyancing for Masterman and Lloyd, at Gray’s Inn, where, in 1780, he took chambers of his own and became a conveyancer in his own right. In 1784 he leased from Masterman the position of bailiff of the Savoy, and, having enrolled as a student at Gray’s Inn, was called to the bar in 1789. Thereafter, with his literary endeavours under way, Ritson’s legal career plateaued.

Politically, Ritson was a radical, and after a visit to Paris in 1791 embraced republicanism, as testified to by his friend William Godwin. In this light, perhaps, should be seen Ritson’s tendency not to put his name to his works, and the lack of obsequious dedication pages in his books, the absence of which tells us much, and was in distinct counterpoint to the prevailing fashion.

Religiously, he was said to be inclined towards atheism. Psychologically, much has been made of his irascible attacks on men publishing in the same fields as he, and his final bout of mental instability in 1803, leading up to his death, and the well-known incident in which he barricaded himself into his chambers in Gray’s Inn, would admit nobody, and set fire to some of his manuscripts. His sister had suffered from mental illness at an early age, and it was her son, Joseph Frank, who became Ritson’s sole heir, legatee, and posthumous editor. What may be born in mind is his fastidious championing of original and unaltered historical texts, in which respect he was ahead of his time, as might be expected of one with a forensic legal training. Clearly it was his great wish to bring into print the ancient texts and oral versions, properly and assiduously inspected, collected, and collated. To this end he found appropriate and typographically high-end printers and publishers, such as William Bulmer, and some of his works were illustrated by those who, to this day, have a keen following, such as Fuseli, Blake, Heath, Stothard, and the Bewicks. Ritson struggled financially to bring his works to fruit, and in the early 1800’s was forced to sell a large portion of his library and some inherited property. His great wish to edit and publish the

works of Shakespeare - boldly announced in an advertisement at the back of *Remarks, Critical and Illustrative, on the Text and Notes of the Last Edition of Shakespeare*, 1783, [see item 4] - was never to be. Ritson's main literary labours focused on three distinct areas, consequently weighted with his barbed criticisms of those held by the literary establishment to be the leading proponents of them, i.e.: the literature of romance, and Thomas Warton; early popular poetry, and Bishop Percy; Shakespeare, and the group of eighteenth-century editors which included Johnson, Steevens, Read, and Malone. Although Ritson severely and consistently aggravated many in the literary establishment with his exposure of "the inadequacy of taste as against exact method and detailed scholarly knowledge," (Butler, p. 103), he was not without friends; Sir Walter Scott was one, Francis Grose another, as was William Godwin who wrote a sympathetic obituary which appeared in the *Monthly Magazine*, November, 1803. In compiling the following catalogue we have also referred to the indispensable Bronson (Bertrand H.) *Joseph Ritson, Scholar at Arms*, 2 vols, UCA Berkeley, 1938; and Carpenter (Kevin, editor:) *Robin Hood*, Oldenburg, 1995



Item 16

to Mr Allan  
(89)

Stockton 4<sup>th</sup> Oct: 1770

Sir!

By your Permission I send you the inclosed Papers which I am sorry to think are hardly consequential enough to merit your Attention. — I have also inclosed a Book which, if you have not seen, may perhaps afford you some Amusement in reading. — In the Notes & Appendix you will find several particulars relating this County not generally known. — I am sorry I had it not in my power to send a Copy of the Endowment Deed of Greattham Alms-house. Mr Bradley is afraid that Mr. Walhead (who is it seems remarkably jealous of his Consequence) might take Umbrage at not being consulted on this Occasion & as Mr. B. would ~~not~~ wish to avoid ~~any~~ every Suspicion of treating him slightly he desires ~~you~~ you to excuse his Breach of Promise till Mr. W's Permission be obtained (which ~~could~~ <sup>the</sup> Imagines might be easily done by Mr. Christoph or any other ~~gentleman~~ gentleman of your Acquaintance at Durham) when Mr. B. wd. be happy in sending a Copy of the Deed. —

If I can be of the least Service to you in taking any Inscritions in the neighbouring Churches I beg to be favoured with a Knowledge of your Wants & shall take a particular Pleasure in being able to remove them.

I am Sir  
with the greatest Respect  
Your obliged humble servant  
Ritson

1. RITSON (Joseph) [Autograph letter] Stockton 4th October 1775

£1,650

1 page, pasted to an album leaf

To George Allan (1736-1800), antiquarian and topographer, of Darlington. A very early and, so far as our researches have allowed, unpublished letter by Ritson, but already evincing his interests and temperament. The earliest in *The Letters* [item 14] for example, is dated 26<sup>th</sup> August, 1776.

2. [RITSON (Joseph)] a fine caricature by J.S[ayers]., [London] Published by H[annah].  
Humphrey 22nd March 1803 £650

*etching & aquatint, 273 x 209mm. [P]*

[see front cover] BM Cat. 10171. "No title. Ritson stands at a desk in profile to the l., writing in a large book, both pages headed 'Common Place'. His finger- and toe-nails are talons; he dips his pen in an ink-stand inscribed 'Gall', and has written: 'Moses an Impostor the prophets old Cloaths Men of Judæa Warburton a fool Dr Percy a Liar Warton an infamous Liar a pipeer [Ritson adopted a system of spelling chiefly characterized by a duplication of the letter e. 'D.N.B.'] better than a parson'. He wears a tightly buttoned overcoat and a top-hat; his toes project through broken shoes. From his pocket projects a pamphlet: 'The Atheist's pocket Companion.' He stands on a slab of (damaged) papers headed 'Dr Percy's Antient Balla[ds]'. [At] his feet is a large open book; on one page is a half length portrait of Thomas Warton stabbed through with a knife and fork; on the other, 'History of English Poetry'.

The room is filled with heavy folio volumes and vegetable products; there is a small window with cracked panes. A cow (head only visible) munches at a basket of large leaves beside a paper: 'Bill of Fare \ Nettle Soup \ Sour Crout \ Horse Beans \ Onions Leeks'. On a top shelf an emaciated cat, heavily chained, strains in vain towards two rats who nibble a bunch of candles; beside it is an open book: 'Abstinence from animal Food a moral duty'. Below, 'The Bible' slants across a gap in the book-shelf labelled 'Old Romances'. On Ritson's desk (l.) is a pile of books on which squats a frog; on it vegetables are heaped. Below the design:

'Impiger iracundus, inexorabilis acer [Horace, 'Ars Poetica', 121]

Βλαγγαροδος ενροριλος Γρανιεροσση macer

Fierce meagre pale no Commentator's friend. Purs. Lit. Let his Portion be with the Beasts in the Grass of the Earth Let his heart be changed from Man's and let a Beasts heart be given unto him And he was driven from Men and did eat Grass till his hairs were grown as Eagles feathers and his Nails like Birds Claws - 4th Ch Daniel' . . ."

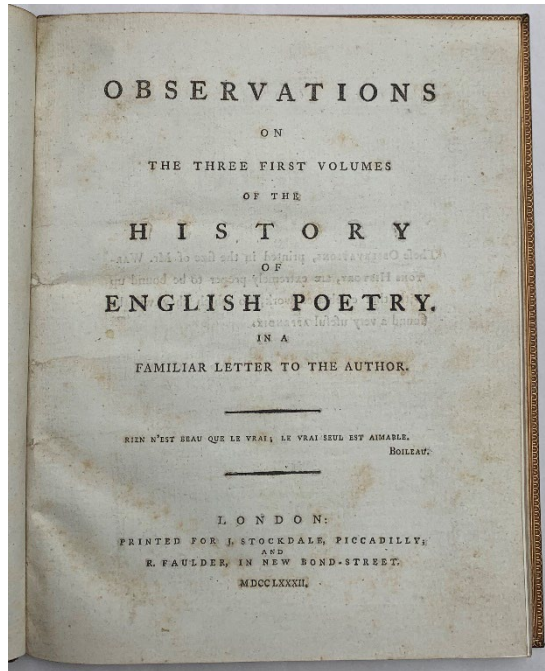
[Curator's comment:] (Description and comment from M. Dorothy George, 'Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires in the British Museum', VIII, 1947):

The scene must represent his chambers in Gray's Inn . . . Sayers' figure was copied for the only two portraits of Ritson, three-quarter length and half length."

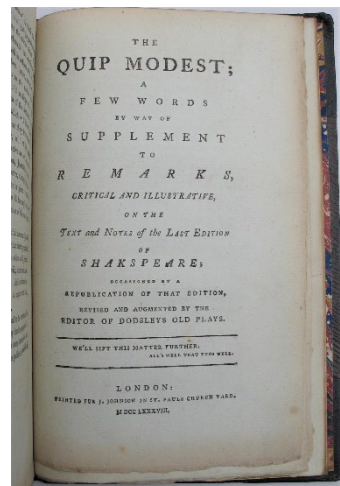
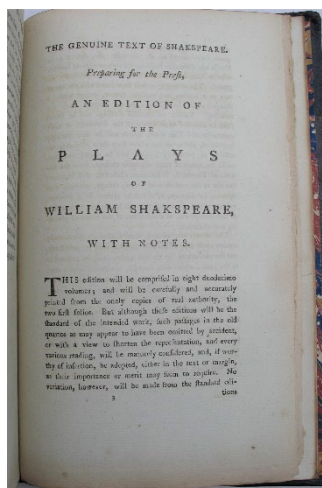
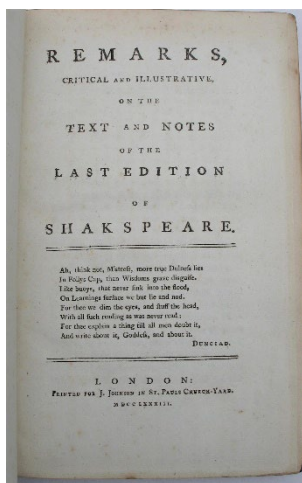
3. [RITSON (Joseph)] Observations on the First Three Volumes of the History of English Poetry in a Familiar Letter to the Author, London, Printed for J. Stockdale, Piccadilly, and R. Faulder in New Bond-Street, 1782 £600

4to, [2], 49 (1), fine full later calf by Hayday, spine richly gilt, black label lettered in gilt, comb-marbled end-papers, a.e.g., William Brown, Edinburgh, bookseller's label to f.f.e.p.,

Bronson I 6. First Edition. Fine copy. Verso the title we have "These Observations, printed in the size of Mr. Warburton's History, are extremely proper to be bound up with that celebrated work, to which they will be found a very useful Appendix." Lowndes, 2101, "Full of the grossest abuse and the most illiberal invective. It is said that Ritson, at the latter period of his life, bought up and destroyed many copies." Butler, p. 136, regarding this work, "Extreme, polarising and, in an age of politeness, deliberately uncivil, the hostile tract has received too little modern critical attention."



4. [RITSON (Joseph)] Remarks, Critical and Illustrative, on the Text and Notes of the Last Edition of Shakspeare, London, Printed for J. Johnson, 1783 £500

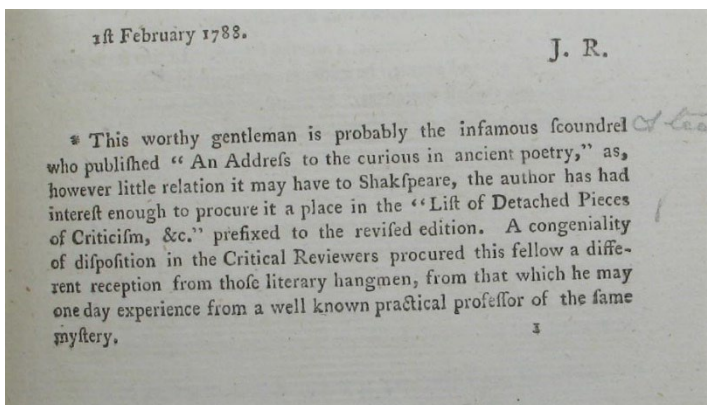


8vo, title, pp. viii, 232, 235-240 (text continuous despite pagination gap), 1 f. adverts., later half-morocco, unidentified gilt armorial device & "WS" monograms in compartments to spine, t.e.g., rest untrimmed (a little rubbed; upper corners knocked)

[Bound with:] The Quip Modest; a Few Words by Way of a Supplement to Remarks, Critical and Illustrative, on the Text and Notes of the Last Edition of Shakespeare; occasioned by a Republication of that Edition, revised and Augmented by the Editor of Dodsleys Old Plays, London, Printed for J. Johnson, 1788.

pp. viii, 32,

Bronson, I, 7 & 13. The advertisement leaf at the end of *Remarks* advertises his own edition of Shakespeare's Works, "to be published in eight duodecimo volumes," but it never appeared. In the *Quip Modest*, Lowndes relates that, "In the preface a note on p. vii was cancelled, reflecting on George Steevens, which, however, is to be found in some copies," such as ours. Ex-libris woodcut bookplate of Arthur E. Barker, designed by C.C.Caswell [19]16.



5. [RITSON (Joseph)] The Spartan Manual, or, Tablet of Morality, London, Printed for C.Dilly, 1785

£300

12mo, pp. xxiii, 86, calf gilt, labels

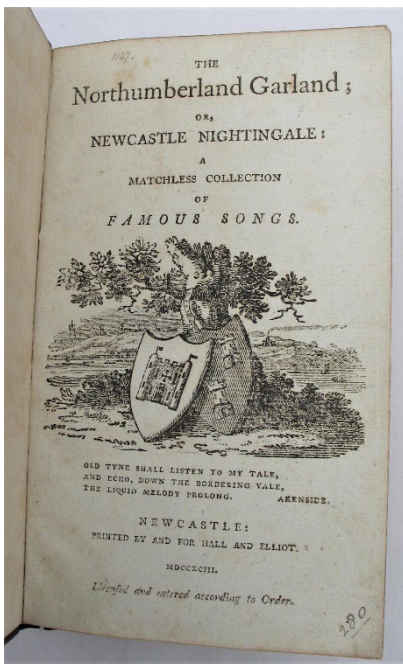
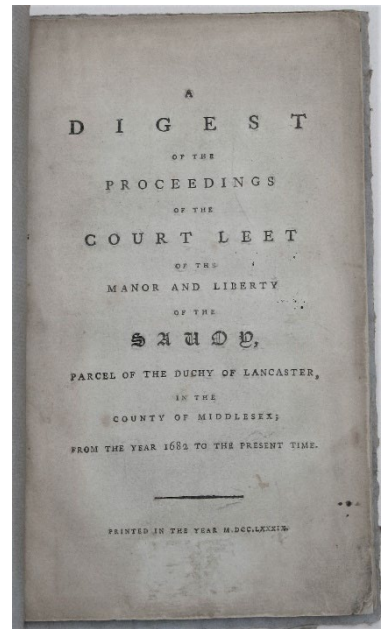
Bronson I 11. Ritson's only work for children, composed for his nephew, Joseph Frank.



6. [RITSON (Joseph)] A Digest of the Proceedings of the Court Leet of the Manor and Liberty of the Savoy, Parcel of the Duchy of Lancaster, in the County of Middlesex, from the Year 1692 to the Present Time, [London], Printed in the Year 1789 £950

8vo, title, 3 ff., pp. 46, (lacking the blank leaf at the end), later paper wrappers, (title-page a little darkened, one or two water stains)

Very rare, and a fascinating insight into life in the Savoy area of London. A typically thorough piece of research by Ritson, including a list of those who kept "Disorderly Houses," - i.e. brothels - the fines levied, dates, etc. Bronson I 15, locating two copies in the British Museum (BL), "I have never found a third copy." ESTC, same collation as ours, locates copies at BL, Cambridge (Trinity), Bodleian, Harvard.



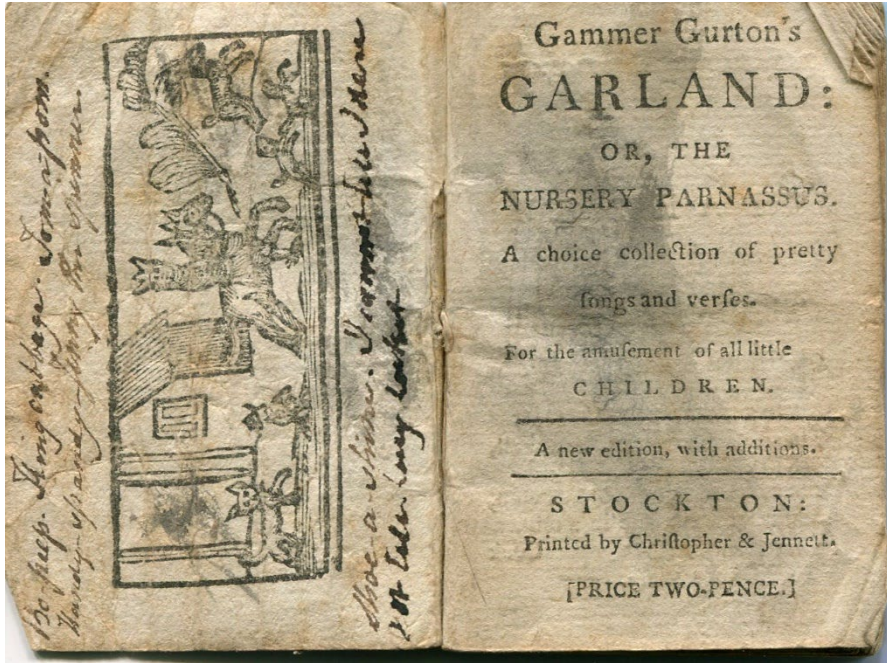
7. [RITSON (Joseph)] The Northumberland Garland; or, Newcastle Nightingale: A Matchless Collection of Famous Songs, Newcastle, Printed by and for Hall and Elliot, 1793 £825

12mo, pp. 71 (1), woodcut on title-page, modern full calf, gilt lettered, old a.e.g.

Bronson I 21.

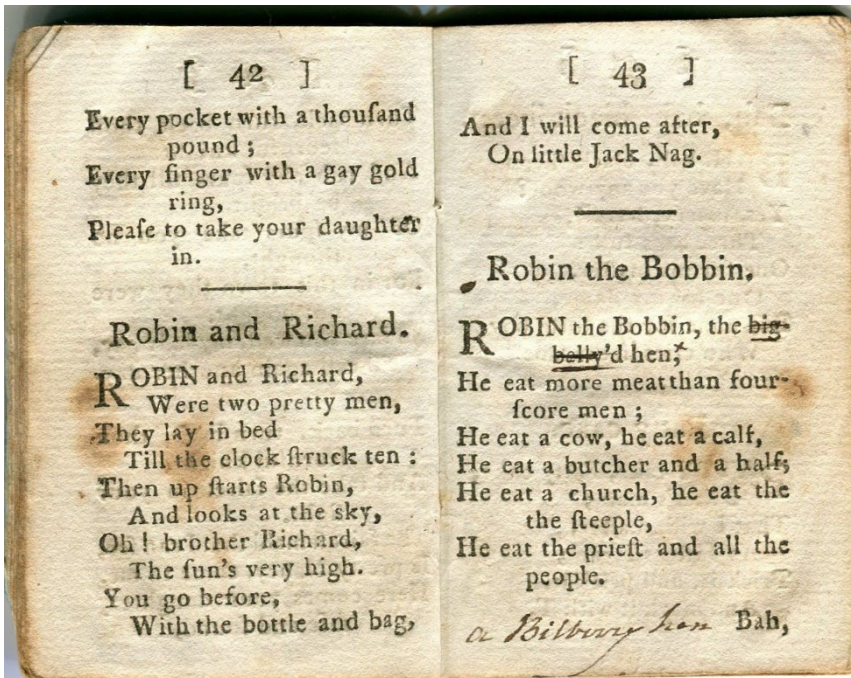
8. [RITSON (Joseph)] *Gammer Gurton's Garland: or, The Nursery Parnassus. A choice collection of pretty songs and verses. For the amusement of all little Children. . . . A new edition, with additions . . .* [Price Two-Pence] Stockton, Printed by Christopher & Jennett, [ca. 1796]

£6,000



*32mo, pp. 63 (1), (first and last pp. blank, and fixed as issued to the contemporary hand-blocked holly & berry patterned wrappers), p. 2 = woodcut frontispiece*





RARITY & DATING. ESTC gives us two variants for Ritson's compilation; both are very rare. ESTC assigns the same date to both issues, i.e. [1795?]. But the dating must be wrong for one of the entries. Both Ritson's early biographers (Nicolas, 1833, & Haslewood, 1824) place the book's first appearance as ca. 1783/84, published and printed at Stockton. The dating of the "New Edition," i.e. the one we have, is also a little contentious.

The earliest edition noted by ESTC [T 184912] is presumably the first edition of Ritson's compilation, and has two locations, both at the Bodleian.

Bronson I 9. He notes that, textually, this edition omits 3 rhymes and adds 4, compared to the preceding edition. This issue, ESTC T 89148, the "new edition," has locations at the BL, the Bodleian, and one copy in North America: Trinity College (Watkinson Library). Bronson mentions a copy at the Folger. It has been ascribed with a date of 1790 in the entry on the SOLO / University of Oxford online catalogue, based on a watermark in the Bodleian copy, which a footnote for the same entry gives as 1788. However, our copy carries a watermark for 1796 (on pp. 5/6). ESTC gives a date of (1795?).

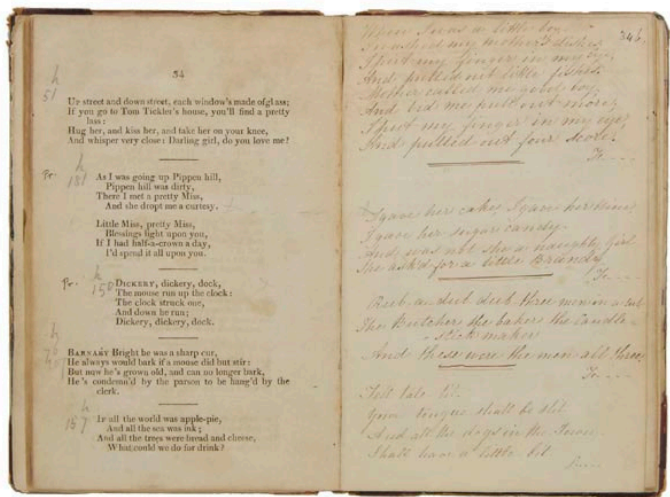
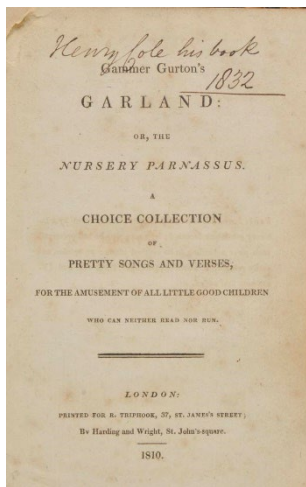
CONDITION: Our copy, like that at the Bodleian, has contemporary patterned (holly & berry) wrappers pasted to the first and last blank pages, presumably as issued, and this concurs with Bronson. The covers are a little rubbed, and the corners of the covers and contents a little dog-eared or turned over, but without paper loss. The frontispiece and p. 43 have **manuscript ink notes**. There is some brown spotting to a few pages. Overall, the condition is middling, i.e. not pristine.

9. **RITSON (Joseph)** An Essay on Abstinence from Animal Food, as a Moral Duty, London, Printed for Richard Phillips, 1802 £400

8vo, pp. [4], 236, later marbled wrappers,

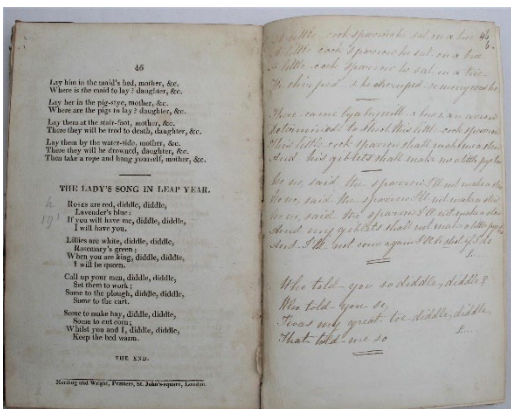
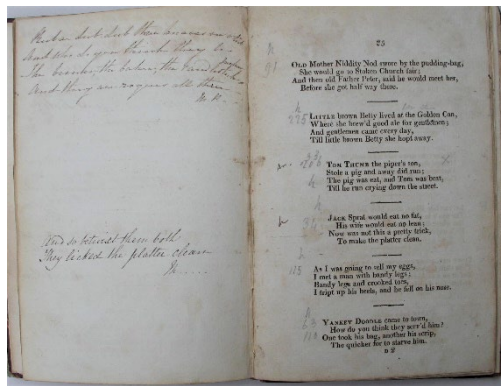
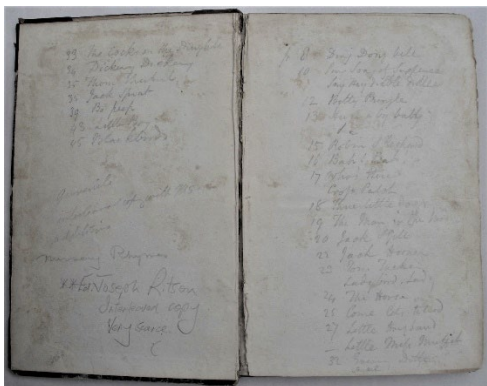
First Edition. Bitting, p.399; Bronson I 27; Simon, 1293. Ritson converted to vegetarianism in 1772, after reading Mandeville's *Fable of the Bees*. He had trouble finding a publisher for this until he found Phillips, a fellow vegetarian. In this work, among much of interest, he suggests that slavery stemmed from the same barbarity as meat-eating.

10. **[RITSON (Joseph) & DOUCE (Francis)]** Gammer Gurton's Garland: Or, the Nursery Parnassus, a choice collection of pretty songs and verses, for the amusement of all little good children who can neither read nor run, London, Printed for R. Triphook, 1810 £1,650



8vo, [2], 46 pp., in 4 parts, interleaved copy, the text leaves with brief pen and pencil marks and numerals throughout, mostly 'h'[allivell] and 'pr', occasional corrections and proof marks, the blanks with numerous alternative versions of some of the verses and additional nursery rhymes written in ink in a neat hand to blanks with an initial for each source (usually L. or M.), some browning and old dampstaining marks throughout, tear with loss to upper inner margin of title, ink ownership name of Henry Cole dated 1832 to title upper margin and pencil name Cha. Halliwell to final leaf verso, front endpapers detached, partial title index to front pastedown and facing endpaper, contemporary half calf over marbled boards, some wear and loss, upper cover detached

Bronson I 9. Oppenheimer, no. 1002. Muir, NBL, no 327 (1820 edn., 'first edition,'). Opie, ODNR, pp. 35-6. Opie, Three Centuries, No. 30. A collection of nursery rhymes in four parts, with parts 1 and 2, compiled by Joseph Ritson, originally published in 1784. This edition adds parts 3 and 4, collected by Francis Douce and others. It includes the first appearances in print of *Humpty Dumpty* and *Little Bo-Peep*, etc.

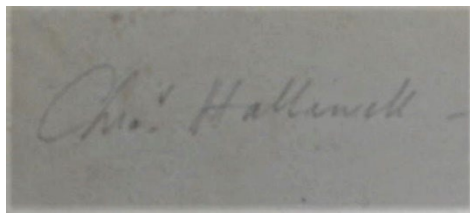


Sir Henry Cole (1808-1882), civil servant, industrialist, inventor of the Christmas card, and writer of children's books (published from 1841, under the pseudonym Felix Summerly).

The 'h' and accompanying pencilled numerals that appear throughout the text refer to the verses as they appeared in James Orchard Halliwell-Phillipps' *The Nursery Rhymes of England* (1842). The additional ink manuscript verses are in more than one unidentified hand, none of which appear to be that of Henry Cole. Contenders include Joseph Haslewood, of whom Bronson notes that "it

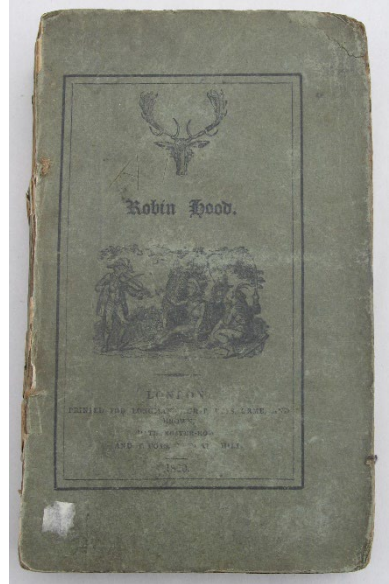
is probable that Haslewood is responsible for the publication," i.e. of this, the 1810 edition. There is also some consistency with the hand of Shakespearean scholar and nursery rhyme collector James Orchard Halliwell-Phillipps (1820-1889). The 'Cha. Halliwell' whose name appears at the back of the volume is perhaps that of Halliwell-Phillipps's daughter, Charlotte.

The variant entries are in themselves of interest. Facing *Little Bo-Peep* on the blank is one verse that begins 'Little Johnny went to Town / Upon a little pony / Stuck a feather in his cap / Looked like a Macaroni'. Opposite *The Song of the Cat and the Fiddle* is written: 'continuation. The basin stood behind the door, / and bid the dishcloth wash the floor, / The spit stood up like an armed man, / And vowed he'd fight the dripping pan, / The gridiron said gentlemen if you can't agree, / I'm the head constable bring 'em to me'.



**11. [ROBIN HOOD] [RITSON (Joseph)]** Robin Hood. A Collection of all the Ancient Poems, Songs and Ballads, now extant, Relative to that celebrated English Outlaw, to which are prefixed historical anecdotes of his Life, London, Printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, Paternoster Row & T. Boys, 1820     £200

*12mo, half-title, vignette title, pp. ix-xii, 2 ff. (misbound), iii-lxxiv, 240, untrimmed in the original printed boards, (upper cover off & first gathering detached, spine mostly eroded, boards worn and rubbed)*

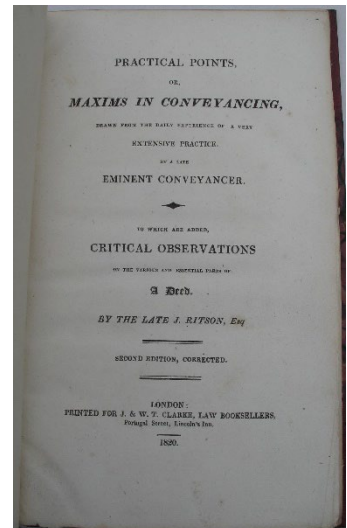


Cf. Bronson I 25. Re-issued from Ritson's 1795 compilation. Carpenter, B-18, "The first collection of the old ballads specifically designed for young readers . . ." The editor of this edition states that it was brought out on the strength of the interest shown in the publication (1819) of Walter Scott's "Ivanhoe." In 1800, Ritson had assisted Walter Scott in compiling materials for his *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, and the following year visited Scott at Lasswade. They remained on cordial terms until Ritson's death.

**12. RITSON (Joseph)** Practical Points, or, Maxims in Conveyancing ... To which are added, Critical Observations on the various and essential parts of a Deed, London, Printed for J. & W.T. Clarke, 1820     £225

*8vo, pp. vii + i (n.n.) blank, 147 + 1 (n.n.) advertisement, later, fine, half red morocco gilt, marbled boards, t.e.g.*

Second Edition, corrected. Bronson II 1, noting that a ms. note in the BM copy attributes the work to Ralph Bradley, of Stockton, but that the publisher's advert declares it to have been revised by Ritson.



**13. RITSON (Joseph)** *Memoirs of the Celts or Gauls*, London, Payne and Foss, 1827     £60

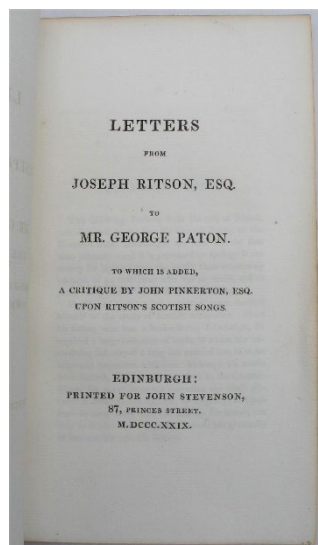
*8vo, pp. xiv, 369 [1], original boards (battered)*

First Edition, edited by Frank. Bronson II 6.

14. [RITSON (Joseph)] Letters from Joseph Ritson, Esq. to Mr. George Paton. To which is added, A Critique by John Pinkerton, Esq. Upon Ritson's Scottish Songs, Edinburgh, Printed for John Stevenson, 1829 £140

8vo, pp. xv (i), 52, later marbled antique wrappers,

Bronson II 8. 100 copies printed. Fine. George Paton (1721-1807), Scottish antiquarian, bibliographer and book collector. The letters, *ibid*, discuss bookish matters in detail, including the printer's warehouse conflagration that destroyed Ritson's book, *The Caledonian Muse*, "which had engaged my attention for a great many years . . . I neither possess, nor can procure, one single copy."



15. [RITSON / FRANK (Joseph) editor / NICOLAS (Sir Harris)] The Letters of Joseph Ritson, Esq. Edited chiefly from originals in the possession of his nephew. To which is prefixed a Memoir of the Author by Sir Harris Nicolas, K.C.M.G., London, William Pickering, 1833 £75

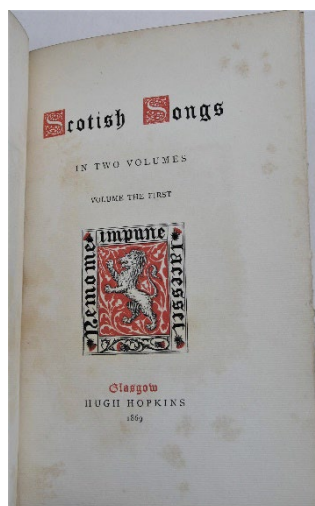
2 vols, 8vo, pp. [4], lxxxix [i], 224; [2], 248, plumb half Morocco (rubbed), t.e.g.,

Bronson II 8. Ex-libris bookplates of 1) Charles Kilburn. 2) Bernard Warrington, Pickering Collection.

16. RITSON (Joseph) Scottish Songs, Glasgow, Hugh Hopkins, 1869 £65

2 vols, 8vo, pp. [4], 288 port. fronti. + 2 engr. plates; [4], 289-375 (1), engr. frontis., 3 engr. plates, green crushed half-morocco spines lettered in gilt, t.e.g., (spines faded, slight foxing of first title, some pages uncut)

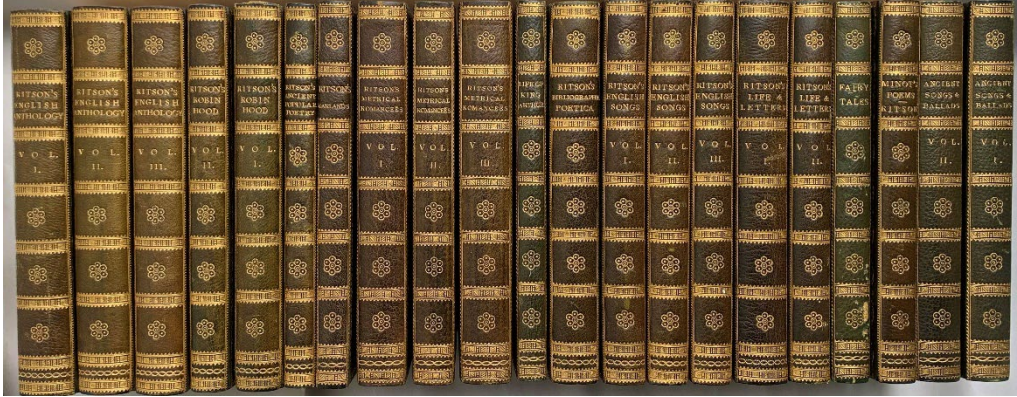
The first edition appeared in 1794. Two editions appeared in the 19th century. This Edition claims to be the Second, but was preceded by a London (Tegg) edition of 1866. Cf. Bronson I 23



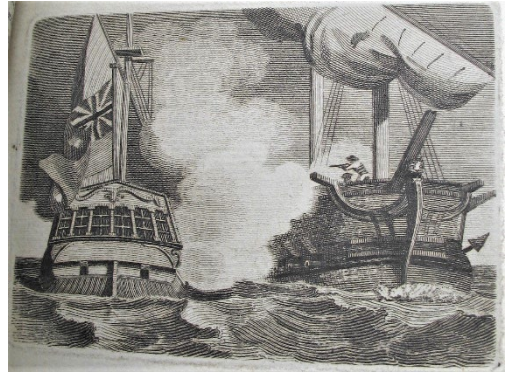
17. RITSON (Joseph) [Miscellaneous Works] London, 18th / 19th c.

£4,500

14 titles in 21 vols, 8vo, uniformly bound in full green morocco gilt, for “James Toovey Bookseller 177 Piccadilly,” of London, marbled end-papers, a.e.g., (a few scuffs, occasional scattered foxing to contents) titles as under:



A) A Select Collection of English Songs. In Three Volumes, pp. [2, title], xiv, lxxii, [2], 264; [4], 342, [32, index, notes, corrections]; [6], [156, music], [2, part-title], [139, music, 1 blank], text illus., (bound without the half-titles; foxing to title of vol. 3), L., Printed for J. Johnson, 1783.

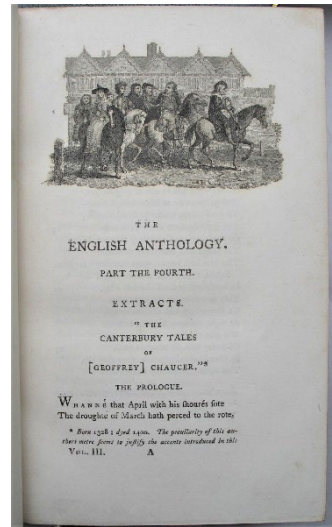
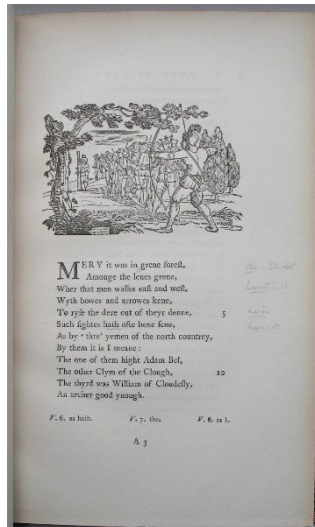
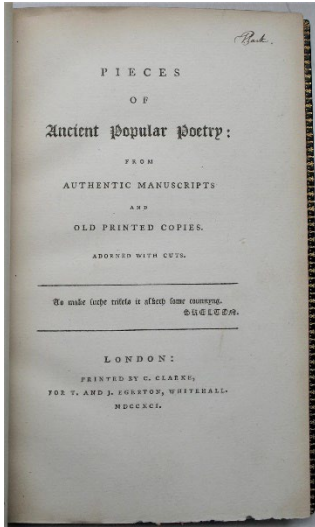


Bronson I 8. Our set has the unsigned frontispiece by Heath, after Fuseli. “There are ten vignettes in Volume I, most of them engraved by **William Blake** after Stothard. Volume II contains six vignettes.” Butler, p. 144, reports on Robert Essick’s assertion that Blake’s work on the engravings “had a formative influence on his style.”



B) Pieces of Ancient Popular Poetry; from Authentic Manuscripts and Old Printed Copies, Adorned with Cuts, 8vo, pp. xiv, 1 f., pp. 152, wood-engraved text vignettes, L., Printed by C. Clarke, 1791.

Bronson 17. 7 woodcuts and 7 tailpieces by the Bewicks



C) The English Anthology, 3 vols, 8vo, pp. [2, title], xvi, 349 [1], [2, errata / blank]; [iii]-xiii [i], 370; [iii]-viii, 334, [2, advert.], 4 fine-engraved vignettes, other vignettes wood-engraved, (half-titles not present), L., Printed by C. Clarke, 1794.

Bronson I 22, identifying 2 of the woodcuts as the work of the Bewicks.

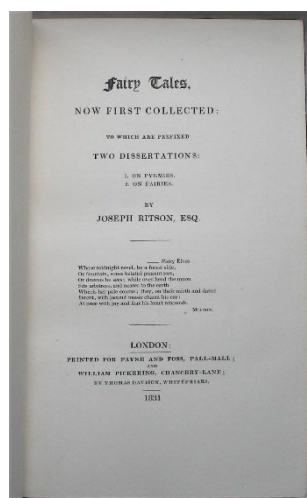
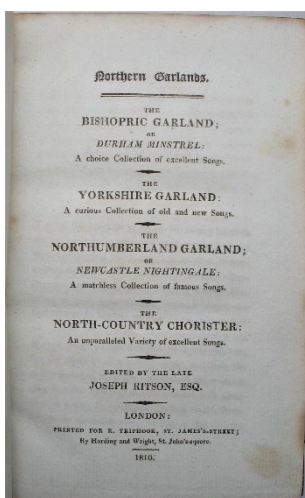
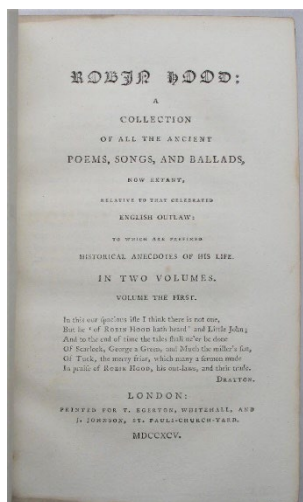
D) Poems on Interesting Events in the Reign of King Edward III. Written, in the Year MCCCLII. By Laurence Minot. With a Preface, Dissertations, Notes, and A Glossary, 8vo, pp. xlv, 180, L., Printed by T. Bensley, 1795.

Bronson I 24. Lowndes, 2099, opining that, typographically, this is “the most elegant of Ritson’s publications.”

E) Robin Hood; A Collection of all the Ancient Poems, Songs, and Ballads, now extant, relative to that celebrated English Outlaw, to which are prefixed Historical Anecdotes of his life, 2 vols, 8vo, pp. [4, half-title & title], cxviii, [2, contents], 167 [1, blank]; [8, half-title, title, contents & advert.], 220, [4, Notes and Corrections], (some occasional pale waterstaining), 33 wood-engraved headpieces & 30 tailpieces by the Bewicks, L., Printed for T. Egerton, 1795.

First Edition. Carpenter, B-16: “Ritson’s collection of the Robin Hood ballads remains “an indispensable handbook for the outlaw legend” [Dobson & Taylor]. – Illustrations by the Bewick brothers. (In an appendix to his *Memoir* of 1862, Thomas Bewick mentions that his brother John executed the woodcuts; his biographer, Austin Dobson, adds a note to the 1887 edition that “Thomas did a few of them.”.)”

Bronson I 25.



F) Ancient English Metrical Romancees, 3 vols, pp. [4], cxxxiv, 215 [1]; [4], 313 [1]; [4], 444, + 327\*-328\*, L., Printed by W. Bulmer and Company, 1802. Bronson I 28.

G) Bibliographia Poetica: A Catalogue of English Poets, of the Twelfth, Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centurys, with A Short Account of their Works, 8vo, pp. [2, title], ii, [2], pp. 407 [1], with additional leaves 45\*-46\*, 115\*-116\*, 399\*-402\*, (some foxing), L., Printed by C. Roworth, 1802.

Bronson I 29, Haslewood, Madden, and Hazlitt each contemplated a new edition, and their copies were interleaved with preparatory notes. The first two copies were found by Bronson at Harvard. He notes that Hazlitt's was sold in Nov. 1893, Lot 430.

H) Northern Garlands. [4 titles, with separate title-pages and pagination, in 1 volume, i.e.]: The Bishopric Garland; or Durham Minstrel ... / The Yorkshire Garland ... / The Northumberland Garland; or Newcastle Nightingale ... / The North-Country Chorister ..., 8vo, pp. viii, iv, 64; pp. 31, [1]; pp. [2, title], 94; pp. 16, L., Printed for R. Triphook, 1810. **Bound with:** I) Gammer Gurton's Garland, pp. [2, title], 46, L., Printed for R. Triphook, 1810.

Bronson II 2, Bronson could not find a copy with the half-title, present here.

Bronson I 9 [see also item 10]

J) The Life of King Arthur: from Ancient Historians and Authentic Documents, pp. [8], xliii, 172, L., Printed for Payne and Foss [et al.], 1825.

Bronson II 5.

K) Ancient Songs and Ballads, from the Reign of King Henry the Second to the Revolution, 2 vols, pp. [10], ciii [i], 169 [1]; pp. [8], 326, [2. adverts.], London, Printed for Payne and Foss, 1829

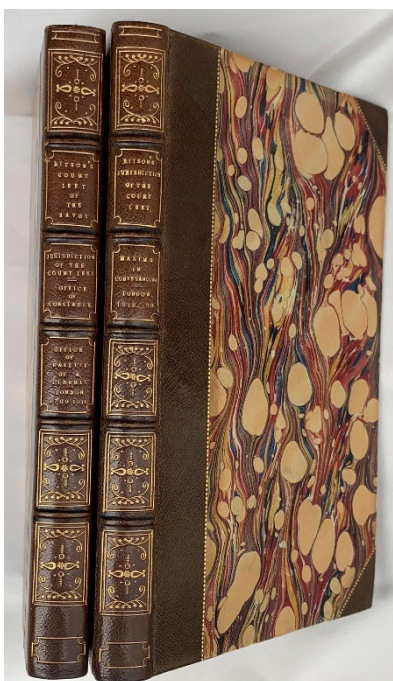
Bronson I 16, second edition, enlarged, but omitting Stothard's designs. Lowndes, 2088, commenting on the first edition, "The most curious and certainly the most interesting to antiquarian readers of Ritson's works."

L) Fairy Tales, now first collected: to which are prefixed Two Dissertations: 1) On Pygmies. 2) On Fairies, 8vo, pp. vi, [2, blank], pp. 207 [1, adverts.], L., Printed for Payne and Foss, 1831.

First edition, (posthumous); Keynes, p.87. Bronson II 9. Although prepared for the press by Ritson, this is the version edited by his nephew, Joseph Frank.

M) HASLEWOOD (Joseph) *Some Account of the Life and Publications of the late Joseph Ritson Esq., silhouette frontispiece by Mrs. Park (offset onto title), pp. [4], 48, Appendix ["Versees addressed to te Ladies of Stockton" ix [i, colophon], L., Printed for R. Triphook, 1824; bound with: N) [FRANK (Joseph) editor / NICOLAS (Sir Harris)] The Letters of Joseph Ritson, Esq., 2 vols, pp. [6 half-title, title, advert.], lxxxix [i], 224; [4, half-title, title], 248, L., William Pickering, 1833.*  
 Bronson IX 4 & Bronson II 8. The two titles bound as 2 volumes in all.

18. [RITSON (Joseph) / 2 volume collection of his legal works, with an important provenance, i.e. Ritson's biographer SIR HARRIS NICOLAS, and including a PRESENTATION COPY to him] £2,000



6 works, 3 of them very rare, bound in 2 vols, fine early 19th century half morocco with raised bands, elaborate gilt tooling to the panels and gilt top edges (some foxing), vol.1 carries the engraved ex-libris **bookplate of Sir Nicolas Harris Nicolas on the front paste-down**

Vol. 1

- a) A Digest of the Proceedings of the Court Leet of the Manor of the Savoy, pp. viii, 46, (some foxing, lacking the final blank), [London], 1789; first edition, Bronson I 15, **"I have never found a third copy."** [see our fuller description, item 6 ]
- b) The Jurisdiction of the Court-Leet, pp. [2], xxviii, 36, [i.e. lacking pp. 37 +1), London, Whieldon and Butterworth, 1791; first edition, Bronson I 19, outlining how it was supposed to be a much



d) *The Office of Bailiff of a Liberty*, pp. xv [i], 80, London, Strahan, 1811. Bronson II 3, relating that Ritson had this more or less ready around 1791, but was still compiling further material; nevertheless he left it, at his death, ready for the press.

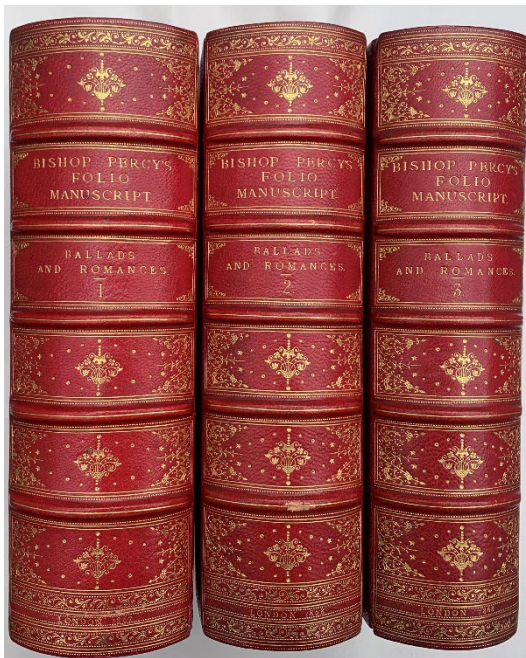
Vol. 2

e) *The Jurisdiction of the Court Leet*, pp. iv, 166, [6, index and adverts], London, Printed for W. Clarke, 1816; third edition, Bronson 1 19.

f) *Practical Points, or, Maxims in Conveyancing*, pp. vii [i], 147 [1, advert], London, Printed for J. & W.T. Clarke, 1820. Second edition. Bronson, II 1. See our description under item 12.

Provenance note: Nicolas Harris Nicolas (1799-1848) was created KH in 1831, and KCMG in 1832. The inscription to "Sir Harris" [c\* above] cannot, therefore, predate this. Similarly, the bookplate, and hence the bindings, cannot be before 1832. Bronson, vol.1, pp. vii/viii, "The fourth and indispensable account of Ritson is the Memoir by Sir N. H. Nicolas which serves as introduction to Ritson's collected *Letters*, 1833 [vide item 15, above]. This was the most extensive essay to appear upon the critic in the nineteenth century, and it is of the first authority because prompted and assisted by Ritson's own nephew and chief correspondent, Joseph Frank.

**19. [RITSONIANA] PERCY (Bishop)** Bishop Percy's Folio Manuscript. Ballads and Romances. Edited by John W. Hales... and Frederick J. Furnivall..., London, N. Trübner & Co., 1867/68 £1,450



4 vols in 3, 8vo, 1) [2, half-title], lxxiv, [2], xii subscribers list, 1 f. folding facsimile of the ms., 536, [bound with, 4):] "Loose and humorous Songs," pp. iv, [2, Part I Contents], 60, 1 f. 'Direction to the Binder,' pp. v/vi, 127[1] (pp. 119/20, 'Index to First Lines,' bound at the end) 2) pp.[4], lxxi [i], [2, corrigenda], 609 [1, index]. 3) pp. xlv, 595 [1, colophon]

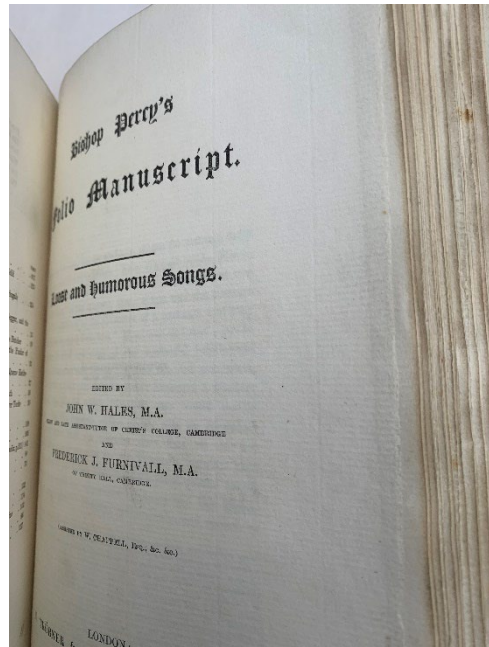
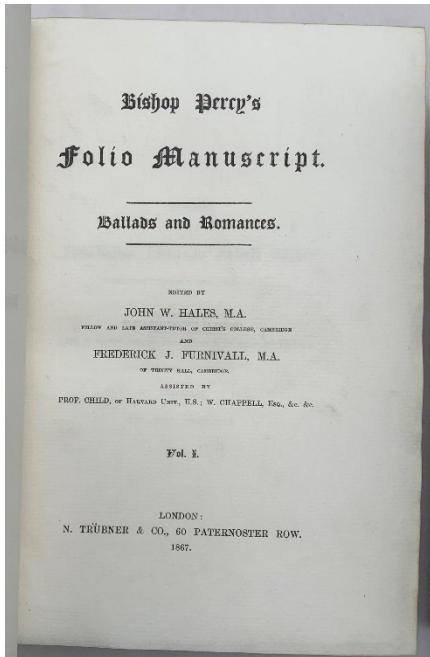
The first printed edition. A fine set of the 'extra octavo' edition (250 sets printed), which includes, in the first volume, *Loose and humorous Songs*, which was sometimes bound separately (and presumably not on the open shelves of a respectable library) on account of its contents being of a vulgar or bawdy nature, "which Victorian ears would hardly tolerate," [ibid, 'Notice', p. iii].

This production was the result of the concerted efforts of Professor Francis James Child, of Harvard, and his intermediaries, to gain access to the fabled

Percy MS., which had hitherto been steadfastly guarded by Bishop Percy, and subsequently by his family. Albeit, Dibdin managed a surreptitious listing of part of the contents before being

discovered and ejected, and one or two others were supplied with copies of particular parts for printing.

Percy had discovered the manuscript “lying dirty on the floor under a Bureau in ye Parlour... being used by the maids to light fires” at Shiffnal Hall, the home of his friend Humphrey Pitt, from whom he obtained it. It thereafter resided at Ecton Hall. Thinking to lend it to Dr. Johnson, he had it bound in half-calf by a binder who, in paring it, shaved off some of the top and bottom lines. Under Percy’s stewardship, the manuscript suffered further, including messy annotations, crossings out, and the removal of pages. Nevertheless, the manuscript formed a central plank of his work, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* which was first published in 1765.



The reason we include this work here is because of Ritson’s long and unsuccessful battle to gain access to the original manuscript. Whilst not going so far as to deny the manuscript’s existence, Ritson did accuse Percy of fabrication and other mistreatments of the text, taking liberties, and degrading its purity. For the sake of completeness, Ritson was forced to include poems and ballads from the *Reliques* in his own compilations and anthologies, but it irked him considerably not to be able to have access to the pure, unadulterated texts - for which he was a stickler. In this respect, Furnivall writes, “I hope we are all now on Ritson’s side,” [ibid, vol. 1, p.xx].

Bronson devotes a long and detailed chapter to the whole affair, entitled, “The Hunting of the Percy,” vol. 2, pp. 543-610. In this chapter, he tracks Ritson’s comments on the subject, beginning in *Observations*, 1783, up to *Ancient English Metrical Romances*, 1802.



Thus have you heard of Robin Hood,  
Also of Little John ;  
How a shepherd swain did conquer them,  
The like was never known.

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