

Milton's poetry in some measure. The overt references proliferate and the fact that Philip Ayres admitted that Milton was one of his models in 1687 *Lyric poems* is a more significant landmark in the development of Milton's reputation than the fact that in 1804 William Blake wrote a substantial poem called *Milton*, though this judgement has no reference to the merits of the respective poems.

If Milton's influence is far-reaching and the bounds of Miltoniana are so indefinite, the works which influenced Milton are equally difficult to identify for quite a different reason. Even the works most clearly among those he read, because he attacked them, quoted them in his works or in his *Common-place-book*, or annotated copies, cover a very wide area of human knowledge and when we start looking for those he *may* have read the field becomes enormous. Works such as Bracton's *De consuetudinibus Angliae*, the 1602 *Works* of Chaucer, the 1587 *Chronicles* of Holinshed, the 1626 *Purchas his pilgrimage* show the variety of his reading and these are works published in England and in the Turnbull Library. A large proportion of his known reading, and buying, was of books published in Europe.¹⁰ Milton's learning is a major handicap to most who would go source-hunting and it is not surprising that Alexander Turnbull made no effort to collect in the area of Milton's sources.

This brings us back to the question: what did Turnbull collect, and how much influence did he have on the nature of the collection as it exists today?

Turnbull wrote to Quaritch in July 1892, 'I intend forming a Milton collection & making it as complete as possible if I can see my way to do so' and he asked the bookseller to obtain the 1645 and 1673 editions of the *Poems*.¹¹ This was some four months after his permanent return to Wellington at the age of twenty-four with his parents and sister, after an English education and youth. Why he began his Milton collection cannot be explained. Like most English people he was apparently only vaguely aware of Milton the prose writer—and probably not much in sympathy with that side of Milton—and the strength and weakness of the collection is a reflection of this awareness. He began by collecting the poetry and he was very largely successful—the first five of the six title pages of the first edition of *Paradise lost* and at least one issue of every major seventeenth century edition of the poetical works except the 1688 folio of *Paradise regained* and *Samson Agonistes*. This includes the prestigious *Iusta Edovardo King naufrago* with the first printing of *Lycidas*¹² and the 1637 *Maske* more commonly known as *Comus*. It does not include the separate printing of *Epitaphium Damonis*, scarcely surprising with only one known copy, nor does it include the various miscellanies which reprinted some of the minor poems.

In the eighteenth century the major editions are by and large there—