

BRITAIN'S LITERARY HERITAGE

**British Literary Manuscripts from
the British Library, London**

Series One

**Part Three: Manuscripts selected from
Additional MSS. 30982 - 63054**



The Information Solutions Company

HARVESTER PRESS MICROFORM PUBLICATIONS, LTD

(Publisher: John Spiers)

17 Ship Street, Brighton

Sussex, England

BRITAIN'S LITERARY HERITAGE:

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Series One: The English Renaissance:

Literature from the Tudor period to

the Restoration, c.1500 - 1700

Part Three: Manuscripts selected from Additional MSS. 30982 - 63054

First Published in 1985 by Harvester Press Microform Publications, Ltd.

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Britain's Literary Heritage is making available a wide selection of literary manuscripts from the British Library. As the first series in this far-reaching programme Harvester Microform is offering generous coverage of the sixteenth and seventeenth century manuscripts in the Sloane and Additional series, which form the most extensive literary sources within the British Library.

We have attempted to employ the broadest possible criteria for selection. Our principal focus has been on creative literary forms, be they poetry, drama or prose. Purely in chronological terms this is a project of enormous range. It also represents the variety of literary compositions during this period. It features the major author and the most important texts, but also includes many works by lesser-known and anonymous writers.

This first series from the British Library consists of literary manuscripts from the Tudor period to the Restoration. It is divided into three parts: Part One contains manuscripts selected from Sloane Manuscripts 20-3943 and Additional Manuscripts 4128-10305; Part Two includes material from Additional Manuscripts 10306-30303; and this third part completes the series with a selection from Additional Manuscripts 30982-63054.

Part Three includes literary documents from both the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, ranging from John Milton's commonplace book (Add.MS.36354) to a collection of songs, ballads and instrumental pieces composed early in the reign of Henry VIII, many of which are ascribed to the King himself (Add.Ms.31922). As in Parts One and Two the inclusion of material by lesser-known authors ensures that a wide range of literary achievement is represented. Jests, stories and alchemical verses appear alongside the more distinguished works to provide to revealing and uncanonical picture of Renaissance writing.

In addition to this manuscripts material Harvester Microform is providing informative aids to use, both on film and in the accompanying Guide. Scholars will be aware of the existing multi-volume catalogue of the British Library Additional Manuscripts which begins at Add.Ms.4128. However, there is no printed catalogue available for the earliest manuscripts in the series, or for the most recently deposited manuscripts. To aid the user we have therefore typed up existing manuscript entries from the British Library's handwritten Sloane catalogue (for the earlier items) and from the "Rough Registers" (for the later items). Sloane manuscripts form the greater part of Part One and for the sake of completeness we therefore provide descriptive entries for all items in Part One, as Appendix I of the Guide. Appendix II contains descriptive entries for the small number of manuscripts most recently deposited, taken from the "Rough Registers". As a further aid to users we have reproduced these on Reel One of the film, together with all descriptive entries from the printed catalogue. For ease of reference the appropriate catalogue entries are also reproduced at the beginning of each reel.

Harvester Microform would like to thank the British Library for their permission to make available this splendid collection of Renaissance literary manuscripts.

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