BIBLIOGRAPHICAL PROCEDURES AND FORMAT

**Scope**

There were 781 titles published in the Modern Library and its two related series, Modern Library Giants and the Illustrated Modern Library, from 1917 through 1985; 642 of these titles were published in the main Modern Library series. This bibliography covers 1925–59 for the regular Modern Library series during the most profitable and prolific years of the series. First printings and major bibliographical variants of each title (reset texts, reset title pages, introductions added and dropped, etc.) are fully described. Publishing history information, including which titles were discontinued each year, is provided.

**Format**

Within each section of the bibliography, entries are arranged chronologically. For each title published in the series between 1925 and 1959, subsequent variants of each title are described if they appeared prior to 1992. The entry numbers reflect the chronological arrangement of the bibliography and are unrelated to Modern Library numbers assigned by the publisher.

**Editions, Printings, States, Issues**

The descriptive bibliography of a reprint series like the Modern Library presents special challenges in terms of bibliographical methodology.

Basic to any descriptive bibliography is the identification and distinction of editions, printings, states, and issues. An *edition* is defined as the copies of a book printed from a single setting of type, including all reprintings. Many Modern Library books were printed from relief plates previously used by other publishers or from offset plates made by photographing books originally typeset for other publishers. Modern Library printings of such a title are bibliographically part of an edition that was created before its publication in the Modern Library. Other Modern Library books, on the other hand, are printed from relief or offset plates made from new settings of type (most of these plates were made for and owned by the Modern Library; sometimes they were owned jointly by the Modern Library and an original publisher; in a few cases they were made by an original publisher and rented to the Modern Library for its printings). All printings from plates made from an original typesetting constitute an edition in their own right. Modern Library books identified in the bibliography as having been printed from newly set plates constitute new editions. For Modern Library printings that belong to an earlier edition, an attempt has been made to identify the source of the plates and to indicate precisely which pages of the Modern Library “edition” were printed from them. (The term “first Modern Library edition,” as loosely applied by collectors and booksellers, refers to the first Modern Library printing.)

The widespread practice of printing from plates in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has led bibliographers to speak of “parent editions” and “subsidiary editions.” Plates used by an original publisher for the initial printing of a work are commonly used by one or more reprint publishers (such as the Modern Library) for “reprint editions.” The original publisher may use the plates for a special printing marketed as a “limited edition,” printings of the “trade edition,” and later printings of one or more “popular editions” at a lower price and often in a smaller format. All printings from plates made from the same type setting belong bibliographically to the same edition or “parent edition.” Printings by the original publisher marketed in distinguishable formats and printings by other publishers marketed under their imprints can be considered “subsidiary editions.” Bowers notes that a “basic list of possible subsidiary editions to the parent edition typesetting” includes American and English editions (including cheap editions), limited editions, colonial editions, editions by other publishers, revised editions, and enlarged editions. He continues: “These terms are not pure bibliographical terms and at best are only conveniences. They do not replace the necessity of being precise in a bibliography about the origin of a subsidiary edition. Thus a first American edition may actually be a re-issue of an impression of an English edition, or an American state of one of its impressions which comprises a separate American issue, or it may be a first American impression from the English plates, or a new American type-setting. For the arrangement of a bibliography, any one of these is most conveniently treated as the first American edition, but the bibliographical facts must be present” (1975, pp. 383–84).

The term “Modern Library edition” is used for the sake of convenience in the printing and publishing history statement (where the precise bibliographical facts about its origins are set forth) and in the publishing history notes. The term “bibliographical edition” is used occasionally when it might otherwise be unclear that “edition” is being used in its bibliographical sense. The numbering system as described below distinguishes Modern Library printings that belong to different editions or parent editions.

*Printing*. All the copies of a book printed at one time without removing the type or plates from the press are considered a printing. All Modern Library books were printed from plates. Printings occur only within editions. *Impression* is the same as *printing*, but *printing* is used here for consistency.

*State*. States are created by an alteration of the text to *some copies* of a particular printing (usually by stop-press correction or cancellation of leaves). States occur within printings; there cannot be a first state without a second state. The first printing of Calverton’s *Anthology of American Negro Literature*, published in the Modern Library in 1929, omitted copyright notices from the pages containing five blues lyrics by W. C. Handy. When Handy granted permission for their inclusion, he stipulated that copyright notices were to be printed on the same pages as the lyrics. He protested the omission a few weeks after publication. The Modern Library ordered its bindery to collect all unsold copies on hand, to cancel the leaves without copyright notices, and to replace them with six newly printed leaves containing the copyright notices. Copies of the first printing distributed before the cancellation was made constitute the first state of the printing; copies with the corrected leaves constitute the second state of the printing. All subsequent printings included the copyright notices. Cancelled leaves do not always create separate states of a printing. Several Modern Library books contain cancellations that appear to have been made in *all* copies of the first printing.

*Issue*. Issues are created by an alteration of the text that affects the conditions of publication or sale of some copies of a particular printing. The alteration usually consists of a change in the title page. Issues occur only within printings; there cannot be a first issue without a second issue. Franz Werfel’s *Forty Days of Musa Dagh*, published as a Modern Library Giant in 1937, offers a good example. The printed sheets came from two sources. In addition to securing reprint rights to the work, the Modern Library acquired 3,984 sets of sheets from Viking Press, the original American publisher. The first four leaves of these copies were canceled and replaced with new preliminary leaves, including the Modern Library title page. The copies thus published under the Modern Library imprint represent the second issue of the final Viking Press printing. With the creation of the second issue, copies of the printing previously sold by Viking Press under its own imprint became the first issue of the final Viking Press printing. If Viking Press retained a few copies in its warehouse for subsequent sale they would also form part of the first issue of the printing. The availability of Viking Press sheets allowed the Modern Library to reduce its own first printing from 10,000 copies to 5,000 copies. These 5,000 copies, printed from Viking plates and placed on the market simultaneously with the Modern Library issue of the final Viking Press printing, constitute the first Modern Library printing.

**Families of Printings**

The bibliographical description of books printed over a period of years from the same set of plates, or from multiple sets of plates made from the same typesetting, presents special difficulties. All such printings belong to the same bibliographical edition. The plates may be used concurrently or in succession by different publishers. The plates of Theodore Dreiser’s *Sister Carrie* that the Modern Library first used in 1932 had previously been used for printings by Doubleday, Page & Co. (1900), B. W. Dodge & Co. (1907), Grosset & Dunlap (1908), Harper & Brothers (1912), and Boni & Liveright (1917). Printings within a parent edition can be organized into subsidiary editions but a further level of ordering is needed. Publishers may change their names or addresses with the result that later printings appear under new or revised imprints. There were printings of *Sister Carrie* under the successive imprints of Boni & Liveright and Horace Liveright, Inc., for example. A publisher may also bring out printings in different formats. The Macmillan Co. in New York published Louis Hémon’s *Maria Chapdelaine* in three formats. It first appeared in 1921 in a two-color format using one set of plates for the text and a second set of plates for matter printed in blue (the two-color title page, large initials at the beginning of each chapter, and decorative part titles and chapter heads). There were several printings in this format. In 1924 Macmillan published an “Illustrated Edition” using the original text plates together with newly set plates containing the illustrations and different large initials, both of which were printed in grayish yellow. Five years later the novel appeared in Macmillan’s Modern Readers’ Series with an introduction and notes by Carl Y. Connor. Printings in the Modern Readers’ Series did not include illustrations, but the large initials from the “Illustrated Edition” were added to the original text plates (or to a duplicate set of these plates) to make possible one-color printing. The Modern Library used the Modern Readers’ Series plates when it published *Maria Chapdelaine* in 1934, omitting Connor’s introduction and notes but adding a new introduction by Hugh Eayrs.

*Sister Carrie* remained in the Modern Library for forty years; *Maria Chapdelaine* remained in the series for seventeen years. Both titles were reprinted regularly. In fall 1939 the Modern Library introduced a new and larger format that featured individually designed title pages. Backlist titles were put into the new format as they were reprinted. Modern Library printings of *Sister Carrie* and *Maria Chapdelaine* before 1940 were in the smaller format with a uniform title-page design; subsequent printings were in the larger format with individually designed title pages. The Modern Library “subsidiary edition” of each of these works thus includes two bibliographically distinct sequences of printings distinguished by the title page design and the size of the volumes.

Any sequence of printings from a set of plates with a given characteristic in common can be regarded as a family of printings. Characteristics that distinguish a family of printings can include fully or partially reset title pages (including changes in the publisher’s device or imprint), introductions added and dropped, printings with and without illustrations, substantive changes in the back matter such as the addition of an index, and substantive changes in the body of the text such as the addition of one or more works to a previously published anthology.

Modern Library printings of *Sister Carrie* or *Maria Chapdelaine* fall into two distinct families based on the title page. Macmillan printings of *Maria Chapdelaine* could be regarded either as three subsidiary editions or three families of printings. The concept of families of printings is especially useful for the ordering of books printed from the same set of plates over an extended period of time. It should be noted that while there are usually multiple printings within a given family, there can also be families that consist of a single printing.

Since many Modern Library titles remained in the series for decades and were reprinted every year or two, a decision about the level of bibliographical ordering to be attempted had to be made at the outset. No attempt has been made to identify and describe every printing of every title. Bibliographical ordering at this level may be justified in a bibliography of the works of a single author or editions of a single work. It would be impracticable—and not particularly useful—in a bibliography of a series as large and long-lived as the Modern Library. The first level of ordering in the bibliography is the identification of editions as defined above. The second level of ordering is the identification of families of printings within editions. States and issues as defined above occur within specific printings; there are only a few examples of these.

For each family of printings, the *earliest* printing seen has been described. Modern Library books can be dated precisely or approximately on the basis of several kinds of evidence. Books that include lists of Modern Library titles in the back matter can usually be dated by spring or fall of a given year. Between fall 1925 and spring 1967 these lists were revised twice a year, and the current list was usually included in books printed during a given season. (The list in the first Modern Library printing of books printed from offset plates commonly appears without change in later printings.) Modern Library jackets can be dated on the basis of the lists of titles that were printed inside nearly all jackets through 1963. The jacket date can provide useful (but not conclusive) evidence as to the date of the book inside the jacket, subject to the cautions noted below in the section on jackets. The dating key can be used to date any list of Modern Library titles by spring or fall of a given year.

The numbering system begins by identifying works published in the Modern Library

in approximate chronological order as described above. This bibliographic numbering system is distinct from the Modern Library system. Numbers in the bibliography that are not preceded with an ML pertain to the internal chronological numbering system. *Madame Bovary* was the twenty-fifth title published in the Modern Library and has remained in print in the series from 1917 to the present. The bibliography number 25 is used for all regular Modern Library printings of *Madame Bovary*. Modern Library printings of *Madame Bovary* between 1917 and 1991 fall into three editions numbered 25.1, 25.2 and 25.3. Five families of printings have been identified within the first edition, all based on partially or fully reset title pages. These are numbered 25.1a through 25.1e. The Modern Library reset the work in 1927 creating the second edition. Three families of printings have been identified within this edition, including a reset title page in 1940 and the addition of an introduction by Henri Peyre in 1950. These are numbered 25.2a, 25.2b and 25.2c. The first and second editions use the Eleanor Marx Aveling translation; both typesettings were made for the Modern Library. In 1957 Random House published *Madame Bovary* in a new translation by Francis Steegmuller. Later that year the Modern Library used the Random House plates for its first printing of the Steegmuller translation, creating the third Modern Library edition. Three families of Modern Library printings have been identified within the third edition, including reset title pages in 1969/70 and 1978. These are numbered 25.3a, 25.3b and 25.3c. All Modern Library printings within the third edition are bibliographically part of the parent edition originally published by Random House.

Several of the families within the Modern Library’s first edition of *Madame Bovary* appear to have consisted of a single printing. The other families of printings consist of multiple printings. Bibliographical ordering at the level of families of printings makes it possible to see how Modern Library printings of *Madame Bovary* evolved over a period of seventy-five years and to place any copy of a Modern Library printing unambiguously within a family of printings.

Most Modern Library titles exist in a single bibliographical edition. For these titles the entry number begins with the number for the work followed by letters designating families of printings. For *The Philosophy of Spinoza*, three families of printings have been identified, all within the same edition. These entries are numbered 136a, 136b and 136c.

The author believes that the first printing of every Modern Library title has been examined and described (new evidence may prove this belief to be unfounded). Subsequent families of printings are described on the basis of the earliest printing examined; the dating of these families and the identification of the earliest printing within each will be improved on the basis of information that comes to light as a result of the publication of this bibliography.

The printing and publishing history statement (see below) indicates whether Modern Library printings were from newly set plates (in which case the printings constitute an edition in their own right) or whether the printings were from an original publisher’s plates (in which case the printings constitute a subsidiary edition within the parent edition).

**Binding and Jacket Variants**

The terms *issue* and *state* apply only to the sheets of a book within a single printing. Binding and jacket variants have no bearing on *state* and *issue* as correctly applied. The Modern Library did not always bind an entire printing at the same time. A portion of a printing could be stored as unbound sheets and cased as needed, with the result that books printed at the same time are sometimes found in variant bindings. Boni & Liveright printings can be found in Modern Library, Inc., bindings, for example. Cerf and Klopfer acquired the remaining Boni & Liveright stock when they bought the Modern Library in 1925. Most of the books they acquired had not been cased; the sheets were folded and sewn with Boni & Liveright endpapers tipped onto the outer leaves. Cerf and Klopfer had the sheets cased in the Modern Library, Inc., binding featuring the newly designed torchbearer device. They also printed new Modern Library, Inc., jackets. There is one Boni & Liveright title that was discontinued shortly after 1925 and never reprinted by Cerf and Klopfer, yet they printed a new jacket for it in which the remaining Boni & Liveright copies were sold.

The format and design of Modern Library titles, including binding and jacket variants, are described as much as possible for the series as a whole. The only descriptions of format and design in the entries are for aspects unique to particular titles. The size of the books is indicated only when it differs from the standard format (a few titles were slightly larger so that they could be printed from original plates). The Modern Library always used uniform binding designs and endpapers. Endpapers are described only for the few titles that did not use the standard endpapers of the period. Uniform jacket designs were used for all titles through spring 1928 and for some newly published titles into the 1930s. Descriptions of uniform jackets in the entries refer to the illustrations where they are reproduced; text describing the work from the front panel or jacket flap is reproduced in the entries. An attempt has been made to note all of the variant jackets used within a given family of printings.

**Elements of the Entry**

*Heading*. The boldface heading includes the following elements: (1) bibliography number; (2) author or editor; (3) title; (4) year of publication followed by the year the Modern Library edition was discontinued; (5) Modern Library catalogue number. The bibliography number is unique to this bibliography. Modern Library catalogue numbers were assigned by the publisher and appear in the heading within parentheses. Catalogue numbers of discontinued titles were usually reassigned the following season to newly published titles; some catalogue numbers were used over the years for four or five titles. The Modern Library occasionally changed a title’s catalogue number; in such cases both numbers appear in the heading. Additional information about the change appears in the publishing history notes.

*Subheads for families of printings*. The boldface subhead for each family of printings includes the following elements: (1) expanded bibliography number identifying a specific family of printings, or bibliography number in unexpanded form for Modern Library titles that do not exist in multiple families of printings; (2) short description such as *First printing*, *Text reset*, or *Introduction added*; (3) year of first printing within a family of printings.

*Title page transcription*. Title pages are described using quasi-facsimile transcription. Quasi-facsimile transcription describes each line of the title page. Lines may consist of text, rules, ornaments, publisher’s devices, or an illustration. Line endings are indicated by a vertical stroke [ | ]. References to specific lines later in the entry are by line number; it is the reader’s responsibility to ascertain the line number by counting the vertical strokes indicating line endings. Quasi-facsimile transcriptions reproduce roman, *italic*, script, andgothic types and distinguish capital and lowercase letters. Full and small roman capitals are distinguished when both appear *in the same line*. No further attempt is made to distinguish the size or style of type. Rules, ornaments and illustrations are described in lowercase type enclosed in square brackets. The word “rule” in square brackets refers to a rule that extends the full width of the text page; any rule shorter than this is described as a “short rule” and can range in length from a few millimeters to nearly the full width of the text page. Publisher’s devices such as the Boni & Liveright device and the ML torchbearer are identified with a reference to the illustrations where they are reproduced. The description of a title page that is enclosed entirely within a double rule-frame begins with a statement such as: [within double rules]. A rule-frame is not regarded as a line of the title page and the statement describing it is not followed by a vertical stroke. The first line of the title page is the first line within a rule-frame.

*Pagination statement and collational formula*. The pagination statement accounts for every page of the book and is based on the printed page numerals in the book being described. Unnumbered pages at the beginning or end of a sequence that can be inferred as part of a sequence of numbered pages are indicated within square brackets. Unnumbered pages that cannot be inferred as part of a sequence of numbered pages are indicated as an italicized total within square brackets, as follows: [*6*], 1–280 [281–282]. Unnumbered pages within a sequence of numbered pages are not noted. Two characteristics found in some of the pagination statements require explanation. When the Modern Library used original publishers’ plates it sometimes added new matter to the preliminaries without repaginating the preliminaries of the original edition. The result could be two incompatible sequences of pagination in the preliminaries. These have been transcribed as they appear following the guidelines indicated above.

Leaves containing a fly title (a second half title preceding the opening page of the text) have also presented problems. The fly title is properly regarded as part of the text; when a fly title leaf is present, the text usually begins with p. 3. Occasionally a fly title leaf cannot be inferred as part of the text because the text begins with p. 1. In such cases the fly title and its verso (usually blank) have been transcribed as [*2*] following the guidelines for unnumbered pages that cannot be inferred as part of a sequence of printed page numerals.

The collational formula appears after the pagination statement. The collation indicates how the printed sheets were folded and how a given book was physically put together. This information is primarily of interest to professional bibliographers, but it also reveals useful information about trends in printing and bookmaking practices over the course of the twentieth century. Gatherings in Modern Library books are rarely signed and the number of gatherings is indicated by numerals within square brackets. The number of leaves in each gathering is indicated in superscript numerals outside the square brackets. Abnormal gatherings with inserted or canceled leaves are recorded using conventional formulas containing the symbols “+,” “-,” or “±.” A handful of Modern Library books were printed from older plates containing printed signatures. None of these was printed as signed and the printed signatures are ignored in the collation.

Collational statements are customary in scholarly bibliographies of early printed books. Many bibliographers consider them less important for bibliographies of twentieth century books and they are commonly omitted. I would like to add a personal statement in support of their value. Collations are intensely time consuming: the bibliographer has to go through each book leaf by leaf to determine the number of gatherings and the number of leaves in each. In most Modern Library books the gatherings consist of 8, 16, or 32 leaves. A leaf is a physical unit of a book that can be grasped between the thumb and forefinger; each leaf has two pages, the recto and the verso. Rectos are odd-numbered pages, versos are even-numbered pages. A gathering of 8 leaves consists of 16 pages; a gathering of 16 leaves consists of 32 pages. Not all pages have printed page numbers. Before “perfect” (glued) bindings became the norm in the American trade publishing industry, most hardbound books were sewn. If you open a book at the center of a gathering you can see the thread in the gutter. To compile the collational formula, the bibliographer examines a book leaf by leaf, noting the thread in the center of a gathering, and noting the number of gatherings. If the total number of leaves in a book is not a multiple of 8, 16, or 32, gatherings at the beginning or end of the volume may have fewer leaves than the rest of the volume. Leaves at the end of the volume that are not needed for a book’s printed content may be left blank; with Modern Library books they were often used for lists of titles.

Going through a book with great care and noting the number of leaves in each gathering is a time-consuming process. When I decided to include collations in the bibliography, I had already done title-page transcriptions and pagination statements for the books in my own collection and those of two other major Modern Library collectors I had the benefit of examining during the early stages of the project. Doing the collations for the books in my own collection took about a year. This work was worthwhile in three respects. First, it gave me a level of intimacy with the books as physical objects that a bibliographer ideally should have. Second, it saved me from several errors in recording paginations. The pagination statement records the total number of pages in a book, whether or not the pages are numbered; the collation records the total number of leaves. When correctly recorded, the number of pages is twice the number of leaves. When the Modern Library printed from original publisher’s plates but added material unique to the Modern Library edition such as a new introduction, it was sometimes necessary to omit or add leaves in order to make the ML printing fit a typical 8-leaf format.Third, it revealed trends in printing practices over the course of the twentieth century.

*List of contents*. The list of contents amplifies the pagination statement by indicating the contents of every page of the book, including blank pages. Some statements in the contents list employ quasi-facsimile transcription (for example: v–xiii; INTRODUCTION signed p. xiii: Pearl S. Buck). Generic statements in the contents list are entirely in lower-case letters (for example: [*1*] half title; [i] title; 3–[375] text; [376] blank); any statement entirely in lower-case letters is not part of a quasi-facsimile transcription. Lists of Modern Library titles in volumes published after August 1925 are dated by spring or fall of a given year. The date appears in parentheses following the list of contents. Except for books printed from offset plates, lists of titles in Modern Library books were normally updated in each printing. Any Modern Library list from fall 1925 on can be dated using the dating key.

The verso of the title page is subject to greater change from one printing to another than any other part of Modern Library books except for lists of Modern Library titles, which from 1925 to 1963 were updated twice a year. The verso of the title page is described selectively in the contents list. Publication and manufacturing statements are only noted when they are the *only* printed matter on the page. Copyright statements are given in full using quasi-facsimile transcription, as are *First* statements such as “First Printing” or “FIRST *Modern Library* EDITION.” From fall 1925 on it was customary for first Modern Library printings to include a *First* statement on the verso of the title page. *First* statements were normally removed after the first printing, but there are numerous examples of *First* statements that were retained through two or more printings. The retention of *First* statements on later printings is noted whenever this has been observed. If not noted otherwise, it should be assumed that the *First* statement was removed from subsequent printings within a family. Not all first printings of Modern Library titles had a *First* statement. If a *First* statement is not noted in the description of the first printing it can be assumed that the first printing lacked such a statement. The presence or absence of a *First* statement is never conclusive evidence of priority in Modern Library printings.

Except for books printed from offset plates, Modern Library lists in the back matter usually offer the most conclusive evidence for dating a printing. Books printed from offset plates generally did not include these lists because they were produced from photographic copies of earlier printings. The lists would have been outdated and were excluded.

*Variant printings*. Subsequent printings within a family of printings that vary significantly from the printing described are noted in an indented paragraph headed *Variant*. If more than one variant printing has been noted, the indented paragraphs are headed *Variant A*, *Variant B*, etc. Most variants result from a change in the total number of leaves, a change in the pagination statement because of the removal of a battered page numeral from the plates, or a change in the copyright statement. Variants within a family of printings that are encountered routinely are not noted. These include changes in Modern Library lists in the back matter (including the allocation of pages in the back matter between lists and blank pages), changes in publisher’s notes, and changes in the collational formula that do not result from a change in the number of leaves. (It was common for the plates to be imposed differently from one Modern Library printing to another. Modern Library books were printed initially in 8’s, then in 16’s, then mostly in 32’s. A gathering printed in 16’s in one printing might be printed as two 8’s in another printing. Books that did not consist of an even multiple of sixteen leaves usually placed the gathering of four, eight, or twelve leaves at the end of the book until the late 1940s when such gatherings began to appear in the penultimate position followed by a gathering in 16’s.

*Contents note*. A contents note headed *Contents* lists the works included in original Modern Library collections and anthologies unless these have been fully listed in the list of contents. I have used the term “collection” to refer to a volume consisting of multiple works by a single author, and the word “anthology” to refer to a volume consisting of the works of multiple authors. (As noted above, the “List of contents” is primarily concerned with the physical make-up of a book and accounts for the contents of every page. The “Contents note” is concerned solely with intellectual contents and does not indicate page numbers.) Some contents notes for poetry anthologies list the poets included and the number of poems by each but do not attempt to list individual poems by title.

*Jackets*. Jacket descriptions appear in separate paragraphs headed *Jacket*. Each jacket design used within a family of printings is described separately; if there are multiple jackets, the paragraphs are headed *Jacket A*, *Jacket B*, etc. Uniform typographic jacket designs are identified with reference to structure and composition. Other jackets are described individually. Jacket descriptions include enough information to distinguish successive jackets within a family of printings but do not fully describe each jacket. Most descriptions of individually designed jackets describe the front panel only; the jacket spine is described when it differs significantly from the design of the front panel. Colors have been described according to *ISCC-NBS Color-Name Charts Illustrated with Centroid Colors* published by the National Bureau of Standards. Back panels of Modern Library jackets were uniform; successive back panel designs are described and illustrated in the section on format and design.

Jacket descriptions transcribe the descriptive paragraphs about the work. These descriptive paragraphs appeared on the front panel of uniform typographic jackets used from 1917 through spring 1928 and on the front flap of jackets from fall 1933 on. (Jackets printed from fall 1928 through spring 1933 had brief blurbs on the front panel but no descriptive paragraphs about the work.) The descriptive paragraphs sometimes indicate why a work was included in the Modern Library and provide valuable information about how canonical and semi-canonical works were presented to American readers at given periods. Descriptive paragraphs for works that remained in the Modern Library for decades were commonly rewritten several times. The transcription of successive descriptive paragraphs for a work like *Madame Bovary*, which was in the Modern Library since 1917, can be especially interesting.

Beginning in fall 1953, the text on the flaps and back panels of Modern Library jackets was reset in sans-serif type. Most of the descriptive paragraphs were reset without change but some were extensively rewritten and others were slightly revised. Major changes are fully described. An attempt has been made to incorporate minor revisions in the transcriptions of the original paragraphs using square brackets around alterations together with the symbols “-,” “+,” and “±” to indicate deletions from the original text and additions or substitutions in the reset text.

Jackets from fall 1925 through fall 1963 included a complete list of current Modern Library titles that were updated twice a year. Each printing of Modern Library jackets used the current list. Jacket descriptions from fall 1925 through fall 1963 are dated by spring or fall of a given year on the basis of the list of titles. Any Modern Library jacket containing a list of titles can be dated using the dating key. It must be remembered that a date assigned to a jacket does not conclusively date the book inside the jacket. Most Modern Library printings were distributed with newly printed jackets that correspond to the date of the printing, but there were occasions when older jackets were used on at least some copies of a printing. At one period in the 1930s, Modern Library sales representatives carried stocks of replacement jackets so they could freshen Modern Library displays in bookstores; sales representatives were encouraged to offer to freshen Modern Library stocks as a way of getting their foot in the door when booksellers protested they did not need additional books. Switching jackets from one copy of a book to another has always been a common practice among collectors and booksellers. The only reasonably certain way of dating a given printing of a Modern Library book is by means of a Modern Library list at the end of the book. But not all titles or all printings of a given title include Modern Library lists. And while lists at the end of the book were normally updated in each printing from letterpress plates, lists in books printed from offset plates were not always updated.

*Printing and publishing history statement and sources*. A paragraph with printing and publishing history information follows the bibliographical description. The original American publisher is identified for modern works. Modern Library printings have been compared with the original publisher’s printings to ascertain the source of the plates. For titles printed from an original publisher’s plates, the precise pages printed from the plates are identified, making it easy to distinguish content that is original to Modern Library printings. Content omitted from original publishers’ printings (such as illustrations, introductions or indexes) is also noted. The phrase “printed from newly set plates” indicates that the Modern Library printed from plates made from an original typesetting; Modern Library printings from newly set plates constitute a new bibliographical edition as defined above. The publication date as announced by the Modern Library is indicated; the date is rarely more precise than the month or season of a given year. Following the announced publication date is the date the Modern Library edition was listed in the “Weekly Record” section of *Publishers’ Weekly*, designated with the initials *WR*. The next element of the printing and publishing history statement is the number of copies in the first Modern Library printing, if this has been ascertained. The last element is the date the Modern Library edition was discontinued, if applicable.

The publishing history notes are based primarily on research in the Random House archives at Columbia University Library. Other archival collections consulted include the Horace Liveright Papers at the University of Pennsylvania Library, Boni & Liveright archives in the possession of the W. W. Norton Co., and several other manuscript collections. The publishing history notes include information about reprint negotiations, financial arrangements with original publishers, negotiations with authors of introductions, and information on printings, and sales. The information provided under each entry varies according to which records survived in the archival collections consulted. Collectively the publishing history notes make a significant contribution to our knowledge of twentieth-century reprint publishing.