

The Guide to William James's Reading and How to Use it.

In a letter dated February 24, 1923, William James's son Henry James III wrote the director of Widener Library to ask if Harvard University would be interested in obtaining the contents of his father's library. Henry III concedes that the volumes are neither "rare nor valuable editions," but insisted that James's "annotations give them an interest, especially if they are grouped together." This evaluation of James's marginalia as significant was taken up and perpetuated by Ralph Barton Perry, a student of James and a Professor of Philosophy at Harvard until 1946. Perry undertook to compile what James had written in and marked in his own books. Perry's work on "William James Sources" here abbreviated as WJS consists of "Notes and marked passages found in James's Library in books which were afterwards sold." The records made by Perry are in Houghton Library today under the catalogue number bMsAm 1092.9 (4578).

A Guide to William James's Reading seeks to continue Perry's work, but on a much wider scale. The core of this extended list is an alphabetical presentation of all the books, articles and poems James is known to have read and referred to in his own writings. Books referred to in James's major writings are listed here, as are books mentioned in his correspondence. In addition, books mentioned in several unpublished notebooks are also included. Books from James's library are listed here as *WJHough* and can be found in the Houghton Library Catalogue. A notebook James began in 1864 called *Index Rerum* and now in Houghton under the call number bMsAm 1092.9 (4520) contains many comments on his reading. So does another notebook James started in Cambridge in 1862, called here WJNB1. It is in Houghton under call no bMsAm 1092.9 (4495). Comments on James's reading from all these manuscripts are included here. Perry's list, referenced above, has also been included.

Each entry gives as much information as we have as to where James mentions it, (indicated by an M) makes a note about it (indicated by an N) or quotes it, (indicated by a Q). James own words are printed in **bold**. Other annotations not in bold are from archivists, cataloguers and editors.

A sample entry:

Abbott, Thomas Kingsmill. *Sight and Touch: An attempt to disprove the Received (or Berkeleian) Theory of Vision*. London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, and Green, 1864. M in WJ note in PP, p. 687. WJS, entry 88, p. 6. Fly-leaf: **48,50,54-55, 78, 95; the original explanation of monocular sign of distance, 99; approaching engine, 124**: marginal markings throughout. M in WJIR p. Vi under "Vision." **Reviewed in North British Review vol. XLI no. LXXXI (August 1864: 199-230.**

Explanation of sample entry. James mentions the book in his *Principles of Psychology*, in a note to be found on p. 687 of the modern Harvard edition. The page numbers and the comment in bold were written by James in the book, recorded by Perry in his listing of William James's Sources, (WJS.) The book was likely sold and is not in the Harvard Library. The same work was mentioned by James in his Index Rerum, on page Vi where he noted a review of it. (the numbering of this notebook is by Capital letters and subheads in lower case numbers. Vi is followed by Vii, which is followed by Viii)

Large as this list may at first appear, it is still incomplete. The goal is to be an ongoing project, and it is hoped that subsequent entries may be made by mining primary sources that have not yet been consulted. But even in its present form, the *Guide* provides a great deal of information about what James knew and thought and it should be of permanent usefulness to future work on William James.

Grateful acknowledgment is hereby made to the work of Nathan Eddy and Megan Carnes, who began this compilation in the late 1990s working under the direction of Robert Richardson, the James biographer who has continued in a supervisory capacity over my own work.

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June 2014