

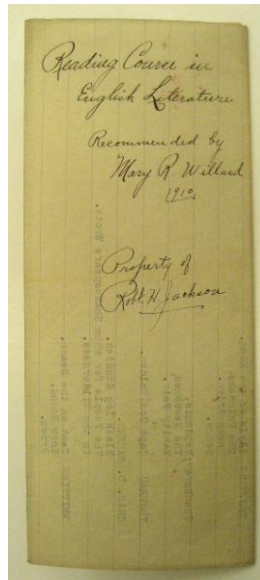
Miss Willard's English Reading List (1910)

*John Q. Barrett**

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In 1909, Robert H. Jackson, age 17, graduated from the high school in his boyhood hometown, Frewsburg, New York. That Fall, he began to commute northward by trolley each day—about six miles—to Jamestown, New York. He attended Jamestown High School as a senior, taking subjects that had not been offered in Frewsburg.

At Jamestown High School, Robert Jackson came to be influenced, deeply, by an English teacher, Miss Mary Willard. He took her courses in English and English History. He also studied with her outside of class. In 1910, she gave him a carbon copy of a typed, four-page list of recommended readings—it became, as he wrote on it, “Property of Robt. H. Jackson.” Soon thereafter, Miss Willard gave him a mimeographed



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For an archive of selected Jackson List posts, many of which have document images attached, visit <http://thejacksonlist.com>.

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MISS WILLARD'S ENGLISH READING LIST (1910)

copy of a retyped, slightly longer version of the list—an expanded edition, it seems.

Jackson kept both documents for the rest of his life.¹ The five-page version:

**READING COURSE IN ENGLISH LITERATURE.
RECOMMENDED BY MARY R. WILLARD 1910**

JOSEPH ADDISON:

Sir Roger de Coverly Papers.

MATTHEW ARNOLD:

Schrab and Rustum.[²]

Sonnet on Shakespeare.

THOS. B. ALDRICH:

Marjorie Daw.

The Story of a Bad Boy.

The Queen of Sheba.

Poems.

BIBLE Book of:

Genesis- Exodus-Ruth.

1&2 Samuel- 1 &2 Kings.

Esther, Daniel, The New Testament.

BROWNING, ROBERT:

Saul (?)

Prospice.

A Death in the Desert.

Pippa Passes.

A Blot in the Scutchon.

Pheidippides.

The Pied Piper of Hamelin.

Epistle of Karshish.

¹ They are in the Robert H. Jackson Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C., Box 244, Folder 2.

² In fact, Arnold's poem is titled "Sohrab and Rustum"—see www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/172860. As retyped here, this list preserves the word typos that someone, perhaps Mary Willard herself, made.

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JOHN BURROUGHS:

Wake Robin.
Sharp Eyes.
Essay on Walt Whitman.

MRS. ELIZABETH BROWNING:

The Cry of the Children.
Mother and Poet.
Sonnets from the Portuguese.

DR. JOHN BROWN:

Rab and his Friends.
Marjorie Fleming.

BUNYAN:

Pilgrim's Progress.

BURNS:

Cotter's Saturday Night.
To a Field Mouse.
To a Mountain Daisy.
On Seeing a Louse on a Ladies Bonnet.
To Mary in Heaven.
Songs.

CARLYLE:

Sartre Resartus.
Essays on Burns.
Heroes and Hero Worship.

JAMES FREEMAN CLARK:

Self-Culture.

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS:

Prue and I.

CERVANTES:

Don Quixote.

MISS WILLARD'S ENGLISH READING LIST (1910)

CHAUCER:

Prologue to the Canterbury Tales.
Patient Griselda.
Palamon & Arcite (?)^[3]

COLERIDGE:

Ancient Mariner.
Christabel.
Kubla Khan.

DE QUINCEY:

Essay on Joan of Arc.
Essay on Burns.
Confessions of an Opium Eater.
Flight of a Tartar Tribe.

DICKENS:

Our Mutual Friend.
Bleak House.
Tale of Two Cities.
Christmas Carol.
Martin Chuzzlewit.
David Copperfield.

ALEXANDER DUMAS:

Count of Monte Christo.
The Three Musketeers.

DRYDEN:

Ode on St. Cecillie's Day.
Palamon & Arcite (?)^[4]

³ This typed question mark suggests that the typist knew that this wasn't quite right—these Chaucer characters, in *THE CANTERBURY TALES*, are Palamon and Arcite. (Indeed, I've been told that these names are actually spelled in two different ways in the original, to fit requirements of rhyme (Palamon or Palamoun) or rhythm (Arcite in two syllables or Arcita in three syllables).)

⁴ See *supra* note 3—John Dryden's "Palamon and Arcite" is his translation of Chaucer's work.

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EMERSON:

Essay on American Scholar.

""""""""""Compensation.

""""""""""Friendship.

""""""""""Gifts.

""""""""""Self-Reliance.

Concord Hymn.

GEORGE ELIOT:

Silas Marner.

Romola.

Adam Bede.

GOLDSMITH:

The Deserted Village.

She Stoops to Conquer.

GRAY:

Elegy in a Country Churchyard.

MRS. GASKELL:

Cranford.

EDWARD EVERET HALE:

A Man Without a Country.

OLIVER WENDEL HOLMES:

The Chambered Nautilus.

Old Ironsides.

LEIGH HUNT:

Abou Ben Adhem.

JAMES HOGG:

Poems.

VICTOR HUGO:

Les Miserables.

MISS WILLARD'S ENGLISH READING LIST (1910)

IBSEN:

Pere Gynt.
Dolls House.
Ghosts.
Master Builder.

WASHINGTON IRVING:

Sketch Book.
Knickerbocker's History of New York.

KEATS:

Ode to a Nightingale.
Ode to Autumn.
Ode to a Grecian Urn.
The Eve of St. Agnes.

THOMAS a' KEMPIS:

The Imitation of Christ.

KIPLING:

Mine Own People.
Plain Tales from the Hills.
Soldiers Three.
Recessional.

KINGSLEY:

Water Babies.

LANIER: The Symphony.

Corn.
Sunrise.

LONGFELLOW:

Tales of a Wayside Inn.
Building of the Ship.
The Arsenal at Springfield.

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LOWELL:

Commemoration Ode.
Vision of Sir Lannfal.
Table for Critics.
Prayer of Agassiz.

MACAULAY:

Essay on Milton.
"Addison.
"Sam'l Johnson.
"Earl of Chatham.
Lays of Ancient Rome.

MILTON:

Lycidas.
L'Allegro.
Il' Penseroso.
Comus.
Sonnet on His Blindness.
Samson Agonistes.

DONALD G. MITCHEL:

Reveries of a Bachelor.
Dream Life.

MERY N. MITFORD:

Our Village.

PRESCOTT:

Conquest of Peru.

STEPHEN PHILLIPS:

Paolo & Francesca.
Herod.
The Sin of David.

RUSKIN:

Sesame & Lilies.

MISS WILLARD'S ENGLISH READING LIST (1910)

SCOTT:

Ivanhoe.
Kenilworth.
Marmion.
Lay of the Last Minstrel.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE:

Comedy:

Tempest.
Midsummer Night's Dream.
Winter's Tale.

Tragedy:

Hamlet.
King Lear.
Othello.

History:

Henry IV (I&II)
Henry V
Richard III

Songs and Sonnets.

SHELLEY:

The Cloud.
Ode to a Skylark.

HERBERT SPENCER:

The Philosophy of Style.

STEVENSON:

Verginibus Puerisque.

STERNE:

A Sentimental Journey.

EDMUND SPENSER:

Faerie Queen B'ks 1 & 2
Prothalamion.
Epithalamion.

MISS WILLARD'S ENGLISH READING LIST (1910)

JEREMY TAYLOR:
Holy Living.

TENNYSON:
Idyls of the King.
The Princess.
Enoch Arden.
Songs.

THACKERAY:
Pendemis.
The Newcomes.
Vanity Fair.

THOREAU:
Cape Cod Walden.

CHAS B. WARNER:
Black Log Studies.
The People for whom Shakespeare Wrote.
In the Wilderness.

WHITTIER:
Tent on the Beach.
Snow Bound.
Proem.

WORDSWORTH:
Ode to Duty.
Laodamea.
Rye Re-visited.

* * *

People ask how Robert H. Jackson, from humble origins and lacking higher education, became one of the finest writers in American public life, U.S. Supreme Court history, international relations and maybe generally. My answers are that he had natural talents, sufficient resources, a love of learning, special teachers, and drive. And that he read—thanks to Mary Willard and others, he read, savored, recited, memorized and thus, in

his speaking and writing, consciously and unconsciously, emulated great works.

* * *

Two links—

- After Mary Willard's death in 1931, then-Jamestown attorney Robert Jackson wrote and delivered this tribute speech: <http://www.roberthjackson.org/the-man/speeches-articles/speeches/speeches-by-robert-h-jackson/tribute-to-mary-willard/>.
- Currently on display at the Robert H. Jackson Center in Jamestown is an excellent exhibit on Mary Willard's life and work, "Say, I Taught Thee," produced by Jennifer J. Champ—for more information, visit the exhibit's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/events/482202298572473/>.

And more information about Miss Mary R. Willard is in the Jackson List archive: <http://thejacksonlist.com/>.