Alexander Pope (1688 – 1744) was a poet famous for his moral satires and mock epics, as well as his use of the heroic couplet. His professional opportunities were limited because of his Catholic faith and poor health throughout his life.

Pope began his foray into pastoral poetry with his first major poem, *Pastorals* (1705). He explored the intellectual and emotional reach of poetry within formal composition rules, satirizing the poet’s dedication to these rules in his famous poem *An Essay on Criticism* (1711). In 1712 Pope started to write mock epic poetry with the *Rape of the Lock*, which he followed with a famous verse translation of Homer’s *Iliad*, which took six years to complete.

During the 1720s, Pope published multiple versions of a mock heroic the *Dunciads*, cementing his reputation as a satirist. However, his poem *An Essay on Man* (1734-35) marked a move away from satire back to the poetic essay. He continued to write poetic epistles, as well as the *Books of Horace*, until his death in 1744.

*The Works of Alexander Pope Esq. In Nine Volumes Complete* was published in 1751, and became the primary edition of Pope’s works.

Evidence for Inclusion in Wythe’s Library

Listed in the *Jefferson Inventory of Wythe’s Library* as *Pope’s works. S. v. 8vo.* and given by *Thomas Jefferson* to his daughter *Martha*. The precise edition of the set owned by Wythe is unknown. *George Wythe’s Library* on LibraryThing indicates as much, adding “Numerous nine-volume editions in octavo were published, the first at London in 1751.” The *Brown Bibliography* lists the first edition (1750-1751) published in London, and this was the edition purchased by the Wolf Law Library.

Description of the Wolf Law Library's copy

Bound in nineteenth century hard-grained morocco, spines and edges gilt, with silk markers in each volume. Ownership inscription in each volume of J. Barnard; bookplates of Charles and Mary Lacaita on each front pastedown. Purchased from Christopher Edwards. Images of the library’s copy of this book are available on Flickr. View the record for this book in William & Mary’s online catalog.
The English poet Alexander Pope is regarded as one of the finest poets and satirists (people who use wit or sarcasm to point out and devalue sin or silliness) of the Augustan (mid-seventeenth to mid-eighteenth century English literature) period and one of the major influences on English literature in this time and after. Early years. Alexander Pope was born on May 21, 1688, in London, England, to Alexander and Edith Pope. Then, in 1725, Pope's six volumes on the works of William Shakespeare (1564–1616) were published. Pope's edits and explanatory notes were notoriously capricious (impulsive and not scholarly). His edition was attacked by Lewis Theobald in Shakespeare Restored (1726), a work that revealed a superior knowledge of editorial technique. Alexander Pope (21 May 1688 – 30 May 1744) was an 18th-century English poet. He is best known for his satirical verse, including Essay on Criticism, The Rape of the Lock and The Dunciad, and for his translation of Homer. He is the second-most frequently quoted writer in The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations after Shakespeare. From the age of 12, he suffered numerous health problems including Pott's disease, which deformed his body and stunted his growth. He also suffered from respiratory difficulties.