

Cambridge University Press  
978-0-521-03228-5 - A History of Augustan Fable  
Mark Loveridge  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

## A HISTORY OF AUGUSTAN FABLE

This book explores the tradition of fable across a wide variety of written and illustrative media, from its origins in classical antiquity to the end of the eighteenth century and beyond. It offers both a history and a poetics of the genre, presenting a body of evidence on the stable and transhistorical qualities of fable, while showing that many individual writers consciously employed these qualities in dynamic and witty ways highly responsive to their own historical and cultural moment. Tracing the impact of classical and European models on verse and moral fables of the eighteenth century, and the use of the fable by major writers – including Dryden, Pope, Mandeville, Swift, Gay, and Cowper – in their historical and literary contexts, Mark Loveridge offers the first full account of a significant form of English and European literature and suggests new ways of reading eighteenth-century literature.

Mark Loveridge is Lecturer in English at the University of Wales, Swansea, and author of *Laurence Sterne and the Argument about Design* (1982).

Cambridge University Press  
978-0-521-03228-5 - A History of Augustan Fable  
Mark Loveridge  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

# A HISTORY OF AUGUSTAN FABLE

MARK LOVERIDGE



**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press  
 978-0-521-03228-5 - A History of Augustan Fable  
 Mark Loveridge  
 Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
 Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press  
 The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)  
 Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9780521630627](http://www.cambridge.org/9780521630627)

© Mark Loveridge 1998

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception  
 and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,  
 no reproduction of any part may take place without  
 the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 1998  
 This digitally printed first paperback version 2006

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data*

- Loveridge, Mark, 1951–  
 A history of Augustan fable / Mark Loveridge.  
 p. cm.  
 Includes bibliographical references and index.  
 ISBN 0 521 63062 2 (hardback)  
 1. Fables. English – History and criticism.  
 2. English literature – 18th century – History and criticism.  
 3. English literature – Early modern, 1500–1700 – History and criticism.  
 4. Didactic, literature, English – History and criticism.  
 5. English literature – Classical influences.  
 6. Moral, conditions in literature.  
 7. Animals in literature. 8. Ethics in literature.  
 9. Literary form. I. Title.  
 PR448.F34L68 1998  
 820.9'005–dc21 97–32207 CIP

ISBN-13 978-0-521-63062-7 hardback  
 ISBN-10 0-521-63062-2 hardback

ISBN-13 978-0-521-03228-5 paperback  
 ISBN-10 0-521-03228-8 paperback

Cambridge University Press  
978-0-521-03228-5 - A History of Augustan Fable  
Mark Loveridge  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

*For Kate*

Cambridge University Press  
978-0-521-03228-5 - A History of Augustan Fable  
Mark Loveridge  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

Contents

<i>List of illustrations</i>	<i>page</i> ix
<i>Preface and acknowledgements</i>	xi
<i>List of abbreviations</i>	xiii
1 Introduction	I
2 Fables and novels	14
3 The Peachum position	30
4 History, transmission, kindred	62
5 The fable in the wars: Ogilby and after	102
6 Transitions: Dryden to Mandeville	143
7 High Augustan fable: Mandeville, Swift and Gay	189
8 Gay to Cowper: the diaspora of fable	247
<i>References</i>	263
<i>Index</i>	275

# *Illustrations*

1	Randolph Caldecott: ‘The Stag Looking Into the Water’, illustration from <i>Some of Aesop’s Fables, with Modern Instances, shewn in Designs by Randolph Caldecott, from new Translations by Alfred Caldecott</i> (1883).	page 37
2	J. J. Grandville, ‘The Cockerel and the Pearl’, illustration from <i>Fables de La Fontaine</i> (Paris, 1838).	39
3	Randolph Caldecott, ‘The Cockerel and the Pearl’, illustration from <i>Some of Aesop’s Fables</i> .	39
4	‘Wolf and Stork/Fox and Crow’, ‘The Lion’s Share’, ‘The Swallow and Other Birds’, from the Bayeux Tapestry.	72
5	Randolph Caldecott, ‘The Lion’s Share’, illustration from <i>Some of Aesop’s Fables</i> .	77
6	J. J. Grandville, ‘The Lion Humbled by Man’, illustration from <i>Fables de La Fontaine</i> .	85
7	Wenceslaus Hollar, ‘Of the Tortoise and the Eagle’, illustration from John Ogilby, <i>The Fables of Aesop, Paraphras’d in Verse, Adorn’d with Sculpture, and Illustrated with Annotations</i> (1668).	109
8	Wenceslaus Hollar, ‘Of the Frog and Mouse’, illustration from John Ogilby, <i>The Fables of Aesop</i> .	112
9	Wenceslaus Hollar, ‘Of the File and the Viper’, illustration from John Ogilby, <i>The Fables of Aesop</i> .	117
10	Wenceslaus Hollar, ‘Of Cupid and Death’, illustration from John Ogilby, <i>The Fables of Aesop</i> .	120
11	Wenceslaus Hollar, ‘Of the Frogs Fearing the Sun Would Marry’, illustration from John Ogilby, <i>The Fables of Aesop</i> .	125
12	Wenceslaus Hollar, ‘Of the Swan and Stork’, illustration from John Ogilby, <i>Aesopics, or a second Collection of Fables</i> (1668).	129
13	Thomas Chippendale, design for a <i>girandole</i> , featuring Fox and Grapes, from Thomas Chippendale, <i>The Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker’s Director</i> .	140

Cambridge University Press  
978-0-521-03228-5 - A History of Augustan Fable  
Mark Loveridge  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

x

*Illustrations*

Illustrations by Randolph Caldecott from *Some of Aesop's Fables* (nos. 1, 3, and 5), by J. J. Grandville, from *Fables de La Fontaine* (Nos. 2 and 6), and from the Bayeux Tapestry (No. 4) are printed from copies in the author's possession. Illustrations from John Ogilby's *The Fables of Aesop* (Nos. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11), from his *Aesopics* (No. 12), and Thomas Chippendale's design for a *girandole* from *The Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director* (No. 13) are all printed by permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library.

Cambridge University Press  
978-0-521-03228-5 - A History of Augustan Fable  
Mark Loveridge  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

## *Preface and acknowledgements*

This project has been under way for so long that acknowledging its debts is like the moment in *Waiting for Godot* when a stage direction instructs Gogo to gesture at the universe. Everyone knew something interesting about this kind of fable which I did not know: that was one of the things that so impressed me about the subject. Could anyone who has ever helped me please consider themselves thanked. However, I would like to single out for particular thanks my students and colleagues in the English department at Swansea, particularly Ian Bell, Andrew Varney, Sam Dawson, and Glyn Pursglove, and John Morgan in Classics; Howard Erskine-Hill, James Raven, and the students in the 'long eighteenth century' seminar at Cambridge; the staffs of libraries in London, Swansea, and Cambridge; R. P. Davies of the photographic unit at Swansea; Josie Dixon at Cambridge University Press, especially for her patience; and the Press's inscrutable but very sensible readers. Tomoko Hanazaki is due a public apology: he sent me a copy of his article which I promptly misplaced for two years.

The largest debt, though, apart from the one in the dedication, is to the writers of the several very good Ph.D theses on fable which, until about 1990, represented almost the whole of the work in this field. As far as I know, none of these apart from Thomas Noel's ever came to publication, presumably because the field was deemed not to exist. They deserved better. Things have changed a little since, but I am still conscious that part of my remit here is to *open* the subject as fully as possible.

One result of this consciousness is something for which I probably need to apologize to the reader. This is the use of a version of the 'author-date' reference system, which is not supposed to be viable in the Arts because of insuperable difficulties which I have tried to sidestep more or less elegantly, and which the reader may find distracting because unfamiliar. It became clear in the course of writing that the



temptation to document the subject at all fully by adding footnotes and a bibliography was going to have to be resisted in the interests of presenting the outline of the case clearly. Author-date was the only way of forcing this discipline upon myself. The book might have been six times as large: there are more verse fables in the Augustan period than there are sonnets in the Renaissance, in English. What I wanted to stress was the persistence of the *generic tradition* across a variety of media, and so to describe a way of reading and writing – a manner of proceeding – which I think was inherent in the period but which has since been lost. To do this I have had to proceed somewhat on my own terms, and to keep scholarly interventions as light as possible. In those sections where large amounts of information are being passed at speed, I have usually indicated the source of the data elliptically by brief quotation. The most notable omission is probably Anne Finch, Countess Winchilsea: the reader is referred to Jayne Lewis's chapter on her.

The other apology is that I have not been able to make more of the material with which I concern myself directly visible to the reader. There is no anthology or collection of this literature: there is no widely available modern edition of Babrius and Phaedrus, apart from Perry's *Babrius and Phaedrus*, which dates from 1965. There is no accessible edition of Ogilby's fables apart from the Augustan Society reprint, also from 1965. How does one find out whether Smart's Story of a cock and BULL and Hall-Stevenson's fables might really have something to do with *Tristram Shandy*? Whether generations of readers were wholly wrong to prefer Moore's *Fables for the Female Sex* to those of Gay? Why Croxall's was the most popular prose collection until well into the nineteenth century, why La Motte's fables were preferred in English to those of La Fontaine – and so on. For the moment, apart from the canonical writers whom I have treated at some length, the proof of the pudding must rest in the morsels provided herein. But, as Confucius says, *this too will change*.

# Abbreviations

<i>BNYPL</i>	<i>Bulletin of the New York Public Library</i>
<i>CR</i>	<i>Critical Review; or, Annals of Literature</i>
<i>EC</i>	<i>Essays in Criticism</i>
<i>ECS</i>	<i>Eighteenth-Century Studies</i>
<i>ELH</i>	<i>Journal of English Literary History</i>
<i>GJ</i>	<i>The Gentleman's Journal</i>
<i>GM</i>	<i>The Gentleman's Magazine</i>
<i>JEGP</i>	<i>Journal of English and Germanic Philology</i>
<i>JHI</i>	<i>Journal of the History of Ideas</i>
<i>MLN</i>	<i>Modern Language Notes</i>
<i>MLR</i>	<i>Modern Language Review</i>
<i>MP</i>	<i>Modern Philology</i>
<i>PMLA</i>	<i>Publications of the Modern Language Society of America</i>
<i>POAS</i>	<i>Poems on Affairs of State: Augustan Satirical Verse, 1660–1714</i>
<i>RES</i>	<i>Review of English Studies</i>
<i>SEL</i>	<i>Studies in English Literature</i>
<i>UTQ</i>	<i>University of Toronto Quarterly</i>

Please note that in the text animals are given an initial capital letter when they are being discussed as the actors in fables, but a lower-case one where it is, or is more, a question of nature. The generic or general name of a fable – for example The Lion's Share – is designated by capitals without inverted commas. This form of reference has been extended, as a form of compliment, to one or two other works referred to in the text.