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*Landmarks of world literature*

Gustave Flaubert

MADAME BOVARY

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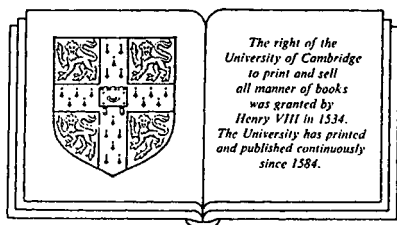
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GUSTAVE FLAUBERT

# Madame Bovary

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Published by the Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge  
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1RP  
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA  
10 Stamford Road, Oakleigh, Victoria 3166, Australia

© Cambridge University Press 1992

First published 1992

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

*Library of Congress cataloguing in publication data*

Heath, Stephen.

Gustave Flaubert, Madame Bovary / Stephen Heath.

p. cm. – (Landmarks of world literature)

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 0 521 32805 5. – ISBN 0 521 31483 6 (paperback)

I. Flaubert, Gustave, 1821–1880. Madame Bovary. I. Title.

II. Series.

PQ2246. M3H38 1992 91–19758

843'.8 – dc20 CIP

ISBN 0 521 32805 5 hardback

ISBN 0 521 31483 6 paperback

Transferred to digital printing 1999

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‘Le but? le but? le sens? qui le sait?’

Flaubert, *Par les champs et par les grèves*, 1847

(OC II, 484)

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## *Note on references*

References to *Madame Bovary* are to part and chapter numbers and are given in brackets after quotations (e.g. II,7). The text used is that of the Classiques Garnier edition by Claudine Gothot-Mersch, Paris, Garnier, 1971. Translations are largely my own, though the available English versions have been consulted and their renderings used where appropriate; details of these versions can be found in the Guide to further reading.

Quotations from other works by Flaubert, as from the speeches and judgement at the trial of *Madame Bovary*, are from *Oeuvres complètes*, 2 volumes, Collection l'Intégrale, Paris, Seuil, 1964, abbreviated *OC* with references given to volume and page numbers (e.g. *OC* I, 302). Exceptions are quotations from (i) *Dictionnaire des idées reçues*, references to which are to the Folio edition of *Bouvard et Pécuchet* by Claudine Gothot-Mersch, Paris, Gallimard, 1979 (the most complete and methodical edition available, including a number of 'idées' not in *OC*), abbreviated *BP* and accompanied by the page number (e.g. *BP*, 341); (ii) the notebook kept by Flaubert from c.1838–41 entitled (by his niece) *Souvenirs, notes et pensées intimes*, where references are to the edition by J. P. Germain, Paris, A.-G. Nizet, 1987, abbreviated *SNPI* with the page number following (e.g. *SNPI*, 26); (iii) the draft material for *Madame Bovary* published, with initial plans, scenarios and sketches, as *Madame Bovary, nouvelle version précédée des scénarios inédits*, edited by Jean Pommier and Gabrielle Leleu, Paris, José Corti, 1949, references being given to the page number after the abbreviation *NV* (e.g. *NV*, 103).

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References to Flaubert's letters are made by date and correspondent, using initials for the latter as follows: C – Louise Colet; B – Louis Bouilhet (these two are the recipients of the majority of the letters quoted here); EC – Ernest Chevalier; MDC – Maxime Du Camp; JD – Jules Duplan; EF – Ernest Feydeau; ALP – Alfred Le Poittevin; LdC – Marie-Sophie Leroyer de Chantepie; RdG – Edma Roger des Genettes; GS – George Sand (thus '23 December 1853, C' means a letter of that date to Louise Colet; 'April 1857 EF', a letter to Ernest Feydeau of that month and year, day unknown; and so on); other correspondents are indicated by name on the one or two occasions each occurs; in cases where the context already clearly identifies the correspondent no initial or name is given. The source for most of the quotations is the edition of the *Correspondance* by Jean Bruneau, the three volumes of which so far published cover the years 1830–68, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, Paris, Gallimard, 1973, 1980 and 1991; for later letters the edition used is *Œuvres complètes de Gustave Flaubert*, Paris, Club de l'Honnête Homme, 1971–5, volumes XII–XVI. Wherever possible translations are based on the small selection of the letters translated by Francis Steegmuller, *The Letters of Gustave Flaubert*, 2 volumes, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, and London, Faber, 1980 and 1982.

Information regarding other works mentioned in the text is given, where appropriate, in the Guide to further reading.



## Chronology

	<i>Flaubert's life and works</i>	<i>Literary events</i>	<i>Historical events</i>
1821	12 December: born in the Hôtel-Dieu, Rouen, where his father is surgeon-in-chief; there is an elder brother, Achille aged eight	Hegel, <i>Philosophy of Right</i>	Death of Napoleon
1822		Hugo, <i>Odes et poésies diverses</i>	
1823		Stendhal, <i>Racine et Shakespeare</i> Scott, <i>Quentin Durward</i>	
1824	Birth of sister, Caroline	Death of Byron at Missolonghi	Death of Louis XVIII, succeeded by Charles X; power of the clerical party ('ultras'), refusal of political reform
1826		Vigny, <i>Poèmes antiques et modernes</i> ; Cinq-Mars Cooper, <i>The Last of the Mohicans</i>	
1827		Hugo, <i>Cromwell</i>	

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1829	Balzac, <i>Le Dernier Chouan</i> , <i>Physiologie du mariage</i> Hugo, <i>Les Orientales</i>	Stephenson's <i>Rocket</i>
1830	Hugo, <i>Hernani</i> Lamartine, <i>Harmonies</i> <i>poétiques et religieuses</i> Stendhal, <i>Le Rouge et le Noir</i>	Capture of Algiers, start of French colonial presence in Algeria July Revolution against reactionary and authoritarian regime; abdication of Charles, succeeded by Louis-Philippe, 'the bourgeois king'; power of the constitutional party, industry and finance
1830–48		July Monarchy
1831	Hugo, <i>Notre-Dame de Paris</i>	
1832	Balzac, <i>Louis Lambert</i> Vigny, <i>Stello</i> Beginning of the satirical paper <i>Le Charivari</i> ; Daumier imprisoned for caricature of Louis-Philippe Goethe, <i>Faust II</i>	First Reform Act (England)
1833	Balzac, <i>Le Médecin de</i> <i>campagne</i> ; <i>Engénie Grandet</i> Sand, <i>Lélia</i>	

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	<i>Flaubert's life and works</i>	<i>Literary events</i>	<i>Historical events</i>
1834	Start of friendship with Louis Bouilhet; beginning of period of intense early literary activity	Balzac, <i>Le Père Goriot</i> Musset, <i>Lorenzaccio</i> Sainte-Beuve, <i>Volupté</i>	Repression of worker insurrections in Lyon and Paris Poor Law Reform Act (England)
1835		Lamartine, <i>Voyage en Orient</i> Vigny, <i>Chatterton</i> Büchner, <i>Danton's Death</i>	Attempt by Fieschi on Louis-Philippe's life; increasingly repressive laws against right of association and freedom of Press
1836	On holiday at Trouville, falls in love with Elisa Foucault, twenty-five, companion and soon wife of Maurice Schlesinger: the 'only true passion' of his life, image of the loved but inaccessible woman	Gautier, <i>Mademoiselle de Maupin</i> Musset, <i>La Confession d'un enfant du siècle</i> Dickens, <i>Pickwick Papers</i>	
1837	Publication of two stories in local literary journal; writes <i>Passion et vertu</i> , a premonition of <i>Madame Bovary</i>	Balzac, <i>Illusions perdues</i> (Part I) Carlyle, <i>The French Revolution</i> Dickens, <i>Oliver Twist</i>	
1837–1901			Reign of Queen Victoria
1838	<i>Mémoires d'un fou</i> , an autobiographical narrative dedicated to his friend Alfred Le Poittevin		Beginnings of Chartist movement in England First daguerrotypes

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1839	Smarh, an 'old mystery', pre-figuring <i>La Tentation de saint Antoine</i>	Stendhal, <i>La Chartreuse de Parme</i>	Insurrection in Paris, Barbès and Blanqui arrested
1840	Passes <i>baccalauréat</i> examination; travels in Corsica	Proudhon, <i>Qu'est-ce que la propriété?</i>	
1841		Michelet, <i>Jeanne d'Arc</i> Feuerbach, <i>The Essence of Christianity</i>	
1842	<i>Novembre</i> , another autobiographical narrative; lives in Paris and passes first law examination	Balzac, 'Avant-Propos' to <i>La Comédie humaine</i> Sue, <i>Les Mystères de Paris</i> Gogol, <i>Dead Souls</i>	
1843	Begins first version of <i>L'Éducation sentimentale</i> ; meets Maxime Du Camp; fails second law examination	Balzac, completion of <i>Illusions perdues</i> Hugo, <i>Les Burgraves</i> Ruskin, <i>Modern Painters</i> (first volume)	Opening of Paris-Rouen railway
1844	Has first seizure while driving a carriage at night with his brother near Pont-l'Évêque; abandons his studies and retires to the house bought by his father at Croisset, near Rouen	Dumas, <i>Les Trois Mousquetaires</i> ; <i>Le Comte de Monte-Cristo</i>	

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	<i>Literary events</i>	<i>Historical events</i>	
1845	<p><i>Flaubert's life and works</i></p> <p>Finishes first version of <i>L'Education sentimentale</i>; with the Flaubert family accompanies his sister on her honeymoon in Italy</p> <p>Death of father and sister; Flaubert now lives at Croisset with his mother and his sister's baby daughter, Caroline, whom he will bring up; meets Louise Colet in Paris, who becomes his mistress</p> <p>Travels with Maxime Du Camp in Brittany; they record their impressions in <i>Par les champs et par les grèves</i></p> <p>With Bouilhet and Du Camp witnesses February uprising in Paris; death of Alfred Le Poittevin; begins <i>La Tentation de saint Antoine</i>; breaks with Louise Colet</p>	<p><i>Mérimée, Carmen</i></p> <p><i>Engels, Condition of the Working-Class in England</i></p> <p><i>Poe, The Raven and Other Poems</i></p> <p>Balzac, <i>La Cousine Bette</i></p> <p>Proudhon, <i>La Philosophie de la Misère</i></p> <p>Michelet, <i>Le Peuple</i></p> <p>Sand, <i>François le Champi</i></p> <p>E. Brontë, <i>Wuthering Heights</i></p> <p>C. Brontë, <i>Jane Eyre</i></p> <p>Thackeray, <i>Vanity Fair</i></p> <p>Chateaubriand, <i>Mémoires d'outre-tombe</i></p> <p>Dumas fils, <i>La Dame aux camélias</i></p> <p>Marx–Engels, <i>Manifesto of the Communist Party</i></p> <p>Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood founded</p>	<p>Economic crisis, opposition campaign of reform banquets</p> <p>Year of revolutions in Europe</p> <p>February: overthrow of July Monarchy, institution of Second Republic;</p> <p>May–June: failure of 'National Workshops', Paris workers revolt crushed by troops; triumph of 'the party of order'</p> <p>Louis-Napoleon elected President</p>

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- 1848–52
- Second Republic
- Elections: defeat of moderate republicans; workers' demonstrations, new heightening of repression
- 1849
- Sainte-Beuve, first 'Lundi'  
Sand, *La Petite Fadette*  
Dickens, *David Copperfield*
- Reads *La Tentation* to Bouilhet and Du Camp who pronounce against it; leaves for tour of Middle East with Du Camp (Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, Rhodes, Asia Minor, returning through Greece and Italy)
- 1850
- Marx, *The Class Struggle in France: 1848–1850*  
Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*  
Tennyson, *In Memoriam*
- Law restricting suffrage  
Death of Louis-Philippe
- 1851
- Goncourt brothers begin *Journal Nerval*, *Voyage en Orient*  
Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*  
Melville, *Moby Dick*  
Hugo in exile (1851–70)
- Louis-Napoleon proposes revision of Constitution to allow his re-election, refused by parliament  
December: *coup d'état* extends presidential authority  
Great Exhibition in London
- 1852
- Gautier, *Emaux et camées*  
Monnier, *Grandeur et décadence de Monsieur Joseph Prudhomme*  
Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*
- New Constitution; Louis-Napoleon becomes emperor as Napoleon III  
Creation of large financial institutions (*Crédit Foncier*)

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1852–70			Second Empire
1853		Hugo, <i>Les Châtiments</i> Michelet, completion of <i>Histoire de la Révolution française</i>	Beginning of Haussmann's reconstruction of Paris
1854	Breaks definitively with Louise Colet	Barbey d'Aurevilly, <i>L'Enfermée</i> Champfleury, <i>Les Bourgeois de Molinchart</i>	Crimean War (1854–6). Pius IX proclaims dogma of the Immaculate Conception
1855		Nerval, <i>Aurélia</i> R. Browning, <i>Men and Women</i> Trollope, <i>The Warden</i> Whitman, <i>Leaves of Grass</i> Courbet, 'Du réalisme' exhibition of refused paintings	Exposition universelle in Paris
1856	Publication of <i>Madame Bovary</i> in the <i>Revue de Paris</i> ; second version of <i>La Tentation de saint Antoine</i> , fragments published in <i>L'Artiste</i>	Duranty ed., <i>Le Réalisme</i> Hugo, <i>Les Contemplations</i>	Birth of the Prince Imperial, height of the Empire and the Imperial Court
1857	Trial of <i>Madame Bovary</i> , Flaubert and the <i>Revue de Paris</i> acquitted; publication and success of <i>Madame Bovary</i> in book form; begins <i>Salammbô</i>	Baudelaire, <i>Les Fleurs du Mal</i> (and trial, condemned) Champfleury, <i>Le Réalisme</i> E. B. Browning, <i>Aurora Leigh</i>	Anglo-French interventions in China

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|------|---|---|--|
| 1858 | Visits Tunisia to gather material for <i>Salammbô</i>   | E. Feydeau, <i>Fanny</i><br>Michelet, <i>L'Amour</i>  | Attempt by Orsini on Napoleon III's life; <i>loi de sûreté générale</i>            |
| 1859 |   | Hugo, <i>La Légende des siècles</i> (first series)<br>Michelet, <i>La Femme</i><br>Darwin, <i>The Origin of Species</i><br>Mill, <i>On Liberty</i><br>Tennyson, <i>Idylls of the King</i> | Beginning of construction of Suez Canal (1859–69)<br>Franco-Austrian War (1859–60) |
| 1860 |   | Baudelaire, <i>Les Paradis artificiels</i><br>Dickens, <i>Great Expectations</i><br>Eliot, <i>The Mill on the Floss</i>   |  |
| 1861 |   |   | American Civil War (1861–5)  |
| 1862 | Publication of <i>Salammbô</i> , great success; Flaubert now a literary personality, often in Paris | Fromentin, <i>Dominique</i><br>Hugo, <i>Les Misérables</i><br>Leconte de Lisle, <i>Poèmes barbares</i><br>First 'Magny' dinner<br>Turgenev, <i>Fathers and Sons</i>                       | Bismarck appointed chief minister of Prussia                                       |
| 1863 | Beginning of friendship with George Sand  | Taine, <i>Histoire de la littérature anglaise</i>   |  |



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1864	<i>Flaubert's life and works</i> Begins second <i>Education sentimentale</i> ; frequents the Princess Mathilde's Paris salon, received by the emperor at Compiègne	Foundation in London of International Working Men's Association (First International)
1866	Awarded <i>Légion d'honneur</i>	Foundation of <i>Société pour la Revendication des Droits de la Femme</i> , first French feminist organisation
1867	Zola, <i>Thérèse Raquin</i> Ibsen, <i>Peer Gynt</i> Marx, <i>Capital</i> (first volume)	Exposition universelle in Paris Troops sent to defend Rome against Garibaldi; Second Reform Act (England)
1869	Publication of <i>L'Education sentimentale</i> ; death of Bouilhet	Elections, growth of liberal and republican oppositions Creation of <i>Ligue du Droit des Femmes</i>
1870	Begins third version of <i>La Tentation de saint Antoine</i> ; Prussians billeted at Croisset	Franco-Prussian War; battle of Sedan, fall of the Empire; proclamation of Third Republic; siege of Paris

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1870–1940		Third Republic	
1871	Flaubert renounces <i>Légion d'honneur</i> in response to armistice	Rimbaud writes <i>Le Bateau ivre</i> Darwin, <i>The Descent of Man</i> Eliot, <i>Middlemarch</i> Marx, <i>The Civil War in France</i>	Armistice and capitulation of Paris; Paris Commune
1872	Death of mother; completes <i>La Tentation</i> ; begins to plan <i>Bouvard et Pécuchet</i>	Nietzsche, <i>The Birth of Tragedy</i>	Law against First International
1873	Growing friendship with Maupassant; writes <i>Le Candidat</i> (play)	Rimbaud writes <i>Une Saison en enfer</i> Verne, <i>Le Tour du monde en quatre-vingts jours</i> Pater, <i>Studies in the History of the Renaissance</i>	Death of Napoleon III Withdrawal of Prussian troops from France Mac-Mahon President of the Republic, elected by predominantly Royalist parliament
1874	<i>Le Candidat</i> fails after four performances in Paris; publication of <i>La Tentation</i> ; begins writing <i>Bouvard et Pécuchet</i>	Barbey d'Aureville, <i>Les Diaboliques</i> Hardy, <i>Far from the Madding Crowd</i> Trollope, <i>The Way We Live Now</i> First Impressionist Exhibition	
1875	Financial difficulties as result of help given to his niece and her husband; begins <i>La Légende de saint Julien l'Hospitalier</i>	James, <i>Roderick Hudson</i>	Constitutional laws for the Republic

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	<i>Literary events</i>	<i>Historical events</i>
1876	<i>Flaubert's life and works</i> Completes <i>Saint Julien</i> ; death of Louise Colet and George Sand; writes <i>Un Cœur simple</i> ; begins <i>Hérodias</i>	Elections, republican majority Queen Victoria proclaimed Empress of India Bell's telephone
1877	Completes <i>Hérodias</i> ; the three stories are published together in a volume as <i>Trois Contes</i> ; returns to <i>Bouvard et Pécuchet</i>	Edison's phonograph
1879	Appointed <i>bibliothécaire hors cadre</i> , a sinecure position with a pension of 3,000 francs a year	Grévy elected President of the Republic, moderate republican government Reinstatement of the <i>Marseillaise</i> as national anthem
1880	8 May: death of Flaubert at Croisset	Amnesty for Communards 14 July becomes national holiday
1881	Publication of <i>Bouvard et Pécuchet</i> (unfinished); sale and demolition of the Croisset house	

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- 1884 Beginning of publication of Flaubert's letters
- 1910–54 Publication of *Œuvres complètes* (Conard edition), including early works (first *Éducation sentimentale*, etc.) and thirteen volumes of *Correspondance*