

[Peter Longueville and Alexander Bicknell], *The English Hermit; or the adventures of Philip Quarll*. London: John Marshall and Co., [n.d.]. 12mo, 22 woodcuts, 107 pages (A2–3, B1–6 lacking).

The English Hermit was a popular castaway story in eighteenth-century England, and it made its way to America at the end of the century (Boston, 1795). The story of Philip Quarll and his discoverer Edward Dorrington is considered fictitious, but it is very colorful. After a history of crime, seafaring, and polygamy, Quarll became a merchant and was shipwrecked off the coast of Mexico in 1675. Quarll, of necessity, became self-sufficient and had stayed on his island for fifty years in the company of a faithful monkey before Edward Dorrington, a trader from Bristol, England, came exploring. Having told Dorrington his story, Quarll gave him his diaries and declined to return to England. Among the woodcuts is a map of the island showing its landmarks with accompanying text. Following Quarll's tale, the three-page poem "On the Hermit's Solitude" glorifies the castaway's solitary existence in his simple, idyllic domain.

This book is from the publishing house of John Marshall (d. 1823), a prolific producer of children's books. (His catalogues of the 1780s included approximately 100 titles for children.) Marshall is considered to be the first significant rival to the Newberys, whose patriarch John was the first to develop a serious specialty in juvenile literature. The final page in this volume is a one-page advertisement for John Marshall's children's books.

This book, in a contemporary binding of boards covered with Dutch floral paper, is now in the Douce Collection at Oxford University's Bodleian Library. Francis Douce (1757–1834) was a British antiquary and the Keeper of Manuscripts at the British Museum from 1807 to 1811. His bequest of more than 19,000 volumes contained printed books from various periods, including nearly 500 incunables, as well as roughly 425 manuscripts. Eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century children's books numbered among Douce's wide range of collecting specialties. This copy of *The English Hermit* has the inscription of former owners on the title page ("Marg^l H Haskoll | Jan^y 14 1799") and on leaf A4

("Margaret Elizabeth Haskell | 1819"). The stamp "EX DONO FR. DOUCE | BIBL. BODL." also appears on the title page.

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