The Wisdom of the Ages Athenaeum at Middle Tennessee State University
Mission Statement

The mission of The Remnant Trust is to elevate educational standards & the public’s understanding of individual liberty & human dignity through the precedent setting, hands on availability of the world’s great ideas in original form...To raise consciousness of the most significant documents that have shaped America: The Great Experiment...to raise the spirits of each generation to think the grandest thoughts & be guided by the most profound idealism, implementing Emerson’s thesis on Man Thinking...to provide, through sharing, those works moving Goethe’s vision into reality: to think is easy, to act is hard, but the hardest thing in the world is to act in accordance with one’s thinking...to be the world’s finest repository of the great ideas that have propelled Man through the centuries from the earth to the stars...to be free, to think, speak & act in keeping with the greatest of enduring assets: Reason, with justice for all... Great ideas belong to everyone.
About The Remnant Trust, Inc.

The Remnant Trust is a public organization that shares an actively growing collection of manuscripts, 1st edition and early works dealing with the topics of individual liberty and human dignity with some pieces dating as early as 2500 BCE. The Trust makes this collection available to colleges, universities and other organizations for use by students, faculty, scholars, and the general public. Those exposed are encouraged to touch, feel and read the originals, including the first English translation. Generally, titles are loaned for a semester or longer to educational institutions that choose specific exhibits that are tailored to each.
Federalist
(Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay)
The Federalist
1802
Second Edition

Second Edition, in two volumes. “The Federalist, On the New Constitution. By Publius. in 1788. To which is added, Pacificus, on the Proclamation of Neutrality. Written in 1793. Likewise, the Federal Constitution, with all the Amendments” is a collection of eighty-five essays written anonymously under the pseudonym "Publius" by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay; first published in Second Edition, in two volumes. "The Federalist, On the New Constitution. By Publius. in 1788. To which is added, Pacificus, on the Proclamation of Neutrality…” is a collection of eighty-five essays written anonymously under the pseudonym "Publius" by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay; it first published in 1788 in book form. The volumes seen here were published in 1802 in New York. The essays (seventy-seven of the eighty-five) first appeared consecutively in the "Independent Journal" and the "New York Packet" between October 1787 and August 1788. The remaining eight were published when the essays were compiled into book form. The essays were written to promote and garner support for the ratification of the United States Constitution which would replace the agreement between the thirteen original states of the United States called the Articles of Confederation, ratified in 1777. The Articles placed restrictions on the central government rendered it ineffective and left many states and their citizens unsatisfied. With the help of "The Federalist" and its commentary, the Constitution drafted in 1787 was ratified on June 21, 1788. The importance of "The Federalist" cannot be overstated in American history as it helped usher in a new form of government that places the government's power in the hands of the citizens. #0124-0125

Great Britain
The Justice and Necessity of Taxing the American Colonies, Demonstrated. Together with a Vindication of the Authority of Parliament,
1766
First Edition

First Edition, with half title page. Entitled, "The Justice and Necessity of Taxing the American Colonies, Demonstrated. Together with a Vindication of the Authority of Parliament," this work was first printed for John Almon who was an English journalist, bookseller, and was notable during his time for publishing reports on the debates in Parliament. Written after the British victory at the conclusion of the French and Indian War, this pamphlet endorses the taxation of the American Colonies and justifies doing so due to the assistance provided by Britain in the War. Additionally, it states that the British Parliament has authority over the American Colonies since Britain gained control over the land at the conclusion of the War. Ultimately, the various taxes levied upon the American Colonies during this period led the Colonies to revolt against the British Empire and lead to the Revolutionary War. #0006

Magna Carta
The Great Charter Called in Latyn Magna Carta
1542

Rare, early 16th century printing of the Magna Carta in English with decorative woodcut initials throughout. Entitled, "The Great Charter Called in Latyn Magna Carta with Divers olde Statues Whole Titles Appere in the Next Leafe," this is a 1542 edition of Ferrers' translation of the Magna Carta with Ferrers' final corrected text. Ferrers' translation was the first English translation of the Magna Carta and was initially published in 1534. It was reprinted in an undated edition (approximately 1541) before the edition presented here. The Manga Carta is a charter that was first drafted by Stephen Langton, the Archbishop of Canterbury, as an attempt to make peace between a group of barons and King John; King John of England subsequently agreed to the charter on June 15, 1215. Initially, the Magna Carta promised protection of church rights and from illegal imprisonment, access to timely justice, and restrictions on payments to the Crown, and was to be fulfilled through a council of twenty-five barons. Though the interpretation of the Magna Carta changed throughout the centuries, it nevertheless became an iconic and influential document, especially in Revolutionary America, concerned with the rights of ordinary citizens. #0221
First Edition. "The Unconstitutionality of Slavery," was written by abolitionist Lysander Spooner and promotes the idea that the United States Constitution forbids slavery. In the document, Spooner demonstrates that the constitutions of slave states do not explicitly sanction slavery, clauses in the United States Constitution contradict slavery, slavery violated natural law, and that the original intent of the members of the Constitutional Convention had no legal bearing on the Constitution itself. Through this, Spooner shows his support for a textual interpretation of the Constitution; meaning that law should be based on the ordinary meaning of the legal text, not based on the intention of the legal document when it was passed. Also bound with this work is "American Slavery As It Is: Testimony of a Thousand Witnesses," written in 1839 by Theodore Dwight Weld, an important figure in the formative years of the American abolitionist movement. "American Slavery As It Is," published by the American Anti-Slavery Society, focuses on the challenges that slaves faced in their everyday lives and was very influential at the time; it was used by Harriet Beecher Stowe as inspiration for "Uncle Tom's Cabin." #0501

First Octavo Edition. Entitled "Acts Passed at the Congress of the United States of America, Begun and Held at the City of New York, on Wednesday the Fourth of March, in the Year M.DCC.LXXXIX. and of the Independence of the United States, the Thirteenth…," this volume contains the acts passed in the first session of the first Congress of United States that took place from March 4 to September 29, 1789. This work was published in 1789 in New York. It is comprised of the legislation fundamental to the establishment of United States government, including the Constitution and twelve proposed amendments. The Constitution was ratified on June 21, 1788 and went into effect on March 4, 1789. It originally consisted of seven articles that laid out the separation of powers and the concepts of federalism. The Constitution has been amended twenty-seven times since its inception, with the first ten amendments known collectively as the Bill of Rights. The Bill of Rights was created on September 25, 1789 and ratified on December 15, 1791. These amendments guarantee personal freedoms and rights, limitations to the government's power, and states that powers not explicitly given to the national government will be given to the states and people. This volume is a foundational work in the history of American government. #0069

First Pamphlet Edition. Published by Adams and Nourse in Boston, this is a pamphlet printing of the Constitution of United States entitled, "The Constitution or Frame of Government, for the United States of America" was most likely issued shortly after the Constitution was made public on September 19, 1787. The Constitution was created on September 17, 1787 and ratified on June 21, 1788. It became effective on March 4, 1789 and replaced the Articles of Confederation, the first constitution for the United State, which was rendered ineffective by the limitations placed on the central government. The United States Constitution originally consisted of seven articles which laid out the separation of powers, the concepts of federalism, and the methodology for how the states were to ratify the Constitution. It strengthened the federal government by creating the three branches of government: executive, legislative, and judicial. The Constitution has been amended twenty-seven times since its inception, with the first ten amendments known collectively as the Bill of Rights. Drawing on the ideas of the Magna Carta as well as William Blackstone, John Locke and Montesquieu, the Constitution's importance cannot be overstated; the Constitution protects individual freedom, limits government power, and places the government's power in the hands of the citizens. #0092
First Edition. This volume includes "Journal of the Proceeding of the Congress, held at Philadelphia, September 5th, 1774" and "Extracts from the Votes and Proceedings of the American Continental Congress, Held at Philadelphia on the Fifth of September, 1774"; together these two documents make up the complete proceedings of the First Continental Congress. The work also contains the Bill of Rights, the Association, the petition to the King, and other historical documents; these represents America's growing liberty in the 18th century. The first Continental Congress was held in response to the Coercive Acts imposed on the Thirteen Colonies by British Parliament early in the American Revolution. These documents were the colonists' way of regaining their entitlement to all English liberties. This was a major step to establishing American into what it now is today, making these documents an incredibly important piece of American history. #0532

First Book Edition. The Articles of Confederation was an agreement comprised of the thirteen original states of the United States of America. The Articles served as the first constitution for the United States. It was drafted by an appointed committee during the Second Continental Congress (1775-1781) and was approved for ratification on November 15, 1777. It came into effect on March 1, 1781 after it was ratified by the thirteen states. The Articles formed a very limited central government, but let the states form a wartime union. Congress soon discovered the Articles' limitation on the central government rendered it ineffective and delegates decided to meet to talk about changes to the Articles. This meeting became known as the Constitutional Convention (May 27, 1787 - Sep 17, 1787) as it was soon realized the changes would not work and the Articles would need to be replaced. The Articles were replaced with the Constitution on March 4, 1789, strengthening the federal government by creating the three branches of government: executive, legislative and judicial. #0938

First British Edition of the Declaration of Independence in "The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure." "The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure" was a periodical published monthly in London from 1747 and 1814 by John Hinton and W. Bent. The magazine covered a wide variety of topics including: debates, essays, tales, history, travels, gardening, science and mathematics as well as included illustrations, tables and maps. Volume LIX of "The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure" is the collected printings of July through December 1776, with a Supplement. In the August issue, located on pages 91 to 93, is the text of the Declaration of Independence. The Declaration of Independence was adopted by the Second Continental Congress and ratified on July 4, 1776. The purpose of this document was to announce and explain the separation from Great Britain and that the thirteen American colonies now considered themselves as independent sovereign states that formed a new nation, the United States of America. The Declaration of Independence was authored by Thomas Jefferson, among others, and signed by fifty-six delegates of the Continental Congress. It has served as inspiration for many other countries, including nations in the Caribbean and the Low Countries of Europe. #0962
First Edition. "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman: with Structures on Political and Moral Subjects" is one of the earliest and most famous works on feminism. Written in approximately six weeks by Mary Wollstonecraft after she read Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord's 1791 report to the French National Assembly, "Rapport sur l'instruction publique," that declared women should only receive domestic education. The report prompted Wollstonecraft to launch an attack against the double standard between men and women and call for equality between the sexes in certain areas of life, such as education.

Upon its publication, "Rights of Woman" was immediately released in a second edition in London, and was followed by several American editions and was translated into French. While it was favorably reviewed by several magazines including "Analytical Review" and "New York Magazine," it did receive ill-favored reviews. "Rights of Woman" heralded in ideas of women's suffrage that have longed influenced feminist philosophy and, along with Wollstonecraft's own unconventional life, has made her a revered figure in feminism. #0368