

# BRITISH WRITERS

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## SUPPLEMENT IX

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RETROSPECTIVE SUPPLEMENTS I-II

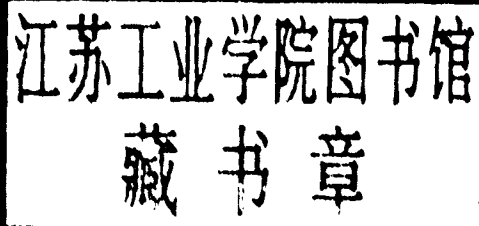
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# BRITISH WRITERS

JAY PARINI

Editor

*SUPPLEMENT IX*



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## British Writers Supplement IX

Jay Parini, Editor in Chief

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# Introduction

“Writing is not literature unless it gives to the reader a pleasure which arises not only from the things said, but from the way in which they are said,” observed Stopford Brooke, a Victorian essayist. To this day, one of the major functions of the critic is simply to notice the way things are said—how the language of a given text works to embody meaning. The essays in Supplement IX of *British Writers* are focused with considerable intensity on the language of eighteen of our most interesting (and often neglected) writers, mostly contemporary, although some are from the past. In each case they are written to increase the reader’s pleasure in the work of each writer and to make the shape of that career, its evolution and influence, comprehensible.

This series brings together a wide range of articles on British writers, most of them modern or contemporary, although a couple of them consider neglected, but interesting, writers from the literary past. As in previous volumes, the subjects have all been chosen for their significant contribution to the traditions of literature, and each has influenced intellectual life in Britain in some way. Readers will find these eighteen essays lively and intelligent, designed to interest readers unfamiliar with their work and to assist those who know the work quite well by providing close readings of individual texts and a sense of the biographical, cultural, and critical context of that work.

*British Writers* was originally an off-shoot of a series of monographs that appeared between 1959 and 1972, the *Minnesota Pamphlets on American Writers*. These pamphlets were incisively written and informative, treating ninety-seven American writers in a format and style that attracted a devoted following of readers. The series proved invaluable to a generation of students and teachers, who could depend on these reliable and interesting critiques of major figures. The idea of reprinting these essays occurred to Charles Scribner, Jr., an innovative publisher during the middle decades of the twentieth century. The series ap-

peared in four volumes entitled *American Writers: A Collection of Literary Biographies* (1974). *British Writers* began with a series of essays originally published by the British Council, and regular supplements have followed. The goal of the supplements has been consistent with the original idea of the series: to provide clear, informative essays aimed at the general reader. These essays often rise to a high level of craft and critical vision, but they are meant to introduce a writer of some importance in the history of British or Anglophone literature, and to provide a sense of the scope and nature of the career under review.

The authors of these critical articles are mostly teachers, scholars, and writers. Most have published books and articles in their field, and several are well-known writers of poetry or fiction as well as critics. As anyone glancing through this volume will see, they have been held to the highest standards of clear writing and sound scholarship. Jargon and theoretical musings have been discouraged, except when strictly relevant. Each of the essays concludes with a select bibliography of works by the author under discussion and secondary works that might be useful to those who wish to pursue the subject further.

Supplement IX focuses on a wide range of authors who have had little sustained attention from critics, although most are well known. For example Caroline Blackwood, Bruce Chatwin, Alasdair Gray, Patrick McCabe, Brian Moore, Mary Renault, and Emma Tennant have all been written about in the review pages of newspapers and magazines, often at considerable length, and their books have acquired a substantial following, but their work has yet to attract significant scholarship. That will certainly follow, but the essays included in this volume constitute a beginning of sorts, an attempt to map out the particular universe of each writer.

Two unusual writers from the distant past considered in this supplement are John Trevisa, a

# Chronology

ca. 1342	<b>John Trevisa born</b>	<b>1422–1461</b>	Reign of Henry VI
1348	The Black Death (further outbreaks in 1361 and 1369)	1431	François Villon born Joan of Arc burned at Rouen
ca. 1350	Boccaccio's <i>Decameron</i> Langland's <i>Piers Plowman</i>	1440–1441	Henry VI founds Eton College and King's College, Cambridge
1351	The Statute of Laborers pegs laborers' wages at rates in effect preceding the plague	1444	Truce of Tours
1356	The Battle of Poitiers	1450	Jack Cade's rebellion
1360	The Treaty of Brétigny: end of the first phase of the Hundred Years' War	ca. 1451	Death of John Lydgate
1362	Pleadings in the law courts conducted in English Parliaments opened by speeches in English	1453	End of the Hundred Years' War The fall of Constantinople
1369	Chaucer's <i>The Book of the Duchess</i> , an elegy to Blanche of Lancaster, wife of John of Gaunt	1455–1485	The Wars of the Roses
1369–1377	Victorious French campaigns under du Guesclin	ca. 1460	Births of William Dunbar and John Skelton
ca. 1370	John Lydgate born	<b>1461–1470</b>	Reign of Edward IV
1371	Sir John Mandeville's <i>Travels</i>	<b>1470–1471</b>	Reign of Henry VI
1372	Chaucer travels to Italy	1471	Death of Sir Thomas Malory
1372–1382	Wycliffe active in Oxford	<b>1471–1483</b>	Reign of Edward IV
1373–1393	William of Wykeham founds Winchester College and New College, Oxford	1476–1483	Caxton's press set up: <i>The Canterbury Tales</i> , <i>Morte d'Arthur</i> , and <i>The Golden Legend</i> printed
ca. 1375–1400	<i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i>	<b>1483–1485</b>	Reign of Richard III
1376	Death of Edward the Black Prince	1485	The Battle of Bosworth Field; end of the Wars of the Roses
<b>1377–1399</b>	Reign of Richard II	<b>1485–1509</b>	Reign of Henry VII
ca. 1379	Gower's <i>Vox clamantis</i>	1486	Marriage of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York unites the rival houses of Lancaster and York Bartholomew Diaz rounds the Cape of Good Hope
ca. 1380	Chaucer's <i>Troilus and Criseyde</i>	1492	Columbus' first voyage to the New World
1381	The Peasants' Revolt	1493	Pope Alexander VI divides undiscovered territories between Spain and Portugal
1386	Chaucer's <i>Canterbury Tales</i> begun Chaucer sits in Parliament Gower's <i>Confessio amantis</i>	1497–1498	John Cabot's voyages to Newfoundland and Labrador
<b>1399–1413</b>	Reign of Henry IV	1497–1499	Vasco da Gama's voyage to India
ca. 1400	Death of William Langland	1499	Amerigo Vespucci's first voyage to America Erasmus' first visit to England
1400	Death of Geoffrey Chaucer	1503	Thomas Wyatt born
1408	Death of John Gower	1505	John Colet appointed dean of St. Paul's; founds St. Paul's School
1412–1420	Lydgate's <i>Troy Book</i>	<b>1509–1547</b>	Reign of Henry VIII
<b>1413–1422</b>	Reign of Henry V		
1415	The Battle of Agincourt		
1420–1422	Lydgate's <i>Siege of Thebes</i>		



# CHRONOLOGY

1509	The king marries Catherine of Aragon		The king marries Catherine Howard
1511	Erasmus' <i>Praise of Folly</i> published		Fall and execution of Thomas Cromwell
1513	Invasion by the Scots defeated at Flodden Field	1542	Catherine Howard executed
1515	Wolsey appointed lord chancellor		Death of Sir Thomas Wyatt
1516	Sir Thomas More's <i>Utopia</i>	1543	The king marries Catherine Parr
1517	Martin Luther's theses against indulgences published at Wittenberg		Copernicus' <i>De revolutionibus orbium coelestium</i>
	Henry Howard (earl of Surrey) born	1546	Trinity College, Cambridge, re-founded
1519	Charles V of Spain becomes Holy Roman Emperor	1547	The earl of Surrey executed
1519–1521	Magellan's voyage around the world	<b>1547–1553</b>	Reign of Edward VI
		1548–1552	Hall's <i>Chronicle</i>
1525	Cardinal College, the forerunner of Christ Church, founded at Oxford	1552	The second Book of Common Prayer
1526	Tyndale's English translation of the New Testament imported from Holland	ca. 1552	Edmund Spenser born
		1553	Lady Jane Grey proclaimed queen
1529	Fall of Cardinal Wolsey	<b>1553–1558</b>	Reign of Mary I (Mary Tudor)
	Death of John Skelton	ca. 1554	Births of Walter Raleigh, Richard Hooker, and John Lyly
1529–1536	The "Reformation" Parliament	1554	Lady Jane Grey executed
1531	Sir Thomas Elyot's <i>The Governour</i> published		Mary I marries Philip II of Spain
1532	Thomas Cranmer appointed archbishop of Canterbury		Bandello's <i>Novelle</i>
	Machiavelli's <i>The Prince</i>	ca. 1556	Philip Sidney born
1533	The king secretly marries Anne Boleyn	1557	George Peele born
	Cranmer pronounces the king's marriage with Catherine "against divine law"		Tottel's <i>Miscellany</i> , including the poems of Wyatt and Surrey, published
1534	The Act of Supremacy constitutes the king as head of the Church of England	ca. 1558	Thomas Kyd born
1535	Sir Thomas More executed	1558	Calais, the last English possession in France, is lost
	Thomas Cromwell appointed vicar general of the Church of England		Birth of Robert Greene
1536	The Pilgrimage of Grace: risings against the king's religious, social, and economic reforms	<b>1558–1603</b>	Mary I dies
	Anne Boleyn executed	1559	Reign of Elizabeth I
	The king marries Jane Seymour		John Knox arrives in Scotland
1537	The dissolution of the monasteries: confiscation of ecclesiastical properties and assets; increase in royal revenues	ca. 1559	Rebellion against the French regent
	Jane Seymour dies	1561	George Chapman born
1538	First complete English Bible published and placed in all churches		Mary Queen of Scots (Mary Stuart) arrives in Edinburgh
1540	The king marries Anne of Cleves		Thomas Hoby's translation of Castiglione's <i>The Courtier Gorboduc</i> , the first English play in blank verse
	Marriage dissolved	1562	Francis Bacon born
			Civil war in France
		1562–1568	English expedition sent to support the Huguenots
			Sir John Hawkins' voyages to Africa
		1564	Births of Christopher Marlowe and William Shakespeare
		1565	Mary Queen of Scots marries Lord Darnley

# CHRONOLOGY

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| 1566      | William Painter's <i>Palace of Pleasure</i> , a miscellany of prose stories, the source of many dramatists' plots   |                  | Birth of Virginia Dare, first English child born in America, at Roanoke Island   |
| 1567      | Darnley murdered at Kirk o'Field<br>Mary Queen of Scots marries the earl of Bothwell  | 1588             | Defeat of the Spanish Armada<br>Marlowe's <i>Dr. Faustus</i>   |
| 1569      | Rebellion of the English northern earls suppressed  | 1590             | Spenser's <i>The Faerie Queen</i> , Cantos 1–3   |
| 1570      | Roger Ascham's <i>The Schoolmaster</i>  | 1592             | Outbreak of plague in London; the theaters closed<br>Henry King born   |
| 1571      | Defeat of the Turkish fleet at Lepanto  | 1593             | Death of Christopher Marlowe   |
| ca. 1572  | Ben Jonson born   | 1594             | The Lord Chamberlain's Men, the company to which Shakespeare belonged, founded<br>The Swan Theater opened<br>Death of Thomas Kyd             |
| 1572      | St. Bartholomew's Day massacre<br>John Donne born   | 1595             | Raleigh's expedition to Guiana<br>Sidney's <i>Apology for Poetry</i>   |
| 1574      | The earl of Leicester's theater company formed  | 1596             | The earl of Essex's expedition captures Cadiz<br>The second Blackfriars Theater opened   |
| 1576      | The Theater, the first permanent theater building in London, opened<br>The first Blackfriars Theater opened with performances by the Children of St. Paul's<br>John Marston born    | ca. 1597         | Death of George Peele  |
| 1576–1578 | Martin Frobisher's voyages to Labrador and the northwest  | 1597             | Bacon's first collection of <i>Essays</i>  |
| 1577–1580 | Sir Francis Drake sails around the world  | 1598             | Jonson's <i>Every Man in His Humor</i>   |
| 1577      | Holinshed's <i>Chronicles of England, Scotlande, and Irelande</i>   | 1598–1600        | Richard Hakluyt's <i>Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffics, and Discoveries of the English Nation</i>                                     |
| 1579      | John Lyly's <i>Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit</i><br>Thomas North's translation of <i>Plutarch's Lives</i>   | 1599             | The Globe Theater opened<br>Death of Edmund Spenser  |
| 1581      | The Levant Company founded<br>Seneca's <i>Ten Tragedies</i> translated  | 1600             | Death of Richard Hooker  |
| 1582      | Richard Hakluyt's <i>Divers Voyages Touching the Discoverie of America</i>  | 1601             | Rebellion and execution of the earl of Essex   |
| 1584–1585 | Sir John Davis' first voyage to Greenland   | 1602             | The East India Company founded<br>The Bodleian Library reopened at Oxford  |
| 1585      | First English settlement in America, the "Lost Colony" comprising 108 men under Ralph Lane, founded at Roanoke Island, off the coast of North Carolina                              | <b>1603–1625</b> | Reign of James I   |
| 1586      | Kyd's <i>Spanish Tragedy</i><br>Marlowe's <i>Tamburlaine</i><br>William Camden's <i>Britannia</i><br>The Babington conspiracy against Queen Elizabeth<br>Death of Sir Philip Sidney | 1603             | John Florio's translation of Montaigne's <i>Essays</i><br>Cervantes' <i>Don Quixote</i> (Part 1)<br>The Gunpowder Plot<br>Thomas Browne born |
| 1587      | Mary Queen of Scots executed  | 1604             | Shakespeare's <i>Othello</i>   |
|           |   | ca. 1605         | Shakespeare's <i>King Lear</i><br>Tournear's <i>The Revenger's Tragedy</i>   |
|           |   | 1605             | Bacon's <i>Advancement of Learning</i>   |
|           |   | 1606             | Shakespeare's <i>Macbeth</i><br>Jonson's <i>Volpone</i><br>Death of John Lyly<br>Edmund Waller born  |
|           |   | 1607             | The first permanent English colony established at Jamestown, Virginia  |

# CHRONOLOGY

1608	John Milton born		Cardinal Richelieu establishes the
1609	Kepler's <i>Astronomia nova</i> John Suckling born		Company of New France with monopoly over trade and land in Canada
1610	Galileo's <i>Sidereus nuncius</i>		Buckingham's expedition to the Isle of Ré to relieve La Rochelle
1611	The Authorized Version of the Bible Shakespeare's <i>The Tempest</i>		Death of Thomas Middleton
1612	Death of Prince Henry, King James's eldest son Webster's <i>The White Devil</i> Bacon's second collection of <i>Essays</i>	1627–1628	Revolt and siege of La Rochelle, the principal Huguenot city of France
ca. 1613	Richard Crashaw born	1628	Buckingham assassinated Surrender of La Rochelle
1613	The Globe Theatre destroyed by fire Webster's <i>The Duchess of Malfi</i>		William Harvey's treatise on the circulation of the blood ( <i>De motu cordis et sanguinis</i> )
1614	Raleigh's <i>History of the World</i>		John Bunyan born
1616	George Chapman's translation of Homer's <i>Odyssey</i> Deaths of William Shakespeare, Francis Beaumont, and Miguel Cervantes	1629	Ford's <i>The Broken Heart</i> King Charles dismisses his third Parliament, imprisons nine members, and proceeds to rule for eleven years without Parliament
ca. 1618	Richard Lovelace born		The Massachusetts Bay Company formed
1618	The Thirty Years' War begins Sir Walter Raleigh executed Abraham Cowley born	1629–1630	Peace treaties with France and Spain
1619	The General Assembly, the first legislative assembly on American soil, meets in Virginia Slavery introduced at Jamestown	1631	John Dryden born Death of John Donne
1620	The Pilgrims land in Massachusetts John Evelyn born	1633	William Laud appointed archbishop of Canterbury Death of George Herbert
1621	Francis Bacon impeached and fined Robert Burton's <i>Anatomy of Melancholy</i> Andrew Marvell born	1634	Samuel Pepys born Deaths of George Chapman and John Marston
1622	Middleton's <i>The Changeling</i> Henry Vaughan born	1635	The Académie Française founded George Etherege born
1623	The First Folio of Shakespeare's plays Visit of Prince Charles and the duke of Buckingham to Spain; failure of attempts to negotiate a Spanish marriage	1636	Pierre Corneille's <i>Le Cid</i> Harvard College founded
1624	War against Spain	ca. 1637	Thomas Traherne born
1625–1649	Reign of Charles I	1637	Milton's "Lycidas" Descartes's <i>Discours de la méthode</i> King Charles's levy of ship money challenged in the courts by John Hampden
1625	Death of John Fletcher Bacon's last collection of <i>Essays</i>		The introduction of the new English Book of Common Prayer strongly opposed in Scotland
1626	Bacon's <i>New Atlantis</i> , appended to <i>Sylva sylvarum</i> Dutch found New Amsterdam Death of Cyril Tourneur Death of Francis Bacon	ca. 1638	Death of Ben Jonson
1627	Ford's <i>'Tis Pity She's a Whore</i>	1638	Death of John Webster
		1638	The Scots draw up a National Covenant to defend their religion
		ca. 1639	Death of John Ford

# CHRONOLOGY

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| <p>1639 Parliament reassembled to raise taxes<br/>Death of Thomas Carew<br/>Charles Sedley born</p> <p>1639–1640 The two Bishops' Wars with Scotland</p> <p>1640 The Long Parliament assembled<br/>The king's advisers, Archbishop Laud and the earl of Strafford, impeached<br/>Aphra Behn born</p> <p>1641 Strafford executed<br/>Acts passed abolishing extraparliamentary taxation, the king's extraordinary courts, and his power to order a dissolution without parliamentary consent<br/>The Grand Remonstrance censuring royal policy passed by eleven votes<br/>William Wycherley born</p> <p>1642 Parliament submits the nineteen Propositions, which King Charles rejects as annihilating the royal power<br/>The Civil War begins<br/>The theaters close<br/>Royalist victory at Edgehill; King Charles established at Oxford<br/>Death of Sir John Suckling</p> <p>1643 Parliament concludes the Solemn League and Covenant with the Scots<br/>Louis XIV becomes king of France<br/>Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset, born</p> <p>1644 Parliamentary victory at Marston Moor<br/>The New Model army raised<br/>Milton's <i>Areopagitica</i></p> <p>1645 Parliamentary victory under Fairfax and Cromwell at Naseby<br/>Fairfax captures Bristol<br/>Archbishop Laud executed</p> <p>1646 Fairfax besieges King Charles at Oxford<br/>King Charles takes refuge in Scotland; end of the First Civil War<br/>King Charles attempts negotiations with the Scots<br/>Parliament's proposals sent to the king and rejected</p> | <p>1647 Conflict between Parliament and the army<br/>A general council of the army established that discusses representational government within the army<br/>The Agreement of the People drawn up by the Levelers; its proposals include manhood suffrage<br/>King Charles concludes an agreement with the Scots<br/>George Fox begins to preach<br/>John Wilmot, earl of Rochester, born</p> <p>1648 Cromwell dismisses the general council of the army<br/>The Second Civil War begins<br/>Fairfax defeats the Kentish royalists at Maidstone<br/>Cromwell defeats the Scots at Preston<br/>The Thirty Years' War ended by the treaty of Westphalia<br/>Parliament purged by the army<br/>Commonwealth</p> <p><b>1649–1660</b></p> <p>1649 King Charles I tried and executed<br/>The monarchy and the House of Lords abolished<br/>The Commonwealth proclaimed<br/>Cromwell invades Ireland and defeats the royalist Catholic forces<br/>Death of Richard Crashaw</p> <p>1650 Cromwell defeats the Scots at Dunbar</p> <p>1651 Charles II crowned king of the Scots, at Scone<br/>Charles II invades England, is defeated at Worcester, escapes to France<br/>Thomas Hobbes's <i>Leviathan</i></p> <p>1652 War with Holland</p> <p>1653 The Rump Parliament dissolved by the army<br/>A new Parliament and council of state nominated; Cromwell becomes Lord Protector<br/>Walton's <i>The Compleat Angler</i></p> <p>1654 Peace concluded with Holland<br/>War against Spain</p> <p>1655 Parliament attempts to reduce the army and is dissolved<br/>Rule of the major-generals</p> |
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# CHRONOLOGY

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|------------------|---|------|--|
| 1656             | Sir William Davenant produces <i>The Siege of Rhodes</i> , one of the first English operas  |      | The war with Holland ended by the Treaty of Breda<br>Milton's <i>Paradise Lost</i>   |
| 1657             | Second Parliament of the Protectorate<br>Cromwell is offered and declines the throne<br>Death of Richard Lovelace   |      | Thomas Sprat's <i>History of the Royal Society</i><br>Death of Abraham Cowley  |
| 1658             | Death of Oliver Cromwell<br>Richard Cromwell succeeds as Protector  | 1668 | Sir Christopher Wren begins to rebuild St. Paul's Cathedral<br>Triple Alliance formed with Holland and Sweden against France<br>Dryden's <i>Essay of Dramatick Poesy</i>         |
| 1659             | Conflict between Parliament and the army  | 1670 | Alliance formed with France through the secret Treaty of Dover<br>Pascal's <i>Pensées</i><br>The Hudson's Bay Company founded<br>William Congreve born                           |
| 1660             | General Monck negotiates with Charles II<br>Charles II offers the conciliatory Declaration of Breda and accepts Parliament's invitation to return<br>Will's Coffee House established<br>Sir William Davenant and Thomas Killigrew licensed to set up two companies of players, the Duke of York's and the King's Servants, including actors and actresses<br>Pepys's <i>Diary</i> begun | 1671 | Milton's <i>Samson Agonistes</i> and <i>Paradise Regained</i>  |
| <b>1660–1685</b> | Reign of Charles II   | 1672 | War against Holland<br>Wycherley's <i>The Country Wife</i><br>King Charles issues the Declaration of Indulgence, suspending penal laws against Nonconformists and Catholics      |
| 1661             | Parliament passes the Act of Uniformity, enjoining the use of the Book of Common Prayer; many Puritan and dissenting clergy leave their livings<br><b>Anne Finch born</b>   | 1673 | Parliament passes the Test Act, making acceptance of the doctrines of the Church of England a condition for holding public office  |
| 1662             | Peace Treaty with Spain<br>King Charles II marries Catherine of Braganza<br>The Royal Society incorporated (founded in 1660)  | 1674 | War with Holland ended by the Treaty of Westminster<br>Deaths of John Milton, Robert Herrick, and Thomas Traherne  |
| 1664             | War against Holland<br>New Amsterdam captured and becomes New York<br>John Vanbrugh born  | 1676 | Etherege's <i>The Man of Mode</i>  |
| 1665             | The Great Plague<br>Newton discovers the binomial theorem and invents the integral and differential calculus, at Cambridge  | 1677 | Baruch Spinoza's <i>Ethics</i><br>Jean Racine's <i>Phèdre</i><br>King Charles's niece, Mary, marries her cousin William of Orange  |
| 1666             | The Great Fire of London<br>Bunyan's <i>Grace Abounding</i><br><i>London Gazette</i> founded  | 1678 | Fabrication of the so-called popish plot by Titus Oates<br>Bunyan's <i>Pilgrim's Progress</i><br>Dryden's <i>All for Love</i><br>Death of Andrew Marvell<br>George Farquhar born |
| 1667             | The Dutch fleet sails up the Medway and burns English ships   | 1679 | Parliament passes the Habeas Corpus Act<br>Rochester's <i>A Satire Against Mankind</i>   |
|                  |   | 1680 | Death of John Wilmot, earl of Rochester  |
|                  |   | 1681 | Dryden's <i>Absalom and Achitophel</i> (Part 1)  |

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| 1682             | Dryden's <i>Absalom and Achitophel</i> (Part 2)<br>Thomas Otway's <i>Venice Preserv'd</i><br>Philadelphia founded<br>Death of Sir Thomas Browne  | 1694             | Death of Sir George Etherege<br>George Fox's <i>Journal</i><br>Voltaire (François Marie Arouet) born<br>Death of Mary II  |
| 1683             | The Ashmolean Museum, the world's first public museum, opens at Oxford<br>Death of Izaak Walton  | 1695             | Congreve's <i>Love for Love</i><br>Death of Henry Vaughan   |
| <b>1685–1688</b> | Reign of James II  | 1697             | War with France ended by the Treaty of Ryswick<br>Vanbrugh's <i>The Relapse</i>   |
| 1685             | Rebellion and execution of James Scott, duke of Monmouth<br>John Gay born  | 1698             | Jeremy Collier's <i>A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage</i>   |
| 1686             | The first book of Newton's <i>Principia—De motu corporum</i> , containing his theory of gravitation—presented to the Royal Society   | 1699             | Fénelon's <i>Les Aventures de Télémaque</i>   |
| 1687             | James II issues the Declaration of Indulgence<br>Dryden's <i>The Hind and the Panther</i><br>Death of Edmund Waller  | 1700             | Congreve's <i>The Way of the World</i><br>Defoe's <i>The True-Born Englishman</i><br>Death of John Dryden<br>James Thomson born   |
| 1688             | James II reissues the Declaration of Indulgence, renewing freedom of worship and suspending the provisions of the Test Act<br>Acquittal of the seven bishops imprisoned for protesting against the Declaration<br>William of Orange lands at Torbay, Devon<br>James II takes refuge in France<br>Death of John Bunyan<br>Alexander Pope born | 1701             | War of the Spanish Succession, 1701–1714 (Queen Anne's War in America, 1702–1713)<br>Death of Sir Charles Sedley  |
| <b>1689–1702</b> | Reign of William III   | <b>1702–1714</b> | Reign of Queen Anne   |
| 1689             | Parliament formulates the Declaration of Rights<br>William and Mary accept the Declaration and the crown<br>The Grand Alliance concluded between the Holy Roman Empire, England, Holland, and Spain<br>War declared against France<br>King William's War, 1689–1697 (the first of the French and Indian wars)<br>Samuel Richardson born      | 1702             | Clarendon's <i>History of the Rebellion</i> (1702–1704)<br>Defoe's <i>The Shortest Way with the Dissenters</i>  |
| 1690             | James II lands in Ireland with French support, but is defeated at the battle of the Boyne<br>John Locke's <i>Essay Concerning Human Understanding</i>  | 1703             | Defoe is arrested, fined, and pilloried for writing <i>The Shortest Way</i><br>Death of Samuel Pepys  |
| 1692             | Salem witchcraft trials  | 1704             | John Churchill, duke of Marlborough, and Prince Eugene of Savoy defeat the French at Blenheim<br>Capture of Gibraltar<br>Swift's <i>A Tale of a Tub</i> and <i>The Battle of the Books</i><br><i>The Review</i> founded (1704–1713) |
|                  |  | 1706             | Farquhar's <i>The Recruiting Officer</i><br>Deaths of John Evelyn and Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset   |
|                  |  | 1707             | Farquhar's <i>The Beaux' Stratagem</i><br>Act of Union joining England and Scotland<br>Death of George Farquhar<br>Henry Fielding born  |
|                  |  | 1709             | The <i>Tatler</i> founded (1709–1711)<br>Nicholas Rowe's edition of Shakespeare<br>Samuel Johnson born<br>Marlborough defeats the French at Malplaquet  |

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|                  | Charles XII of Sweden defeated at Poltava   |                  | Voltaire in England (1726–1729)   |
| 1710             | South Sea Company founded   | <b>1727–1760</b> | Death of Sir John Vanbrugh  |
|                  | First copyright act   |                  | Reign of George II  |
| 1711             | Swift's <i>The Conduct of the Allies</i>  | 1728             | Gay's <i>The Beggar's Opera</i>   |
|                  | The <i>Spectator</i> founded (1711–1712; 1714)  |                  | Pope's <i>The Dunciad</i> (Books 1–2)   |
|                  | Marlborough dismissed   | 1729             | Oliver Goldsmith born   |
|                  | David Hume born   |                  | Swift's <i>A Modest Proposal</i>  |
| 1712             | Pope's <i>The Rape of the Lock</i> (Cantos 1–2)   |                  | Edmund Burke born   |
|                  | Jean Jacques Rousseau born  |                  | Deaths of William Congreve and Sir Richard Steele                                   |
| 1713             | War with France ended by the Treaty of Utrecht  | 1731             | Navigation improved by introduction of the quadrant                                 |
|                  | The <i>Guardian</i> founded   |                  | Pope's <i>Moral Essays</i> (1731–1735)  |
|                  | Swift becomes dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin   |                  | Death of Daniel Defoe   |
|                  | Addison's <i>Cato</i>   |                  | William Cowper born   |
|                  | Laurence Sterne born  | 1732             | Death of John Gay   |
| <b>1714–1727</b> | Reign of George I   | 1733             | Pope's <i>Essay on Man</i> (1733–1734)  |
| 1714             | Pope's expanded version of <i>The Rape of the Lock</i> (Cantos 1–5)                           |                  | Lewis Theobald's edition of Shakespeare   |
| 1715             | The Jacobite rebellion in Scotland  | 1734             | Voltaire's <i>Lettres philosophiques</i>  |
|                  | Pope's translation of Homer's <i>Iliad</i> (1715–1720)  | 1736             | James Macpherson born   |
|                  | Death of Louis XIV  | 1737             | Edward Gibbon born  |
| 1716             | Death of William Wycherley  | 1738             | Johnson's <i>London</i>   |
|                  | Thomas Gray born  | 1740             | War of the Austrian Succession, 1740–1748 (King George's War in America, 1744–1748) |
| 1717             | Pope's <i>Eloisa to Abelard</i>   |                  | George Anson begins his circumnavigation of the world (1740–1744)                   |
|                  | David Garrick born  |                  | Frederick the Great becomes king of Prussia (1740–1786)                             |
|                  | Horace Walpole born   |                  | Richardson's <i>Pamela</i> (1740–1741)  |
| 1718             | Quadruple Alliance (Britain, France, the Netherlands, the German Empire) in war against Spain |                  | James Boswell born  |
| 1719             | Defoe's <i>Robinson Crusoe</i>  | 1742             | Fielding's <i>Joseph Andrews</i>  |
|                  | Death of Joseph Addison   |                  | Edward Young's <i>Night Thoughts</i> (1742–1745)                                    |
| 1720             | Inoculation against smallpox introduced in Boston   |                  | Pope's <i>The New Dunciad</i> (Book 4)  |
|                  | War against Spain   | 1744             | Johnson's <i>Life of Mr. Richard Savage</i>   |
|                  | The South Sea Bubble  |                  | Death of Alexander Pope   |
|                  | Gilbert White born  | 1745             | Second Jacobite rebellion, led by Charles Edward, the Young Pretender               |
|                  | Defoe's <i>Captain Singleton</i> and <i>Memoirs of a Cavalier</i>                             |                  | Death of Jonathan Swift   |
| 1721             | Tobias Smollett born  | 1746             | The Young Pretender defeated at Culloden  |
|                  | William Collins born  |                  | Collins' <i>Odes on Several Descriptive and Allegorical Subjects</i>                |
| 1722             | Defoe's <i>Moll Flanders</i> , <i>Journal of the Plague Year</i> , and <i>Colonel Jack</i>    | 1747             | Richardson's <i>Clarissa Harlowe</i> (1747–1748)                                    |
| 1724             | Defoe's <i>Roxana</i>   |                  | Franklin's experiments with electricity announced                                   |
|                  | Swift's <i>The Drapier's Letters</i>  |                  |   |
| 1725             | Pope's translation of Homer's <i>Odyssey</i> (1725–1726)                                      |                  |   |
| 1726             | Swift's <i>Gulliver's Travels</i>   |                  |   |



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- Voltaire's *Essai sur les moeurs*
- 1748 War of the Austrian Succession ended by the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle  
Smollett's *Adventures of Roderick Random*  
David Hume's *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*  
Montesquieu's *L'Esprit des lois*
- 1749 Fielding's *Tom Jones*  
Johnson's *The Vanity of Human Wishes*  
Bolingbroke's *Idea of a Patriot King*
- 1750 The *Rambler* founded (1750–1752)
- 1751 Gray's *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*  
Fielding's *Amelia*  
Smollett's *Adventures of Peregrine Pickle*  
Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d'Alembert begin to publish the *Encyclopédie* (1751–1765)  
Richard Brinsley Sheridan born
- 1752 Frances Burney and Thomas Chatterton born
- 1753 Richardson's *History of Sir Charles Grandison* (1753–1754)  
Smollett's *The Adventures of Ferdinand Count Fathom*
- 1754 Hume's *History of England* (1754–1762)  
Death of Henry Fielding  
George Crabbe born
- 1755 Lisbon destroyed by earthquake  
Fielding's *Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon* published posthumously  
Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language*
- 1756 The Seven Years' War against France, 1756–1763 (the French and Indian War in America, 1755–1760)  
William Pitt the elder becomes prime minister  
Johnson's proposal for an edition of Shakespeare
- 1757 Robert Clive wins the battle of Plassey, in India  
Gray's "The Progress of Poesy" and "The Bard"
- Burke's *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*  
Hume's *Natural History of Religion*  
William Blake born
- 1758 The *Idler* founded (1758–1760)
- 1759 Capture of Quebec by General James Wolfe  
Johnson's *History of Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia*  
Voltaire's *Candide*  
The British Museum opens  
Sterne's *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy* (1759–1767)  
Death of William Collins  
Mary Wollstonecraft born  
Robert Burns born
- 1760–1820**
- 1760 Reign of George III  
James Macpherson's *Fragments of Ancient Poetry Collected in the Highlands of Scotland*  
William Beckford born
- 1761 Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Julie, ou la nouvelle Héloïse*  
Death of Samuel Richardson
- 1762 Rousseau's *Du Contrat social* and *Émile*  
Catherine the Great becomes czarina of Russia (1762–1796)
- 1763 The Seven Years' War ended by the Peace of Paris  
Smart's *A Song to David*
- 1764 James Hargreaves invents the spinning jenny
- 1765 Parliament passes the Stamp Act to tax the American colonies  
Johnson's edition of Shakespeare  
Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*  
Thomas Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*  
Blackstone's *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (1765–1769)
- 1766 The Stamp Act repealed  
Swift's *Journal to Stella* first published in a collection of his letters  
Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield*  
Smollett's *Travels Through France and Italy*  
Lessing's *Laokoon*  
Rousseau in England (1766–1767)
- 1768 Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey Through France and Italy*



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- The Royal Academy founded by George III  
First edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*  
Maria Edgeworth born  
Death of Laurence Sterne
- 1769 David Garrick organizes the Shakespeare Jubilee at Stratford-upon-Avon  
Sir Joshua Reynolds' *Discourses* (1769–1790)  
Richard Arkwright invents the spinning water frame
- 1770 Boston Massacre  
Burke's *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents*  
Oliver Goldsmith's *The Deserted Village*  
Death of Thomas Chatterton  
William Wordsworth born
- 1771 Arkwright's first spinning mill founded  
Deaths of Thomas Gray and Tobias Smollett  
Walter Scott born
- 1772 Samuel Taylor Coleridge born
- 1773 Boston Tea Party  
Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*  
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen*
- 1774 The first Continental Congress meets in Philadelphia  
Goethe's *Sorrows of Young Werther*  
Death of Oliver Goldsmith  
Robert Southey born
- 1775 Burke's speech on American taxation  
American War of Independence begins with the battles of Lexington and Concord  
Samuel Johnson's *Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland*  
Richard Brinsley Sheridan's *The Rivals* and *The Duenna*  
Beaumarchais's *Le Barbier de Séville*  
James Watt and Matthew Boulton begin building steam engines in England  
Births of Jane Austen, Charles Lamb, Walter Savage Landor, and Matthew Lewis
- 1776 American Declaration of Independence  
Edward Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776–1788)  
Adam Smith's *Inquiry into the Nature & Causes of the Wealth of Nations*  
Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*  
Death of David Hume
- 1777 Maurice Morgann's *Essay on the Dramatic Character of Sir John Falstaff*  
Sheridan's *The School for Scandal* first performed (published 1780)  
General Burgoyne surrenders at Saratoga
- 1778 The American colonies allied with France  
Britain and France at war  
Captain James Cook discovers Hawaii  
Death of William Pitt, first earl of Chatham  
Deaths of Jean Jacques Rousseau and Voltaire  
William Hazlitt born
- 1779 Johnson's *Prefaces to the Works of the English Poets* (1779–1781); reissued in 1781 as *The Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets*  
Sheridan's *The Critic*  
Samuel Crompton invents the spinning mule  
Death of David Garrick
- 1780 The Gordon Riots in London  
Charles Robert Maturin born
- 1781 Charles Cornwallis surrenders at Yorktown  
Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*  
Friedrich von Schiller's *Die Räuber*
- 1782 William Cowper's "The Journey of John Gilpin" published in the *Public Advertiser*  
Choderlos de Laclos's *Les Liaisons dangereuses*  
Rousseau's *Confessions* published posthumously
- 1783 American War of Independence ended by the Definitive Treaty of Peace, signed at Paris  
William Blake's *Poetical Sketches*