

BRITISH WRITERS

RETROSPECTIVE SUPPLEMENT II

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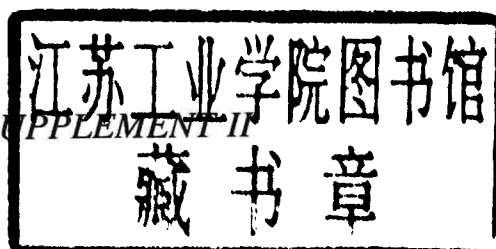
CUMULATIVE INDEX FOR VOLUMES I-VII,
SUPPLEMENTS I-VII, AND
RETROSPECTIVE SUPPLEMENTS I-II

BRITISH WRITERS

JAY PARINI

Editor

RETROSPECTIVE SUPPLEMENT II



Charles Scribner's Sons

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New York • Detroit • San Francisco • London • Boston • Woodbridge, CT

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Charles Scribner's Sons
an imprint of The Gale Group
27500 Drake Rd.
Farmington Hills, MI 483331-3535

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

British Writers Retrospective Supplement II/Jay Parini,
editor

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-684-31228-X (alk. paper)

1. English literature—Bio-bibliography. 2. English literature—History and criticism. 3. Authors, English—Biography. I Parini, Jay.

PR85.B688 Retro Suppl. 2

820.9—dc21

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2002001442

The paper used in this publication meets the requirements of ANSI/NIS Z39.48-1992 (Permanance of Paper).

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Introduction

In his preface to *Sesame and Lilies*, John Ruskin wrote: "Life being short and the quiet hours of it few, we ought to waste none of them in reading valueless books." Most readers will, I think, agree with Ruskin; there is no point in wasting time on books that will not make a lasting impact. In this supplement to *British Writers*, we present twenty-two essays on classic authors (or literary periods, in the case of an essay on Old English Literature), confident that these writers produced books that will waste nobody's time.

This supplement of *British Writers* adds to a series originally modeled on *American Writers* (1974-), another series published by Scribners (an imprint of Gale). In the original set of *British Writers*, published between 1979 and 1984, seven volumes were produced, each of them an anthology that featured articles on the lives and works of well-known poets, novelists, playwrights, essayists and autobiographers from the Anglo-Saxon era to the present. This set was followed by several supplemental volumes that covered authors who, for various reasons, had been neglected in the original series.

Throughout the series, we have attempted to provide transparent, knowledgeable essays aimed at the general, literate reader. Most of the critics writing for this supplement, as in the previous volumes, are professionals: teachers, scholars, and writers. As anyone glancing through this anthology will see, the critics have held to the highest standards of scholarship and writing. Their work often rises to a high level of craft and critical vision as they survey the life and work of a writer who has made a genuine impact on the course of British, Irish, or Anglophone literature. The biographical context for works is provided so that readers can appreciate the historical ground beneath the texts under discussion. The essays each conclude with a select bibliography intended to direct the reading of those should want to pursue the subject in greater detail.

In this collection, we examine the work of many of Britain's most central authors, reaching back to Old English Literature and some of its most revered texts, such as *Beowulf*. From the fourteenth century, we include an essay on Geoffrey Chaucer, whom many regard as the father of English literature, famous for his *Canterbury Tales* and other works. The fifteenth century writer, Sir Thomas Mallory, is another early author discussed here, with a close look at *Le Morte D'Arthur* and the question of Arthurian Romance. A wide range of poets are discussed, including Sir Philip Sidney, Andrew Marvell, John Donne, George Herbert, John Milton, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Robert Browning, T.S. Eliot, and Ted Hughes—a galaxy of stars. In each case, we pay close attention to major poems and lyric sequences, providing a good deal of context for each poet. In some cases, the poets (Sidney, Milton, Coleridge, Hopkins, and Eliot) were also excellent writers of prose, even major critics in their own right. The whole career is examined in each instance, and the relationship between the poet's verse and prose considered.

The English novel is represented here with essays on Jane Austen, George Eliot, Joseph Conrad, D. H. Lawrence, E. M. Forster, and Graham Greene—all of these firmly in what F. R. Leavis called "the great tradition." Attention is paid especially to the major novels produced by these authors, such as *Pride and Prejudice*, *Middlemarch*, *Heart of Darkness*, *Sons and Lovers*, *Passage to India*, and *The Heart of the Matter*. Readers will, I think, find uncanny connections among these writers.

English drama is represented here by three of its most influential modern writers: Oscar Wilde, George Bernard Shaw, and Tom Stoppard. The latter, of course, is still a dramatist in full flight, but the essay on his work brings his career up to date, with a close look at his recent masterwork,

Arcadia. These vivid, exuberant careers are studied with great sensitivity and care. In all, this volume provides a cornucopia of readable, lively criticism, designed to stimulate students and general readers, to guide them in their reading

and thinking, and to suggest directions for further study. No one of these authors will waste the reader's time, and we hope the essays on their work will be deemed valuable as well.

JAY PARINI

Chronology

- | | | | |
|------------------|--|------------------|---|
| 731 | An Anglo-Saxon monk, Bede, writes <i>Ecclesiastical History of the English People</i> | 1066 | The Normans, led by William the Bastard (to become William the Conqueror), defeat Harold II at the Battle of Hastings and conquer England |
| 732 | The Battle of Tours halts the Moorish conquest of Europe | 1066–1087 | Reign of Norman William I (William the Conqueror) |
| 735 | Egbert serves as the first archbishop in England's second archbishopric, located in York | 1085–1086 | The Domesday Book, a census of England, is ordered by King William the Conqueror |
| 793 | The first recorded appearance of the Vikings comes from the island of Lindisfarne, Scotland. | 1087–1100 | Reign of William II (Rufus) |
| 800 | Charlemagne is crowned Emperor of the western Roman Empire | 1095 | At the Council of Clermont, Pope Urban II called Christians to war; the first crusade lasts until 1099, and other crusades follow until the fall of the last Christian stronghold in 1291 |
| 896 | England's Alfred the Great ends the threat of the Danes | 1100–1135 | Reign of Henry I |
| 899 | Death of Alfred the Great | 12th century | Oxford University is founded |
| 959–975 | Reign of Edgar (great-grandson of Alfred the Great and first king of a united England) | 1120 | Anglo-Saxon scientist Welcher of Malvern pioneers the measurement of the earth in degrees, minutes, and seconds of latitude and longitude |
| 975–978 | Reign of Edward (the Martyr) | | French philosopher Peter Abelard's <i>Sic et non</i> |
| 978–1016 | Reign of Aethelred (the Unready) | 1121 | Concordat of Worms |
| 999 | Eastern and western Europeans fear the end of the world | 1128 | Scotland's David I founds the Abbey of Holyrood |
| 1016 | Reign of Edmund | 1135–1154 | Reign of Stephen |
| 1016–1035 | Reign of Canute, by conquest | 1136 | Abelard's <i>Historia Calamitatum</i> |
| 1037–1040 | Reign of Harold I | 1139 | Matilda, daughter of Henry I and cousin of King Stephen, challenges for the throne of England, but withdraws her claim in 1148 |
| 1040 | Duncan I, King of Scotland, is murdered, and Macbeth assumes his throne until 1057, when Macbeth is murdered by Duncan's son | 1140 | Matilda is elected "Lady of the English" |
| 1040–1042 | Reign of Harthacanute | 1141 | King Stephen is captured during the siege of Lincoln Castle, and Matilda rules for 6 months |
| 1065 | Westminster Abbey is consecrated. | 1154–1189 | Reign of Henry II |
| 1042–1066 | Reign of Edward (the Confessor) | 1159 | John of Salisbury writes his <i>Policraticus</i> , a work of political philosophy |
| 1066 | Reign of Harold II | | |
| 1066 | At the Battle of Stamford Bridge, Harold II's army defeats Harald III, king of Norway, and his men, who have invaded England | | |

CHRONOLOGY

- 1164 At the Council of Clarendon, King Henry II issues the Constitutions of Clarendon, extending jurisdictions of civil over church courts
- 1170 Thomas Becket, long-time foe of King Henry II, is murdered by King Henry's men in Canterbury Cathedral
- 1189–1199 Reign of Richard the Lionheart (Coeur de Lion)**
- 1199–1116 Reign of John**
 - 1215 The Magna Carta, a charter limiting the power of the monarchy, is reluctantly signed by King John
- 1216–1272 Reign of Henry III**
 - 1217 Cambridge University is founded
 - 1247 Death of Robin Hood, identified as Robert, Earl of Huntington
- 1266–1273 St. Thomas Aquinas' *Summa theologiae*
- 1272–1307 Reign of Edward I**
 - 1276 The prince of North Wales, Llewelyn II, refuses to pay homage to England's Edward I, who invades North Wales and forces Llewelyn to surrender
 - 1282 Llewelyn II leads a second attack against Edward and fails; Wales falls to English rule
 - 1297 William Wallace (Braveheart) leads attacks against British troops in an attempt for Scottish sovereignty
 - 1305 William Wallace is captured, tried, and hanged
- 1307–1327 Reign of Edward II**
 - ca. 1325 John Wycliffe born
 - John Gower born
- 1327–1377 Reign of Edward III**
 - ca. 1332 William Langland born
 - 1337 Beginning of the Hundred Years' War
 - ca. 1340 **Geoffrey Chaucer born**
 - 1346 The Battle of Crécy
 - 1348 The Black Death (further outbreaks in 1361 and 1369)
 - ca. 1350 Boccaccio's *Decameron*
 - Langland's *Piers Plowman*
- 1351 The Statute of Laborers pegs laborers' wages at rates in effect preceding the plague
- 1356 The Battle of Poitiers
- 1360 The Treaty of Brétigny: end of the first phase of the Hundred Years' War
- 1362 Pleadings in the law courts conducted in English
- Parliaments opened by speeches in English
- 1369 Chaucer's *The Book of the Duchess*, an elegy to Blanche of Lancaster, wife of John of Gaunt
- 1369–1377 Victorious French campaigns under du Guesclin
- ca. 1370 John Lydgate born
- 1371 Sir John Mandeville's *Travels*
- 1372 Chaucer travels to Italy
- 1372–1382 Wycliffe active in Oxford
- 1373–1393 William of Wykeham founds Winchester College and New College, Oxford
- ca. 1375–1400 *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*
- 1376 Death of Edward the Black Prince
- 1377–1399 Reign of Richard II**
 - ca. 1379 Gower's *Vox clamantis*
 - ca. 1380 Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*
 - 1381 The Peasants' Revolt
 - 1386 Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* begun
 - Chaucer sits in Parliament
 - Gower's *Confessio amantis*
- 1399–1413 Reign of Henry IV**
 - ca. 1400 Death of William Langland
 - 1400 Death of Geoffrey Chaucer
 - 1408 Death of John Gower
 - ca. 1410 **Sir Thomas Malory Born**
- 1412–1420 Lydgate's *Troy Book*
- 1413–1422 Reign of Henry V**
 - 1415 The Battle of Agincourt
- 1420–1422 Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes*
- 1422–1461 Reign of Henry VI**
 - 1431 François Villon born
 - Joan of Arc burned at Rouen

CHRONOLOGY

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|------------------|---|------------------|---|
| 1434 | Jan van Eyck's <i>Giovanni Arnolfini and His Wife</i> | 1492 | Columbus's first voyage to the New World |
| 1436 | Guillaume Dufay's <i>Nuper rosarum flores</i> | 1493 | Pope Alexander VI divides undiscovered territories between Spain and Portugal |
| 1440–1441 | Henry VI founds Eton College and King's College, Cambridge | 1497–1498 | John Cabot's voyages to Newfoundland and Labrador |
| 1444 | Truce of Tours | 1497–1499 | Vasco da Gama's voyage to India |
| 1450 | Jack Cade's rebellion | 1498 | Leonardo paints <i>The Last Supper</i> |
| ca. 1451 | Death of John Lydgate | 1499 | Amerigo Vespucci's first voyage to America |
| 1452 | Leonardo da Vinci born | | Erasmus's first visit to England |
| 1453 | End of the Hundred Years' War | 1503 | Thomas Wyatt born |
| | The fall of Constantinople | | Leonardo begins <i>Mona Lisa</i> (completed 1506) |
| 1455–1485 | The Wars of the Roses | 1505 | John Colet appointed dean of St. Paul's; founds St. Paul's School |
| 1455 | Gutenberg uses movable-type printing press to print bible | 1509–1547 | Reign of Henry VIII |
| ca. 1455 | Donatello's <i>Magdalen</i> | 1509 | The king marries Catherine of Aragon |
| ca. 1460 | John Skelton born | | Raphael and assistants begin painting the Stanze (completed 1514) |
| 1461–1470 | Reign of Edward IV | | John Calvin born |
| 1463 | Villon disappears | 1511 | Erasmus's <i>Praise of Folly</i> published |
| 1466 | Death of Donatello | 1512 | Michelangelo's Sistine ceiling unveiled. |
| 1469 | Machiavelli born | 1513 | Invasion by the Scots defeated at Flodden Field |
| 1470–1471 | Reign of Henry VI | 1515 | Wolsey appointed lord chancellor |
| 1471 | Death of Sir Thomas Malory | 1516 | Sir Thomas More's <i>Utopia</i> |
| 1471–1483 | Reign of Edward IV | | Ludovico Ariosto's <i>Orlando furioso</i> (first edition) |
| 1475 | Michelangelo born | 1517 | Martin Luther's theses against indulgences published at Wittenberg |
| 1476–1483 | Caxton's press set up: <i>The Canterbury Tales</i> , <i>Morte d'Arthur</i> , and <i>The Golden Legend</i> printed | | Henry Howard (earl of Surrey) born |
| 1478 | Sir Thomas More born | 1518 | Titian's <i>Assumption of the Virgin</i> |
| 1483–1485 | Reign of Richard III | | Vives's <i>Fabula de homine</i> |
| 1483 | François Rabelais and Raphael born | | Erasmus's <i>Colloquia</i> |
| 1485 | The Battle of Bosworth Field: end of the Wars of the Roses | 1519 | Charles V of Spain becomes Holy Roman Emperor |
| ca. 1485 | Thomas Cromwell born | | Death of Leonardo |
| | Botticelli's <i>The Birth of Venus</i> | 1519–1521 | Spanish conquest of Mexico |
| 1485–1509 | Reign of Henry VII | 1519–1522 | Magellan circumnavigates the globe |
| 1486 | Marriage of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York unites the rival houses of Lancaster and York | 1520 | Death of Raphael |
| | Bartholomew Diaz rounds the Cape of Good Hope | 1522 | Skelton's <i>Collyn Clout</i> |
| ca. 1490 | Giovanni Bellini's <i>Allegory</i> | | |

CHRONOLOGY

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|-----------|--|------------------|--|
| 1523–1524 | Holbein the Younger's <i>Dance of Death</i> (1st edition) | 1538 | First complete English Bible published and placed in all churches |
| 1525 | Cardinal College, the forerunner of Christ Church, founded at Oxford
Pietro Aretino's <i>La Cortegiana</i> | 1540 | The king marries Anne of Cleves
Marriage dissolved
The king marries Catherine Howard
Fall and execution of Thomas Cromwell |
| 1526 | Tyndale's English translation of the New Testament imported from Holland | 1542 | Catherine Howard executed
Death of Sir Thomas Wyatt |
| 1527 | Death of Machiavelli | 1543 | The king marries Catherine Parr
Copernicus's <i>De revolutionibus orbium coelestium</i>
Andreas Vesalius's <i>De humani corporis fabrica</i> |
| 1528 | Baldassare Castiglione's <i>Il libro del cortegiano</i> | 1546 | Trinity College, Cambridge, refounded |
| 1529 | Fall of Cardinal Wolsey
Death of John Skelton | 1547 | The earl of Surrey executed
Benevuto Cellini's <i>Perseus</i> (completed 1554)
Cervantes born |
| 1529–1536 | The "Reformation" Parliament | 1547–1553 | Reign of Edward VI |
| 1531 | Henry VIII proclaimed head of Church of England
Sir Thomas Elyot's <i>The Governour</i> published | 1548–1552 | Hall's <i>Chronicle</i> |
| 1532 | Thomas Cranmer appointed archbishop of Canterbury
Machiavelli's <i>The Prince</i>
Rabelais's <i>Pantagruel</i> | 1550 | Giorgio Vasari's <i>Vite de' più eccellenti architetti, pittori, et scultori italiani</i> |
| 1533 | The king secretly marries Anne Boleyn
Cranmer pronounces the king's marriage with Catherine "against divine law" | 1552 | The second Book of Common Prayer |
| 1534 | The Act of Supremacy constitutes the king as head of the Church of England
Rabelais's <i>Gargantua</i> | ca. 1552 | Edmund Spenser born |
| 1535 | Sir Thomas More executed
Thomas Cromwell appointed vicar general of the Church of England | 1553 | Lady Jane Grey proclaimed queen
Death of Rabelais |
| 1536 | The Pilgrimage of Grace: risings against the king's religious, social, and economic reforms
Calvin's <i>Institutio Christiana</i>
Anne Boleyn executed
Michelangelo begins <i>Last Judgement</i> (unveiled 1541)
The king marries Jane Seymour | 1553–1558 | Reign of Mary I (Mary Tudor) |
| 1537 | The dissolution of the monasteries: confiscation of ecclesiastical properties and assets; increase in royal revenues
Jane Seymour dies | ca. 1554 | Births of Walter Raleigh, Richard Hooker, and John Lyly |
| | | 1554 | Lady Jane Grey executed
Mary I marries Philip II of Spain
Bandello's <i>Novelle</i>
Philip Sidney born |
| | | 1555 | Louise Labbé's <i>Sonnets</i> |
| | | ca. 1556 | George Peele born |
| | | 1557 | Tottel's <i>Miscellany</i> , including the poems of Wyatt and Surrey, published |
| | | ca. 1558 | Thomas Kyd born |
| | | 1558 | Calais, the last English possession in France, is lost
Mary I dies |
| | | 1558–1603 | Reign of Elizabeth I |

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1559	John Knox arrives in Scotland Rebellion against the French regent		The first Blackfriars Theater opened with performances by the Children of St. Paul's
ca. 1559	George Chapman born		John Marston born
1561	Mary Queen of Scots (Mary Stuart) arrives in Edinburgh Thomas Hoby's translation of Castiglione's <i>The Courtier</i> <i>Gorboduc</i> , the first English play in blank verse Francis Bacon born	1576–1578	Martin Frobisher's voyages to Labrador and the northwest
1562	Civil war in France English expedition sent to support the Huguenots Benevuto Cellini's <i>Autobiography</i>	1577–1580	Sir Francis Drake sails around the world
1562–1568	Sir John Hawkins's voyages to Africa	1577	Holinshed's <i>Chronicles of England, Scotlande, and Irelande</i>
1563	John Foxe's <i>Book of Martyrs</i>	1578	Ronsard's <i>Sonnets pour Hélène</i>
1564	Births of Christopher Marlowe, William Shakespeare, and Galileo Galilei Death of Michelangelo and John Calvin	1579	John Lyly's <i>Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit</i> Thomas North's translation of <i>Plutarch's Lives</i> John Fletcher born
1565	Mary Queen of Scots marries Lord Darnley Santa Teresa's <i>Libro de la vida</i>	1579–1580	Sir Philip Sidney's <i>The Defence of Poetry</i>
1566	William Painter's <i>Palace of Pleasure</i> , a miscellany of prose stories, the source of many dramatists' plots	1580	Montaigne's <i>Essais</i> , I and II
1567	Darnley murdered at Kirk o'Field Mary Queen of Scots marries the earl of Bothwell	ca. 1580	Thomas Middleton born
1569	Rebellion of the English northern earls suppressed Gerardus Mercator publishes map of the world	1581	The Levant Company founded Seneca's <i>Ten Tragedies</i> translated
1570	Roger Ascham's <i>The Schoolmaster</i>	1582	Richard Hakluyt's <i>Divers Voyages Touching the Discoverie of America</i>
1571	Defeat of the Turkish fleet at Lepanto	1583	San Juan de la Cruz's <i>Noche Oscura</i>
ca. 1572	Ben Jonson born	1584	Sir Walter Raleigh lands on Roanoke Island Giordano Bruno's <i>De la Causa, Principio, et Uno</i> George Peele's <i>The Arraignment of Paris</i>
1572	St. Bartholomew's Day massacre John Donne born	ca. 1584	Francis Beaumont born
1574	The earl of Leicester's theater company formed	1584–1585	Sir John Davis's first voyage to Greenland
1575	Tasso's <i>Gerusalemme liberata</i> written (published 1581)	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
ca. 1575	Cyril Tournear born	1586	Kyd's <i>Spanish Tragedy</i> John Ford born Marlowe's <i>Tamburlaine</i> William Camden's <i>Britannia</i>
1576	The Theater, the first permanent theater building in London, opened		The Babington conspiracy against Queen Elizabeth Death of Sir Philip Sidney

CHRONOLOGY

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| 1587 | Mary Queen of Scots executed
Birth of Virginia Dare, first English child born in America, at Roanoke Island
Claudio Monteverdi completes first book of madrigals | 1599 | The Globe Theater opened and <i>Julius Caesar</i> performed for first known time
Oliver Cromwell born
Death of Edmund Spenser |
| 1588 | Defeat of the Spanish Armada
Marlowe's <i>Dr. Faustus</i>
Montaigne <i>Essais</i> , III | 1600 | Death of Richard Hooker
Shakespeare's <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> |
| 1589 | William Byrd's <i>Cantiones sacrae, Songs of Sundrie Natures</i> | 1601 | Rebellion and execution of the Earl of Essex
Donne's <i>The Progresse of the Soule</i> |
| 1590 | Spenser's <i>The Faerie Queen</i> , Cantos 1–3 | 1602 | The East India Company founded
The Bodleian Library reopened at Oxford |
| 1591 | Robert Herrick born | 1603–1625 | Reign of James I |
| 1591–1592 | Shakespeare's <i>Henry VI</i> (authored) | 1603 | John Florio's translation of Montaigne's <i>Essays</i>
Cervantes's <i>Don Quixote</i> (Part 1)
Shakespeare's <i>Hamlet</i>
The Gunpowder Plot |
| 1592 | Outbreak of plague in London: theaters closed | 1604 | Kepler's <i>Astronomia pars Optica</i>
John Marston's <i>The Malcontent</i>
Tournear's <i>The Revenger's Tragedy</i> |
| 1593 | Death of Christopher Marlowe
George Herbert born
Izaak Walton born
Richard Hooker's <i>Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity</i> (first four books) | ca. 1604 | Shakespeare's <i>Othello</i> (written) |
| 1594 | The Lord Chamberlain's Men, the company to which Shakespeare belonged, founded
The Swan Theater opened
Death of Thomas Kyd | 1605 | Thomas Browne born
Bacon's <i>Advancement of Learning</i> |
| 1595 | Raleigh's expedition to Guiana
Sidney's <i>Apology for Poetry</i> | ca. 1605 | Shakespeare's <i>Macbeth</i> |
| ca. 1595 | Thomas Carew born | 1606 | Jonson's <i>Volpone</i>
Death of John Lyly
Edmund Waller born |
| 1596 | The Earl of Essex's expedition captures Cadiz
René Descartes born
The second Blackfriars Theater opened | 1607 | The first permanent English colony established at Jamestown, Virginia
John Fletcher's and Francis Beaumont's <i>Knight of the Burning Pestle</i>
Monteverdi's <i>Orfeo</i> |
| ca. 1597 | Death of George Peele | 1608 | John Milton born
Shakespeare's <i>King Lear</i> |
| 1597 | Bacon's first collection of <i>Essays</i>
Shakespeare's <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>
Jacopo Peri's <i>Dafne</i> (the first opera) | 1609 | Kepler's <i>Astronomia nova</i>
John Suckling born |
| 1598 | The Edict of Nantes
Jonson's <i>Every Man in His Humor</i> | 1610 | Galileo's <i>Sidereus nuncius</i> |
| 1598–1600 | Richard Hakluyt's <i>Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffics, and Discoveries of the English Nation</i> | 1611 | The Authorized Version of the Bible
Shakespeare's <i>The Tempest</i> (authored) |

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| 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> | | Cardinal Richelieu establishes the Company of New France with monopoly over trade and land in Canada
Buckingham's expedition to the Isle of Ré to relieve La Rochelle
Death of Thomas Middleton |
| 1613 | The Globe Theatre destroyed by fire | | |
| ca. 1613 | Richard Crashaw born
Webster's <i>The Duchess of Malfi</i> | 1627–1628 | Revolt and siege of La Rochelle, the principal Huguenot city of France |
| 1614 | Ralegh's <i>History of the World</i> | 1628 | Buckingham assassinated
Surrender of La Rochelle
William Harvey's treatise on the circulation of the blood (<i>De motu cordis et sanguinis</i>)
John Bunyan born |
| 1616 | George Chapman's translation of Homer's <i>Odyssey</i>
Deaths of William Shakespeare, Francis Beaumont, and Miguel Cervantes | | |
| ca. 1618 | Richard Lovelace born | 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
The Massachusetts Bay Company formed |
| 1618 | The Thirty Years' War begins
Sir Walter Ralegh executed
Abraham Cowley born | | |
| 1619 | The General Assembly, the first legislative assembly on American soil, meets in Virginia
Slavery introduced at Jamestown | 1629–1630 | Peace treaties with France and Spain |
| 1620 | The Pilgrims land in Massachusetts
John Evelyn born | 1630 | Thomas Slater publishes <i>The True Travels, Adventures, and Observations of Captain John Smith</i> |
| 1621 | Francis Bacon impeached and fined
Robert Burton's <i>Anatomy of Melancholy</i>
Andrew Marvell born | 1631 | John Dryden born
Death of John Donne |
| ca. 1621 | Henry Vaughan born | 1632 | Rembrandt's <i>Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Tulp</i> |
| 1622 | Middleton's <i>The Changeling</i> | 1633 | William Laud appointed archbishop of Canterbury
Death of George Herbert; <i>The Temple</i> published posthumously
Samuel Pepys 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 | 1634 | Death of George Chapman
Death of John Marston |
| 1624 | War against Spain | 1635 | The Académie Française founded
George Etherege born |
| 1625–1649 | Reign of Charles I | ca. 1635 | Sir Thomas Browne's <i>Religio Medici</i> (authored) |
| 1625 | Death of John Fletcher
Bacon's last collection of <i>Essays</i>
Heinrich Schütz's <i>Cantiones Sacrae</i> | 1636 | Pierre Corneille's <i>Le Cid</i>
Harvard College founded |
| 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 | 1637 | Milton's "Lycidas"
Descartes's <i>Discours de la méthode</i> |
| 1627 | Ford's <i>'Tis Pity She's a Whore</i> | | |

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- King Charles's levy of ship money challenged in the courts by John Hampden
The introduction of the new English Book of Common Prayer strongly opposed in Scotland
Death of Ben Jonson
- ca. 1637 Thomas Traherne born
- 1638 The Scots draw up a National Covenant to defend their religion
Galileo's *Discorsi e dimostrazioni matematiche intorno a due nove scienze*
Sir John Suckling's *The Goblins*
- ca. 1638 Death of John Webster
- 1639 Parliament reassembled to raise taxes
- ca. 1639 Death of John Ford
Charles Sedley born
- 1639–1640 The two Bishops' Wars with Scotland
- 1640 The Long Parliament assembled
The king's advisers, Archbishop Laud and the earl of Strafford, impeached
Aphra Behn born
Death of Thomas Carew
- 1641 Strafford executed
Acts passed abolishing extraparliamentary taxation, the king's extraordinary courts, and his power to order a dissolution without parliamentary consent
The Grand Remonstrance censuring royal policy passed by eleven votes
William Wycherley born
- 1642 Parliament submits the nineteen Propositions, which King Charles rejects as annihilating the royal power
The Civil War begins
The theaters close
Royalist victory at Edgehill; King Charles established at Oxford
Deaths of Sir John Suckling and Galileo
- 1643 Parliament concludes the Solemn League and Covenant with the Scots
Louis XIV crowned king of France
Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset, born
- 1644 Parliamentary victory at Marston Moor
The New Model army raised
Milton's *Areopagitica*
- 1645 Parliamentary victory under Fairfax and Cromwell at Naseby
Fairfax captures Bristol
Archbishop Laud executed
Edmund Waller's *Poems*
- 1646 Fairfax besieges King Charles at Oxford
King Charles takes refuge in Scotland; end of the First Civil War
King Charles attempts negotiations with the Scots
Parliament's proposals sent to the king and rejected
Richard Crashaw's *Steps to the Temple*
- 1647 Conflict between Parliament and the army
A general council of the army established that discusses representational government within the army
The Agreement of the People drawn up by the Levelers; its proposals include manhood suffrage
King Charles concludes an agreement with the Scots
George Fox begins to preach
John Wilmot, earl of Rochester, born
- 1648 Cromwell dismisses the general council of the army
The Second Civil War begins
Fairfax defeats the Kentish royalists at Maidstone
Cromwell defeats the Scots at Preston
The Thirty Years' War ended by the treaty of Westphalia
Parliament purged by the army
Thomas Herrick's *Hesperides*
- 1649–1660 Commonwealth**
- 1649 King Charles I tried and executed
The monarchy and the House of Lords abolished
The Commonwealth proclaimed