

BRITISH WRITERS



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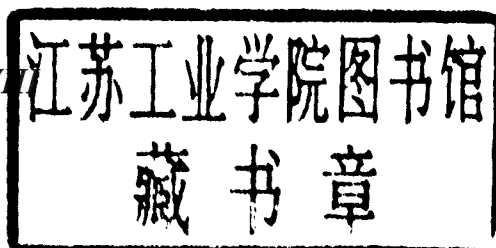


BRITISH WRITERS

JAY PARINI

Editor

SUPPLEMENT VII



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Introduction

It was Henry David Thoreau who said, in *Walden*, that “books must be read as deliberately and reservedly as they are written.” One of the purposes of this ongoing series is to encourage readers to read “deliberately and reservedly,” reconsidering major authors and learning about forgotten or unknown authors who have nevertheless contributed important work to the British literary tradition, which reaches back into the medieval period and continues to this moment, a lively and abundant tradition of good writing.

The contributors' articles to this volume are all professionals: teachers, scholars, and writers. As anyone glancing through the collection will notice, writers are held to the highest standards of writing and scholarship. Their essays, which focus on the life and work of a particular author, each conclude with a bibliography of work by the author and about the author; these are meant to direct the reading of those should want to pursue a subject further.

In *British Writers, Supplement VIII* we present essays on a wide variety of writers. None of these has yet been discussed in previous volumes in the series, yet all seem worthy of consideration. The range of subjects covered stretches from the literature written in Old Norse, a precursor of

modern English, to such contemporary poets and playwrights as Michael Longley, Simon Armitage, Peter Reading, Alan Bennett, and Sarah Kane—all writers who have made a significant impact on the literary scene in the last few decades.

In keeping with previous volumes in the series, we also turn occasionally to major writers from the British Commonwealth (or countries once in some way associated with Britain). One of the most widely studied and discussed writers in the world today is the Kenyan writer Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, whose major career in fiction and drama is discussed in detail here. Another important writer discussed here is the Australian poet, Christopher Wallace-Crabbe.

This particular supplement is rich in authors from the past, such as the early Scottish poet William Dunbar and the playwright Robert Greene, Shakespeare's contemporary. More recent writers covered in this collection include George Russell (also called AE), James Macpherson, Mary Elizabeth Braddon, Barbara Comyns, A.E. Coppard, Frances Cornford, and Charles Maturin. These interesting and important writers were, for various reasons, neglected in previous volumes and supplements. We try to make up for that here.

JAY PARINI

Chronology

1272–1307	Reign of Edward I	1371	Sir John Mandeville's <i>Travels</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	1372	Chaucer travels to Italy
1282	Llewelyn II leads a second attack against Edward and fails; Wales falls to English rule	1372–1382	Wycliffe active in Oxford
1297	William Wallace (Braveheart) leads attacks against British troops in an attempt for Scottish sovereignty	1373–1393	William of Wykeham founds Winchester College and New College, Oxford
1305	William Wallace is captured, tried, and hanged	<i>ca.</i> 1375–1400	<i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i>
1307–1327	Reign of Edward II	1376	Death of Edward the Black Prince
<i>ca.</i> 1325	John Wycliffe born John Gower born	1377–1399	Reign of Richard II
1327–1377	Reign of Edward III	<i>ca.</i> 1379	Gower's <i>Vox clamantis</i>
<i>ca.</i> 1332	William Langland born	<i>ca.</i> 1380	Chaucer's <i>Troilus and Criseyde</i>
1337	Beginning of the Hundred Years' War	1381	The Peasants' Revolt
<i>ca.</i> 1340	Geoffrey Chaucer born	1386	Chaucer's <i>Canterbury Tales</i> begun Chaucer sits in Parliament Gower's <i>Confessio amantis</i>
1346	The Battle of Crécy	1399–1413	Reign of Henry IV
1348	The Black Death (further outbreaks in 1361 and 1369)	<i>ca.</i> 1400	Death of William Langland
<i>ca.</i> 1350	Boccaccio's <i>Decameron</i> Langland's <i>Piers Plowman</i>	1400	Death of Geoffrey Chaucer
1351	The Statute of Laborers pegs laborers' wages at rates in effect preceding the plague	1408	Death of John Gower
1356	The Battle of Poitiers	1412–1420	Lydgate's <i>Troy Book</i>
1360	The Treaty of Brétigny: end of the first phase of the Hundred Years' War	1413–1422	Reign of Henry V
1362	Pleadings in the law courts conducted in English Parliaments opened by speeches in English	1415	The Battle of Agincourt
1369	Chaucer's <i>The Book of the Duchess</i> , an elegy to Blanche of Lancaster, wife of John of Gaunt	1420–1422	Lydgate's <i>Siege of Thebes</i>
1369–1377	Victorious French campaigns under du Guesclin	1422–1461	Reign of Henry VI
<i>ca.</i> 1370	John Lydgate born	1431	François Villon born Joan of Arc burned at Rouen
		1440–1441	Henry VI founds Eton College and King's College, Cambridge
		1444	Truce of Tours
		1450	Jack Cade's rebellion
		<i>ca.</i> 1451	Death of John Lydgate
		1453	End of the Hundred Years' War The fall of Constantinople
		1455–1485	The Wars of the Roses
		<i>ca.</i> 1460	Births of William Dunbar and John Skelton
		1461–1470	Reign of Edward IV

CHRONOLOGY

1470–1471	Reign of Henry VI	1526	Tyndale's English translation of the New Testament imported from Holland
1471	Death of Sir Thomas Malory	1529	Fall of Cardinal Wolsey
1471–1483	Reign of Edward IV		Death of John Skelton
1476–1483	Caxton's press set up: <i>The Canterbury Tales</i> , <i>Morte d'Arthur</i> , and <i>The Golden Legend</i> printed	1529–1536	The "Reformation" Parliament
1483–1485	Reign of Richard III	1531	Sir Thomas Elyot's <i>The Governour</i> published
1485	The Battle of Bosworth Field; end of the Wars of the Roses	1532	Thomas Cranmer appointed archbishop of Canterbury
1485–1509	Reign of Henry VII		Machiavelli's <i>The Prince</i>
1486	Marriage of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York unites the rival houses of Lancaster and York	1533	The king secretly marries Anne Boleyn
	Bartholomew Diaz rounds the Cape of Good Hope		Cranmer pronounces the king's marriage with Catherine "against divine law"
1492	Columbus' first voyage to the New World	1534	The Act of Supremacy constitutes the king as head of the Church of England
1493	Pope Alexander VI divides undiscovered territories between Spain and Portugal	1535	Sir Thomas More executed
1497–1498	John Cabot's voyages to Newfoundland and Labrador		Thomas Cromwell appointed vicar general of the Church of England
1497–1499	Vasco da Gama's voyage to India	1536	The Pilgrimage of Grace: risings against the king's religious, social, and economic reforms
1499	Amerigo Vespucci's first voyage to America		Anne Boleyn executed
	Erasmus' first visit to England		The king marries Jane Seymour
1503	Thomas Wyatt born	1537	The dissolution of the monasteries: confiscation of ecclesiastical properties and assets; increase in royal revenues
1505	John Colet appointed dean of St. Paul's; founds St. Paul's School		Jane Seymour dies
1509–1547	Reign of Henry VIII	1538	First complete English Bible published and placed in all churches
1509	The king marries Catherine of Aragon	1540	The king marries Anne of Cleves
1511	Erasmus' <i>Praise of Folly</i> published		Marriage dissolved
1513	Invasion by the Scots defeated at Flodden Field		The king marries Catherine Howard
1515	Wolsey appointed lord chancellor		Fall and execution of Thomas Cromwell
1516	Sir Thomas More's <i>Utopia</i>	1542	Catherine Howard executed
1517	Martin Luther's theses against indulgences published at Wittenberg		Death of Sir Thomas Wyatt
	Henry Howard (earl of Surrey) born	1543	The king marries Catherine Parr
1519	Charles V of Spain becomes Holy Roman Emperor		Copernicus' <i>De revolutionibus orbium coelestium</i>
1519–1521	Magellan's voyage around the world	1546	Trinity College, Cambridge, refounded
1525	Cardinal College, the forerunner of Christ Church, founded at Oxford	1547	The earl of Surrey executed

CHRONOLOGY

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| 1547–1553 | Reign of Edward VI | 1569 | Rebellion of the English northern earls suppressed |
| 1548–1552 | Hall's <i>Chronicle</i> | 1570 | Roger Ascham's <i>The Schoolmaster</i> |
| 1552 | The second Book of Common Prayer | 1571 | Defeat of the Turkish fleet at Lepanto |
| ca. 1552 | Edmund Spenser born | ca. 1572 | Ben Jonson born |
| 1553 | Lady Jane Grey proclaimed queen | 1572 | St. Bartholomew's Day massacre |
| 1553–1558 | Reign of Mary I (Mary Tudor) | | John Donne born |
| ca. 1554 | Births of Walter Raleigh, Richard Hooker, and John Lyly | 1574 | The earl of Leicester's theater company formed |
| 1554 | Lady Jane Grey executed | 1576 | The Theater, the first permanent theater building in London, opened |
| | Mary I marries Philip II of Spain | | The first Blackfriars Theater opened with performances by the Children of St. Paul's |
| | Bandello's <i>Novelle</i> | | John Marston born |
| | Philip Sidney born | | |
| ca. 1556 | George Peele born | 1576–1578 | Martin Frobisher's voyages to Labrador and the northwest |
| 1557 | Tottel's <i>Miscellany</i> , including the poems of Wyatt and Surrey, published | 1577–1580 | Sir Francis Drake sails around the world |
| ca. 1558 | Thomas Kyd born | 1577 | Holinshed's <i>Chronicles of England, Scotlande, and Irelande</i> |
| 1558 | Calais, the last English possession in France, is lost | 1579 | John Lyly's <i>Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit</i> |
| | Birth of Robert Greene | | Thomas North's translation of <i>Plutarch's Lives</i> |
| | Mary I dies | 1581 | The Levant Company founded |
| 1558–1603 | Reign of Elizabeth I | | Seneca's <i>Ten Tragedies</i> translated |
| 1559 | John Knox arrives in Scotland | 1582 | Richard Hakluyt's <i>Divers Voyages Touching the Discoverie of America</i> |
| | Rebellion against the French regent | 1584–1585 | Sir John Davis' first voyage to Greenland |
| ca. 1559 | George Chapman born | 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 |
| 1561 | Mary Queen of Scots (Mary Stuart) arrives in Edinburgh | 1586 | Kyd's <i>Spanish Tragedy</i> |
| | Thomas Hoby's translation of Castiglione's <i>The Courtier Gorboduc</i> , the first English play in blank verse | | Marlowe's <i>Tamburlaine</i> |
| | Francis Bacon born | | William Camden's <i>Britannia</i> |
| 1562 | Civil war in France | | The Babington conspiracy against Queen Elizabeth |
| | English expedition sent to support the Huguenots | | Death of Sir Philip Sidney |
| 1562–1568 | Sir John Hawkins' voyages to Africa | 1587 | Mary Queen of Scots executed |
| 1564 | Births of Christopher Marlowe and William Shakespeare | | Birth of Virginia Dare, first English child born in America, at Roanoke Island |
| 1565 | Mary Queen of Scots marries Lord Darnley | | |
| 1566 | William Painter's <i>Palace of Pleasure</i> , a miscellany of prose stories, the source of many dramatists' plots | | |
| 1567 | Darnley murdered at Kirk o'Field | | |
| | Mary Queen of Scots marries the earl of Bothwell | | |

CHRONOLOGY

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| 1588 | Defeat of the Spanish Armada
Marlowe's <i>Dr. Faustus</i> | Jonson's <i>Volpone</i>
Death of John Lyly |
| 1590 | Spenser's <i>The Faerie Queen</i> , Cantos 1–3 | Edmund Waller born |
| 1592 | Outbreak of plague in London; the theaters closed
Henry King born | 1607 The first permanent English colony established at Jamestown, Virginia |
| 1593 | Death of Christopher Marlowe | 1608 John Milton born |
| 1594 | The Lord Chamberlain's Men, the company to which Shakespeare belonged, founded
The Swan Theater opened
Death of Thomas Kyd | 1609 Kepler's <i>Astronomia nova</i>
John Suckling born |
| 1595 | Raleigh's expedition to Guiana
Sidney's <i>Apology for Poetry</i> | 1610 Galileo's <i>Sidereus nuncius</i> |
| 1596 | The earl of Essex's expedition captures Cadiz
The second Blackfriars Theater opened | 1611 The Authorized Version of the Bible
Shakespeare's <i>The Tempest</i> |
| ca. 1597 | Death of George Peele | 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> |
| 1597 | Bacon's first collection of <i>Essays</i> | ca. 1613 Richard Crashaw born |
| 1598 | Jonson's <i>Every Man in His Humor</i> | 1613 The Globe Theatre destroyed by fire
Webster's <i>The Duchess of Malfi</i> |
| 1598–1600 | Richard Hakluyt's <i>Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffics, and Discoveries of the English Nation</i> | 1614 Raleigh's <i>History of the World</i> |
| 1599 | The Globe Theater opened
Death of Edmund Spenser | 1616 George Chapman's translation of Homer's <i>Odyssey</i>
Deaths of William Shakespeare, Francis Beaumont, and Miguel Cervantes |
| 1600 | Death of Richard Hooker | ca. 1618 Richard Lovelace born |
| 1601 | Rebellion and execution of the earl of Essex | 1618 The Thirty Years' War begins
Sir Walter Raleigh executed
Abraham Cowley born |
| 1602 | The East India Company founded
The Bodleian Library reopened at Oxford | 1619 The General Assembly, the first legislative assembly on American soil, meets in Virginia
Slavery introduced at Jamestown |
| 1603–1625 | Reign of James I | 1620 The Pilgrims land in Massachusetts
John Evelyn born |
| 1603 | John Florio's translation of Montaigne's <i>Essays</i>
Cervantes' <i>Don Quixote</i> (Part 1)
The Gunpowder Plot
Thomas Browne born | 1621 Francis Bacon impeached and fined
Robert Burton's <i>Anatomy of Melancholy</i>
Andrew Marvell born |
| 1604 | Shakespeare's <i>Othello</i> | 1622 Middleton's <i>The Changeling</i>
Henry Vaughan born |
| ca. 1605 | Shakespeare's <i>King Lear</i>
Tournear's <i>The Revenger's Tragedy</i> | 1623 The First Folio of Shakespeare's plays |
| 1605 | Bacon's <i>Advancement of Learning</i> | |
| 1606 | Shakespeare's <i>Macbeth</i> | |

CHRONOLOGY

	Visit of Prince Charles and the duke of Buckingham to Spain; failure of attempts to negotiate a Spanish marriage		George Etherege born
1624	War against Spain	1636	Pierre Corneille's <i>Le Cid</i>
1625–1649	Reign of Charles I		Harvard College founded
1625	Death of John Fletcher	ca. 1637	Thomas Traherne born
	Bacon's last collection of <i>Essays</i>	1637	Milton's "Lycidas"
1626	Bacon's <i>New Atlantis</i> , appended to <i>Sylva sylvarum</i>		Descartes's <i>Discours de la méthode</i>
	Dutch found New Amsterdam		King Charles's levy of ship money
	Death of Cyril Tourneur		challenged in the courts by John Hampden
	Death of Francis Bacon		The introduction of the new English
1627	Ford's <i>'Tis Pity She's a Whore</i>		Book of Common Prayer strongly opposed in Scotland
	Cardinal Richelieu establishes the Company of New France with monopoly over trade and land in Canada		Death of Ben Jonson
	Buckingham's expedition to the Isle of Ré to relieve La Rochelle	ca. 1638	Death of John Webster
	Death of Thomas Middleton	1638	The Scots draw up a National Covenant to defend their religion
1627–1628	Revolt and siege of La Rochelle, the principal Huguenot city of France	ca. 1639	Death of John Ford
1628	Buckingham assassinated	1639	Parliament reassembled to raise taxes
	Surrender of La Rochelle		Death of Thomas Carew
	William Harvey's treatise on the circulation of the blood (<i>De motu cordis et sanguinis</i>)		Charles Sedley born
	John Bunyan born	1639–1640	The two Bishops' Wars with Scotland
1629	Ford's <i>The Broken Heart</i>	1640	The Long Parliament assembled
	King Charles dismisses his third Parliament, imprisons nine members, and proceeds to rule for eleven years without Parliament		The king's advisers, Archbishop Laud and the earl of Strafford, impeached
	The Massachusetts Bay Company formed		Aphra Behn born
1629–1630	Peace treaties with France and Spain	1641	Strafford executed
1631	John Dryden born		Acts passed abolishing extraparliamentary taxation, the king's extraordinary courts, and his power to order a dissolution without parliamentary consent
	Death of John Donne		The Grand Remonstrance censuring royal policy passed by eleven votes
1633	William Laud appointed archbishop of Canterbury		William Wycherley born
	Death of George Herbert	1642	Parliament submits the nineteen Propositions, which King Charles rejects as annihilating the royal power
	Samuel Pepys born		The Civil War begins
1634	Deaths of George Chapman and John Marston		The theaters close
1635	The Académie Française founded		Royalist victory at Edgehill; King Charles established at Oxford
			Death of Sir John Suckling
		1643	Parliament concludes the Solemn League and Covenant with the Scots
			Louis XIV becomes king of France

CHRONOLOGY

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| <p>1662 Peace Treaty with Spain
King Charles II marries Catherine of Braganza
The Royal Society incorporated (founded in 1660)</p> <p>1664 War against Holland
New Amsterdam captured and becomes New York
John Vanbrugh born</p> <p>1665 The Great Plague
Newton discovers the binomial theorem and invents the integral and differential calculus, at Cambridge</p> <p>1666 The Great Fire of London
Bunyan's <i>Grace Abounding</i>
<i>London Gazette</i> founded</p> <p>1667 The Dutch fleet sails up the Medway and burns English ships
The war with Holland ended by the Treaty of Breda
Milton's <i>Paradise Lost</i>
Thomas Sprat's <i>History of the Royal Society</i>
Death of Abraham Cowley</p> <p>1668 Sir Christopher Wren begins to rebuild St. Paul's Cathedral
Triple Alliance formed with Holland and Sweden against France
Dryden's <i>Essay of Dramatick Poesy</i></p> <p>1670 Alliance formed with France through the secret Treaty of Dover
Pascal's <i>Pensées</i>
The Hudson's Bay Company founded
William Congreve born</p> <p>1671 Milton's <i>Samson Agonistes</i> and <i>Paradise Regained</i></p> <p>1672 War against Holland
Wycherley's <i>The Country Wife</i>
King Charles issues the Declaration of Indulgence, suspending penal laws against Nonconformists and Catholics</p> <p>1673 Parliament passes the Test Act, making acceptance of the doctrines of the Church of England a condition for holding public office</p> | <p>1674 War with Holland ended by the Treaty of Westminster
Deaths of John Milton, Robert Herrick, and Thomas Traherne</p> <p>1676 Etherege's <i>The Man of Mode</i></p> <p>1677 Baruch Spinoza's <i>Ethics</i>
Jean Racine's <i>Phèdre</i>
King Charles's niece, Mary, marries her cousin William of Orange</p> <p>1678 Fabrication of the so-called popish plot by Titus Oates
Bunyan's <i>Pilgrim's Progress</i>
Dryden's <i>All for Love</i>
Death of Andrew Marvell
George Farquhar born</p> <p>1679 Parliament passes the Habeas Corpus Act
Rochester's <i>A Satire Against Mankind</i></p> <p>1680 Death of John Wilmot, earl of Rochester</p> <p>1681 Dryden's <i>Absalom and Achitophel</i> (Part 1)</p> <p>1682 Dryden's <i>Absalom and Achitophel</i> (Part 2)
Thomas Otway's <i>Venice Preserv'd</i>
Philadelphia founded
Death of Sir Thomas Browne</p> <p>1683 The Ashmolean Museum, the world's first public museum, opens at Oxford
Death of Izaak Walton</p> <p>1685–1688 Reign of James II</p> <p>1685 Rebellion and execution of James Scott, duke of Monmouth
John Gay born</p> <p>1686 The first book of Newton's <i>Principia –De motu corporum</i>, containing his theory of gravitation presented to the Royal Society</p> <p>1687 James II issues the Declaration of Indulgence
Dryden's <i>The Hind and the Panther</i>
Death of Edmund Waller</p> <p>1688 James II reissues the Declaration of Indulgence, renewing freedom of worship and suspending the provisions of the Test Act</p> |
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CHRONOLOGY

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| | Acquittal of the seven bishops imprisoned for protesting against the Declaration | | 1701 | War of the Spanish Succession, 1701–1714 (Queen Anne's War in America, 1702–1713) |
| | William of Orange lands at Torbay, Devon | | | Death of Sir Charles Sedley |
| | James II takes refuge in France | 1702–1714 | | Reign of Queen Anne |
| | Death of John Bunyan | | 1702 | Clarendon's <i>History of the Rebellion</i> (1702–1704) |
| | Alexander Pope born | | | Defoe's <i>The Shortest Way with the Dissenters</i> |
| 1689–1702 | Reign of William III | | 1703 | Defoe is arrested, fined, and pilloried for writing <i>The Shortest Way</i> |
| 1689 | Parliament formulates the Declaration of Rights | | | Death of Samuel Pepys |
| | William and Mary accept the Declaration and the crown | | 1704 | John Churchill, duke of Marlborough, and Prince Eugene of Savoy defeat the French at Blenheim |
| | The Grand Alliance concluded between the Holy Roman Empire, England, Holland, and Spain | | | Capture of Gibraltar |
| | War declared against France | | | Swift's <i>A Tale of a Tub</i> and <i>The Battle of the Books</i> |
| | King William's War, 1689–1697 (the first of the French and Indian wars) | | | <i>The Review</i> founded (1704–1713) |
| | Samuel Richardson born | | 1706 | Farquhar's <i>The Recruiting Officer</i> |
| | | | | Deaths of John Evelyn and Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset |
| 1690 | James II lands in Ireland with French support, but is defeated at the battle of the Boyne | | 1707 | Farquhar's <i>The Beaux' Stratagem</i> |
| | John Locke's <i>Essay Concerning Human Understanding</i> | | | Act of Union joining England and Scotland |
| 1692 | Salem witchcraft trials | | | Death of George Farquhar |
| | Death of Sir George Etherege | | | Henry Fielding born |
| 1694 | George Fox's <i>Journal</i> | | 1709 | <i>The Tatler</i> founded (1709–1711) |
| | Voltaire (François Marie Arouet) born | | | Nicholas Rowe's edition of Shakespeare |
| | Death of Mary II | | | Samuel Johnson born |
| 1695 | Congreve's <i>Love for Love</i> | | | Marlborough defeats the French at Malplaquet |
| | Death of Henry Vaughan | | | Charles XII of Sweden defeated at Poltava |
| 1697 | War with France ended by the Treaty of Ryswick | | 1710 | South Sea Company founded |
| | Vanbrugh's <i>The Relapse</i> | | | First copyright act |
| 1698 | Jeremy Collier's <i>A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage</i> | | 1711 | Swift's <i>The Conduct of the Allies</i> |
| | | | | <i>The Spectator</i> founded (1711–1712; 1714) |
| 1699 | Fénelon's <i>Les Aventures de Télémaque</i> | | | Marlborough dismissed |
| | | | | David Hume born |
| 1700 | Congreve's <i>The Way of the World</i> | | 1712 | Pope's <i>The Rape of the Lock</i> (Cantos 1–2) |
| | Defoe's <i>The True-Born Englishman</i> | | | Jean Jacques Rousseau born |
| | Death of John Dryden | | | |
| | James Thomson born | | | |

CHRONOLOGY

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

CHRONOLOGY

- Franklin's experiments with electricity announced
Voltaire's *Essai sur les mœurs*
- 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** Reign of George III
- 1760 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

CHRONOLOGY

- 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*
 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 *Goetz 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