Literary London:
Imagining the City
Drs. Christopher and Hope Hodgkins
Wednesday, March 29

Renaissance, Reformation,
and Civil War
Langland’s and Chaucer’s London
14th Century
Early Tudor London--1485-1550
15\textsuperscript{th}-Century Tower of London, based on a contemporary painting
London with Customs House, London Bridge, from the Tower, looking west
London Street Scene late 15th Century
Edward IV and Elizabeth Woodville, King and Queen 1461-1483
Richard III—King 1483-1485
Richard III's Death at Bosworth 1485
Richard III's Grave under a “car park,” the former Greyfriars Church, Leicester
Henry VII, First Tudor King—1485-1509
Sir Thomas More—1478-1535
by Hans Holbein
Lawyer (More’s statue opposite the Royal Courts of Justice) ...
Family man ... c. 1527
...anti-Protestant polemicist...

- **Defense of the Seven Sacraments**, written with and for Henry VIII (1521)
Friend to the Catholic Reformer Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466-1536) ...
Lord Chancellor (1529-1532) ...
(see that chain)
...and Catholic Martyr (Paul Scofield in A Man for All Seasons, 1966)
...beheaded on this spot on Tower Hill in 1535
But before his great rise

And fall...
... he was creator of *Utopia* (1516)
The ideal state ...

- (frontispiece of 1516 First Edition)
...on an artificial island far away (1518 edition map)
Yet Book 1 of *Utopia* takes place at Lambeth House, home to the Archbishops of Canterbury (right)
...across the Thames from Westminster
...over dinner with Cardinal John Morton (c. 1420-1500), Archbishop of Canterbury (1488-1500)
...debating the goods and evils of

COMMUNISM
More also wrote *The History of Richard III* (1513)
...yes, him again...
...source of Shakespeare’s play...which includes the affair between

King Edward IV and Elizabeth (Jane) Shore
Alternately imagined as Hunky and Underdressed.
Jane Shore’s Public Penance at Paul's Cross, 1483
More grew up under Henry VII...
Followed by this fellow...
Henry VIII, about 1509, by Meynnart Wewyck
...who by 1546 looked like this, according to Holbein
Who could fit into this...
And had by then gone through six wives...
Divorced, beheaded, died, divorced, beheaded, survived...a.k.a...
Catherine of Aragon, Anne Boleyn, Jane Seymour, Anne of Cleves, Catherine Howard, Katherine Parr
Anne Boleyn’s “luxurious” Execution, 1536
...on this lovely spot in Tower Green
...vs. burning of Baptist Anne Askew outside the city in Smithfield, 1546
Smithfield Market today—
London’s Butcher Shop
Henry VIII died in 1547, passing rule to his very Protestant 10-year-old son, Edward VI...
...who died in July 1553, followed by...
Lady Jane Grey, Reigned July 10-18, 1553
...followed soon by her beheading, leading to...
Mary Tudor
Queen 1553-1558

- Very Catholic
- Daughter of Henry VIII
- and
- Catherine
- of
- Aragon
...opening an era of burning and butchering Protestants at Smithfield
...recorded and published by John Foxe (1516-1587)...
...in Acts and Monuments (Book of Martyrs) 1563, 1570
Foxe: John Rogers, First Marian Martyr, 1555
How Mr. Bucers and Paulus Phagius bones were put into two new Coffins, and so bound to a Stake.
Mary’s 1558 death brought her half-sister Elizabeth to the throne...
Beginning what has been called a Golden Age for England and London...
...establishing a Protestant Church of England with an English *Book of Common Prayer* (1559)
...opening the Royal Exchange in 1571...
and visiting new public playhouses such as The Rose (1587)...

...the Swan (1595)...
and The Globe (1599)
...now accurately rebuilt on the Thames South Bank
...where Shakespeare (1564-1616) and The Lord Chamberlain’s Men could thrive
Now he could retell More’s story of Richard III...
The sun will not be seen to-day;
The sky doth frown and lour upon our head.
Would these dewy tears were from the sky, not shine to-day! Why, what is that to me?
More than to Richmond? For the selfsame sun that frowns on me looks sadly upon him.
...with Richard’s audacious wooing of Lady Anne in the street...
...and sending those poor princes to the Tower...
...and a very early grave under the stairs (discovered 1674)
Shakespeare could revisit the Boar’s Head Tavern in Eastcheap...
...as rebuilt today...
...where in *1 Henry IV* Prince Hal hides in plain sight among the ruffians...
...until, at the end of his father’s troubled reign, he can rise like the sun
Shakespeare can even reflect in *Hamlet* on the all-boy productions...
...competing with his company’s business
Meanwhile John Donne (1572-1631)...
...is making each of his *Songs and Sonnets* into a little theater...
…and making “one little (bed)room an everywhere”…

**Break of Day**  
*By John Donne*

- ‘Tis true, ‘tis day, what though it be?
- O wilt thou therefore rise from me?
- Why should we rise because ‘tis light?
- Did we lie down because ‘twas night?
- Love, which in spite of darkness brought us hither,
- Should in despite of light keep us together.

- Light hath no tongue, but is all eye;
- If it could speak as well as spy,
- This were the worst that it could say,
- That being well I fain would stay,
- And that I loved my heart and honour so,
- That I would not from him, that had them, go.

- Must business thee from hence remove?
- Oh, that’s the worst disease of love,
- The poor, the foul, the false, love can
- Admit, but not the busied man.
- He which hath business, and makes love, doth do
- Such wrong, as when a married man doth woo.
...commenting on the new national obsession with “business”...
and making the overcrowded graves of London...
...a place for relics and...

By John Donne
The Relic  By John Donne

When my grave is broke up again
Some second guest to entertain,
(For graves have learn’d that womanhead,
To be to more than one a bed)
And he that digs it, spies
A bracelet of bright hair about the bone,
Will he not let’us alone,
And think that there a loving couple lies,
Who thought that this device might be some way
To make their souls, at the last busy day,
Meet at this grave, and make a little stay?

If this fall in a time, or land,
Where mis-devotion doth command,
Then he, that digs us up, will bring
Us to the bishop, and the king,
To make us relics; then
Thou shalt be a Mary Magdalen, and I
A something else thereby;
All women shall adore us, and some men;
And since at such time miracles are sought,
I would have that age by this paper taught
What miracles we harmless lovers wrought.
...for miraculous discovery

- First, we lov'd well and faithfully,
- Yet knew not what we lov'd, nor why;
- Difference of sex no more we knew
- Than our guardian angels do;
- Coming and going, we
- Perchance might kiss, but not between those meals;
- Our hands ne'er touch'd the seals
- Which nature, injur'd by late law, sets free;
- These miracles we did, but now alas,
- All measure, and all language, I should pass,
- Should I tell what a miracle she was.
He went from young “Jack” to older “Dr. John” Donne...
Dean of St. Paul’s and the most popular preacher of his time...
...in 1623, while ill of a fever, he wrote a meditation on the sound of bells...

Meditation 17

PERCHANCE he for whom this bell tolls may be so ill as that he knows not it tolls for him. And perchance I may think myself so much better than I am, as that they who are about me, and see my state, may have caused it to toll for me, and I know not that. The church is catholic, universal, so are all her actions; all that she does, belongs to all. When she baptizes a child, that action concerns me; for that child is thereby connected to that head which is my head too, and ingrafted into that body, whereof I am a member. And when she buries a man, that action concerns me; all mankind is of one author, and is one volume; when one man dies, one chapter is not torn out of the book, but translated into a better language; and every chapter must be so translated; God employs several translators; some pieces are translated by age, some by sickness, some by war, some by justice; but God's hand is in every translation, and his hand shall bind up all our scattered leaves again, for that library where every book shall lie open to one another; as therefore the bell that rings to a sermon, calls not upon the preacher only, but upon the congregation to come; so this bell calls us all: but how much more me, who am brought so near the door by this sickness.

There was a contention as far as a suit (in which, piety and dignity, religion and estimation, were mingled) which of the religious orders should ring to prayers first in the morning; and it was determined, that they should ring first that rose earliest. If we understand aright the dignity of this bell, that tolls for our evening prayer, we would be glad to make it ours, by rising early, in that application, that it might be ours as well as his, whose indeed it is. The bell doth toll for him, that thinks it doth; and though it intermit again, yet from that minute, that that occasion wrought upon him, he is united to God. Who casts not up his eye to the sun when it rises? But who takes off his eye from a comet, when that breaks out? who bends not his ear to any bell, which upon any occasion rings? But who can remove it from that bell, which is passing a piece of himself out of this world?

No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main: if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friend's or of thine own were: any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.
When Donne was dying in 1631, he had a painting done in his shroud...
...which was then turned into a statue in St. Paul’s Cathedral...
...which survived the Great Fire, and stands in Wren’s cathedral today
During the lives of Shakespeare and Donne, religious divisions had not disappeared...
In 1605, renegade Catholics aided by Guy Fawkes tried to blow up Parliament...
...while Puritans scattered to Holland (1607) and New England (1620)....
King James commissioned the very popular Authorized Version (1611)…
...but when he died in 1625...
...his son Charles took a more aggressive tack...
...stirring Puritan resistance in London and southern England, including from...
...the very independent
John Milton
(1608-1674)
Milton attacked his fellow Puritans in *Areopagitica* (1644) for censoring the press:
For books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are; nay, they do preserve as in a vial the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them.

―John Milton
Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties.

- John Milton
I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat.

- John Milton
Milton also wrote Sonnets both praising and warning Puritan General Oliver Cromwell to fight Monarchy...
...and Milton wrote four books defending Cromwell’s trial and execution in 1649 of Charles I ...
...outside the Whitehall Banqueting House that still stands today
The power of Kings and Magistrates is nothing else, but what is only derivative, transferrd and committed to them in trust from the People, to the Common good of them all, in whom the power yet remains fundamentally, and cannot be takn from them, without a violation of thir natural birthright.
The Restoration

But Cromwell died in 1658...

& Charles II crowned in 1660
A New Map of the Cities of London and Westminster and Ye Borough of Southwarke with their Suburbs (1675; based on Wenceslas Hollar’s retrospective)
It was about the beginning of September, 1664, that I, among the rest of my neighbours, heard in ordinary discourse that the plague was returned again in Holland. . . . We had no such thing as printed newspapers in those days to spread rumours and reports of things, and to improve them by the invention of men, as I have lived to see practised since.
Lord, have mercy on London.

I follow. We fly.

Wee dye. Keepe our.
LONDON'S Dreadful Visitation:
Or, A Collection of All the
Bills of Mortality

For this Present Year:
Beginning the 20th. of December 1564, and
ending the 19th. of December following:
The usual number of burials within the bills of mortality for a week was from about 240 or thereabouts to 300. The last was esteemed a pretty high bill; but after this we found the bills successively increasing as follows:—

Buried. Increased.
December the 20th to the 27th 291 ...
" 27th " 3rd January 349 58
January the 3rd " 10th " 394 45
" 10th " 17th " 415 21
" 17th " 24th " 474 59
"In that very Moment, when we might very well say, Vain was the Help of Man; I say in that very Moment it pleased God, with a most agreeable Surprize, to cause the Fury of it to abate, even of it self . . . the very first Week's Bill decreased 1843, a vast Number indeed!

"It is impossible to express the Change that appear'd in the very Countenances of the People, that *Thursday* Morning when the Weekly Bill came out; it might have been perceived in their Countenances, that a secret Surprize and Smile of Joy sat on every Bodies Face; they shook one another by the Hands in the Streets, who would hardly go on the same Side of the way with one another before" (245).

"A dreadful Plague in London was,  
   In the Year Sixty Five,  
   Which swept an Hundred Thousand Souls  
   Away; yet I alive!  
         H.F."
“Samuel Pepys” (1633-1703) by John Hayls, 1666
Medieval and Tudor “jetties”
“the better to preserve the memory of this dreadful visitation”
St. Olave’s Church (details)