

Literary London:
Imagining the City

Drs. Christopher and Hope Hodgkins

Wednesday, April 5

**Eighteenth Century & Romantic
London**

London 1688--Glorious Revolution

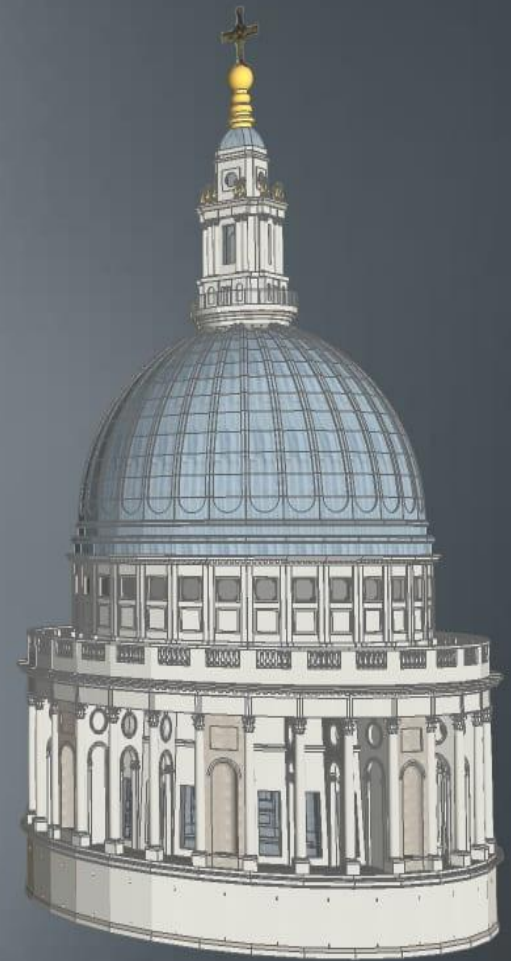
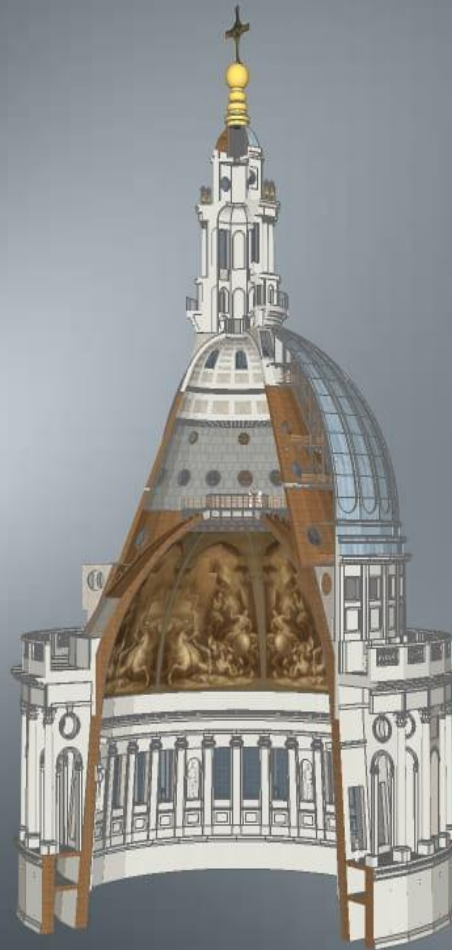
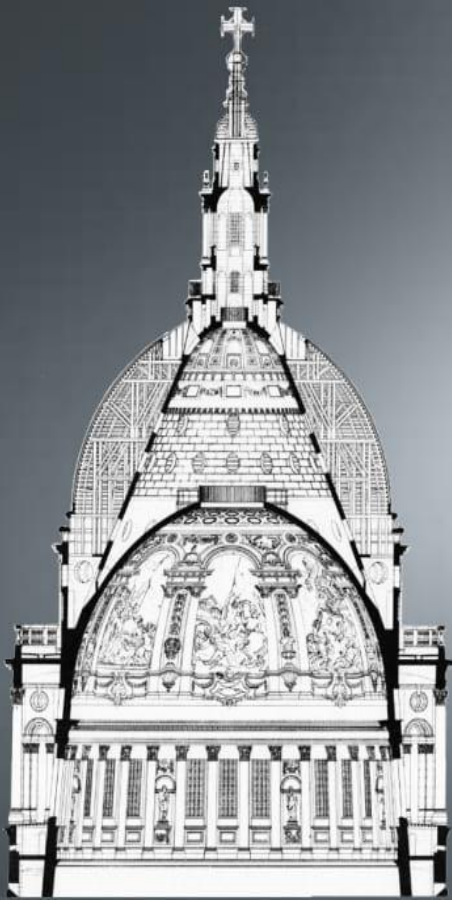


St. Paul's Cathedral, 1675-1711

by Sir
Christopher
Wren



St. Paul's Dome





Old Royal Naval College,
Greenwich (Originally Royal
Hospital for Seamen, now
National Maritime Museum),
1696-1712, by Sir Christopher
Wren



National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, from Flamsteed Hill

Alexander
Pope
(1688-
1744) in
1719



Pope's *Rape of
the Lock* (1712)
Canto 1

Canto 1.

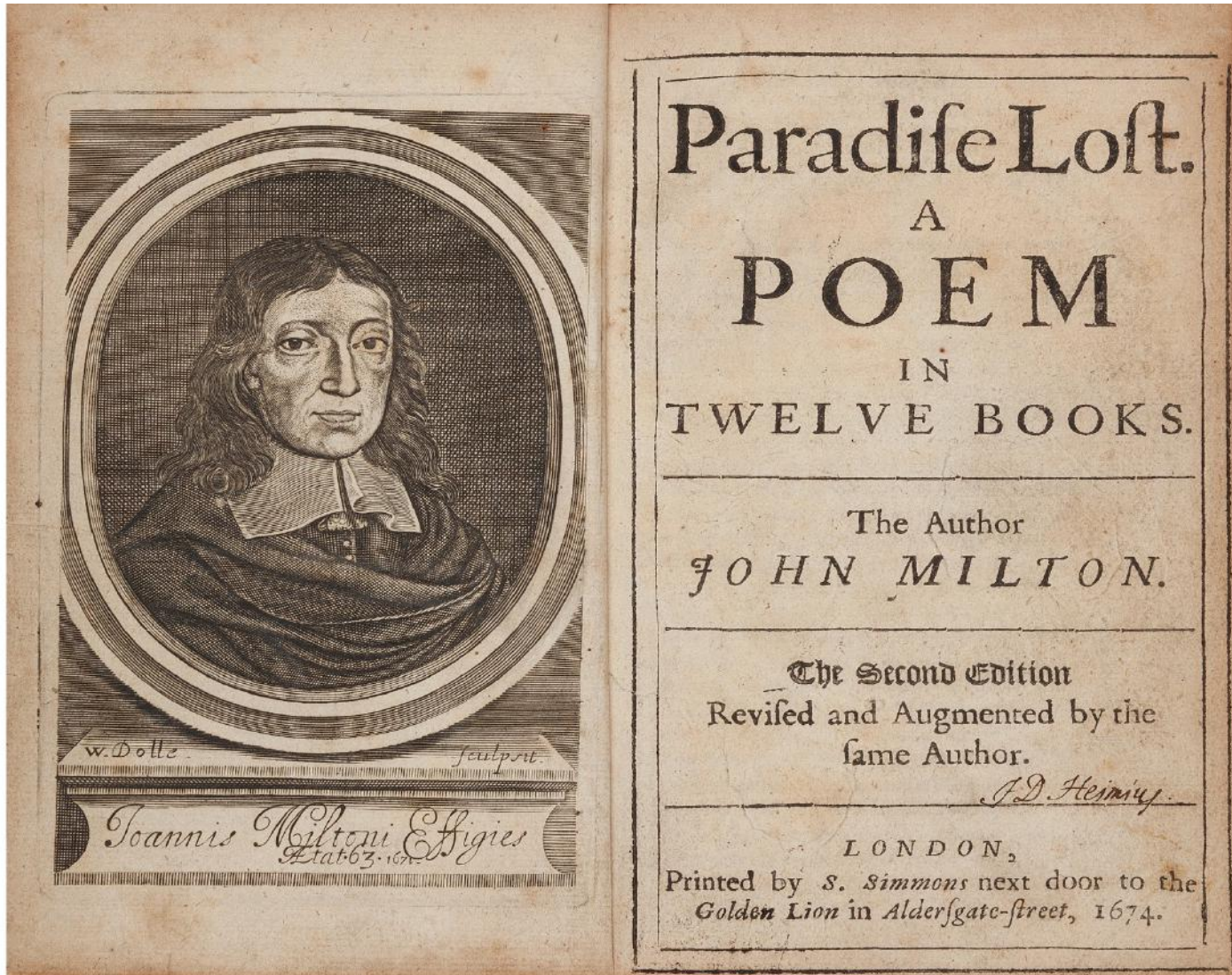


Lud. Du Gaernier inv.

C. Du Bose sculp.

**A SUBLIMELY SILLY
MOCK-HEROIC
POEM
PARODYING...**

Paradise Lost (1674) by John Milton



Based on a
Hair-Trimming
Incident...



...involving
Arabella
Fermor...
(alias Belinda)



Engraved by T. Kneass from a Drawing by Goussier

ARABELLA FERMOR,

From a Picture by Sir Peter Lely.

the Collection of W. Fermor, Esq.^r Tusmore, Oxfordshire.

Published by Gold & Davies, Strand, and the other Proprietors, May 1. 1807.

...some flying
Sylphs...

Frontispice.



Lud. Du Guernier. inv.

C. Du Bose. sculp.

...and the snip
heard 'round
the world

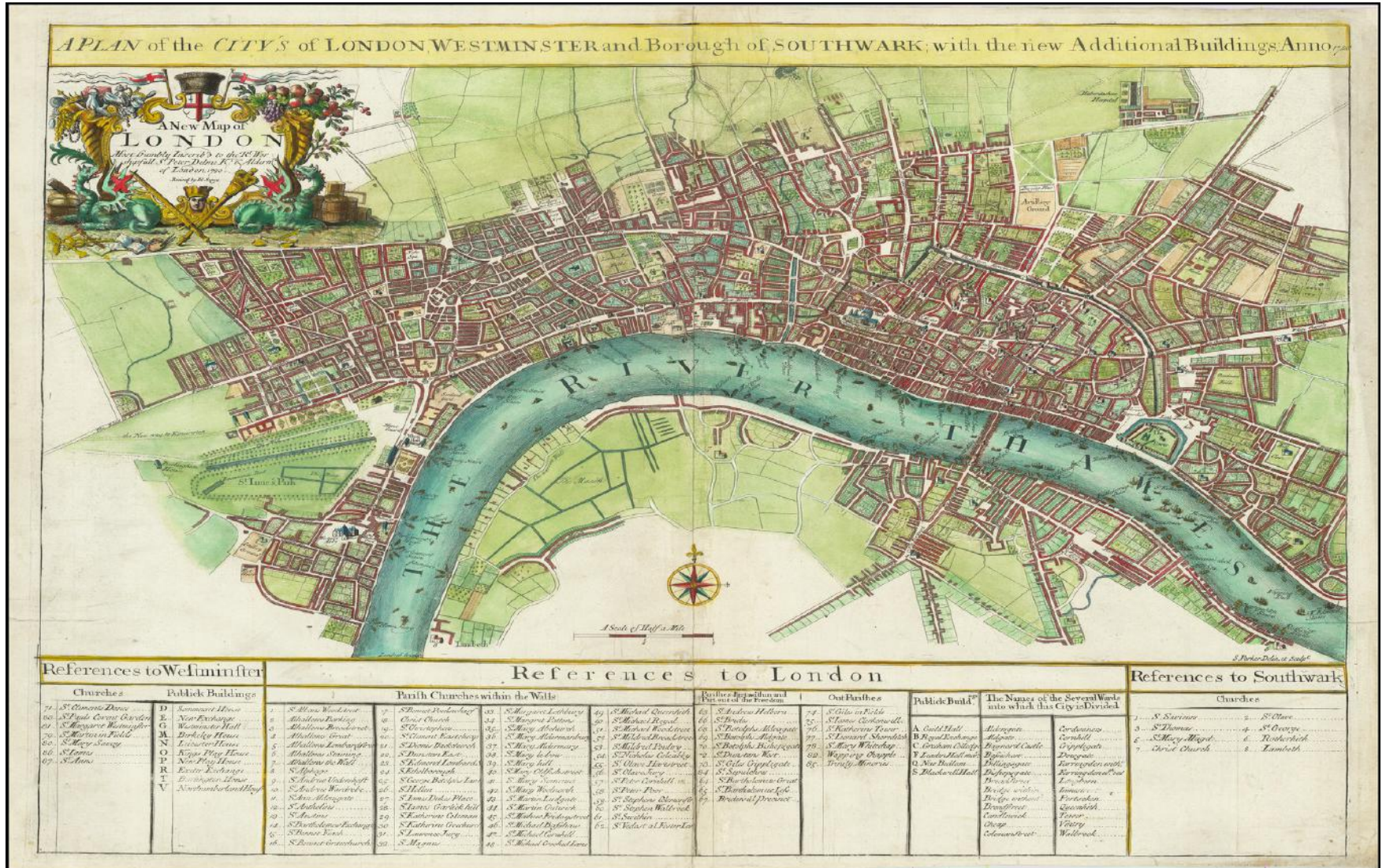


Lud. Du Guernier inv.

E. Du Boze sculp.

R A T
S H
B
In vain
For wh
Not hal
While A
To Arms
And swif

...taking place west of London (1720 map)...





near Twickenham where Pope would soon build his grotto (1720)



...recently reopened to visitors

While Pope
retired to the
country, young
Samuel Johnson
(1709-1784)
arrived in
London from
Lichfield...



...which he found
appealing and
appalling as “the
new Rome” ...



So in 1738 he published a satire in the style of the 2nd Century Roman poet Juvenal...

L O N D O N :

A

P O E M,

In Imitation of the

THIRD SATIRE of *JUVENAL*.

~~TO~~ ~~ONE~~ ~~and~~ ~~FONDNESS~~ ~~in~~ ~~my~~ ~~Breast~~
L rebel,
When injur'd THALES bids the TOWN
farewell,

Yet still my calmer Thoughts his Choice commend,
I praise the Hermit, but regret the Friend,
Who now resolves, from Vice and LONDON far,
To breathe in distant Fields a purer Air,
And, fix'd on CAMBRIA'S solitary Shore,
Give to St DAVID one *true Briton* more.

JUV. SAT. 3.

*Quævis Discessit veteris incolæ domus
Laudis, tamen, vacat quæ sedes fuge Comit
Olym, atq; unum Civem docuit Selylic.*

B

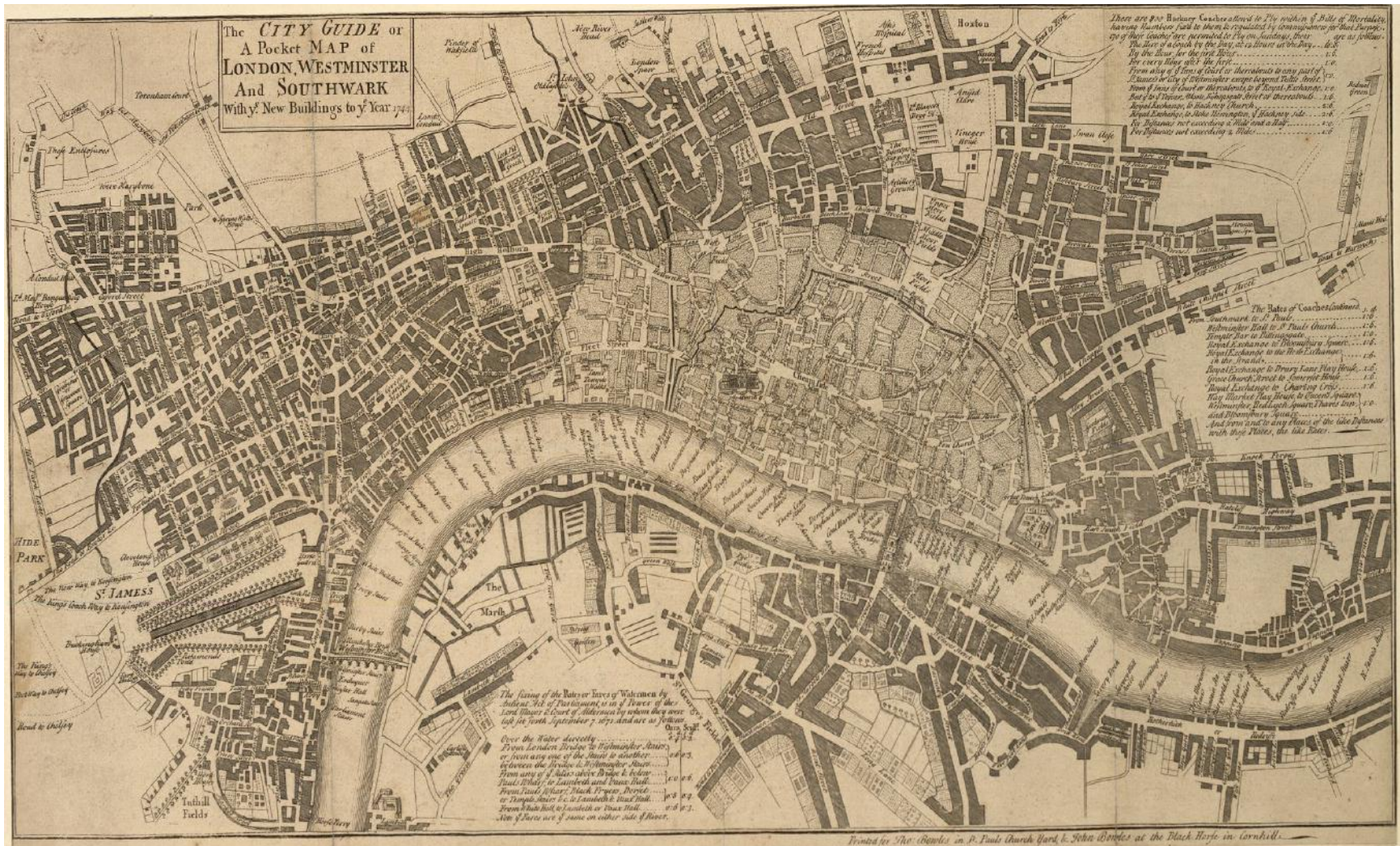
For

...mocking the capital's
greed, lust, crime, and
imperial excess...

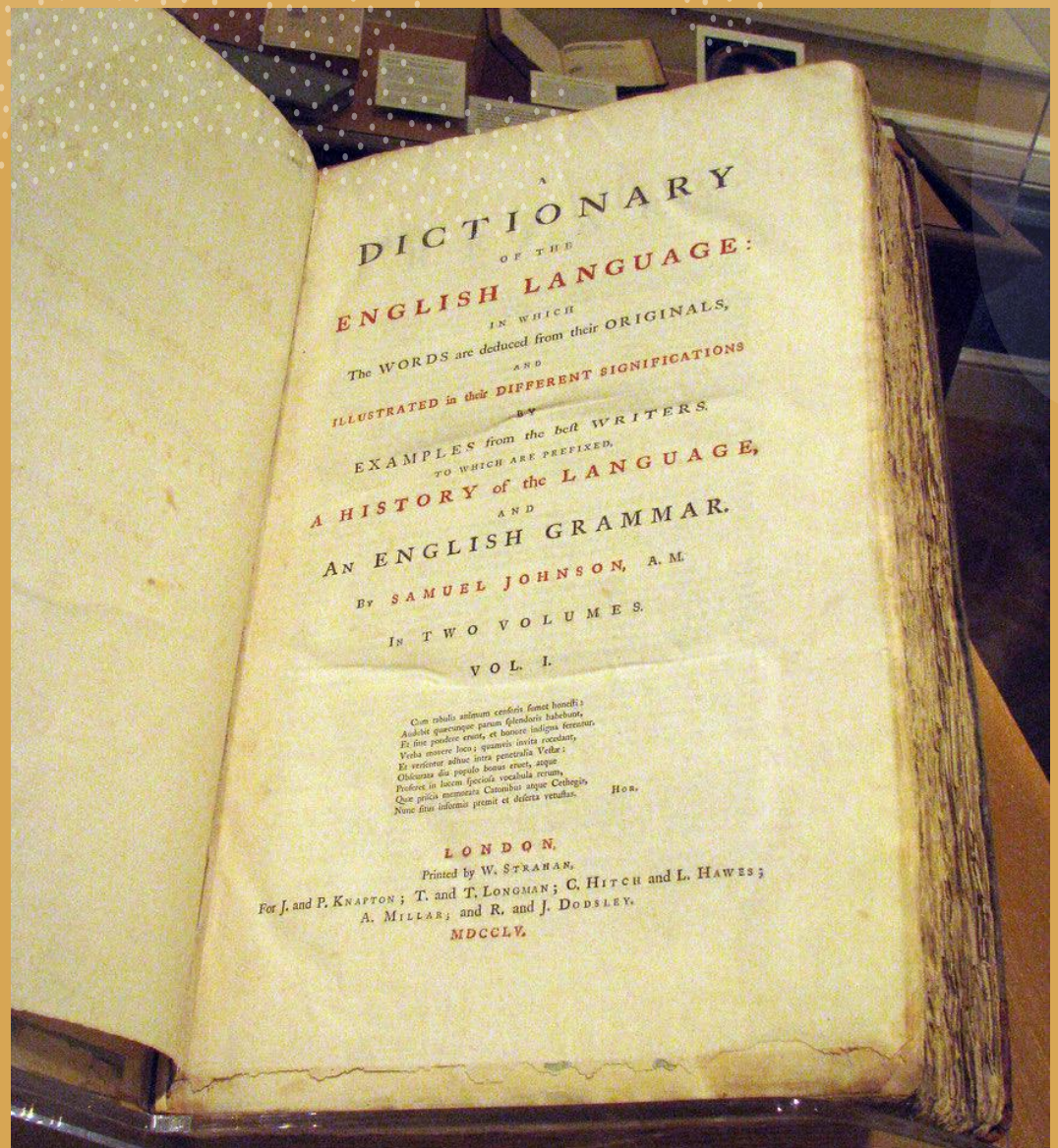
...nevertheless,
settling into a
tall house in
Gough Square
in the Strand...



...where soon after Pope's death in 1744...



...Johnson began work
on his huge
*Dictionary of the
English
Language*...published
1755



Some sample definitions:

LEXICO' GRAPHER, *n.*

A writer of dictionaries; a harmless drudge, that busies himself in tracing the original, and detailing the signification, of words.

OATS, *n.*

A grain which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people.

PA' TRON, *n.*

One who countenances, supports, or protects.

Commonly, a wretch who supports with insolence, and is paid with flattery.

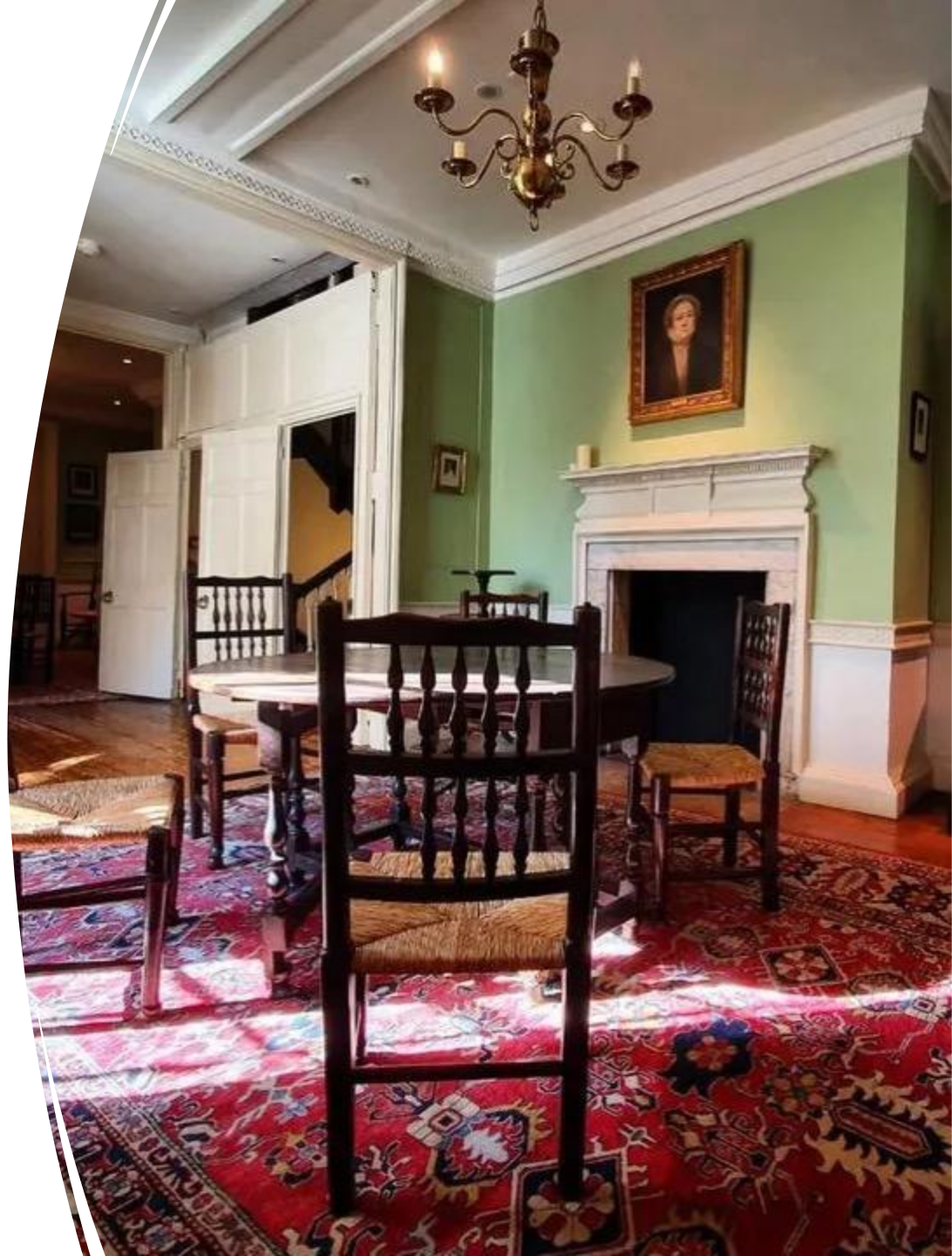
PEN' SION, *n.*

An allowance given to anyone without an equivalent. In England it is generally understood to mean pay given to a state hireling for treason to his country.

He worked
largely alone
in his 4th-floor
Dictionary
Room...



...while in his
parlor below
befriending
the greatest
people of his
time...



Including novelist Oliver Goldsmith
and actor David Garrick...



Portraitist Joshua Reynolds...



**...and Johnson's own
biographer James Boswell**



Johnson wrote
the *Lives of the
English Poets*
and the great
*Preface to
Shakespeare...*

P R E F A C E

τ 0

S H A K E S P E A R E.

Published in the Year 1768.

THAT praises are without reason lavished on the dead, and that the honours due only to excellence are paid to antiquity, is a complaint likely to be always continued by those, who, being able to add nothing to truth, hope for eminence from the heresies of paradox; or those, who, being forced by disappointment upon consolatory expedients, are willing to hope from posterity what the present age refuses, and flatter themselves that the regard, which is yet denied by envy, will be at last bestowed by time.

Antiquity, like every other quality that attracts the notice of mankind, has undoubtedly votaries that reverence it, not from reason, but from prejudice. Some seem to admire indiscriminately whatever has been long preserved, without considering that time has sometimes co-operated with chance; all perhaps are more willing to honour
past

...and though
Johnson was
London's
harshest critic,
he loved the
city...

WHEN A MAN
IS TIRED OF
LONDON,
HE IS TIRED OF LIFE;
FOR THERE IS IN
LONDON
ALL THAT LIFE
CAN AFFORD

Dr Samuel Johnson 1777



ANGLOTEES

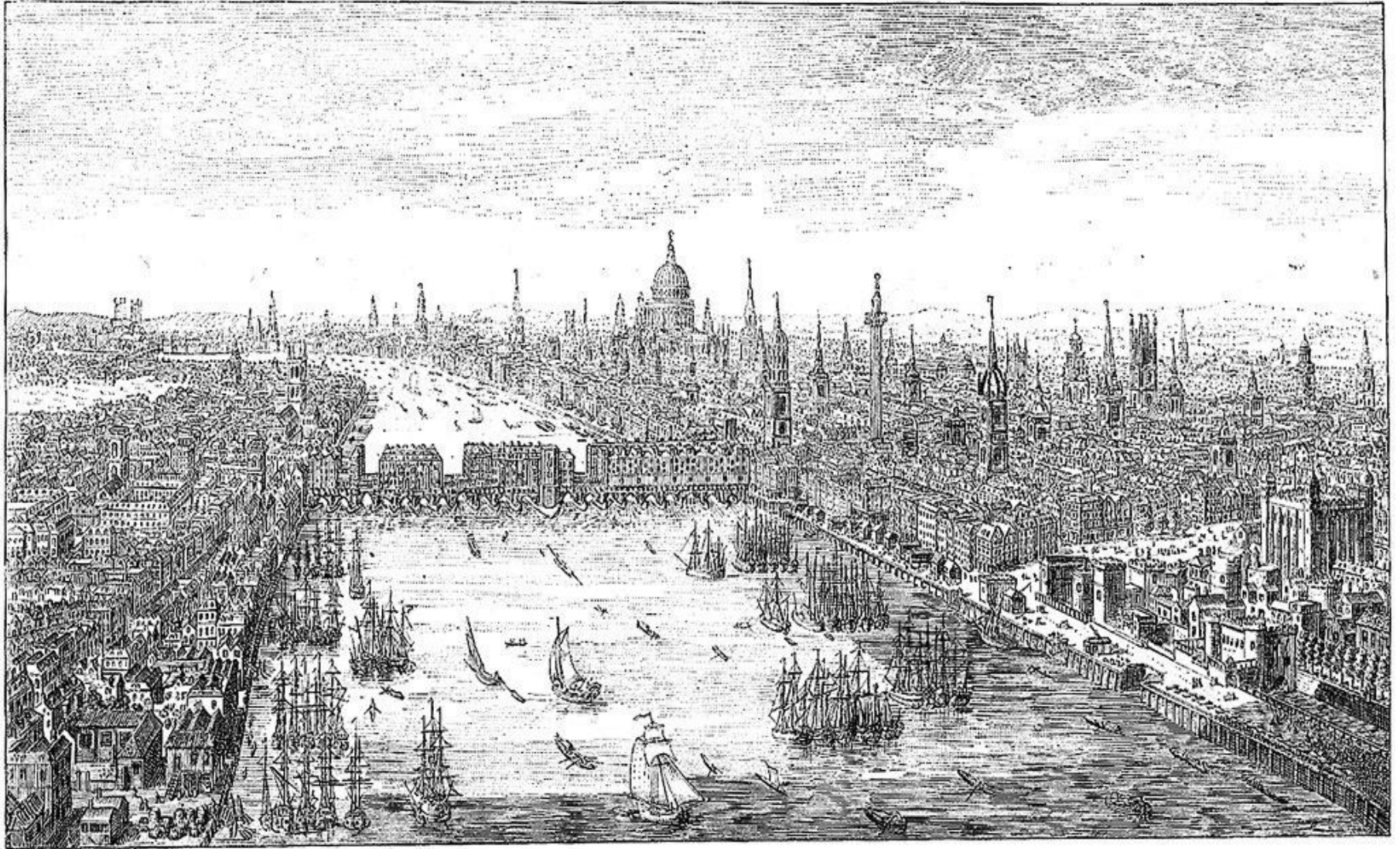
1 British Shirt

1 Week

52 Shirts a Year

Anglotees.com

London, 1750



While his
demeanor
might look
severe...



...his
morality is
loaded
with
humor...

No man will be a sailor who has
contrivance enough to get
himself into a jail; for being in a
ship is being in a jail, with the
chance of being drowned... a
man in a jail has more room,
better food, and commonly
better company.



QuoteHD.com

Samuel Johnson

English writer

1709 - 1784

...suffering
no fools...

**“PATRIOTISM IS
THE LAST REFUGE OF
THE SCOUNDREL.”**

- Samuel Johnson

...yet touched by Christian
compassion.

The **true measure of a man** is
how he **treats someone** who can
do him absolutely no good.

— *Samuel Johnson*



Try to forget these once you've heard them:

- “The wise man applauds he who he thinks most virtuous; the rest of the world applauds the wealthy.”
- “Prejudice, not being founded on reason, cannot be removed by argument.”
- “Fraud and falsehood only dread examination. Truth invites it.”
- “Bachelors have consciences, married men have wives.”
- Of second marriages: “The triumph of hope over experience.”
- Editing: “Your manuscript is both good and original, but the part that is good is not original, and the part that is original is not good.”
- “Almost every man wastes part of his life attempting to display qualities which he does not possess.”
- “The majority have no other reason for their opinions than that they are the fashion.”
- “A horse that can count to ten is a remarkable horse, not a remarkable mathematician.”
- “When a man knows he is to be hanged in a fortnight, it concentrates his mind wonderfully.”
- “A man seldom thinks with more earnestness of anything than he does of his dinner.”
- Spoken of Milton’s *Paradise Lost*: “No one wished it longer.”
- To Boswell on an unnamed skeptic: “But if *he* does really think that *there is no* distinction between *virtue* and *vice*, why, *Sir*, when *he leaves our houses, let us count our spoons.*”

An arch-
Tory, he
loathed
slavery...

- When given an honorary degree at Oxford, he proposed this toast:
 - **“Here's to the next insurrection of the Negroes in the West Indies.”**
-
- And in a 1775 tract against the Patriot Revolutionaries in America, he asked:
 - **“How is it that we hear the loudest yelps for liberty among the drivers of Negroes?”**

Widowed and
childless, he
adopted tradesman
Francis Barber as
his son and heir...



...and Johnson admired the 1772
decision of Lord Chief Justice William
Murray...





...owner of Kenwood House in Hampstead Heath...



...and adoptive father of Dido Elizabeth Belle Lindsay (l.), here with Murray's niece (and Dido's cousin) Elizabeth...

...and in the film “Belle” (2013)



Justice Murray decided the Somerset Case codifying long-standing common-law prohibition of slavery in England...



Johnson wrote “A Brief to Free a Slave”:

- **It must be agreed that in most ages many countries have had part of their inhabitants in a state of slavery; yet it may be doubted whether slavery can ever be supposed the natural condition of man. It is impossible not to conceive that men in their original state were equal; and very difficult to imagine how one would be subjected to another but by violent compulsion. An individual may, indeed, forfeit his liberty by a crime; but he cannot by that crime forfeit the liberty of his children. What is true of a criminal seems true likewise of a captive. A man may accept life from a conquering enemy on condition of perpetual servitude; but it is very doubtful whether he can entail that servitude on his descendants; for no man can stipulate without commission for another. The condition which he himself accepts, his son or grandson perhaps would have rejected...**

- **...The laws of Jamaica afford a Negro no redress. His colour is considered as a sufficient testimony against him. It is to be lamented that moral right should ever give way to political convenience. But if temptations of interest are sometimes too strong for human virtue, let us at least retain a virtue where there is no temptation to quit it. In the present case there is apparent right on one side, and no convenience on the other. Inhabitants of this island can neither gain riches nor power by taking away the liberty of any part of the human species. The sum of the argument is this:—No man is by nature the property of another: The defendant is, therefore, by nature free: The rights of nature must be some way forfeited before they can be justly taken away: That the defendant has by any act forfeited the rights of nature we require to be proved; and if no proof of such forfeiture can be given, we doubt not but the justice of the court will declare him free.**

...and the
man in
question,
Joseph
Knight,
went free.



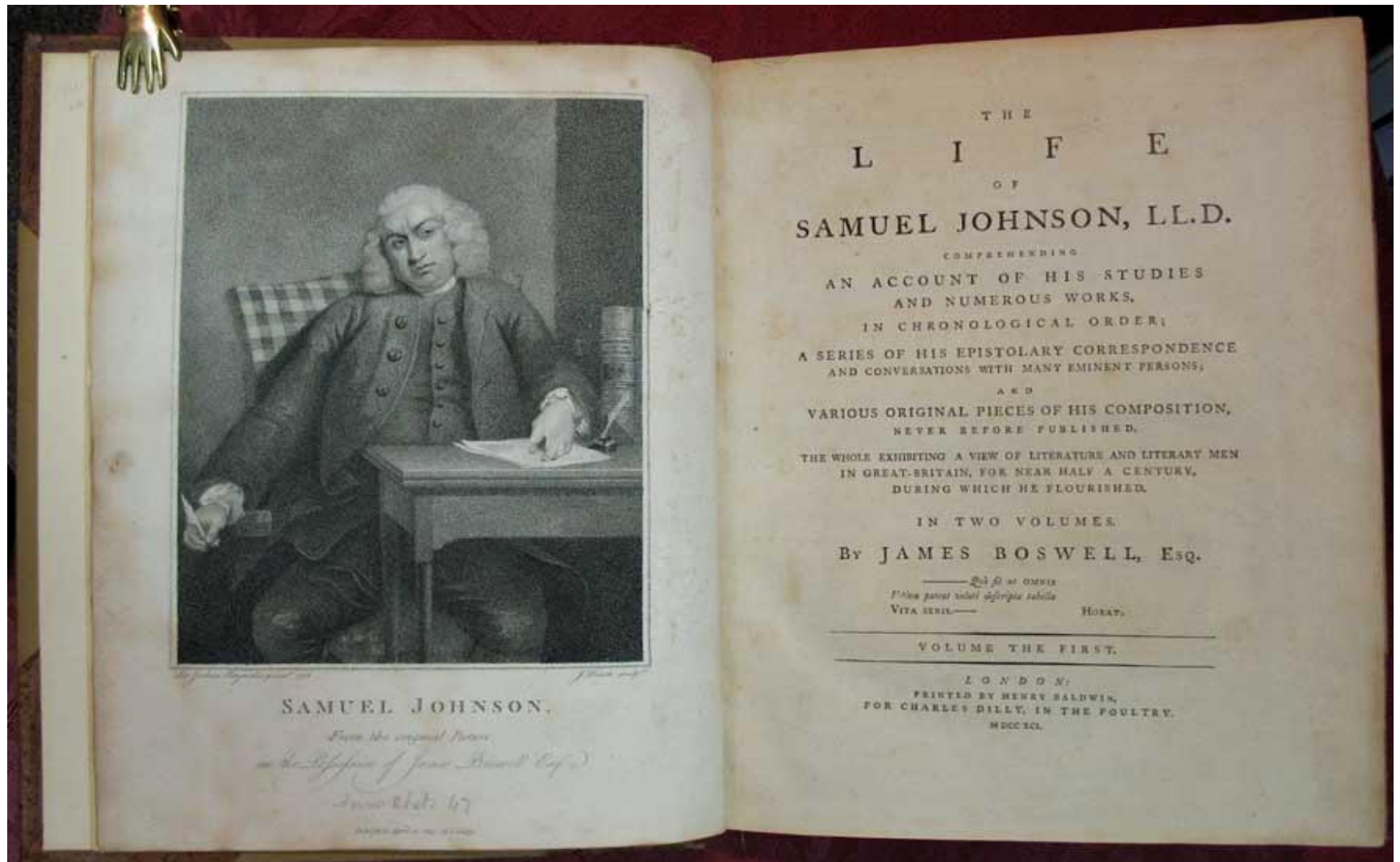
Johnson had met young James Boswell in 1763...



...and for the next 21 years Boswell followed, cajoled, provoked, and recorded Johnson's conversation...



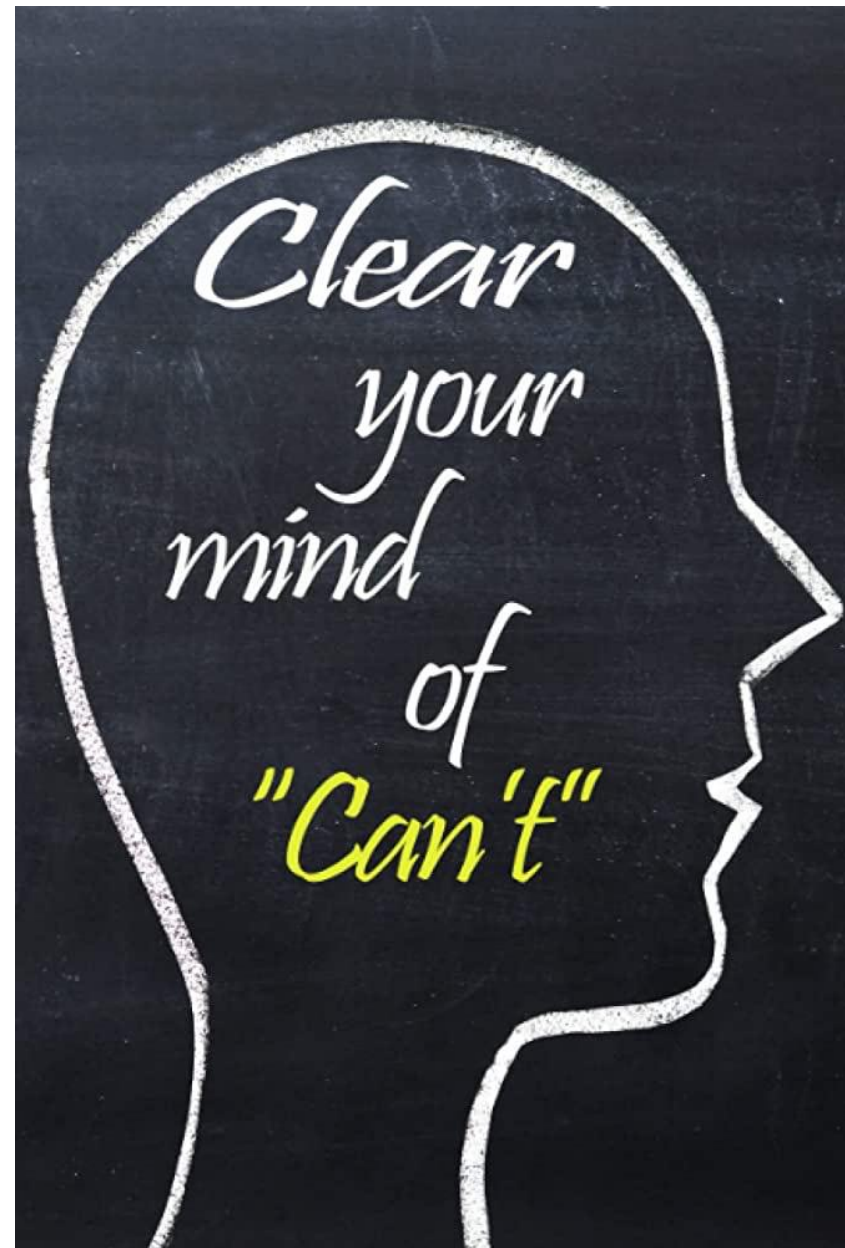
...producing what many call the greatest biography ever written...



...including this memorable advice:

- **“My dear friend, clear your *mind* of cant.** You may talk as other people do. You may say to a man, ‘Sir, I am your most humble servant.’ You are not his most humble servant. You may say, ‘These are sad times; it is a melancholy thing to be reserved to such times.’ You don’t mind the times. You tell a man, ‘I am sorry you had such bad weather the last day of your journey, and were so much wet.’ You don’t care six-pence whether he was wet or dry. You may talk in this manner; it is a mode of talking in Society: but don’t think foolishly.”

...and
converted
back into
cant by
the
internet...



**If Johnson's portrait of London life
was neoclassical, witty, yet grave...**

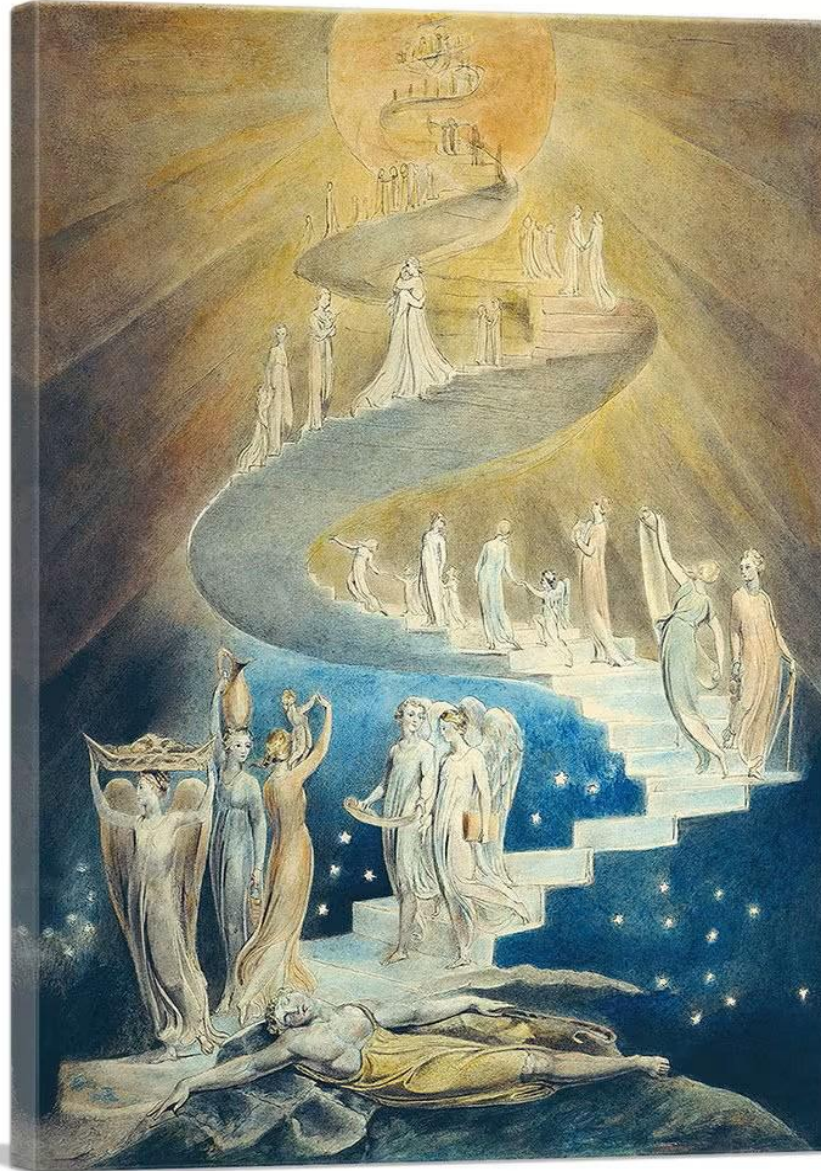
...William
Blake's
(1757-
1827)...



...was
ecstatic...



...sublime...



...obsessive...

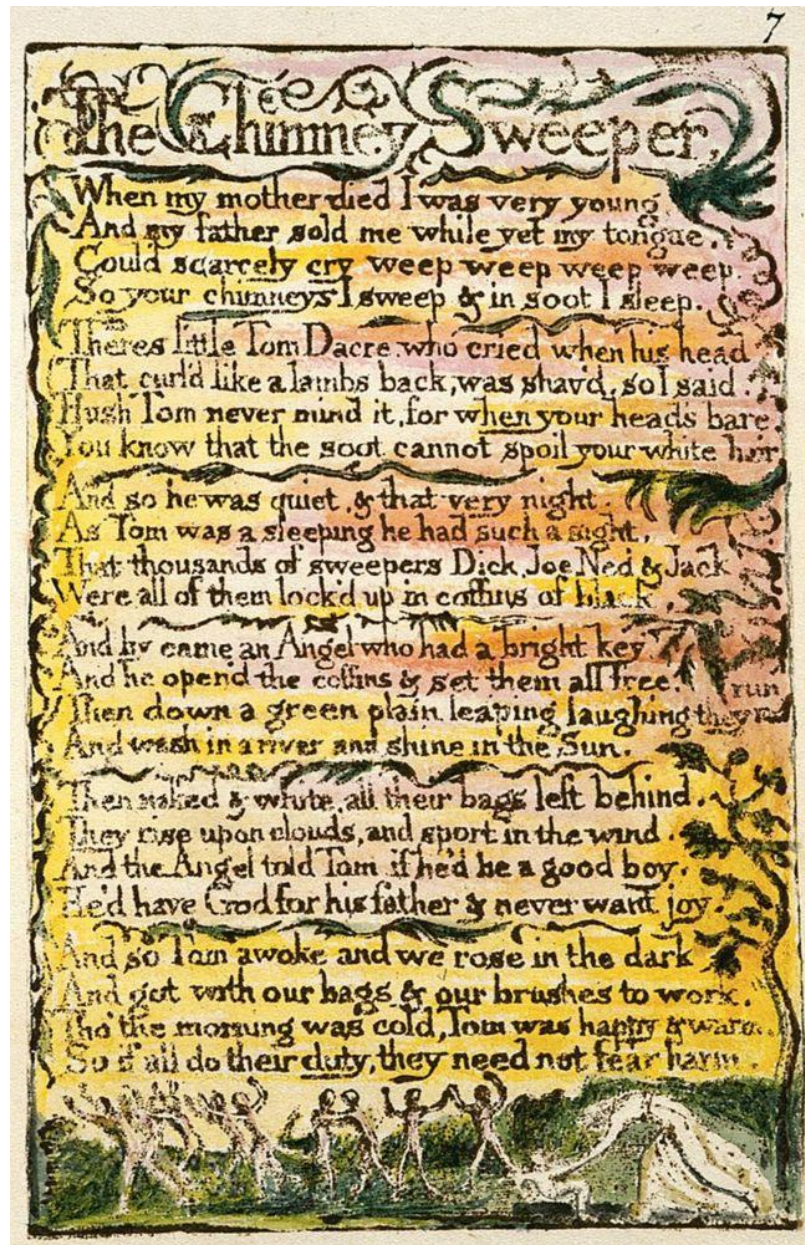


...and apocalyptic...



...seeking to fuse London with the New Jerusalem—but fearing that London was becoming Babylon instead.

Blake also
fused
image and
word to
stunning
effect:



THE CHIMNEY SWEEPER

When my mother died I was very young,
And my father sold me while yet my tongue
Could scarcely cry " 'weep! 'weep! 'weep! 'weep!"
So your chimneys I sweep & in soot I sleep.

There's little Tom Dacre, who cried when his head
That curled like a lamb's back, was shaved, so I said,
"Hush, Tom! never mind it, for when your head's bare,
You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair."

And so he was quiet, & that very night,
As Tom was a-sleeping he had such a sight!
That thousands of sweepers, Dick, Joe, Ned, & Jack,
Were all of them locked up in coffins of black;

And by came an Angel who had a bright key,
And he opened the coffins & set them all free;
Then down a green plain, leaping, laughing they run,
And wash in a river and shine in the Sun.

Then naked & white, all their bags left behind,
They rise upon clouds, and sport in the wind.
And the Angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy,
He'd have God for his father & never want joy.

And so Tom awoke; and we rose in the dark
And got with our bags & our brushes to work.
Though the morning was cold, Tom was happy & warm;
So if all do their duty, they need not fear harm.

•

•



LONDON

I wander thro' each charter'd street,
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow,
And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every Man,
In every Infants cry of fear,
In every voice: in every ban,
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear

How the Chimney-sweepers cry
Every blackning Church appalls,
And the hapless Soldiers sigh,
Runs in blood down Palace walls

But most thro' midnight streets I hear
How the youthful Harlots curse
Blasts the new-born Infants tear
And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse



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PREFACE.

The Stolen and Perverted Writings of Homer & Ovid; of Plato & Cicero. which all Men ought to condemn; are set up, by artifice against the Sublime of the Bible. but when the New Age is at leisure to Pronounce; all will be set right; & those Grand Works of the more ancient & consciously & professedly inspired Men, will hold their proper rank & the Daughters of Memory shall become the Daughters of Inspiration. Shakspeare & Milton were both curbd by the general mulady & objection from the silly Greek & Latin slaves of the Sward. Rouse up O Young Men of the New Age! set your foreheads against the ignorant Hirelings. For we have Hirelings in the Camp, the Court, & the University; who would if they could, for ever depress Ment-al & prolong Corporal War; Painters; on you I call! Sculptors! Architects! Suffer not the fashonable fools to depress your powers; by the prices they pretend to give for contemptible works; or the expensive adverting boasts that they make of such works; believe Christ & his Apostles that there is a Class of Men whose whole delight is in Destroying. We do not want either Greek or Roman Models if we are but just & true to our own Imaginations. those Worlds of Eternity in which we shall live for ever; in Jesus our Lord.

And did those Feet in ancient time,
Walk upon Englands mountains green;
And was the holy Lamb of God,
On Englands pleasant pastures seen!

And did the Countenance Divine,
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here,
Among these dark Satanic Hills?

Bring me my Bow of burning gold;
Bring me my Arrows of desire;
Bring me my Spear: O clouds unfold;
Bring me my Chariot of fire!

I will not cease from Mental Fight,
Nor shall my Sword sleep in my hand;
Till we have built Jerusalem,
In Englands green & pleasant Land

Would to God that all the Lords people
were Prophets Numbers XI. ch. 90.

JERUSALEM

And did those feet in ancient time

Walk upon Englands mountains green:

And was the holy Lamb of God,

On Englands pleasant pastures seen!

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Here lies
WILLIAM
BLAKE
1757-1827
Poet Artist
Prophet

I give you the end
of a golden string
Only wind it
into a ball
It will lead you in
at Heavens gate
Built in
Jerusalems wall

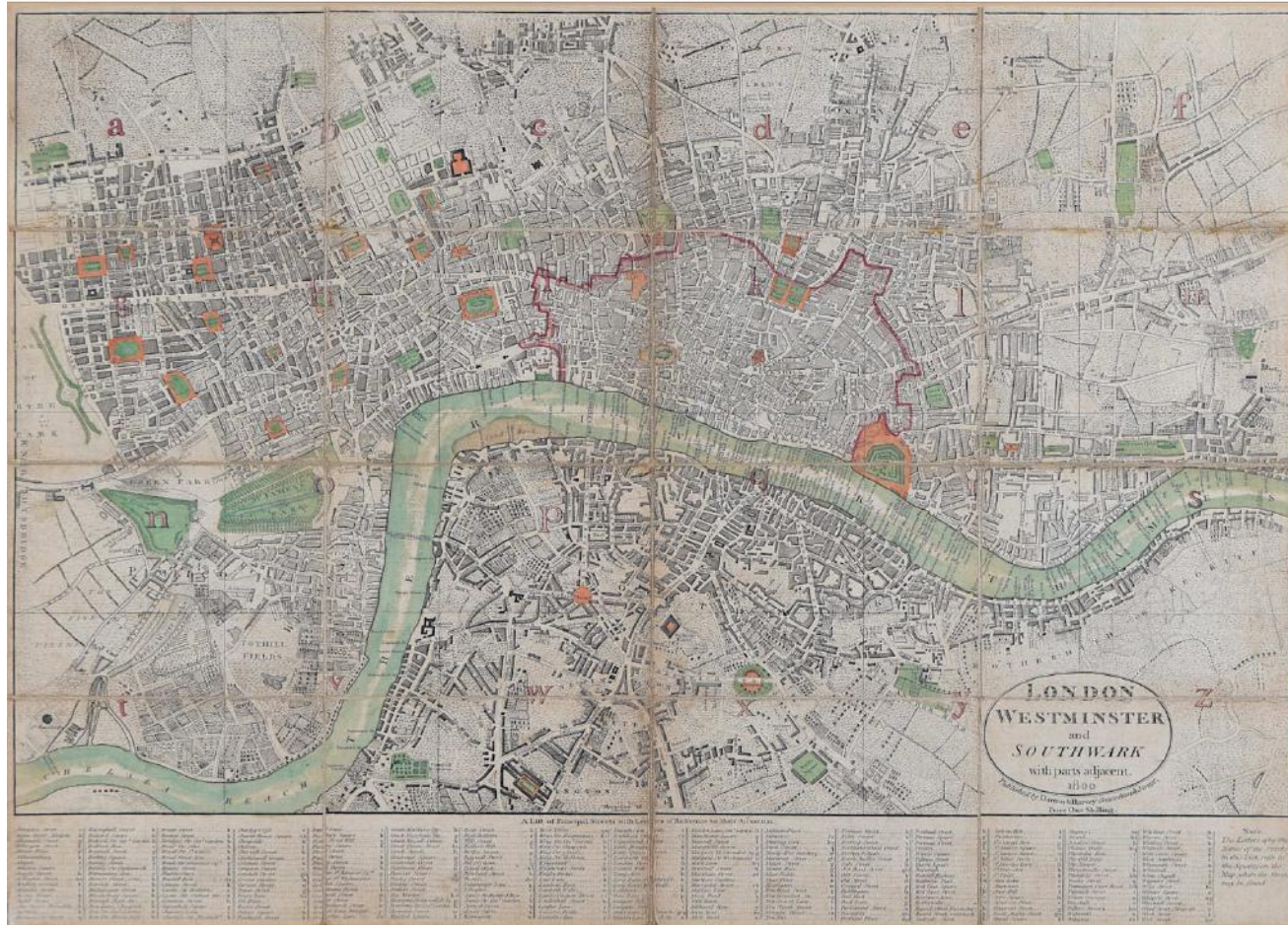


William
Wordsworth,
1770-1850





London and Westminster, 1800



“Westminster Bridge” by Joseph Farrington 1789

“Earth has not any thing to show more fair. . .”



This City now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.



Westminster Bridge today



General Toussaint Louverture (1743-1803)



To Toussaint L'Ouverture

Toussaint – the most unhappy of men! –
Whether the rural milkmaid by her cow
Sing in thy hearing, or thou liest now
Alone in some deep dungeon's earless den,
Oh miserable Chieftain, where and when
Wilt thou find patience? Yet die not! Do thou
Wear rather in thy bonds a cheerful brow;
Though fallen thyself, never to rise again,
Live, and take comfort! Thou hast left behind
Powers that will work for thee – air, earth, and skies
There's not a breathing of the common wind
That will forget thee! Thou hast great allies:
Thy friends are exultations, agonies,
And love, and man's unconquerable mind.

William Wordsworth (1802, 1803)

John Keats (1795-1821):

“With a great poet the sense of beauty overcomes every other consideration.”



Wentworth Place (Keats House), Hampstead



From Parliament Hill, Hampstead Heath



Frances (Fanny) Brawne Linden (1800-1865); John Keats





Keats's bedroom, Wentworth Place



Keats on his deathbed in Rome (Joseph Severn sketch)



“Here lies one whose name was writ in water.”



Joseph Severn, “John Keats at Wentworth Place”
Sehnsucht



The Elgin Marbles from the Parthenon, British Museum



On Seeing the Elgin Marbles

My spirit is too weak—mortality

Weighs heavily on me like unwilling sleep,

And each imagined pinnacle and steep

Of godlike hardship tells me I must die

Like a sick eagle looking at the sky.

Yet 'tis a gentle luxury to weep

That I have not the cloudy winds to keep

Fresh for the opening of the morning's eye.

Such dim-conceived glories of the brain

Bring round the heart an undescribable feud;

So do these wonders a most dizzy pain,

That mingles Grecian grandeur with the rude

Wasting of old time—with a billowy main—

A sun—a shadow of a magnitude.

John Keats (1817)

Keats House Garden



Joseph Severn, “John Keats at Wentworth Place”
Sehnsucht



Ode to the Nightingale. 1819.

53

My heart aches and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as tho' of hemlocke I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and ^{had} hitherwards sunk;
'Tis not thro' envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thine happiness
That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singst of Summers in full throated ease.

2

O, for a draught of vintage, that has been
Cool'd a long age in the deep delved earth,
Tasting of Flora, and the country green,
Dance, and Provencal song, and sunburnt mirth,
O, for a beaker full of the warm south,
Full of the true and blissful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles whispering at the brim,
And purple stained mouth,
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade into the forest dune.

That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies.
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs,
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
Fast fading violets cover'd up in leaves;
And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
* * *

Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!

“Sehnsucht”

Thou wast not born for death, immortal
Bird!

No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was
heard

In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a
path

Through the sad heart of Ruth, when,
sick for home,

She stood in tears amid the alien
corn....

