

THE NEW RAMBLER



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THE JOHNSON SOCIETY OF LONDON

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THE NEW RAMBLER
Journal of the Johnson Society of London

Editor: David Parker, MA, M Litt
 10 Beaumont Buildings, Oxford

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BOOKS RECEIVED FOR REVIEW

The Letters of Samuel Johnson, Vol IV, 1782-4 and Vol V, Appendices and Comprehensive Index. Edited by Bruce Redford, Clarendon Press 1994

Boswell: Laird of Auchinleck. Edited by Frederick Pottle, Edinburgh University Press, 1993

"Steel for the Mind": Samuel Johnson and Critical Discourse. Charles H. Hinnant, University of Delaware Press, 1994

A New Species of Criticism: Eighteenth Century Discourse on the Novel. Joseph F. Bartolomeo, University of Delaware Press, 1994

It is hoped that reviews of these books will appear in the next issue.

From the Editor

The Society still lacks a Treasurer and Membership Secretary: and although the care-takers have (with our grateful thanks) kept our affairs moving, they will not be sorry to surrender their duties to a regular holder of these posts.

We have again had sad losses among our membership. Two senior American Johnsonians died in the course of the year. Daniel J Blum was the founder of the California Johnson Society: and George M Kahrl, whose main studies relate to Garrick (he edited Garrick's Letters in 1963), had been a member of our Society for thirty years. Then we learnt of the death of F M Hodgess Roper, whom older members will recall as Secretary: he had continued to serve on the Committee until 1989. David Fleeman's death, after much ill-health, nobly borne, was a sad loss: to us he was a very supportive Vice-President, and in a wider world his contribution to Johnsonian studies places him in the first rank of scholars. A memorial appears elsewhere in this journal. We have also received news of the death of W H Cooper, another member of thirty years standing.

Professor Greene's promised response to Professor Nagashima's paper in Volume VII appears in this issue.

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A CURIOUS MIX OF SHOW
LONDON PLEASURE GARDENS IN THE 18th CENTURY
 Peter Street BA MA: 16th October 1993
 Chairman: Mrs Dowdeswell

Mr Street is an Oxford history graduate, a qualified teacher, and a history tutor in adult education since 1975. Most of his teaching is for London University's Birkbeck College. He has taught for the adult education departments of the universities of Cambridge and Surrey. He is also tutor-counsellor with the Open University.

At Oxford he specialised in British and European economic and political history, but much of his teaching has involved social and - increasingly - cultural history. London history (1603-1965) has also featured significantly in his teaching programme. Consequently Dr Johnson has loomed large!

He began by saying that we would recognise his title as a comment by Johnson on Pleasure Gardens, referring specifically to Ranelagh. He would concentrate on the three gardens with which we know Johnson to have had associations - Vauxhall, Ranelagh and Marylebone; but historians have identified over fifty others, between the late seventeenth and the early nineteenth centuries, varying in size from mere beer gardens attached to hostelrys to something very grand indeed, offering a wide range of attractions.

Johnson was able to enjoy the Pleasure Gardens at their best, their peak being effectively the seventeen-sixties to the seventeen-eighties, after which they begin to deteriorate by the early years of the nineteenth century to something of less significance.

Vauxhall derived its name from Falkes de Bréauté, who built a house there early in the thirteenth century, known as Falkes Hall. The Pleasure Gardens were originally known as the New Spring Gardens. There were references to them in Pepys' diary and in John Evelyn's.

They were laid out with walks and arbours, there were nightingales in the trees, wild roses could be gathered in the hedges, cherries picked in the orchard. There was no admission charge at this time. It was a favourite place of many Londoners from various backgrounds.

Alongside food and space, we find the introduction of music. Swift talks about going there to hear the nightingales and Addison's Sir Roger de Coverley described it in Spring 1712 as a kind of Muslim paradise, meandering through it was ideal for men in love.

At the time of Johnson's birth Vauxhall had been established but was in need of change. In 1728 Jonathan Tyers obtained a thirty year lease on the gardens, and can be seen as their true founder in terms of their historical prestige. He died in July, 1757. He improved them, opening them in June 1732 with a grand fanfare, a ridotto alfresco, open-air

entertainment, music, dancing and general delights. It was fancy dress, with two predominant outfits, the dominoes and the lawyers. The admission charge on this occasion was one guinea.

In 1737 the regular admission charge was one shilling, rising to two shillings by the end of the century. A season ticket, a silver disc for two people, cost one guinea, but that, too, systematically increased in price during the eighteenth century. The season began in April or May and ran through till September or October. There was an orchestra, with an organ and singers; it was a mix of vocal and instrumental performances. Public access to music was very limited in eighteenth century London and the Pleasure Gardens provided the main source.

In April 1749 a rehearsal of Handel's music for the Royal Fireworks Suite has an audience in Vauxhall Gardens of twelve thousand, causing a three-hour traffic jam across London Bridge.

There were statues of Apollo and Handel in the Gardens. The one of Handel was by Roubiliac and is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

The opening of Westminster Bridge in 1750 gave easy access and there was also the approach by water, at Westminster and Whitehall stairs.

Supper was an aspect of life in the Vauxhall gardens, and the thinness of the slices was proverbial. A journal of 1762 complains that "the would-be consumer at Vauxhall, could read the newspaper through a slice of Tyers' ham or beef!" The minimal amount of food and the high price was a constant complaint to which Johnson certainly refers. Chickens no bigger than sparrows at two shillings and sixpence led to a popular comment that at each mouthful people would say, "there goes twopence, there goes fourpence".

The rack punch was characteristic by then; Jos. Sedley in *Vanity Fair* drank freely of it on his disastrous visit.

A statue of Milton was lit up in the evenings and there were musical bushes, and a band playing fairy-like music under the ground. The instruments were, however, damaged by dampness, so the lasting effect was always disappointing.

On each side of the Grove were the Supper boxes and pavilions. We know of the picture with Dr Johnson in one of these. In return for a life season ticket Hogarth allowed his four *Times of the Day* series to be copied by Hayman for those boxes, so we have this cultural mix of painting, music and nature coming together there.

The principal structure was the Rotunda, also known as "The Umbrella," where the orchestra was to be found on wet evenings.

The most popular evening was the last night. Young Branghton, in Fanny Burney's Evelina, says, "There's always a riot and then the folks run about and there all the lamps are broke and the women run skimperscamper!" So it was more active than the last night of the Proms, but there was the same sense of music, occasion and delight.

In 1775 catches and glees featured and a favourite catch was They say there is an echo here, performed by two sets of singers and musicians, the principal band answered by an invisible group over the Prince's Box at the bottom of the Gardens. From 1783 groups of drums, fifes, horns and clarinets would perform around the gardens after the main concert.

The charges and costs were growing considerably, support was falling off, tastes had changed: and the gardens finally closed in July 1859.

In 1690 Richard, later Earl of Ranelagh, built a house in Chelsea and a garden was laid out. The property was sold in 1733 to the patent holder of the Drury Lane Theatre. The amphitheatre, later known as the Rotunda, was built in 1741, the gardens opened in April 1742 with a public breakfast.

Horace Walpole visited the gardens saying, "every night it totally beats Vauxhall". Thomas Gray, however, said "they do not succeed, people see it once or twice, and so they go to Vauxhall".

It did make its mark, but it did not have the longevity of Vauxhall. Within the Rotunda were fifty-two boxes. It cost a shilling to go in and if you wanted food it cost two shillings. This went up on firwork nights. There were complaints over people going to them instead of to work, so the season was shortened.

The main time to be there was in the evenings. There were formal gardens, gravel walks, shaded by elms and yews and a flower garden. A small knell accommodated a temple to Pan and a Chinese house. Four footmen appeared before John Fielding because of riotous behaviour at Ranelagh.

Mozart performed there at the end of June 1764 at the age of eight, a composition on harpsichord and organ. The Ranelagh Regatta was inaugurated in the mid-seventeen-seventies. According to contemporaries the number of people turning out to that first occasion ranged from two hundred thousand to three million! The whole population of London was less than one million then. People moved on to the gardens themselves, dancing in the Temple of Neptune. Refreshments were provided. Those attending included David Garrick and Joshua Reynolds.

The Rotunda closed in 1803 and the gardens shortly afterwards.

Other gardens directly linked with Dr Johnson include Marylebone Gardens, which opened in 1650. These, in their early years were somewhat suspect, a place of dog-fights, cockfights, bear and bull-baiting. John Gay in The Beggar's Opera in 1728 makes the Gardens a haunt of the highwayman,

McHeath, and Dick Turpin visited them in the seventeen-thirties. They were enlarged in 1738; there was an admission charge of sixpence and a season ticket was available.

Handel once asked Fountayne's opinion of a new composition that the band were playing. Both sat down and after ten minutes or so, Dr Fountayne proposed moving on saying, 'It's not worth listening to, this is very poor stuff'!

To which the reply was, "You're right, I thought so when I'd finished it"!

An incident in 1774 actually included Johnson. A firework display was advertised. It looked as if it might rain, not many people had turned up, so the management announced that the display was to be cancelled and that they were sorry for the inconvenience this would cause, to which Dr Johnson said, "This is a mere excuse, to save their crackers for a more profitable company. Let us both hold up our sticks and threaten to break their coloured lamps and we shall soon have our wishes gratified. The course of the fireworks cannot be injured." There was a display of force, the management agreed to put on the show but the fireworks were damp, so it had to be cancelled after all.

A set of Winter pleasure gardens, the Winter Ranelagh was purposely built, entirely under cover, in Oxford Street, and opened in January, 1772. It was very late for substantial support and it subsequently was used as a bazaar, then a warehouse for Gilbey's gin. It was known as the Pantheon and it eventually became the site of Marks and Spencer's.

JOHNSON, GARRICK AND MACBETH

Professor Jonathan Bate PhD, Litt D, D Hum, LHD,

King Alfred Professor of English Literature

in the University of Liverpool: 20th November 1993

Chairman: Mrs Anthea Hopkins MA

Professor Jonathan Bate is King Alfred Professor of English Literature in the University of Liverpool, and was formerly a Fellow of Trinity Hall, Cambridge. He has held visiting posts at Harvard, Yale and the University of California, Los Angeles. His books include Shakespeare and the English Romantic Imagination, the Penguin anthology, The Romantics on Shakespeare, Shakespearean Constitutions, (a wide-ranging account of Shakespeare's place in eighteenth and nineteenth century English cultural life), Romantic Ecology, (a study of Wordsworth and the origins of Green politics), and Shakespeare and Ovid. He is currently editor of The Oxford English Literary History.

Professor Bate began by referring to Johnson as a boy, at about the age of nine, alone in the kitchen at Lichfield, which is below street level, reading Hamlet: 'He kept on steadily enough till, coming to the Ghost scene, he suddenly hurried upstairs to the street door, that he might see people about him.'

So his experience of Shakespeare begins with the supernatural, and the idea of Shakespeare being something that is isolated and individual, which takes place in the imagination, is perhaps rather different from the experience of Shakespeare in a busy theatre.

In the eighteenth century, the leading theorists of literature and drama tended to be French, for whom tragedy should involve elevated characters, having noble emotions; the intervention of witches, ghosts and spirits was not really approved of.

Much of Johnson's Shakespearean criticism is a great blast against the neo-classical position. In The Preface to Shakespeare, he attacks the idea that a play must have unity of action, place and time, saying, 'there is always an appeal open from criticism to Nature.'

There is a very strong sense of Johnson working in the same tradition as Dryden, who speaks of how Shakespeare and his imagination were particularly well-served by the 'fairy way of writing.' Addison, in the Spectator in 1711, wrote how Shakespeare's imagination was seen at its most vivid and intense in his representations of witches, ghosts and magical beings.

Professor Bate thought that the ghost in Hamlet encountered by Johnson at the age of nine, in some ways merged in his mind with the other major Shakespearean tragedies in which the supernatural is used. Hamlet and Macbeth are closely linked in this way. In Johnson's first published book on Shakespeare, in 1745, called Miscellaneous Observations on the Tragedy of Macbeth, he writes, 'He that peruses Shakespeare looks round alarmed

and starts to find himself alone.' The startling intensity of reading Shakespeare exercised an influence on a later critic, Thomas de Quincy, who at various points in his autobiographical writings seems to use references to "Macbeth," as a way of registering a sense of horror and fear. He wrote a famous essay entitled On The Knocking at the Gate in Macbeth in which he has this idea of being completely absorbed in an event and then suddenly, in the moment when it ends, being startled. It is an experience that he shares with, and perhaps even learns from, Doctor Johnson.

So Macbeth is at the centre of Johnson's thinking about Shakespeare, his encounter with Shakespeare and the supernatural is at the centre of his thinking about Macbeth.

Garrick, Johnson's former pupil, became the leading actor of the eighteenth century, in many ways the most celebrated and best-known Englishman of his age. It must have been slightly galling for Johnson that his junior, the man who pursued the vulgar trade of theatre, was the one who in the public eye became more or less synonymous with Shakespeare. In Boswell Johnson expresses scepticism whether an actor really can be as intense or full in his understanding of plays as the dramatist is. When asked, 'Did you not admire his recitation of "To be or not to be?"' Johnson replies that an eight-year-old boy could have recited it just as well. When someone said, 'Mr Garrick has earned one hundred thousand pounds for his acting!' Johnson replies, 'To earn one hundred thousand pounds is no proof of excellence!'

In the Journal of the Tour to the Hebrides, when Garrick says, 'Now I have quitted the theatre, I will sit down and read Shakespeare,' Johnson replies, 'Tis time you should, for I much doubt if you ever examined one of his plays from the first scene to the last.'

Garrick came to fame first. He first staged Macbeth in 1744; so was Johnson's choice of play for his Miscellaneous Observations, published in 1745, influenced by the fact that Macbeth was a big hit of Garrick the previous season? Is there a sense of him almost sub-consciously engaging in a contest for possession of the play, trying to wrest it away from Garrick and the stage, to reclaim it for his more literary approach? A suggestion that critical close reading takes us closer to Shakespeare than histrionics and the butchering of the text that took place in the eighteenth century theatre?

In fact, Garrick did begin a movement towards restoring an authentic text for performance. He was not able to restore as much of the original text as he wished, because there was a popular outcry against this innovation; it was thought that people liked the Davenant version. Garrick was learning a hard lesson, summed up in the poetic prologue which Johnson wrote for the opening of Drury Lane in 1747:

'The drama's laws the drama's patrons give,
For we that live to please must please to live.'

Garrick does manage to smooth out the language and slightly to diminish Davenant's representation of the Witches, springing up through trap doors and exiting, flying into the wings. Davenant also added a large number of song-and-dance routines for the Witches; Professor Bate described him as the Andrew Lloyd Webber of the period!

Garrick wanted to see the Witches not as comic song-and-dance figures with big pointed hats and broomsticks, but as genuinely sinister forces of fate, who strongly influence the tragedy. This is the first point at which Garrick and Johnson are doing something similar, taking the supernatural seriously. Johnson's point is that if there is a real belief in the sinister and coercive powers of witches, that explains the play.

Garrick's initial image of Macbeth is of a noble character, crowned with confidence, ambitious, but human, an experienced General. The idea of the murder is repugnant to his nature, but he is spurred on by metaphysical prophecies, the Witches and the unconquerable pride of his wife. Aristotle says that tragedy should evoke fear and pity; traditionally Macbeth evokes fear, Garrick's version seems to evoke more pity, suggesting that Macbeth is a reluctant murderer and tyrant.

The question of how much you should use your body and use gesture rather than merely the language of Shakespeare to convey the tragedy seems central to the difference between Johnson and Garrick. It may be that Garrick was over-theatrical at times, as an article in the theatrical journal The Connoisseur suggests: for who can forbear laughing, when he finds that deed, which has thrown all that horror and confusion into countenance, has also untwisted the tails of his periwig! Referring to the scene with Banquo's ghost the writer also protests, 'a man who is naturally very bold, does not speak in a faint manner, when he is frightened.'

Garrick replied to this: 'I make a great difference between a mind sunk by guilt into cowardice, and one rising with horror to acts of madness and desperation,' which, said Professor Bate, was a very subtle analysis of the shifts in Macbeth's character.

However, Garrick felt impelled to end the play with an added speech, of his own composition, which gave a strong moral judgement upon Macbeth. Shakespeare's last lines for Macbeth are:

'lay on Macduff,
And damn'd be him that first cries, Hold, enough!'

Garrick's version adds a dying speech, which ends:

'It is too late, hell drags me down; I sink,
I sink - my soul is lost for ever! - Oh! - Oh! - Oh! -'

The five major points of Garrick's Macbeth are that he takes the supernatural seriously, his character is basically noble and sympathetic, it is the influence of the witches and especially his wife which affects

the way he acts, he gives a real sense of psychological depth of the character, attention to linguistic detail and a moralized ending.

In Johnson's notes we find close similarities with those five characteristics. Both take the supernatural seriously; and in the sense of blaming Lady Macbeth, we find something similar in Johnson: 'she urges the excellence and dignity of courage ... but this sophism Macbeth has for ever destroyed by distinguishing true from false fortitude, in a line and a half; of which it may almost be said, that they ought to bestow immortality on the author, though all his other productions had been lost:

"I dare do all that may become a man,

Who dares do more, is none."

Just as Garrick moved from the language of Davenant, to that of Shakespeare, so Johnson in one of his notes contrasts the language of Dryden and of Shakespeare concerning night: 'one [Dryden] describes a night of quiet, the other [Shakespeare] of perturbation ... He that reads Dryden, finds himself lull'd with serenity, and disposed to solitude and contemplation. He that peruses Shakespeare, looks round alarmed, and starts to find himself alone.'

In the scene where Macbeth walks to the King's room to kill him, Johnson describes him as 'afraid of some supernatural discovery of his design and calls out to the stones not "to talk"'. As he is going to say "of what", he discovers the absurdity of his suspicion, and pauses, but is again overwhelmed by his guilt and concludes, that such are the horrors of the present night, that the stones may be expected to cry out against him.'

So, again, he is reading *Macbeth* in terms of a movement, a pause, a slight shift, very much like Garrick in that reading of the two appearances of Banquo.

Johnson, like Garrick, also concludes with a moralization: 'The danger of ambition is well-described; and I know not whether it may not be said that ... in Shakespeare's time, it was necessary to warn credulity against vain and illusive predictions.'

The passions are directed to their true end. Lady Macbeth is merely detested and though the courage of Macbeth preserves some esteem, yet every reader rejoices at his fall.'

Professor Bate said this does not fully describe Lady Macbeth's character, which was more sympathetically portrayed by Sarah Siddons at a later period. He thought that it was likely that Johnson's criticism was influenced by Garrick's 1744 performance, but could find no evidence that Johnson had actually seen it, and would like to hear from anyone who had such evidence.

Garrick, however, seems to have been influenced by Johnson as in 1769 a Dr Scrope wrote to Garrick to praise his "judicious emphasis on the word

"May" "in: in:
The way he does, he gives a real sense of Johnson's character, attention to linguistic detail and a natural ending.
character, attention to linguistic detail and a natural ending.
This was an emendation from "Way of life" made by Johnson in 1744, on the grounds that it was printer's error and "May" made more sense, and, unlike Shakespeare, Johnson did not like mixed metaphors.
Professor Bate concluded with a generous remark of Johnson on Garrick, recorded by Boswell: a true conception of character and a natural expression of it were his distinguished excellence."
In the words where Macbeth waits for the king's room to kill him, Johnson described him as at a state of some supernatural discovery of his design and his exit to the throne not "to calm" but "to hasten going to say" of what he discovered the absurdity of his suspicion and guesses, but is again overwhelmed by his guilt and concludes that such are the horrors of the present night that the terrors may be expected to return against him. In Garrick's last scene there was a slight suggestion of the danger of Johnson, like Garrick, also concluding with a moralisation: "The danger of ambition well described, and I know not whether they may not be said that in Shakespeare's time it was necessary to learn morality again and that in Garrick's time it was necessary to learn morality again."

SIXTY FIVE YEARS IN THE COMPANY OF DR JOHNSON AND HIS FRIENDS

Mrs Dowdeswell, Miss Pigrome and Mr Leicester: 11th December 1993

Chairman: David Parker

Instead of hearing a paper read at this Christmas meeting members were offered reminiscences of the Society's history by three of its senior members, whose experiences covered over forty years.

Mrs Dowdeswell joined the Society in 1952, and working in tandem with her late husband (who was Secretary for several years and later a Vice-President) she has contributed greatly - and still continues to do so - to our well being. Miss Pigrome also served as Secretary, for fifteen years, and has recently returned as caretaker Membership Secretary. Mr Leicester was Treasurer for almost twenty years, until 1984, combining these duties with those of the Editorship of The New Rambler.

Mr Leicester spoke first. The Society was founded on 3rd February 1928 and the inaugural meeting was arranged by the then Rector of St Clement Danes Church, the Revd Pennington-Bickford, to take place on 30th March of that year. There was a double Johnson connection here: Elizabeth Carter had taken Dr Johnson to that church to hear her nephew - Montague Pennington - preach: and the wife of the Rector in 1928 was in fact descended from Elizabeth Carter's family. Meetings were held in the crypt of the church: and there is a statue of Dr Johnson in its garden. For some years a silver medal, donated in memory of E S Roscoe (sometime Editor of The New Rambler) was awarded to the scholar of S Clement Danes School producing the best prose or verse piece on Dr Johnson. Mr Leicester had extracted examples of these from William Kent's London Worthies.

The first New Rambler was published in July 1941 - a noteworthy feat in war-time England - and extracts from that period were read. The journal took its present form in June 1966.

Mrs Dowdeswell then took up the story with an account of the fortunes of the Society's Library and of the Johnson statue at S Clement Danes. She also had fascinating anecdotes of the personalities. There was Mrs Waterhouse, a member of the Barclay family which had purchased a share in the Thrale brewery; she guarded the Society's Library, until its eventual sale, in her house at Yattendon. The house had been the property of Robert Bridges, whose nephew was her husband. There was Dean Matthews, who always appeared to be asleep while a paper was read: his devastating criticism at the end of it invariably proved this not to have been the case. There was Ross Wilson, a journalist with theological qualifications and also a well-informed historian of drink. His papers for the Society were much appreciated.

The Society met in the Alpine Club in Great Waldorf Street and later at the Kenilworth Hotel in Bloomsbury.

Miss Pigrome, a much later member (1971) then took over: she had been led to the Society because her first love, Jane Austen, had been so devoted to Dr Johnson that she wanted to learn more about him. Within a few years she found herself, when Mr Hodgess Roper went to live in the country, as Secretary: organising outings and involved in the preparations for the Golden Jubilee in 1978. This was celebrated with a dinner at the Ivanhoe Hotel. Six years later came the Johnson Bicentenary Year, the Society's celebration of which was organised by Dr Isobel Grundy as Commemoration Secretary.

Accounts of unusual meetings and outings were supplemented by recollections of other members, thus rounding out this interesting and little known personal history of the Society.

HIGHLANDERS AND HEROINES

Dr Johnson's meeting with Flora MacDonald

Hugh Douglas: 15th January 1994

Chairman: Mrs Anthea Hopkins MA

Mr Douglas has had a varied career as author, journalist, radio presenter and public relations specialist. His main interests are biography and social history and among his nine published works (almost exclusively on Scottish subjects) the one most relevant to today's paper is Flora MacDonald, The Most Loyal Rebel.

My fellow Ayrshireman, James Boswell, was already a seasoned traveller when he set out on his adventure of one hundred and one consecutive days travelling through the Highlands and Hebridean islands with Samuel Johnson. I use the word advisedly, for the journey to the Western Isles was considered an adventure then as indeed it still is by many people. Even today, to announce that one is contemplating a journey to the Hebrides, especially the outer isles, excites a response almost as strong as that of Voltaire to Boswell when the latter announced his intention of making the journey.

'He looked at me as if I had talked of going to the North Pole,' Boswell wrote, 'and said, "You do not insist on my accompanying you?"' Boswell did not.

'Then I am very willing you should go,' replied Voltaire.

Nearly ten years later Boswell at last persuaded Dr Johnson to make the much discussed journey - and they set out with all the preconceived ideas that Englishman and Lowland Scots hold for that remote, beautiful and mesmerising part of the world.

Although keen, Boswell had reservations - How would the great man fare without the stimuli of his beloved London? How could he be happy if he could not flash his wit on minds bright enough to reflect it? Boswell laid tasty bait to entice the Doctor - invitations to meet clan chiefs and noted Scots of the day. So Dr Johnson was persuaded and arrived on Saturday, 14 August 1773.

The start was unpromising - at the inn the Doctor asked for another piece of sugar to sweeten his lemonade and the waiter handed it to him with his fingers. The Doctor threw it out of the window, and for a moment onlookers feared the waiter would follow. Walking up the High Street he encountered one of the city's perils, all the dirt and smells of that crowded thoroughfare and the unsavoury evening ritual of housewives throwing their foul water and effluvia out the window with the cry 'Gardyloo' (Gardez l'eau). 'I smell you in the dark,' he muttered to Boswell.

It could only get better - and fortunately it did, even if he did not always find the creature comforts and intellectual stimuli of London.

The pair set out from Edinburgh on Wednesday, 18 August, and journeyed up the east coast of Scotland, then through the Highlands to Skye and the other inner Hebridean islands before returning to the mainland, or 'the continent' as islanders called mainland Scotland in those days. By the time they returned to what Boswell described as 'civilized living' at Inverary on 23 October, Dr Johnson had a very different view of the Highlands and of Highlanders, and also a sharply critical opinion of those Lowlanders and Englishmen who had destroyed the Highlanders' and islanders' way of life.

Perhaps the person who lingered most vividly in the travellers' memory was Flora MacDonald of Kingsburgh, who was already a legend in London for her part in Prince Charles Edward's escape over the sea to Skye after his defeat at Culloden in 1746. The Prince had fled to the islands after the battle and spent weeks hiding from King George's army and navy, at times no more than minutes away from capture. Although there was a reward of £30,000 on his head, and Highland militia corps who knew the terrain and the people intimately were among the searchers, he was never captured.

We know that these militiamen were secretly aiding the Prince and when he was finally cornered on South Uist it was a militia captain Hugh MacDonald of Armadale who devised the plan for him to escape the net. Hugh was an adventurer, a younger son who had served in the French army, lost an eye, and returned to the Hebrides where he married a widow with two sons, a daughter, and two tacks or leases of land, which made her an attractive match.

The woman was Marion MacDonald, and her daughter was Flora, who was born in 1722 and grew up into a polished, cultured young woman. Flora's only educational handicap appears to have been her handwriting, which she took lessons to improve, but alas they did her little good.

One-eyed Hugh's plan was simple: Flora would cross from Uist to Skye, where her mother now lived, and the Prince would accompany her, disguised as her maid. On Skye other MacDonald clansmen would take over and help him to escape to France. And that is what happened: the journey was made on the night of Saturday 28 June so that they would arrive on a Sunday morning when the coast would be at its least well guarded.

The plan worked well and the Prince eventually escaped to France, but Flora was captured and imprisoned for a whole year, part of it in London. There she was treated as a heroine and was taken up by Lady Primrose and other Jacobites who raised a large sum of money for her. She even met the Duke of Cumberland's brother, Prince Frederick, but so far as we know, never met Dr Johnson.

Flora returned to Skye a rich woman and married Allan MacDonald of Kingsburgh, son of the factor, or land agent, to the Chief, Macdonald of

Sleat. Allan had been groomed to succeed his father as factor, and was known for his advanced farming ideas. It was a splendid match. Flora was 23 or 24 when she made the journey over the sea to Skye with the Prince. She was 51 when Dr Johnson and Boswell were her guests on the night of Sunday, 12 September, 1773, and to Boswell she appeared 'a little woman of genteel appearance, and uncommonly mild and well-bred'. She may have acted the genteel hostess and appeared uncommonly mild, but there was more to Flora MacDonald than that, and Dr Johnson quickly became aware of her worth. She won him over just as she had won her inquisitors over after her capture in 1746. At supper she teased him, telling him she had recently returned from the mainland where she had been informed that Mr Boswell was on his way to Skye, 'a young English buck with him.' The visitors were given the bedroom in which Prince Charles Edward stayed overnight, and Johnson actually slept in the Prince's bed. The room was well furnished with tartan bed-hangings, and prints and maps decorated the walls - it surprised every visitor to the Hebrides to find that, although a house might appear primitive, it was not uncommon for it to contain good furniture, pictures and books - always lots of books. One of the prints in the bedroom at Kingsburgh showed John Wilkes with the cap of Liberty on a pole beside him. We are not told what the good doctor made of that, but fortunately he slept soundly in spite of having a heavy head cold. Otherwise he might have been forced to turn the picture to the wall.

In the morning Boswell found a note in Johnson's hand saying, in Latin, 'What is the worth of gold when weighed against virtue?' At breakfast all three - Flora, the Doctor and Boswell - were in almost childlike high spirits. When the Doctor thanked his hostess for according him the honour of sleeping in the Prince's bed, Boswell suggested archly that Johnson and Flora had plotted this between them. Flora replied, 'You know young bucks are always favourites of the ladies.' The Doctor was highly amused and was now emboldened to raise the question of the Prince's escape, a subject on which Flora was always reluctant to talk. 'Who was with him?' he asked. 'We are told, madam, in England, there was one Miss Flora MacDonald with him.' They were very right, Flora replied, and proceeded to recount the story of the escape. Johnson listened in silence until she finished, then he said quietly, 'All this should be written down.' Boswell obliged, adding information collected from others he met on the tour. Flora's husband, Allan MacDonald of Kingsburgh made an equally favourable impression on Johnson and Boswell. He was the complete figure of a

gallant Highlander, said Boswell, dressed in tartan plaid, kilt and blue bonnet: although he too was well past 50, his hair was still jet black and tied jauntily back. On the surface Kingsburgh and his wife appeared to be prosperous and successful, with their seven children growing up, and they themselves moving graciously towards a peaceful old age.

How different the reality was: although it cannot be blamed altogether on his inefficiency, Allan had failed miserably as the Chief's factor and had been sacked. He had gone through Flora's fortune in spite of all his hard work and modern farming methods. They were almost in penury as was the whole island of Skye at that time in spite of the fact that it had not been devastated as other parts of the Highlands had been following the failure of the '45.

The trouble was that the British Government had set about dismantling the ancient clan system under which the chief was father, sovereign, lawmaker and law dispenser to his clansmen. Now the chiefs were no more than landlords, interested only in squeezing higher rents out of their tenants. This was aggravated by economic depression and terrible weather in which crops failed year after year. People and animals were starving, and all who could were desperate to escape from the gehenna of misery, as one islander described Skye at this time. Yet the island had not suffered as badly as others after the '45 because its two chiefs, Macdonald of Sleat and MacLeod of Dunvegan, had supported the Hanoverians. In spite of the chiefs' loyalty Skye was destitute a generation later.

The only escape was emigration. But of course that was only for those who could afford it or were able to persuade others to take them as indentured servants.

The situation was the same throughout the Highlands, and what Dr Johnson saw as he travelled to the Hebrides angered him so much that by the time he landed on Skye - after a bad night in a bad inn - he was fairly glowing with indignation against the lairds whom he blamed for the misery and the denuding of the land of its wealth and its people. Sir Alexander Macdonald, the Chief of Sleat, his first host on the island, was as bad as any landowner, and had the misfortune to come in for Dr Johnson's wrath.

Johnson had known Sleat in London and Boswell was related to his wife, who was Elizabeth Bosville of Gunthwaite in Yorkshire, but that did not stop the travellers from criticizing their host and hostess over their poor hospitality. They argued with Sir Alexander about the way he treated his clansmen, and they criticised Lady Macdonald to her husband's face. He was mean, they said, and she was dull, insipid, and no better dressed than the maid she ought to have had but didn't. 'This woman would sink a ninety-gun ship. She is so dull - so heavy', said Johnson, who mimicked her unmercifully for her clumsiness and for talking with her mouth full of the farm machinery and by high rates charged for shipping their goods.

Lady Macdonald may have been dull, but she did have the excuse for her poor hospitality that she and Sir Alexander were on their way to Edinburgh and were entertaining the travellers at the house of one of their tenants.

at Armdale. Her husband had no excuse for being an absentee landlord and bad-tempered. All one can say in his defence is that he had a chip on his shoulder because his mother had treated him shabbily as he grew up, pouring out all her affection on his brother who had succeeded to the title as Sir James Macdonald, but died young. Alexander disliked his mother, he disliked the islands, but he liked the income the Sleat lands yielded. Dr Johnson hated his parsimony and treatment of his tenants, and could not resist arguing with him.

Over the years before and after the tour a number of reasons were given as to why it was made, including an interest generated by Martin's account of the islands, which was published early in the century. However, when the first edition of the Tour appeared, Sir Alexander, by then Lord Macdonald, took exception to Boswell's comments and a hot dispute arose. This led to a complaint from his lordship that Boswell had said their only reason for going to Skye was to visit Flora MacDonald. The war of words almost led to a duel, but as neither appeared to have the heart for a fight, the matter was glossed over, probably to the satisfaction of neither party.

But that was all in the future. All Boswell wrote at the time of the visit in 1773 was, 'We were resolved to pay a visit to Kingsburgh, and see the celebrated Miss Flora Macdonald.'

When Dr Johnson and Boswell arrived in Skye talk everywhere was of emigration, and they saw several ships preparing to leave with emigrants. The island was being so robbed of its wealth that when they wanted to cash a bill for thirty pounds the only place where so large a sum of cash could be found was on an emigrant ship at Loch Bracadale - a comment on the rapacity of emigrant ship captains and the poverty of the island alike.

At Kingsburgh they found Allan and Flora had already decided to follow their kinsmen and relations to North Carolina, and were busy making preparations. When they parted from Allan, Boswell noted that Kingsburgh would soon be over his financial troubles and would succeed in America.

How wrong he was; Allan and Flora emigrated the following year to the Cape Fear area of North Carolina, an area hugely popular with Highlanders. Almost immediately they found themselves caught up in the Revolution. Allan was easily persuaded to raise a force for King George - perhaps too easily persuaded - but his little army was defeated at Moore's Creek bridge and he was held prisoner for a year and a half, during which time Flora suffered terrible hardship. She lost everything - her furniture, her books, even her silver which is still in Carolina. It was said that she sold it to pay her passage home from Charleston, but Flora MacDonald did not sail from Charleston and Allan included the four pieces of silver plate in his claim at the end of the war.

After her release, Flora spent a bitterly cold winter in Nova Scotia before returning to Skye where she died in 1790. She was buried at Kilmuir with a funeral to end all Highland funerals: they said that three

Her name will be mentioned in history, and if courage and fidelity be virtues, mentioned with honour.

It is fitting that those two days, among the most agreeable that Dr Johnson spent in the Hebrides, provided an epitaph fit for a Highland heroine.

"THE FINAL SENTENCE AND UNALTERABLE ALLOTMENT": JOHNSON AND DEATH

Miss Claire Lamont, University of Newcastle upon Tyne: 19th February 1994

Chairman: Trevor Russell-Cobb

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It is a well known fact that Dr Johnson was frightened by death. A passage from his Rambler 78 explains the mental perturbation caused by the idea of dying:

... surely, nothing can so much disturb the passions, or perplex the intellects of man, as the disruption of his union with visible nature; a separation from all that has hitherto delighted or engaged him; a change not only of the place, but the manner of his being; and entrance into a state not simply which he knows not, but which he has not faculties to know; an immediate and perceptible communication with the supreme Being, and, what is above all, distressful and alarming, the final sentence, and unalterable allotment.¹

In this passage death is described first as the loss of what we know, and then as an encounter with what we don't know. Both are unsettling; but what is most frightening is 'the final sentence, and unalterable allotment', the awful thought of a final and unalterable judgement on the individual. The last phrase alludes to the Christian doctrines of death, judgement, heaven and hell, and does so with a certain suppression of Christian language. This passage was written for publication. In conversation, and on occasions where the writer is Boswell rather than Johnson himself, Johnson's views on death and the fear of it are more explicitly investigated.

In June 1784, six months before his death, Johnson was entertained in Oxford by Dr Adams, Master of Pembroke College. This is Boswell's account of the conversation which took place over tea. The participants are Johnson, Boswell, Dr Adams and Mrs Adams.

Dr Johnson [acknowledged] that he was much oppressed by the fear of death. The amiable Dr. Adams suggested that God was infinitely good. JOHNSON. That he is infinitely good, as far as the perfection of his nature will allow, I certainly believe; but it is necessary for good upon the whole, that individuals should be punished. As to an individual, therefore, he is not infinitely good; and as I cannot be sure that I have fulfilled the conditions on which salvation is granted, I am afraid I may be one of those who shall be damned.' (looking dismally.) DR. ADAMS. 'What do you believe by damned?' JOHNSON. (passionately and loudly) 'Sent to Hell, Sir, and punished

everlastingly,' DR. ADAMS. 'I don't believe that doctrine.' JOHNSON. 'Hold, Sir; do you believe that some will be punished at all?' DR. ADAMS. 'Being excluded from Heaven will be a punishment; yet there may be no great positive suffering.' JOHNSON. 'Well, Sir; but, if you admit any degree of punishment, there is an end of your argument for infinite goodness simply considered; for, infinite goodness would inflict no punishment whatever. There is not infinite goodness physically considered; morally there is.' BOSWELL. 'But may not a man attain to such a degree of hope as not to be uneasy from the fear of death?' JOHNSON. 'A man may have such a degree of hope as to keep him quiet. You see I am not quiet, from the vehemence with which I talk; but I do not despair.' MRS. ADAMS. 'You seem, Sir, to forget the merits of our Redeemer.' JOHNSON. 'Madam, I do not forget the merits of my Redeemer; but my Redeemer has said that he will set some on his right hand and some on his left.' - He was in gloomy agitation, and said, 'I'll have no more on't.'²

In this discussion Johnson puts the orthodox Christian position: that of a future state and conditional salvation. Death is dreadful because the individual sinner may, through his own fault, fail to reach Heaven. '... I cannot be sure,' Johnson laments, 'that I have fulfilled the conditions on which salvation is granted.'³ The others drinking tea with him put three objections which have the tendency of modifying his fear. The fear is of going to hell. Dr Adams says that he does not believe the doctrine; Boswell suggests that hope might relieve the fear of death; and Mrs Adams reminds him of 'the merits of our Redeemer'. These all introduce theological issues: in the case of Boswell's suggestion the nature of the Christian virtue of hope; in the case of Mrs Adams' suggestion the question of the Redemption. Dr Adams' suggestion is slightly different in that it questions Johnson's premise, the doctrine of hell as a place of everlasting punishment. Dr Adams, Master of Pembroke College, does not believe that doctrine in its full rigour: he does not believe in a fire and brimstone hell, but adheres to a less orthodox view that hell should be seen not as positive punishment but as exclusion from heaven. Johnson refuses to allow that this interpretation is particularly comforting: 'Well, Sir; but if you admit any degree of punishment ...' He does not fully engage with Adams' argument, perhaps because he thinks it doesn't help, perhaps for another reason.

D.P. Walker in his book *The Decline of Hell* has pointed out that although disbelief in a hell of eternal punishment can be found in the early Christian centuries it was not a widely held view before the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century the doctrine of hell in its full rigour was expounded particularly by conservative theologians who believed that only the threat of everlasting punishment would keep the wickedness of human nature in check.⁴ Johnson's belief in an orthodox hell goes with his acute sense of the moral wickedness of human nature and especially his own. He wrote in *Rambler* 78, 'The great incentive to virtue is the reflection that we must die', and the reason why death is an incentive to virtue is the threat of judgement. On dying we are 'added to the number of those whose probation is past, and whose happiness or misery shall endure for ever.'⁵

I quoted the account of the conversation on death in Pembroke College from Boswell's Life of Johnson. It is almost identical in Boswell's Journal from which the passage was taken for the biography. After Johnson's dismissal of the topic, however, the two texts diverge. Boswell's Journal continues

I now thanked God that my mind was calm and placid while I considered my 'latter end'; and Dr. Adams, to whom I expressed it, agreed with me that I could not be sure of being right were I in greater fear than I was at present.⁶

Boswell often used calmness of mind as a measure of his religious feelings. When it came to revising the passage for the Life of Johnson, however, he removed this sentence and replaced it with a psychological explanation of Johnson's fear: 'let is be remembered, that Johnson's temperament was melancholy, of which such direful apprehensions of futurity are often a common effect.' (IV 300)

The discussion at Pembroke College ended when Johnson dismissed the topic: 'He was in gloomy agitation, and said, "I'll have no more on't."' The fear of death was a subject which repeatedly shook the note of confidence in Johnson's conversation. On one occasion, earlier in their acquaintance, Boswell had tried to maintain that the fear of death might be overcome. He pressed his point despite Johnson's obvious disinclination for the topic. As Boswell left that evening Johnson's voice followed him, sternly, '"Don't let us meet to-morrow."' (II 107) And in Boswell's view death was the only thing Johnson was frightened of: 'He feared death, but he feared nothing else, not even what might occasion death.' (II 298) There was an occasion when Johnson and Boswell were both in danger of death. It was on their journey to the Western Isles of Scotland in 1773. They were in a boat sailing to the isle of Coll when they were caught in a violent storm. The mariners struggled to save the boat. Boswell offered to help and in the end was given a rope to hold. Afterwards he realised ruefully that he had been asked to hold that useless rope to keep him quiet. Throughout Johnson lay in the boat 'in philosophic tranquillity, with a greyhound ... at his back, keeping him warm.' (V 283) On the subject of bravery Johnson said, 'I never thought confidence with respect to futurity any part of the character of a brave, a wise, or a good man. Bravery has no place where it can avail nothing'⁷

Johnson's fear of death was the fear that he would fail to find salvation. Mrs Adams attempted to bring him comfort:

'You seem, Sir, to forget the merits of our Redeemer.' Johnson. 'Madam, I do not forget the merits of my Redeemer; but my Redeemer has said that he will set some on his right hand and some on his left.'

His fear was endorsed by theology which was offered to bring him relief. Johnson's fear that he would not attain salvation was fuelled by his sense of unworthiness. In his elegy 'On the Death of Dr. Robert Levet', the humble doctor whom he had taken into his home, Johnson alludes significantly to the Parable of the Talents:

His virtues walk'd their narrow round,
Nor made a pause, nor left a void;
And sure th'Eternal Master found
The single talent well employed.⁸ (11.25-28)

Johnson would not, even in an elegy, flatter his subject with easy assurances of Heaven. What is stressed throughout the poem is that Levet's was a 'single talent'; and the talents had been given 'to every man according to his several ability.'⁹ The poem celebrates modest gifts used to their utmost. Its tone of humble confidence could not readily be applied to the predicament of its author, conscious of a burden of gifts and opportunities inadequately deployed.

Johnson was not only afraid of death himself, but was suspicious of claims that others were not. The wicked might expect to be fearful. There was little relief for the virtuous: 'The better a man is, the more afraid he is of death, having a clearer view of infinite purity.' (III 154) Johnson regarded a conversation between Johnson and a Quaker Mrs Knowles:

JOHNSON. '... No man can be sure that his obedience and repentance will obtain salvation.' MRS. KNOWLES. 'But divine intimation of acceptance may be made to the soul.' JOHNSON. 'Madam, it may; but I should not think the better of a man who should tell me on his death-bed he was sure of salvation. A man cannot be sure himself that he has divine intimation of acceptance; much less can he make others sure that he has it.' (III 295)

Acceptance is a term in use in evangelical theology: in his Dictionary Johnson cites Milton; the Oxford English Dictionary cites Wesley.¹⁰

Boswell frequently provoked Johnson into speaking on topics he might not have chosen. Death was one of them. Boswell was fascinated by death and the fear of it. He repeatedly brought forward examples of those who did not fear death, to see how Johnson would react.

I mentioned to him a friend of mine who was formerly gloomy from low spirits, and much distressed by the fear of death, but was now uniformly placid, and contemplated his dissolution without any perturbation. 'Sir, (said Johnson) this is only a disordered imagination taking a different turn.' (III 158)

After seeing a public execution at Tyburn Boswell remarked of the convicts

... that none of them seemed to be under any concern. JOHNSON. 'Most of them, Sir, have never thought at all.' BOSWELL. 'But is not the fear of death natural to man?' JOHNSON. 'So much so, Sir, that the whole of life is but keeping away the thoughts of it.' (II 93)

Speaking on another occasion about those facing death by hanging, Johnson admitted that they 'set themselves to behave with resolution', but, he adds, they are 'not the less unwilling to be hanged.' (III 295) He accounts for

such courage by commenting that 'scarce any man dies in publick, but with apparent resolution; from that desire of praise which never quits us.' (III 154) The interpretation of other qualities, like pride or 'desire of praise', may in Johnson's view disguise the fear of death, but could not remove it.

All that I have said so far has been in the context of the Christian belief in an afterlife. But the eighteenth century was perhaps the first modern century to express explicit scepticism. There were people who did not believe in a future state, and among them were some of the foremost thinkers of the Enlightenment. What was the attitude to death of those who did not believe in an afterlife? In mentioning the *sang froid* of those executed at Tyburn I have assumed that they were desperadoes rather than sceptics. In the world of Johnson and Boswell the foremost sceptic was David Hume. The philosopher did not believe in an after life, and repeatedly denied that death had fears for him. Johnson never thought that the view that death was simply extinction removed the fear of it, though he admitted that 'It is in the apprehension of it that the horror of annihilation consists.' (III 296) Hume and Johnson were two contradictory thinkers: Hume the sceptic with a calm temperament and Johnson the Christian with a turbulent one. They scarcely met. Boswell was famous for arranging a dinner at which Johnson and Wilkes would cross swords; but even Boswell did not arrange such a meeting between Johnson and Hume. Hume's infidelity aroused fear in Boswell which he called on Johnson's bravery to combat. Boswell was less orthodox than Johnson, he was in reaction against his presbyterian upbringing, and Scottish Enlightenment scepticism was an intellectual temptation to him if not an emotional one. One of the things that Boswell valued in Johnson was Johnson's confirmation of religious faith. He can be seen urging Johnson to act as defender of the faith. After the publication of Hume's autobiography, which included a letter from Adam Smith, Boswell wrote to Johnson:

you might knock Hume's and Smith's heads together, and make vain and ostentatious infidelity exceedingly ridiculous. Would it not be worth your while to crush such noxious weeds in the moral garden?¹¹

Hume's views had such a horrid fascination for Boswell that he visited Hume when he was approaching death, and was shocked to find that he remained staunch in his belief. Boswell recorded the meeting in his Journal; he weaves into his account memories of previous debates with Hume. The visit took place in July 1776 about six weeks before Hume's death and when he knew he was 'approaching to his end.' Boswell records

I had a strong curiosity to be satisfied if he persisted in disbelieving a future state even when he had death before his eyes. I was persuaded from what he now said, and from his manner of saying it, that he did persist.¹²

Boswell is reminded of a previous discussion with Hume in which they philosopher had given as a cogent argument against immortality 'that Wilkes and his mob must be immortal.' Boswell tried Hume again:

I asked him if the thought of annihilation never gave him any uneasiness. He said not the least; no more than the thought that he had not been; as Lucretius observes.

Boswell could not easily give up the idea of a future state. He had marvelled on a previous occasion at hearing Hume declare that he did not wish to be immortal.

I tried him at this interview with that topic, saying that a future state was surely a pleasing idea.

and he continued 'would it not be agreeable to have hopes of seeing our friends again?' This question shows the temperamental difference between Johnson and Boswell: when Johnson thinks of a future state he thinks of hell; Boswell thinks of a pleasant heaven shared with friends. Johnson among the three was the one burdened with self-criticism. He would not have said anything like this slightly mocking remark of Hume's to Boswell:

'If there were a future state, Mr. Boswell, I think I could give as good an account of my life as most people.' Boswell reported this conversation to Johnson:

I said he told me he was quite easy at the thought of annihilation. "He lied," said Dr. Johnson. "He had a vanity in being thought easy. It is more probable that he lied than that so very improbable a thing should be as a man not afraid of death; of going into an unknown state and not being uneasy at leaving all that he knew. And you are to consider that upon his own principle of annihilation he had no motive not to lie."¹³

Donald Siebert has pointed out that Johnson uses Hume's arguments against miracles against the likelihood of Hume's being easy at the approach of death.¹⁴ The arguments are that it is more probable that he should have been fearful, and that the witness (Hume himself) had a motive to lie.

To Johnson death was awful chiefly for the prospect of it; but another cause why he did not expect a person to face death with ease was the thought of what was left behind. As he said of David Hume, 'When he dies, he at least gives up all he has'; he must be uneasy 'at leaving all he knew.' (II 106, III 153) In the passage in Rambler 78 with which I started Johnson elaborates as the cause of our dread of death the rupture it makes with our habitual experience.

For surely, nothing can so much disturb the passions, or perplex the intellects of man, as the disruption of his union with visible nature; a separation from all that has hitherto delighted or engaged him...

It is significant that one of only a few stanzas in the work of Thomas Gray which Johnson was prepared to commend was this from the Elegy written in a Country Churchyard:

For who to dumb Forgetfulness a Prey
This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing lingering look behind?¹⁵ (II 328)

Johnson even more than Boswell had an appetite for life. Boswell demurred when Johnson asserted that 'mere existence is so much better than nothing, that one would rather exist even in pain, than not exist.' (III 295-6)

Johnson points out that we hate disruption. We have a horror of the last of anything. In the last paper of his Idler series he took the opportunity to write an essay on our 'horror of the last'. His point is that we have a horror of finality in even the trivial activities of life, because they all remind us that life too must have its end. 'This secret horror of the last is inseparable from a thinking being whose life is limited, and to whom death is dreadful.'¹⁶

No man in Johnson's view dies willingly; there remains, however, the possibility of dying well. What is it to die well? The first requisite is to believe that it is going to happen to you. Johnson frequently in his periodical essays points out how the mind has a tendency to evade that fact.¹⁷ Death is driven from our minds, he writes in Rambler 54 'by the jollity of health, the hurry of employment, and even by the calmer diversions of study and speculation.'¹⁸ On the subject of temporal provision for death Johnson seems little concerned; it is Boswell, the lawyer, who raises the subject of wills, and comments with surprise that 'Johnson was not free from that general weakness of being averse to execute a will.' (IV 402) On the physical aspect of dying Johnson thought a great deal. A violent death Johnson considered 'never very painful',¹⁹ but it might find its victim unprepared. Of the miseries of disease and extreme old age Johnson repeatedly wrote.²⁰ The danger was that the distresses suffered would hinder proper preparation for death. Johnson himself wanted to face death in a state of mental awareness. On hearing shortly before his death that he would not recover without a miracle, 'Then, (said Johnson,) I will take no more physick, not even my opiates; for I have prayed that I may render up my soul to God unclouded.' (IV 415) Long before his last illness Johnson had thought about his own death,

and in what manner he should conduct himself upon that occasion:

'I know not (said he,) whether I should wish to have a friend by me, or have it all between God and myself.' (II 93)

He took comfort from the prayers and sacraments of the Church of England, but on the whole took upon himself responsibility for his spiritual preparation. Considering the benefits afforded by the different Christian churches he commented, 'I shall never be a Papist, unless on the near approach of death, of which I have a very great terrour'; and the recommendation of Catholicism was 'a church where there are so many helps to get to heaven.' (IV 289)

What might be regarded as an ideal death is celebrated in the elegy on Dr Robert Levet:

The busy day, the peaceful night,
Unfelt, uncounted, glided by;
His frame was firm, his powers were bright,
Tho' now his eightieth year was nigh.

Then with no throbbing fiery pain,
 No cold gradations of decay,
 Death broke at once the vital chain,
 And free'd his soul the nearest way. (II. 29-36)

After Johnson's brief indication of different kinds of physical death, the mind is particularly struck with the final line 'And free'd his soul the nearest way.' 'The nearest way' in Johnson's Dictionary means the most direct way. Is it possible that the use of the phrase here is an echo of Bunyan's description of the death of Faithful, who 'was carried up through the clouds, with sound of Trumpet, the nearest way to the coelestial Gate'?²¹

During the conversation on death in Pembroke College Boswell had asked 'But may not a man attain to such a degree of hope as not to be uneasy from the fear of death?' He is referring presumably to the Christian virtue of hope. Some of Johnson's most famous works are on the subject of hope, and underlying them is the distinction between earthly hopes and Christian hope that extends beyond death. Johnson was eloquent upon the delusiveness of earthly hopes. In his imitation of Juvenal's 10th satire entitled The Vanity of Human Wishes the vanity of earthly hopes is remorselessly demonstrated, until the last paragraph when the poet turns to those things which one should hope for. One should

Pour forth thy fervours for a healthful mind,
 Obedient passions, and a will resign'd;
 For love, which scarce collective man can fill;
 For patience sov'reign o'er transmuted ill;
 For faith, that panting for a happier seat,
 Counts death kind Nature's signal of retreat.²² (II. 363-4)

While man has his hopes fixed on heaven, friendly Nature will bring his earthly concerns to an end. Nature's 'signal of retreat' is a military image for death which Johnson uses elsewhere. He uses it strikingly in the Rambler 78

To neglect at any time preparation for death, is to sleep on our post at a siege, but to omit it in old age, is to sleep at an attack.²³

The virtue that enables the good man to wait for death is Patience (I. 362). This is not the tame affair of our colloquial usage, but what Jeremy Taylor calls 'The Grace of Patience',²⁴ and what Johnson defines in his Dictionary as 'The power of suffering; ... the power of expecting long without rage or discontent'.

The last paragraph of The Vanity of Human Wishes uses minimally Christian language. The poem's subject was one which could be concluded by Johnson only with reference to Christianity. But he had chosen to imitate a satire by Juvenal, and the central part of Johnson's poem gives a very different view of death, what one might call the classical view of death. The poem gives a series of examples of the great struck down at the height of their power.

Most memorable is the portrait of Charles XII of Sweden. After his great victories

His fall was destin'd to a barren strand,
A petty fortress, and a dubious hand;
He left the name, at which the world grew pale,
To point a moral, or adorn a tale. (II.219-22)

The portraits of death of great men in the poem, of Xerxes, of Wolsey, present death from the classical rather than the Christian point of view: death is the ultimate irony, undermining all human achievements. Johnson's periodical essays give many, more domestic, examples of the classical view, the folly of failing to remember death. 'Remember your end,' Solon urged Croesus, the richest king of his time:²⁵ remember death so as to put a perspective on earthly achievements, so as not to be caught out by life. In Johnson's writing on death there are two voices, representing two traditions, the Christian, urging one to remember death so as to prepare for it and win salvation; and the classical, urging one to remember death so as to temper life by the recollection. In Johnson, as in the whole Christian humanist tradition, these two views overlap to some extent, but not entirely. Frequently when Johnson is most moved in his writings on death he discusses that point where the 'warnings of philosophers' fail to satisfy. One such occasion is Idler 41, which he was contracted to write at the time of his mother's death. In it he dismisses classical advice on death as inadequate in the event:

The precepts of Epicurus, who teaches us to endure what the laws of the universe make necessary, may silence but not content us. The dictates of Zeno, who commands us to look with indifference on external things, may dispose us to conceal our sorrow, but cannot assuage it.²⁶

He concludes with the observation that, 'Philosophy may infuse stubbornness, but religion only can give patience.'

I have mentioned some of the literary forms in which Johnson presents death: the elegy, in which the presentation of death is charged with the emotion of recent bereavement; the philosophical poem or essay, in which classical and Christian views compete, and in which the deaths of individuals are given as *exempla* as the argument requires. The other literary form in which he wrote of death was biography. Johnson wrote several short biographies, and his last work was a collection of Lives of the English Poets. The biographer has to deal with death, although except in the case of the lives of the martyrs, that is probably not the reason for choosing the subject. It is a common feature of medieval and Renaissance biographies to present death as an appropriate climax to life, death as the final example of all that the person had stood for in life. In his early biographies Johnson often presents death in this way. He wrote several biographies of doctors. The great Dutch doctor Boerhaave dies, in Johnson's biography, in an heroically appropriate way: in his last illness he took the 'Opportunities of contemplating the wonderful and inexplicable Union of Soul and Body, which nothing but long Sickness can

give.²⁷ This can be given an ironic twist: Johnson remarks in his Life of Dr Sydenham how many doctors succumb to a disease 'which they profess to relieve'.²⁸ Is this desire to find a death that sets a fitting seal on life only a biographers' convention? Johnson gives some examples in his Lives of the Poets that imply that his subjects too sought a death which rounded off their life. The seventeenth-century poet Edmund Waller towards the end of his life bought 'a small house with a little land' at Coleshill, Hertfordshire, where he had been born, and accounted for it thus: 'he should be glad to die, like the stag, where he was roused'.²⁹ Of the death of Addison, Johnson says that finding his illness becoming pressing, 'he prepared to die conformably to his own precepts and professions'.³⁰

These people were hoping for a death which had consistency with their life, which in some way rounded off life. The ambition implied the classical virtues of self-knowledge and self-control. These were of only limited use to Johnson who remembered in one awful line in The Vanity of Human Wishes that 'Swift expires a driv'ler and a show.' (I.318) There is, however, in his Life of Collins a Christian version of a similar idea, of life deliberately ended in a way that recalled its beginning. William Collins was a poet and scholar whose last years had been tormented by madness. In his biography Johnson describes his own visit to Collins towards the end of his life. He found him with only one book,

an English Testament such as children carry to the school; when his friend took it into his hand, out of curiosity to see what companion a man of letters had chosen, 'I have but one book,' says Collins, 'but that is the best.'³¹

His published works show Johnson considering death from different perspectives, not all of them fearful. Did he ever achieve that calmness in his own life? I have quoted occasions when Boswell, in many ways the most annoying of companions, asked probing questions about death. He did so because he himself could not live with the terrifying uncertainty with which Johnson heroically grappled. Boswell needed to be 'easy'. He is therefore on the alert for occasions on which Johnson was if not secure then at least calm about death. One such was during their tour of the Western Isles in 1773. The date was Sunday 12 September; he, Johnson and others were in a boat crossing from Raasay to Skye, and they spoke of death. Johnson said

'No wise man will be contented to die, if he thinks he is to go into a state of punishment. Nay, no wise man will be contented to die, if he thinks he is to fall into annihilation: for however unhappy any man's existence may be, yet he would rather have it, than not exist at all. No; there is no rational principle by which a man can die contented, but a trust in the mercy of God, through the merits of Jesus Christ.'

Boswell added:

This short sermon, delivered with an earnest tone, in a boat upon the sea, which was perfectly calm, on a day appropriated to religious worship, while every one listened with an air of satisfaction, had a most pleasing effect on my mind. (V 180)

On this occasion Johnson had calmed Boswell. On other occasions he took a tougher line with Boswell and told him to shut up. Here is Boswell again

To my question, whether we might not fortify our minds for the approach of death, he answered, in a passion, 'No, Sir, let it alone. It matters not how a man dies, but how he lives. The act of dying is not of importance, it lasts so short a time.' He added (with an earnest look,) 'A man knows it must be so, and submits. It will do him no good to whine.' (II 107)

Johnson was aware that not everyone thought of death as he did. In his periodical essays he supposes there to be a large number of the unreflecting who continue in their giddy courses never thinking of death. But he is also aware that some apparent thoughtlessness is brought about by the frantic need to hide from the disturbing fact of death. The warnings of the traditional moralist could perhaps halt the thoughtless, and these Johnson addressed in his magisterial vein. Where his deepest sympathies are aroused is in considering those who like himself cannot stop thinking of death, those for whom fear of death is 'the polluter of the feast of happiness, and embitterer of the cup of joy.'³² (The phrase comes from his sermon for the funeral of his wife.) We are left with some paradoxes. 'To die' is an active verb. But death too is an actor, and we may be simply his victim. How do you find the appropriate attitude, between the extremes of complacency and despair, giddy thoughtlessness and chilly stoicism? The paradoxical nature of the ideal Johnson recommends is best expressed by some words from Proverbs which he used as the text of one of his sermons: 'Happy is the man that feareth alway'.³³

- 1 Samuel Johnson, The Rambler, ed. W J Bate and Albrecht B Strauss, 1969, II 47.
- 2 James Boswell, Boswell's Life of Johnson, ed G B Hill and L F Powell, 1934-50, IV, 299-300. Subsequent references to this edition are given in brackets after the quotation.
- 3 For a discussion of the theological aspect of Johnson's fear see J H Hagstrum, 'On Johnson's Fear of Death', A Journal of English Literary History, XIV, 1947, 308-19.
- 4 D P Walker, The Decline of Hell, 1964, 3-4, 23-24.
- 5 The Rambler, ed cit, II 50.
- 6 James Boswell, Boswell: The Applause of the Jury 1782-1785, ed Irma S Lustig and Frederick A Pottle, 1981, 238.
- 7 To Mrs Thrale, 10 March, 1784. The Letter of Samuel Johnson, ed R W Chapman, 1952, III, no 938.
- 8 The Poems of Samuel Johnson, ed David Nichol Smith and Edward L McAdam, 1941, 201.
- 9 Matthew 25: 15
- 10 Samuel Johnson, A Dictionary of the English Language, 1755; The Oxford English Dictionary, 1st ed., 1884-1928, Acceptance 3.
- 11 The Life of David Hume, esq, written by himself, 1777. To Samuel Johnson, 9 June, 1777. The Letters of James Boswell, ed Chauncey Brewster Tinker, 1924, I, 264.
- 12 Boswell's account of his last interview with David Hume is printed in Boswell in Extremes 1776-1778, ed Charles Mc C Weis and Frederick A Pottle, 1970, 11-15.
- 13 Ibid, 155
- 14 Donald T Siebert, Jr, 'Johnson and Hume on Miracles', Journal of the History of Ideas, XXXVI, 1975, 543-7.
- 15 The Poems of Thomas Gray, William Collins and Oliver Goldsmith, ed Roger Lonsdale, 1969, 132-3.
- 16 Idler 103. Samuel Johnson, 'The Idler' and 'The Adventurer', ed W J Bate, John M Bullitt, t, and L F Powell, 1963, 315.
- 17 See for instance Rambler 54, 71; Adventurer 69.
- 18 Rambler ed cit, 54

- 19 Letter to Bennet Langton, 21 September 1758. The Letters of Samuel Johnson, ed Bruce Redford, 1992, I, 167.
- 20 For instance in The Vanity of Human Wishes, II. 255-318.
- 21 A Dictionary of the English Language, 4th ed, revised, 1773, near adj. 3: 'direct; streight; not winding.' John Bunyan, The Pilgrim's Progress, ed J B Wharey rev Roger Sharrock, 1960, 97.
- 22 The Poems of Samuel Johnson, ed cit., 48.
- 23 Rambler ed cit., II. 49.
- 24 Jeremy Taylor, Holy Dying, 1651, chs III and IV.
- 25 Plutarch, Life of Solon, xxviii, 4; alluded to in The Vanity of Human Wishes, II.313-4 and Rambler 17, ed cit., III, 92.
- 26 The Idler and the Adventurer, ed cit., 131-2.
- 27 Early Biographical Writings of Dr Johnson, ed J D Fleeman, 1973, 33.
- 28 Ibid, 194.
- 29 Samuel Johnson, Lives of the English Poets, ed George Birkbeck Hill, 1905, I, 276.
- 30 Ibid, II, 116.
- 31 Early Biographical Writings of Dr Johnson, ed cit., 518.
- 32 Samuel Johnson, Sermons, ed Jean Hagstrum and James Gray, 1978, 263.
- 33 Ibid, 29. Proverbs 28: 14.

HESTER THRALE AND THE GLOBE THEATRE

Martin Clout FTCL: 19th March 1994

Chairman: Richard Thrale

Martin Clout is a specialist in the design of early English open public theatres. In 1989 he was an historical adviser to the Museum of London on the Rose and Globe Theatre excavations. He has published a number of articles on the subject and has lectured in England and America. We are pleased that this piece of original research appears under our auspices: the paper is printed in full from a text provided by the speaker.

Amongst the evidence for the design of the Globe theatre is an intriguing account of its remains written in 1819 by Hester Thrale - then known as Mrs. Piozzi.¹ Her observations, which appear in her short manuscript autobiography, The Abridgement,² suggest that at least part of the theatre's foundation was exposed and observed in the latter half of the eighteenth century. She wrote: "But there were really curious Remaynes of the old Globe Playhouse, which tho' hexagonal in Form without, was round within". Mrs. Thrale's view was also held by the eminent Shakespearean scholar Edmond Malone and was first published by him in 1780. However, modern scholars have completely dismissed Mrs. Thrale's witness to the extent that her evidence (and Malone's) is now completely omitted in histories of the Globe theatre and books concerning its design.

The rejection of Mrs. Thrale's witness has come about through the scholarly elision of two key passages from The Abridgement: the first appears to concern the construction of a garden to the east of the Thrales' home in Southwark, which, with the sale of the Thrale brewery in 1787 was named Palmyra;³ the second contains a description of the Globe's remains.⁴ Selected and first published by Charles E. Norton in 1861, each quotation was placed in separate quotation marks but no text was placed between them, they were divided only with a dash.⁵ Their relationship one to another was further confused as Norton introduced them in the singular as "a passage of interest". Later that same year Abraham Hayward published the two quotations in the second edition of his Autobiography, Letters and Literary Remains of Mrs. Piozzi (Thrale). Hayward maintained their juxtaposition and the separate quotation marks, but replaced Norton's dash with an ellipsis of three dots.⁶ Then in 1910, The Builder magazine quoted both passages (apparently from Hayward but with transcription errors) citing as its source the original manuscript.⁷ On this occasion the two passages were placed in just one set of quotation marks separated by an ellipsis. With minor variations this is how they have been published ever since. However, this form, adopted by The Builder, created the inference that very little material was missing between the two. As Dr. William Martin, clearly puzzled, pointed out in 1910:

"the garden called "Palmyra" was on the east side of Deadman's Place, opposite to Globe Alley. It is strange, however, that a statement of fact such as this could have been made if it were not

true, unless, indeed, Mrs. Piozzi's memory was playing her false or, unless she had mistaken some other ruin for that of the playhouse, a matter scarcely probable."⁸

In 1950 the authors of the L.C.C. Survey of London confined Mrs. Thrale's observations to a footnote, commenting that she:

"was confused about the position of the Globe, which was west of her dwelling house not on the east side of Deadman's Place where the garden was made."⁹

This has been the orthodox interpretation of Mrs. Thrale's witness ever since.¹⁰ However, those inferences which have led to its rejection are a product of the elision, not of her original statement. There are over 380 words missing between the two passages. Further, Norton's transcription was inaccurate - he did not reproduce Mrs. Thrale's punctuation, so that her emphasis in the text was lost. If, however, you listen to Mrs. Thrale's voice here it certainly sounds as though she's describing something she's actually seen. How could she have become so confused about something so important?

The complete passage from which Norton took his quotations is published here for the first time.¹¹

[p.7]

"For a long time then, or I thought it such; my Fate was bound up with the old Globe Theatre upon the Bank Side Southwark: The Alley it had occupied having been purchased & thrown down by Mr.¹² Thrale to make an Opening before the Windows of our Dwelling house. When it lay desolate in a black Heap of Rubbish, my Mother one Day in Joke called it the Ruins of Palmyra;¹³ & after they had laid it down in a Grass Plot, Palmyra was the Name it went by I suppose, among the Clerks & Servants of the Brewhouse: for when the Quaker Barclay bought the whole, I read that Name with Wonder in the Writing.

To tempt Purchasers however, my Plan was to appear ready to carry on the Business myself - & attending to my Counting house Duties, from seven in the Morn to six in the Afternoon, I used to drive home to Streatham Park, & eat what we then called a late Dinner every day sufficiently tired. Mr: Thrale had left me no fewer than five Coadjutors. Johnson, Crutchley, Cator, Smith, & Perkins. To make these Men agree was hopeless, such discordant Characters could scarcely have been found I fancy, in the whole Island: & to get quit of the Concern by selling it, was the only Thing their Minds would have borne to clash in. & You Dear Sir will wonder when I tell you that Dr. Johnson most disliked the Sale: but signing Bankers Checks helped to amuse him; adding a new Idea to his Stock.

My Heart

[p.8]

abhorred the whole, yet did I suffer no Aversions of my own to hurry the Sale; & my Pecuniary Interest was not flatter'd, by parting with a Place which brought me in 1000£.¹⁴ O'Year whilst we went on together for Benefit of the Ladies:- - so

Mr: Thrale's Daughters were always called among us; The Letters shew You, both our Sons were dead. At Streatham Park meanwhile, Comfort commonly awaited me in the Countenance, and soothed me in the Voice I best liked to hear & see; but the Queen of France liked them too, & Sent for Piozzi and Sacchini to Paris, where he died,¹⁵ & his Friend ran to Lombardy for purpose of visiting a sick Mother - - & then, came back to England. I read his Letters during Absence, & minded my Business: recollecting at this Moment how I was forced to Solicit Custom from coarse Creatures who Sometimes refused me, & one Day I whimper'd when returned to Dr: Johnson; - - - not liking my Employment of Course. Madam! said he, be not discouraged: Your Character rises on such Occasions, & Mrs. Montagu says so. "16 Yes Sir; we are living here at Old Shakespear's Theatre you know; and I am rising from the Shilling Side Box of those Days, to the Penny Gallery - - - would Mrs. Montagu like that? d'ye think? You are one of the Understanders. Come, Come your Spirit is not crushed cried he, while you can be so saucy.¹⁷ - - - But there were really curious Remaynes of the old Globe Playhouse, which tho' hexagonal¹⁹ in Form without,²⁰ was round within; as Circles contain more Space than other Shapes, & Bees make their Cells in hexagons, only because that

Figure best admits of Junction. Before I quitted the Premises however, I learn'd that Tarleton the Actor of those Times was not buried at St. Saviour's Southwark - as he wish'd, near Massinger and Gower; but at Shoreditch Church. He was the first of the Profession whose Fame was high enough to have his Portrait solicited for, to set up as a Sign; and none but he & Garrick I believe ever obtained that honour. Mr. Dance's Picture of our Friend David lives in a Copy now in Oxford Street: - - The Character King Richard."²¹

In this paper²² I shall examine Mrs. Thrale's testimony in the light of the documentary evidence for her era in Southwark in order to show that what she describes is in fact a plausible record of events. It is my contention that she was not confused at all, rather, it is the historic record that has become confused and clouded by later scholars. As I shall show, Mrs. Thrale had every opportunity to, and probably did witness what she described.

Hester Lynch Salusbury married Henry Thrale in 1763. While their main residence was Streatham Park, for eight months of the year they lived in their house in Southwark next to Henry Thrale's brewery.²³ While Mrs. Thrale was new to Southwark, her husband's family had a long association with the area. The brewery had been in Thrale's family since 1665, passing through male and female lines of descent. It was originally acquired by Henry's, father's, aunt's, father: James Child.²⁴ He had bought it from the Monger family who

had owned it for two generations since its establishment, c.1616, when the second Globe theatre had been standing for about two years.

The brewery was located just south of the river Thames to the west of Park Street (formerly Dead Man's Place) south of Globe Alley. It was a depressed, working-class, industrial area; many of the surrounding buildings dated back to medieval times, untouched by the Great Fire of London of 1666 and by the fire which destroyed much of the Borough area of Southwark ten years later. The Thrales' family house had no garden and was built with its back to the brewery. All the principal rooms on the ground floor looked east across Dead Man's Place onto residential properties, Naked Boy Alley and numerous small businesses, including: an inn, a chandler's shop, a dye house and warehouses. Throughout this area of Bankside there were still sections of open ditch sewers from which rats could have roamed freely. Rabies was suspected in the area. To the west of the brewery in Globe Alley was a tannery, while a little further along was the parish workhouse for men and boys: a profoundly insanitary place. The air would have been thick with the smells from the breweries, tanneries, dye houses, the workhouse laundry and the sewers.

The boundary of the Globe estate and the precise location of the second Globe theatre were common knowledge amongst the local residents in Southwark in the late 18th century.²⁵ We have it on good authority that the ruins of the second Globe (to the west of the brewery) had remained standing until the middle of the 1740s. In 1795, it was recorded that:

"Several of the neighbouring inhabitants remember these premises being wholly taken down about fifty years ago, having remained for many years in a very ruinous state; avoided by the young and superstitious as a place haunted by those imaginary beings called evil spirits."²⁶

Surviving remnants of the second Globe would certainly have been seen by Henry Thrale's father, who started working at the brewery c.1711; while Henry (who was born c.1728-9) would almost certainly have explored the ruins as a child and would have been in his mid-teens when they were finally demolished.

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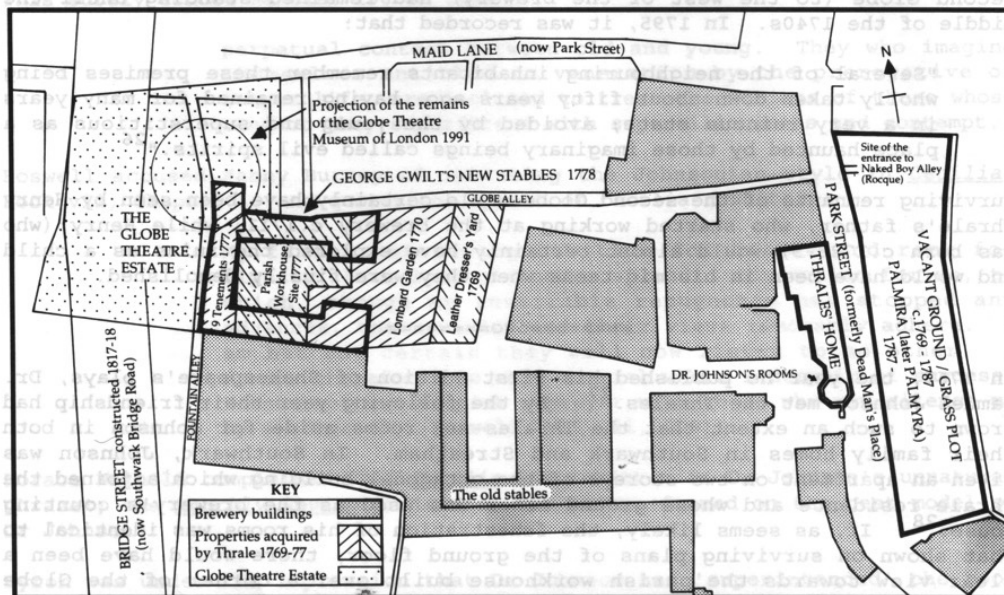
In 1765, the year he published his first edition of Shakespeare's plays, Dr. Samuel Johnson met the Thrales.²⁷ By the following year their friendship had grown to such an extent that the Thrales set rooms aside for Johnson in both their family homes in Southwark and Streatham. In Southwark, Johnson was given an apartment on two storeys of the octagonal building which adjoined the Thrale residence and whose ground floor was used as the brewery's counting house.²⁸ If, as seems likely, the fenestration of his rooms was identical to that shown on surviving plans of the ground floor, there would have been a clear view towards the parish workhouse built over a corner of the Globe estate. The Globe theatre could well have been one of their earliest topics of conversation, even before they sat around the Thrales' dining table.

By the late 1760s, scholarly interest had begun to focus on the design of those theatres used by Shakespeare and their possible influence on his

writing. Up to this point, editors of Shakespeare's works had concentrated on establishing authentic texts, but in 1768 Edward Capell laid out a programme of research for the future: when Shakespeare started to write for the stage and with which play; the order in which the plays were written; the events which occasioned them and in which theatre each play was first performed:

"even the stage he appear'd upon, it's form, dressings, actors should be enquir'd into, as every one of those circumstances had some considerable effect upon what he compos'd for it: The subject is certainly a good one, and will fall (we hope) ere it be long into the hands of some good writer..."²⁹

The following year a broader public interest in Shakespeare was generated, thanks mainly to the press coverage of the huge Shakespeare Jubilee organised by David Garrick in the bard's home town of Stratford-upon-Avon. The Jubilee served to reveal contemporary ignorance of the Globe's design in a much more public and graphic way than had Capell's list. The main events of the celebration were held in an octagonal wooden building designed by the architect Latimore and modelled on the Rotunda at Ranelagh.³⁰ The occasion also highlighted a marked division in attitude between Garrick and James Boswell on the one hand and Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Thrale on the other. While



THE THRALE BREWERY AND ITS DEVELOPMENT OVER THE GLOBE THEATRE ESTATE.

Based on George Gwilt's plan of the Thrale Brewery 1774,
Horwood's map of London 1819 and Rocque's map of London 1747.

the junketings were taking place in Stratford-upon-Avon, with Boswell proudly parading in his Corsican costume, Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Thrale chose to retire to the Thrales' house in Brighton, no doubt much to Garrick's disappointment.

With Capell's suggestions for further research; Garrick's practical demonstration of how little was known; the proximity of the Globe estate to the Thrale brewery; and Dr. Johnson's expertise on Shakespeare, there was ample motivation to seek the Globe's remains - all that was required was the opportunity to do so.

Over a period of eight years (1769-1777) Henry Thrale acquired four properties that together extended his brewery over the south-east corner of the Globe theatre estate. The first lay directly next to his brewery - just over halfway along the south side of Globe Alley, the lease to run from Christmas 1769 for a period of 61 years.³¹ The site had been used as a leather dresser's yard or tannery (from 1614, possibly earlier) and had contained two small tenements, seven wood-lined tanning pits and a large well also lined with wood. The second property was acquired the following year, in 1770, when Thrale bought a lease for 61 years to Lombard Garden,³² an area that lay between the leather dresser's yard and the parish workhouse.

There is some evidence of an early archaeological intention behind this expansion of Thrale's brewery. Archaeological references were made by Mrs. Thrale's mother, Mrs. Salusbury, at some point between 1769 and her death in 1773, when the clearance of buildings around the brewery inspired a joke that centres on an analogy with a classical archaeological site.³³ Henry Thrale, his father Ralph and great-uncle Edmund Halsey had all purchased properties on the east side of Park Street opposite the brewery's residence, the final purchase being made by Henry on 25th January 1769.³⁴ After the buildings had been demolished, Mrs. Salusbury likened the scene to "the Ruins of Palmyra" - the ancient ruined classical city in Syria described in Robert Wood's account of his expedition there in 1751.³⁵ Her joke, however, may well have been a witty gloss on the contemporary vogue for giving industrial sites classical names, such as Wedgwood's new pottery, Etruria, officially opened on 13th June 1769.³⁶

By the time Henry Thrale's protégé, the architect and surveyor George Gwilt, drew his plan of the brewery in 1774, the area to the east of the Thrales' home had been cleared of buildings and was captioned by Gwilt 'Vacant Ground'. The position of three wells are marked which suggests that they were probably capped off and buried. Mrs. Thrale tells us that the site was laid down in a grass plot. To do so would require removing all the foundations (which were probably rat infested) and, possibly, bringing in fresh soil. Had they done so, the Thrales, Dr. Johnson and possibly Gwilt as well, would have gained first-hand knowledge of the type of foundations that were probably laid for the Globe.

The demolition that inspired Mrs. Salusbury's joke, however, is described by Mrs. Thrale as being in the alley the Globe theatre occupied. The leather dresser's yard and Lombard Garden were both in Globe Alley and lay before the windows at the back of the Thrales' home; the houses in Park Street and Naked

Boy Alley were before the windows in front. On Rocque's map of London (1747) the entrance to Naked Boy Alley is directly opposite Globe Alley and as such, may have been thought of by Mrs. Thrale as its continuation on the east side of Park Street. Of course, if both these areas were demolished at the same time, from inside the Thrales' house it might appear that their home was surrounded by demolition and destruction, giving rise to Mrs. Salusbury's quip.

As Mrs. Thrale makes clear she was aware of the proximity of the theatre from the outset of her marriage,³⁷ but, she goes further, she says that her "Fate was bound up with the old Globe Theatre". What might be regarded as simply a turn of phrase, would have been literally true if the decision to excavate the Globe was made prior to 1772 when there was a hiatus in their programme of acquisition. Already facing financial difficulties, Henry Thrale was persuaded to finance imprudent brewing and chemical experiments on a massive scale which brought him to the edge of bankruptcy. Thrale was ultimately saved by his wife's efforts at raising capital.³⁸

With the brewery's finances once more secured Henry Thrale's attention turned to acquiring the third property: the site of the parish workhouse. Conditions at the workhouse were truly appalling. The wards were chronically overcrowded and under ventilated. The common yard for exercise (34ft. by 25ft.) was enclosed on all four sides and contained the workhouse privies and a ditch, (most probably the open ditch sewer that formed the southern boundary of the site). The kitchen, boiling house and laundry were all described as being underground and very low and sometimes overflowed with springs and tides so as to be ankle deep in water.³⁹ (High tides may well have created a back-flow through a pipe that had been laid especially to supply Thames water directly to the premises.) As the local M.P. and next door neighbour, Henry Thrale must have known of the conditions there.

In May 1774, an Act of Parliament for the expansion of the old, or the construction of a new workhouse in the parish of St. Saviour's Southwark received royal assent.⁴⁰ The trustees for the act (who included Henry Thrale, John Cator and Jeremiah Crutchley) considered extending the existing premises but there was not enough new ground available, so they decided to build a new workhouse south of St. George's Fields.⁴¹ The old workhouse buildings, their furniture and site were sold by public auction on 29th April 1777, and were purchased by Henry Thrale for £460.⁴² The fourth and final purchase made by Thrale was for nine tenements along Fountain Alley. These were acquired through two leases purchased on the 28th August & 4th October 1777.⁴³

Henry Thrale's purpose in this westward expansion of his brewery was to increase the size of the dray yard and to build a new stable block, designed by George Gwilt.⁴⁴ From the archaeological evaluation of the Globe theatre, by the Museum of London's Department of Greater London Archaeology in 1989, we now know that the trenches dug for the foundations of Gwilt's stables cut through late 16th century levels. We also know that the area of the stables' infirmary (a small annex in the north-west corner of the development) was built over the south-east portion of the Globe theatre; as such, surviving

archaeology belonging to the Globe would certainly have been revealed. However, this area was not archaeologically evaluated in 1989, so we do not yet know whether the Thrales instructed workmen to dig specifically so they could view the remains first, or whether the remains were simply uncovered while the ground was being prepared for the stables' foundations.

The foundations of the Globe theatre were constructed mainly from chalk and brick; materials that are easily discernible against Southwark's black soil. From Mrs. Thrale's description it would seem that one angle of the outer gallery foundation and one or two angles of the inner gallery foundation were found. The comparison of the remains with honeycomb stems from Dr. Johnson's definition of 'hexagon' in his dictionary and observations made by Johnson and Mrs. Thrale in the spring of 1778 on the geometrical properties of circles and hexagons.⁴⁵ This was clearly a favoured configuration, one in which their interest may well have been initiated by the insubstantial nature of the remains. After all, it only needed one person to speculate that if the angle of the outer gallery foundation was repeated around the theatre it would have created an hexagonal building. Clearly, the notion that the Globe was hexagonal quickly took root. It is curious that ever since there has been a general assumption that all early English open public theatres were strictly regular polygonal buildings. This was not in fact the case, the Rose theatre was an irregular polygon both before and after it was rebuilt in 1592. Mrs. Thrale's observations taken in conjunction with the discoveries made in 1989 suggest that the design of the Globe may have been irregular as well.

The Globe was constructed from the second-hand timbers of The Theatre built in St. Leonard's Shoreditch in 1576 and demolished in 1598. We do not know whether The Theatre was faithfully reconstructed in Southwark as the Globe, or whether its timbers were used to create a completely new, or partially new design. The Globe existed for only 14 years, from 1599 to the 29th June 1613, when it caught fire during a performance of Shakespeare's Henry VIII and burnt to the ground. A new theatre, the second Globe was built during the following spring and was open by 30th June, 1614. The relationship of these two Globe theatres, one to another, presents us with an historical conundrum. There is some evidence that they were built on the same foundation,⁴⁶ thus they would have been the same size, had the same outer shape and occupied the same location within the Globe estate. If this were the case, the memory of the remnants of the second Globe standing in the 1740s would have directed the Thrales to the exact location of both theatres. The visual evidence, however, suggests that the two theatres were built on different foundations, in slightly different locations within the estate.⁴⁷ Even so, both may have had an angle of 120 degrees in the area of the Thrale brewery development.

The first Globe in John Norden's panorama of London, *Civitas Londini*, (1600) is depicted with an angle in the order of 120 degrees at the east end of the south face of the theatre. The south face is aligned with a row of mature trees that clearly predate the theatre's construction and which were most probably planted against the footpath that cut across the estate. This footpath was a continuation of Globe Alley. In 1989 a small section of the trench dug for the Globe's outer gallery wall was discovered just north of this footpath. This trench is aligned at an angle of 120 degrees to the

footpath, supporting both Mrs. Thrale's observations and Norden's depiction.

The second Globe in Wenceslaus Hollar's sketch titled 'West part oSouthwarke toward Westminster' has been calculated to be 102 feet in diameter,⁴⁸ 30 feet larger than the first as depicted by Norden. Hollar shows the second Globe to have been built over the footpath that divided the Globe estate in two. He also depicts, in pencil, a corner of the building in between the fourth pair of inked windows from the left. The angles between this line and those pencil lines representing the eaves of the roof are consistent with walls set at 120 degrees, as seen from Hollar's vantage point, the top of the tower of St. Saviour's Church.

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There is a joke, told by Dr. Johnson at about the time the stables were completed in 1778, which appears to be expanding on Mrs. Salusbury's joke: a joke upon a joke.

"A young fellow asked him abruptly one day, Pray, Sir, what and where is Palmira? I heard somebody talk last night of the ruins of Palmira. 'Tis a hill in Ireland (replies Johnson), with palms growing on the top, and a bog at the bottom, and so they call it Palm-mira."⁴⁹

I think it highly probable that this joke was inspired by events surrounding the discovery of the Globe's remains. We have already heard how the Workhouse site was prone to flooding: the water table in this area of Bankside is very high. I have a personal experience of this. Towards the end of January 1989, I visited the Rose theatre excavation. A few days before, dressed chalk blocks had been discovered at the bottom of a trench dug to examine the various archaeological levels that made up the site; these later proved to be part of the foundations of the Rose theatre. During my visit, however, the trench was full of muddy water: nothing could be seen.

Johnson's joke centres on his etymological experience: Palm = "victory; triumph"; mire = "Mud; dirt at the bottom of Water". The "bog" may have been a derogatory comment on Southwark compared to the magnificent ruins of Palmyra; a classical setting far more fitting for Shakespeare's works, whose ruins may well have formed their expectations for the Globe's remains rather than the reality contained in Southwark's soil. The clerks and employees of the brewery clearly had a sense of humour; with the documents of sale for the brewery in 1787⁵⁰ the grass plot on the east side of Park Street was formally called Palmira. The name commemorated Mrs. Salusbury's and Dr. Johnson's joke in this new spelling in which the 'y' was replaced with an 'i'. Little wonder that Mrs. Thrale was surprised when she "read that Name with Wonder in the Writing."

Events from the year before Johnson made his joke may give clues to added depths which may not appear evident on first reading.

On 1st May 1777, the scholar Edmond Malone left his native Ireland to settle in London. He had known Johnson since 1765 and his move was probably

motivated by the proposal that he should write a supplementary volume to the second edition of Shakespeare's plays (then in preparation) edited by Johnson and George Steevens.⁵¹ Steevens encouraged Malone in his work, lent him books, and, it would seem, cultivated him as his successor.⁵² However, later that summer (August - September 1777) Mrs. Thrale fell out with Steevens. In her diary, *Thraliana*, she records how Steevens had asserted to Johnson that he had written a political alphabet which had been published anonymously in 1769. As Mrs. Thrale still had her manuscript draft of the poem she was able to convince Johnson of her own authorship.⁵³ Steevens had lied to Johnson and he had been found out: Mrs. Thrale was 'victorious'. Steevens never visited the Thrales again; Dr. Johnson, Mrs. Thrale supposed, kept him away.⁵⁴ While these events would have isolated Steevens from the discovery of the Globe's remains they may also have isolated Mrs. Thrale from Malone and the publication of the results. Dr. Johnson, I suspect, may have felt the estrangement between Mrs. Thrale and Steevens to be an emotional mire, one which later erupted after Johnson died in Steevens's anonymous attacks on Mrs. Thrale.⁵⁵

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Edmond Malone worked on his supplement with enthusiasm. In the spring of 1779 he wrote to a friend:

"My Shakspearomania still continues strong upon me, and has now engaged me in a work with which I think you will be pleased. I mentioned, I believe, to you that I intended to publish a supplement to the late edition - but I have now enlarged my scheme, and mean to print, at the same time, the sonnets - the 'Tarquin and Lucrece' - the 'Venus and Adonis' - and the seven spurious plays. The whole will make two volumes octavo."⁵⁶

In the event, Malone's *Supplement* embodied Edward Capell's programme for future research. In the opening pages Malone wrote:

"The Globe, which was situated on the southern side of the river Thames, was an hexagonal building, partly open to the weather, partly covered with reeds" adding later, "The Globe, though hexagonal at the outside, was probably a rotunda within, and perhaps had its name from its circular form."⁵⁷

An examination of the texts and illustrations which Malone used show that his supporting references agree with his description in all but one respect: none qualify his assertion that the Globe was hexagonal. Indeed, his statement is contradicted by a woodcut illustration of the Globe in the very edition of Shakespeare's plays his work was intended to supplement.⁵⁸ The Globe is depicted as having four external walls facing the viewer with a semicircular wall behind.⁵⁹ Malone clearly approved of the woodcut as he included it in his first edition of Shakespeare's works published in 1790⁶⁰ and subsequent editions as well. However, a regular hexagonal building can only show a maximum of three external faces to a bystander from any one position on the ground. To show four, the building would have to possess more than six sides

or be an irregular hexagon. Malone was highly critical of careless scholarship in others, but in this one important respect - the outer shape of the Globe theatre - he does not cite his source of information.

Malone never subsequently revised his description of the Globe nor did he substantiate his assertion of its outer shape. His reiteration of the Globe's hexagonal form, it seems to me, was most probably derived from Dr. Johnson, however, Malone's loyalty to Steevens may well have inhibited him from acknowledging Thrale's excavation as the source of that information. While Malone was writing the Supplement there would probably have been a general understanding not to broadcast any new discoveries until publication. David Garrick, who might have championed the discovery, died in 1779, the year before the Supplement was published. No one in the Thrales' circle is known to have contradicted or corrected Malone's assertion of the Globe's hexagonality. This may be a silence in the documents, or a silence of assent.

Mrs. Thrale and Dr. Johnson certainly discussed the Globe.⁶¹ Johnson and Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu (a leading intellectual of the day) admired Mrs. Thrale for taking on the day to day running of the brewery after Henry Thrale's death and for arranging its sale. Both noted how dealing with the disputes between the clerks and servants at the brewery (the "coarse Creatures") improved or raised Mrs. Thrale's character. However, in selling the brewery Mrs. Thrale knew that her circumstances would not rise but fall, as she clearly warned Dr. Johnson; she was 'rising' in order to leave the brewing industry and in doing so her circumstances would fall from living on its profits, "the Shilling Side Box", to being constrained to live on the income from her capital. Even so, as she saucily pointed out, there would still be a difference in their financial and social status. Johnson's place in the Globe theatre was the pit, hers the penny gallery. The passage also shows how Mrs. Thrale and Johnson were clearly familiar with Malone's Supplement. Her emphasis of the word 'Understanders' exaggerates that used by Malone in his footnote to the prologue from Shirley's Doubtful Heir, whose title may well have reflected Mrs. Thrale's feelings on taking on the brewery. Malone wrote:

"The common people stood in the Globe theatre, in that part of the house which we now call the pit; which being lower than the stage, Shirley calls them understanders."⁶²

I believe it may be highly significant that in this conversation with Johnson, Mrs. Thrale chose the Globe theatre as a metaphor for forthcoming disappointments, and that having recounted her anecdote, she immediately described the Globe's remains. To have discovered only part of the Globe's gallery, and not the stage, or backstage area, must have been very disappointing. After all their efforts their investigation provided no new information on the production of Shakespeare's plays, and so, to that extent, their search had failed.

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After Henry Thrale's death in 1781, Hester Thrale fell in love and married the Italian musician, Gabriel Piozzi. Their marriage in 1784 caused an

irreparable rift between Mrs. Thrale and Dr. Johnson, who died later that same year. Mrs. Thrale and Piozzi were happily married for 25 years before she was widowed for a second time in 1808.

We next hear of Mrs. Thrale in 1817, when, while living in Bath, she paid a visit to London where she witnessed the construction of Southwark Bridge, an event which revived old memories. Mrs. Thrale had an indirect association with the development: the foundation stone of the bridge had been laid two years earlier, in 1815, by her son-in-law, Admiral Lord Viscount Keith.⁶³ The construction of the southern approaches, Bridge Street (now Southwark Bridge Road) required cutting a wide swathe through residential and business properties, resulting in the wholesale demolition of a significant proportion of the Bankside area, including all those properties over the Globe estate to the west of Fountain Alley. While the bridge itself had been designed by the engineer, John Rennie, its approaches were designed by the architect Joseph Gwilt, son of the architect of Thrale's stables 40 years before.⁶⁴

Mrs. Thrale's letters during this visit reflect her lively interest in the recent changes:

"London is most embellished since I saw it last . . . The bridges are very fine, and will make my old habitation, Southwark, a gay place in due time, I dare say."⁶⁵

A few days later she wrote:

"I actually passed through Southwark - the borough I canvassed three times, and inhabited thirteen years - without knowing where they had carried me any more than if I had been found in Ispahan."⁶⁶

The gas-lights, and steam boats, and new bridges are all incomparable."⁶⁷

Here we can see how Mrs. Thrale's memory appears to have been triggered by 'memory clusters' or groups of associations: Southwark; demolition and excavation; water; ruined cities of the classical world. On an earlier occasion, an appreciation of Shakespeare, Mrs. Thrale used archaeological and mining metaphors which appear to echo the discovery of the Globe's remains, where we can see similar 'memory clusters' at work. She wrote:

"But when our Retrospection is employed on those who best bestowed the new-blown pleasures that spring from the newly-dug-up soil of intellect, let our delighted eyes fix upon him to whom perhaps we owe our happiest moments - the poet of daily life, of hourly use; our solace when alone; our pride in the theatre; Shakespear! who, if he had an equal in Homer, a competitor in Ariosto, never, oh never shall acknowledge a superior. Shakespear! whose mind, like to our Wicklow mountain, produced his gold in masses from the mine - not in a shining sand or brilliant dust, washed from the distant bed. Nor warm'd by patronage, nor fertilized by education, nature and genius claim him for their own, and while they last, he lives."⁶⁸

In 1790, the antiquarian, Pennant, published a criticism of the hexagonal thesis. He perceived that the woodcut of the Globe theatre published by Johnson and Malone was octagonal in form.⁶⁹ This was the beginning of a growing body of opinion which favoured eight sides rather than Malone's six, one which culminated on New Years Day 1819, with the publication of a collection of new engravings of London which included views and descriptions of the first Globe theatre as an octagonal building.⁷⁰

By this time almost everyone connected with the construction of the stables and Malone's Supplement was dead: Johnson, Steevens, Malone, Boswell, George Gwilt, as no doubt were most of the local residents of Southwark who remembered the remains.

On 9th May 1819, just two months after Southwark Bridge opened, Mrs. Thrale presented her friend, the Shakespearean actor, William Augustus Conway, with a copy of her two volume autobiographical work, Observations and Reflections made in the Course of a Journey through France Italy and Germany. At the time, Conway was planning to leave Bath in order to take up an acting engagement in Birmingham. Conscious that her health could not be relied upon and that they might never meet again, Conway returned the volumes to Mrs. Thrale so that she could annotate them for him. Over the summer Mrs. Thrale composed The Abridgement (which was later bound into the two volume work) in which she recalled her witness of the Globe's remains, from which Norton took his extracts in 1861 and on which this paper has focused.

The anatomy of this 18th century antiquarian discovery is clear: Dr. Johnson provided the motivation, Hester and Henry Thrale the opportunity, George Gwilt the execution, and Edmond Malone the publication. A substantial body of evidence favours the outer wall of the Globe theatre having an angle of 120 degrees in the area of the north-west corner of George Gwilt's stables. Mrs. Thrale's observations, the archaeological evidence discovered by the Museum of London in 1989, visual evidence from 1600 and topographical evidence for the area all presently conform.

Hester Thrale's observations could be confirmed - or perhaps refuted - by an archaeological examination of the area common to Gwilt's stables and the Globe theatre. This now lies directly behind Anchor Terrace, a row of terrace houses built in the late 1830s that face onto Southwark Bridge Road. In 1989 this area was excluded from the evaluation for fear that any disturbance to the ground might cause the terrace to collapse. However, since then, Anchor Terrace has been found to have been constructed on a float of concrete 1.41m to 1.67m thick.⁷¹ The terrace may be far more secure than had been previously realised. An archaeological evaluation might be possible, one which could determine whether the second Globe theatre was built on a new foundation and reveal in the walls of the stables' foundation trenches exactly what Mrs. Thrale saw.

Acknowledgements

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A full account of Mrs. Thrale and the Globe Theatre will be published shortly.

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- 1 Mrs. Thrale was born Hester Lynch Salusbury. She had two husbands: Henry Thrale (d.1781) and Gabriel Piozzi (d.1808), she died in 1821. In order to avoid confusion, throughout this paper I shall call her Mrs. Thrale.
- 2 The Abridgement, MS autobiography by Hester Lynch Piozzi (Mrs. Thrale) especially written for William Augustus Conway and bound in three parts into his copy of her book Observations and Reflections made in the Course of a Journey through France, Italy, and Germany, 2 vols., London, 1789, with marginal notes by Mrs. Piozzi. (Previously referred to as The Conway MS.) Hyde Collection.
- 3 Ibid., pt. i, p.7, ll. 4-12.
- 4 Ibid., pt. i, p.8, ll. 23 - p.9, l. 9.
- 5 Norton, C. E., 'Original Memorials of Mrs. Piozzi', Atlantic Monthly, vii, (May 1861) pp. 617-8.
- 6 Hayward, A. (editor), Autobiography, Letters and Literary Remains of Mrs. Piozzi, (Mrs. Thrale), 2 vols., 2nd ed., London, 1861, vol. II, p.33.
- 7 The Builder, 26th March 1910, p.353.
- 8 Martin, W, 'The Site of the Globe Playhouse of Shakespeare', Surrey Archaeological Collections, vol. XXIII, 1910, p.176.
- 9 Survey of London, vol. XXII, Bankside, London, 1950, p.78, n. c.
- 10 One notable exception is Frances Yates, who accepted Mrs. Thrale's witness on face value. Yates, F. A., Theatre of the World, London, 1969.
- 11 The Abridgement, pt. i, pp. 7-9.
- 12 Throughout this quotation, forms of address (Mr. Mrs. & Dr.) are written by Mrs. Thrale such that a full stop or colon has been placed directly next to the capital letter, with subsequent letters in superscript.
- 13 In the MS. Mrs. Thrale has underlined this semicolon.
- 14 The pound sign is in uppercase with the full stop beneath.
- 15 Sacchini died in Paris on the 6th October 1786.
- 16 In the MS. Mrs. Thrale wrote three sets of quotation marks, one above the other.
- 17 The first few letters of the next three lines, saucy, old, and was, are on a scrap of paper that has broken away from p.8 and is now folded back

- onto p.11.
- 18 'curious' in the 18th century could mean: inquisitive; accurate; careful not to mistake; exact; nice; subtle. It could also mean: addicted to enquiry; difficult to please; solicitous of perfection. Johnson, S., A Dictionary of the English Language, London, 1755.
 - 19 'hexagonal' has been carefully written as if Mrs. Thrale did not want any misunderstanding about the shape.
 - 20 'without' is given extra emphasis by being written in a condensed, almost italic style.
 - 21 Much of this text was abridged by Mrs. Thrale from her work Autobiographical Memoirs for Sir James Fellowes. See: Hayward, A. (editor), Autobiography, Letters and Literary Remains of Mrs. Piozzi, (Mrs. Thrale), 2 vols., 1st ed., London, 1861, vol. I, p. 270 & pp. 294-5. See also n. 45 below.
 - 22 An earlier version of this paper was given at a seminar The Globe that Shakespeare Knew held at The Barbican Centre, London, 3rd September 1987.
 - 23 Abridgement, op. cit., pt. i, p.6, ll. 6-8.
 - 24 Also known as Josiah Child.
 - 25 In 1706, before the workhouse was created in Globe Alley, the buildings on the site were described as: "erected and built where the late playhouse Called the Globe stood & upon the Ground there unto belonging". Courage Archive.
 - 26 Concanen and Morgan, History of Southwark, London, 1795, pp.224f; see: Braines, W. W., The Site of the Globe Playhouse Southwark, 1924, 2nd ed., London, p.45.
 - 27 Clifford, J. L., Hester Lynch Piozzi (Mrs. Thrale), 2nd ed., Oxford, 1987, p.54f.
 - 28 Ibid., p.68.
 - 29 Capell, E. (editor), Mr. William Shakespeare, his Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies..., London, 1768, vol. I, p.74.
 - 30 Deelman, C., The Great Shakespeare Jubilee, New York, 1964, p.104 & pp. 128-9.
 - 31 Courage Archive.
 - 32 Ibid.
 - 33 Abridgement, op. cit., pt. i, p.7, ll. 4-12.
 - 34 Courage Archive.
 - 35 Wood, R., The Ruins of Palmyra, Otherwise Tedmor, in the Desert, London, 1753.
 - 36 Burton, A., Josiah Wedgwood: A Biography, London, 1976, p.90.
 - 37 Abridgement, op. cit., pt. i, p.7, ll. 4-5.
 - 38 Clifford, op. cit., pp. 92-4.
 - 39 St. Saviour Workhouse Trustee Minutes: 1774-1787. Report to the meeting of 26th July 1774.
 - 40 Acts not Printed: 14 Geo. III, c. 75, 1774.
 - 41 I have not yet been able to find out who introduced the act, though it was most probably Thrale. The trustees decision was clearly in Thrale's interest and we can only guess at the extent to which Thrale's ambitions for the brewery swayed his influence on the committee.
 - 42 Courage Archive.
 - 43 Ibid.
 - 44 Gwilt's new stables were built over the last three purchases by Thrale:

- Lombard Garden, the Workhouse site and the tenements in Fountain Alley. After the development was completed in 1778 Gwilt included the new stables in his plan of the brewery of 1774, erasing the buildings that had had to be demolished on the west side of Lombard Garden (these are still faintly visible on the plan).
- 45 Johnson, Dictionary, op. cit.; Balderston, K. C. (editor), Thraliana The Diary of Mrs. Hester Lynch Thrale (Later Mrs. Piozzi), 2 vols., 2nd ed., Oxford, 1951, vol. I, pp. 251-2.
 - 46 P92/SAV/1327. 27th February, 1634 [1635]. This survey for the Royal Commission for Buildings records that the second Globe theatre was built "vppon an old foundacon".
 - 47 Clout, M., 'The evaluation and scheduling of the Globe Theatre Estate.' London Archaeologist, vol. VI, no. 15, 1992.
 - 48 Orrell, J., The Quest for Shakespeare's Globe, Cambridge, 1985, chapter 4.
 - 49 Piozzi, H. L., Anecdotes of the late Samuel Johnson, LL.D., 1786, Cambridge, 1925, edited by S. C. Roberts, p.64. Also: Barret, C. (editor), Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay, 4 vols., London, vol. I, 1778-1784, p.46. Johnson's joke is dated 1778.
 - 50 Courage Archive.
 - 51 Johnson, S. & Steevens, J. (editors), The Plays of William Shakespeare, 10 vols., 2nd ed., London, 1778.
 - 52 Prior, J., Life of Edmond Malone, London, 1860, pp. 18-19, p.45 & p.100.
 - 53 Balderston, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 122-123.
 - 54 Ibid., vol. I, p.122, n.4.
 - 55 Ibid., vol. II, pp. 629-30, n.2.
 - 56 Historical Manuscripts Commission, 12th Report, Appendix, Part X, The Manuscripts and Correspondence of James, First Earl of Charlemont, vol. I, 1745-1783, London, 1891, p.343. No. 149, Malone to Charlemont, 5th April 1779.
 - 57 Malone, E., Supplement to the Edition of Shakespeare's Plays Published in 1778 by Samuel Johnson and George Steevens, 2 vols., London, 1780, vol. I, pp. 4 & 5.
 - 58 Johnson / Steevens, The Plays of William Shakespeare, 2nd ed., op. cit., vol. I, p.85. The woodcut was made from a drawing by the Reverend Mr. Henley of the building captioned 'The Globe' in Visscher's panorama of London, published in Amsterdam in 1616. Visscher's panorama is derivative and topographically inaccurate and is no longer considered to be an authoritative source for architectural information.
 - 59 Visscher depicts four walls facing the viewer with three behind the building, and a probable eighth behind the tiring house.
 - 60 Malone, E., 'An Historical Account of the Rise and Progress of the English Stage, and of the Economy and usages of our Ancient Theatres', The Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare, 1790, vol. I, pt. ii, p.51.
 - 61 Abridgement, op. cit., pt. i, p.8, ll. 12-23.
 - 62 Malone, Supplement, op. cit., vol. I, p. 7, n. p.
 - 63 The Times, 24th May, 1815, 3e.
 - 64 Contract for the construction of the approaches to Southwark Bridge. Southwark Bridge Company and Messrs. Joliffe and Banks. Deeds Boxes, Box 1, No. 18. 15th April 1817. (The contract is incorrectly endorsed 15th April 1816.)

- 65 Hayward, op. cit., 2nd ed., vol. II, p.376. Mrs. Piozzi to Sir James
 Fellowes, 23rd August 1817.
 66 Ispahan, (now spelt Isfahan): a province and town in west central Iran.
 67 Hayward, op. cit., 2nd ed., vol. II, p.376-7. Mrs. Piozzi to Sir James
 Fellowes, 29th August, 1817.
 68 Piozzi, H. L., Retropection, 2 vols., London, 1801, vol. II, p. 171.
 69 Pennant, T., Of London, London, 1790, p.58.
 70 Caulfield, J., Londina Illustrata, London, 1819.
 71 Blatherwick, S., Report of the Archaeological Evaluation at 1/5 Anchor
 Terrace, Southwark Bridge Road, London S.E.1., Museum of London, 1991,
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DR. JOHNSON AND THE ASCENT TO
IMMORTALITY: AN ASPECT OF HIS LEGACY

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The chief legacy of the eighteenth-century English poet Edward Young has proved to be a long blank verse poem entitled The Complaint; or Night Thoughts on Life, Death, and Immortality. For Dr. Johnson, thoughts on life, death, and immortality were constantly before him, not exclusively nocturnally. They were all pervasive as he moved through a life chequered with enigma and perplexity. His conjectures, often doubt-ridden, concerning the possibility of a personal immortality inform much of his most poignant writing, particularly the Prayers and Meditations, never really intended for publication. Today, some of his most moving, most introspective observations on the subject of immortality, especially in regard to himself, will be briefly examined.

But one cannot limit one's examination of Johnson's views on this subject merely to the intricate potential application of these ideas unto himself. For, there are other facets of Johnson's relation to immortality that apply as well; and of these, two perforce must be taken into account: (1) the immortality which now would possibly surprise Johnson the writer, as the corpus of his work developed across the decades of his professional life, and (2) the unexpected, often unacknowledged immortal state that he bestowed upon numerous of his contemporaries who otherwise would inevitably have sunk into almost irrecoverable oblivion.

As different from one another as these three aspects of Johnson and the ascent to immortality may seem when considered together, they play consequentially into a genuine if somewhat cumbersome unity: (1) his concerns for personal salvation and for a life hereafter; (2) his terrestrial immortality as attested by his eclectic professional accomplishments as a man of letters and by his burial in Poets' Corner; and (3) his dazzling gift to those who were fortunate enough to fall within his ken, fortunate enough to play some part, as it were, major or minor, in his incredibly colourful life.

Across the centuries, literature and philosophy have been replete with reflections upon immortality. Among the most renowned of these subsequent to Dr. Johnson's time is William Hazlitt's essay "On the Feeling of Immortality in Youth," composed in 1827. Part of its opening paragraph consists of the following passage:

No young man believes he shall ever die.
... There is a feeling of eternity in youth,
which makes us amends for everything. To be young

is to be as one of the Immortal Gods. One half of time indeed is flown - the other half remains in store for us with all its countless treasures; for there is no line drawn, and we see no limit to our hopes and wishes.

And then, before continuing, Hazlitt quotes from Addison's Cato:
 "The vast, the unbounded prospect lies before us."

Death, old age, are words without a meaning, that pass by us like the idle air which we regard not As in setting out on a delightful journey, we strain our eager gaze forward . . . and see no end to the landscape, new objects presenting themselves as we advance; so, in the commencement of life, we set no bounds to our inclinations, nor to the unrestricted opportunities of gratifying them. We have as yet found no obstacle, no disposition to flag; and it seems that we can go on so forever.

Even in his youth, Johnson did not take the future for granted, not to say an eternal future; nor was he ever very far from the underlying seriousness which is the core of life. He was terrified of the Ghost in Hamlet, and the tragedy of Lear held such an intensity of pain for him that he could read it no more. Johnson, unlike Lear, was not a solipsist: he did not believe that the universe revolved around him or, to put it slightly differently, that he was its centre, and he knew that he was not going to live forever. And he so constantly indicted himself on charges of culpability in some form that he worried anxiously about God's judgment. His fear of death is well established; and the grounds for this fear, though sad, can be readily understood.

It is his prayers which disclose probably the most about Johnson's views of and hopes for immortality; and as is always the case when discussing virtually any facet of Johnson's thought, it seems especially appropriate to allow him to speak for himself. At least 80 of his prayers disclose his fears and doubts, his yearnings and hopes, with respect to his relation to God and God's judgments; and these usually allude to possibilities of eternal life. Of the 80, all of which are deeply moving to any reader of compassion and sensitivity, ten seem dramatically compelling. A brief selection from the ten, of the 80, allows Johnson, for the purposes of this paper, to speak in his own voice.

First, from January 1, 1772, at 2:00 in the morning:

Almighty God, who hast permitted me to see the beginning of another year, enable me [by thy grace] so to receive thy mercy, as that it may raise in me stronger desires of pleasing thee by purity of

mind, and holiness of Life. Strengthen me O Lord, in good purposes, and reasonable meditations. Look with pity upon all my disorders of mind, and infirmities of body. Grant that the residue of my life may enjoy such degrees of health as may permit me to be useful, and that I may live to thy Glory; and O merciful Lord when it shall please thee to call me from the present state, enable me to dye in confidence of thy mercy, and receive me to everlasting happiness for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.²

Appended to this prayer, as if afterthought and an urging of conscience, are the words "To rise in the morning." Johnson's affliction of early-morning lassitude resonates through his prayers as he resolves, only to resolve again. Here we have a Johnsonian example of a New Year's resolution, to be repeated many times.

All of Johnson's prayers are stirringly beautiful, poignant, and unforgettable. Among them, his prayers at Eastertide possess all of these qualities in a marked, singular way. Here is his Easter prayer approximately four months following the New Year's resolution:

Easter 72. I hope from this time

To rise more early

To waste less time

To appropriate something to Charity.

Almighty God, merciful Father, who hatest nothing that thou hast made look down with pity upon my sinfulness and weakness.

Strengthen, O Lord, my mind; deliver me from needless terrors. Enable me to correct all inordinate desires, to eject all evil thoughts, to reform all sinful habits, and so to amend my life, that when at the end of my days thou shalt call me hence, I may depart in peace, and be received into everlasting happiness for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.³

Almost eighteen months later, when touring the Scottish highlands and islands with Boswell, he was reflecting on Sept. 24 [1773] at Talisker, Isle of Skye, upon his mortality. Boswell had displeased him a few days earlier at Dunvegan by reminding him that Sept. 18 was his birthday. For Johnson, birthdays were not so much days of joy and celebration as signposts along the road to the inevitable. Thus, here, a brief excerpt from a rather lengthy prayer:

On last Saturday was my sixty fourth birthday. I might perhaps have forgotten it had not Boswell

told me of it, and, what pleased me less, told the family at Dunvegan. . . . Almighty God, most merciful Father, look down upon me with pity; Thou hast protected me in childhood and youth, support me, Lord, in my declining years. Deliver me from evil thoughts and scruples and preserve me from the dangers of sinful presumption. Give me, if it be best for me, stability of purposes, and tranquillity of mind. Let the year which I have now begun, be spent to thy glory, and to the furtherance of my salvation. Take not from me thy holy Spirit, but as Death approaches, prepare me to appear joyfully in thy presence for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.⁴

Approximately three and one-half years later, none of his spiritual anxiety had subsided; if anything, it had intensified. On March 30, 1777, he seemed to be even unusually distressed. Another excerpt from a rather lengthy prayer:

Have mercy upon me, O God, have mercy upon me; years and infirmities oppress me. Have mercy upon me, my Creatour and my Judge. In all dangers protect me, in all perplexities relieve and free me, and so help me by thy Holy Spirit, that I may now so commemorate the death of thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ as that when this short and painful life shall have an end, I may for his sake be received to everlasting happiness. Amen.⁵

Despite the unrelenting self-abnegation, hope sprang eternal for a life after death, of which he quite consistently, painfully, found himself undeserving. The sense of guilt, of stark culpability, which was self-imposed continues to wring the hearts of his admirers. Johnson should never be presented in the modern-day classroom without significant, pressing reference to his prayers.

On September 18, 1777, another birthday, his 68th, from Ashbourne, where he was visiting the esteemed Dr. Taylor, he prayed:

Almighty and most merciful Father, who hast brought me to the beginning of another year, grant me so to remember thy gifts, and so to acknowledge thy goodness, as that every year and every day which thou shalt yet grant me, may be employed in the amendment of my life, and in the diligent discharge of such duties, as thy Providence shall allot me. Grant me by thy Grace to know and do what Thou requirest. Deliver and defend me from needless

scruples and oppressive terrors and give me good desires, and remove those impediments which may hinder them from effect. Forgive me my sins, negligences, and ignorances, and when at last thou shalt call me to another life, receive me to everlasting happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.⁶

His birthday, like the beginning of the new calendar year and like Easter particularly among the religious holidays, was an auspicious occasion for re-resolving, for conscious resolution and reformation, for the acknowledgement of palpable weakness, and for an intense aspiration to eternal life.

Of all of his birthday prayers, perhaps the last before his death is the most moving and the most memorable. Again, from Ashbourne, on September 18, 1784, with less than three months of life remaining, he was keenly aware, it would seem, of the nearness of the end. However the world may have misinterpreted Johnson's character as one of prideful extremity, gargantuan ego, and disdain for some of his fellowmen, and for whatever reason for this lack of understanding of the true Johnson, as has been suggested before one has to turn only to the prayers to see him as he really was - a man of a unique humility. And this intrinsic part of him reveals itself very poignantly in this final birthday prayer:

Almighty God, merciful Father, who art the giver of all good, enable me to return Thee Due thanks for the continuance of my life, and for the great mercies of the last year, for relief from the diseases that afflicted me, and all the comforts and alleviations by which they were mitigated; and, O my gracious God, make me truly thankful for the call by which thou hast awakened my conscience and summoned me to Repentance. Let not thy call, O Lord, be forgotten, or thy summons neglected, but let the residue of my life, whatever it shall be, be passed in true contrition, and diligent obedience. Let me repent of the sins of my past years, and so keep thy laws for the time to come that when it shall be thy good pleasure to call me to another state, I may find mercy in thy sight. Let thy Holy Spirit support me in the hour of death, and O Lord grant me pardon in the day of Judgement, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.⁷

Who can fail to be moved by such a prayer, both sincere and eloquent? And who, knowing anything of Johnson's life and work, cannot be thankful for his having been granted 75 years of life?

His final prayer was composed on December 5, only eight days before death came, and holds a place unique, for reasons that are obvious, among all that he prayed:

Almighty and most merciful Father, I am now, as to human eyes it seems, about to commemorate for the last time, the death of thy son Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Redeemer. Grant, O Lord, that my whole hope and confidence may be in his merits and in thy mercy: forgive and accept my imperfect repentance; make this commemoration [of] him available to the confirmation of my Faith, the establishment of my hope, and the enlargement of my Charity, and make the Death of thy son Jesus effectual to my redemption. Have mercy upon me and pardon the multitude of my offences. Bless my Friends, have mercy upon all men. Support me by the Grace of thy Holy Spirit in the days of weakness, and at the hour of death, and receive me, at my death, to everlasting happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.⁸

And thus he left this life in an attitude of hope, confidence, and faith in an immortal state defined by a merciful God. Neither his transgressions, which were numberless in his view of his personal culpability, nor his fear of death compromised his conviction of eternity.

For Johnson, life and meaning were as one. His life has been described by Walter Jackson Bate, a senior vice president of this Society, as a life of allegory. Intrinsic to his considerations of meaning are, of course, such matters as the miseries and felicities of existence, the fear of death, the reality of human mortality, and the hope for and faith in an immortal state. His writings are ever interlaced with profound reflections upon the state of man and the vanity of human wishes. Circumstances permitting, the thoughtful reader of Johnson could spend many months rediscovering the wonder of these reflections, concentrating exclusively upon The Rambler, The Idler, and The Adventurer.

In the interest of both time and patience, it is perhaps expedient to notice, from among the myriad of possibilities, a short passage from a single essay, The Adventurer, No. 120, for Saturday, December 29, 1753, the valedictory essay for that particular year. It seems an early summation of Johnson's view of an immortal state:

A good man is subject, like other mortals, to all the influences of natural evil: his harvest is not spared by the tempest, nor his cattle by the murrain; his house flames like others in a conflagration; nor have his ships any peculiar power of resisting hurricanes: his mind, however

elevated, inhabits a body subject to innumerable casualties, of which he must always share the dangers and the pains

From this general and indiscriminate distribution of misery, the moralists have always derived one of their strongest moral arguments for a future state; for since the common events of the present life happen alike to the good and bad, it follows from the justice of the Supreme Being, that there must be another state of existence, in which a just retribution shall be made, and every man shall be happy and miserable according to his works.

The miseries of life, may, perhaps, afford some proof of a future state, compared as well with the mercy as the justice of God. It is scarcely to be imagined, that Infinite Benevolence would create a being capable of enjoying so much more than is here to be enjoyed, and qualified by nature to prolong pain by remembrance and anticipate it by terror, if he was not designed for something nobler and better than a state, in which many of his faculties can serve only for his torment, in which he is to be importuned by desires that never can be satisfied, to feel many evils which he had no power to avoid, and to fear many which he shall never feel: there will surely come a time, when every capacity of happiness shall be filled, and none shall be wretched but by his own fault.⁹

The place of Samuel Johnson in English letters as the scion of the eighteenth century seems secure. This status has long been established, has not been really seriously questioned except by a handful of detractors in the age of Dickens, and has been confirmed repeatedly by scholars of literary history for as long as literary history has been a legitimate, recognised area of study. It seems unlikely that Johnson's terrestrial immortality will ever be seriously challenged. It was not accidental that Thomas Carlyle, when writing Heroes and Hero Worship, chose Johnson as the apex representation of the hero as man of letters. Nor is it accidental that wreaths are placed annually on his tomb in Westminster Abbey or that Johnson societies exist around the world and that new societies originate with every passing year. The intellectual force of Johnson's life continues to be explored and celebrated by scholars across the world.

Upon what, exactly, is Johnson's place in English literary history based? To be sure, Boswell's Life, acknowledged by many as the best biography in English and, perhaps, in the world, had helped - and continues to help - to keep both Johnson the man and Johnson the writer prominently before readers everywhere. On occasion I have heard myself snapping "What!?" to

some innocent but ignorant person who has just asked my "Who was Dr. Johnson?" But within my personal realms, this is certainly exceptional. Recently a man whom I met on United Airlines as I was crossing from Washington, D.C., to London astonished me by the intimate knowledge that he, an American importer of Asian silk, displayed of both Johnson and Boswell. And often one finds passages from Johnson's works quoted in newspapers and a wide variety of periodica. But, unquestionably, Boswell's immortal biography has contributed to the continuing perception of Johnson as one of the legends of English Literature.

The biography aside, Johnson's writings, which span decades from his life of 75 years, ensure his terrestrial immortality as well as his uniqueness of place among the greatest writers of the world. Though he contributed to virtually all genres, including poetry and drama, he is especially well known for his extensive, multifaceted prose works, which constitute a very impressive and eclectic genius. Among the prose genres in which he worked are tragedy, biography, the periodical essay, the oriental tale, the travel book, the political tract, the critical essay, the book review, the oration, the sermon, the letter, the prayer, the dedication, the preface, the legal brief, and the petition to royalty, not to overlook the fairy tale and the definition. Paul Fussell, in his book Samuel Johnson and the Life of Writing, mentions that Johnson "was a master even of the advertisement, the political handbill [,] and the medical prescription."¹⁰ Plenitude, variety, and intrinsic quality characterise and individualise his work.

From these numerous different genres, one could single out any of several in which Johnson excelled. For the purposes of this current discussion, it is sufficient to mention only three or four.

The Dictionary of the English Language, finally published in 1755 after a full seven years of arduous labour, is the work known by most people who are familiar with only one of Johnson's literary accomplishments. It is probably true that ordinarily lexicographical work is not regarded as being literary per se. In the case of Johnson's work in this sphere, lexicographical compilation, with all that it entailed in his hands, was elevated to the sphere of art - literary art. Single-handedly, Johnson composed the definitions of more than 40,000 separate words and illustrated these meanings with more than 114,000 quotations which he selected personally from a wide range of English sources. Had he given the world nothing more than the Dictionary, his immortal fame would likely have been assured. If to this gargantuan undertaking he brought the desire to organise and to stabilise the language, he also brought depth of insight into many different aspects of knowledge as well as a sense of almost unparalleled wit. Three famous definitions serve to illustrate the latter: (1) network: "Any thing reticulated or decussated, at equal distances, with interstices between the intersections"; (2) oats: "A grain, which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people"; (3) tarantula: "An insect whose bite is only cured by musick."¹¹

If these definitions seem aberrational, so be it. They are aberrationally Johnsonian, and there's an end on it!

In December 1980, Dr. Graham Nicholls of the Johnson Birthplace Museum addressed The Johnson Society of London on the topic "The Wisdom of Johnson's Shakespeare." In moving from Johnson's celebrated reputation as lexicographer to that as a major editor of Shakespeare, I can do no better than to refer to part of Dr. Nicholls' opening paragraph:

When Johnson's edition of Shakespeare's plays appeared at last in 1765, it came at the end of a cluster of events which transformed Johnson from being the leading writer and journalist of the 1750s into a national celebrity. Within a very short period in the early 1760s Johnson had met Boswell, Henry and Hester Thrale, received the first of his honorary doctorates and, most importantly, been granted his government pension. He was metamorphosed from "Dictionary" Johnson, the wise man who had composed The Vanity of Human Wishes, Irene, The Rambler, Adventurer, and Idler essays, Rasselas, the Dictionary itself, and the '50s critical and political journalism, into the celebrity of the Boswell years¹²

Whatever Johnson's shortcomings as an editor of Shakespeare may have been - and they have been variously identified, as one might know and expect, by a host of commentators in three different centuries - he helped to restore Shakespeare to his proper position in the English literary firmament. Shakespeare's reputation had needed some shoring up.

When after several years the edition appeared at last in 1765, Johnson looked back upon its preparation with some degree of both relief and wistfulness. Dr. Nicholls refers to "that sad, elegiac tone at the conclusion of a major work,"¹³ something that had become characteristic of Johnson, who laboured always against the huge odds of pathological indolence. His prayers resonate, as we have heard, with the need to reform his ways - to resolve, only to resolve again. Dr. Nicholls goes on to remark that:

[t]here is a simple sadness that a great task is no longer to be performed, there is apprehension that the book is now in the hands of people who may be insensitive, ignorant, or malicious, but above all, there is that massive Johnsonian dissatisfaction arising from the glaring gap between the ideal work in the mind and the stark reality of the finished product.¹⁴

It is these qualities which combine with his remarkable, unique insight into Shakespearean drama, with all of its convolutions of wisdom, universal human truth, and dramatic richness, that mark Johnson's editorial accomplishment in this work. His Preface is among the most significant critical documents of the neoclassical age, and his notes are still consulted by students and scholars alike as they mine the ore of his editorial imagination and expertise. A parallel exists, of course, between his feelings of disappointment and inadequacy concerning his editorial achievement and similar feelings of self-admonishment at the close of his work on the Dictionary.

What greater combinations is to be imagined than the combination of Johnson and Shakespeare? Each was curiously of service to the other in a way that calls down across the annals of time. The fame of each is inestimable. Who was Dr. Johnson indeed? Who was Shakespeare?

And what can be designated the masterpiece of a man who wrote so much so well and who worked in as many different literary forms? Considering the genres that are pre-eminently literary, it is widely conceded that the very successful series of critical biographies known as The Lives of the English Poets constitute the apex achievement of Johnson's long career. When he began the Lives, he was sixty-eight years old and seventy-two when he completed them. During the four years from 1777 to 1781, as Arthur Waugh points out,

... he gathered the material for the composition of some fifteen hundred closely printed pages, and set forth the Lives in a style which is, under all circumstances, uniformly animated, witty, and picturesquely incisive. That in itself, to begin with, is no small tour de force for a man who was already reaching the end of the allotted span of human existence.¹⁵

What Johnson gives the world in these 52 lives is "... a picture of the literary life of the eighteenth century unequalled for variety and colour, an insight into the poetical ambitions of the period unparalleled for sympathy and judgment."¹⁶ The work as a whole is a dramatic example of the way in which a formal task (not seen as at all daunting or formidable by Johnson), accepted on specific commercial terms, may lead to the production of literary art, immutable and permanent - a work that would come to be regarded as the zenith of literary criticism in the eighteenth century, the embodiment of the spirit and the culture of its age. In Johnson's critical judgments permeating the Lives, there exists the highest expression of its kind recorded in a generation most eagerly interested in literary art - and therefore of great value from an historical point of view.

Of innumerable passages quoted and reprinted again and again across the decades, one can easily cite several which have taken their rightful places in the annals of unforgettable, uniquely insightful literary criticism. Two of the most prominent are Johnson's examination of the metaphysical poets in his Life of Cowley and his paragraph in the Life of Pope which juxtaposes the respective geniuses of that poet and his neoclassical forbearer Dryden. Interlaced frequently among the countless passages of criticism are stories of natural charm. Johnson loved a good story and an unusual anecdote, and he regularly used his narrative skills to embellish and to humanise his subjects. The Life of Savage is an excellent example of the combination of biographical narrative and critical pronouncement. Never mind the fact that the Life of Savage had first appeared via separate publication in 1744 and was resurrected for this series of lives largely in order to save its writer time and trouble. Who can imagine The Lives of the English Poets without it?

It should not seem strange that the Dictionary of the English Language, the edition of Shakespeare, and The Lives stand at the forefront of a vast body of writing by Johnson. Each was a project of enormous scope, required years in the research and preparation, and could easily alone have given Johnson the terrestrial immortality of which he was totally deserving. To have written, edited, or compiled any one of these, one would have thought, would have sufficiently justified his life and learning. Ironically, each in its own way was a spectacular valediction.

For the better part of his life, as we have seen, Johnson continuously worked to strengthen his faith in an immortal state of which, through God's grace, he could be thought worthy. He sought earnestly God's mercy, God's forgiveness, God's acceptance. And concomitant with this aspect of his ascent to immortality, his work as a professional man of letters was to assure another ascent of which he would not be fully aware in his lifetime. Many of his writings were to assign to him a very special and lasting fame, a reputation for literary and critical excellence, which would come to transcend his 75 years on earth and to assume a fixed place for him in the minds of men and women everywhere well beyond the neoclassical period. Thus, as his spiritual ascent became reality, so did his intellectual ascent.

Concurrently with these phenomena, not all aspects of which could he be fully aware, he was bestowing the gift of terrestrial immortality upon many different individuals, some of whom he knew only through reading and others of whom he came to know through both the pleasures and the frustrations of social intercourse.

In the case of those poets chosen for inclusion in The Lives of the English Poets, several would long since have become permanently obscure, or worse, totally forgotten, had Johnson not deemed them somehow worthy of being remembered. Of the 52 lives comprising this remarkable late achievement, at least fourteen would probably not be remembered at all in the twentieth century except for Johnson's largesse and conviction of

their worth; and several others of the remaining 38 can be said to be marginal in this regard.

The fourteen whose names live only in The Lives of the English Poets are the following: the Earl of Roscommon, Charles Sackville of Dorset, George Stepney, Edmund Smith, Richard Duke, William King, John Hughes, Elijah Fenton, George Granville, Thomas Yalden, James Hammond, Mr Somerville, William Broome, and Christopher Pitt. The literary historian who is a narrow specialist might argue the case for any of these fourteen, but the reality is that all have dropped from serious consideration except as they exist in Johnson's work. But, in a sense, what greater legacy than immortality can be given? It is a legacy not accorded to these fourteen writers by modern literary historians.

As mentioned earlier in this discussion, Johnson's immortality on this earth can be attributed partially to Boswell's renowned biography. But Boswell's own ascent has to be attributed largely to his subject. Had he chosen to write the life of someone less famous or esteemed than Dr Johnson, his level of fame would not have been, probably, so great. It is to Johnson's credit that association with him conferred a particular celebrity - indeed, a unique celebrity; and if Boswell's great biography supported - and supports - Johnson's ascent, it must necessarily be acknowledged that a symmetrical symbiosis was at work. Each boosted the other, though the precise effect could not have been foreseen by either.

To each of the members of the well-known Literary Club co-founded by Johnson in 1764, a more lasting assurance of fame could eventually be claimed as a result of holding a place in Johnson's circle. Oliver Goldsmith is a case in point. A well-known writer of poetry, essays, and drama, he is immortalised in the pages of Boswell through his close friendship with Johnson. His conversational repartee with the greatest literary and critical authority of his century continues to enliven Boswell's personal accounts, perhaps in part because Goldsmith seldom came off well as he vied for the master's attention. He earned a very significant portion of that terrestrial presence of which the world continues to find him deserving. Numerous productions of She Stoops to Conquer are presented worldwide every year. A course given in two different universities on whose faculties I have served is entitled "Boswell, Johnson, and Goldsmith." Nevertheless, Goldsmith the man lives in the annals of Boswell, as he periodically appeared in Johnson's daily life. His presence was noted for all time.

Sir Joshua Reynolds would likely have achieved a high level of terrestrial immortality on his own because of his unique role in the world of eighteenth-century art. But his prominence is undeniably even greater because of his portraits of Johnson, which underscored the close friendship that existed between the two men. It was at Reynolds' great house in Leicester Square that Johnson met the young aspiring poet George Crabbe and encouraged his earliest efforts. A plaque marking the site of Reynolds' home notes expressly that Johnson had visited there. The possibilities of Reynolds to achieve an immortal state were enhanced by

his close association with Johnson.

Even more remarkable surely is the status assigned to Johnson's acquaintances and friends who were not famous and would never be famous but for their places in Johnson's life. Various citizens of Lichfield qualify here, as do the ever fascinating assemblage of individuals who were residents of Johnson's household. Mrs Anna Williams, Peg Carmichael, Dr Robert Levet, and the redoubtable, devoted Francis Barber are unforgettable examples of those whose unquestioned ascent to immortality lay exclusively in Johnson's hands, with some bit of boost from Boswell. For this present discussion, it seems appropriate to look briefly at Francis Barber in particular.

In recent years, John Wain has made much of Barber's place in Johnson's daily life. From his boyhood years, Barber served as Johnson's manservant and eventually was the principal legatee in Johnson's will. His devotion to and his love for his master were unassailable. He made the throes of Johnson's life more bearable. Wain's treatment of Barber is overall quite sympathetic. Near the end of his highly regarded biography of Johnson, as a kind of epilogue, Wain gives this account, which I find quite endearing:

Frank Barber took Johnson's advice, retiring to Lichfield with Betsy and the children. Even this wise move was insufficient to protect him against his own improvidence; he managed, somehow, to get his hands on the lump sum which had been invested to produce his annuity, and squander it. In dire poverty he moved to the village of Burntwood, three miles from Lichfield, and kept a little school, the education provided at Johnson's expense proving his last and best resource. He died in Stafford Infirmary in January 1801 [His] eldest son, Samuel, wandered to the north of the county and ended up in the Potteries [Samuel's] children in turn were absorbed into the labour force of the pottery industry, so that today, if you see a man or woman in the streets of Stoke-on-Trent with a slightly mulatto cast of countenance, you are possibly looking at one of the descendants of Frank Barber.¹⁷

The ascent to immortality could be discussed at inestimable length in terms of Johnson's influence upon the ascent of others. Any person attempting to examine this important and fascinating topic, even cursorily, opens himself to the scorn and censure of critics whose favourite players in the Johnsonian drama possibly will include David Garrick, Hester Thrale, Charlotte Lennox, Sir John Hawkins, Bennet Langton, Hill Boothby, Catherine Chambers, or John Taylor, none of whom has earlier been mentioned here. The potential list of those to whose lives he brought universal illumination is truly inexhaustible. And this

paper purports no stellar degree of comprehensiveness; it can proffer only apology at its incompleteness.

Unlike the Lucan, the Sidney, the Chatterton, and the Keats of Shelley's Adonais, Johnson was no "inheritor of unfulfilled renown." What Shelley was to say so eloquently, so magnificently, of Keats in this great pastoral elegy, may with equal force and appropriateness be said of Johnson, however:

He has outsoared the shadow of our night;
Envy and calumny and hate and pain,
And that unrest which men miscall delight,
Can touch him not and torture not again;
From the contagion of the world's slow stain
He is secure, and now can never mourn
A heart grown cold, a head grown grey in vain;
Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to burn,
With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn.¹⁸

To greet the spirit of Keats, Shelley says,

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown
Rose from their thrones, built beyond mortal
thought,
Far in the Unapparent . . .
[They] rose, robed in dazzling immortality.¹⁹

It should be a fortuitous, happy consolation to think of Johnson, too, as being "robed in dazzling immortality." The gift which he gave to so many, and the grace for which he longed for others, yes, but also for himself, have been given to him as well, by this world and also by the next.

Documentation

¹William Hazlitt, "On the Feeling of Immortality in Youth," in Russell Noyes (ed.), English Romantic Poetry and Prose (New York, 1956, p. 676.

²Samuel Johnson, "Diaries, Prayers, and Annals," The Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson, ed. by E.L. McAdam, Jr., with Donald and Mary Hyde (New Haven, 1958), I, 145-146.

³Ibid., 149

⁴Ibid., 160-161.

⁵Ibid., 265

⁶Ibid., 276

⁷Ibid., 396-397.

⁸Ibid., 417-418.

⁹Samuel Johnson, "'The Idler' and 'The Adventurer'," The Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson, ed. by W.J. Bates, John M. Bullitt, and L.F. Powell (New Haven, 1963), II, 469-470.

¹⁰Paul Fussell, Samuel Johnson and the Life of Writing (New York, 1971, pp. 38-39.

¹¹E.L. McAdam, Jr., and George Milne (eds.), Johnson's Dictionary: A Modern Selection (New York, 1963, pp. 263, 268, 411.

¹²Graham Nicholls, "The Wisdom of Johnson's Shakespeare," The New Rambler, Serial C, No. XXI, 1980, p.17.

¹³Ibid., p. 25.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Arthur Waugh (introd.). Lives of the English Poets by Samuel Johnson (London, 1959), p. ix.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷John Wain, Samuel Johnson (New York, 1974, [379].

¹⁸Percy Bysshe Shelley, "Adonais," in Noyes, p. 1081.

¹⁹Ibid., 1082.

DR JOHNSON, FANNY BURNEY AND JANE AUSTEN

Valerie Grosvenor Myer: 21st May 1994

Chairman: Stella Pigrome

Valerie Grosvenor Myer, a graduate of Cambridge, is a novelist and critic, with many published studies of 18th and 19th century writers to her credit. She is also a poet, she has written a play (produced in 1982), and she has lectured in France, Sierra Leone, Canada, the USA and China. She left China under gunfire during the events of 1989. She is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.

Professor Chauncey Tinker of Yale once said 'We think of ourselves as Johnsonians, but really we're all Boswellians.' He published a book on the friendship between Johnson and Fanny Burney in New York in 1911, but I cannot find a copy. Fanny Burney met Dr Johnson on March 20, 1777, at Mrs Thrale's. Dr Burney gave music lessons to her daughter Queenie. Fanny wrote:

Dr Johnson ... is, indeed, very ill-favoured; is tall and stout; but stoops terribly; he is almost bent double. His mouth is almost constantly opening and shutting, as if he was chewing. He has a strange method of frequently twirling his fingers, and twisting his hands. His body is in continual agitation, *see-sawing* up and down; his feet are never a moment quiet; and, in short, his whole person is in perpetual motion ... he had a large wig, snuff-colour coat, and gold buttons, but no ruffles to his shirt ... and black worsted stockings. He is shockingly near-sighted, and did not, till she held out her hand to him, even know Mrs Thrale.' (letter to Samuel Crisp, March 27 & 8, 1777). [Fuseli & Reynolds disagreed about the tics.]

A year later she wrote, 'But all that is unfortunate in his exterior, is so greatly compensated for in his interior, that I can only, like Desdemona to Othello, "See his visage in his mind".' She went to Johnson's funeral, and a bust of Dr Johnson is mentioned in her own will.

It was to Fanny Burney and Mrs Thrale that Johnson spoke of the lady who was habitually a slut and a drunkard and occasionally a thief and a harlot, adding, 'Oh, I loved Bet Flint!' Bet had written a verse autobiography and asked him to correct it. He refused, but gave her half a crown. Fanny Burney and Johnson shared an interest in characters. (John Bailey, *Dr Johnson and his Circle*, p. 127) He said to Fanny, 'O, you little character-monger, you!' (Austin Dobson, *Fanny Burney*, p. 96) 'I admire her,' he said to her face, 'for her observation, for her good sense, for her humour, for her discernment, for her manner of expressing them, and for all her writing talents.' She was his 'dear little Burney'. It was Miss Burney who pointed out that Johnson was always the first man in any company in which he appeared. Her journal

emphasises his gaiety: 'Dr Johnson was gaily sociable', 'Dr Johnson was in high spirits, full of mirth and sport', 'Dr Johnson was in exceeding humour'. In 1778 she recorded he was 'so facetious that he challenged Mr Thrale to get drunk', and the next year, when he was seventy, she wrote that he 'has more fun and comical humour and love of nonsense about him than almost anybody I ever saw.' It has been suggested that whereas Boswell saw Johnson in the company of men, Fanny saw him in the company of women, when he was merrier. For a complete picture of Johnson gay as well as serious, we need Mrs Thrale and Miss Burney, despite the jealousy between Boswell and Mrs Thrale. Fanny Burney's diaries and journals are available in 12 volumes, ed. Joyce Hemlow, and her novels are available in paperback World's Classics editions, annotated by leading American scholars like Margaret Ann Doody and Edward and Lillian Bloom.

Critics have observed the Johnsonian influence on Fanny's prose style, in her Preface to *Evelina*. [1778] Mrs Thrale recommended the novel to Dr Johnson, who said there were 'passages ... which might do honour to Richardson'. However, when John Opie asked if it were true that Johnson has sat up all night to finish *Evelina*, he said, 'I never read it through at all, though I do not wish this to be known.' (Cited W J Bate, *The Achievement of Samuel Johnson*, p 120) In a moment of irritation, Johnson accused Boswell of being a Branghton, before Boswell had read *Evelina*, in which the Branghtons are the unacceptably vulgar family. Boswell asked what a Branghton might be; was it an animal thereabouts?

Jane Austen took the idea of embarrassing connexions and created Mrs Bennet. The name Bennet, with only one T, occurs in Fanny Burney's *Cecilia* [1782]. Jane Austen also drew on the toe-curling chatter of Mrs Belfield in *Cecilia*, a vulgar mother, infatuated with her foolish son. The character of Mr Belfield, shopkeeper's son who goes to Eton and university and learns to despise trade, does not exactly parallel anybody in the *Idler*, but implicitly invokes numbers 15 and 16: Treacle's complaint of his wife, who thinks herself too good to work in the shop, and Ned Drugget, who minds his shop and prospers. We know Belfield will be saved at last, because he says

'I respected the voice of wisdom and experience in the first of moralists, and most enlightened of men, and reading the letter of Cowley, I saw the vanity and absurdity of panting after solitude.'
(*Cecilia*, World's Classics edn., Vol. iv, Book 8, Chapter v, 663)

Whether Johnson missed this delicate compliment to himself we do not know.

On Saturday, May 15, 1784, Johnson told Boswell he had dined the previous day with Mrs Carter, Miss Hannah More and Miss Fanny Burney. He appreciated their distinction: 'Three such women are not to be found...' (Vol. i, 627) On Monday, May 26, 1783, Boswell found Johnson at tea

'and the celebrated Miss Burney, the authour of *Evelina* and *Cecilia* with him ... I mentioned *Cecilia*'. JOHNSON. (with

an air of animated satisfaction), "Sir, if you talk of 'Cecilia', talk on." (Simpkin Marshall edn., Vol. ii, 577) Mrs Thrale wrote to Fanny Burney on 31 July, 1782, to relate that Johnson has said to her of *Cecilia*, 'the grand merit is in the general power of the whole'.

Cecilia, like the prince in *Rasselas*, imagines she has choices, but like him is defeated by circumstances, and ends up losing her fortune because her husband will not take her name. When the heroine finds herself among a mob waiting to watch hangings at Tyburn, she tries hard to avoid seeing the condemned criminals in their carts. (*Cecilia*, Vol. 2, Book 1, Chapter 1, 176) The author would have had in mind *Rambler* 114, which talks of 'legal massacre' and argues that only murder should be a capital offence. While it is a commonplace that youth and crabbed age cannot live together, in *Cecilia* we find

.... the young are rash, and the aged are mercenary: one vanquishes, and the other submits..... (*Cecilia*, Vol. iii, Book 6, Chapter viii, 495)

This surely echoes *Rambler* 196 on the:

perpetual contest between old and young. They who imagine themselves entitled to veneration by the prerogative of longer life, are inclined to treat the notions of those whose conduct they superintend with superciliousness and contempt.

Boswell accused Fanny Burney of imitating the Johnsonian style in *Cecilia*, Book vii, Chapter 1, and quotes the speech of Cecilia's suitor:

My family, mistaking ambition for honour and rank for dignity, have long planned a splendid connection for me, to which, though my invariable repugnance has stopped any advances, their wishes and their views immovably adhere. I am but too certain they will now listen to no other. I dread, therefore, to make a trial where I despair of success; I know not how to risk a prayer with those who may silence me by a command. (Boswell, Vol. ii, 729)

Horace Walpole complained that *Cecilia* was 'written in Dr Johnson's unnatural phrase'; the *Monthly Review* praised it for being 'framed on the best model of Dr Johnson'.

Byron was under the impression that Dr Johnson had 'superintended' the book (Austin Dobson, *Fanny Burney*, p. 194, citing Moore's *Life of Byron*, 1844, 147). Lord Macaulay, writing in 1843, believed that Johnson had himself 'revised' *Cecilia* and 'retouched the style of many passages', but Johnson himself said, 'I never saw one word of it before it was printed.' As Austin Dobson puts it:

As the writer of Evelina she had remembered the writer of the Rambler; and nothing is more reasonable than that she should remember him all the more in Cecilia, when, by personal contact and personal admiration, she had assimilated his method and vocabulary. (p.128)

Boswell quotes a poem by Mr Courtenay, in heroic couplets, which includes the line,

With Johnson's flame melodious Burney glows.

This may not be inspiring poetry, but suggests that Johnson's influence on Fanny Burney's prose style was acknowledged. Boswell, however, thought Johnson's language 'too masculine for the delicate gentleness of female writing.' (Vol.1, 163)

Nonetheless, his influence was absorbed by Jane Austen. On Sunday November 25, 1798, she writes, 'We have got Boswell's "Tour of the Hebrides" and are to have his "Life of Johnson..." (Letter 12). In her Love and Freindship she had written, aged 15, in the style of Journey to the Western Isles, 'after having walked about a mile and a half we sate down by the side of a clear limpid stream to refresh our exhausted limbs' (MW 97). In Lesley Castle, written shortly afterwards, she mentions two universities at Aberdeen, probably from Johnson's description. She adapts Boswell in an early verse, 'To the memory of Mrs Lefroy':

At Johnson's death, by Hamilton 'twas said
"Seek we a substitute -- Ah! vain the plan,
No second best remains to Johnson dead --
None can remind us even of the Man." (MW 442).

I am suggesting that Johnson's influence on Jane Austen was both direct and indirect; it came from reading his work, and via the novels of Fanny Burney. On Sunday February 8, 1807, writing to Cassandra, she interpolates gaily, 'What a Contretems! In the language of France! What an unluckiness! in that of Mde. Duval:' (Letter 49), referring to Evelina. In Northanger Abbey we find Jane Austen's celebrated defence of novels and novelists:

If the heroine of one novel be not patronised by the heroine of another, from whom can she expect protection and regard... Let us not desert one another; we are an injured body. Although our productions have afforded more extensive and unaffected pleasure than those of any other literary corporation in the world, no species of composition has been so much decried.... 'Oh, it is only a novel,' replies the young lady... 'It is only Cecilia, or Camilla, or Belinda, or in short, only some work in which the greatest powers of the mind are displayed, in which the most thorough knowledge of human nature, the happiest delineation of its varieties, the

liveliest effusions of wit and humour are conveyed to the world. (R.W. Chapman, ed., The Oxford Illustrated Jane Austen, NA, 37-8)

Belinda is a novel by Maria Edgeworth. Jane Austen's brother Henry's memoir tells us that his sister 'sent into the world those novels which by many have been placed on the same shelf as a D'Arblay or an Edgeworth'. (Chapman, Vol. v, 4) Jane Austen's name is on the list of subscribers to Camilla in 1796. Although Jane Austen admired Fanny Burney, who outlived her, the two never met. Dr Johnson was still a living influence as a lexicographical authority. Henry Tilney, in Northanger Abbey, is severe on careless choice of words. When Catherine asks him if he thinks Udolpho 'the nicest book in the world', this quizzical pedant retorts, 'The nicest -- by which I suppose you mean the neatest. That must depend upon the binding.' (NA 107) Henry's sister, Eleanor, advises Catherine to 'change' the word as soon as she can, warning her that otherwise 'we shall be overpowered with Johnson and Blair all the rest of the way'. (NA 108) Blair is of course Hugh Blair, author of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres, being first professor of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres at Edinburgh University, he who told Boswell he had 'found the Giant in his den' and whose sermons Johnson persuaded the bookseller Strahan to publish; 'though the dog is a Scotchman and a Presbyterian, and everything he should not be, I was the first to praise them.' (Vol ii, 469) Mary Crawford in Mansfield Park thought a sensible clergyman ought to prefer relying on Blair's sermons instead of writing his own. It is worth remembering that Jane Austen read sermons with pleasure. Isabella Thorpe recommends Mrs Radcliffe's novels to Catherine. Professor Marilyn Butler, in Jane Austen and the War of Ideas, writes:

... Mrs Radcliffe's heroines are pious and unassertive, and her virtuous minor characters tend to be faithful servants. While cunningly giving her readers the imaginative experience they crave, she manages at the same time to pay sufficient tribute to the established order of a liberal but Christian England.

Even the care taken by Mrs Radcliffe underlies how dangerous the novel was felt to be: as Johnson and his critical followers supposed, it was a form made to convey moral relativism. It was not therefore surprising that in the early 1790s, in the immediate aftermath of the French Revolution, a group of English radicals made use of it to circulate their ideas. (Butler, p. 31)

Radicals she cites are Thomas Holcroft, William Godwin (whom we know Jane Austen detested) and Elizabeth Inchbald, who translated Kotzbuhe's play Lovers' Vows, so crucial to the plot of Mansfield Park, from the German.

Catherine asks gleefully whether Mrs Radcliffe's books are all horrid: 'are you sure they are all horrid?' (NA 40) The word 'horrid' had lost its Miltonic meaning of 'shaggy', 'bristling', and the first meaning in Johnson's dictionary is 'hideous, dreadful'. The second is 'shocking, offensive,

unpleasing, in women's cant'. The word is thoughtlessly used by Isabella and her doltish brother John to mean unpleasing when Isabella dismisses Richardson's novel Sir Charles Grandison (NA 41) and John sneers at Fanny Burney's novel Camilla as 'horrid'. In Jane Austen's unfinished novel, Sanditon, Charlotte Heywood picks up a copy of Camilla in the circulating library at the seaside resort. Charlotte is 'a very pleasing young woman of two and twenty'.

She had not Camilla's youth, and no intention of having her distress. (S 178, Penguin edn., ed. Margaret Drabble)

Camilla is 17 and her distress is due to financial imprudence. The book earned its author £2,000. The preface to Camilla echoes Ramblers 4 and 17. Camilla has a kind but stupid uncle, Sir Hugh Tyrold, who decides in middle age to learn Latin and Greek, but cannot get them into his head. Fanny Burney knew how hard the classics were, having briefly been taught Latin by Johnson himself, sharing her lessons with Viscountess Keith. Camilla, further, offered Jane Austen a theme: Camilla's

ardour of . . . imagination . . . shook her Judgement from its yet unsteady seat and left her at the mercy of wayward Sensibility. . . (Vol. iv, Book 8, Chapter xi, 680)

Fanny Burney frequently uses such Johnsonian balances of abstraction. That Jane Austen admired Johnson we know from her brother Henry, who tells us that 'her favourite moral writers were Johnson in prose and Cowper in verse'. (Chapman, Vol. v, 7) She wrote to Cassandra on November 3, 1813, that a friend

has more of Cowper than a Johnson in him, fonder of Tame Hares and Blank verse than of the full tide of human Existence at Charing Cross. (Letter 90)

Like Johnson, she was a Tory in politics and a practising member of the Church of England. On February 8, 1808, she had written to Cassandra tangentially mentioning 'my dear Dr Johnson' (Letter 49), alluding to his Journey to the Western Isles. In general, she followed Johnson's lead in moral matters, as I hope to show.

Peter De Rose, in Jane Austen and Samuel Johnson, notes that she built into her novels, such Johnsonian ideas as

the importance of self-knowledge, and the repudiation of pride, of practical common sense . . . of rational self-control in the sense of moral duty, and of recollection, discipline and sacrifice in the difficult education for life.

(Washington: American Universities Press, 1980)

The moral influence of fictions was a source of anxiety to Plato, and the ancient controversies revived with Henry Fielding's Shamela, which satirised

Samuel Richardson's story Pamela. Johnson said both Fielding and Richardson ought to be afraid of Fanny Burney. (Dobson, p.96) We remember he thought Tom Jones 'a corrupt book', and that Richardson 'had picked the kernel of life, while Fielding was contented with the husk' (Piozzi, Anecdotes of Samuel Johnson, Pocket Classics edn., p. 90) Johnson wrote in Rambler 97 that Richardson had 'enlarged the knowledge of human nature and taught the passions to move at the command of virtue'. Johnson's views on the responsibilities of the novel are well known. He argued in Rambler 4 that:

Vice, for vice is necessary to be shown, should always disgust; nor should the graces of gaiety, or the dignity of courage, be so united with it, as to reconcile it to the mind. (31 March, 1750)

We know that Jane Austen shared Johnson's admiration for Richardson. One immediately thinks of Mansfield Park, where Henry Crawford demonstrates his vicious character by running away with Mrs Rushworth, the former Maria Bertram, and Mary demonstrates her moral irresponsibility by thinking it a 'folly', a peccadillo. Edmund finally recognizes that Mary, whose attitude to marriage is wholly worldly and mercenary, is corrupt when she fails to express 'modest loathings'. We are meant to agree with the author's valuation of the escapade as 'guilt and misery'. (MP 461) Nowhere does Jane Austen dissent from Johnson's view that chastity was, and should be, the first principle women were taught. 'Maria's guilt had induced Julia's folly' in eloping with the negligible Mr Yates. The author's view of Henry is made quite plain:

Henry Crawford, ruined by early independence and bad domestic example [his uncle and guardian, the Admiral, has brought his mistress under his own roof], indulged in the freaks of a cold-blooded vanity a little too long. (MP 467)

Yet Henry and his sister have all the 'graces of gaiety', as Johnson puts it, though Henry plays cruelly with the affections of the Bertram sisters and tries to make 'a little hole in Fanny Price's heart'. They have their defenders because they seem to have more vitality than the other characters. That they have charm is undeniable, but they are condemned by their insensitivity and selfishness: Henry wants Edmund to spend on unnecessary improvements money he has not got, Mary is interested only in marrying money and status. Henry's money comes from property in Norfolk, but he is an absentee landlord, who employs a steward. Henry tries to win favour with Fanny by going back to his estate. Johnson said to Boswell in 1778 that he disapproved of absentee landlords:

'Sir, a man of family and estate ought to consider himself as having the charge of a district, over which he is to diffuse civility and happiness.' (Vol. ii, 217)

In Jane Austen's day, Maria's elopement would have been summed up for most people by Johnson's famous remark on an earlier occasion: 'Sir, the woman's a whore and there an end on't.' It is possible that in the novel Jane Austen was putting the doctrines of Rambler 4 to the test, by making basically

unpleasant characters superficially attractive. Such people are not hard to find in real life, and in a society where relationships were formal and distant, so that young women had small chance of getting to know young men well before marriage, the ability to assess moral character was crucial. Fanny Price, whose books, collected ever since she had command of a shilling, include *The Idler*, is saved by her clear-sightedness and integrity from the marriage to attractive wicked Henry that Sir Thomas and Lady Bertram consider it her duty to contract. Henry's subsequent conduct proves Fanny to have been right. We remember the letter in which Jane Austen writes to Cassandra on May 12, 1801:

I am proud to say I have a very good eye at an Adulteress, for tho' repeatedly assured that another in the same party was the she, I fixed upon the right one from the first. (Letter 36)

The tone of the letter is flippant, but, like Johnson, Jane Austen was a practising Protestant Christian. Her brother Henry describes hers as 'A life of usefulness, literature and religion'. She was 'thoroughly religious and devout'. She 'made a point of receiving the sacrament'. She took the orthodox view of adultery as a grave sin, though as a practice it was far from rare. On June 20, 1808 she wrote to Cassandra:

This is a sad story about Mrs Powlett. I should not have suspected her of such a thing. She staid the Sacrament, I remember, the last time that you & I did. A hint of it, with Initials, was in yesterday's Courier ... (Letter 58)

In the novel, *Mansfield Park*, a hint of Maria's elopement with Henry, with initials, appears in the London newspapers. Scandals in high life were common, as Fanny's half-pay father Mr Price recognizes in the novel. Jane Austen's omniscient narrator writes

Lady Bertram did not think deeply, but, guided by Sir Thomas, she thought justly on all important points; and she saw, therefore, in all its enormity, what had happened, and neither required herself, nor required Fanny to advise her, to think little of guilt and infamy. (MP, 449)

Mary and Henry have vivacity and social graces, but they have neither religion nor good morals. Careful reading shows that Jane Austen could never have intended them to be appealing and then changed her mind while writing, as some commentators have suggested. We are meant to side with Edmund and Fanny against them. Sir Thomas recognizes that in the bringing up of his daughters:

there had been grievous mismanagement; but bad as it was, he gradually grew to feel that it had not been the most direful mistake in his plan of education. Something must have been wanting within, or time would have worn away much of its ill effect. He feared that principle, active principle, had been wanting, that they had never been properly taught to govern

their inclinations and tempers, by that sense of duty which alone can suffice. They had been instructed theoretically in their religion, but never required to bring it into daily practice (MP 463 - 4)

Jane Austen's views on the role of the clergy coincide with Johnson's. In the case against the Rev. Mr James Thomson, defended by Boswell in 1776, Johnson dictated an argument against the court judgement that the clergy had no right to rebuke. (Vol. ii, 45)

He is also recorded as saying

'The Dean of Carlisle ... told me, that it might be discerned whether or no there was clergyman resident in a parish by the civil or savage manner of the people'.

In 1778, Johnson said to his old college classmate, Mr Edwards,

'Sir, the life of a parson, of a conscientious clergyman, is not easy. I have always considered a clergyman as the father of a larger family than he is able to maintain. No, Sir, I do not envy a clergyman's life as an easy life, nor do I envy the clergyman who makes it an easy life.' (Vol. ii, 264)

Compare Mansfield Park: Sir Thomas Bertram, who owns the living of Thornton Lacey, takes it for granted that when his son Edmund becomes parish priest, he must reside there. It is a black mark against Henry Crawford that he wants to rent the parsonage house which he suggests Edmund 'improve' by turning it round so that it turns its back on the village. His sister Mary constantly pains Edmund by mocking the profession of clergyman, and disqualifies herself as a wife for him with every word she says. Edmund clarifies for her his ideas of a clergyman's duty: the clergyman, says Edmund,

'has the guardianship of religion and morals, and consequently of the manners which result from their influence.'

Mary pooh-poohs this influence:

'How can two sermons a week, even supposing them worth hearing, supposing the preacher to have the sense to prefer Blair's to his own, do all that you speak of?' Edmund replies that the clergyman should influence public manners in the sense of

'conduct the result of good principles; the effect, in short of those doctrines which it is their duty to teach and recommend; and it will, I believe, be everywhere found, that as the clergy are, or are not what they ought to be, so are the rest of the nation.' (MP 92)

Mary Butler wrote that Jane Austen's scepticism about fallen human nature has excellent Christian authority. (Butler, p. 296)

This authority, coming directly from Jane Austen's parson father, was mediated and endorsed through the writings of Johnson. In *Mansfield Park* she alludes to *Rasselas*, Chapter 26:

Fanny was tempted to apply ... Dr Johnson's celebrated judgement as to matrimony and celibacy, and say, that though *Mansfield Park* might have some pains, *Portsmouth* could have no pleasures. (MP 392)

In a famous phrase, Lord David Cecil said of Jane Austen's novel *Sense and Sensibility*, 'The issues between Elinor and Marianne are the issues between Rousseau and Dr Johnson'. He meant, of course, 'Dr Johnson and Rousseau', but as a general statement few people quarrel with it, though until recently not many have examined the nature of Johnson's influence on Jane Austen, apart from passing comments that she writes balanced, antithetical sentences or that like Johnson she was a moralist.

Dr Johnson defined 'sensibility' as '1. Quickness of sensation. 2. Quickness of perception; delicacy', but in the latter part of the eighteenth century the word attracted overtones of violent emotion: Lawrence Sterne had written, in *A Sentimental Journey* (1768), 'Dear sensibility! source inexhausted of all that's precious in our joys, or costly in our sorrows!' Mary Wollstonecraft wrote later that 'Sensibility is become the mania of the day' (1792). Marianne is happy when the deceitful Willoughby catches 'all her enthusiasms' (SS 47). The word seems to be used ironically. The word 'enthusiasm' as used by Jonathan Swift is wholly derogatory and about equivalent to 'religious fanaticism', but it had acquired softer overtones by the end of the eighteenth century. Johnson's first definition in the dictionary is 'A vain belief in private revelation', the second is 'heat of imagination; violence of passion; confidence of opinion'; and the third, and kindest, which is applicable to Marianne, is 'Elevation of fancy; exaltation of ideas.' Marianne's fancy is certainly elevated, her ideas exalted, until she is taught by painful experience. The negative connotations of the word 'enthusiasm' seem to have faded by the time Jane Austen came to write her last novel, *Persuasion*, still unrevised when she died. Her heroine, Anne Elliot, aged twenty-seven, still responds to 'warmth and enthusiasm'. (P 161) Most people take Lord David Cecil's handy formulation to mean Johnsonian rationality versus Rousseau-esque sentimentality, the head versus the heart.

We remember the fate of poor Marianne, who marries Colonel Brandon, a man twice her age, 'with no sentiment superior to strong esteem and lively friendship'; Colonel Brandon, we recall 'still sought the constitutional safeguard of a flannel waistcoat'. (SS 378) Jane Austen is perhaps less complacent about this marriage than some people think: the other characters feel that Marianne is to oblige and 'reward' them all by marrying Brandon. 'With such a confederacy against her ... what could she do?' But we know that

the marriage will not be poisoned by lack of 'esteem' or mutual respect. Marriage is of course the all-important decision for Jane Austen's women, and Jane Austen took heed in her fictions of Rambler 35, which warns readers against marrying those they have no reason to esteem. But we do feel saddened by the match, not because Jane Austen is cynical about matrimony, but because she can be sadly realistic. We know what Johnson thought of Rousseau: in 1764 he wrote 'I think him to be one of the worst of men; a rascal, who ought to be hunted out of society and transported to work on the plantations ... Rousseau, Sir, is a very bad man' (Boswell, Vol. i, 391). A couple of years later, when Boswell tries to defend Rousseau, Johnson retorts that Rousseau knows he is talking nonsense. (Vol. i, 443). In 1763, Johnson had demolished Rousseau's egalitarian theories, concluding that 'he who is rich in a civilised society must be happier than he who is poor' (Vol. i, 336); an example of the famed Johnsonian commonsense: but Johnson's real objection to Rousseau was religious. He thought it 'difficult to settle the proportion of iniquity between' Rousseau and Voltaire (Vol. i, 392). In Jane Austen's novel, Marianne's intensely excitable attitude to experience was linked with a new and controversial morality.

Rousseau taught that man was naturally good, kind and innocent. Society, laws and civilisation were to blame for corrupting him, and if only social institutions could be abolished, everybody could be wise, happy and good. Although this view was widely influential and underlies certain aspects of today's social theory, it was opposed because it contradicted orthodox Christian teaching that man was born in a state of original sin and could be saved only by the grace of God, a view held as we know by Johnson and, I would argue, by Jane Austen. Moralists in her day warned against a morality based on feelings, which could easily become a recipe for selfishness. At the end of Sense and Sensibility Marianne admits to having been guilty of 'fretful selfishness' and talks about 'making atonement to my God' (SS 346). Elinor is praised in the novel for self-control, although she too suffers the pangs of love she believes to be unrequited, whereas Marianne, though admired for her delicacy and sense of honour, is teased for her excessive sensibility, contrasted with Elinor's hard-won good sense.

Claudia Johnson (no relation so far as I know) has argued recently that 'The case of Willoughby proves that Austen is more interested in probing the fallibility of Marianne's judgement than exposing the folly of her sensibility,' citing Rambler 8: 'What men allow themselves to hope, will soon believe', although as Johnson puts it in Rambler 2, the 'natural flights of the human mind' are 'from hope to hope'. (Claudia Johnson, Philological Quarterly 62 (1984), 531-38). However, Claudia Johnson warns us that 'Studies which argue that Johnson supplied Jane Austen with moral norms often imply a Johnson more prescriptive, conservative and commonsensical than he really is', a fascinating viewpoint, undeveloped because she believes that the 'most dynamic and suggestive aspect of Johnson's legacy to Jane Austen is his distinctive concept of psychology, his emphasis on the operations of hope and anticipation or, conversely, regret and memory, and his conviction that these activities must be properly regulated.' She cites Idler 72, that any hope or sorrow can become 'a pernicious adhesion', when Johnson actually wrote 'pertinacious adhesion'. Claudia Johnson also thinks Jane Austen is parodying

Dr Johnson when she writes in the juvenilia 'From this subject she made a short digression to the instability of human pleasures and the uncertainty of their duration, which led her to observe that all earthly joys must be imperfect' (MW 172), though it seems to me more like a Christian commonplace. It is notable that Jane Austen supplies happy endings, and seems not to endorse the conclusions either of *Rasselas* or of *The Vanity of Human Wishes*. But if she did not accept Johnson's pessimism, she shared a common tradition of morality.

In both Dr Johnson and Jane Austen, manners rest on the moral principle of unselfishness. In *Rambler* 98 Johnson writes that politeness means that 'no man should give any preference to himself'.

Like Nekayah in *Rasselas*, Marianne indulges her grief as a duty. Elinor, in her rational self-control, is wiser and more admirable than Marianne, though she seems less vital and attractive to us. Like Marianne, Elinor weeps, but Elinor's tears are shed in private. She rushes out of her room to give way to them. Jane Austen was not hostile to the culture of the feelings and the fancy, so long as they are under the cool, rational scrutiny of the mind and conscience. She wrote to her niece, Fanny Knight, on March 13, 1817:

You are all over imagination, so much flight of mind, such unbounded fancies, you should have such excellent judgement in what you do. Religious principle I fancy must explain it. (Letter 141)

Johnson's dictionary defines principle as a 'tenet on which morality is founded'. When Boswell tried to defend a man whose principles had been perverted by a noted infidel writer as 'nevertheless, a good, benevolent man', Johnson is recorded as having replied:

... if such a man stood in need of money, I should not like to trust him; and I should certainly not trust him with young ladies, for there is always temptation.

We remember the wicked, selfish Wickham, in *Pride and Prejudice*, is exposed by Darcy to Elizabeth as having 'want of principle.' (PP 200) Wickham has been unreliable and unscrupulous in money matters, and equally unprincipled where young ladies are concerned: he subsequently deserts Elizabeth because she has no money, pays court to an heiress and finally runs away with Elizabeth's thoughtless sister, Lydia, with no intention of marrying her. He does not marry her indeed until in effect bribed to do so by Darcy. From *Cecilia* Jane Austen took her title:

If to PRIDE and PREJUDICE you owe your miseries, so wonderfully is good and evil balanced, that to PRIDE and PREJUDICE you will also owe their termination (*Cecilia*, vol. v, Book 10, Chapter x, 930)

More than one person has noticed the Johnsonian echo in the opening sentence of *Pride and Prejudice*:

It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.

In Rambler 115, the bachelor Hymenaeus opens with the statement, 'I was known to possess a fortune and be in want of a wife'. C.S. Lewis quarrels with Lord David Cecil's view that Jane Austen believed 'it was wrong to marry for money, but it was silly to marry without it'. Discussing Jane Austen's final novel, Persuasion, Lewis quotes Jane Austen's conclusion that Anne's experience has taught her to be 'on the side of early warm attachment, and a cheerful confidence in futurity, against that over-anxious caution which seems to insult exertion and distrust Providence'. (P 30) Lewis adds, in parenthesis, 'Notice, in passing, the cadence of a sentence which expresses a view that Johnson, in one of his countless moods, might have supported'. (Jane Austen, ed. Ian Watt, p. 29)

The problem in Persuasion is that young Captain Wentworth has not yet made his fortune, so Anne lets herself be persuaded, against her instinct, to reject him. This mistake is happily rectified eight years later, when Wentworth returns, having become rich. The smooth deceiver Mr Elliot, the cousin to whom Anne is fleetingly attracted, 'never had any better principle than selfishness'. (P 200)

In that novel, Jane Austen refines Dr Johnson's definition of 'good company' (Idler) as

the company of those whose birth is high, and whose riches are great, or of those whom the rich and noble admit to familiarity.

Jane Austen improves morally on Johnson, in shifting the definition from wealth and social position to intellectual culture:

'My idea of good company, Mr Elliot, is the company of clever, well-informed people, who have a great deal of conversation; that is what I call good company.'

'You are mistaken,' said he gently, 'that is not good company, that is the best.' (P 150)

Persuasion, Jane Austen's final novel, is full of Johnsonian echoes, because her mind was full of digested Johnsonian thought. Her whole output is an illustration of Rambler 19: that 'he must expect to be wretched, who pays to beauty, riches or politeness, that regard which only virtue and piety can claim.'

THE WREATH LAYING CEREMONY

The annual wreath-laying ceremony took place in Westminster Abbey at midday on 11th December 1993.

The Allocution was delivered by Mr J H Leicester, MA FRSA, a Vice-President of the Society. He said that, writing on biographers in The Rambler, Johnson observed 'If we owe regard to the memory of the dead, there is yet more respect to be paid to knowledge, to virtue and to truth'. As we once again gather to pay our annual homage to Samuel Johnson, we honour the memory of one, who himself exemplified respect for knowledge, virtue and truth, both as a writer and as a man. As the years progress, these qualities become no less relevant to our world today.

The last occasion on which he had the honour to lay the wreath on Johnson's tomb, was December, 1969; one might say a generation ago as indeed his new Grandson was with us here today. It was the memorable year when man first set foot on the moon. He then referred to the modern age of scientific and technological advance, and of the relevance of Johnson's personal qualities to our times. From Apollo II in 1969, to Endeavour today, the exploration of space and the quest for knowledge and truth of our universe goes on.

But what of virtue? In an ever-expanding world of Information Technology and satellites, we are able to communicate over greater distances and with greater speed than ever before. Johnson recognised the power of words over men's minds, together with the responsibility that this places upon the author. Doubtless he would have recognized the added responsibility of those entrusted with the powerful media of today.

Johnson's own greatness of mind was matched by his greatness of heart. If he saw the need for the minds of men to be nurtured, he was realist enough to know that they also had bodies to be fed. His own compassion was evident in the practical acts of kindness he performed for those in need. As one who had felt poverty himself, he had no time for the theorists. Again, from The Rambler: 'He that wishes to become a philosopher at a cheap rate, easily gratifies his ambition by submitting to poverty, when he does not feel it and by boasting his contempt of riches, when he has already more than he enjoys'!

Nor did he see the absence of poverty, the acquisition of wealth, as the inevitable concomitant of happiness. The son of a Lichfield bookseller, Johnson was fascinated by the practicabilities of the world of work, and judged the romance of trade by its usefulness to society. But trade as a means to wealth alone, was too narrow a calling: 'We hear on every side the noise of trade and see the streets throng with numberless multitudes, whose faces are clouded with anxiety, and whose steps are hurried by precipitation, from no other motive, than the hope of gain, and the whole world is put in motion by the desire of wealth, which is chiefly to be valued as it secures us from poverty. For it is more useful for defence than acquisition and it is not so much able to procure good as to exclude evil'. Again those words are from The Rambler. Perhaps Johnson's world was not so different from our own.

Mr Leicester said that he had recently had occasion to walk down Victoria Street towards Parliament Square, as he did this morning. Nicholas Hawksmoor's two western towers of Westminster Abbey gleamed resplendent in the Autumn sunlight of a London morning. Newly-cleaned this year, released from the London grime, they appeared as a revelation - in the same pristine state, it occurred to him, as Johnson himself would have seen them. The Gothic towers, added in a classical age, have become a symbol of the Abbey itself, as part of the London scene, and to the world at large. The years of their building, 1736-45, embraced Johnson's own appearance on the London scene, from his arrival in 1737, his poem, London, 1738, his Life of Savage, 1744. During these years he would have been even more familiar with the twin towers flanking the arch of St. John's Gate in Clerkenwell, a building he first beheld with reverence, when he began work for Edward Cave, editor of The Gentleman's Magazine.

These were the formative years for Johnson, in his career as a writer, the years of struggle, of writing for bread, out of which, ultimately, came the literature of experience: 'Slow rises worth, by poverty depressed'. He rests now, here in Poet's Corner, in the company of fellow poets and men of letters and others who achieved distinction and success in their chosen fields. We honour his memory today, as much for the man he was, as for the success he achieved. Indeed, for Johnson, just as the pursuit of wealth was insufficient justification for a life, so success, in itself, was not enough. In his final issue of The Rambler, we hear the essential voice of Johnson, as he affirmed his role as a writer: 'The essays professedly serious, if I have been able to execute my own intention, will be found exactly conformable to the precepts of Christianity without any accommodation to the licentiousness and levity of the present age. I therefore look back on this part of my work with pleasure, which no blame or praise of man shall diminish or augment. I shall never envy the honours which wit and learning obtain in any other cause, if I can be numbered among the writers who have given ardour to virtue and confidence to truth.'

Mr Leicester concluded by saying that, on behalf of the Johnson Society of London, he laid his wreath on the grave of Samuel Johnson who, pre-eminently is numbered among such writers.

The Annual Luncheon of the Society, organised as in other years by Mrs A G Dowdeswell, then took place at the Vitello D'Oro restaurant.

IN MEMORY OF JOHN DAVID FLEEMAN,
Fellow of Pembroke College, Oxford

The death of David Fleeman, on which I have already touched, was a sad blow to the Society: he was a loyal and supportive Vice-President and his freely given assistance was always much appreciated.

At his memorial service, held in the University Church on 27th October 1994, addresses were given by Lady Eccles and Professor Gray. A reading was also given, by James McLaverty: and Mrs Fleeman has kindly agreed that we reproduce this in The New Rambler as a tribute to her late husband. It is 'A fragment of the late Dr Johnson on the Character and Duty of an Academick', [published for the first time] by John Moir AM in London in 1793. The text is as follows:

The mere assertion of no man biassed by interest, or prejudice, or party, in a passion, or not serious, merits the least credit or attention. Every accusation of an origin thus irreputable must be harmless. And all that mean abuse poured of late with so much virulence, on a class of the community regularly trained and consecrated for instructing the rest, can be resolved, into no principle, more respectable. Happily for the interest of common decency, to the grossest libels of sots, buffoons, men of pleasure, and men of the world, purposely hatched and rudely averred to raise vice and depress virtue, the very different sentiments of the wisest and best may always be opposed.

The affinity of the subject has induced me to present the reader with the following STRICTURES, by one of the most illustrious moralists in modern times, presented to me, in the Author's own hand-writing, by a friend whose confidence is one of my best comforts, and whose communications are all valuable, and merit the highest gratitude. The utility of the order is implicated in the functions thus forcibly described and inculcated.

'The great effect of society is, that by uniting multitudes in one general co-operation, it distributes to different orders of the community the several labours and occupations of life. The general end is general happiness, which must result from the diversified industry of many hands, and the various direction of many minds. From this distribution every man being confined to his own employment, derives opportunities of attaining readiness and skill by improving daily on himself, and to this improvement must be ascribed the accommodations which are enjoyed in popular-cities, and countries highly civilised, compared with those which are to be found in places thinly inhabited, where necessity compels every man to exercise more arts than he can learn.

'From this complex system arise different obligations. Every man has his task assigned, of which, if he accepts it, he must consider himself as accountable for the performance. The individuals of this illustrious community are set apart, and distinguished from the rest of the people, for the confirmation and promotion of national knowledge. An academic is a man supported at the public cost, and dignified with public honours, that he may attain and impart wisdom.

abhorred as treachery.⁴

COLONEL GIMBEL AND THE "LITERARY ANVIL": OR WHY SAMUEL JOHNSON'S LETTERS
BELONG IN THE AIR FORCE ACADEMY'S AERONAUTICAL COLLECTION¹

By Captain Brian Hanley

Captain Hanley is an English teacher at the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado. He has recently become a member of the Society, and we are delighted to publish his paper on an unusual aspect of Johnson. In 1793, Johnson's letters were published in two volumes, published by Hester Lynch Piozzi (London: A. Strahan, 1788). This is a scarce edition, in good to excellent condition, of Samuel Johnson's letters. Unlike later and more scholarly editions, this set, which includes 338 of the more than 1500 letters that Johnson wrote, largely centers on the correspondence between himself and the Thrale family. A few letters to other people are also included.²

Bibliographic interest aside, why would Colonel Gimbel acquire a copy of Johnson's letters, valuable to the scholarly world though it is, in light of the Collection's theme of the history of flight? Johnson, after all, is best known for his moral and philological writings, as well as for - thanks in good measure to Boswell and Macaulay - his "personality". But given that the first flight of a hot-air balloon took place in the age that bears Johnson's name, Colonel Gimbel was right to comb Johnson's work of contemporary thought on the dream and reality of flight.³ Indeed, what we see in these letters are the reflections on the possibilities of human flight, and what such possibilities tell us about human nature, from a man who ranks among humanity's keenest observers.

Before analyzing the letters themselves, a word must be said about Johnson's relations with Hester Lynch Piozzi, formerly Mrs Thrale. Johnson met Henry Thrale, a wealthy brewer and member of Parliament (for whom Johnson later wrote speeches), in 1765. Both Mr Thrale and his wife Hester were so pleased with Johnson's conversation and company that he was a frequent guest at their table; in fact, he eventually became something of a permanent resident at the Thrale home in Streatham Park. The relationship was deeply rewarding: John Wain, in his biography of Johnson, points out that his relation with the Thrales was second in intimacy only to that with his wife, and in material benefit second only to his pension.⁴

In 1784, three years after Henry Thrale died, Mrs Thrale married an Italian musician named Gabriel Piozzi - an event that outraged Johnson to the extent that he penned a letter to her so strident ("You are ingnominiouly married"⁵) that Mrs Piozzi omitted it from her edition of Johnson's letters.⁶ Shortly afterward, Johnson composed a kinder letter about her marriage ("What you have done, however I may lament it, I have no pretence to resent.... I therefore

breath out one sigh more of tenderness . . . at least sincere"⁷). But their relationship was essentially over: Johnson received no more letters from her, and those of her letters that he had kept he subsequently burned.⁸ In 1786, Mrs Piozzi published the *Anecdotes of Samuel Johnson*; her edition of Johnson's letters followed two years later.

In Piozzi's edition of Johnson's letters, flight and hot-air ballooning are largely - though not entirely - synonymous. In fact, four letters to Piozzi, and one from Piozzi to Johnson, reflect the late eighteenth-century's interest in lighter-than-air vehicles. More particularly, these five letters suggest Johnson's movement from a discernible but not whole-hearted skepticism about ballooning to an interest in it that, like much of everything else that Johnson wrote, prompted him to see ballooning in humanistic terms. In the earliest letter on ballooning, dated 22 September 1783, Johnson tries to dampen Mrs Thrale's enthusiasm for hot-air balloons: "Happy are you," writes Johnson, "that have ease and leisure to want intelligence of air-balloons. Their existence is I believe, indubitable; but I know not that they can possibly be of any use" (2: 310). Johnson thus opens his letter with a tone that is certainly ironical, if not disdainful. His tactic is to admit grudgingly that balloons actually exist in order to make the point that they are extravagant and useless: a pursuit best left to those who have time and money to waste.

Another letter to Mrs Thrale, dated 1 November 1783, further reflects the view that ballooning is a futile enterprise: there Johnson remarks on a recent failure of a balloon to sustain flight (2: 324). Mrs Thrale's only response to these two letters is a mild rebuke to Johnson for his peremptory dismissal of balloon flight: "You should be more willing than you are to think about air balloons," Mrs Thrale writes. "The first sailing chariot I have ever read of was in *Rasselas*⁹; and the French seem now full of your mechanist's mind, that only idleness and ignorance need to crawl upon the ground" (2: 360).¹⁰

Johnson again mentions ballooning and its popularity in a 13 December 1783 correspondence, but in this letter his doubts seem to have largely disappeared. While recounting a recent dinner with old friends Johnson notes, with some surprise, that balloon flights were not a conversation topic: "I boasted [to my dinner companions] that I had passed the day with three friends, and that no mention had been made among any of us of the air balloon, which has taken full possession, with a very good claim, of every philosophical mind and mouth. Do you not wish for the flying coach?" (2: 340). Johnson here asserts an extremely favorable judgement of ballooning when he identifies the enterprise as worthy of intellectual interest. His change of heart continues through the new year, beginning with a letter to Mrs Thrale on 12 January 1784. Ballooning is "a wonderful and unexpected addition to human knowledge," concludes Johnson (2: 345).

Unfortunately, Mrs Piozzi's collection does not contain four additional letters, all written in 1784, that reflect Johnson's deepening interest in ballooning. The first of these is dated 31 January and is addressed to Mrs Thrale. "I have continued my connection with the world so far as to subscribe¹¹ to a new balloon which is [to] sustain five hundred weight, and by

which, I suppose, some Americo Vespucci, for a new Columbus he cannot now be, will bring us what intelligence he can gather in the clouds."¹² According to Professor Redford, Johnson here is probably talking about one of two projects: Chevalier de Moret's idea for a balloon shaped like a Chinese temple or to an oblong balloon conceived by John Sheldon and Allen Keegan. That Johnson would compare these engineers with Vespucci ratifies his comment of 19 days earlier that ballooning legitimately advances human knowledge -- the Columbus of balloon flight was the French aeronaut the previous November.

However, both of the concepts that Johnson might be referring to failed in August 1784 -- Moret's on the 10th, the Keegan and Sheldon project on the 16th (a retry by Keegan and Sheldon failed on 29 September).¹³ Writing to his doctor Richard Brocklesby on 21 August, Johnson discusses these aviation disasters: "It is a pity that Philosophers [scientists] have been disappointed," says Johnson, "and shame that they have been cheated; But I know not well how to prevent either."¹⁴

But Johnson's pity for pioneer aeronauts soon changes to impatience with the enthusiasm their successes generate. On 18 September Johnson, responding to Joshua Reynolds, complains that he has received "three letters this day, all about the balloon." He asks Reynolds to no longer write about the balloon, "whatever else You may think proper to say."¹⁵ Presumably, the letters in question remark on the first successful flight in England which took place on 15 September 1784.¹⁶

The fourth letter omitted from the Piozzi edition, dated 29 September and addresses to Brocklesby, suggests that Johnson's impatience has degenerated into doubt:

On one day I had three letters about the Air balloon [cf. letter to Reynolds]. Yours was far the best, and has enabled me to impart to my friends in the country an Idea of this species of amusement. In amusement, mere amusement I am afraid it must end, for I do not find that its course can be directed, so as that it should serve any purpose of communication; and it can give no new intelligence of the state of the air at different heights, till they have ascended above the height of mountains, which they seem never likely to do.¹⁷

Here Johnson expresses opinions about balloons reminiscent of his letter to Piozzi of more than a year before. There are, however, subtle but decisive differences in the sentiment: instead of dismissing ballooning out of hand as he did in September 1783, in this case he believes that the technology has taken itself as far as it can possibly go (a historically valid observation); he is not so much doubtful here as he is judgemental.

The final letter in Piozzi's collection that mentions ballooning is dated 1 November 1784. Johnson writes to Francesco Sastres, an Italian poet, teacher and translator who, after having settled in London in 1777, became a very close friend of Johnson's. When he asks Sastres to keep up his frequent

correspondence, Johnson uses ballooning as a symbol of the best and worst of human conduct:

You may always have something to tell: you live among the various orders of mankind, and may make a letter from the exploits, sometimes of the philosopher, and sometimes of the pickpocket. You see some balloons succeed and some miscarry, and a thousand strange and a thousand foolish things. But I see nothing; I must make my letter from what I feel, and what I feel with so little delight, that I cannot love to talk of it. (2: 412)

This letter, written days before Johnson's death and one of his last pieces of writing,¹⁸ represents the extent of Johnson's interest in balloon flight. In Johnson's mind, ballooning initially seemed a vain but entertaining enterprise, a frivolity; but as his last hour approached, Johnson, with all his great learning and gifted powers of expression, selects ballooning as an epitome of the range of human endeavour, from the wise to the foolhardy.

NOTES

- 1 The Colonel Richard Gimbel Aeronautical Collection, part of the United States Air Force Academy's library, is a special collection of rare and valuable items that pertain to history of flight. With more than 20,000 items, the Collection is a comprehensive record of aeronautical history. Of those items, approximately 6,000 are books (encompassing more than 15 languages) and 3,000 are prints, portraits, and views, including engravings, etchings, and woodcuts.
- 2 This is the first of four major editions of Johnson's letters. The latest and most authoritative is *The Letters of Samuel Johnson*. Edited by Bruce Redford. 5 volumes. Princeton: 1994. For an excellent discussion of Mrs. Piozzi's corruptions of the 1788 edition, see R. W. Chapman "Mrs. Piozzi's Omissions from Johnson's Letters to Thrales," *R.E.S.* 22 (1946): 17-28. Mrs Piozzi intervened in none of the letters relating to ballooning.
- 3 The first balloon flight was unmanned and took place in France on 5 June 1783; the first successful manned flight took place on 21 November 1783 in Paris, France.
- 4 Wain, John. *Samuel Johnson*. New York: Viking Press, 1974. 261-2.
- 5 Johnson, Samuel. *The Letters of Samuel Johnson*. Ed. Bruce Redford. 4: 338.
- 6 Chapman, R.W. "Mrs. Piozzi's Omissions from Johnson's Letters to Thrales." *R.E.S.* 22 (1946): 17-18.
- 7 Johnson, *Letters*. Ed. Bruce Redford. 4: 343.
- 8 Wain 363.
- 9 Johnson, Samuel. *Rasselas and Other Tales*. Ed. by Gwin J. Kolb. Volume 16 of the *Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1990. See chapter 6.
- 10 This letter is dated March 27, 1784. I surmise that this letter responds to Johnson's correspondences that belittle or doubt balloon

flight; I can find no other letter where she acknowledges or responds to Johnson's change of heart regarding ballooning.
 11 OED: to promise over one's signature to pay for shares in an undertaking.

12 Redford 4: 279.

13 Redford 4: 279 n. 2.

14 Redford 4: 377.

15 Redford 4: 407.

16 Redford 4: 407 n. 2.

17 Redford 4: 408-9.

It is indeed, "But," he continues, "the

convention is convenient; it is a working hypothesis

And what sort of final hypothesis is it? Why was

seven or eight years old, I was allowed to go to a local theatre on

Saturday afternoon to see the western; the theatre was

at that time, I arrived a little later and

group of contemporary friends who were with me

of whom I was not a member through the

"which were the good guys and which were the bad guys" I

anxious. After receiving this essential piece of information, I

and my voice to those which were cheering for the good guys.

and this is the reason why I am writing this to you.

Let me begin by stating to find dichotomies in political ideologies

very different from this primitive paradigm. The fact is that the

impassive optical labels needed by such a paradigm are "progressive,"

"liberal," "conservative," "left-wing," "right-wing," to mention the most

familiar - originated in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, after

Johnson's time and the most part of the contemporary political

situations that have few genuine analogues in eighteenth-century British

or indeed international political history. The one definition of

"conservative" that Johnson gives in his *Discourses* is "having the power

of opposing a minister of justice, or a minister of religion, or a

minister of the gospel, or a minister of the law, or a minister of the

"progressive" is "a man who is advancing the cause of the

number of illustrations of the term 'progressive' in political

history, it is the most abundant and the most varied. It is

still (like always) progressive, not retrograde. That is, you have a

useful and ambitious man, who is promoting him, don't demote him, but

use in a modern exposition of Johnson's political opinions.

In the past decades of the nineteenth century, and especially in the

twentieth, the term 'progressive' has been used in a political sense

prairie farm belt of the western United States and Canada, where the

farmers complained (with considerable justification) that they were being

exploited by the high prices charged them by the eastern manufacturers

the farm machinery and by high rates charged for shipping their grain by

the eastern owners of the railroads. In this protest movement, which

political historians have called 'populism', the word 'progressive'

was used to describe the political position of the farmers.

PROGRESS TOWARDS WHERE? CONSERVATION OF WHAT?

Donald Green, Leo S. Bing Professor of English emeritus, University of Southern California.

Since my name appears so frequently in my good friend Daisuke Nagashima's article "Progressive or Conservative? Two Trends in Johnson Studies", The New Rambler, 1991-92, perhaps I may be permitted to reply. The subject, after all, is an important one. Professor Nagashima writes, "It is of course dangerously misleading to try to understand everything in terms of 'progressive vs conservative'". It is indeed. "But," he continues, "the dichotomy is convenient, at least as a working hypothesis to start on."

Convenient for whom? For those with a compulsion to discover dichotomies? And what sort of final hypothesis is hoped to be arrived at? When I was seven or eight years old, I was allowed to go to a local movie theatre on Saturday afternoons to see the "western" film that was usually shown there at that time. Sometimes I arrived a little late, and sat down among a group of contemporary friends who were wildly cheering at a scene of one lot of horsemen vehemently pursuing another lot of horsemen through the chaparral. "Which are the good guys and which are the bad guys?" I'd ask my neighbours anxiously. After receiving this essential piece of information, I'd lustily add my voice to those which were cheering for the good guys.

Is the urge by modern students to find dichotomies in political ideologies very different from this primitive paradigm? The fact is that all the impressive ideological labels used by such students - "progressive," "Liberal," "conservative," "left-wing," "right-wing," to mention the most familiar - originated in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, after Johnson's time and, for the most part, in contemporary political situations that have few genuine analogies in eighteenth-century British or indeed international political history. The one definition of "conservative" that Johnson gives in his Dictionary is "Having the power of opposing diminution or injury," with a single and rather strange illustration, apparently related to aesthetic theory, from Henry Peacham. "Progressive," meaning "Going forward; advancing," had a more generous number of illustrations - four - beginning with a somewhat political one from Bacon: "Princes, if they use ambitious men, should handle it so as they may be still [i.e. always] progressive, not retrograde". That is, if you have a useful and ambitious henchman, keep promoting him, don't demote him. Not much use in a modern exposition of Johnson's political opinions.

In the late decades of the nineteenth century and early ones of the twentieth, the term "progressive" came into popular political use in the prairie farm belt of the western United States and Canada, where the wheat farmers complained (with considerable justification) that they were being exploited by the high prices charged them by the eastern manufacturers of the farm machinery and by high rates charged for shipping their grain by the eastern owners of the railroads. In this protest movement, which political historians have come to call "populism" - a revolt of downtrodden, poverty-stricken proletarian farmers against rich eastern

capitalists, Rockefellers, Vanderbilts, Carnegies, (in Canada) Masseys - the farmers were joined by the more radical of the newly formed labour unions, the I.W.W.s (International Workers of the World, or "Wobblies") and so on. The best account of how "populism" could work in practice is Robert Penn Warren's novel, All the King's Men, describing how, in the 1920s and 1930s, Huey Long organised the resentful, "redneck," poverty-stricken backwoodsmen of rural Louisiana to overthrow the entrenched régime in Baton Rouge (the state's capital) and New Orleans, and establish his own mafia-like dictatorship there. For decades the Farmer-Labour party was the majority one in the state of Minnesota, and its favourite, Robert La Follette, ran for president of the United States as a "Progressive" in 1924, gaining what, for a "third-party" presidential candidate, was a very respectable number of votes.

But "progressive" was far too useful and potentially vote-catching a term to be confined to relatively small regional political groups. Two other presidential candidates ran as "Progressives" - Theodore Roosevelt in 1912, relying no doubt on his well-deserved reputation as a formidable opponent of the "big interests," and Henry Wallace in 1948, whose book One World envisioned a blissful future of mutual understanding and peace. Both were soundly defeated in the elections.

The appeal of the term comes of course from the notion that the political history of the world is a linear one of constant advance, and that to be successful in politics one should identify oneself with "the wave of the future," and get on the band wagon that is constantly moving forward. Who would want to be identified with all the unpleasantnesses of the past? Others may well have had the conception earlier, but it was surely Macaulay who publicised it most powerfully and effectively for the nineteenth century. "Through the whole of that great movement," he wrote, "there have been, under some name or other, two sets of men, those who were before their age, and those who were ahead of it." The "great movement" is that extending from Magna Carta, 1215, to the Reform Act of 1832. It was in the bitter struggle to enact this latter piece of legislation that Macaulay won his epaulettes as one of the most brilliant of younger Whig politicians and began the successful political career that was to make him, among other things, independently wealthy. Whether the 1832 Act was in fact such a great ideological advance, some later critics doubted, maintaining that it merely entrenched the bourgeoisie in a position of solid political power in Britain for many decades. But Macaulay vigorously reinforced his theoretical position: "The History of England is emphatically the history of progress. It is the history of a constant movement of the public mind, of a constant change in the institutions of a great society." The progress is as inevitable as that of the tide coming in: "Each successive wave rushes forward, breaks, and rolls back; but the great flood is steadily coming in." This simple but heartwarming doctrine was stigmatised in 1931 by Herbert Butterfield as "the Whig interpretation of history". He summed it up as history written for "the ratification of the present" - history in which any event in the past that appeared to lead up to the state of affairs in England after the passage of the Reform Act of 1832, when Macaulay so successfully flourished, was approved, and any event that seemed to delay or hinder it was condemned. Butterfield might have written not merely "the ratification of the present,"

but the ratification of what is proclaimed to be the inevitable future. But the concept of Macaulay and others of ineluctable eventual progress in the political history of the world surely received its greatest setback in the last three-quarters of the twentieth century. It is hard now (I write this in the summer of 1993) to recall with what uncritical, even fanatical, belief the dogma was received, from the 1920s onward, by, among others, some of the most eminent "intellectuals" of the Western world, that the inevitable political and economic future of the world had been set out in a volume, Das Kapital, written in the 1850s by an obscure speculatist, Karl Marx. Its prophecies were as fervently believed as those of the Revelation of St. John the Divine are believed by some small Christian sects who have been prepared to commit ghastly atrocities in order to authenticate them. Marx's prophecies were supposed to have begun to be fulfilled by the Russian revolution of 1917, and indeed its leader, Lenin, and his successor Stalin, made much use of Marx to justify their actions, though serious students of Marx's writings argued that Marx himself would have been appalled by the use made of them. Nevertheless, it was agreed by many that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics represented the authentic "wave of the future". Did not the influential journalist Lincoln Steffens write, after a visit there in 1919, "I have seen the future, and it works"? And in later years did not such eminences as Bernard Shaw, Lady Astor, and the American ambassador Joseph E. Davies visit the place and confirm Steffens's finding? Thus it became the duty of every right-thinking individual to do whatever he could to foster its success and eventual taking over of the world, even if it meant acts of treason to their own countries by intellectuals educated in such places as Cambridge University, high-placed scientists, diplomatists, even the Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures, Knight Commander of the Victorian Order and Professor of Art History in the University of London. And then, after seventy years, the whole thing collapsed overnight. The "future", towards which the world was thought to be progressing, thanks to the earnest propaganda and sometimes more practical activities of so many dedicated individuals, was no more. What, if anything, will replace it? More to the point, if Samuel Johnson's dates had been 1909-1984, instead of two centuries earlier, would he have been taken in by all this persuasion, by some of the "finest minds" of the time? And if he had failed to respond to it, would he not have to be regretfully categorised as "unprogressive"? For, like it or not, Professor Nagashima's "progressive" has a strong connotation of approbation. To be "progressive" is to be one of the good guys. If, to take another obvious example, a German had in the 1930s expressed some doubt there about the validity of Hitler's vision of the future, the promised Thousand Years Reich, he would certainly have been set down as "unprogressive", if nothing worse. Not to be progressive means being - well, if not one of the bad guys, one of the more regrettable ones. We may admire Johnson for his many virtues. But of course he may have had his flaws, and, alas, a lack of full progressiveness might have been one, though perhaps we can forgive him for this (yet many commentators, relying chiefly on Macaulay's caricature of him, have never done so).

The converse of "progressive" is not "conservative" but "retrogressive" or, less precisely, "reactionary." Such a person wants to go backwards, not forwards. Did Johnson so wish? As Professor Nagashima points out, he certainly does not wish to go back to a time when kings were supposed to hold their crowns by divine right. He (or his collaborator Chambers) even rejects the element of religious consecration that still forms part of the coronation of a British monarch, and prefers to call the ceremony simply "inauguration", as though it were an American president. Does he look back with pleasure to the great days of Elizabeth I, when England displayed her prowess by soundly whipping the Spanish Armada? Far from it. He praises the North administration for having, by skilled diplomacy, prevented a pointless war with Spain over the Falkland Islands - and was much abused by the more "progressive" Whigs for doing so (including that great "conservative" Burke, who continued the abuse even after Johnson's death). Whig, or at least Pittite Whig, "progressiveness" at the time, vigorously supported by the London and Bristol business interests, consisted in encouraging naval and military aggressiveness in order to found a great commercially profitable overseas British Empire. In view of what eventually happened to that empire, and, with it, the British economy, it might be argued that Johnson took a longer-sighted, more "progressive" view of the situation than his opponents.

Over thirty years ago, Jeffrey Hart published an article maintaining that the central motif of Johnson's Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland is his nostalgic yearning for "the pre-Reformation Christian culture" of Scotland. Hart was immediately jumped on by five or six better informed Johnson scholars. Whether it was this traumatic encounter that discouraged him from continuing to involve himself in Johnson scholarship or something else, he went on to make his name as a journalistic exponent of what was then called "neo-conservatism." Certainly Johnson occasionally displays some fondness for what he thinks of as merits of the old feudal system in the Highlands, gone beyond recall. But he clearly sees things as they are. Boswell reports,

I said, I believed mankind were happier in the ancient feudal state of subordination, than they are in the modern state of independency - Johnson. 'To be sure, the Chief was: but we must think of the number of individuals. That they were less happy, seems plain; for that state from which all escape as soon as they can, and to which none return after they have left it, must be less happy; and this is the state of dependence on a chief or great man.'

He gives a vivid picture of the squalor and hopelessness of the life of a Highland crofter, and, though he regrets the harm emigration is doing to welfare of Britain, says frankly that he well understands the crofters' wish to escape to the independence and opportunities they find in North America.

An alternative dichotomy to that of "progressive" versus "retrogressive" or "reactionary" is of course that mocked by W.S. Gilbert, who marvels

... how nature does contrive
That ev'ry boy and ev'ry gal
That's born into this world alive
Is either a little Liberal
Or else a little Conservative.

The terms remain in use as designations of active political parties in Britain and Canada. To what extent do they represent consistent and opposing political ideologies? Johnson's definitions of "liberal" in his Dictionary are no more helpful to the student of political ideology than the one of "conservative," cited above: "1. Not mean; not low in birth; not low in mind. 2. Becoming a gentleman. 3. Munificent; generous; bountiful; not parsimonious." To have called Johnson politically either a liberal or a conservative in his own lifetime would have made no sense to him or to one's hearers. The Oxford English Dictionary's citations of the words in their political sense come chiefly from the 1830s and 1840s. In its definition of "liberal" under the rubric "of political opinions" it permits itself some ideological description: "Favourable to constitutional changes and legal or administrative reforms tending in the direction of freedom or democracy Opposed to Conservative." It also gives a brief but rather interesting historical sketch of the word, differentiating its use in English from that in French and Spanish political history, but ending with the questionable assertion, though one still believed by many unfamiliar with older British political history, "The new names 'Liberal' and 'Conservative' took the place of 'Whig' and 'Tory' as the usual appellations of the two great parties in the state." The adjective "conservative" is "the most common current designation of one of the two great English political parties, the characteristic principle of which is maintenance of existing institutions political and ecclesiastical." As a noun it is "a Tory," tout court.

Here we still have Macaulay's eternal obsession with political dichotomies, which he seemed to believe had been established from the beginning of time by a "hidden hand," much as he believed his other main obsession, the sacred principles of Adam-Smithian free trade, had been. What he and the compilers of the OED would have done with the British political scene from the 1920s onward, when there were not two but three "great parties in the state," is hard to imagine. The eighteenth-century Whig/Tory dichotomy still plagues us. Sir Lewis Namier declared that a perfectly adequate political history of eighteenth-century Britain could be written without the use of a single party label. But of course modern historians, like Macaulay before them, finds it more dramatic (and easier) to write history dealing with the ups and downs of the fortunes of these hypothetical ideological entities than with the much tougher problem of the complex activities and motivations of the actual human participants. The OED gives a number of quotations to show that the favoured designation in the early nineteenth century was in fact "liberal-conservative." That too was the official name for its first eighty years or so of the party

which, at the time this is written, is in power in Ottawa. Then, around the 1920s, someone had the brilliant inspiration that it was wrong, or at least poor publicity, for it to share an adjective with its traditional opponents, the Liberal party (though during the course of the history of the "two great parties" of the Canadian state, many have remarked that the ideological differences between them are so minute as to be barely perceptible). So it became officially simply "The Conservative Party". Then in the 1940s there was another brain wave. The party's electoral fortunes were at a low ebb. It was thought that they might be improved by forming an alliance with the premier of the province of Manitoba, John Bracken, who had proved himself a sure vote-getter. Premier Bracken, however, had been elected as the head of the Progressive party, a western Canadian version of the Farm-Labour "populist" movement in the neighbouring States. Mr Bracken agreed to accept the leadership of the older party, but only on condition that it change its name to the "Progressive Conservative" party. It still made a miserable showing in the next general election, but considerably improved it in later ones. There was one unexpected and ironic consequence of the newer designation. The president of the "Young Progressive Conservative" association wanted to make a brief holiday trip to Florida. He was stopped at the U.S. border and refused admittance. Why? Because it was in the McCarthyite era of the 1950s, and any organisation bearing the label "progressive" must somehow be allied to the Communists. Such anecdotes, while trivial, emphasise the fact that one can learn virtually nothing about the actual political ideology of an individual from the labels affixed to him. Are "left-wing" and "right-wing" any improvement? The terms are supposed to have originated with the semicircular seating of the French National Assembly, 1789, where those placing themselves on the left were supposed thereby to demonstrate that they were more in favour of drastic revolutionary measures than those seated on the right, with those who were uncertain vaguely hovering in the centre. The British and Canadian arrangement of two separated and facing rows of benches - supposed to be the result of the fact that the House of Commons used to meet in St Stephen's Chapel, where the stalls were so arranged - might seem at first to encourage dichotomy. But it is a simple and easily understood dichotomy, "Government" versus "Opposition" (formerly "Court" versus "Country"; in reality, "ins" versus "outs"), and after a general election or a vote of want of confidence, the left quickly becomes right, and right left.

The sudden collapse of the Communist régime in Soviet Russia in the late 1980s caused great problems for journalists and other writers. For decades the accepted wisdom was that anyone who demonstrated any favour or even tolerance toward Marxist theory of Communist practice was automatically to be designated a "leftist" or described as "liberal"; those opposed to either or both were "right-wingers" or "conservatives." Suddenly the Communists were out of power, and Messrs Gorbachev and Yeltsin in. Almost overnight the "media" had to revise their terminology. Those who supported Gorbachev and Yeltsin were now the "liberals"; those who adhered to Marxism and wanted to see the Communist régime restored were "conservatives" or "right-wingers." Perhaps by the time this

discussion appears in print the situation will have again been reversed, and those in Russia who want to restore the happy Marxist state so rudely snatched from them will once more have become "progressives", "leftists," and "liberals." My local newspaper, the Los Angeles Times, several days a week prints two columns of opinion on its "Commentary" page. One, running down the left side of the page, is called, wittily, "Column Left," the other on the opposite side, "Column Right." In the good old days of the Cold War, one could pretty well predict what kind of thing would appear in each column. Now all is confusion and bewilderment. Someone writes opposing possible reductions in Social Security payments. Left or right? Someone else writes advocating military intervention in what used to be Yugoslavia or expressing skepticism about the future of the European Community or the North American Free Trade Agreement. Right or left? Perhaps, mercifully, some obliging issue will come up again on which the debaters can be neatly aligned on either side of a clearcut dichotomy.

To get back to Samuel Johnson. Was he "progressive" on such an important issue as the expansion of the British Empire? Obviously not. On the issue of the emigration of Scottish Highlanders to North America? Yes and no; but, in the end, judging the question from the standpoint of the Highlanders themselves, definitely yes. On the question of the abolition of Negro slavery, he was as "progressive" as could possibly be imagined. Certainly, following the OED's definition of "Liberal," he would have been passionately in favour of legal reforms tending in the direction of freedom. Would he have been "progressive" on the matters of Marxist theory and its alleged implementation by Lenin and Stalin? One can only suppose that, like most of his compatriots, he would have been horrified by the unspeakable atrocities perpetrated by them. On the other hand it is quite conceivable that he might have read Marx's theoretical writings with interest and even possible approval, as he did those of the almost equally controversial Bernard Mandeville. On the question of his "conservatism", defined by N Hudson and quoted by Professor Nagashima as "desire for stability and order" (and by the OED as "the principle of the maintenance of existing institutions political and ecclesiastical" - the compiler was forgetting the "high Tory" Duke of Wellington's scrapping the ancient laws against the Roman Catholics in 1829, the "liberal conservative" Peel's doing the same with the Corn Laws in 1846, the Conservative Disraeli's substantially expanding the franchise in 1867), I have never been able to see that Johnson had a greater desire for stability and order than most people have - indeed I think that very possibly he had a much lesser one. His supposed toast at Oxford, "Here's to the next insurrection of the Negroes in the West Indies," is not well substantiated - Boswell, who reports it, gives no date, time, or place for it, but elsewhere he expresses his shocked indignation at Johnson's outrageous rejection of a doctrine so universally accepted as the desirability of the Negro slave trade, a "very important and necessary branch of commercial interest," which "in all ages GOD himself has sanctioned." But it fits in well enough with Johnson's fulminations in print against slavery - "The English barbarians who inhabit the southern islands of America," "Jamaica, a place of great wealth and dreadful wickedness, a den of tyrants and a dungeon of slaves." No desire for preserving the status quo here.

Nor the status quo elsewhere in North America, where his Idler No 81 is perhaps the most bitter and inflammatory denunciation ever written of the oppression of the native Americans by the European invaders, provided with gunpowder, horses, and steel armour, things unknown to the natives. Johnson's spokesman, as "Indian" (so-called) chief, watches with relish while the two warring European armies slaughter each other on the Plains of Abraham, and proposes to his followers that when both are exhausted by the battle they rush down upon them, drive them to their ships, and force them to return to the lands they came from and leave the natives in peace.

Johnson wrote that it would have been happier for the human race if those two great explorers and pioneers of the exploitation of the inhabitants of the "third world", Columbus and Vasco de Gama, had never been born. This was hardly the received wisdom among Johnson's contemporaries, or indeed for generations to come. His Idler No. 22, in the original numbering, a diatribe against war, was so violent that it was silently omitted in the collected edition and the remaining Idlers renumbered, perhaps in the hope that this inflammatory piece, published at a time when all England was rejoicing at its military successes in the Seven Years War, might be forgotten. Johnson began his career as a writer with ferocious pamphlet attacks on the current powerful ministry of Sir Robert Walpole, one of which was so violent that it was said the government issued a warrant for his arrest and that he had to go into hiding for a time. I find it hard to think such and attitudes those of a man who was temperamentally or ideologically attracted to the preservation of order and stability or to the maintenance of existing institutions merely because they exist. Professor Nagashima writes that "it is surprising that Greene does not say anything whatever about Johnson's conservatism". Perhaps that is because I can find little evidence in Johnson of what Professor Nagashima and others conceive of as conservatism, apart from young Tom Macaulay's memorable and often parroted assertion (made for his own political purposes) that Johnson was a "bigoted Tory".

Professor Nagashima argues that the Chambers/Johnson Vinerian law lectures demonstrate Johnson's conservatism not only (presumably) because they contradict Blackstone's unhistorical adulation of Magna Carta and other mediaeval documents as foreshadowing the burgeoning of Whig-supported "liberty" and "democracy" in Blackstone's lifetime (a good example of the Macaulayesque "Whig interpretation" of the inevitability of political "progress") but because the lectures were not so "democratic as to put the rights of individuals before the happiness of society." Of course all law in civilised countries often puts the happiness of society above the rights of individuals. To take a homely example: I have just had my automobile driving licence for the state of California renewed for another five years. But the renewal is accompanied by a warning (sent to all applicants) that if, on being stopped on suspicion of drunk driving, and a blood or urine test, which I am legally required to take, shows an alcohol content of greater than .08% in my blood stream, the licence may be revoked and I may be punished by a term in prison for wilfully endangering the happiness of innocent members of society who have had the misfortune to be physically present on the same road where I was driving. This of course is a restriction on my right as an individual to get drunk whenever

I feel like it. But is it undemocratic? Again, a good share of the taxes that I, as an individual, am required to pay to various governmental bodies, goes to the provision of relief for those whose incomes are below the poverty level, to pay for medical treatment which they cannot afford, to feed, clothe, and educate their children. The happiness of society as a whole is placed before my right as an individual to spend the money I have earned as I like. Is this an undemocratic state of affairs? Johnson of course summed up the matter in a notorious pamphlet of his called Taxation No Tyranny. What I find particularly interesting in the passage quoted is the assertion that "no man is naturally willing that his happiness should be diminished to increase another's, or that the profit should be divided among many when the labour or the danger is all his own," so that "it is apparent that some public authority must be necessary to overrule single opinion, or private interest." This of course raises the perennial question in economic matters of private enterprise versus public regulation. Macaulay was a vehement advocate of private enterprise - see his essay on Southey's Colloquies, where he tells government to keep its nose out of private industry and business; the "hidden hand" will see to it that, under laissez faire, all will turn out for the best in the best of all possible worlds. (Oddly, Macaulay himself seems to have had few personal involvements in private business and industry).

But his doctrine perhaps gave the real meaning to the term "liberal" as the name of one of what were for a time in the nineteenth century the "two great parties" in the British state, a party of which Macaulay was proud to be a pioneering theorist. "Liberalism" meant "freedom" - freedom to make money in the most effective ways one can devise, by whatever means one finds most lucrative, without interference by soft-headed, bleeding-heart government officials worrying about the use of child labour, long working hours, minimal pay, intolerable working and living conditions, and so on. One can read Macaulay's vicious attacks on the sentimental and wrong-headed Tory do-gooders, Michael Sadler and Richard Oastler, who were so perverse as to try to push through Parliament legislation enacting a maximum ten-hour working day and regulating the use of child labour in factories. (For a detailed account of the long and painful struggle to obtain legal recognition that factory workers had some minimal rights to humane treatment - a struggle which tends to be forgotten because it was led by "conservatives" not "liberals", and indeed was opposed by "liberals" like Macaulay - see Cecil Driver, Tory Radical: A Life of Oastler, New York; Oxford, 1946).

Later in the nineteenth century the great Liberal hero Gladstone became the heir to some at least of Macaulay's doctrine of governmental non-interference, while erstwhile Tories such as Lord Shaftesbury and Conservatives such as Disraeli were sympathetic to governmentally sponsored actions to alleviate the lot of workers. The irony comes in the early twentieth-century United States, where Supreme Court justices appointed by Republicans used the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution to invalidate governmental attempts to control the "right of free contract" of industry and business to extort whatever terms they could from their workers to maximise the profits of the corporations'

shareholders. Those who upheld such practices were called "conservatives," and when the Democratic President F.D. Roosevelt, in his "New Deal," instituted a set of powerful governmental bodies to monitor and control the methods of operation of privately owned industries, he was called (and denounced) as a "liberal", and the principle of governmental oversight and regulation of privately owned business, as well as governmental concern for the welfare of less advantage citizens, is still known (and condemned) in the United States as "liberalism". Conversely, in recent years in Great Britain, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher prided herself on her hard-headed "conservatism" in "privatising" formerly governmentally owned and operated industries, returning them to individual ownership, on the theory that the private sphere will run them more efficiently than the public one. Because of this recrudescence of the spirit of Macaulay or, arguably, Adam Smith, she has, in spite of her cherished label of "conservative", sometimes been described as a "neo-liberal", and, from the perspective of nineteenth-century British political history, this term seems the more accurate one. But when Professor Nagashima writes of the principle enunciated in the Chambers/Johnson lectures that the general happiness of society takes precedence over the "rights" of individuals, "It is no abuse of the term . . . to call this attitude 'conservative,' "I think he might find it difficult to persuade Lady Thatcher to agree with him.

I mention all this terminological confusion, not because I think it will help Professor Nagashima to decide whether Johnson should be placed in the pigeon hole marked "conservative" or in that marked "progressive", but rather to try to persuade him that in worrying about such categorisation he is wasting valuable time and mental energy that might be devoted to more profitable activities. Whatever label one decides finally to place on him, Johnson remains the same highly thoughtful, highly learned, highly observant, highly compassionate individual, whose conclusions about the human condition deserve careful study and pondering. If I had to select one label to characterise his political attitudes, it would probably be, as I once suggested, "meliorist" - one who consistently wants to see improvement in the way human beings live and act; and, given the ghastly history of the human race in the twentieth century, now fortunately drawing to its close, there is almost infinite room for improvement. Another label might be the rather pedantic sounding "utilitarian" - one who, in Francis Hutcheson's phrase, judges political actions according to whether or not they contribute to the greatest happiness of the greatest number.

In all this, let us not forget the epigraph, from Horace, that Johnson prefixed to his Rambler, "Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri" - "committed to the dogma of no 'authority'", whether a "progressive" visionary of the future, like Marx, or a romantic "conservative" or "reactionary" like Burke, who looked back with nostalgia to "the age of chivalry". (Curiously, Johnson saw Marie Antoinette at about the same time Burke must have seen her, but the sight raised in him no such rhapsodic imagery as Burke's). The motto of course is that of the great Royal Society of London for the Improvement of Natural Knowledge, chartered in 1662 by King Charles II, founding fathers of modern

experimental and empiricist science, who declared their independence of authoritative "systems" such as those of Aristotle and Galen and asserted their determination to make up their minds independently on the basis of their own observations. A similar exhortation, "Question authority!", became popular in the supposedly rebellious years of the 1960s; "question it," not necessarily reject it. I cannot think of a more accurate description of the way Johnson's mind worked. There were numerous acquaintances of his, such as Hogarth and Hester Thrale, who expressed their surprise at how intensely skeptical his thinking was. And perhaps most skeptics are conservatives, in that they tend to question grandiose declarations of principle such as Thomas Jefferson's. Is it not odd, indeed perverse, when, as Johnson put it, we listen to the loudest yelps for liberty from the drivers of Negroes and applaud them; when we acclaim Jefferson, who "owned" two hundred slaves, as a great "liberal", "democrat", and "progressive", but look suspiciously at Samuel Johnson, who was appalled at the notion that one human being could "own" another human being, and who virtually adopted as his son a young former slave from Jamaica, did his best to educate him, and made him the residuary legatee to his estate, as a "conservative" and "reactionary"?

Let me conclude this section of this already overlong piece with what might be called a happy ending. The villain of it has, of course, been Thomas Babington, first Baron Macaulay, whom we remember all too well as having pronounced, when he was the young star journalist of the Edinburgh Review in the 1830s, such judgments as that Johnson was "the most bigoted of Tories" and that he had no knowledge of or interest in anything beyond a square mile or so of London centred on Fleet Street. It is pleasant to encounter, in Macaulay's splendid History of England, written some twenty years later, this footnote to his long and deserved denunciation of those English and Anglo-Irish who despised or ignored the native Celtic population of Ireland:

On this subject Johnson was the most liberal politician of his time. "The Irish," he said with great warmth, "are in a most unnatural state: for we see here the minority prevailing over the majority." I suspect that Alderman Beckford and Alderman Sawbridge [Whig financial magnates in the City, who disagreed vigorously with Johnson's position in the affairs of Wilkes and the Falkland Islands] would have been far from sympathising with him. Charles O'Connor, whose unfavourable opinion of the Whig Lucas I have quoted, pays . . . a high compliment to the liberality of the Tory Johnson. (Chap. XVII, Everyman ed., 1906, II, 354).

And in this context, by "liberal" and "liberality" Macaulay does not mean "munificence". Moreover, although it took him fourteen years to do so, Macaulay eventually came round to supporting the Ten Hours Bill of Shaftesbury, Sadler, and Oastler. There is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, etc.

Professor Nagashima kindly devotes some space to my views on how to edit Johnson's writings. I'm not sure whether or not he intends to suggest here that I'm being "progressive". I'm not a trained bibliographer or textual critic, though the work I did as a graduate student at Columbia University under that very fine bibliographer, Allen Hazen, was certainly most helpful. My point of view about editing Johnson's writings for a modern reader is a very simple one. For the vast majority of his prose writings, we have usually only one textual "authority", their first known appearance in print, although some important works, the Dictionary and the Shakespeare, are known to contain important revisions by him in later editions.

But what are we to do with early journalistic writings, such as those which appeared in the Gentleman's Magazine, and, for that matter, The Rambler, where the printers imposed on Johnson's text their then standard "house style," which meant that all nouns were capitalised, as in German today, all proper nouns italicised, and generally, heavier punctuation used than is now the case (we now make the useful distinction of setting off "non-restrictive" subordinate clauses from the rest of the sentence with commas so as to distinguish them from "restrictive" clauses, which are not so set off; throughout most of the eighteenth century, all subordinate clauses were so set off).

There was considerable clamour by reviewers when the Idler and Rambler volumes first appeared in the Yale edition without the capitalised common nouns and italicised proper nouns found in their first printed editions. Were we not somehow falsifying Johnson's intentions and concealing useful clues to what his original MSS may have read? The answer is "not at all." From what scanty manuscript material of Johnson's we have, we learn that he used capital letters quite economically and that his punctuation was relatively light - that in this respect, as in many others, he tended to be rather modern. The capitals and italics of the Gentleman's Magazine texts were imposed on his MSS by the rigid "house style" of early eighteenth-century printshops. In sixteenth and early seventeenth-century English printing, the compositors may have had more licence or at least worked with less consistency, so that it may be possible to argue that, in difficult texts like those of Shakespeare's, a minute study of typographical practices - for instance, in the famous "way/May of life" crux - may afford some clues to what Shakespeare's original intentions may have been (not, of course, that he may not have changed those intentions as time went on, as Wordsworth changed his intentions in The Prelude; I was once given an account of a conversation with Tom Stoppard, who, when a play of his was having a long run in the West End, said that he made a habit of attending a performance of it every now and then to see whether it could be improved, and, when it seemed desirable, making changes then and there in the actors' scripts). But with Johnson, when a piece of his was printed in the current monthly

number of the Gentleman's Magazine, there, for the most part, it has remained for posterity to examine, with the typesetters' capitals, italics, and all (there are a few notable exceptions, when later editions, probably revised by Johnson, came out). But then, of course, at mid-century, came the great English typographical revolution, when most printers discarded the old capitals and italics and adopted something fairly close to present-day usage in those matters. The use of the "long s" held out for somewhat longer - John Bell, in The British Theatre, 1770s-1790s, is said to have been the printer to discard it. But, oddly, critics who complain when the Gentleman's Magazine's capitals and italics are regularised in modern editions, and, when they themselves publish editions of earlier eighteenth-century works, religiously reproduce them, never dream of reproducing the "long s" found in their originals. (And, indeed, it could cause trouble: when the first editor of Johnson to reprint his review in the Literary Magazine, 1756, of Joseph Warton's Essay on Pope, he had Johnson objecting to Warton's statement that "Robert of Gloucester's wife is an alexandrine". A puzzling statement indeed, which bothered later Johnsonian editors. Did it mean that the lady came from Alexandria? Some editors printed the phrase as "Robert of Gloucester's Wife," thinking, or hoping, that there was a mediaeval poem by that name. What Johnson undoubtedly wrote and the Literary Magazine accurately reproduced was that the verse of the thirteenth-century metrical Chronicle of England attributed to Robert of Gloucester is not in a six-foot measure but "fourteeners".)

But one can see, in J.D. Fleeman's useful collection of facsimiles of the earliest printed editions of biographical writings by Johnson (Early Biographical Writings, Farnborough, England: Gregg, 1973), how odd the press-imposed capitals and italics of his writings of the 1730s look when printed together with those from the 1760s and later, and one wonders what use the preservation of them in a modern edition would be. Of some, perhaps, to a historian of typographical practice; none that I can see to a student of Samuel Johnson's thought, prose style, and general literary artistry.

What Dr. Fleeman's thoughtful comments, quoted by Professor Nagashima, on the present state of opinion about how to edit Johnson's writings for modern intelligent readers seem to add up to (and he is able to call on the great name of Sir Walter Greg to support this) is that each editor will have to work out his own salvation (and that of his author) according to his own lights; we are "forced back on our critical judgement"; each particular situation presents its own problems, which have to be studied and pondered in situ, and it is useless to hope for general "rules" that will apply to all cases. (And is this not what was argued above concerning Johnson's approach to political matters, and is it not what he memorably declared in his preface to his edition of Shakespeare concerning criticism of the drama?)

Those who like neat, comprehensive, easily grasped "rules" which can be quickly and mindlessly applied to any editorial (or political or literary-critical) situation will sneer at such advice and dismiss it as "eclecticism".

(Those who do so might do well to study some of the prefaces of that very great classical scholar, A.E. Housman, and learn the difference between eclecticism and the use of genuine critical judgement.) The first editorial committee of the Yale Johnson edition, headed by that fine student of textual and bibliographical problems, Allen Hazen, found no great need to impose many rigid "rules" on the individual editors. On one of the rare occasions when it did, the result was not a particularly happy one. The question was raised whether British or American spelling should be used in annotation and prefatory material in the volumes of the edition. Some members of the committee argued that, presumably as a tribute to Johnson's British nationality, British spelling should be used. Among those opposing the suggestion, I recall, were the general editor, Allen Hazen, myself (a Canadian), and, most interestingly, R. W. Chapman, for many years Secretary to the Delegates of the Oxford University Press. Chapman maintained that since the edition was to be printed and published in the United States and since the majority of its editors, purchasers, and readers would be American, it seemed perverse to use British spelling. Nevertheless the motion was adopted and the Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English was made the authority for spelling in the edition. Thus for a time the word "connexion" appeared in its early volumes, a form never used on the western side of the Atlantic and very seldom on the eastern side. But the current edition of the C.O.D. gave it preference over "connection" and so, apparently, we were stuck with it. What the movers of the resolution had forgotten - and this seems a strange thing for students of a famous lexicographer to forget - is that dictionaries can have a succession of editions as usage changes, and the next edition of the C.O.D. preferred "connection" over "connexion". I haven't checked to see how the Yale Johnson is now handling the problem.

But no legislation by a general editorial committee is likely to be able to cope with the great variety of practical problems an individual editor may happen to encounter. Here is an example of the unexpected sort of thing he may run into. Preparing Johnson's too little known Life of Cheynel, a small masterpiece of dry, deadpan irony at the expense of a doctrinaire "Puritan" whom Johnson evidently detested, for publication in an anthology in The Oxford Authors series, I encountered, in the only authoritative "copy text", the first printing in Christopher Smart's journal The Student in 1751, the passage "From Sussex he [Cheynel] went often to London, where in 1643 he preached three times before the parliament, and, returning in November to Colchester" Well, (I was almost about to imitate Macaulay and write "as every schoolboy knows"), Colchester is in Essex and nowhere near Sussex; Cheynel spent much of his life in Sussex, being for a time vicar of Petworth, a few miles from Chichester, and dying "at a small village near Chichester, on a paternal estate." "Colchester" is a slip either of Johnson's pen or of the typesetter's fingers. Should it be perpetuated in a twentieth-century edition of the work? I could not see what possible advantage would result from doing so, and printed "Chichester" (to be sure, with a note saying what the reading of the "copy text" was). A perhaps somewhat trickier example. In Johnson's "Introduction to the Political State of Great-Britain," 1756, the copy text states that "Canada or New-France is situated eastward of our [i.e. British] colonies, between which they [the

French-Canadians] pass up the great river of St. Lawrence, with Newfoundland on the north, and Nova Scotia on the south." A glance at a map at once tells us that they passed westward, not eastward. Was Johnson really so ignorant of geography? Was it just an instance of Homer nodding? Or did a typesetter misread Johnson's crabbed handwriting - a not unusual occurrence? I wanted to correct the mistake in the Yale volume of Johnson's Political Writings, but was overruled by the general editor. I'm still not sure which of us was right. But there's a footnote to tell the reader what the problem was.

May I conclude with a correction of a minor misunderstanding by Professor Nagashima? He implies (p. 43) that "the 'leanness' of the explanatory notes" in the Yale Johnson edition was the result of a decision by the editorial committee. This is not so. The original "style sheet" for the edition contained a warning against such garrulous and long-winded notes as those of Birkbeck Hill at the beginning of his edition of Johnson's autobiographical "Annals", where we are told what Benjamin Franklin thought about the change in the calendar in 1752, that, according to Adam Smith, the year 1709 was one of "great dearth", that the first recorded use in print in English of the word accoucheur is in Tristram Shandy in 1759. But there is no recommendation of "leanness" in annotation merely for leanness's sake. The senior editor of The Idler (Vol. II) and The Rambler (Vols. III-V) uses the word in his prefaces in what seems a tone of self-congratulation. But this is without the authority of the editorial committee, and indeed it has been commented that The Rambler, with the wealth of intellectual allusion in its text, still awaits an adequately annotated edition. Editors of later volumes, such as Nos. X and XVI, who have felt that heavy annotation was needed in order to make their texts fully comprehensible to their readers, have not been hindered from supplying it.

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BOOK REVIEWS:

MONTAGU, LADY MARY WORTLEY. *ESSAYS AND POEMS AND 'SIMPLICITY', A COMEDY*, ed. Robert Halsband and Isobel Grundy (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).

PIERREPONT, LADY MARY. *INDAMORA TO LINDAMIRA*, ed. Isobel Grundy (Alberta: Juvenilia, 1994).

Lady Mary is known to most of us through hostile witnesses: we remember the 'old mazarine blue wrapper' of Horace Walpole's bitchy description and Pope's aspersion that the unwary were liable to be 'Foxed by her Love or libelled by her Hate'; we know she was Henry Fielding's cousin, that she campaigned for vaccination, and was a great letter-writer, who complained about women's education.

Few of us have actually read her, because her works have not been widely distributed, though I was lucky enough to see a recent production of her comedy, *Simplicity*. The late Robert Halsband and Isobel Grundy's scholarly edition is now available in paperback. For the first time I have been able to read the full text of her poetically accomplished, but cruel, attack on Pope after their friendship had ruptured.

Original spellings are retained, though punctuation is 'adjusted' and there are other discreet emendations. Grundy's 1992 introduction wisely warns against anachronistic interpretation, showing that the author's feminism was not of the twentieth-century kind and that she often wrote on either side of a question. It emphasises Lady Mary's political interests and suggests she would have made a competent member of Parliament. I learned a great deal from the footnotes, which though economical carry an immense weight of scholarship. It was as particularly interesting to learn that, in the period, carving was the lady's duty, while her husband pushed the bottle, and she not only had to take lessons in the art, but was expected to lay slices on individual plates.

Grundy has also edited Lady Mary's juvenile epistolatory novel, with delightful illustrations by Juliet McMaster. The University of Alberta Department of English are publishing, with student involvement, early works by famous authors. Annotations here are by Susan Hillabold. I wondered whether a 'marble Mercury' needed annotating, then realised that outside Europe it probably does. As literacy declines, we need all the annotation we can get.

Valerie Grosvenor Myer.