Madam, you who so often occasion a want of seats to other people, will the more easily excuse the want of one yourself.

—Johnson to the great actress Mrs. Siddons.
# Table of Contents

## From the Editor ............................................. 4

## Features

Teaching Samuel Johnson
  Teaching Johnson in a Time of War
  *Elizabeth Croft* ........................................ 6

Johnsoniana
  *Yale Alumni Magazine, May/June 2007*
  *Gordon Turnbull* ........................................ 11
  “A Lexicon! A Lexicon!”
  *Lisa Berglund* .......................................... 11
  *New York Times Book Review, 10 June 2007*
  *Roy W. Menninger* ........................................ 13
  Dr. Johnson Revival Shows That Old Jokes Really Are Best
  Hammer Attack on £1.7m Painting
  *Matthew Davis* .......................................... 14

## Reports

Yale Boswell Editions Notes
  *Gordon Turnbull* ........................................ 17

The Johnsonians Dinner, 2007
  *Peter Kanter* ............................................ 24

Samuel Johnson Society of Southern California
  *O M Brack, Jr.* ......................................... 26

Samuel Johnson Society of Australia
  *Bryan Reid* ............................................... 26

Samuel Johnson Club of Japan
  *Shigeru Shibagaki* ...................................... 28

Johnson at Bucknell
  *Greg Clingham* .......................................... 30

Johnson at Dartmouth
  *J. T. Scanlan* ............................................ 32

## Notes and Queries

Exploring the Theatre History of the Eighteenth Century:
  My Experience of Curating an Exhibition on Johnson and the Theatre
  *Fiona Ritchie* ............................................ 35
Johnson on Philips via Cicero on Lucretius
    Barry Baldwin ........................................ 42
Anna Williams’s Miscellanies in Prose and Verse in the
    Houghton Library
    Greg Clingham ......................................... 44
Query
    Marcus A. McCorison .................................. 46

Book Reviews
Agustín Coletes Blanco, trans. and ed.: Viaje a las islas
    occidentales de Escocia
    John Stone ............................................. 47
Andrew Billen: Who Was Sam Johnson the Wonderful
    Word Doctor
    Matthew Davis ......................................... 54
Giovanni Iamartino and Robert DeMaria, Jr., eds.: 
    Textus: English Studies in Italy. Samuel Johnson’s
    Dictionary and the Eighteenth-Century World of Words
    Elizabeth Hedrick .................................... 55

Remembrances
John H. Middendorf
    John Richetti ......................................... 59
John Middendorf: A Teaching Tribute
    Allen Reddick ........................................ 61

A Call For Contributions

The editors of the JNL invite contributions of notes, queries, 
Johnsoniana, and short articles on any and all matters regard-
ing Johnson and his circle (social, political, and intellectual). 
Contributions to the March issue are due 22 November; those 
for the September issue are due 22 May.
he death of a friend is almost always unexpected: we do not love to think of it, and therefore are not prepared for its coming,” (Johnson to Lucy Porter, 10 November 1783).

In this issue we sadly mark the passing of John H. Middendorf, who edited the Johnsonian News Letter in one capacity or another for forty years. John first appeared on the masthead of the News Letter in 1951 when he became the assistant editor. He was acting editor in 1958-59 while Jim Clifford was on sabbatical in the remote capital of the British Isles. He was “full co-ordinate editor” from 1960 and full editor from at least 1978, when Jim Clifford died, until 1990, when he handed the editorship over to one of his best students, Stuart Sherman. In addition to editing and managing the News Letter all those years, John wrote literally hundreds of book reviews for the journal. On my shelves is a four-volume bound set of the numbers published between 1945 and 1960; in the margins John marked with initials the authors of many of the reviews: the volumes are covered with the vertical series “JHM.” This is far from the only mark that John made on Johnsonian studies.

Testimonials from two of John’s many successful students appear at the end of this issue; they suggest that like all great teachers John engendered many more works than he produced, and he inspired heart-felt loyalty and gratitude in those who studied with him. John’s wide circle of productive and, in their turn, inspiring scholars may be the greatest testimony to the success of his career, but there is also an impressive body of his own work. Some of this work, like his efforts for the News Letter and thirty years as general editor of the Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson, went on “behind the scenes.” John was constantly editing the work of others and helping it into the light. As a mid-wife, Middendorf was gentle and kind but precise and demanding as well. (He was the outside reader for my first book, as I learned many years later, not from him; he recommended publication but he articulated an intelligent line of criticism that I could only ignore at my peril.) As a creator of work in his own right, John was deliberate, steady, and impeccably accurate. (His essay on Locke and Johnson, for example, is unsurpassed despite all the work that has been done on that intellectual relationship since he published it in 1971.) The great project of John’s life is still to see the light, but happily he left
it all but complete. The three volumes of the *Lives of the Poets*, the crowning achievement of Johnson's life and of the Yale Edition, is now making its way through the press, and will certainly come out in time for Johnson's tercentenary in 2009. Yale University Press and the Editorial Board of the Yale Johnson are collaborating to make sure the price for these three volumes is manageable for Johnsonians, so the books will not be confined to institutional libraries but will make their way into our homes and hearts.

Johnson's beloved *Lives* could not have a more endearing or a more precise editor than John H. Middendorf, and in Maureen McGowan, John's widow, and a veteran editor in her own right, it could not have a better mid-wife in its final throes of production. But there is no shortage of literary attendants. Maureen will have the help of the several scholars who edited various individual lives—James Gray (Savage), Stephen Fix (Milton), Jim Battersby (Addison), J. A.V. Chapple (Dryden), and James May (Young)—as well as other members of the Editorial Board of the Yale Edition. It will be my pleasure as the new chairman of that board to do whatever I can to help. Our progress, you can be sure, will be noted in these pages.

[Signature]

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JNLKAD
Teaching Samuel Johnson

Teaching Johnson in a Time of War

In my twenty years in the English Department of the University of Georgia, I have taught the Age of Johnson five or six times, most memorably during the first and the second Gulf Wars. While I vary the second half of the course from year to year, the first half remains the same. We read Johnson's London, Life of Savage, Vanity of Human Wishes, Rambler, Idler, Adventurer, Rasselas, Prefaces to the Dictionary and to the Shakespeare edition, and sometimes some of the Lives of the Poets. We try to concentrate on the works themselves, making an effort to encounter Johnson through his writing before we look at his life. London usually leaves the students cold, but Life of Savage amuses them. By the time we get to the essays, they are hooked—either in antagonistic opposition to what they invariably (and, to me, inexplicably) call Johnson's "arrogance," or in sympathetic accord with his humane effort to assert a system of values in a world that is, in some ways, surprisingly similar to their own.

I use the Oxford World's Classics anthology edited by Donald Greene as the class text of Johnson's works. His selection of essays includes Idlers 22 (original numbering) and 81 (original numbering) which he titles editorially "The Vultures' View of Man" and "European Oppression in America," respectively. Both, of course, contain powerful arguments against war—the first, war in general, and the second, war of imperialistic conquest. During the first Gulf War, one of my students was so moved by Idler 22 that he or she (I never discovered the student's identity) wrote a poem based on the Mother Vulture's indictment of Man as a "friend to vultures." The student displayed the poem on the walls of Park Hall where our English Department resides, and others experienced it as a "found poem" or a "protest poster" (or both) rather than as a class reading. My only complaint was that Johnson was nowhere acknowledged, a matter that seemed very important to me at the time, but less important as time has passed. Such a spontaneous reaction cannot be coerced; nevertheless, it prompted me to introduce contemporary analogies into the class discussion when I recently taught the
course. Polls had long indicated that our military action in Iraq had lost much of its (strange) appeal, and so it was with little hesitation that I asked the students to consider the two Idlers in light of our engagement in the Middle East—our motives and the possible consequences. How analogous were the situations represented by the Seven Years’ War and Bush’s War? How effective would Johnson’s rhetorical strategies be if employed in anti-war propaganda regarding Iraq?

I provided several options by which interested students could address this question. The first was a mere class discussion. I devoted about seven minutes to the question and the responses. Idler 81 seemed “right on” to the students: “What reward can induce the possessor of a country to admit a stranger more powerful than himself? Fraud or terror must operate in such contracts; either they promised protection they never have afforded, or instruction which they never imparted.” But Idler 22’s general satire, which had so moved the students of Gulf War I, angered the children of our second foray into Saddam’s world. There have been, after all, just wars! I left the question hanging: was the Seven Years’ War a just war? But I also invited students to write their short papers on this topic, if they so desired. One student took me up on the challenge, noting that in London, Johnson had employed patriotic rhetoric much like that used by the “current war proponents”; in contrast, in Idler 81, Johnson “argues that England is not practicing the ‘golden rule’ in their takeover of American Indian land.” He then compared the Seven Years’ War to the current conflict, concluding on an anti-war note that recounts the pyrrhic victories of the Seven Years’ War and the costs of both conflicts in money and in lives.

The terms of the short-paper assignment were set before this particular thread had evolved. Each original essay would receive a response from another student pre-assigned to the task. The pairing in this case could not have been more interesting. Agreeing in principle with the first student’s argument, the second made a distinction between useful comparisons and not-so-useful comparisons regarding the Seven Years’ War and the current Iraq War. The situations, he found, were too different for the conflicts themselves to shed any light on one another as conflicts per se. But in terms of the motivation of the leaders in each conflict, this student saw a pertinent parallel: “it is not impossible, and indeed likely, that individuals in power desire more power, even if that means sacrificing ethical principles,” a sentiment he supports with a quotation from The Vanity of Human Wishes concerning Wolsey: “Still to new heights his restless wishes tower, / Claim leads to claim, and power
advances power" (ll. 105-6). This student was not ready to "place judgment on any individual for his motives." Still, he argued, "the possibility of hidden desires must be considered. Ig noble desires might be subsumed by more accepted justifications, and this done in a manner not entirely known to the decision maker." President Bush, finally, garnered some sympathy from this writer, "in the same way that Johnson exacted a degree of sympathy towards Savage in light of his psychological misfortunes." I think there is little need to comment on this observation except to say that I found the argument gracefully circumspect.

Meanwhile, for me and for some of the students, questions about the Seven Years' War lingered. Who was Friedrich, for example, and why did England support him? While we know what was at stake in America, why was there a European conflict? Winston Churchill called this war the First World War in that it involved pretty much the whole world, but was it really a conflict of global proportions? In an effort to assimilate a few facts by which to address these questions, I (as many of us do these days) turned to the internet and began to "google." To my surprise and delight, I discovered there was an award-winning board game called Friedrich available for purchase. It is a little expensive ($30), but if I could get the students to play it, maybe we would learn something about the war. Perhaps we could "historically re-enact" it. I polled the class. Were there four or five students willing to play? Absolutely. So I invested.

The game is complicated. Two students and I met for a trial run the Wednesday before Fall Break. We were perplexed as we read the convoluted rules. One student, though, was an avid Risk player, and, as this game bears some similarities, he managed to master enough of the terrain to get us going. He was Friedrich; I was Maria Theresa of Austria; the other student was Madame Pompadour (who ran the campaign for France!) and Elizabeth of Russia. Our basic goals were to keep the territory we held and to try to grab more, but there is strategy involved that we did not master that evening. A later meeting, with more players, revealed the complexities and satisfactions of the game. Every player has to pursue a different strategy in order to maximize the chance for winning. Further, "cards of fate" play a capricious and sometimes devastating role (as fate often does). In the second game, France was played particularly well by one much more skilled at military maneuvers than Madame Pompadour (apparently) was; nevertheless, he picked up a "card of fate," and discovered himself defeated—not by the other players, but by something that happened on the American front. It was the (bad) luck of the draw. History, of course, records that France did not fare well in the Seven Years' War, but in the game France, theoretically,
can win if the cards cooperate. But if they don’t, France is a goner. The students actually enjoyed the capriciousness of the game and the idea that strategy and skill could come to nought for reasons beyond their control. One student wanted to know more. He chose to write his research paper on the “players” in the Seven Years’ War—Friedrich, Pompadour, Maria Theresa, and Elizabeth. As he pursued his topic, however, he came to an interesting conclusion—and one that validated our class’s interest in the game: “The greatest omission of Friedrich is the massively influential role of Britain in the Seven Years’ War.” Indeed, Britain “is one of the greatest players in the war and arguably its greatest beneficiary.” Like his colleague who wrote the short response paper, this student found analogies with current times: the “minimal opposition to the war” in England (pace Johnson) is likely attributable to the fact that England was gaining from the war without putting too much effort into it. “When a war is successful or causes little loss to American lives, such as the Gulf War, it rarely receives any more condemnation other than general anti-war reactions similar to Samuel Johnson’s criticism. However, when a war such as Vietnam, which has comparably suspect foundations, causes massive losses financially and in American soldiers, the fervor of anti-war emotion is severely raised.” For this student, Friedrich seems to have provided not only an impetus to learn more about the past, but also a perspective from which to evaluate current events as though they are already a part of history.

For my purposes, the value of Friedrich, the game, lay primarily in the opportunity for out-of-class interaction with students in a focused, fun, but also educational, activity. The group that played the full game was so enthusiastic that we actually staged another game after the class was officially over! While I would hesitate at this point to make participation in Friedrich a requirement for a class, I do think features of the game (particularly details included in the Cards of Fate) could be exploited for brief research assignments and reports in relation to Johnson and his age. Friedrich, for example, was a large personality—a poet as well as a military genius. He and Johnson share the cult of celebrity that defined the late eighteenth century. In a literature class focused on the Age of Johnson, representations in the British press of Friedrich, George III, Elizabeth of Russia, Madame Pompadour, and Maria Theresa of Austria could be the core of a group research project. ECCO could be explored to flesh out the events of a given year with a list of publications suggesting what was in the bookstalls (and perhaps on the minds) of Londoners as certain battles raged across the channel and beyond. Or, a student or a group of students might be encour-
aged to explore the way the gendering of the Seven Years’ War (Friedrich against the women of Europe) reverberates with late eighteenth-century’s concern with “manliness.” In a course with a feminist bent, the topic could be extended to constructions of gender in the period (using Johnson’s writings as a core). Off-board, so to speak, are the colonial concerns that are really at the heart of the conflict from England’s point of view. In a history class focused on this period, students could be assigned the task of creating matching “games” for the American conflict and for the international trade community (including India and Africa). Olaudah Equiano’s *Interesting Narrative* reveals that he played a role in certain battles. His experiences could be reflected in yet another parallel “game” that students could sketch out or fully develop. And, of course, these ideas do not even begin to tap the technological possibilities of projects focused on Johnson, his contemporaries, and the Seven Years’ War.

All said, I had rather not teach Johnson in a time of war as, like most of us, I would prefer there be no times of war. Yet, as we do not seem to be capable of living together in peace, there will no doubt continue to be such times, and I like to think that by responding creatively we in some ways thwart the insidious intent of war and ameliorate its devastating effects. After all, as Johnson himself puts it, “war is not the whole business of life”—even in a time of war.

—Elizabeth Croft with Patrick Fadeley, Brian Lake, Scott Dudley, Bo Franklin, Sara Fish, Angela Fralish, Corey Goergen, and Jeremiah Wood
In a letter to the Yale Alumni Magazine (May/June 2007), Michael W. Steinberg takes exception to a proposal by Professor Ian Shapiro in an earlier issue (March/April) for containment of the "enabling states" that "host terrorist networks," through "cooperation" and "development assistance." "Shapiro's view that we can change [the behavior of Iran and Syria] by wielding 'economic sticks and carrots' is simply the triumph of hope over experience" (p. 6).

—GORDON TURNBULL

The following song was written by Lisa Berglund and performed by a trio of lexicographers at the Dictionary Society of North America Conference in June 2007.

"A Lexicon! A Lexicon!"

to the tune of "The Paradox Trio" from Gilbert & Sullivan's
The Pirates of Penzance

MEZZO. In seventeen and fifty-five
The language suffered from neglect;
A wild exuberance did thrive
That no one could correct.
Unregulated was the word,
Yet finally there came the dawn,
For unto Johnson it occurred
To write a lexicon.

TENOR. A lexicon?

MEZZO. A lexicon!

A sorely needed lexicon!
We've Bailey to rely upon
But still we need a lexicon!

ALL. A lexicon, a lexicon, a sorely needed lexicon!
Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!
A lexicon!
BASS. When Johnson first produced his Plan
He said three years would see it through,
And promised that one Englishman
Would forty French outdo.
In fact, it took him five years more,
With help from half a dozen clerks,
To add this folio to our store
Of English masterworks.

TENOR. The lexicon?
BASS. The lexicon!
The long-awaited lexicon!
We'd Bailey to rely upon
But what can beat this lexicon!

ALL. The lexicon, the lexicon, the long-awaited lexicon!
Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!
The lexicon!

BASS. For some ridiculous reason, about which, however,
I've no need to be specific,
Lord Chesterfield, arbiter elegantiarum, whose social influence was terrific,
Decided, after seven years of neglect, that puffery would serve Johnson's
cause well.
Johnson's response we all know, thanks to the record in Boswell:
"Seven years ago, milord, I waited in your outward room or was repulsed from
your door.
Such treatment was unexpected. I was surprised — but then, I had never had
a patron before.
But now, milord, your belated patronage, however you may flaunt it,
Has been delayed, till I am indifferent, and what is more,
till I am known, and
do not want it!"

BASS & MEZZO. Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ho! Ho! Ho! Ho!
TENOR. Indeed!
Let's read!
And see - how Samuel Johnson did proceed.

ALL. Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!
TENOR. (paging through the Dictionary of the English Language)
How quaint is Johnson’s way with words!
His oats are fed to Scots, not herds.
An “excise” is a “hateful tax.”
‘Gainst Whigs I do detect a grudge.
The pastern is the horse’s . . . knee?
There’s no example here for “sea”!
A lexicographer’s a drudge!
MEZZO & BASS. Oh, yes, he’s just a harmless drudge!
ALL. Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!
A lexicon, a lexicon,
A long-awaited lexicon!
Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!
A lexicon!
Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!
That English lexicon!
Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!
That most compendious lexicon!

New York Times Book Review, 10 June 2007

In a review of Long Time Leaving: Dispatches from Up South by Roy Blount, Jr., Christopher Dickey writes,

Here’s the real problem in writing about Blount, much as Blount discovered when he was writing about Mark Twain: “Despair begins to creep in. How much can be said about how funny anyone’s writing is? Or should be said. Introduce something by going on and on about how funny it is, and the reader may well begin to think, irritably, and quite rightly, ‘Perhaps I should be the judge of that.’ Laughter is so gratifying because it is autonomic. ‘Nothing is so hopeless,’ Dr. Johnson observed, ‘as a scheme of merriment.’ Merriment bubbles, or not.”

The effervescence in Blount’s writing depends on timing, of course. If you’re going to get the jokes, you’ve got to get the setups, and those trickle and meander like streams in the Okefenokee. But Blount, as the word “autonomic” and the reference to Dr. Johnson suggest, also exhibits a literate good humor that is at least as impressive as his punch lines, and stays with you longer. If champagne bubbles are our metaphor, Blount’s best writing is the wine, not the fizz.

—ROY W. MENNINGER
Dr. Johnson Revival Shows That Old Jokes Really Are Best

by Ben Hoyle, Arts Reporter (Times of London, 7 August 2007)

With his rapier wit, caustic put-downs and prodigious appetite for drink, Samuel Johnson is right at home on the Edinburgh Fringe but for one thing: his jokes are 230 years old.

In 18th-century London, Dr. Johnson was a superstar—the author of the first English dictionary, a critic and a novelist who dominated the capital's literary salons. In 21st-century Edinburgh, he is half of the Fringe's most eagerly awaited double act in *Johnson and Boswell—Late but Live*, which has its premiere at the Traverse theatre tonight.

The show, devised by the team that turned *Jerry Springer: The Opera* into one of the most explosive successes in Fringe history, is an attempt to prove that Dr. Johnson can cut it as a modern comic. The *Jerry Springer* cocktail of biblical characters, filthy arias and tap dancing Ku Klux Klansmen appalled some and delighted many more. Five years later Stewart Lee, who co-wrote and directed it, has returned to the festival with Iain Gillie and Nigel Godfrey, the show's managers, to put on the equally ambitious *Johnson and Boswell*.

"Great wit is timeless," Lee said yesterday. "I wanted to find a way to take the dust off Dr. Johnson's lines and show that Johnson was as funny as any stand-up working today."

Like many Fringe favorites, Dr. Johnson's humor was punchy, rude and often fuelled by alcohol. The Scots were frequently the victims of his barbs, although he did concede that "much may be made of a Scotchman, if he be caught young." In 1773 Dr. Johnson toured the Hebrides with his dissolute friend and biographer James Boswell, who recorded much of their conversation verbatim. Extracts from their contrasting accounts of the trip form the basis of Lee's script.

The show is set in the present day. Boswell has persuaded Dr. Johnson to visit Edinburgh to cash in on the fad for celebrity memoirs by relaunching their travel books.

"We quote a lot of their text directly but we've also written things about Scotland today in a Johnsonian way. I don't think the average person will be able to tell which bits are Johnson and which bits are us. That's the joy of it," said Lee.
Hammer Attack on £1.7m Painting

by Ben Hoyle, Arts Reporter (Times of London, 10 August 2007)

A homeless man has been accused of attacking a £1.7 million painting at the National Portrait Gallery with a hammer.

Mark Paton, 44, was charged yesterday with the criminal damage of the portrait of Samuel Johnson by Sir Joshua Reynolds. The oil painting, completed soon after Johnson finished his pioneering Dictionary of the English Language in 1755, was struck several times.

The blows shattered the glass protecting it and tore through the painting, leaving the hammer embedded in the portrait, with the head hanging between the canvas and the back of the frame.

Mr. Paton, who is unemployed, will appear at City of Westminster Magistrates' Court today.

The attack came shortly before the gallery, in St Martin’s Place near Trafalgar Square, closed at 6pm on Tuesday night. A spokeswoman for the gallery said that security staff were clearing the rooms of visitors when they were alerted by the noise.

She said: “A man was apprehended by gallery staff and later taken away by police. The police are investigating the incident and the cost of the damage is not yet known. The value of this painting was given in a statement to police by Jacob Simon, chief curator at the gallery, as approximately £1.7 million.” Mr. Simon is leading the gallery’s response to the incident because its director, Sandy Nairne, is on research leave in America.

The painting is now in the hands of conservators who are expected to report back at the beginning of next week on the likely cost of repair. The spokeswoman added: “The good news is that we are confident that the portrait is repairable.”

Bag checks brought in after the recent attempted car bomb attack in Haymarket, a few hundred yards away, had only recently been dropped. “We did step down those measures along with other London museums and galleries when deemed appropriate, approximately three weeks after,” the spokeswoman said.

“We did not have bag checks in place at the time of the incident and the security measures we do have in place are in line with those currently in place in other national museums and galleries. We are satisfied that security arrangements were appropriate at the time of the incident to the current national security alert level. “Bag checks are a deterrent but not a guarantee [against visitors damaging works of art]. We do everything appropriate to stop inci-
dents of this nature occurring, but they are very difficult to anticipate.”

Gallery staff do not know why the Johnson portrait was singled out. Measuring 50 by 40 inches (128cm by 102cm), it hangs in a room with several other portraits of 18th-century luminaries, including David Garrick, the actor, and Laurence Sterne, the author of *Tristram Shandy*. All were painted by Reynolds, the first president of the Royal Academy and a pivotal figure in the history of British portraiture and art theory. The portrait of Johnson was painted between 1756 and 1757 and depicts the author, critic and legendary wit seated at a writing table.

The last comparable incident at the National Portrait Gallery occurred in 1981. Bryan Organ’s engagement portrait of Diana, Princess of Wales, which had only recently gone on view, was slashed by a member of the public. It was repaired and is on display.

Last month in France a woman was charged with criminal damage after she kissed a pure white canvas valued at £1 million while wearing glossy red lipstick.

Sam Rindy, 35, an artist who was born in Cambodia, said that she had been “overcome with passion” for the white canvas by Cy Twombly, the American painter.

She said: “The artist left this white for me. I left a kiss. I stepped back. I found the painting even more beautiful. A red stain remained. This red stain is testimony to this moment, to the power of art.”

In 2006 Pierre Pinoncelli, a 77-year-old performance artist, used a hammer to assault Marcel Duchamp’s celebrated Fountain—a display of a urinal created in 1917—at the Pompidou Centre in Paris. He was arrested and fined, but avoided prison.

—Matthew Davis
Yale Boswell Editions Notes

The next volume in the Yale Boswell Editions research series, James Boswell: The Journal of his German and Swiss Travels, 1764, edited by Marlies K. Danziger, is now in press, with a projected publication date of February 2008. This volume, the first to appear in the research series devoted to Boswell's journals (nine volumes in the Correspondence series have so far appeared), parallels the trade volume Boswell on the Grand Tour: Germany and Switzerland, 1764, ed. F. A. Pottle (1953), whose annotation it greatly expands, supplements, and in many instances corrects. Marlies Danziger, who with Frank Brady co-edited the final volume in the trade series of Boswell's journals—Boswell: The Great Biographer, 1789-1795 (1989)—is Professor Emerita of English, Hunter College and the Graduate School, City University of New York. The volume can be ordered from Edinburgh University Press in the U.K. and Yale University Press in North America.

****

Boswell's European travels did not in the event, despite Johnson's earnest encouragement, take him to Spain, but he now visits it authorially. The Spanish publisher, Acantilado, of Barcelona, (www.acantilado.es) has just published Vida de Samuel Johnson, which it describes as the first complete Spanish edition of the Life (in the Hill-Powell rendering). It is translated by Miguel Martínez-Lage, whose many other translations include works by J. M. Coetzee, C. S. Lewis, S. E. Hinton, and Hemingway. As its introduction, the edition reproduces Frank Brady's discussion of the Life that appeared as Chapter 17 of his James Boswell: The Later Years, 1769-1795 (1984).

Birlinn Press, of Edinburgh (www.birlinn.co.uk), has just issued To the Hebrides, edited by Ronald Black, a volume which integrates Johnson's Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland and Boswell's
Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides, folding the two accounts together and dividing the text into thirteen chapters and “Boswell’s Conclusion.” It dispenses with “Johnson’s subtitles, like ‘Fall of Fiers’ and ‘Lough Ness’” which “were unhelpful anyway” (p. vii). For Boswell’s text, the editor has drawn for the most part on the manuscript version (rendered in modernized spelling and punctuation), which was edited by Pottle and Charles H. Bennett in 1936, and reissued, with Corrections and Additions, in 1963. Ronald Black, formerly a lecturer in Celtic at the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh, is Gaelic Editor of The Scotsman. The volume includes 134 pages of endnotes, an eight-page bibliography, a three-page “Glossary,” and 17 maps, and reproduces the 1786 Collings-Rowlandson series of caricatures of Boswell’s Tour, using a detail from one of them (The Dance on Duncaan) as its cover illustration. Ronald Black reports in his Preface that he has been asked by Birlinn next “to prepare To the Western Islands, in which the Highland response to Johnson will be examined, mainly through the Rev. Donald MacNicol’s Remarks on Dr. Samuel Johnson’s Journey to the Hebrides (1779), a much maligned book that is ripe for reappraisal” (p. ix).

Among several other Hebridean titles from Birlinn is The Discovery of the Hebrides: Voyages to the Western Isles 1745-1883, by Elizabeth Bray, which surveys accounts of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century journeys to these regions, including that by Sir Joseph Banks, “who revealed the wonders of Fingal’s Cave to an astounded public,” as well as those by Boswell and Johnson, “whose writings encouraged many others, including Sir Walter Scott and Queen Victoria, to discover the Hebrides for themselves.”

James Boswell, a 126-page study by Murray Pittock (www.abdn.ac.uk/riiss/jamesboswell.shtml) has just appeared in the Aberdeen Introductions to Irish and Scottish Culture series. According to the volume’s promotional description, “the stature of Boswell’s achievement and his complexity as a writer have been better appreciated” since the recovery and publication of “his private papers,” but “without adequate understanding of his role as a specifically Scottish author and thinker in the age of Enlightenment: in particular, his anxious critique of Humean scepticism is discussed here.”

In this place in the last JNL issue, we referred to Stuart Gillespie’s researches into the work of an obscure poet, one Freeman, whose surviving writings (in a leather notebook in the
Beinecke's Osborn collection) mention names associated with the Ivy Lane Club at the time of its founding, placing him possibly within the range of Johnson's acquaintance. Dr. Gillespie reports further researches establishing that this poet was Arthur Freeman (b. ca. 1720), not as at first thought the probably pseudonymous "Isaac Freeman" who published Aesop at St James's, a verse fable in octosyllabic couplets, in 1729.

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In the following short letter, not before known to the Yale Boswell Editions, Thomas David Boswell sends news of his brother James's death to their cousin, Robert Boswell, in Edinburgh:

London 20th May 1795

My dear Sir

I am sorry to be under the disagreeable necessity of informing you that my eldest Brother died yesterday morning at two o clock after a severe illness of five weeks which was at first a fever, and was followed by a swelling & mortification of the parts contiguous to the bladder; it is a heavy affliction to his family & to myself who have lost the best friend I ever had; we all beg your sympathy on this melancholy occasion, and I request you will make my best compts. to Mrs. Boswell & all your family.

I am with great regard My Dear Sir

Your most affect. cousin & obt. humble servant

T. D. Boswell

My Brother is to be buried at Auchinleck, for which place my Nephews will set out in a few days.

The letter is in the possession of David and Joan Boswell, of Bath. The letter's recipient, Robert Boswell (1746-1804), Writer to the Signet, was a son of Boswell's uncle, John Boswell M.D. (1710-1789), president of the Royal College of Physicians in Edinburgh, and Anna (Cramond) Boswell (d. 1777). He was a Glasite (S hundredian) preacher, and in fact married into that version of the faith—his wife, to whom T. D. Boswell's letter refers, was Sibella
Sandeman (1753-1835)—and he wrote and published adaptations of the Psalms. He served as a law agent and man of business for his cousin James as laird of Auchinleck, had a cordial friendship with him, and later was law agent to Sir William Forbes, Boswell’s executor.

David Boswell, a direct descendant of Robert Boswell, has kindly recently revived the Auchinleck Boswell Society (first founded in 1974 by the late Gordon Hoyle and others), and included a photocopy of this letter with the Society’s Winter 2006-7 Newsletter. He and Mrs. Boswell regularly host a Spring Lunch for the Society in London on the Saturday in May nearest to the anniversary of the date of Boswell’s first meeting with Johnson, and an “at home” at Auchinleck House in Ayrshire (the mansion completed by Boswell’s father in 1762) on the Saturday in November closest to the date of Boswell and Johnson’s return there from their trip to the Highlands and Hebrides in 1773. Auchinleck House, which had fallen derelict in the late twentieth century, was restored after a generous gift for the purpose (later augmented from other sources) by the late Mary (Hyde), Viscountess Eccles, and it opened as a self-catering holiday let in 2000. JNL readers interested in staying in the house should check availability at: www.landmarktrust.org.uk.

In 2007, Mr. and Mrs. Boswell also inaugurated a Summer Lunch in Edinburgh, held on August 14 (anniversary of the date on which Johnson arrived in Edinburgh in 1773) at which the speaker was Hugh Milne, editor of Boswell’s Edinburgh Journals: 1767-1786. Speaker at the May 2006 London gathering was Peter Martin, whose A Life of James Boswell appeared in 1999, and who is now at work on a new biography of Johnson (to be published by Weidenfeld and Nicholson in the UK, with a projected date of 2009). Speaker at the November 2006 event was David Nokes, at work on yet another biography of Johnson (set for publication by Faber and Faber, also in 2009), who, according to the Newsletter, “whetted our appetites with SJ’s observations on ‘Trees and Mathematics.’” Speaker at the May 2008 London gathering will be yours truly, the author of these Yale Boswell Editions Notes.

Boswell was taken ill at a meeting of the Club on 14 April 1795, and had to be carried home, where he died, as T. D. Boswell’s letter to Robert Boswell reports, on 19 May. In Boswell’s Clap and Other Essays: Medical Analyses of Literary Men’s Afflictions (1979), William Ober M.D., in an influential and now widely accepted account, gave the probable cause of Boswell’s death as “uraemia, the result of acute and chronic urinary tract infection, secondary to postgonorrheal urethral stricture” (p. 28). This “paleodiagnosis
based on literary remains” follows from Ober’s study of Boswell’s lengthy sequence of episodes of “urethral disease” (p. 29) and the accounts of Boswell’s last days in letters by T. D. Boswell and Boswell’s younger son James Boswell, Jr. to the Rev. William Johnson Temple (mss. in the Pierpont Morgan Library; see The Great Biographer, pp. 314-16). James wrote to Temple on 17 April 1795 as follows: “My Father desires me to tell you ‘that on Tuesday Evening he was taken ill with a Fever of cold attended with a severe shivering[,] a violent headache[,] disorder in his stomach & throwing up.’ ” In a more recent retro-autopsic study, “The Maladies of James Boswell, Advocate” (Journal of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, Vol. 32, No. 3, 2002), David M. Purdie and Neil Gow report that the “symptoms of chills, fever, headache and nausea” of Boswell’s last illness “indicate an acute infective process which could have been a malarial recurrence,” but are “more likely to have been a bout of acute septicaemia proceeding from an infective process which may have been prostatitis, or a pyelonephritis. . . . A swelling could have been an obstructed bladder, or a tumour of the bladder itself. The term mortification, as then used, described a process of tissue death. The tumour was perhaps—in pathological terms—now infarcted or gangrenous. . . . It seems to be the medical consensus that the final cause of death was renal failure precipitated by acute-on-chronic pyelonephritis, itself triggered perhaps by a chronically infected prostate or a postgonorrheal urethral stricture” (p. 202).

The medical elements of the article have been contributed by Purdie, Head of Clinical Research, Center for Metabolic Bone Disease, Hull University. The author of these Yale Boswell Editions Notes has no medical training whatever, but, though therefore thoroughly unqualified, feels nevertheless that Purdie and Gow retreat much too quickly from their own suggestion that a “malarial recurrence” contributed materially to Boswell’s final illness, before offering “more likely” conclusions that conform essentially to Ober’s. The young Boswell contracted malaria in Europe in 1765, evidently on his acutely uncomfortable sea crossing from Leghorn to Corsica, of which he reports: “I lay down in the cabin bed, but was eat up by mosquitoes and other vermin” (11 October 1765). He suffered severely, on leaving Sollacaro on October 28 after his soon-to-be-famous meetings with General Pasquale Paoli, from what he called “a severe cold, which ended in a tertian ague,” and battled through a remarkably arduous journey, rain-drenched, burning with fever, racked with chills, and light-headed, until he rested at the monastery of the Franciscan fathers at Corte, and later received kind help from the French commander
at Bastia, the Comte de Marbeuf, who gave him a room in his house and placed him in the care of the Army physician and surgeon. Purdie and Gow report that malaria “is transmitted by the bite of a female anopheles mosquito which is itself infected with one of the four species of the organism plasmodium. Given the location and the timing of the first attack together with the mosquitoes [sic] general prevalence in Europe, the most likely malarial type in the case of Boswell was P. falciparum” (p. 198).

Malaria in Boswell’s time had no curative treatments, and no vaccine (Boswell famously found Johnson’s Rambler essays “bark and steel for the mind”—the “bark” of the Cinchona tree being an early source of quinine—but alas not for the body). Malaria was as it remains a terrible affliction to have to carry. Boswell’s diaries of his later life record several recurrences of his “ague,” and several other journal entries describe attacks of headache, shivering, fever and nausea which, though he does not say so (as he may not have known it), have all the hallmarks, not of venereal or alcohol-induced distresses, but of malarial recurrence. These involve, Purdie and Gow tell us, “fatigue, headache, dizziness, myalgia, arthralgia and prostration,” and it “should be remembered a malarial bout in the late 18th century, with the disease still endemic in the U.K., would have been commonly regarded more as an irritating inconvenience than as a medical emergency” (p. 198). Ober’s survey, focusing as it does on Boswell’s sexual behavior, nowhere mentions his malaria. Indeed, of the Corsican trip, Ober states—astoundingly—that its “chief medical complication” was “that Boswell developed ingrown toenails from hiking through the rough, mountainous terrain in tight-fitting boots. Recurrent infections of the toes were to plague him for many years thereafter” (p. 12). Indeed they were, but not as much as his malaria.

Purdie and Gow contend, elsewhere in their survey, that the often ill and depressed Boswell suffered from no “formal psychiatric disorder” but was a “cyclothymic personality,” showing “cyclic depression and elevation of mood” related to “a serial increase and decrease of neurotransmitters, such as serotonin, dopamine and nor-adrenaline, the neurotransmitters which internally regulate the central nervous system” (p. 202). (Another article in this vastly entertaining issue of the Journal argues that Cosimo de’ Medici did not suffer from the gout commonly attributed to him, but rather from “ankylosing spondylitis,” for an explanation of which any curious JNL readers had better refer to the essay itself). Some JNL readers may prefer to cling to the well-known autopsic analysis made by Thomas Percy (long bitterly aggrieved by the way Boswell depicted him in the Life), far less medically precise but certainly
pithier, that Boswell’s drinking habits “speedily terminated a Life that seemed radically formed for long duration” (draft of a letter to the Rev. Thomas Stedman, 22 May 1798). But Purdie and Gow note that Boswell lived “for 55 years [a mistake for 54]—beyond the overall male life expectancy in the 18th century, but probably about average for his class and station in life” (p. 197).

The commonly received and under-argued notion that Boswell essentially fornicated and/or drank himself to death proceeds as much from clichéd supposition and a neo-Macaulayite pleasure in moral disparagement (that infects much response to Boswell) as from accurate medical assessment. In Percy’s case, his claim is on a par with his widely known and unfortunately accepted assertion in the same letter to Stedman that after publication of the Life Boswell, because of its injudicious quotation of private conversation, was “studiously excluded from all decent and good Company.” (Boswell’s 1790s letters and journals, however dispiriting they are overall, show the situation to have been far otherwise.) The common fixation that leads to the focus on sex in Boswell’s self-record, producing absurd associations between Boswell’s allegedly “racy” diaries with such things as the autobiography of Casanova, proceeds largely from the fact that publication of the bestselling London Journal 1762-1763 (1950) caught the waves then crashing after the Kinsey report on male sexual behavior, which appeared two years earlier, and the report on female sexual behavior of 1953. (Ober’s paleodiagnostic essay on Boswell’s urethral history, to the exclusion of other aspects of his health, first appeared in fact as an article in 1969, two years after the Summer of Love, final year of the swinging Sexual Revolution sixties). T. D. Boswell’s letter, quoted above, makes a point of reporting to his cousin Robert that the “severe illness” that ended Boswell’s life was “at first a fever,” confirming the more detailed account that Boswell himself gave his son James to pass on to his closest friend, William Temple. At that meeting of The Club on 14 April 1795, some five weeks before his death, Boswell was taken ill with fever, chills, violent headache and nausea, that is to say, precisely as he was as a much younger man leaving Sollacarò in Corsica nearly thirty years earlier, having been infected by a female of a kind other than the ones with whom his life (and death) are most often associated in the popular imagination.

—GORDON TURNBULL
The Johnsonians Dinner, 2007

The Johnsonians celebrated the 298th anniversary of Samuel Johnson's birth with our annual black tie dinner, held on 14 September 2007, at the Grolier Club in New York City.

Starting at 6 pm, we enjoyed drinks and hors d'oeuvres on the club's fifth floor before moving down to the first floor for dinner. Dinner was excellent, offering a choice of branzino with a tomato concasse, olive and parsley sauce; torrados of filet of beef with a red wine demi-glace; or, for vegetarians, spiced sweet potato puree, slow roasted caramelized bermuda onion, and shiitake mushrooms roasted with fresh herbs.

After dinner, Professor Christopher Ricks of Boston University delivered a splendid talk on Samuel Johnson's shifting attitudes towards poetic convention—attitudes that he expressed both in his poetry and in his criticism.

When Ricks read, “How small of all that human hearts endure / That part which laws or kings can cause or cure” (lines which Johnson wrote for Goldsmith’s The Traveller), he paused for a moment to reflect regretfully upon how things have changed since Johnson’s day: how in our present day big government can play so terribly large a part in private lives. My thoughts (and I think those of most around me) turned from Georgian England to the “deciders” in present day Washington and to the brave young men and women of the coalition who have been sent off to distant lands. Ricks finished his talk with a reading of On the Death of Dr. Robert Levet. He read Johnson’s sad and quiet poem in a very plain and simple style, presenting it almost as part of a conversation—a part and piece of passing life—and less a piece of crafted art.

Ricks talked playfully, rarely from notes, and reminded me how easy it was to take pleasure in a speaker who was so obviously enjoying himself. His speech was the high point of the evening for many. One Johnsonian in attendance wrote, “I was impressed that after an already lengthy career of high critical achievement, Christopher Ricks still has a contagious enthusiasm and passion for the podium, delivering a talk of both high polish and real substance. The question of Johnson’s interventions in the ‘Sound Echoing Sense’ debates was nicely revivified, and enlivened with a sparkling and wide-ranging set of asides.” Another noted, “While
the all-too-brief social hour (too many people to see, too little time) always competes with the fine after dinner speaker, this year the talk given by Christopher Ricks was truly the high spot. Scholarly and entertaining, his fluid delivery was both fascinating and touching. To turn a familiar quote on its head, 'It was a fine talk, and many wished it longer.'

Our dining room was adorned with eighteenth-century items from "Boston Collects," an exhibit celebrating the Boston Athenæum’s bicentennial. Our host for the evening, Richard Wendorf, who is the director of the Boston Athenæum, pointed out to us one of the highlights of the exhibit, George Washington’s personal copy of Thomas Paine’s Common Sense.

The toast to our hero’s immortal memory was given by Stephen Fix; Ved Mehta gave the toast from hosts to guests; and Deirdre David gave the reply from the guests. Two poignant and personal memorials were also given, one for Morris Brownell, by Gordon Turnbull and one for John Middendorf (for many years the editor of this newsletter) given by his former student, John Richetti.

In Secretary Jim Caudle’s minutes, we learned that the Johnsonians now number 101, which Jim tells us is a record. “Same as the Dalmatians,” he noted later, “but fewer spots and less fur.” We also learned that the turnout for the dinner (including guests) was 93, a very healthy number, if not itself a record.

Social drinking recommenced after dinner on the club’s fifth floor and lasted until 11 pm. The weather, which flirted with a light sprinkle, but then pulled back, allowed us to enjoy post-dinner conversation in the fresh air of the fifth-floor terrace. At 11 pm, Johnsonians who wished to extend the evening walked north a few blocks to a nearby bar. I don’t remember its name, but it had a gracious host who, despite the late hour, and the odd blinking manner in which we entered his establishment, gamely pushed together some big, comfortable tables, and our party continued.

—Peter Kanter
Samuel Johnson Society of Southern California

The twenty-fifth annual dinner of the Samuel Johnson Society of Southern California will be held Sunday, 23 November 2008 at the Huntington Library, San Marino, California. The President is Robert DeMaria, Jr. The Daniel Blum Memorial Lecture will be delivered by Michael Bundock, editor of the New Rambler. SJSSC is open to all persons interested in conversation and discourse about the life and writings of Samuel Johnson, his circle, and the history and culture of his century. The annual dinner is the convivial focus for these activities. Among the events in the tercentenary year will be an exhibition at the Huntington library, 20-23 May—September 2009, a series of lectures, and a special twenty-sixth annual dinner, with John W. Byrne, founding member of the Samuel Johnson Society of Australia, as President, who will also deliver the Daniel Blum Memorial Lecture. Further information can be obtained from Myron Yeager, Secretary to the society at yeager@chapman.edu.

—O M Brack, Jr.

Samuel Johnson Society of Australia

Double Honours for JSA Foundation Member

John Byrne, foundation member and first Treasurer of the Johnson Society of Australia, will be President for 2008 and 2009 of two prestigious Johnson Societies—one in the United Kingdom and one in America.

John, recognized as one of the world's most enthusiastic and knowledgeable collectors of Johnson and Johnsoniana, as well as a tireless correspondent with fellow Johnsonians internationally, has been appointed President of The Johnson Society of Lichfield for 2008/2009. John will take office at the annual Birthday Weekend celebrations in Lichfield on 20 September 2008, succeeding Professor Lynda Mugglestone, the Viceregent of Pembroke College,
Oxford. John will give the Presidential address at the dinner on that evening, and will then take part in the traditional ceremonies, as President, on the following Sunday and Monday. He will hand over the presidency to his successor on the evening of Saturday, 21 September 2009 after taking part in the ceremonies in the market place during the morning.

At a recent meeting of the Nomination Committee of the Samuel Johnson Society of Southern California, John was unanimously chosen President-Elect of that body for 2009. John will take office at the end of the annual dinner on 23 November 2008 and will serve until the end of the annual dinner in November 2009. At the annual dinner to be held at the Huntington Library in San Marino, California on 22 November 2009, he will give the Daniel Blum Memorial Lecture. John has said that he will find this a particular pleasure as he now owns many of the books from the library of the late Daniel Blum, who donated his library to the Johnson Birthplace Museum in Lichfield. John has long maintained contact with a number of the members of the Samuel Johnson Society of California by letter and he is looking forward to meeting his fellow Johnsonians and to seeing their collections in California. He sees his two appointments as a recognition by Johnsonians internationally of the high regard in which the Johnson Society of Australia is held, and the respect which is afforded to its publications.

John, a Perth barrister, has been a member of the Johnson Society since attending the foundation meeting in Melbourne in 1993 and in fact moved the resolution for establishing the society and later drew up the draft Constitution. He has contributed his “Western Idler” page for the JSA’s newsletter, the Southern Johnsonian, for almost the same length of time. John is a Trustee of Dr. Johnson’s House, London.

Enthusiastic Reception for 2007 Fleeman
A review by Clive Probyn

The Johnson Society of Australia’s 2007 David Fleeman Memorial Lecture was delivered to an enthusiastic audience at the English-Speaking Union in Melbourne on 15 September by Dr. Paul Tankard, the JSA's editor and senior lecturer in English at the University of Otago, Dunedin. Otago is now able to boast of two Fleeman lecturers among its numbers (Professor Chris Ackerley was the 2006 lecturer).

Paul’s subject, clearly a first survey of an ever-expandable work in progress, was entitled Reference Point: Samuel Johnson and the Encyclopaedias.
Johnson, of course, was keenly interested in what he called “that muddling work,” the task of searching out and organizing large fields of knowledge which supported the brilliant criticism contained in the *Lives of the Poets*, or the fundamental research which made possible the astonishingly creative *Dictionary*—both being outstanding examples of the encyclopaedic instincts of Johnson and also of his age (one thinks of Blair, Reynolds, Burney, and others).

Johnson both relied upon and redirected the reference literature of his day. His key sources included D’Alembert and Diderot’s *Encyclopédie* (1751), Chambers’s *Cyclopaedia* (1728), the *Biographica Britannica* (1747-66) and the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (first edition 1768-71, and heavily used for the *Lives of the Poets*). Paul was able to demonstrate not only Johnson’s use of these vast volumes, but also the extent to which his own work was to become the raw material for other encyclopedists as an item of content—as in Andrew Kippis’s revised edition of the *Biographica Britannica*.

Finally, it was Johnson’s fate to become an authority in such works—a testimony from his peers, a recognition of his scholarship and the extraordinary range of interests to which he brought the rare skills of paraphrase and conciseness, an ability to make almost anything that interested him also of interest to his reader. Paul’s informative, suggestive, and amusing Fleeman lecture will be published in due course in the JSA Papers.

—Bryan Reid

Samuel Johnson Club of Japan

Eighteen years have already passed since the establishment of the SJCCJ. The twentieth annual meeting was held at “Hoshin-Tei” in the basement of Sanseido Bookstore in Tokyo, on Sunday, 20 May 2007, with Hitoshi Suwabe in charge of the proceedings. Thirteen members, a large number compared to the last meeting, were present and each member in attendance made a short speech before listening to Shinpei Saito’s lecture, “A General View of Shaftesbury’s Aesthetics and Johnson’s Ethics.” We enjoyed talking together and exchanging information on Johnson, while having beer, Shochu (Japanese spirits distilled from sweet potatoes, rice, etc.), and wine.

Our SJCCJ is planning to publish an enlightening book on Johnson on the 300th anniversary of his birth in 2009, which is also

28
the twentieth anniversary of our club's foundation. The editors will be Professors Suwabe, Eto, and Shibagaki. They are looking for a publisher now, although it is difficult despite an all-out effort.

**The Summary of Shinpei Saito's Lecture**

According to F. C. Beiser, it was not Hobbes's materialism but the doctrine of predestination in Calvinism that the Cambridge Platonists regarded as the source of atheism. Against the voluntarism of Calvinism the Cambridge Platonists argued that reason could be a reliable guide to salvation because reason could grasp those eternal moral rules that even God himself followed on the day of judgment. Thus, the Cambridge Platonists introduced a completely new conception of a God who was infinite in reason and intelligence (Beiser, *The Sovereignty of Reason*). According to R. Voitle, Shaftesbury published Whichcote's sermons to protest against Hobbes's materialism. And then he published his own first book to protest against John Locke because he thought Locke "threw all Order and Virtue out of the world" (Voitle, *The Third Earl of Shaftesbury*, p. 119). Shaftesbury insisted that the idea or sense of order and proportion was strongly imprinted on our minds. S. Grean says that the Cambridge Platonists still used language that implied that God was personal and transcendent, but in Shaftesbury's philosophy God was largely impersonal, and His immanence was given greater stress (*Shaftesbury's Philosophy of Religion and Ethics*). This change is very important in understanding aesthetics in this period because the immanence of God was directly connected with aesthetics. For Shaftesbury, ultimately, beauty and goodness were the same.

For Johnson, goodness was the understanding of man (*Rambler* 5). It could be said that Johnson extended his idea of goodness to the notion of beauty. He said from an empiricist point of view that we could understand beauty from the comparison of beautiful things as our knowledge increased (*Rambler* 92). That is to say, beauty is a kind of result of our experiences. In the ninth *Discourse*, Reynolds's words are very similar to Johnson's, but the difference between them is that Reynolds acknowledges that beauty "is an idea that subsists only in the mind: the sight never beheld it, nor has the hand expressed it."

"Aesthetics is not a product of the general trend of English empiricism, but of English Platonism" (Cassirer, *The Platonic Renaissance in England*, p. 197). Cassier's words are very informative when considering aesthetics and ethics in this period.
Hideichi Eto is translating James Boswell’s Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides together with Hitoshi Suwabe, Shigeru Shibagaki, and others. The group published a Japanese version of Johnson’s Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland last year.


In addition to translating the second voyage of James Cook, Noriyuki Harada published an essay in which he discussed the roles of Edward Cave, Johnson, and Robert Dodsley in eighteenth-century print culture.

Early in September Hitoshi Suwabe visited London, Oxford, and Edinburgh. In London he went to Covent Garden and found No. 8 Russell Street, the meeting place of Johnson and Boswell, standing as it was. A bookseller’s shop had changed to an Italian restaurant named Boswell’s. On the canopy of the shop was a portrait of Samuel Johnson gazing grimly at visitors. In addition, going downstairs to the toilet, the history of the place is written on a large plaque. In Edinburgh he found a pub, another Boswell’s, on the Royal Mile just across James’s Court, where Boswell lived and entertained Johnson. The proudly-displayed plaque on the wall of the pub insists that this is where Boswell entertained Johnson. The start of another pseudo-legend?

We are pleased to inform you that two new members, Zenji Inamura (Professor, Gunma Social Welfare University) and Yasuo Ichikawa (Professor, Chuo University) have joined our club. Professor Inamura will give a short lecture, title undecided, at our annual meeting next year, which will be held in Hiroshima on Sunday, 18 May.

—SHIGERU SHIBAGAKI

Johnston at Bucknell

The last decade has seen some of the worst of times for scholars working in eighteenth-century literature, and some of the best. While many publishers—including some of our oldest and biggest—have drastically cut their eighteenth-century output as a means of dealing with the so called “crisis of the monograph,” and in an effort to maintain the bottom line demanded by their universities and governing bodies, Johnson has fared less badly than others in the austere climate. Oxford, of course, has recently published the monumental Lives of the English Poets edited by Roger Lonsdale (2006), and Yale has continued
gradually to issue volumes in their standard scholarly edition of Johnson’s works, the completion of which is imminent with the publication within the next couple of years of their edition of the *Lives*. Likewise, the last decade has established *The Age of Johnson*, first under Paul Korshin and now under Jack Lynch, as the preeminent vehicle for critical, historical, and biographical work on Johnson and his times when that work can appropriately take the form of an article (short or long).

However, only a few presses have published monographs and multi-authored volumes on Johnson over the last decade, a choice that, I believe, is a sign of their enlightened status and their commitment to the liberal arts, rather than of their old-fashioned redundancy. Among these few are, primarily, Cambridge University Press and our close relative, the University of Delaware Press, both of whom continue to find Johnson’s writings and his times worthy of scholarly discussion.

As the tide begins to turn once again in favor of humanistic discussion of Johnson and other eighteenth-century authors, and as we approach the tercentenary of Johnson’s birth, when we are likely to see a flurry of published Johnsonian work, I’d like to bring to the reader’s attention Bucknell University Press’s recent history in publishing on Johnson. Over the last decade we have to our credit the following books that deal wholly or mainly with Johnson’s writings, and which range widely in critical kind, from bibliographical and textual studies to editorial work to cultural and theoretical contextualization to postcolonial considerations to close humanistic and empirical readings of Johnson’s texts and their interconnections with other texts over time:


Readers should know that Bucknell continues to be receptive to new work on Johnson, including work of a biographical, historical, contextual, critical, cultural, and theoretical kind, whether by one or more than one author. Those interested in exploring opportunities for publication should contact me at clingham@bucknell.edu.

The publications mentioned above may be ordered from Associated University Presses (aup440@aol.com) or online at the usual outlets. Subscribers to the *Johnsonian News Letter* will receive a 20% discount on orders from AUP for a limited period. Please quote code JNL-1.

— GREG CLINGHAM
BUCKNELL UNIVERSITY

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**Johnson at Dartmouth**

Although the rural campus of Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire may not strike readers of this *News Letter* as a particularly Johnsonian place ("TREE. A large vegetable, rising with one woody stem to a considerable height"), Johnson, as a topic, clearly took root there during the last weekend of the past October. The occasion was the Annual Meeting of the Northeast American Society of Eighteenth-Century Studies, hosted by Dartmouth College, and, with the help of Peter Cosgrove, of the Dartmouth English Department, and Anna Battigelli, the President of the organization, Johnson flourished. Two panels were devoted solely to Johnson. The first panel, put together by Nancy Johnson, featured lively and informative talks by Robert DeMaria, John Scanlan, and Tom Bonnell. DeMaria’s talk focused on Boswell’s somewhat ill-conceived attempt to see Johnson and himself as the progeny of Plutarch, “the Prince of Ancient Biographers.” Scanlan offered comments on the changes Johnson’s sense of humor underwent from the beginning to the end of his long literary career, noting that the changes more or less reflect broader changes in ideas about satire, laughter, and sociability in the eighteenth century. He closed by wondering whether Tom Davies, who said Johnson laughed “like a rhinoceros,” actually had direct or second-hand knowledge of “Clara,” a rhinoceros who traveled around Europe and actually visited London in the middle of the century. In the last paper of this session, Tom Bonnell addressed, in
illuminating and precise detail, the degree to which we can now track the specific changes Boswell made to his manuscript of the *Life of Johnson*. Deftly calling our attention to cross outs, unfinished revisions, and even nib size, Tom beckoned us to inspect as carefully as we could the magnified page from the *Life* he presented on a large screen at the head of the room. Tom coupled his screening of a page of the *Life* with helpful handouts. Coming late in the day, on the second day of the meeting, this panel attracted a fairly large audience, and a spirited conversation on various aspects of the papers emerged.

The second panel on Johnson took place in the last time slot—early Sunday, the morning after a convivial celebratory banquet. Understandably, the audience was smaller. However, a few hardy souls evidently took Johnson's injunction to "rise at eight" to heart, and though our ranks were smaller, we surely constituted an audience "fit though few," if the spirited conversation in reaction to the papers be a guide. This panel, put together by J.T. Scanlan, featured three superb papers—on three different works. In the first paper, Katherine Quinsey spoke of the two *Rambler* papers on Misella, the prostitute. After taking us through a history of the republication of these essays—itsel itself a fascinating subject—Quinsey found time to confront both specific and general questions on Johnson's treatment of this important subject. Johnson, she argued, changes significantly the "conventional narrative of the fallen woman." Christopher Pearce spoke next on the *Dictionary*. His paper, titled "Johnson Enkrates"—which of course brings to mind Bertrand Bronson's influential essay, "Johnson Agonistes"—addressed the degree to which Johnson's presentation of himself in the Preface actually presents a figure who controls his passions as much as he struggles with them. Finally, Christopher Vilmar took us deep into a subject on which relatively little has been written—Johnson's work as Parliamentary reporter early in his career. Emphasizing formal aspects of Johnson's work, Vilmar spoke also on the "literary and philosophical antecedents" as one way to begin to expand our understanding of Johnson's real achievement in these *Debates*. Since everyone in the room knew Johnson's work fairly well, the subsequent discussion was unreservedly detailed—which struck us all as a rare delight, coming so early in the morning.

Inevitably, with so much Johnson on the Program, there were many informal opportunities to talk Johnson. I expect next year's NEASECS Annual Meeting, to be held in upstate New York (see NEASECS website this spring for details), to feature Johnson prominently again.

—J. T. SCANLAN
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JNLLAD
Notes and Queries

Exploring the Theatre History of the Eighteenth Century: My Experience of Curating an Exhibition on Johnson and the Theatre

From July 2005 to December 2006, as well as completing my PhD on women’s responses to Shakespeare in the long eighteenth century, I was also employed part-time as the Deputy Curator of Dr. Johnson’s House, London. During my time there, I had the opportunity to co-curate an exhibition on an area of particular interest to me, Johnson and the Theatre. The exhibition, entitled “Behind the Scenes: The Hidden Life of Georgian Theatre, 1737-1784,” ran at the House from 16 April to 18 September 2007. This essay details my experiences of using my academic knowledge in a curatorial context, exploring the choices we made in planning the exhibition, the problems we encountered, and examining the ways in which contemporary cultural institutions present the history of the eighteenth century to the public.

Background on Dr. Johnson’s House

Dr. Johnson’s House is located in Gough Square, London. It was Johnson’s home from 1748 to 1759 and is famous as the place where he compiled the Dictionary. The House was found derelict in 1911 by the liberal MP Cecil Harmsworth who bought and restored it, opening it to the public in 1912. Since then, it has been run by a small charitable trust and operates on the profits it makes from admissions and shop sales, as well as a small annual grant from the City of London. The House, then, is chronically short of funds. Additionally, it is also short of staff. Until 2002, it was run by a sole Curator, who lives in a cottage at the side of the House, built during the restoration in the early twentieth century. In recent years, money has been raised to employ a part-time Deputy Curator but these are the only paid members of staff. The Trust relies on volunteer staff to run the shop and admissions desk and there is a
small team of “vollies” who commit to regular hours at the House to work in this way. The Curator’s and Deputy Curator’s roles are incredibly varied. During my time at the House, I did everything from changing light bulbs and cleaning, to serving refreshments at evening events, to being interviewed for television documentaries, and of course, curating this exhibition.

My co-curator on the exhibition was Natasha McEnroe, at that time Curator of Dr. Johnson’s House. Coincidentally, she and I both left the House in December 2006, and the new curatorial team of Stephanie Pickford and Elizabeth Emerson took up the reins and arranged the installation of the exhibition. Stephanie Pickford also edited the accompanying full-colour booklet, which contains six scholarly essays developing the themes of the exhibition and reproduces images of some of the key objects on display. Natasha McEnroe, the exhibition’s co-curator, had organised a display on Georgian medicine in 2003 and so had unique insight into how to curate a temporary exhibition within the financial and spatial constraints of Dr. Johnson’s House. The venue for the exhibition was the “Dictionary garret,” a relatively large room at the top of the house. This was the reason that Johnson moved to Gough Square in order to work on his Dictionary; the garret provided plenty of space for Johnson and his amanuenses to conduct their lexicographical work. The garret is not the most elegant room in the House (that distinction would go to the withdrawing room on the first floor) but it is the most practical. There is less potential for damage since the walls are plastered, not wood panelled. This means that items like prints can be screwed to the wall and the damage repaired by replastering once they are removed. In addition, following fire damage in World War Two, the floorboards are no longer original, as they are elsewhere in the House. The garret, then, provides the best environment for a temporary exhibition, despite some constraints: a large fireplace, a stairwell, and two sloping walls restrict the number of surfaces on which objects can be hung, for example.

**Concept of the exhibition**

One of the first questions that we had to address was the concept of the exhibition. Why hold an exhibition on Georgian theatre at Dr. Johnson’s House? What could we do differently, or even better, than the large, well-funded national museums such as the V&A (which is responsible for the Theatre Museum’s collections), the British Museum, or the British Library? Johnson’s connection with David Garrick immediately suggested itself. However, we were extremely wary of the exhibition becoming overshadowed by Garrick, who
dominates the theatre history of the period, and who has many achievements attributed to him at the expense of the substantial contribution of other members of the theatre community to the world of the eighteenth-century stage. This problem became particularly acute in the light of my academic research, which has tried to recognize the contribution of a variety of women to the theatre history of the long eighteenth century and the reception of Shakespeare in the period.

Nevertheless, we had to recognize that Garrick was a substantial presence in Johnson’s life, and in the theatre of the period, and therefore could not be ignored. Considering Johnson’s friendship with the actor-manager led us to what developed into one of the main concepts behind the exhibition: the idea of social networks. Johnson of course knew many of the important figures in the theatre world of the day, including Oliver Goldsmith, George Colman, Arthur Murphy and the female Shakespeare critics Charlotte Lennox and Elizabeth Montagu. Johnson’s comments on players were famously harsh but he was occasionally able to appreciate their ability: although he described Hannah Pritchard as a “vulgar idiot,” he thought Kitty Clive “a good thing to sit by; she always understands what you say.” An item in the collection of Dr. Johnson’s House suggested a further connection. On permanent display is a nineteenth-century oil painting by William Powell Frith depicting the meeting between Sarah Siddons and Samuel Johnson in late 1783 (reproduced on the cover of this issue). Boswell describes how they discussed their favourite Shakespearean characters, agreeing that Queen Catharine in Henry VIII was the most natural.

Johnson and Garrick’s arrival in London in 1737 became the starting point for the coverage of our exhibition (also an important year for theatre because of the passing of the Stage Licensing Act) and 1784, the year of Johnson’s death, shortly after his meeting with Siddons, was decided on as an end point. But it was important to my co-curator and myself that the exhibition cover as many theatrical personalities as possible and that we focus on something for which Johnson was famous: social networking, conversation, friendships, and fallings out. To this end, a key feature of the exhibition became an interest in the spaces in which such networking took place: the dressing room and the green room, the theatre auditoria and the coffee-houses around Drury Lane and Covent Garden in which playgoers gathered to discuss the latest production. We divided the exhibition into five sections: The Green Room, which looked at the life of the theatre personnel backstage; The Players, which examined the interface between the actors’ public performances and private personae; The Audience, which considered the
social space of the theatre; Shakespeare, an exploration of how the figure of the bard and his works influenced the eighteenth-century stage; and Theatrical Networks, which assessed the role played by coffee-houses in the evaluation of performers and productions.

Since Dr. Johnson's House is a small, private museum, we wanted to explore the "hidden" spaces of the theatre world and to give our visitors a glimpse of what life was like behind the scenes as well as on the stage. We felt that our museum, tucked away in the backstreets of London, was a unique venue in which to do this and that by focusing on social interaction and conversation, we would be doing something Johnsonian in spirit.

**Loan institutions and objects**

Our focus on the small-scale and less well-known aspects of eighteenth-century theatre also influenced our choice of the institutions we approached for the loan of objects, as of course did money. Many of the large national museums charge considerable sums for conservation before they will lend an object and have complicated insurance demands. But we also liked the idea of displaying objects that are less well known to the public and which are less easily seen, and so we approached a variety of smaller institutions and also included some objects lent by private collectors. One of our first contacts was the Garrick Club, which has a vast collection of relevant material usually seen only by its members. Despite our fears about Garrick dominating the exhibition, we felt it was worthwhile to explore their archives. As a taster of what we might find, the archivist, Marcus Risdell, sent us an extraordinary image of Garrick's powder puff, which he would have used to apply powder to his wig. On our visit there, we discovered a number of other treasures: Sarah Siddons's coral tiara, which demonstrates her regal and iconic status on stage and in society; shoe buckles worn by Garrick in the farce *High Life Below Stairs*; a Shakespeare Jubilee medal in a box made from wood from the mulberry tree allegedly planted by Shakespeare; a ceramic figure of Garrick as Tancred, a popular collector's item; John Philip Kemble's "George" medal worn on stage. These finds dispelled our fear that we would not be able to include enough three-dimensional objects in the exhibition and would end up with a display primarily of books and prints.

Two-dimensional objects such as paintings, printed matter and manuscripts were, of course, still an important component of the exhibition. We were able to borrow a letter detailing Johnson's 1756 contract with Jacob Tonson to complete the edition of Shakespeare from the Samuel Johnson Birthplace Museum in Lichfield.
document from the archive of Hoare’s Bank, a sponsor of the exhibition, gave an insight into how the theatres were financed: it is a grant of rent issued by the patentees and proprietors of Drury Lane in 1784 which gives Sir William Cheere the sum of 2 shillings for every evening on which a performance takes place, plus free admittance to the playhouse, in return for his investment of £250. We also included a copy of Johnson’s tragedy Irene (1749) from our own collection and a first edition of Charles Churchill’s The Rosciad (1761) from the British Library, a poem which analyses the merits of famous actors and actresses. Prints that we chose to display included Hogarth’s Strolling Actresses Dressing in a Barn, a comment on the 1737 Licensing Act; a Rowlandson image of the interior of Covent Garden theatre, showing the audience in all its glory, and Fitzgiggo, a print depicting the riots that took place during a performance of Thomas Arne’s opera Artaxerxes in 1763 when the Covent Garden managers tried to abolish the custom of half-price tickets. The Orleans House Gallery in Richmond lent us a splendid image of Eva-Maria Garrick at the age of 98. She outlived her husband by some 43 years and maintained her connections with many members of Garrick’s theatrical circle after his death. Images of performers in role were also important: prints of Charles Macklin as Shylock and Spranger Barry as Othello showed the use of costume and makeup, and a ceramic figure of Frances Abington as Rosalind in As You Like It highlighted the appeal of actresses playing breeches parts.

We were also able to include some objects that explored details of the theatre and of daily life in the period. Such minutiae often become obscured by history and we wanted to elucidate some of the particulars of eighteenth-century theatrical life. The exhibition contained a set of entry tokens to the Haymarket (1778), giving admission to the four different parts of the theatre (the box, the pit, and the first and second galleries) which would have been returned after the performance and reused. A selection of china bowls and cups found on the site of Tom’s coffee-house, Covent Garden, were also displayed as an example of the type of vessels used to drink coffee and tea while patrons discussed the previous night’s performance.

There were of course several objects that we had to come to terms with omitting from the exhibition. We requested the loan of a pair of boots owned by Sarah Siddons from the Theatre Museum, but we had to rethink this when we were told there would be a charge of £700 for conservation! Another example was the painting The Downfall of Shakespeare on a Modern Stage by William Dawes (1765). I had learned of this fascinating piece from Iain Macintosh,
curator of a previous exhibition on Georgian playhouses at the Haywood Gallery. The last he knew of it, it had been in the possession of Mrs. Allardycce Nicoll. Amazingly, during my search to discover its current location, it came up for auction and was eventually purchased for the Theatre Museum with the help of the Society for Theatre Research, but was acquired too late to be included in our loan request.

But to counteract the disappointments, during our search for objects we found several that became key pieces in the exhibition as a result of their rarity or the unique light they shed on the theatre of the eighteenth century. One of these was a mirror owned by Garrick, said to be from his dressing room, from the collection of the Garrick Club. As well as being a beautiful piece, this object conjures up the atmosphere of the star performer in his dressing room, preparing to go onstage. The Theatre Museum also had such an object, an incredible set model painted by Philippe Jacques de Loutherbourg for the afterpiece Omai. This pantomime by John O'Keeffe detailed the voyages of James Cook and gave De Loutherbourg the opportunity to create lavish depictions of the South Sea Islands, based on the illustrations of those who had been on the voyage. The Museum of London lent us a wonderful wax diorama depicting the interior of the Turk's Head Tavern with Samuel Johnson holding court over the Literary Club.

Perhaps my favourite object in the exhibition was one loaned to us by the British Museum. It is a watercolour by Michael Angelo Rooker entitled The Scene-Painter's Loft at the Theatre Royal Haymarket, dating from circa 1785. Rooker was himself a scene painter and this unique view of backstage life shows the artist at work. In 1785, playbills advertised the afterpiece Here and There and Everywhere as having new scenery by Rooker, which may be what he is working on in the picture. I find this painting utterly fascinating and I think it sums up what we tried to achieve in the exhibition: to show visitors something new about the theatre in the age of Johnson, offering them a glimpse of aspects of the Georgian playhouse that have previously been hidden by displaying some intriguing lesser-known objects from collections they might not normally have access to.

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So what did I learn from my curatorial experiences? Firstly, I discovered a lot about the practicalities of organizing museum exhibitions and was both frustrated by constraints (lack of money, resources, etc) and thrilled by the freedom I had in selecting objects, choosing how to exhibit them and creating a context for
their display. When we began our search for exhibits, I knew only of collections of printed matter and manuscripts and some major theatrical paintings of the period. Being able to explore the archives of the Theatre Museum, the British Museum, the Museum of London, and smaller institutions such as the Garrick Club, the Orleans House Gallery, the Mander and Mitchinson Theatre Collection, and the archive of Hoare’s Bank was a unique opportunity for me to enrich my knowledge of the material culture of eighteenth-century theatre, and I was consistently surprised and impressed by just how much three-dimensional theatrical memorabilia survives. These items are not often discussed in academic work on eighteenth-century theatre history but they are certainly an important source and deserve further study. Through the exhibition’s focus on the “hidden world of Georgian Theatre” I came, as I hope visitors to the exhibition were also able to do, to better understand the playhouses of the period: how exactly they operated, how what went on there was perceived by playgoers and how social interaction shaped the theatre world. I believe that my experience in curating “Behind the Scenes” will enrich my future endeavours as a scholar of the theatre and I hope that visitors to the exhibition enjoyed its exploration of eighteenth-century theatre history.

—FIONA RITCHIE

Copies of ‘Behind the Scenes: The Hidden Life of Georgian Theatre 1737-1784’

The illustrated booklet accompanying the exhibition, can be ordered by sending a cheque for $20 (includes postage and packaging) made payable to:

Dr. Johnson’s House Trust to Dr. Johnson’s House
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41
Johnson on Philips via Cicero on Lucretius

"But perhaps to his last poem may be applied what Tully said of the work of Lucretius, that it is written with much art, though with few blazes of genius" (Johnson, "Life of J. Philips," par. 17). Commenting on this passage in his new edition of the *Lives*, Roger Lonsdale writes, "SJ translates Cicero, *Epist. Ad. Quintum Fratrem*, II. xii. 5 (‘multis luminibus ingenii, non multae tamen artis’), but the omission of ‘non’ in modern texts considerably modifies Cicero’s opinion of Lucretius" (*Lives*, II: 301). Two details: there should be no period after *Ad*; Cicero’s letter is number xi (sometimes, x) in most modern editions. More seriously, Lonsdale’s text is not the right one. Johnson was translating from an edition in which *non* came before *multis luminibus ingenii*, not before *multae tamen artis*.

G. B. Hill, using the 1902 Oxford Cicero numeration (II. 9. 25), suggests that "Johnson probably used a copy of Laminbus’ Cicero, 1594, bought by Charles Burney at the sale of his library in 1785."¹ Johnson did own a 1566 Laminbus along with a Stephanus (1543) and a Gruter (1681; rpt. 1749).² A. L. Reade finds that as an undergraduate Johnson had a Graevius (1677, rpt. 1698 and, with Cortius’ corrections, 1722 and 1735).³ Laminbus in the preface to his Lucretius edition (1570) insisted that the right reading was *multis ingenii luminibus tincta, multae tamen etiam artis*—no negatives (p. 26). Putting *non* before *multis luminibus ingenii* was the notion of J. A. Ernesti (1707-1781), whose edition (1739; rpt. 1777) was standard in Johnson’s time. Hill dubbed Cicero’s text "corrupt," a more forceful recognition than Lonsdale’s, whose *non multae tamen artis* was the brainchild of Theodore Bergk.⁴ There is in fact a monograph entirely devoted to this textual crux, as well as a detailed investigation by E. G. Sihler.⁵ This is not the place for similar chalcenetic industry, though it is worth noting that Johnson translates Cicero’s strange plural *poemata* (echoed in Jerome’s *aliquot libros*) by singular "work." However, there are three 64,000 dollar (or denarius) questions: are any negatives

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³ *Johnsonian Gleanings*, vol. 5 (1928; rpt. 1968), p. 223.
needed? what is the force of *tamen*? what exactly does *artis* mean in this quotation?

Working backwards, in Homeric *hysteron-proteron* style, *artis* can (of course) refer simply to literary style. But, do Lucretius’ often rough hexameters (his purple passages not withstanding) deserve such a compliment? As W. Glynns Williams asks in his Loeb editon (1954), “But is there much of such *ars* in the *De Rerum Natura*?” (518-519, n. b). Williams, like many others, prefers to see *multae artis* as a compliment to Lucretius’ ability in handling the techniques of Epicurean philosophy, a view that is lexically hard to sustain and one owing much to the poet’s lament (comporting implicit pride in his own success) over the inadequacy of his native Latin (*patrīi sermonis egestas*) for the translation of Greek technical terms. *Tamen* is normally adversative. If so here, *multae artis* calls for the negative, to provide contrast with *multis luminibus ingeni*, a compliment that Lucretius’ best set-pieces warrant. Hence, I am inclined to follow Bergk’s idea, described by Sihler as “brilliant but unnecessary.”

Reverting to Johnson, the proper business of this journal, it could be said that his construction “with much art” gains credence from the fact that Cicero in his own poetic efforts frequently imitated Lucretius. To what extent Johnson pondered these matters before deciding to adorn Philips with this Ciceronianism is, of course, unknowable. We do know from his account of the 1774 jaunt through North Wales that he “read Tully’s Epistles on the road” on 5 and 9 July (*Life V*: 428-429), not long before embarking on the *Lives*. In a Latin poem to Elizabeth Carter, he rhapsodized, *et iuvat ingenii vita sine arte rudis*. Finally pertinent is Johnson’s quotation of John Dennis’s verdict on Blackmore’s *Creation* (“Life of Blackmore,” par. 22): “A philosophical poem, which has equaled that of Lucretius in the beauty of its versification and infinitely surpassed it in the solidity and strength of its reasoning.” Here Johnson clearly extols the Roman poet’s style at the expense of his content; it seems that he was also doing so in the relevant passage in the *Life of J. Philips*; and he probably had a version of Lucretius to hand that supported his view. But this was not the version cited by Lonsdale, however superior that version might be.

—BARRY BALDWIN

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6 Another rare supporter was C. T. Crutwell, *A History of Roman Literature from the Earliest Period to the Death of Marcus Aurelius* (1877: II. i. ch. 4, n. 50: unpaginated on-line text).
8 For the classical antecedents of this line, including Ovid’s tribute (Tristia II. 410) *Ennius ingenio maximus, arte rudis*, see Baldwin, ed., *The Latin and Greek Poems of Samuel Johnson* (1995), p. 51.
Anna Williams's Miscellanies in Prose and Verse in the Houghton Library

The Houghton Library at Harvard University has three copies of Anna Williams's Miscellanies in Prose and Verse (London: Printed for T. Davies, in Great Russel-Street, Covent Garden, 1766) in quarto. All three have significant associations. One copy (*2003J—SJ442), from the Donald and Mary Hyde Collection, contains the autograph of Elizabeth Carter on the flyleaf (dated 1766), and a note, in an eighteenth-century hand on the inside front pastedown, to the effect that "This book was the property of Mrs Elizabeth Carter (translator of Epictetus), the friend of Dr. S. Johnson. It seems afterwards to have passed into the possession of Rev'd M Pennington, who wrote 'Memoirs & Life of Mrs Elizabeth Carter etc' 1 vol 4to London 1807."

A second copy of Miscellanies (*2003J—SJ443) has the bookplate of R. B. Adam, and pasted in, on the inside of the flyleaf, in a small eighteenth-century hand, is a "List of Names of Author's of Various Pieces."

Most interesting is the third copy of Miscellanies, also from the Hyde Collection (*2003J—SJ441), which contains eighteenth-century annotations that deserve to be better known. This copy is bound in contemporary half calf with marbled boards (in relatively poor condition), and contains the bookplates of Joseph Cooper Walker and Frank Brewer Bemis. There is a lengthy manuscript inscription on two sides of the flyleaf (A1) by Thomas Percy, a former owner, as noted in an early nineteenth-century hand at the top of the page: "The following note by Dr. Percy late Bp. Of Dromore." These are Percy's notes:

Mrs Anna Williams, for whose Benefit this book was published by subscription & who composed a great part of the Contents, was a woman of Genius and Learning (at least in the modern Languages) altho’ she lost her sight, soon after, I believe, she was 20 years of age. She had been an acquaintance of Dr. Johnson's wife, & she continued to live with him & supervise his Family, as oft as he kept house, until her Death, which happened a short time before his

2 The text of Bemis's bookplate reads: "Three things to me God lends, old Place, old books, old friends."
own. In this situation, notwithstanding her total Blindness, she managed with wonderful address, (especially in making Tea for him & his intimate Friends; the only Entertainmt to which he, a single man, cd invite them.)

[Overleaf, A1v]

Johnson superintended the Publication, but the authoress herself collected & arranged, the Materials & some of which were contributed by her Friends # — Johnson is supposed to have written the Preface, & was author of the Epitaph in p. 23 on Claudius Phillips, (a fine Performer on the Violin, who was buried, I believe, at Wolverhampton,) Mrs Thrale wrote the Three Warnings in pag. 74—and the writer of this, gave the Sonnet in pag. 3, being a Juvenile Escape written about 1753.

[In the margin of A1v]

See the Prefatory advertisement. I am also inclined to attribute to Johnson the first poem (pag.1.) [The Ant] It is like his style, & much resembles one of his self reproaches: (but this is only conjecture.) I also think that she would pay this compliment to her great Friend, of placing something of his at her [sic] Entrance on ye work —“pour une bonne bouche.”—I also believe Johnson wrote the Epitaph on Mr Worrall in p. 36.

[At the bottom of A1v]

NB. The Fairy Tale of the Fountains has been attributed to Johnson: But Mrs Williams was quite equal to the Composition herself.

As we know, Percy got some of the attributions correct and some incorrect.3 The Ant, “The Epitaph on Claudy Philips,” and The Fountains are now part of the Johnson canon whereas the “Epitaph on Mr Worrall” is not.4 J. D. Fleeman provides full bibliographical details for Williams’s venture in literary collaboration, and he notes the existence of and draws on Percy’s manuscript notes, but he does not quote them. I think the reader will agree that having Percy’s notes before us adds to the literary contexts of the work.

— Greg Clingham

3 See Bibliography, 2: 1140-41 for a list of the contents and attributions.
4 Fleeman gives reasons for not accepting the “Epitaph on Mr Worrall” (Bibliography, 2: 1142, n.7) and does not print it in his Samuel Johnson: The Complete Poems (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971). Neither do David Nicol Smith and Edward L. McAdam in The Poems of Samuel Johnson, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974). They do not even list it in “Poems of Doubtful Authorship” or “Poems Wrongly Attributed to Johnson.”
Dr. Johnson wrote of The Byble in Englyshe (London: Richard Grafton, 1540) [ESTC S121498; Herbert 54; STC (2nd ed.) 2070] to this effect:

king Henry VIII, at the request of archbishop Cranmer, who had been engaged in revising and correcting Tyndal’s translation, had determined to have it printed. . . . [The king] allowed Grafton, the printer, and bishop Coverdale, as corrector of the press, by permission from the French monarch, Francis I, to . . . execute the work at Paris; . . . They accordingly went to Paris in 1537, and nearly completed an impression of 2500 copies; when . . . officers of the inquisition . . . seized the work . . . the officer, who had the charge of committing the books to the flames, was bribed to save a part of them; and Grafton’s agents afterward . . . recovered the copies that were preserved, and carried them to London, together with the types, presses and French printers where the edition was completed; as appears by the imprint of the book in 1540.

This statement is quoted (in abbreviated form) from Isaiah Thomas’s History of Printing in America (Worcester, 1810), vol. I, pp. 57-63. T. F. Dibdin’s ed. of Joseph Ames’s Typographical Antiquities (London, 1810-19), vol. III, pp. 438-440, also relates a similar story. My question is—from whence did Isaiah Thomas find the original text of Dr. Johnson’s commentary?

—Marcus A. McCorison
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Agustín Coletes Blanco, trans. and ed: Viaje a las islas occidentales de Escocia


"Los que no somos ingleses," two of twentieth-century Spain's leading literary scholars confessed in their still popular Historia de la literatura universal, "no comprendemos nunca del todo la importancia de Johnson."¹ That has not always been the case. An essay by Johnson was the first English literary text to be published in direct Spanish translation, in 1764, and Rasselas the first English work of fiction, in 1798. Johnson's work was harvested by Spain's first generation of Shakespeare translators and critics (such as Leandro Fernández de Moratín and Cristobal Cladera), Romantic theorists (the German-born Johann Niklaus Böhl von Faber), and, more extensively, by the exiled Jesuit Juan André's in his vast diachronic survey of European letters and learning, first issued in Parma as Dell'origene, progressi e stato attuale d'ogni letteratura (1782-1799), and in Madrid as Origen, progreso y estado actual de toda la literatura (1784-1799), which quickly achieved institutional status as a set text. In the few Spanish libraries to build up considerable holdings in English in the eighteenth century—at the Colegio Mayor de Santa Cruz and the Colegio de San Albano (in Valladolid), the Reales Estudios de San Isidro (in Madrid), and the court residences of the noble houses of Osuna and Fernán Núñez—Johnson's writings had pride of place. Yet for the better part of the following two centuries those writings were overshadowed by versions of "Johnson as spectacle," as derived either from Macaulay, Taine, or a hodgepodge of both, recast by the critics Antonio Alcalá Galiano and Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, and retailed in encyclopedias and literary histories ever since. The blunders that crop up in the

¹ Martín de Riquer and José María Valverde, Historia de la literatura universal (1959) vol. 2, p. 425. The more extensive sketch of Johnson in the 1984 edition, written by Valverde after twelve years' exile in the U.S. and Canada, is kinder.
resulting whispering chain, such as the listing of the novel [sic] *The History of Scotland* as one of Johnson’s more important works, only served to underline his status as an alien rather than a denizen.

The catalyst of university English studies (without departments or degree programs until the 1950s), was needed for Johnson to come to the notice of any considerable Spanish readership. Translations of nine lives from the *Lives of the Poets* (1988), and of the *Preface to Shakespeare* into both Spanish (2003) and Catalan (2004)—all undertaken by academics and furnished with generous introductions and copious notes—attest to the role scholarship plays in naturalizing the alien, as does, more tangentially, a 2004 translation of *London* by a poet and English graduate. When in April 2007 a prestigious publishing house issued the first complete Spanish translation of Boswell’s *Life*, the seeds sown by scholars were merely being reaped. Given the venture’s critical success (widely and very warmly reviewed in the Spanish press, at the time of writing it has spent two weeks on the non-fiction best-sellers list of a national daily, despite an exorbitant price), one hopes that Spanish *Ramblers* and *Idlers* will eventually see the light of day.

Appearing a few months before the *Vida de Samuel Johnson, doctor en leyes*, Professor Agustín Coletes Blanco’s *Viaje a las islas occidentales de Escocia* should benefit from the former title’s considerable media echo. This is fortuitous, to be sure, but not unjust. Coletes is a distinguished comparatist of broad output and interests, ranging from the imprint of English culture on Spanish writers (such as Jovellanos, Clarín, and Pérez de Ayala), and the Spanish reception of Oscar Wilde and Rabindranath Tagore, to topics in translation studies, sociolinguistics, and even economic history. His learning is evident in the front matter that precedes his translation, a series of introductions to Johnson; eighteenth-century Scotland; the place of the *Journey* in the tradition of English travel writing; and relevant textual studies, editions, and secondary works, whether historical or critical. Taken together, they run to over one hundred and twenty pages, and, despite occasional lapses, they cumulatively compensate for the cultural

3 The English eighteenth century has never been favored by the Spanish ministerial guidelines that shape curricula and never granted its own panel at the yearly conference of the society of Spanish anglicists.
4 A new translation of *Rasselas*—the tenth—is forthcoming.
5 For example, “Market Worth” for Market Bosworth (16); Birmingham for Edial as the location of the school where Garrick was a student of Johnson’s (16); “Doctor en Letras” rather than the correct equivalent “Doctor en leyes” for the honorary LL.D.s Johnson received from Dublin and Oxford (24); George III as George II’s son rather than grandson (47); and a misdating by two years of the implementation of the Acts of Union (77).
book Reviews

baggage which educated English-speakers bring to a reading of the Journey, but which may not be presumed of their Spanish counterparts. A few lacunae should be noted in passing. Coletes directs the reader’s attention to Johnson’s letters from Scotland to Hester Thrale in Chapman’s edition rather than Bruce Redford’s; and, more significantly, he nowhere mentions J. D. Fleeman’s 1985 edition of the Journey itself. Nor are there, among the thirty-odd titles arrayed for recommendation, any Spanish translations of other works by Johnson, for news of which the reader would have been grateful. All in all, though, Coletes’s terse, careful prose makes these generally taut introductions a pleasure to read. In particular, his catalogue, with commentary, of the variables of Johnson’s style in the Journey (82-89) reveals his training as a linguist, though here as elsewhere he wears his learning lightly.

The closing pages of the front matter are given over to Coletes’s approach to the translation itself, biased in favor of the source language and against excessive domestication, as circumscribed by what is often referred to in translation studies as audience design. The translation is accordingly underwritten by assumptions about the knowledge and expectations of potential readers, as well as their tolerance of the flouting of norms in their own rhetorical culture, and so of free lexical collocations and a greater reliance on anaphoric references to achieve cohesion, to give but two examples. As a stylist, Coletes sets out to recreate, for the Spanish reader, “la elegancia y las cadencias rítmicas de los párrafos johnsonianos” (119); and, believing that Johnson’s usage in the Journey was somewhat dated at the time of initial publication, he opts for an equally conservative lexical subset of contemporary peninsular Spanish. Finally, Coletes rightly stresses that circumspection is required of any translator of a text both rich in references to material culture and lexically precise, when precision is clouded by over two hundred years of semantic shift, and the task of finding equivalents for the names of agricultural implements or features of the built environment

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6 Intellectual life in Spain, long colored by francophile, is patchy in its familiarity with British letters and history. One of the top three newspapers in Spain, La Vanguardia, recently referred to David Garrick as an Elizabethan comic actor and poet, the first to play the title role in Richard III (23 May 2007, 42).

7 His copy-text is Mary Lascelles’s, published in 1971 as the ninth volume of The Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson. Subsequent citations will be included in the body of the text.

8 Only the occasional use of the “gerundio de posterioridad” (e.g. on 239), regularly condemned in prescriptive grammars, strikes me as odd for a translation of Johnson.
requires precise description and above all images of the things named.9

Any translation entails interpretation, indeed a degree of interpretation which is co-extensive with the text. As such, a good translation is good scholarship, and must be well-informed and cogent in plan and performance. It is more proper to speak of woolly or sloppy translations rather than bad ones; and Professor Coletes’s work is neither woolly nor sloppy. The arguments for his criteria are sound, though not of course above dispute, and he has been diligent and rigorous in applying them. He handles Johnson’s most challenging syntax smoothly and accurately. Consider the following passage, a hypotactic labyrinth in which most undergraduates would soon lose the thread:

The change of religion in Scotland, eager and vehement as it was, raised an epidemical enthusiasm, compounded of sullen scrupulousness and warlike ferocity, which, in a people whom idleness resigned to their own thoughts, and who, conversing only with each other, suffered no dilution of their zeal from the gradual influx of new opinions, was long transmitted in its full strength from the old to the young, but by trade and intercourse with England, is now visibly abating, and giving way too fast to that laxity of practice and indifference of opinion, in which men, not sufficiently instructed to find the middle point, too easily shelter themselves from rigour and constraint. Yale Edition, 9: 69

To accommodate his readers, Coletes reads “but” as an emphatic discourse marker and adds to his rendering a sentence break in its place:

El cambio de religión en Escocia, exaltado y vehemente, suscitó un contagioso entusiasmo, mezcla de sombrío escrúpulo y ferocidad guerrera, en un pueblo al que la inactividad había confinado a sus propias cavilaciones y al que, en contacto exclusivo consigo mismo, el creciente influjo de las nuevas corrientes de opinión no había supuesto merma en su celo, largo tiempo transmitido de viejos a jóvenes sin perder vigor. Ahora, gracias al comercio e intercambio con Inglaterra, está remitiendo a

9 By way of example, when Johnson writes of “a fragment of the castle, in which the archbishop anciently resided” which stands “on the margin of the water” (Yale 9: 6), the infelicity of a literal rendering into Spanish compels the translator to specify the kind of body of water Johnson had in mind. This, in turn, entails a certain identification of the building and the use of period maps, references, or images. Coletes places the castle, which overlooks the sea, by the river (134).
ojos vistas y dejando paso, demasiado rápido, a la desidia en la práctica y la tibieza en la opinión, socorrido refugio del rigor y el comedimiento para quienes, por falta de instrucción, no hallan el término medio. 135

Not wanting to tax his reader’s short-term memory unduly, the translator has made it zeal rather than enthusiasm that “was long transmitted”; and the syntactic and cohesive benefits of the change more than compensate for any loss of meaning. Here, as elsewhere in the translation, word choice and noun-phrase syntax are at the service of prose rhythm, to great effect: consider “merma en su celo,” a balance which a longer synonym such as disminución or pérdida would have upset; or the frequent recourse to noun-adjective inversion.

Another virtue of the translation is the richness of the vocabulary Coletes uses in Johnson’s service. Perhaps this is best illustrated anecdotally. As I read the Viaje I checked hundreds of words against contemporary and period dictionaries of Spanish (the latter now available online courtesy of the Real Academia Española) and, naturally, Johnson’s own Dictionary. In these cases, either the Spanish word or the implicit sense was unfamiliar to me, and I suspected that Coletes had misread his source text. However, the test proved my ignorance rather than disproving the translator’s skill. A very few representative mistranslations must nonetheless be noted. Most of these reflect meanings which, while not strictly postdating the text, are unlikely inasmuch as their older counterparts came more readily to a man of Johnson’s generation and reading, or, as context clearly suggests, that he had another sense in mind. Thus, “the primacy of the kingdom” as applied to the ruined cathedral at St. Andrews (Yale 9: 5) is translated as “la excelencia del reino” (134), the generic being preferred over the specific ecclesiastical sense. For “petty regality” (Yale 9: 47), the rendering “mezquinas regalías” (244) suggests meanness rather than smallness or unimportance. “Bog” is more often than not “barrizal” (as on 222 and 235), meaning muddy instead of sodden ground. “Cornfield” is sometimes the species-specific “maizal,” a maize field (as on 193), and sometimes “sembrado” (215), denoting any field deliberately sown; and the “meal” for which the highland mother sent her sons to Inverness (Yale 9: 33), given very generically in Spanish as “comida” (198), is any milled grain rather than any food, and might have been rendered better as “harina.” Johnson’s observation at Bamff that “The manners of a people are not to be found in the schools of learning” (Yale 9: 22) becomes “el civismo de un pueblo,” though the ninth sense listed in the Dictionary itself, peculiar to
the plural, is "general way of life," which surely chimes with the reference to "national character" which follows closely. "We dined" at the beginning of the same account, should be read as a reference to a copious midday meal rather than evening meal, to which both the Dictionary and writers as late and as well known as Jane Austen attest; "cenamos" (172) is now and was in the eighteenth century the taking of a meal late in the evening or at night, which, despite the northern latitude, hardly fits with the opening of the second paragraph ("At night we came to Bamff"). Yet "dinner" is well rendered as "almuerzo" a few pages later (176).

Misreadings of passages rather than individual lexical items are rare, as one would expect in a translation of this caliber. In Johnson's anecdote about a man "required to pay the usual tax" after a storm had covered his seaside fields in deep sand (Yale 9: 18), the requirement is changed to one of declaring bankruptcy in order to receive disaster relief (163). Stylistically, critics may take issue with Coletes's combining and splitting of Johnson's paragraphs. For example, the paragraph directly following Johnson's description of himself conceiving the narrative, with its Ramblerian close juxtaposition of imaginings and observation (Yale 9: 40-41), is broken in two at "There were no traces of inhabitants"; while in a related passage on knowledge of the phenomenal world, cast by Johnson as two paragraphs, 10 of which the former is more abstract and the latter both more specific and more emphatic, the emphasis is lessened by fusion (226). At times, the latter half of a paragraph is detached and joined to the next (see, for example, 242). If there were a consistent pattern to these changes, showing a preference for shorter over longer units, they might at least be put down to suppositions about paragraphing in contemporary descriptive and argumentative prose in Spanish. In the absence of such a pattern, the practice itself is difficult to interpret.

The notes accompanying the translation can seldom be faulted. Coletes acknowledges that some are drawn from the Yale and Penguin editions (120); these are often amplified, especially where Johnson refers to Spain. 11 Others, though perhaps not most, are original. As might be expected, Coletes fills in gaps for his readership (as in his short profile of John Knox on 134, n. 7); but he also takes on textual issues (e.g. 213, n. 59) and detects a Ciceronian aphorism behind Johnson's allusion to togas (257, n. 84; see Yale 9: 72, on the accuracy of Johnson's reference to "the original Cantabrian" language spoken "in Biscay" (Yale 9:44).
52). There are a few inaccuracies: Thomas Hay, Earl of Kinnoul, is identified as the University of Saint Andrews’s rector (he was chancellor, 1765-1787); Johnson is taken to task for writing that clergyman of English or Scottish ordination could officiate in chapels using the English liturgy (161, n. 29), although he had correctly written “English or Irish” (Yale 9:17), and for “incorrectly” preferring “Armidel” to “Armadale” (251, n. 78), though the English spelling of highland toponyms was not settled, and Martin Martin, in his Description of the Western Islands, had used “Armidill.” Only once did I feel that a note was lacking. The “Buller, or Bouilloir, of Buchan” (Yale 9: 19) is translated as “el llamado bufón o hervidor de Buchan” (166). In ordinary use, a bufón is a clown or jester; and none of the native speakers I spoke to about this rendering were familiar with the use of bufón to denote a geological feature. In fact, the word is well chosen, and the bufones along the Cantabrian coast a short distance to the north of Oviedo, where Professor Coletes teaches, are bullers; but the rareness of the sense, the rareness of bullers in Spain, and the translation’s inherent interest to Spanish speakers internationally, required a note.

That said, is El Viaje a good read? After all, neither the writer nor the book is remotely iconic in the Spanish-speaking world, nor will readers avoid either because of acquired prejudices against the composite figure that is the English-speaking world’s Samuel Johnson. Johnson’s is simply an unfamiliar name in the unfamiliar literary history of what remains a largely unfamiliar language. And the Johnson who emerges from these pages, a Spanish-speaking Johnson, can thus be read on his own terms. He retains his powers as a reporter at once respectful, careful, and imaginative, his achievement as a compelling analyst, his ability to be at once wry and earnest, and the counterpoint of his spare and elaborate prose. In a book as much about the traveller as about the place travelled to, I would like to think that the reader’s interest in both will be piqued, to Professor Coletes’s credit.

—John Stone
University of Barcelona
Andrew Billen:  
*Who Was Sam Johnson the Wonderful Word Doctor*  


This little book—which was new when I told Bob DeMaria I would review it—has a commendable aim, which is to get young readers interested in Johnson. Other volumes in the series treat other persons of not-merely-historical-interest, an eclectic set that includes Shakespeare, Mozart, Dickens, Napoleon, Queen Victoria, Madame Tussaud, Admiral Nelson, Annie Oakley, Florence Nightingale, and Alexander Selkirk.

Billen, a British journalist, claims to have interviewed hundreds of interesting people—“but none as interesting as Samuel Johnson.” Nor is he likely to interview many such in the future, I dare say. He has produced a lively little book, less than 100 pages with the front and back matter added in.

Most of the content comes from Boswell’s *Life*. Billen begins with Johnson’s penitential stand at Uttoxeter and then flashes back to present a chronological narrative of Johnson’s life. He includes such chestnuts as the night walks with Savage, the folio smack-down of Osborne, and the letter to Chesterfield.

There is a Macaulayesque emphasis on Johnson’s physical mannerisms; Johnson is presented with his tics and twitches, rolling his head, clicking his tongue, and blowing out his breath like a whale. Donald Greene would not approve. And yet this is not a sneering book. The author’s outlook on Johnson and his strategy for pitching Johnson to a youthful audience are nicely captured on the back cover blurb: “Sam was a grumpy, difficult . . . man. He wasn’t handsome. He wasn’t good at sport. He was poor, lazy, and not even very happy. But Sam Johnson was a hero. Why? Because of his words. Sam could speak more cleverly and write more amusingly than anyone before or since.”

There are some errors. Probably I should display one or two to prove my *bona fides* as a reviewer. Billen places the “idiot inspired” anecdote in the wrong reign, so that Johnson now rants against George III as barbarous on all occasions. In fact, early in the reign
of George III Johnson traded the right to curse the House of Hanover for a pension of 300 pounds per annum. The denunciation that so startled Hogarth was in fact directed at George II.

But it would be silly to make much of such peccadilloes. The book makes no claim to be an authoritative, definitive work; it seeks only to interest the young in someone who is well worth their interest. Speaking for myself, I will say that if Billen succeeds in interesting 5 or 10 young readers in Johnson, I am willing to forgive many small inaccuracies. He can have Johnson rant against George IV or even George V if he likes. Where there is interest, there may in time be scholarship.

To estimate the chances of an outbreak of Johnson-mania among British youth, I checked the book’s sales rank on Amazon.co.uk. I was disappointed to discover that the Johnson book appears to be one of the slower-selling titles in the series. Of the twenty figures in the series, Johnson is outselling only Shakespeare and Madame Tussaud.

—MATTHEW DAVIS


This valuable collection of essays on Johnson’s Dictionary constitutes an issue of Textus, a journal devoted (as its subtitle indicates) to English studies in Italy. The range and nature of the essays in the volume, as well as the identities of the contributors, reflect an emphasis that is both interdisciplinary and international, if with a heavily Anglo-Italian orientation. Eight of the volume’s thirteen essays are written by Italian scholars; the other five are by scholars who are American or English. Three of the essays address in some way the connec-
tions between Johnson’s work and Italian language theory and lexicography in the eighteenth century and after. Three more address Johnson’s interest in Scots in various forms, in the relationship of Scots to eighteenth-century English usage, and in the aesthetics of Celtic revivalism. All of the essays remind us that the permeation of one kind of national or disciplinary boundary in investigations of the Dictionary inevitably implies another, and that the study of philology in general, and of Johnson’s work as the greatest eighteenth-century English dictionary in particular, is potentially a boundary-less affair.

Not surprisingly, the essays that pay the most direct tribute to the international occasion of the volume are those by the volume’s editors—Giovanni Iamartino and Robert DeMaria—together with the essay by Alessandra Vicentini. Vicentini’s essay, the short title of which is “In Johnson’s Footsteps,” examines eighteenth-century Italian borrowings from Johnson’s work by focusing on the relationship between Johnson’s Dictionary and the English Grammar and Dictionary of Guiseppe Barretti, who was for many years Johnson’s friend and admirer. Vicentini traces Barretti’s specific, even literal, borrowings from Johnson, and especially from the Grammar that appears in Johnson’s prefatory material. But she also details the ways in which Barretti shaped his adaptations of Johnson to suit “a book market specifically designed to teach Italians the English language” (181). In various ways, the attitude of deference, mixed with a willingness to engage in need-based innovation, that Vicentini shows Barretti exhibiting toward Johnson appears to have been prefigured in the attitude Johnson himself exhibited, between beginning and completing the Dictionary, toward Latin, Italian, and “Southern” culture generally. Robert DeMaria makes this case convincingly in “North and South in Johnson’s Dictionary,” where he presents a Johnson whose “natural tendency” in his youth was to “look south” (12), and whose “southern” orientation manifested itself in an interest in purifying and refining the English language in the Plan for his work. DeMaria also argues, however, that over the course of his lexicographic labors, Johnson was forcibly reminded that “English really is a Teutonic rather than a Roman language” (21). Moreover, Johnson’s altered orientation on this point is aptly reflected in the fact that in the Preface to the Dictionary, in contrast to the Plan, he styles himself, in his role of lexicographic discoverer, as a Goth rather than a Roman. Iamartino’s essay shows, perhaps most convincingly of any in the collection, that the complexity of the relationship between English and Italian lexicography, especially as it centered on Johnson’s Dictionary, was both long-term and evolving.
In “English Flour and Italian Bran,” Iamartino emphasizes that the Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca “provided a model for what would be Johnson’s only true innovation in English monolingual lexicography” (204) (his use of illustrative quotations), despite Johnson’s ambivalence about the establishment of an English academy of letters. But Iamartino also explains that Johnson’s work in turn became a model of modernity for would-be lexicographic reformers after about 1818, as Vincenzo Monti and others attempted to redefine the Italian academy’s mission in the wake of its publication of an edition of the Vocabolario that the reformers regarded as needlessly reactionary.

Two of the three essays that touch on Johnson’s attitudes toward Scots, and its relations to modern English, do so in the process of discussing other subjects. But all these pieces not only expand the disciplinary ambit of the volume markedly, but also suggest, out of the contrasts implicit among them, the nascent positioning of different forms of literary and linguistic study in Johnson’s own mind. In her essay “‘The Cinic Scotomastic’?” for example, Maria Dossena addresses Johnson’s attitude toward Scots and Scotticism directly, arguing that “Johnson’s contribution to the debate on the origins of Scots and English has gone relatively unnoticed” by generations of scholars (64), despite his palpable, encyclopedic, and antiquarian interest in Scots language and culture. Her argument serves as a rich and detailed amplification of Chris Pearce’s suggestion, at the end of his innovative “Recovering the ‘Rigour of Interpretive Lexicography,’” that a more expansive and more fully integrated method of reading the various parts of Johnson’s lexicographic practice in the Dictionary can shed a useful light on his interest in Scots as a reflection of earlier and alternate forms of English usage. Both essays work to deconstruct the long-held view of Johnson as regarding all things Scottish with comparative contempt, in other words, even where they also pursue other aims. Yet together they also offer a provocative contrast to Sandro Jung’s portrayal of the Dictionary, in his essay, as promoting a critical aesthetic hostile to the rapt antiquarianism of such poets as William Collins. The three essays together suggest that for the Johnson of the Dictionary, antiquarian philology was one thing and aesthetics quite another, and that Johnson’s love of mapping out early forms of English words in etymologies and usage notes (for example) by no means translated automatically into a love of the bardic mode in contemporary English verse.

If there are any fault lines that divide the essays in this collection from one another, in fact, they are disciplinary and methodological rather than national. While the volume contains more than
a few essays that navigate with particular grace the boundaries between more linguistic approaches to the Dictionary and those that might be called literary, cultural, or historical—those by Pearce, Dossena, Vicentini, and Iamartino stand out in this regard—it also contains quite a few that reside more obviously on one side of this boundary than the other; and to the extent that some of the contributions are recognizably discipline-specific, they have far more in common with essays having a similar methodological orientation than with essays that might be supposed to reflect a similar national-scholarly sensibility. (Such a national-scholarly sensibility is nowhere in evidence in the volume in any case, at least to the eyes of the present reviewer.) For example, the essays by Silvia Piredu and by Mirella Billi—the first on medical language in the Dictionary and the second on its lexicon of aesthetics—have far more in common with J. T. Scanlan’s essay on “Johnson’s Dictionary and Legal Dictionaries,” or even with David Vancil’s essay on miniature Dictionaries in the Cordell Collection, than they do with the essays of three other Italian scholars whose work is represented in the volume: Laura Pinnavaia, Silvia Cacciani, and Silvia Masi. Pinnavaia’s essay examines Johnson’s use of idiomatic expressions in the Dictionary, Cacciani’s surveys Johnson’s inclusion of intensifiers, and Masi’s analyzes Johnson’s entries for the verb “to observe” within the framework of cognition-based studies of the lexicon. All three of these pieces analyze Johnson’s work in the context of recent linguistic theory or lexicographic practice, whereas the essays by Piredu, Billi, Scanlan, and Vancil, in contrast, all work from and move toward more historically oriented claims.

The existence of visible disciplinary or methodological boundaries in a collection such as this is perhaps inevitable. But all the essays in this particular volume are well worth reading, and Johnsonians would no doubt benefit from seeing the challenge of reading across the boundaries that do exist among them as a positive one, and as one that might open the way to further and more penetrating investigations of Johnson’s great work. The volume should be on the shelf of every serious student of the Dictionary.

—Elizabeth Hedrick

58
John H. Middendorf

John Middendorf died on 14 August 2007. He was 85. John’s death was a great loss for Johnsonian scholarship and a more painful personal loss for me and other colleagues and students who knew him and worked with him. Forty-seven years ago, in early September of 1960, John was my first teacher in the Columbia Graduate Program. He (and Jim Clifford) introduced me to Johnson and his circle and to the British eighteenth century, and I remain grateful for that each and every day. I’m also grateful to have continued to know John as the years went by as a teacher, mentor, colleague, and friend, and also as my neighbor on the upper West Side of New York. I would in recent years on occasion run into him and Maureen. I remember with special pleasure encountering them one bitter cold morning in Riverside Drive Park as I was race walking on the drive. I stopped and we chatted about the bracing pleasures of being out-of-doors in cold weather. My fondest memories of him are from ten or fifteen years ago when we both attended the dinners and listened to the papers presented at the Columbia Eighteenth-Century Seminar. For a few years (in those years such behavior was not considered a sign of utter depravity), I would make a point of bringing two pretty good cigars to the seminar, and as we listened after dinner to the paper we would sit in the back of the room and smoke together. The clouds we produced sometimes hid our amusement or puzzlement with what the speaker was saying. Sharing cigars was and still is about as intimate an activity between old friends as I can imagine.

John encouraged my early efforts as a graduate student. I remember his incredibly neat and precise handwriting on my papers, as well as the sanity and cogency of his comments. He offered gentle and wise instruction and tactful advice, praise but also patience with my youthful awkwardness and even arrogance. He exemplified for me in those days scholarly rigor as well as generosity of spirit. I can’t do better than quote the eloquent tribute from another of his students and fellow Johnsonian, Stuart Sherman, on John’s qualities as a teacher: his teaching as Stuart and I remember it vividly was “a mix of engagement, amusement,
affection, generosity, anecdote, admiration, and erudition that quickly and ineluctably came to seem core qualities of the century he worked in, attributes of the field as well as the teacher. He made his world so welcoming that many of his students, from many generations, decided to make it their world too."

A native New Yorker (he went to Jamaica High School) and a graduate of Dartmouth (and I remember him wearing the bright green blazer that proclaimed him an alumnus), John went from Hanover, New Hampshire right into the wartime navy as an ensign, studying Japanese at the Boulder Language School in Colorado. He was assigned as a Japanese language translator for the Office of Naval Intelligence during World War II, stationed in Pearl Harbor at the Joint Intelligence Center, Pacific Ocean Area. When I first met him in 1960, he looked like an Ivy League English professor from central casting, at least in those days, with his impeccable tweed jackets, pipe, and neatly-trimmed mustache. Indeed, for all the many years I knew him, he was always well-turned out, crisp and natty like the former naval lieutenant that he was. As I enter retirement in these days when English professors are, to put it kindly, as casually dressed as their students, I aspire to the kind of trim elegance and bright-eyed alertness John embodied all his life.

Thanks to the G. I. Bill, John studied at Columbia as a graduate student with Jim Clifford, received his Ph.D. in 1953, and joined the English faculty, based in the new School of General Studies. John was over his many years at Columbia a stalwart supporter of the School of General Studies and appreciated teaching older students who as he put it in an interview after his retirement were not "wet behind the ears." He was of course with Jim for many years the co-editor of The Johnsonian Newsletter. At his death John was both general editor and chairman of the editorial committee of the Yale edition of Johnson's works. As general editor for the last thirty years or so, his leadership helped to make the Yale Johnson one of the enduring monuments of Anglo-American scholarship. He was also the editor of the long-awaited volumes containing The Lives of the Poets: all readers of The Johnsonian Newsletter will be glad to hear that volume one is in press, volume two is ready for the press, and volume three has been copy edited. Although he tragically did not live to see these magnificent volumes appear, John's work of many years, a long labor of love, will mark his passing and testify for many years to come to the uncompromising rigor and depth of his scholarship. As I read and indeed cherish these volumes (if I can afford them), I will think of him as my friend and teacher. Frater, ave atque vale!   

—JOHN RICHETTI
John Middendorf: A Teaching Tribute

John Middendorf’s charm and appeal were immediate, if subtle, to a young English graduate student in Columbia’s Philosophy Hall in the early 1980s. If the attraction was strong, the appeal is somewhat unexpected when one considers the flashier colleagues—Edward Said, Sacvan Bercovitch, Steven Marcus, Ann Douglas, for instance—who also walked those halls. Many of the best students, however, some of whom are now teaching in the next generation of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century studies, found their way to John’s door. In our group alone were Jennifer Fleischner (Adelphi University), Joanna Gondris (The Open University), Elizabeth Hedrick (University of Texas at Austin), Mark Jones (Queen’s University, Kingston, Ontario), Stuart Sherman (Fordham University), John Zomchick (University of Tennessee), and myself (University of Zürich). His personal attributes, not surprisingly, were part of his teaching style: suavity, kindness, intelligence, urbane good looks. But more importantly, John not only imparted knowledge but also allowed us a space and forum to explore and expand our ideas, to become more fully ourselves intellectually. Whatever our actual deserts, we were treated with warm respect, our often ill-considered remarks not meeting the derision they almost certainly deserved. I remember remarking stupidly in my first year, no ideas disturbing my head, that “no one reads Addison these days”; John merely looked at me with a patient (not quite pitying) expression and suggested I take him a little more seriously. No teacher ever respected his graduate students more. It is a delicate balance to strike, providing knowledge, inspiring, then pulling back to allow the student to fill the space. In this important respect, John Middendorf had no ego whatsoever in his teaching. This doesn’t mean he had no presence, didn’t offer guidance, and didn’t know his worth. It means instead that he engendered trust, in the Learned Professor, in and among the students, in the process of critical debate itself. It is a kind of civility, which everyone who knew John will recognize as his; in his teaching, it was like a magical art. Neither stiff nor stuffy, neither hierarchical nor authoritarian, his civility was liberating and emboldening. I would go so far as to say that, in this respect, he was a perfect teacher, a model for all of us in our roles as educators and “enablers” of the succeeding generation. Books and lives from the
eighteenth century populated John’s imagination, and he was refreshingly unapologetic about his fascination with the world of eighteenth-century figures, objects, and ideas. We all absorbed it, were invigorated, and prospered. This world, he insured, would also be ours, as he insisted on an unusually rigorous written comprehensive exam for his graduate students covering the most obscure poems by the most obscure authors (it was a shock to discover how many of the “little-known” authors in Roger Lonsdale’s influential collection, The New Oxford Book of Eighteenth-Century Verse, from Edward Chicken to Stephen Duck and Mary Collier, were already familiar to me from that strenuous exercise!).

As one can imagine, John’s forte was the seminar rather than the lecture; he was more at ease provoking and eliciting response and intelligent debate than imparting grand ideas. I recall Stuart Sherman (who seemed to think he was going to be a medievalist, if I remember rightly) agonizing over the pull towards the irresistible community of eighteenth-centuryists around John. He succumbed to the power, and we’re all the better for it. Mark Jones’s superb Romanticist qualifications barely survived Mark’s year of assisting John in the editing of the JNL, when he seemed perilously close to giving in to the allure of Middendorf’s eighteenth century. In my own case, John’s telling comment in our graduate seminar on Johnson that Johnson quoted authors from the range of English literature in his Dictionary, but frequently mis-quoted them, was a quiet bombshell. Possibly the greatest critic of English literature, the author of the Lives and constructor of literary history, misquoted the writers? Incredible! As “authorities,” but in words not their own? Outrageous! Was it intentionally misleading? Careless? For rhetorical or political purposes? Speaking to him after class, I asked if much work had been done on the topic and whether or not there was manuscript material that might shed some light on this aspect of Johnson’s quoting. He remembered something about inaccessible Dictionary materials mentioned by Sledd and Kolb (Dr. Johnson’s Dictionary: Essays in the Biography of a Book, 1955) and suggested Herman Liebert, former director of the Beinecke at Yale, might know something. He introduced me to Liebert over the telephone; Liebert invited me to Yale the next day; and that was really the beginning of my professional career. John Middendorf’s quietly provocative style—planting seeds, allowing them to germinate, then enabling roots to be set down in the appropriate places—provided the perfect conditions for a young scholar. Trusted and admired among his contemporaries and senior scholars, John was able to assist young scholars in entering and profiting from that intellectual and pro-
Remembrances

professional network. His support of his graduate students in the profession was generous, constant, and effective.

We were also there, in the early ’80s, when Bevy, his dear first wife, died of cancer after heroic battles. John suffered like a man and a loving husband, yet the trusting and serious community he had constructed among his graduate students helped to sustain him. Death was a part of life, we knew he knew from his reading of Rasselas, though we also knew that resolution and calm could only come eventually. We all could see and rejoice in what Maureen did for him for many happy years.

His magical art of teaching was born of intellectual commitment and enviable patience. In this, he was the perfect teacher.

—Allen Reddick
Please provide us with your Johnsonian event listings for 2009!

We plan to run in our next issue of the JNL a calendar of events set to take place around the world in honor of Samuel Johnson on the tercentenary year of his birth.

If you are planning, or know of, an event anywhere in the world (no matter how large or little) honoring Samuel Johnson in 2009, please send us as much of the following information as you can so that we can include it in our calendar:

Event Name

Date

Location

Brief Description

Speakers (if any)

Registration Fee

Accommodations

Contact for further information

To bring the celebration to as many interested people as we can, at this point we consider no event to be "too small" for inclusion in our calendar.

Send the above information to: The Editor, JNL, Department of English, Box 140, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, NY 12604; or e-mail it to: demaria@vassar.edu, by July 28, 2008.

Our calendar will run in the September 2008 issue of the JNL.

Thank you.
Johnsonian News Letter

CONFUCIUS
The celebrated Chinese Philosopher.

His whole Doctrine tends to the Propagation of Virtue
- Johnson's Life of Confucius, 1742.
The Johnsonian News Letter is published twice a year, in March and September. Subscription rates are $12 per year. For subscriptions outside of the U.S. add $7 (U.S.) per year for postage. Send editorial submissions or inquiries to Robert DeMaria, Jr., Editor, Johnsonian News Letter, Department of English, Box 140, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, NY 12604, or e-mail the editor at demaria@vassar.edu. We ask that submissions conform to the style of this journal and that, when possible, digital files (preferably in Microsoft Word, Macintosh or RTF format) accompany printed articles. Send subscription orders or customer service inquiries to Customer Service, Johnsonian News Letter, 6 Prowitt Street, Norwalk, CT 06855, or e-mail JNLcustomerservice@pennypublications.net. The material in this newsletter is Copyright © 2008 by the Johnsonian News Letter and its contributors, all rights reserved.

Cover art: The image of Confucius is reproduced, with the permission of Vassar College, from the frontispiece to volume 1 of The General History of China Containing a Geographical, Historical, Chronological, Political, and Physical Description of the Empire of China, Chinese-Tartary, Corea and Thibet by Jean Baptiste Du Halde (1735; trans., 1738-41).

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# Table of Contents

**From the Editor** ................................................. 4

**Reports**
- Yale Boswell Editions Notes
  - *Gordon Turnbull* ............................................. 7
- Frances Burney Notes
  - *Peter Sabor* .................................................. 11
- Samuel Johnson Society of Southern California
  - *O M Brack, Jr.* .............................................. 13
- Johnson at 300
  - *Michael Bundock* ........................................... 14
- The Johnson Society of Australia
  - *Paul Tankard* ................................................ 15

**Notes and Queries**
- Samuel Johnson, Thomas Osborne, and the Folio:
  - The Incident Revisited
    - *O M Brack, Jr.* ............................................ 18
- An Early Spanish Translation of *Rasselas*
  - *John Stone* .................................................. 24
- Fragment of a Greek Tragedy
  - *Barry Baldwin* .............................................. 28
- Hodge the Favorite
  - *Isobel Grundy* ................................................ 31
- Queeney's Astronomy
  - *Ronald K. Smeltzer* .................................... 33
- Gainsborough to Garrick
  - *Marcia Allentuck* .......................................... 33
- Chinese Words in Johnson's *Dictionary*
  - *Li Xiang* ...................................................... 34
- The Family Background of Francis Stewart:
  - Some New Findings
    - *Matthew Davis* ........................................... 38
Book Reviews

Emily Cockayne: Hubbub: Filth, Noise & Stench in England, 1600–1770
   Nancy E. Johnson .................................................. 53
Tian Ming Cai, trans.: The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia
   Paul T. Ruxin .................................................. 56
Sophie Gee: The Scandal of the Season
   Kate Chisholm .................................................. 58

Remembrances

Morris Ruggles Brownell III
   Robert DeMaria, Jr. ........................................... 62
Bruce Purchase
   Robert DeMaria, Jr. ........................................... 63

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A Call For Contributions

The editors of the JNL invite contributions of notes, queries, Johnsoniana, and short articles on any and all matters regarding Johnson and his circle (social, political, and intellectual). Contributions to the March issue are due 22 November; those for the September issue are due 22 May.
China has been much in the news of late. The unrest in Tibet, the protests and counter-protests following the Olympic torch, the terrible earthquakes that silenced news on those subjects, and the Olympics themselves were all added this spring to the usual flow of economic news about China. The *Johnsonian News Letter* has, somehow, also managed to gather news from China. We have an article in this issue by Li Xiang on the surprising topic of Chinese words in *Johnson’s Dictionary*. Mr. Li is a graduate student at the Beijing University of Foreign Languages who spent this spring at Vassar working on his dissertation on Johnson’s *Dictionary*. His main interest is in Johnson’s comments on usage in the *Dictionary*. By analyzing these comments, Li is trying to clarify for Chinese readers the old question about the balance Johnson strikes between descriptive and prescriptive lexicography. It has been a pleasure to speak frequently with Li as he has steadily and swiftly worked his way through the *Dictionary* and many critical books and dissertations on the subject that were unavailable to him in Beijing.

Not long before Li arrived in Poughkeepsie, I received word from Paul Ruxin of a Chinese translation of *Rasselas*. His review, or, rather, notice of the book appears in this issue, with an interesting quotation from the translator’s introduction, which suggests something about the history of the Chinese reception of Johnson. Of course, Johnson himself was interested in China. He encouraged Boswell to visit the Great Wall because of the glory it would add to his name for generations. A traveler to China gave Johnson a brick of the Wall, which still abides in the house in Gough Square. Johnson probably first read about China and the Great Wall in an English translation of Jean-Baptiste Du Halde’s *Description of the Empire of China* (1738, 1741), which he described in the *Gentleman’s Magazine* over the course of three monthly issues in 1742. Even though he does it in three installments (the last is actually just a table of contents), Johnson’s review of the *Description* is very selective. Not surprisingly, however, he includes a brief description of the Wall. More surprisingly, perhaps, is the extent to which he admits, though only as report, a few dubious stories about the Wall’s construction:
From the Editor

To this Wall there is no Work equal in the known World, for it is extended from a Mole raised in the Sea, thro' three large Provinces, carried on in Places which seem inaccessible, and at proper Intervals fortified with Towers. Ships laden with Iron are said to have been sunk in the Sea to secure the Foundation, and the Architect is reported to have been obliged on Pain of Death, to cement the Stones in such a Manner that it should not be possible to drive a Nail between them.

The Solidity of this Work is apparent from its Duration, which the Missionaries who often climbed to the Top of it in their Survey of the Provinces, had Opportunities of remarking. They found it always well paved from 20 to 25 Feet in Height, and so broad that six Horsemen might ride upon it in a Rank. *Gentleman's Magazine* 12 (1742): 322.

On the subject of Confucius Johnson is more expansive, but he is careful not to repeat elements of Du Halde's treatment of the great philosopher that might suggest a supernatural awareness of Christ and Christianity. Johnson writes:

His whole Doctrine tends to the Propagation of Virtue, and the Restitution of Human Nature to its original Perfection, and it is related that his Precepts always received Illustration from his Example, and that in all Conditions of Life, he took Care to prove by his Conduct, that he required no more from others, than he thought it his own Duty to perform. *Gentleman's Magazine* 12 (1742): 357.

This is a somewhat toned down version of Du Halde's more enthusiastic remarks:

The whole Doctrine of this Philosopher tended to restore human Nature to its former Lustre, and that first Beauty it had received from Heaven, and which had been sullied by the darkness of Ignorance, and the Contagion of Vice. The means he proposed to attain it was to obey the Lord of Heaven, to honour and fear him; to love our Neighbours as ourselves, to conquer irregular Inclinations, never to take our Passions for the Rule of our Conduct, to submit to Reason, to listen to it in all things, to do nothing, to say nothing, to think of nothing contrary to it. As his Actions never belied his Maxims, and as by his Gravity, Modesty, Mildness, Frugality, Contempt of earthly Enjoyments, and a continual Watchfulness over his Actions, he was in his
own Person a Pattern of the Precepts which he taught in his Writings. Du Halde, 3rd ed. (1742), 3: 298.

Later Du Halde describes Confucius as knowing, somehow, that Christ had come, and he carefully distinguishes his philosophy from Stoicism, which he identifies as irreligious because of its belief in self-sufficiency. Johnson repeats neither of these opinions. His standards of evidence were too high to do so, for one thing, and for another, he probably saw Confucius as a Stoic (as Robert Folkenflik pointed out long ago) with all the liability to irreligion in that arrogantly self-sufficient sect.

Along with Ruxin’s review and Li Xiang’s note I also recently received Fabulous Orient (Oxford, 2005; paperback ed., 2007) by Ros Ballaster. A seasoned writer on eighteenth-century fiction, Ballaster describes the various ways in which British writers of the time employed Eastern stories and histories in their own fictions. Alluding to a line from William Whitehead’s prologue to Arthur Murphy’s play The Orphan of China (1759), Ballaster calls her chapter on China “Bearing Confucius’ morals to Britannia’s ears.” In this chapter she touches on everything from Du Halde’s Description to Goldsmith’s Citizen of the World, Eliza Haywood’s Adventures of Eovuai, William Hatchett’s A Chinese Tale, and the surprising references to China in Pope’s Dunciad. Not much of this fiction reflects aspects of the “real” China, however, because not much was securely known and because the writers were not really interested in China itself. As Ballaster concludes, “China could serve as a resource for images of both an extreme rationalism [Ballaster associates Confucius with Swift’s Houyhnhnms] and the playful unconscious bordering on insanity, because it was a manufactured product of the Western imagination, generated, however, not for imperial political ends but rather for domestic narcissism or critique” (253).

With greater opportunities for travel and many more sources of information, we naturally think we know more about the real China than our eighteenth-century literary heroes. As usual, however, we would be wise to hesitate before drawing such a conclusion. I found, for example, my sense of what was happening in Tibet so different from Li Xiang’s that for a moment I was tempted to accuse him of being grossly deceived. But what madness, I thought, for a Johnsonian to prefer his ideas about a place he has never been to the experience of one who lives there. Chief among Johnson’s teachings and fundamental to his understanding is the priority that experience should enjoy over mere ideas.
In "How (Not) to Queer Boswell," Thomas A. King ponders "the textualization of desire" in Boswell's writing and the "question of how to read Boswell's strong identifications with other men and his insistent desire to pose in their gazes," in order to inquire "into the performative effects of Boswell’s textual reflexivity, his impulse to manufacture the gaze in which he might display himself and to negotiate the visual field in which particular male bodies acquired visibility and accordingly distinction." King is not "setting out to queer Boswell, if by that one means revealing the repressed homoeroticism within heterosexuality, the homosexuality at the root of heterosexuality." His conclusions, that "descriptors such as 'homosocial' or 'homoerotic' are . . . insufficient for understanding Boswell’s relations with Eglinton, Johnson, Grange and his other male friends and patrons," concern rather the ways in which "early modern 'manliness' marked a particular aristocratic mode of being within the economy of pederasty and patriarchy, a way of negotiating one's effeminate subordination to, ravishment by, and desire for proximity to more powerful bodies," and how the "rhetoric of the penetration of one male body by another higher placed or more public male body derived from a baroque model of publicness as the ability to ravish the bodies of others, above all, by promoting the arts of imitation." The essay is one of the contributions to Queer People: Negotiations and Expressions of Homosexuality, 1700-1800, ed. Chris Mounsey and Caroline Gonda (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2007), pp. 114-158.

*****

Thomas Holcroft (1745-1809) noted in his Memoirs (1 July 1798) that he read in the Life of Johnson and found its author "weak, vain, a sycophant overflowing with worldly cunning." Yet "owing to the industry with which he collected his materials, the book
abounds in facts, and is amusing. . ." On 16 July 1798: "Read Boswell. Still the same loquacious parasite: to whom we are highly indebted for the facts he has preserved relative to Johnson, and I had almost said for the laughter he has excited at himself. He is indeed, a most solemn, pompous, and important coxcomb." Holcroft, minor actor and playwright, novelist and prolific miscellaneous political journalist and author, became part of the English pro-Revolutionary and radical and reformist movements (closely associated with William Godwin and others) of the 1790s, and was thus plainly ill-disposed to the political orientations of the Boswell and the Johnson depicted in the Life. Yet his feelings are not dissimilar from those of the more mildly disposed and affectionate Charles Burney, who wrote in the same year to Malone: "Among all the good qualities of our friend Boswell, which were very numerous, delicacy had no admission. He was equally careless what was said of himself, or what he said of others. But the memorabilia which his diligence and enthusiastic admiration of the British Socrates have preserved are inestimable and will merit the gratitude of posterity as long as the language of our country shall be intelligible." Burney's splendid daughter, Frances, in the last of her several recorded encounters with Boswell, found her complicated feelings about him change, very much for the better, in the course of a single breakfast meeting (1 June 1792):

I felt a strong sensation of that displeasure which his loquacious communications of every weakness and infirmity of the first and greatest good man of these times has awakened in me, at his first sight. . . . I felt an indignant disposition to a nearly forbidding reserve and silence. Angry, however, as I have long been with him he soon insensibly conquered, though he did not soften me: there is so little of ill-design or ill-nature in him, he is so open and forgiving for all that is said in return, that he soon forced me to consider him in a less serious light . . . and before we parted we became good friends. There is no resisting great good humour, be what will in the opposite scale.

The Yale Boswell Editions would like to recommend this entry from Frances Burney's journal to the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, which, in its entry on Frances Burney, by Pat Rogers, states that she met Boswell several times "but never overcame a dislike of his pushy ways."

As these few selections show, Boswell, man and author, provoked as astonishingly wide a range of opinion in his own time as he does in ours, such that Robert Anderson (1749-1830) could write in his
own brief *Life of Johnson* in 1795 (the year of Boswell’s death), in a highly laudatory assessment of Boswell and his work, that “The eccentricities of Mr. Boswell, it is useless to detail. They have already been the subject of ridicule in various different forms and publications, by men of superficial understanding and ludicrous fancy.” (The Yale Boswell Editions wish that Anderson could have spoken not for an age but for all time.) The remarks here quoted are among the selection of accounts of Boswell appearing in an entertaining and revealing new compilation, *James Boswell: As His Contemporaries Saw Him*, edited by Lyle Larsen (Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2008). Lyle Larsen, who teaches English at Santa Monica College, will be best known to Johnsonians for his *Dr. Johnson’s Household* (1985). Information on how to order the book can be found on the FDUP website.

An opinion of greater significance than any other, Samuel Johnson’s, appears in endearing and enduring simplicity in his letter to Hester Thrale of 19 June 1775 (quoted on p. 70 of Larsen’s compilation): “He is a very fine fellow.”

That should have been an end on’t.

****

For *JNL* readers who have not yet encountered it, we draw attention to a fine website devoted to Boswell, www.jamesboswell.info, the work of an enthusiastic and well-informed fan in Denmark, Thomas Frandzen, who is ambitious to provide biographical notes on the people mentioned in Boswell’s writings, offer news and information about Boswell, and provide an online discussion forum for those interested in the man and his writings. Mr. Frandzen gives the following summary of himself and the development of his interest:

I am not a professional historian—I am a 30 years old Danish M.Sc. student of Business Administration and Philosophy. My name is Thomas Frandzen, and some years ago I accidentally stumbled upon a copy of Boswell’s *London Journal [1762-1763]*. I was instantly fascinated by the young man, his life and his problems, and read the book in no time. Within a few months I had acquired another 5 volumes of his journals and letters, and the collection is still growing. I became particularly interested in finding out more about his friends and acquaintances, and immediately began doing a bit of research. The results of this research will be published on this site as it becomes available, together with all other
sorts of information about Boswell, his work, his life and his time. The site was launched in mid-December 2004.

Mr. Frandzen’s most recent post (at this time of writing) on his site, dated 27 May 2008, is as follows:

I have finally had my first looks through the new volume in the research editions — or rather, the first volume in the journal research editions: *James Boswell: The Journal of His German and Swiss Travels, 1764*. And it is highly recommendable.

With every new research volume, the annotations just keep getting better and more detailed, and are sometimes even correcting earlier notes. And they are, of course, also far better than I can ever hope to make the mini-bios on jamesboswell.info—there has to be some difference between the brilliant researchers at Yale, and a small-time Boswell hobbyist like myself.

With this volume, we get some much needed background information about all the lesser German courts visited by Boswell, about the numerous noblemen, royalty and civil servants he encountered, about his Scots and Irish military acquaintances in the Prussian service, etc. Marlies K. Danziger and the rest of the Boswell team has really done a thorough job this time.

Unlike the trade edition of the journal, this edition contains all the preserved daily memos written by Boswell during the period, and also prints the journal entries as written by himself, i.e. without correcting his grammar or translating his occasional sentences in German or French. Notably, he often quoted extracts of conversations in the language in which they were held.

To conclude—this is yet another great work from the people at Yale. It sells for just £47.50 at Amazon (UK), which is a very reasonable price!

This post is, in effect, the first review to appear of the latest volume in the Yale Boswell research series, and greatly endears Mr. Franzden to us.

—GORDON TURNBULL
An excellent conference entitled “Before Depression: The Representation and Culture of Depression in Britain and Europe, 1660-1800,” organized by Allan Ingram and others with support from the Leverhulme Trust, was held at Northumbria University, 19-21 June 2008. Johnson, of course, played a central part. The program cover features Johnson’s Dictionary definition of “Melancholy,” and there were presentations by Jane Darcy (King’s College, London) on Boswell’s Life of Johnson and Diane Buie (Sunderland) on Rasselas. There were also five papers on, or partly on, Frances Burney. Two of these, by Mascha Gemmeke (Griefswald) and Gillian Skinner (Leeds), focused on gloominess, melancholy, and depression in Burney’s Court journals, in a session at which Joanne Holland (McGill) spoke on Margaret Nicholson, whose attempted assassination of George III took place just after Burney arrived at Court in July 1786. Hélène Dachez (Toulouse) spoke on Elinor Jodrell, the suicidal figure in Burney’s final novel The Wanderer. And my plenary paper on Burney and her wayward son, Alexander d’Arblay, discussed him as a case-study of depression in the early nineteenth century.

The conference was accompanied by an innovative exhibition, “18th-Century Blues: Exploring the Melancholy Mind,” which opened at the Shipley Art Gallery, Gateshead, on 21 June and will run until 31 August. It includes the National Portrait Gallery Joshua Reynolds portraits of Johnson, Boswell and Goldsmith, and also has a copy of the Dictionary on display, open, of course, to “Melancholy.”

The Witlings and The Woman-Hater: from Streatham to New York

On 28 August 1778, shortly after Frances Burney met Dr. Johnson for the first time at the Thrales’ country residence, Streatham Park, the conversation turned to Irene. Hester Thrale, writes Burney, “made Dr. Johnson read some Passages which I had been remarking as uncommonly applicable to the present Times.
And he read several speeches, & told us he had never Read so much of it before since it was first printed." With drama still on his mind, later that morning Johnson declared that Burney should write a play herself, a comedy, to be entitled "Stretham, a Farce." Six months later, in February 1779, Johnson was still egging Burney on, jokingly offering to collaborate with Burney on a comedy, and eliciting Arthur Murphy's reply: "I wish you would Beaumont and Fletcher us." In the event, Burney did complete a comedy that year, *The Witlings*, but she would never see it on stage: her father, Charles Burney, and his friend Samuel Crisp put paid to that. And remarkably, *The Witlings* would not be professionally performed for almost 230 years. The same fate befell another comedy by Burney, *The Woman-Hater*, which she wrote in or around 1800 as a follow-up to *The Witlings*: in both plays, Lady Smatter prides herself on her vast reading in English literature, of which she knows only a smatter.

Happily for us, though too late for Burney, both *The Witlings* and *The Woman-Hater* have received their premieres this year: *The Witlings* in New York by the Magis Theatre Company at the Off-Broadway West End Theater in a three-week run, from 16 May to 1 June, and *The Woman-Hater* at the Orange Tree Theatre, Richmond, Surrey (UK), in a six-week run, from 19 December 2007 to 2 February 2008. Both are intimate theatres with wonderful sightlines: the Orange Tree, a theatre in the round, seats some 170 spectators on two levels, while the West End, on the second floor of the Church of St. Paul & St. Andrew, is smaller still. The productions were a contrast in styles. In his fine production of *The Woman-Hater*, Sam Walters's fidelity to Burney's text resulted in a running time of three hours: a stiff test for any audience. But the play came to life with superb acting in the leading roles—Clive Francis as Sir Roderick, the blustering woman-hater, Auriol Smith as a deliciously self-important Lady Smatter, David Gooderson as a hilariously lecherous Old Waverley, and Jennifer Higham romping around as the hoyden Miss Wilmot, and played to a sold-out theatre for most of its run. Reviews in the British press were largely positive, with an especially glowing one from the influential Michael Billington in *The Guardian* (8 January 2008) describing Burney as the "missing link between Sheridan and Wilde" (see this and other reviews on the Burney Centre website: burneycentre.mcgill.ca).

The New York production of *The Witlings*, directed by Deborah Philips, took a very different approach. Although the play is somewhat longer than *The Woman-Hater* (Burney herself regretted its "enormous length"), judicious cutting brought the running time
down to a mere two hours. The play was set, in part at least, in twenty-first-century Manhattan, rather than late eighteenth-century London, and began with Mrs. Wheedle’s milliners admonishing the audience to silence their cell phones. The Magis Theatre Company had some fine actors in the leading roles: George Drance, the company’s Artistic Director, was splendid as Dabler, reincarnated as a pretentious rap poet, and Casey Groves was singled out for praise in an otherwise lukewarm review of the production by Neil Genzlinger in the New York Times for 29 May (also on the Burney Centre website).

Both the Richmond and New York companies offered presentations on Burney and her comedies to their audiences. At the Orange Tree Theatre, Kate Chisholm spoke to a very appreciative full house before one of the performances. And at the West End Theater, Geoffrey Sill and I took part in “talk-backs” on consecutive Sunday matinees, together with the full cast assembled on stage. Burney, whose complete plays were first published only in 1995, was known to her contemporaries as a novelist and to the Victorians as a journal-writer. In the twenty-first century, she is also making a name as a dramatist.

—Peter Sabor
McGill University

Samuel Johnson Society of Southern California

The twenty-fifth annual dinner of the Samuel Johnson Society of Southern California will be held Sunday, 23 November 2008 at the Huntington Library, San Marino, California. The President is Robert DeMaria, Jr. The Daniel Blum Memorial Lecture will be delivered by Michael Bundock, editor of the New Rambler. SJSSC is open to all persons interested in conversation and discourse about the life and writings of Samuel Johnson, his circle, and the history and culture of his century. The annual dinner is the convivial focus for these activities. Among the events in the tercentenary year will be an exhibition at the Huntington library, 23 May-20 September 2009, a series of lectures, and a special twenty-sixth annual dinner, with John W.
Byrne, founding member of the Samuel Johnson Society of Australia, as President, who will also deliver the Daniel Blum Memorial Lecture. Further information can be obtained from Myron Yeager, Secretary to the society at yeager@chapman.edu.

—O M Brack, Jr.

Johnson at 300

Samuel Johnson Tercentenary Conference
14th-18th September 2009
Pembroke College, Oxford

A four-day conference is to be held in 2009 at Pembroke College, Oxford, to celebrate the tercentenary of its most famous alumnus, Samuel Johnson. The conference, entitled "Johnson at 300," will explore many aspects of Johnson's life and work.

The outline conference programme is:

- Monday, 14th September — "Johnson at 300"
- Tuesday, 15th September — " Seeing Johnson"
- Wednesday, 16th September — "Reading Johnson"
- Thursday, 17th September — "Writing Johnson"
- Friday, 18th September — close

The plenary speakers will be Professor Robert DeMaria, Jr., Professor David Fairer, Professor Isobel Grundy and Professor Howard Weinbrot. The David Fleeman Memorial Lecture will be delivered by Professor James McLaverty.

The academic convenors are Professor Lynda Mugglestone (Pembroke College, Oxford) and Dr. Freya Johnston (St Anne’s College, Oxford). Preliminary information about the conference is available on the Pembroke College web site at http://www.pmb.ox.ac.uk/College/Samuel_Johnson.php. For more information and to register interest, please contact Jill Roberts at jill.roberts@pmb.ox.ac.uk.

—Michael Bundock
The Johnson Society of Australia

15th Annual Seminar, Melbourne, 7 June 2008

The Johnson Society of Australia, based in Melbourne, Victoria, occasionally entices interstate and international speakers to our meetings. But Australia is a wide country, and a long way from the US and Britain, and this small but active literary society of necessity draws most of its speakers and members from Melbourne and environs. We continually surprise ourselves that presenters of thoughtful and original papers can be found annually from amongst our own number.

This year forty or so members gathered to spend a convivial Saturday hearing interesting papers from four local speakers, and from one two time zones to the west. Four of the five are seasoned JSA speakers, but the first speaker for the day was a newcomer to the JSA.

Dr. Simon Bower is a consultant neurologist, and from his own clinical experience he addressed the issue of Tourette’s Syndrome, which has been put forward as a diagnosis explaining Johnson’s reported physical quirks and odd behaviours. Dr Bower’s presentation gave rise to much discussion. He described the usual manifestations of the syndrome, namely motor tics and obsessive behaviours (of which Johnson had a number) and the vocal tic known as coprolalia (making obscene utterances). The usual onset of TS is in adolescence, which is not reported in Johnson—neither is coprolalia, though it was suggested that perhaps it may have gone unrecorded in more discreet times than our own. There are greater and lesser degrees of TS, and it is more common than most people think, occurring in 1-10: 1000 children, with a male to female ratio of 3: 1. It is associated with depression and migraine, and usually normal intelligence. Psychiatric disorders are not over-represented in TS sufferers. It seems to have an organic base (it effects the same part of the brain as Parkinson’s Disease). On one of the rare occasions when Johnson was asked about his odd tics, he said they were a “bad habit.” Whether “habit” suggests something voluntary or involuntary, or whether as a result of disturbed brain chemistry something voluntary could become involuntary—whether a habit could become organic—were questions pursued in discussion but left undecided.

Barrie Sheppard, the JSA Treasurer and a retired lecturer in English, is interested in the philosophical underpinnings of Johnson’s
critical opinions. His paper this year concerned the theory of meaning, derived from John Locke, that was current in Johnson’s day, in particular the naming theory; that is, that the knowledge of a thing was necessarily prior to the knowledge of the sign (word) signifying it. Barrie traced the theory from Aristotle through St. Augustine to John Locke. Locke denied the Cartesian view of inherent ideas, and formulated the famous conception of the mind as a tabula rasa or blank slate. Barrie argued that Johnson’s discussion of the difficulties he had carrying out his original intention (expressed in the Plan of a Dictionary) to “fix” the language indicates a commitment to Locke’s theory. He ended by discussing the view of language of the twentieth-century philosopher Wittgenstein, and asked whether Johnson’s Dictionary would have been significantly different if it had been informed by his speculations rather than those of Locke.

Daniel Vuillermin is a tutor and postgraduate student at Melbourne’s La Trobe University, and is assisting the JSA President John Wiltshire in a book-length publication concerning the “iconography” of Samuel Johnson, entitled “The Creation of Dr. Johnson.” Daniel’s third presentation to the JSA—illustrated by slides—concerned in particular Sir Joshua Reynolds’s three “later” portraits of Johnson: these are the 1775 “blinking Sam” portrait, the 1772-78 “Streatham” portrait, and the “last portrait” (circa 1784), painted for John Taylor, which shows a slightly haggard Johnson, and may not be by Reynolds at all. These images may all be contrasted with the best-known portrait, the circa-1756 “Dictionary” portrait, which was not a commission but a “tribute of friendship.” Boswell used a modified version of this portrait for the engraved frontispiece to his Life of Johnson. Although Reynolds’s portraits constitute (as Morris Brownell says) “a history of Johnson’s mind,” it is possible that Reynolds was also attempting to convey Johnson’s physical conditions, such as tics and other gestures. These later portraits in particular depict a figure in which activity, mental and physical, seems always implied.

The JSA’s “Western Idler” (who conducts a regular column with that title, in our newsletter, the Southern Johnsonian) is Perth-based lawyer and book collector John Byrne. As was reported in the May 2008 JNL, John is to be for 2008-09 the President of both the Lichfield and Southern Californian Johnson Societies. This year John brought across to the Seminar a cache of “sentimental trifles”—mostly non-book objects with Johnsonian associations—that he has collected over the years. His first-acquired piece of Johnsoniana was an 1828 Rasselas, which he bought (with a bundle of “gaudy prize bindings”) in 1963-64. He is now assiduously collecting Rasselas, aiming to have one edition for each year since the book was pub-
lished, and has copies of the first ten editions. But his collection includes medals and coins, various ceramic items of a commemorative nature, cartoons, as well as items associated with other Johnso-
nians, such as the JSA’s two former Patrons, David Fleeman and the Viscountess Eccles, and A. Edward Newton. He has also collected “tourist tat” including erasers, fridge magnets, and bookmarks. John was inspired by the recent restoration of Johnson’s London House (of which he is a Governor) to scavenge some wood shavings from door repairs in the house, and fashion a very limited edition of souvenirs that he sent to various worthies.

It was a pleasure to welcome Nick Hudson for his eleventh presentation to the JSA, and his first since 2004. Nick is a publisher and a grammarian himself, the author of the Oxford U.P. Modern Australian Usage. This year he examined Johnson’s views on grammar, as represented in the Dictionary and its preliminary and seldom-regarded “Grammar of the English Tongue.” He began with a brief history of grammar, beginning at the “big bang.” Nick’s provocative talk suggested that the “rules” that medieval grammarians derived from Latin were of little use when it came to dealing with a language as uninflected as English. English, he said, either has no syntax, or else is all syntax, and he concluded that it is not so much that Johnson’s “Grammar” is rubbish as that grammar itself is rubbish.

The day was punctuated by opportunities for food and conversa-
tion, and concluded with drinks at the bar, accompanied by music from a classical trio. For many of the participants it was followed by a dinner at a nearby restaurant.

It is hoped that some version of all these presentations will be published in the Papers of the Society, of which the next volume has been prepared and will be available at the next meeting of the JSA, which will be our Annual General Meeting and 15th David Fleeman Memorial Lecture, in Melbourne on 4 October. The Fleeman lecturer will be Dr. Ann Blake of La Trobe University, who has edited Sheridan’s School for Scandal for the “New Mermaids” series, and will talk about Johnson and Sheridan. Johnsonians visiting Mel-
bourne would be very welcome.

—Paul Tankard
Notes and Queries

Samuel Johnson, Thomas Osborne, and the Folio: The Incident Revisited

Samuel Johnson was a celebrity during the last twenty years of his life, and like other celebrities, he had numerous stories, true, partially true, and false, told and retold about him by both friends and foes. Johnson often retold the stories himself in slightly different versions. One story that varied in the telling was that of Johnson knocking Osborne down with a folio. Of this beloved tale an early printed version has been recently discovered.

The story has been popular, if not from about 1742 when the alleged incident took place, at least during the last third of Johnson's life to the present.\(^1\) The basic story and the reason for its appeal—Johnson's triumph over adversities to become a great writer and moralist—are well captured by Sir John Hawkins, who had known Johnson at least since November 1738:

I mention the above particulars [Osborne's ignorance, shamelessness, impudence, and insolence] of this worthless fellow as an introduction to a fact respecting his behaviour to Johnson, which I have often heard related, and which himself confessed to be true. Johnson, while employed in selecting pieces for the Harleian Miscellany, was necessitated, not only to peruse the title-page of each article, but frequently to examine its contents, in order to form a judgment of its worth and importance, in the doing whereof, it must be supposed, curiosity might sometimes detain him too long, and whenever it did, Osborne was offended. Seeing Johnson one day deeply engaged in perusing a book, and the work being for the instant at a stand, he reproached him with inattention and delay, in such coarse language as few men would use, and still fewer

\(^1\) As an example of continuing interest in the story, see the Johnsonian News Letter 57 (September 2006). For an overview of Thomas Osborne's life, see the account by O M Brack, Jr. in ODNB.
could brook: the other in his justification asserted somewhat, which Osborne answered by giving him the lie; Johnson’s anger at so foul a charge, was not so great as to make him forget that he had weapons at hand: he seized a folio that lay near him, and with it felled his adversary to the ground, with some exclamation, which, as it is differently related, I will not venture to repeat.

This transaction, which has been seldom urged with any other view than to shew that Johnson was of an irascible temper, is generally related as an entertaining story: with me it has always been a subject of melancholy reflection. In our estimation of the enjoyments of this life, we place wisdom, virtue, and learning in the first class, and riches and other adventitious gifts of fortune in the last. The natural subordination of the one to the other we see and approve, and when that is disturbed we are sorry. How then must it affect a sensible mind to contemplate that misfortune, which could subject a man endowed with a capacity for the highest offices, a philosopher, a poet, an orator, and, if fortune had so ordered, a chancellor, a prelate, a statesman, to the insolence of a mean, worthless, ignorant fellow, who had nothing to justify the superiority he exercised over a man so endowed, but those advantages which Providence indiscriminately dispenses to the worthy and the worthless! to see such a man, for the supply of food and raiment, submitting to the commands of his inferior, and, as a hireling, looking up to him for the reward of his work, and receiving it accompanied with reproach and contumely, this, I say, is a subject of melancholy reflection.2

Just when Hawkins first heard, or read, the story of Osborne and the folio, “often” related, cannot be known. The first appearance in print discovered to date, however, is in an attack on Oliver Goldsmith in The London Packet. Or, New Lloyd’s Evening Post for Friday, 26 March to Monday, 29 March 1773.

In The London Packet for 24 March appeared a personal attack on Goldsmith in a letter signed “THOMAS TICKLE,” believed to have been written by his (and Johnson’s) old antagonist, William Kenrick. The following day Goldsmith went to the office of Thomas Evans, the publisher of the Packet, to protest. When Evans stooped to find a copy of the paper, Goldsmith hit the bookseller across the

back, a fight ensued, and Goldsmith, badly beaten, with oil from a lamp spilled on his coat, was forced to retreat. The 29 March Packet contained a detailed account of the altercation, and a letter, signed "PASQUIN," another personal attack on Goldsmith.

For the London Packet.

O imatatores servum pecus.

Mr. Evans most certainly fulfilled, in part, the title of the Doctor’s comedy, "He Stoops to Conquer"; for while the little spirited bookseller was stooping, the doctor vigorously knocked him down; the honest Welchman sprung from the smart of the blow upon the Doctor, and after mighty active strokes on every part, he conquered.

Victrix causa Dis placuit sed victa Catoni.

Evans with vigour trimm’d the author’s hide,  
And bravely conquer’d while the poet cry’d.

But why should Doctor Kenrick laugh? And why should Johnson call him a rash blockhead? And what friend, I beg to know, could advise this Orlando Furioso to knock a man down in his own house, without provocation? ... But Mr. G—— errs by studied imitation; he has sucked the nipple of nurse Johnson’s bubbly so long, that the manners, not the wit, of the former have become his own.

The great Johnson, some years since, knocked down that blockhead of Gray’s Inn, Tommy Osborne, and because he had done so, the great Goldee thought it necessary to knock down a bookseller too. The event in the end did not prove quite so favorable.

For Johnson triumph’d, and poor Goldee fell.


4  "O imitatores, you servile herd!" (Horace, Epistles, 1.19.19).

5 "The victorious cause pleased the gods, but the defeated cause pleased Cato" (Lucan, Pharsalia 1.28). I am grateful to Thomas Kaminski for assistance with the Latin.

6 The late Helen Louise McGuffie first discovered this Osborne reference. See her Samuel Johnson in the British Press, 1749-1784 (New York & London: Garland Publishing, 1976), 102. I am grateful to James E. Tierney, James E. May, and Robert DeMaria, Jr. for assistance in locating this number of the London Packet, and to Christine Beauregard, Senior Librarian, Manuscripts and Special Collections, New York State Library (Albany, NY) for supplying me with a photocopy of the number.
The identity of Pasquin remains unknown, but the viciousness of the attack, and the personal knowledge of Goldsmith, and Johnson, suggest George Steevens.7

By at least December 1777 Hester Lynch Thrale had heard the story of Osborne, and recorded it in Thraliana: “I asked him the other day about his Combat with that Osborne, how much of the Story was true: It was true said he that I beat the fellow, & that was all; but the World so hated poor Osborne; that they have never done multiplying the blows, and increasing the weight of them for twenty Years together; The Blockhead told the Story himself too originally, for I am sure I should not, —but says Osborne Johnson beat me this Morning in my own house—For what says his Friend—why for telling him that he lied forsooth.”8 When she retold the story in Anecdotes of the late Samuel Johnson, LL.D., she prefaced the account of this incident with a disclaimer: “Of the truth of stories which ran currently about the town concerning Dr. Johnson, it was impossible to be certain, unless one asked him himself; and what he told, or suffered to be told before his face without contradicting, has every possible mark I think of real and genuine authenticity.” Then she went on to relate the story: “I made one day very minute enquiries about the tale of his knocking down the famous Tom Osborne with his own Dictionary in the man’s own house. And how was that affair, in earnest? do tell me, Mr. Johnson? There is nothing to tell, dearest Lady, but that he was insolent and I beat him, and that he was a blockhead and told of it, which I should never have done; so the blows have been multiplying, and the wonder thickening for all these years, as Thomas was never a favourite with the Public. I have beat many a fellow, but the rest had the wit to hold their tongues.”9

If Johnson thought that the story of his altercation with Osborne had been embellished in his lifetime, imagine what he would have thought had he known how his early biographers would handle the story. “An Account of the Writings of Dr. Samuel Johnson, Including Some Incidents of his Life,” written by Isaac Reed and/or George Steevens, first published in the January 1785 number of

7 For information on Steevens, see Arthur Sherbo’s biography in ODNB.
9 Johnson recalled his encounter with Osborne in his life of Alexander Pope, observing that Osborne was “a man entirely destitute of shame, without sense of any disgrace but that of poverty,” adding that the satire directed against him by Pope was in vain, “deadened by [his] impasive dulness.” See Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets, 4 vols., ed. Roger Lonsdale (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006), 4: 50.
the *European Magazine*, gives a brief version, suggesting that the reader was expected to be familiar with the story and know the nature of the “extraordinary correction”: “During the intercourse with this Bookseller, the disagreement happened between them which ended in the extraordinary correction which the latter received from his Author, and which probably put an end to the connection between them.”10 When Thomas Tyers, a long-time friend of Johnson, first tells his version of the story, in the December 1784 number of the *Gentleman’s Magazine*, it is considerably more elaborate: “The bookseller upbraided him in a gross manner, and, as tradition goes, gave him the lie direct, though our catalogue-maker offered at an excuse. Johnson turned the volume into a weapon, and knocked him down, and told him, ‘not to be in a hurry to rise, for when he did, he proposed kicking him down stairs.’” William Cooke, in the first edition of his *Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D.* (27 December 1784), after mentioning Johnson being abused “in the most illiberal manner,” says, “Mr. Johnson heard him for some time unmoved; but, at last, losing all patience, he seized up a large folio, which he was at that time consulting, and aiming a blow at the Bookseller’s head, succeeded so forcibly, as to send him sprawling on the floor: Osborne alarmed his family with his cries; but Mr. Johnson, clapping his foot on his breast, would not let him stir, till he had exposed him in that situation; and then left him, with this triumphant expression: ‘Lie there, thou son of dullness, ignorance, and obscurity.’” By the time Cooke published his revised edition (22 February 1785), he had seen Tyers’s account for he writes, “clapping his foot on his breast, told him, ‘he need not be in a hurry to rise; for if he did, he would have the further trouble of kicking him down stairs.’”

When William Shaw, in his *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Late Dr. Johnson* (1785), takes up the story, he elaborates on Tyers and Cooke. Shaw says the “affray . . . gave the trade no very advantageous idea of Johnson’s temper,” and that it was hushed up and only became “a subject of speculation” after the increase of Johnson’s reputation. Osborne “had often recourse to contumelious language” in an attempt to speed Johnson’s work. Shaw adds:

The calculations of booksellers are solely confined to the sale, and seldom involve the various avocations and deliberations which protract composition. The delicate embarrassments of genius are consequently not unfre-

Notes and Queries

quently treated with rudeness and vulgarity. No body of men are more uniform and eager in taking advantage of their necessities, who, like Johnson, are reduced to a dependance on their favour. Osborne was base enough to make Johnson feel his situation, by a brutal sarcasm, which he blurted in his face, on finding him reading with great coolness, while the quantum of copy promised by this time, was not yet begun. Johnson, surprised into a passion, by the bookseller’s rage and ferocity, started from his seat, without uttering a word, and, with the book in his hand, instantly knocked him down.

Shaw has no folio and no speech. The anonymous lives prefaces the two 1786 editions of the Dictionary are essentially derived from Cooke, with folio and speech.

Hawkins may have had access to all of these versions of the Osborne story; hence his hesitancy not to repeat what Johnson is alleged to have said on the occasion. James Boswell had access to the same versions that Hawkins may have seen, and Hawkins’s own Life. Boswell, uncertain of the facts, like Thrale, asked Johnson: “It has been confidently related, with many embellishments, that Johnson one day knocked Osborne down in his shop, with a folio, and put his foot upon his neck. The simple truth I had from Johnson himself: ‘Sir, he was impertinent to me, and I beat him. But it was not in his shop: it was in my own chamber.’”11

It cannot be known with certainty just what happened on that day in 1742, or thereabouts, when Johnson was compiling the Catalogus Bibliothecae Harleianae or, perhaps, the Harleian Miscellany in Osborne’s house, or in his own chamber. The earliest witness, the 1773 London Packet, appeared about thirty years after the incident, and it already assumes that readers are familiar with the story of Johnson and Osborne. The early biographers embellish the story, no doubt in eagerness to promote their biographies, and cannot be considered reliable witnesses. When all of the embellishments are stripped away what remains is that Thomas Osborne was impertinent in some way to Johnson, and as a result Johnson beat him. Both Thrale and Boswell ask Johnson directly about the

incident and the folio weapon is missing, not a part of the story that one would think Johnson would forget on two occasions.

The story has resisted Johnson’s attempts to persuade others of the simple truth of the affair with Osborne. Johnson, folio in hand, chastising Osborne—the story of learning triumphing over ignorance, David beating Goliath, Johnson fighting his way to literary fame—has deep and continuing human appeal, a moral lesson worthy of Johnson, even if it is not true.

—O M Brack, Jr.

An Early Spanish Translation of Rasselas

David Fleeman’s monumental Bibliography of the Works of Samuel Johnson lists eight Spanish translations of Rasselas. Of these, the Historia de Rasselas, traducida[sic] del Ingles al Castellano (59.4R/TS/5) appears on the strength of an attestation in James Macaulay’s 1884 facsimile edition. It may exist, but I have turned up nothing issued under that title or any closely resembling it. The nearest match, published in Valencia in November 1831 by the Imprenta de José de Orga, is the work of Mariano-Antonio Collado; published in two duodecimo volumes, of which the second begins with Johnson’s concluding chapter and otherwise consists of a translation of Ellis Cornelia Knight’s Dinarbás. Of this handsomely produced work, printed and illustrated by leading firms in the Spanish book trade, a single copy survives in a public collection, at Barcelona’s Universitat Pompeu Fabra.

The long title, El héroe de Abinsinia. Historia escrita en ingles por el Doctor Samuel Jhonson [sic], y traducida, corregida é ilustrada con notas, does not specify the immediate source text or language. The translation may be direct, for the archival record

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1 An unsigned review appeared in a Madrid daily the following year. See “Publicaciones nuevas,” El Correo: Periodico Literario y Mercantil 588 (12 April 1832), p. 3. The reviewer refers to Johnson as “Jhonson,” the spelling given consistently in the work reviewed, and mistakenly commends the translator on being the first to undertake a Spanish Rasselas (Collado’s is the third complete translation).

2 On the Orga family printing house in Valencia, see Nicolás Bas Martí, Los Orga: una dinastía de impresores en la Valencia del siglo XVIII (Madrid: Arco Libros 2005). The lithographs facing the title pages in each volume were produced by the Barcelona firm of Brusi, who pioneered lithography in Spain.
shows Collado to have known English. Born in the southern Spanish town of Lorca in 1794 or 1795, Mariano-Antonio Collado was the son of a judge ennobled in 1803. Tocuato Antonio Collado would later obtain the regencia or chief justiceship of Seville. As such, he belonged to Spain’s legal and administrative elite, and his son was accordingly schooled at the Real Academia Latina Matritense and, from 1805 to 1808, the Reales Estudios de San Isidro, where English had been taught since the 1780s. At some point after Collado left Madrid to join his family at Baza near Granada at the outbreak of hostilities in the late spring of 1808, his knowledge of English and French brought him to the attention of guerrilla and regular forces, for whom he “rendered many valuable services to the commander of guerrilla troops and the advanced troops of the Second Army, whose commanding general placed him in charge of correspondence with countries invaded by the enemy.” If these services postdate August 1811, the commanding general was Joaquin Blake, the eldest son of Inés Joyes, whose translation of Rasselas had appeared in 1798.

Collado studied law at the University of Seville, was called to the bar in 1819, and raised to the bench the following year. The Spanish judiciary was then, as it remains today, a highly centralised branch of the state apparatus, the judges themselves constituting a corps of civil servants. A change of rank regularly entailed a change of court and so of city; and Collado’s judicial and para-judicial career took him successively to Valencia (where he married a lieutenant general’s daughter in 1820), Oviedo (where an affair with a married woman and his liberal politics attracted letters of complaint), Valencia, Murcia, Granada, and Albacete, where he retired from the bench in May 1847, having achieved the rank of regente and served one term in the lower house of the Spanish parliament (1843-1844). Nothing more is known of his professional life beyond the three-year term he served as chancellor of the University of Barcelona, from 1850 to 1853, during which he undertook a study of the university’s assets and finances at the behest of Manuel Seijias, minister of Education and Public Works. Of his published works, most belong to jurisprudence rather than literary translation. His only

3 See the “Relación de los méritos, ejercicios literarios, grados y servicios patrióticos de D. Mariano Antonio Collado, abogado de la real Audiencia de Sevilla,” Archivo Histórico Nacional (Madrid) FC-M. JUSTICIA_MAG. JUECES, 4327, EXP.1540. The “Relación”, akin to an official CV, is a print document. My sketch of Collado’s life and career is otherwise based on MS documents in the same file at the AHC, except as noted.
4 Antonio Palomèque Torres, La Universidad de Barcelona desde el plan Pidal de 1845 a la ley Moyano de 1857 (Barcelona: Ediciones de la Universidad de Barcelona, 1979), 410-11 and 425.
other traceable literary publication, a version of Fénelon’s *Avan-
tures de Télémaque*, was issued in Valencia in 1834 and would see a further three editions before 1850. His superiors in the judici-
ary were certainly aware of and impressed by Collado’s literary output as early as 1824;⁵ and he was admitted to learned societies in Murcia and Valencia.

Collado’s modest introduction, itself largely a translation from Knight’s introduction to *Dinarbas*, closes with a conspicuously modest disavowal of the translator’s skill. Yet Collado is generally balanced in his approach, privileging the norms of target language and culture without adapting wholesale. Where he falters, he betrays a merely bookish knowledge of English that is of limited help in rendering, for example, “is much to be desired” (Chap. VI)⁶ or “I will consider them another time” (Chap. XI).⁷ The long title’s description of *El héroe de Abisinia*, as “corregida” reflects the liberties Collado took with Johnson’s text. While not great, they are worthy of note. Some passages are highly com-
pressed in translation, such as the fourth paragraph of Chap. IV. The text is occasionally imbued with hints of political liberalism, as when Rasselas’s imagined adventures in the same chapter end in “the defeat of oppression,” rendered as “rompiendo las cadenas de la opresión” (1831: I. 20); yet Nekayah is surprised rather than frightened at the treatment she receives on first leaving the valley, and Rasselas, who “expected to be obeyed,” is accorded both respect and obedience by Collado.⁸ Johnson’s paragraphing is often overridden; Chap. V, Chap. IX, Chap. X, and Chap. XI, for example, are each printed as single paragraphs. Some of Johnson’s chapters are likewise joined, such as XXVIII and XXIX, and XLVII and XLVIII. All but the first three and last three para-
graphs of Chap. XLVIII are omitted entirely, and with them the discussion of the nature of the soul. Collado (or the censors) made minor additions to the remaining text, presumably to make for a better doctrinal fit. The greatest liberty, that of presenting

5 See the “Relación de los méritos y servicios de don Mariano Antonio Collado, Ministro de la Real Audiencia de Valencia,” Archivo Histórico Nacional (Madrid) FC-MF JUSTICIA MAG_JUECES, 4327, EXP.1540. The reference to Collado’s “literary merits” is quoted in the “Relación” from a letter written on request by José Manuel de Arjona, Superintendent General of Police during Collado’s tenure as police intendent for the province of Asturias. Collado was likely contributing to the literary press. On the interplay of Spanish civic and cultural history in the period, and more particularly on the growing prominence of literatos in politics, see Joaquin Álvarez Barrientos (ed.) *Se hicieron literatos para ser políticos: Cultura y política en la España de Carlos IV y Fernando VII* (Cádiz: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Cádiz, 2004).

6 Collado’s calque, nearly unintelligible in Spanish, reads “es mucho para desear” (1831: I. 34).

7 “[Yo las consideraré otra vez” (1831: I., 67) suggests “again” rather than “on some other occasion.”

8 1831: I. 92.
Notes and Queries

Rasselas and Dinarbas as a single work, meant that the title of the concluding chapter, in which nothing is concluded, was dropped for the merely descriptive "Determinan volver á Abisinia" (1831: II. 1).

Collado's version brings the tally of Spanish Rasselas translations to ten. Falling within the scope of Fleeman's Bibliography but not noted therein are Raselas, trans. Enrique Blanco Lázaro (Madrid: Felmar, 1976) and Raselas, trans. Ellvio E. Gandalfo (Buenos Aires: Centro editor de América Latina, 1982). La historia de Rásselas, príncipe de Abisinia trans. Pollux Hernández (Madrid: Cátedra, 1991) and La historia de Rasselas, príncipe de Abisinia. trans. María Luisa Pascual Garrido (Córdoba: Berencie, 2007), both of them scholarly editions boasting notes, round out the list. The translator at the head of the list, Inés Joyes y Blake, has of late been the subject of a full-length scholarly study by a leading specialist in the Spanish eighteenth century, Mónica Bolufer Peruga, who is convinced, as I am, that there existed a substantial English-literate readership in eighteenth-century Spain, for whom Samuel Johnson's name would have been a familiar one.

—JOHN STONE

9 The accent on the first syllable of “Rasselas” or “Raselas” indicates that the first syllable should be stressed. Most translators have chosen to stress the second.

10 Mónica Bolufer Peruga, La vida y la escritura en el siglo XVIII (Valencia: Publicaciones de la Universitat de València, 2008).

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27
Fragment of a Greek Tragedy

Greek, Sir, is like lace; every man gets as much of it as he can.  
(Life IV: 23)

All knowledge is of itself of some value. There is nothing  
so minute or inconsiderable, that I would not rather  
know it than not.  
(Life II: 357).

On Wednesday, 20 March 1776, commemorating St.  
Cuthbert, Boswell and Johnson “had an excellent  
dinner” with the Master and Fellows of University  
College, Oxford (Life, II. 445). The biographer reports none of the  
conversation. One exchange, however, reproduced ad locum in Hill-  
Powell, was relayed to Croker by Dr. Philip Fisher (c. 1750-1842),  
Master of Charterhouse. Quoting Quem Deus vult perdere, prius  
dementat, Boswell asked for its source. After a long pause, Dr.  
Chandler (1738-1810) nominated Horace, a guess that does not  
reflect well on the learning of this professional classicist, editor of  
early Greek poets, and renowned epigraphist and traveler. Fisher  
objected that Horace did not employ this particular meter, and he  
was supported by Johnson’s booming, “The young man is right.”  

No one, including Johnson, is here credited with any further sugges-
tions for the verse’s provenance. Likewise, perhaps harking back to this, Boswell receives no information when he brings up the same verse (beginning it with quos instead of the previous quem)  
as one of “the sayings which every body repeats, but nobody knows  
where to find” (Life, IV.181-182). Indeed, Johnson implicitly ac-
knowledges his ignorance by deflecting the Scot with an anecdote  
of how he once lost a ten guinea bet by failing to locate Semel  
insanivimus omnes, albeit this latter phrase he “many years after-
wards met by chance in Johannes Baptista Mantuanus.”

The lengthy note on this passage in Hill-Powell largely repro-
duces that of the famous Sophoclean editor Richard Claverhouse  
Jebb (Cambridge, 1891) on Antigone 622, tracing the source back  
to James Duport’s (1606-1679) Quem Jupiter vult perdere,  
dementat prius, written in his Gnomologia Homericca (1660; p. 282),  
a work included in Donald Greene’s inventory of Johnson’s library.

1 Thanks to A. E. Housman for the title.
The line also turns up in Joshua Barnes’s “Index Prior” to his edition (1694) of Euripides as the translation of a Greek verse of uncertain origin: Unlike Barnes’s Homer (1711), his Euripides was not owned by Johnson at the time of his death.

Fred W. Householder, Jr. (otherwise best known for his work on Lucian) compiled an impressive inventory of the many small linguistic variations (none affecting its basic sense, although “Deus” must sometimes if not always Christianize “Jupiter”) and appearances of our line (Classical World 29 [1936], 165-168). He concluded that the proverb’s origin was earlier than Duport, though he was unable to put his finger on any particular individual(s).

Had Householder lived in the Google Age, he would have found over thirty thousand relevant sites. He failed to notice, for one notable example, our phrase’s presence in Burton’s Anatomy of Melancholy (1621), owned and described by Johnson as the only book that took him out of bed two hours sooner than he wished to rise. Also missed is John Aubrey’s tacking on “sed quos perdere vult Jupiter etc hos etc” to the account of James Harrington in his Brief Lives: Aubrey’s double “etc” must indicate that the expression was commonplace in his time.

By inadvertence or design, Householder also omitted a contribution (Notes & Queries 191, 25 June 1853) by one T. J. Buckton of Lichfield. Starting with Croker’s assertion that the Latin iambic translates a Euripidean original, Buckton takes potshots at Mr. John Pitts, Rector of Great Brickhill, Buckinghamshire, for launching this error, at Mr. Richard Howe of Aspley, Bedfordshire, also Boswell (unfairly), Malone, and Croker himself. (Pitts’s lengthy exegesis, with its claim that “some gentlemen of Cambridge found it among the fragments of Euripides, in what edition I do not recollect . . .” is reproduced by Hill-Powell.) Buckton traces the Latin to an edition of Euripides published at Padua, 1743-1745, by P. Carmeli—inaccessible to myself—specifically to vol. X, p. 268, where it translates a verse under the rubric “Tragedie Incerte.”

I am not here much concerned with tracing the classical origins of the sentiment, in either Greek or Latin; that has been ably done by Hill-Powell, Householder, Jebb, and others. In one form or another, it goes back at least to the time of Sophocles and Aeschylus, arguably to the earlier poet Theognis. One detail, however, is worth rehearsing. The verb dementat is taken to prove (Jebb and company) that our expression must be post-classical. According to the Thesaurus Linguae Latinae, its earliest occurrence is in the Christian writer Lactantius (c. 250-c. 325), in De Mortibus Persecutorum 7. 11, a linguistic novelty passed over without comment by the latest editor, J. L. Creed (Oxford, 1984). Apart from two appear-
ances (I Kings 7. 10; Acts 8. 11) in the Vulgate, this verb is found only in a handful of very late texts, while it has no later life in, for example, R. E. Latham’s Revised Medieval Latin Word-List (1965). In theory, the term might have cropped up somewhere in the large body of lost classical Roman literature, but its absence from all extant pre-Lactantian texts strongly militates against believing this.

In one form or another, the expression has lived on. Engels, for instance, quoted it in a letter (1 May 1866) to Marx. Other illustrious examples (to your Google buttons, for many more) include titular use for a Richard Powell novel and a Star Trek episode. It still drifts around modern anthologies of quotations, notably Bartlett’s where Euripides retains the Greek credit and Oxford’s where it is attributed to X, the Unknown, with Duport given as the ultimate Latin source. Oxford’s cognate Concise Dictionary of Proverbs (ed. John Simpson [1982], pp. 95-96), along with a rich sample of anglicized versions from Ben Jonson via Byron to the British *Daily Telegraph* (24 July 1981), equates the Greek original with anonymous fragment 296 in A. Nauck’s canonical *Fragmenta Tragicorum Graecorum* (2nd ed., 1889). In point of fact, Fragment 455 (provided by a scholium on Sophocles, *Antigone* 620) is the correct location. (I am grateful to Christopher Collard at Oxford, doyen of Euripidean scholars, for confirming this and for other useful tips.)

In Johnsonian terms, his unwillingness or inability to enlighten Boswell on the source is perhaps striking. As I have suggested, there was much contemporary scholarship on Euripides and Greek Tragedy in general; to those already named, the (in)famous Richard Porson (1759-1808) may be subjoined. The relatively small matter at issue here may be placed within the context of Johnson’s self-contradictory remarks on his knowledge of Greek tragedy, from owning to Joseph Warton that he had never read a single play in his life to his apparently first-hand commendation of Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex* (cf. Roger Lonsdale’s edition of *The Lives of the Poets* [2006; I. 429]).

—BARRY BALDWIN
Hodge the Favorite

Howard Weinbrot was right to remark, in his essay on Percival Stockdale's "Elegy on the Death of Dr. Johnson's Favourite Cat," that Hodge was not Johnson's favorite ("Hodge Lives," JNL, September 2007). Hodge not only did not deserve Johnson's Dictionary definition number two for favourite—"One chosen as a companion by his superior; a mean wretch whose whole business is by any means to please"—he also did not qualify under definition one: "A person or thing beloved . . . That which is regarded with particular approbation or affection." "I have had cats whom I liked better than this," Johnson told Boswell, though when he perceived that Hodge looked out of countenance he quickly made amends. It is one of life's ironies that Hodge, the substitute cat, has shared Johnson's fame to the extent of a poem, a statue, and scholarly articles, while nobody knows the names of those earlier, better-loved cats.

I can't be the only person who, having myself had animals under my protection, have assumed that Johnson must have delivered his unintentional snub to Hodge early in their relationship, while the memory of the former cat or cats was still predominant. I felt surer of this than ever as I read Howard Weinbrot's article only a day or two after the death of my fine ginger cat, and while I was thinking, therefore, at Johnson's bidding, that the generations are like leaves. The ginger cat's name was Wookey, but in the early days I often called both him and his companion "Hodge," because I had had cats whom I loved better. But as the years passed like leaves, that particular likeness of these fine cats to Hodge became a thing of the past.

I had already deduced from his plangent style of moralizing the death of Miss Porter's fine black cat (in his letter to Queeney Thrane on 2 November 1772) that Johnson would have mourned Hodge's passing, and here is further evidence. A man does not write an elegy for his friend's cat unless the friend has been speaking of his loss. Stockdale would have kept in mind Thomas Gray's "Ode on the Death of a Favourite Cat," whose moral is closely related to Johnson's second definition for favourite. Selima pays for her success in pleasing her owner or superior when the jealous servants ignore her mewing and let her drown: "A favourite has no friend." Both Gray and Stockdale see the animal as being like a
human dependent in its efforts to please. Johnson would not have agreed: he supposes (in his somber Rambler 148, on cruelty in parents) that any generous person will be touched at the sight of an animal "playing his gambols" to ingratiate itself, and he often expresses a sympathy with humans in a state of dependency which would counterbalance contempt for a fawner or flatterer.

Stockdale's poem has delightful moments. I like particularly the cat's fur being "His garb when first he drew his breath, / His dress thro' life his shroud in death," and also humanity being, in contrast to the other animals, "our articulating race." But Stockdale gives no inkling of the individuality of this particular cat. Nor do we know anything of the character of Hodge's former rivals; if only Hester Thrale had enquired the nature of the crime for which Tetty Johnson once "beat" the cat of the time, thereby drawing upon herself a chiding from her husband. A cat who stole food with particular cunning or panache would have been better qualified to become a favorite than a cat who dirtied Tetty's clean floors. But then Hester Thrale was a dog person, and moreover someone who saw the dog/cat divide as having its basis in class.

The ailurophobe Boswell has done much to establish Hodge as the obvious, the only Johnson cat by catching, much better than Stockdale, the personality of the creature scrambling up Johnson's body and expressing his satisfaction at having his back rubbed and his tail pulled. He has given us the sort of "portrait of [an animal] that I know" which Johnson preferred to a history painting.

But the poem tells us something important about Hodge: the date of his death. Unfortunately Boswell supplies not even a year for the affectionately demonstrative scene between man and cat which drew from him, despite his discomfort, his polite compliment to Hodge. It could not, of course, have happened earlier than May 1763, and if I am right about the reasons for Hodge's being at that time a second-best cat, then he was still a newish member of Johnson's household. All this suggests that if Hodge had died and been eulogized in 1764, according to Stockdale's later, untrustworthy recollection, his tenure in Johnson's life must have been tragically short. Even if he had died in 1769, that would have left him at the maximum a scant six years in which to make himself, at least for the present moment, the cat that Johnson liked best. Let us hope for both their sakes that he succeeded. It is good to know that Jove, who counts our score, did toss him in a couple of years more.

—Isobel Grundy
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**Queeney’s Astronomy**

Notice has been taken (e.g., pp. 155-159, in Patricia Phillips, *The Scientific Lady: a Social History of Woman’s Scientific Interests 1520-1918*, New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1990) of the interest in science, mathematics, and astronomy of Hester Thrale and her daughters. My recent review of the subscriber’s list in the first edition of Margaret Bryan’s *A Compendious System of Astronomy, in a Course of Familiar Lectures* (London: printed for the author, 1797) revealed a subscriber to be “Miss Thrale, Great Cumberland Street.” Based upon the address, the “Miss Thrale” is in all likelihood Hester Maria, “Queeney,” suggesting that perhaps she still had some interest in science at this date. Her name does not appear in the subscriber’s list to Margaret Bryan’s later text, *Lectures on Natural Philosophy* (London: Printed by Thomas Davison, 1806).

Just an added note: a contemporary of the younger Thrales, Margaret Bryan, author of two science text books and headmistress of a popular girl’s school in London, has apparently left no trace of her life other than what can be gleaned from the prefaces in her two books. Any trace of her known to the readers of this newsletter would be of interest.

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**Gainsborough to Garrick**

Our readers may be interested to know that I have discovered a new Gainsborough to Garrick letter which is printed as such with commentary in the current *British Art Journal*, Volume 8, Number 3. It is dedicated to the memory of John Hayes, the finest Gainsborough scholar of our day, who died untimely but made an incomparable contribution to eighteenth-century art historical scholarship.

—Marcia Allevantuck  
Professor Emerita  
The Graduate Center, CUNY
Chinese Words in Johnson's Dictionary

When English developed into the seventeenth century, there were large numbers of foreign words, which confused and disturbed many English writers. A dictionary that could purify and standardize the English language was highly demanded. The booksellers have never failed to grasp the chance and signed the contract with Samuel Johnson who shared this national ideal. As he said in his Plan (1747), “The chief intent of it is to preserve the purity and ascertain the meaning of the English idiom...” In order to achieve this purpose, Johnson was very careful with his word-list. First he determined to select “words and phrases used in the general intercourse of life, or found in the works of those whom we commonly stile polite writers.” As to “the terms of particular professions” which are generally derived from other nations, he decided to be very prudent. There are so many foreign words in English, many of which have become indispensable in everyday English, that some must be admitted. The academicians of France rejected terms of science at first but later relaxed “the rigour of their determination,” noted Johnson, and “it is not enough that a dictionary delights the critic; it should also be helpful to the learner.

As to the treatment of the foreign words in his Dictionary, Johnson argues that some foreign words that are naturalized and incorporated can be considered parts of English. Those that still continue aliens, however, should be italicized in the Dictionary. In order to make clear distinctions, Johnson had to trace the origin of almost every word. We can imagine the hardships of the task. The investigation of the foreign words in the Dictionary helps us recover interactions among different languages. Unexpectedly, there are some Chinese words in Johnson’s Dictionary. Although the etymology of some of these words is not clear or even wrong, from these loan words we can gather some clues about the cultural and linguistic interaction between England and China in the age of Johnson.

In the entry for tea, Johnson writes, “a word, I suppose, Chinese.” He defines tea as “A Chinese plant, of which the infusion has lately been much drunk in Europe.” According to the Oxford English Dictionary (2nd edition, 1989), tea came from Amoy dialect te, in Fuchau tiā, henceforth, French thé, Spanish te, German thee.
However, in Mandarin, it is called ch'a, so in Portuguese it is cha and in Italian cià.

Tea was first introduced into England through Holland in the middle of the seventeenth century, when very few people, mainly aristocrats, could choose tea as a drink. But by the middle of the eighteenth century, tea seems to have become a kind of national beverage. Common people were able to buy and drink tea, too. In 1757, Jonas Hanway, a well-known philanthropist who was alarmed at the fact that tea was becoming a formidable rival to alcohol, wrote An Essay on Tea, in which he described "the Chinese beverage as pernicious to health, obstructing industry, and impoverishing the nation." Johnson became angry at Hanway's exaggeration about the dangers of Chinese tea and wrote a review to refute him, describing himself as "a hardened and shameless tea-drinker, who has, for twenty years, diluted his meals with only the infusion of this fascinating plant; whose kettle has scarcely time to cool; who with tea amuses the evening, with tea solaces the midnight, and, with tea, welcomes the morning." Johnson's hearty appreciation of tea is clearly shown here.

Johnson also "supposes" ginseng Chinese. He quotes Hill's encyclopedic introduction about ginseng, which says, "We have it from China." Ginseng was also imported into England in the middle of the seventeenth century, but it was not so popular as tea, so no other illustrations are provided in the Dictionary.

In the entry for china, Johnson mentions that it is from the name of China. As to its etymology, he does not touch upon it. In Johnson's definition, there are two other names for china, that is, china ware and porcelain. According to the OED, when the Portuguese first brought this earthenware to Europe in the sixteenth century, they called it porcelain. In Sanskrit, it was called china. When China was introduced into England through India in the seventeenth century, there were a variety of spelling forms for this word, such as cheny, chiney, cheney, chenea, etc. As more and more Chinese vessels were imported into England, English people often felt confused about its name. Therefore, they got a general name for it: China-ware. As this compound word was so frequently used, they agreed to use the less complex form. Henceforth the name became simply china. Historical materials in the OED also show that, in English, the name of the country China was used earlier than the name of the pottery china, so the opinion that China originated from china is probably incorrect.

How china is made is briefly introduced in Johnson's definition.

1 Fan Tsen-chung, Dr. Johnson and Chinese Culture (London: the China Society, 1945; p.17).

35
Actually, Johnson had mentioned this porcelain in some detail when he introduced Du Halde’s *Description of China* in *The Gentleman’s Magazine* in 1742. From this introduction, we can conclude that Johnson was quite familiar with this Chinese product. Following the entry *china*, there are two other entries about Chinese products: *China-orange* and *China-root*. 

Up to the eighteenth century, tea and china could be considered as the most popular Chinese products in Europe. In reality, there was another popular product in Europe that originated from China. But very few people knew about that. It is silk. The famous “Silk Route” shows that silk had been passed into Europe through Persia since the tenth century. Later, Western people learned how to weave and make their own silk. Very few people knew the origin of the product; fewer people knew the origin of the word *silk*, including Johnson. Johnson thought it was a Saxon word. According to the *OED*, Old English *sioloc, seoloc* originated from a Latin word *sericus*, and the Latin word *Seres* refers to “the oriental people (perhaps the Chinese) from whom silk was first obtained.” Moreover, *silk* has a similar sound as ancient Chinese *si* (silk). Johnson failed to probe further into its etymology, but he quoted this illustration of *silk-weaver* from Isaac Watts: “The Chinese are ingenious silk-weavers.”

In the *Plan* Johnson said, “when the word is easily deduced from a Saxon original, I shall not often enquire further, since we know not the parent of the Saxon dialect,” so we can understand why he didn’t make any further enquiry about whether *silk* was a Chinese word or not. After all, the word *silk* had been naturalized. But when we are informed of the following two words’ origins, we have to suspect that Johnson was careless about his etymologies:

- **Bohea. n.s. [an Indian word]** A species of tea, of higher colour, and more astringent taste, than green tea.  
  Coarse pewter, appearing to consist chiefly of lead, is part of the bales in which bohea tea was brought from China.  
  
- **Junk. n.s. [probably an Indian word.]**  
  1. A small ship of China.  
  America, which have now but junks and canoes, abounded then in tall ships.  
  *Bacon’s New Atlantis.*

Both the *OED* and *Chambers’ English Etymological Dictionary* agree that *bohea* is a Chinese word. Johnson’s quotation also proves that bohea tea was brought from China. What is the foundation of his suggestion that *bohea* is “an Indian word”? Likewise,
he defined junk as "a small ship of China." Why did he judge that it was "probably an Indian word"? The OED and Chambers' English Etymological Dictionary argue that junk came from Portuguese junco. But where junco came from, they disagree with each other. OED supposes that it possibly came from Malay adjong, while Chambers argues that it has the similar sound as Chinese chw'an. In any case, Johnson's opinion that it was an Indian word seems unfounded.

There are two other entries to consider, mandarin and tutanag. Johnson shows us their Chinese origin in his definitions but offers no etymologies. Perhaps this was a secure way for him to avoid the elusive study of etymology.

Mandarin. n.s. A Chinese nobleman or magistrate.

Tutanag. n.s. Tutanage is the Chinese name for spelter, which we erroneously apply to the metal of which canisters are made, that are brought over with the tea from China. It being a coarse pewter made with the lead carried from England and tin got in the kingdom of Quintang. Woodward.

By reading through these Chinese words in Johnson's Dictionary, it is not difficult to find that most of them are names of Chinese products: bohea, china, China-orange, China-root, ginseng, silk, tea, tutanag. Junk is only somewhat different. Mandarin is the only true exception. Up until the eighteenth century, European people had been impressed by China's affluence and civilization. These products were evidence of China's material abundance as well as the bridge connecting the West and the Orient. In Johnson's famous poem The Vanity of Human Wishes (1749), the first two lines are:

Let observation with extensive view,
Survey mankind, from China to Peru;

As Donald Greene pointed out, "On a map of the world with Britain in the center, China, reputedly the home of a high civilization is in one corner, and Peru, the scene of the massacres and enslavement of the natives by the Spanish under Pizarro, in the diagonally opposite one. The phrase implies a survey of human behaviour from its best to its worst."2

—LI XIANG

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The Family Background of Francis Stewart: Some New Findings

In the Life of Johnson, Boswell gives a brief account of the helpers Johnson employed to work on the Dictionary:

For the mechanical part, he employed, as he told me, six amanuenses; and let it be remembered by the natives of North-Britain, to whom he is supposed to have been so hostile, that five of them were of that country. There were two Messieurs Macbean; Mr. Shiels, who we shall hereafter see partly wrote the Lives of the Poets to which the name of Cibber is affixed; Mr. Stewart, son of Mr. George Stewart, bookseller at Edinburgh; and a Mr. Maitland.

Relatively little is known about these men, but I have recently been able to unearth a little new information about Johnson's amanuensis Francis Stewart and a good deal of information about his father, George Stewart, who is mentioned in Boswell's biography.

I have not been able to positively determine George Stewart's date of birth. According to records available online at the Scotland's People website, George Stewart, bookseller and burgess, was married to Ann Edmonston, daughter of the deceased James Edmonston, Writer, on 7 December 1712.

Parish records viewable on the Scotland's People website record the birth of three sons. George and Ann's eldest son, Francis Stewart, was born 4 January 1714. A record of Francis Stewart's birth is included here as an appendix. A second son, Gilbert, was born in quick succession, 27 November 1714, and a third, James, after a long interval, on 1 June 1725.

The parish registers do not record the birth of any Stewart daughters. However, evidence from other sources suggests that the Stewarts had at least two daughters. A biography of the Grubstreet writer and wastrel Samuel Boyse describes some years Boyse spent

2 Scotland's People: http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/.
in Edinburgh from 1730 to 1737 and notes his friendship with the Stewart family:

One of his most intimate and respectable acquaintances in Edinburgh was a Mr. Stewart, a merchant and bookseller, who had two beautiful and accomplished daughters, to whom [Boyse] addressed some poems, under the names of Hilaria and Clarissa, inserted in the second volume of his poems, published in 1738.3

“Hilaria” appears to have been the younger daughter. In one of Boyse’s poems, she is described as “scarce arrived at thirteen.” It seems that the elder daughter, “Clarissa,” died of an incurable disease while Boyse was in Edinburgh. Boyse addressed a poem of condolence to “Hilaria.”4 Boyse seems to have taken delight not only in Stewart’s daughters, but also in the family as a whole. In another poem, a dialogue with his wife written in imitation of Horace, Boyse described the Stewart family under the name “Peter’s folks”:

I own they’re my friends,
Their agreeable course fair Virtue commends.
With their sense and good humour my woes I relieve
And with them for an age I unwearied could live.5

The Scottish Book Trade Index (SBTI) provides a barebones summary of George Stewart’s activities as a bookseller and bookbinder. Stewart was listed as a bookbinder for the first time in an Edinburgh subscription list dated 1711.6 Subsequent imprints list him, sometimes as a bookbinder and sometimes as a bookseller, maintaining a shop “a little above the Cross” (1713), “at the sign of the Book and Angel a little above the Cross (in the Parliament Close)” (1713-22), and “in the parliament Close” (1723-30). George Stewart seems to have remained in the book trade until his death. SBTI reports that his will was registered 13 August 1745, but I have been unable to find the document, and it seems almost certain

6 Scottish Book Trade Index, available online through the National Library of Scotland: http://www.nls.uk/catalogues/resources/sbt/index.html.
that his actual death occurred a decade prior to this date. A note in *The Thistle* 8 May 1734 states that a new book, *The History of Affairs of Church and State in Scotland*, “is to be given out by . . . Mrs. Stewart, relict of George Stewart bookseller at her house in Anderson’s Land, in the West Bow” (SBTI). Ann is also named as George Stewart’s relict in guild account books reprinted in *The Guildry of Edinburgh*, which record several pension payments to her in 1736 and 1737. A 1737 entry notes an increase in her pension: “Anna Edmonston, relict of Mr. Geo Stewart, bookseller, an old infirm woman with three children, from £18 per quarter to £24 Scots.” She was still collecting from the guild as late as 1741.7

In 1717 George Stewart was given authority to demand from the Company of Stationers in London a copy of each book printed on behalf of the Advocates Library in Edinburgh. He appears in the records of the Advocates Library from 1717 to 1727. This line of work would almost certainly have brought him into contact with Thomas Ruddiman, the keeper of the Advocates Library. Ruddiman and Stewart also collaborated on some publishing projects and, in all likelihood, shared a religious and political outlook, as we shall see.8

Although the evidence is circumstantial, it seems likely that George Stewart was a member of Edinburgh’s Episcopalian community. The books Stewart sold, the books he subscribed to, and the men he engaged as apprentices all point to this conclusion. Using the ECCO database and other searchable online resources, I have been able to identify and inspect more than a dozen books that appeared with George Stewart’s name on the title page between 1713 and 1734. Most of these books were written by men who were Episcopalian and/or Jacobites.9 Stewart was also involved in the publication and sale of at least three sermons preached by Episcopalian clergymen in Edinburgh meeting houses:

1) A Practical Essay, Proving the Christian Religion to Be from God . . . Together with an Apology for the Episcopalian Church in Scotland, A Sermon Preach’d in one of the Meeting-houses of the City of Edinburgh, by W. M., Episcopalian Minister. Second

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9 There are a few exceptions to the overall pattern. William Dunlop, *Sermons Preach’d on Several Subjects and Occasions*, Edinburgh, 1722, was obviously written by a whiggish Presbyterian. See especially, pp. v-vii. I do not detect any obvious political or religious orientation in *Letters and Negotiations of Sir Ralph Sadler*, Edinburgh, 1720.
Edition. Edinburgh, Sold at Mr. Stuart’s Shop at the Sign of the Book and Angel and Mr. Freebairn’s, in the Parliament Close, 1714. The author, the Rev. William Milne, preached at Blackfriars’ Wynd meeting house in Edinburgh. Two years after this sermon was preached, in the wake of the unsuccessful rebellion of 1715, Milne was prosecuted, along with several other Edinburgh Episcopal clergy, for not praying for King George. The connection between Stewart and Milne appears to have been personal: the front matter of Milne’s book announces a projected translation by Milne, for which George Stewart is to collect the subscription money (see p. xxii). Milne’s sermon was also sold by Robert Freebairn (d. 1747), the son of an Episcopalian bishop, who took an active part in the uprising of 1715 and printed the Proclamations of the Earl of Mar, thus earning himself the nickname “the Pretender’s Printer.”

2) A Sermon Preach’d in One of the Meeting Houses in Edin- burgh, on Monday, January 31, Being the Anniversary of the Martyrdom of King Charles the First, by A.C. Edinburgh, Printed for George Stewart, 1715. This was apparently the work of Andrew Cant, an Episcopal clergyman who officiated at Skinner’s Close meeting house and later at Carubber’s Close, both in Edinburgh. Cant was deprived in 1689 for refusing to read the proclamation of William and Mary. He was imprisoned in 1708 and prosecuted in 1716 for failure to pray for King George (Bertie, p. 21). This sermon is an example of a genre much loved by Scottish Episcopalians, royalists, and Jacobites, the 30th of January sermon. The sermon decries the execution of Charles I, Lord’s anointed ruler, and condemns the notion that political power originates in the people.

3) William Smart, Two Sermons Against Treacherous and Double Dealing, With An Answer to Mr. Anderson. Edinburgh, Printed, Sold by George Stewart, 1714. I have not been able to examine this title, but can provide some information on its author. William Smart was an Episcopal clergyman who was “rabbled out” by Presbyterians in the wake of the Revolution (Bertie, p. 131) and subsequently presided in meeting houses.

Stewart was also involved in the publication and distribution of several scholarly and polemical works written by Episcopal clergymen:

1) James Dundass, *A View of the Elections of Bishops in the Primitive Church*. Edinburgh, Printed by T. Ruddiman and Sold by G. Stewart and A. Symmer, 1730. I have not been able to inspect this book. James Dundass was an Episcopal clergyman. This pamphlet was apparently written in response to Thomas Rattray's *Essay on the Nature of the Church* (1728). Judging from the title, I would speculate that the writer was a supporter of the "College" scheme of Episcopal church government and an opponent of the Diocesan scheme supported by Rattray. The printer Thomas Ruddiman was himself an Episcopalian with Jacobite sympathies. Ruddiman had begun his career as a printer in the shop of the aforementioned Robert Freebairn.  

2) *Some Remarks Upon Sir James Dalrymple's Historical Collections. With an Answer to the Vindication of the Ecclesiastical Part of Them, Where the Ancient Settlement of the Scots in Britain; Their early Conversion to Christianity; the Government of their Church by Bishops; and some of the Ecclesiastical Rites and Customs, are Considered, and Cleared from the Mistakes of several Learned Authors*. Edinburgh. Printed and Sold by George Stewart at the Book and Angel, 1714. This posthumous work is obviously the work of an Episcopal and possibly a posthumous work of the Rev. John Sage (1647-1711), a nonjuring Episcopal bishop. The Remarks may have been brought to press by John Gillan, another Episcopal clergyman (later a bishop) who was based in Edinburgh. Gillan was a friend of Ruddiman's. He wrote a *Life of Sage* and was involved in pamphlet wars with Presbyterians in the early 1700s.  

3) *The History of the Affairs of Church and State in Scotland From the Beginning of the Reformation in the Reign of King James V to the Retreat of Queen Mary into England, Anno 1568. Volume I*. Edinburgh. Printed by Thomas and Walter Ruddiman for George Stewart [et. al.], 1734. Published anonymously and advertised as the work of "Alexander Bruce," this scholarly work was in fact the creation of the Rev. Robert Keith. Keith was curate at Barrenger's Close meeting house in

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13 See Bertie, pp. 50, 126; *Life of the Reverend and Learned Mr. John Sage* (London, 1714), pp. 37ff.
Edinburgh from 1713-1733. He was prosecuted in 1716 for failure to pray for King George I and raised to the Episcopal bench in 1727 (Bertie, p. 74). The list of subscribers for this volume includes many Episcopal clergymen and Jacobite nobles.

As several of the above entries indicate, membership in the Scottish Episcopal Church often went hand in hand with Jacobite political views. Almost without exception, the clergy of the Scottish Episcopal Church declined to swear the oaths to King William, Queen Anne, and the Hanoverians. The Scottish Episcopal Church was an explicitly nonjuring communion loyal to the Stuarts until the 1780s, and for many years the church leaders even went so far as to seek approval for their Episcopal nominations from the king across the water. The Episcopal clergy taught the political philosophy of hereditary indefeasible right. Their parishioners imbibed that doctrine and turned out in numbers to support the uprisings of 1715 and 1745.\textsuperscript{14}

Francis Stewart published or sold several books by Jacobites and admirers of the Stuarts:

1) James Watson, The History of the Art of Printing, Edinburgh, Printed by James Watson. Sold at his shop ... and at the shops of David Scot ... and George Stewart, 1713. In this book, the Jacobite Watson "persistently identified disloyalty to the house of Stewart with decline in typographical standards."\textsuperscript{15}

2) Works of that Eminent and Learned Lawyer, Sir George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh, Advocate to King Charles II and King James VII, With Many learned Treatises of His, Never Before Printed. Edinburgh, Printed and Published by James Watson. ... Sold at his Shop ... and at the shops of Mr. John Tennant ... and George Stewart, 1716. A royalist and Episcopalian notorious for his persecution of the Covenanters under Charles II and James II, Mackenzie earned the nickname "Bluidy Mackenzie." He retired from public life after the Revolution of 1689 because he was unwilling to swear the oaths required by the new regime. He was also an aggressive


and uncompromising nationalist and patriot who participated in debates about the early history of Scotland.\textsuperscript{16}
3) \textit{The Battel or Morning Interview. An Heroi-Comical Poem}. Edinburgh, Printed for George Stewart, 1716. The author, Allan Ramsay, was a Scottish patriot and Jacobite poet.\textsuperscript{17}
4) George Crawford, \textit{The Peerage of Scotland}. Edinburgh: Printed for the Author: Sold By George Stewart, 1716. Crawford's earlier works celebrated and stressed the legitimacy of the Royal House of Stuart. This work contains praise of Lord Belhaven's speech against the Union.\textsuperscript{18}

The evidence from subscription lists is less extensive but points in the same general direction. Here are all four of the books I have unearthed that George Stewart subscribed to:

1) Patrick Abercromby, \textit{Martial Achievements of the Scottish Nation}, Edinburgh, T. Ruddiman, 1711. Abercromby (1656-1716?) was a nationalistic, anti-Union Jacobite who was out in the '15.\textsuperscript{19}
2) \textit{History of the Arians and of the Council of Nice}, London, 1721. This was translated from the French of Tillemont by the non-juring clergyman and usager Thomas Deacon. The list of subscribers reads like the index of Broxap's \textit{Later Nonjurors}. The nonjuring Bishop Brett subscribed for seven copies. His fellow bishop Jeremy Collier took six. Many other nonjurors sent in their money, as well. Only a handful of Scotsmen are listed; these include Scottish Bishop Archibald Campbell, the nonjuring printer George Strahan, and the subject of the current inquiry, George Stewart.
3) John Covel, \textit{Some Account of the Greek Church With Reflections on their Present Doctrine and Discipline, Particularly in the Eucharist}. Cambridge, 1722. There was much interest in

\textsuperscript{17} Ross and Scobie, "Patriotic Publishing," pp. 111ff.
\textsuperscript{18} Ross and Scobie, "Patriotic Publishing," p. 104. Two additional titles published by Stewart also set out to vindicate the Stewart genealogy and clear the Scottish royal family of aspersions. George Mackenzie, Earl of Cromarty, \textit{An Historical Account of the Conspiracies by the Earl of Goury and Robert Logan of Restairig Against King James VI of Glorious Memory ... To Which is Added, A Vindication of Robert III, King of Scotland, and all his Descendants, from the Imputation of Bastardy}. Edinburgh, Printed by James Watson ... Sold at his shop and at the shops of David Scot ... and George Stewart, 1713. George Stewart's name also appeared on the title page of a sequel published by Mackenzie in 1714. Despite the subject matter, it does not seem that the author was a Jacobite. He had in fact accepted the Williambite settlement. See ODNB.
the Greek Church and its Eucharistic office about this time, particularly among English nonjurors and Scottish Episcopalians. Many who took the usager side in the usages debates preferred the eucharistic theory and communion office of the Greek Church to the notions and offices current in the West. This was a debate that, by and large, did not interest Presbyterians.

4) Jean Domat, *The Civil Law in its Natural Order* (London, 1722) Translated by William Strahan, L.L.D. Although the work does not seem overtly political, subscribers included some English Jacobites, e.g., William King of Oxford, and nonjurors, e.g. Roger Laurence, Thomas Bowdler, and William Bowyer.

The last source of evidence, and perhaps the most persuasive, involves apprenticeships, records of which are preserved in the Scottish Book Trade Index. SBTI records indicate that George Stewart apprenticed eight men between 1712 and 1726, four as bookbinders and four as booksellers. Most of these men have left few traces in the documentary record. However, three of them were evidently Episcopalians with Jacobite political views. In May of 1718, Stewart apprenticed Arthur Rose (also spelled Ross), a member of what might be called the first family of the Scottish Episcopal Church. Born circa 1691, Arthur Rose was the son of James Rose (1655-1733), who was deposed for refusing to read the Proclamation of King William and went on to become the Bishop of Fife (Bertie, 123). Arthur Rose was also the nephew of Alexander Rose (1646-1720), the Bishop of Edinburgh and primus, who in the weeks immediately following the Revolution alienated King William and ensured the disenfranchisement of the Scottish Episcopal Church by offering King William only the following qualified promise: “I will serve you so far as law, reason, or conscience will allow me” (Bertie, p. 121).

Arthur Rose’s brothers and sisters were no less dedicated to the Episcopal Church and the exiled Stuarts. His brother Charles Rose went on to become Bishop of Dunblane. He has been described as “the most Jacobite of all Jacobites”; in 1788, when the rest of the Scottish Episcopal Church finally forsook the Stuarts and accepted the Hanoverians, Charles Rose refused to do so. He continued a nonjuror (Bertie, 122). Arthur Rose’s sister, Stewart Rose, was the fiancée of the Rev. Robert Lyon of Perth, an Episcopal clergyman who was executed for his participation in the ’45. In his speech on the scaffold, Lyon praised the Scottish Episcopal Church as a church distinguished for “purity of doctrine, orthodoxy in the faith,
perfection of worship and her apostolic government,” a church
which “equals, if not excels any other church on earth.” Lyon
explained that it was in the Episcopal church that he had learned
to embrace the doctrines of “passive obedience, the divine right of
kings and in particular the indefeasible and hereditary title of our
own gracious sovereign, James ... and of his royal heirs, whom God
preserve and restore.” Lyon favored the four usages and was
fulsome in his praise of the Scottish Episcopal liturgy then in use.
This was a usager-inspired reprint of the Laudian communion
office, with footnotes added to instantiate the two usages not
included in the original. The tiny volumes in which this commun-
on office appeared were known as the “wee bookies.” Lyon went to
the scaffold waving one of the wee bookies printed by the Ruddi-
mans. He characterized the communion office set out therein as “a
liturgy... nigher the primitive standard than any other church this
day can boast of (excepting, perhaps, a small but I believe a very
pure church in England, who, I am told, has lately reformed herself
in concert with [the ancient liturgies]).” The parenthetical excep-
tion was a nod to the extreme usager church founded by Archibald
Campbell and Thomas Deacon.20

In January of 1715, George Stewart apprenticed Alexander
Davidson, who also appears to have been an Episcopalian and a
Jacobite. Beginning in 1721 or 1722, Davidson set up a shop of his
own (SBTI). He printed and sold a short-lived periodical entitled
The Blythe Man’s Vade Mecum, which reprinted news reports from
English newspapers, including The Weekly Journal and Wye’s
Letter. He also printed and sold a number of Episcopalian and
Jacobite pamphlets:

1) The Christian’s Director, or, the Observation of Holy Days Jus-
tify’d, Edinburgh, Printed by A. Davidson and Company, 1722.
This has been attributed to the Episcopalian William
Cockburn, who was assistant to the abovementioned Rev.
William Milne at the Blackfriars’ Wynd meeting house.
Cockburn was prosecuted in 1716 with other Edinburgh Epis-
copal clergymen for not praying for King George (Bertie, p.
26). The pamphlet itself is a defense of the observation of fes-
tivals and holidays against the Presbyterians. It displays a
reliance on tradition and the early church fathers reminiscent
of Robert Nelson, Archibald Campbell, Thomas Brett, and the
usager nonjurors. The Christian’s Director contains a list of

20 Henry Paton, ed., The Lyon In Mourning (Edinburgh: Scottish History Society, 1895), 1.12ff;
Bertie, pp. 84-85.
Notes and Queries

titles “lately published and sold by Alexander Davidson” (p. 5). Interestingly, for at least two of these titles Davidson collaborated with someone named J. Ross, or James Ross (SBTI). It seems likely that this coadjutor was James Rose, the father of Arthur Rose (also spelled Ross).

2) The Scottish Behemoth Dissected in a Letter to Robert Wodrow, Printed by J. Ross and A. Davidson and to be sold at A. Davidson’s Shop. Edinburgh, 1722. This is an anonymous attack on Presbyterianism in which the Presbyterians are blamed for the murder of the “Royal Martyr.”

3) Queries to the Presbyterians of Scotland, Edinburgh, Printed by J. Ross and A. Davidson, n.d. (but “lately published” suggests c. 1722). This is evidently a reprint of an earlier work generally attributed to Scottish nonjuring Bishop Archibald Campbell; it is a defense of episcopacy and attack on Presbyterianism buttressed with frequent appeals to the early church fathers.

4) Davidson also published several additional titles where Ross is not listed as a collaborator. Again, partisan Episcopal religious and nonjuring political views are strongly indicated.

5) Considerations Concerning Oaths [Edinburgh, Alexander Davidson], 1722. Attributed to the English nonjuring Francis Lee, this pamphlet explains why one must not take oaths to illegitimate powers or replace an obligation created by a previous oath.

6) History of the Late Septennial Parliament, 1722. A pamphlet critical of the Septennial Act and the MPs who passed it.

On 24 August 1726, Stewart apprenticed William Drummond, the son of George Drummond of Callander. Nineteen years later, William Drummond joined the Jacobite army and served as a gentleman volunteer in the Duke of Perth’s regiment, which fought at Culloden.21 Drummond was lucky enough to survive Culloden, and he went into hiding in London and on the continent for some time afterward. During his time in London he met Samuel Johnson. In the Life, Boswell characterizes Drummond as “a gentleman of good family, but small estate, who took arms for the house of Stuart in 1745; and during his concealment in London till the act of general pardon came out, obtained the acquaintance of Dr. Johnson, who justly esteemed him as a very worthy man” (Life, 2: 26-7). This

passage seems to imply that Drummond was in London in 1746 but was a beneficiary of the general pardon announced in 1747. However, that turns out not to be the case. The pardon issued in 1747 names Drummond as one of several dozen eminent Jacobites who were specifically excepted from the pardon.22

Given Drummond’s political views, it is no surprise to learn that he was also an Episcopalian. In 1752, he wrote from exile in France to the Episcopal leadership in Scotland requesting permission to translate the Liturgy of St. James into French, “for the good of mankind.”23 This liturgy was an object of much interest in Episcopal circles, having been recently published by the learned Scottish bishop Thomas Rattray, a convinced usager (ODNB). Drummond’s interest in liturgical matters seems not to have dissipated. Indeed, although only a layman, he eventually made a significant contribution to the history of the Scottish Episcopal Church, for it was he who printed the Communion Office of 1764 compiled by Bishops Forbes and Falconer. This liturgy was based partly on the research of Rattray; it instantiated the four usages for which Archibald Campbell and the usager nonjurors had contended, and ultimately it replaced the “wee bookies” that Ruddiman had printed. Given the outlaw status of the Episcopal Church and Drummond’s own political status, printing this work was a courageous act—and this may explain why the edition was sold in a plain wrapper.24

In short, the evidence strongly suggests that George Stewart was a member of Edinburgh’s Episcopal community, with ties to Episcopal clergymen like Keith, Cant, Gillan, Milne, Dundass, Smart, and the Roses, as well as Episcopalian laics like Freebairn, Watson, Mackenzie, Ruddiman, Davidson, and Drummond. His subscriptions to works by Deacon and Covell hint at an interest in the eucharistic debate that divided the church in the 1720s. It is harder to say which side he favored in that debate. His subscribing to Deacon’s book and publishing Keith would be consistent with a usager position, but the evidence is not entirely consistent. His apprentice William Drummond was certainly a supporter of the usages, and Alexander Davidson may have leaned that way as well. As far as politics go, it seems likely that George Stewart was a man of Jacobite sympathies who opposed the Union and supported patriotic publishing endeavors like those of Abercromby, Mackenzie, Freebairn, Watson, and Ruddiman.

22 An Act for the King’s most gracious, general, and free pardon (Edinburgh, [1747]), p. 32.
Notes and Queries

Francis Stewart was born in 1714. He would have been one year old when his father apprenticed Alexander Davidson, four when he apprenticed Arthur Rose, eight when Davidson launched his own shop, twelve when his father apprenticed William Drummond, and sixteen when Samuel Boyse (who would then have been 27) moved to Edinburgh and began writing poems about his younger sisters. If the analysis above is accurate, it seems safe to assume that Francis Stewart was raised as an Episcopalian, though nothing is known of his political or religious outlook as an adult. From the way he describes dissenters in his one surviving letter (see below), it seems likely that he did not identify with them.

Much of our information about Francis Stewart comes from a single letter published in the Gentleman's Magazine for 1799.25 The author of the letter, W. N., appears to have been connected with Strahan's printing shop in the late 1740s and/or early 1750s and worked on the Dictionary project with Johnson and Stewart. Although not reliable in all particulars, W. N.'s account does appear to be reliable on many of the basic facts. W. N. says that Francis Stewart was trained in the law and "employed as a writer in some of the principal offices in Edinburgh," where, "being a man of good natural parts, and given to literature, he frequently assisted in digesting and arranging MSS. for the press; and, among other employments of this sort, he used to boast of assisting and copying some of the juvenile productions of the afterwards celebrated Lord [Kames]" (p. 1171).

During the 1730s, Francis Stewart allegedly fell in with a set of "jovial wits and card players." According to W. N., Stewart was carousing with these men in Edinburgh at the time of the Porteous riots in 1736, when he would have been 22. In fact, Stewart and his bon vivant companions "met with the mob procession when they were conducting Capt. Porteous to be hanged." The next day they were examined before the town council, but (as Stewart allegedly used to say) "we were found to be too drunk to have any hand in the business" (1171). According to W. N., "Stewart left Edinburgh partly to extricate himself from this set of loose-living men. Stewart came to London sometime after 1736. In London, W. N. reports, "he stuck more closely to the press; and in this walk of copying or arranging for the press, he got recommended to Dr. Johnson" (1171).

Stewart appears to have been the original amanuensis for the Dictionary project. The contract with the booksellers was signed on 18 June 1746, and on the same day Johnson paid Stewart an advance. Stewart signed a receipt which read, "I received by way of

advance three pounds three shillings, to be repaid out of twelve shillings a week for which I contract to assist in compiling the work.” According to W.N., Stewart’s work on the Dictionary included collecting authorities to illustrate the senses of the words, helping with the definition of cant phrases related to gambling and card playing, and coordinating various managerial and financial responsibilities: “he was the man who did everything in the writing way for [Johnson], and managed all his affairs between the Doctor, his bookseller, and his creditors, who were then often very troublesome” (1171). Stewart seems also to have served as the primary go-between for Johnson and Strahan during work on the Dictionary.

Relations between Johnson and Stewart appear to have been good. W. N. recollected, “Frank was a great admirer of the Doctor, and upon all occasions consulted him; and the Doctor had also a very respectable opinion of his amanuensis Frank Stuart, as he always familiarly called him” (1171). W. N. and another correspondent concurred that Stewart was a “porter-drinking man.” Stewart allegedly spent his evenings at the Bible, in Shire-Lane, “a house of call for bookbinders and printers” (1171).

Stewart and Johnson were working on the Dictionary in 1749 when Samuel Boyse died. Stewart wrote a memorial of the last months of Boyse’s life, which was published in the “Life of Boyse” cited earlier. Since this is the only extended specimen of Stewart’s writing that I am aware of, and since it offers a glimpse of Johnson and his Dictionary team at a time when they labored in obscurity, I quote the account in full:

Poor Mr. Boyse was one evening last winter attacked in Westminster by two or three soldiers; who not only robbed him but used him so barbarously, that he never recovered from the bruises he received; which might very probably induce the consumption of which he died. About nine months before his death he married a cutler’s widow, a native of Dublin, with whom he had no money; but she proved a very careful nurse to him during his lingering indisposition.

She told me, that Mr. Boyse never imagined he was dying, as he always was talking of his recovery; but

perhaps his design in this might be to comfort her; for one incident makes me think otherwise. About four or five weeks before he breathed his last, his wife went out in the morning, and was surprised to see a great deal of burnt papers upon the hearth, which he told her were old bills and accounts; but I suppose were his manuscripts, which he had resolved to destroy; for nothing of that kind could be found after his death. Though, from circumstances, it may be inferred that he was apprehensive of death, yet I must own that he never intimated it to me; nor did he seem in the least desirous of any spiritual advice.

For some months before his end, he had left off drinking all fermented liquors, except now and then a glass of wine, to support his spirits; and that he took very moderately.

After his death, I endeavored all I could to get him decently buried, by soliciting those dissenters who were the friends of him and his father, to no purpose; for only Dr. Grosvenor, in Hoxton-square, a dissenting teacher, offered to join towards it. He had quite tired out those friends in his lifetime; and the general answer that I received was “That such a contribution was of no service to him; for it was a matter of no importance how or where he was buried.” As I found nothing could be done, our last resource was an application to the parish; nor was it without some difficulty, occasioned by the malice of his landlady, that we at last got him interred on the Saturday after he died. Three more of Dr. Johnson’s amanuenses, and myself, attended the corpse to the grave. Such was the miserable end of poor Sam, who was obliged to be buried in the same charitable manner with his first wife; a burial of which he had often mentioned his abhorrence. (“Life of Boyse,” pp. 331-332)

The phrase “last winter” suggests that Stewart composed this account within a year of the death of Boyse. Johnson was not at that time “Dr. Johnson,” but I infer that Stewart’s account was silently edited for publication at a later date by which time it had become customary to refer to Johnson as Doctor Johnson.

It seems likely that it was Francis Stewart who introduced Johnson to William Drummond, rather than vice versa. As we have seen, Stewart was at work on the Dictionary as early as 18 June 1746. In mid-April of that year Drummond was in military service at Culloden. It seems unlikely that he would have made it to
London and struck up a friendship with Johnson by early June. Thus I infer that it was probably Stewart who introduced Johnson to Drummond rather than the other way around. Stewart and Drummond were probably connected to a larger network of Scottish Episcopalians in London, at least a few of whom were lying low in the wake of the '45. Johnson knew other displaced Scottish Episcopalians as well, e.g. William Lauder, Archibald Campbell, William Guthrie, and James Elphinston.

Stewart appears to have been one of the most reliable and valued of Johnson's helpers. He was still working on the Dictionary in November of 1751 (Letters 1: 50). However, he seems not to have remained on the staff until 1755. In an undated letter, which Bruce Redford and Allen Reddick have concluded must have been written in the spring or summer of 1753, Johnson indicates that Stewart had not been working on the project for some time. In the letter Johnson tells Strahan he is aware of problems with amanuenses not achieving the brevity and concision Strahan wanted in either the definitions or (more likely) the illustrative quotations. "Since poor Stuarts time," Johnson writes, "I could never get that part of the work into regularity, and perhaps never shall" (Letters, 1:73; Reddick, Making, pp. 61-62 and notes). It is not clear what happened to Stewart. Did he die or did he just leave the project? In any case, Stewart vanishes from the documentary record at this point. If he was dead by 1753, he died before his fortieth birthday, which would certainly explain Johnson's remark about "poor Stuart."

Johnson did not forget Francis Stewart. In 1780 he asked Boswell to look up Stewart's sister. This was presumably the same woman Boyse had praised under the name "Halaria" forty-odd years earlier. She must have been about 60 by this point. "After a good deal of enquiry," Boswell located her in Edinburgh and, on Johnson's instructions, gave her a guinea for an old pocket-book that had belonged to Francis Stewart. Boswell notes that Stewart's sister was "in very moderate circumstances, but contented and placid." She "wondered at [Johnson's] scrupulous and liberal honesty and received the guinea as if sent her by Providence." Johnson thanked Boswell, adding: "The memory of her brother is yet fresh in my mind; he was an ingenious and worthy man" (Life 3:418; Letters 3:232). In 1784, Johnson offered the same lady another guinea for "a letter relating to me [which] is of consequence only to me" (Letters 2: 291, 299). Unfortunately, this letter seems not to have survived. I suspect many a reader of this journal would give a guinea to see it.

—Matthew Davis
Emily Cockayne:  
*Hubbub: Filth, Noise & Stench in England, 1600-1770*


Emily Cockayne’s *Hubbub* is aptly titled. Not only does it offer an earthy material-culture history of a bustling eighteenth-century England, it does so through a cacophony of images, voices, and observations. Cockayne’s goal is to account for the unpleasant aspects of eighteenth-century daily life: “poor-quality food, smoke, dirt, dust, stench and putrefaction” (1). Among the questions she proposes to answer is: “What made eyes water, ears ache, noses wrinkle, fingers withdraw and mouths close?” Her rationale for this focus on the underbelly of everyday existence is to counterbalance the emphasis on “the pleasures of the period,” which she suggests has dominated historical studies of the eighteenth century, citing John Brewer’s *Pleasures of the Imagination*, Peter Borsay’s *English Urban Renaissance*, and Paul Langford’s *A Polite and Commercial People* as examples (1, 251).

After a nod toward the subjective quality of what any culture considers a nuisance or defines as disgusting, Cockayne opens her book by introducing a cast of “inverts” who are among her sources. (“Inverts” seem to be alternative sources to “experts,” although the term is not clearly defined.) The list includes diarists such as Samuel Pepys, literary authors such as Tobias Smollett and Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle, and lesser-known figures such as the satirist Edward Ward and a milliner Mary Chandler. Also by way of introduction, Cockayne provides a brief description of the urban centers that are the primary settings for her study: London, Oxford, Bath, and Manchester. In the chapters that follow, with titles such as “Itchy,” “Mouldy,” “Grotty,” and “Gloomy,” Cockayne documents problems with bugs and skin diseases, domestic filth and rotting food, shabby construction and rising damp, relentless noise from city streets, human waste disposal, and polluted air. The book is a breath-
taking compendium of disturbances, difficulties and nuisances that plagued eighteenth-century life.

*Hubbub* is at its best when it provides a somewhat sustained discussion of a topic, such as clothing, noise or building construction. Cockayne accounts for the ups and downs in the popularity of wigs, and the long life span of a dress or a jacket. A garment that was stained might be dyed black for further use; a ruffle might be added to renew an out-of-date dress; old clothes were passed down to servants, then to ragmen and slopsellers. Cockayne also explains that problems with urban noises influenced eighteenth-century architecture and law. James Gibb, who designed the church of St. Mary-le-Strand, eliminated windows from the ground floor “to keep out the Noises from the Street” (106). Moreover, court proceedings, located in urban courts, were sometimes ceased simply because “the words of witnesses and counsel could not be discerned above the noises of carts and carriages” traveling the roads outside (106). After the Great Fire of 1666, London houses were built primarily of brick, but those bricks might have contained excrement or sifted ash (132). Cockayne notes that although the Building Act of 1667 tried to guarantee “vertical separation” of buildings, to guard against the spread of fire, some tenancies “spread sideways” and “tenants could occupy rooms laterally through buildings” (134).

Cockayne’s book is replete with fascinating and intriguing facts about eighteenth-century England, some of which continue to plague urban life now; noise, pollution, waste management, and even road rage, are problems we seem to have in common with eighteenth-century Britons. But the sheer volume of information in *Hubbub* is at times overwhelming and cumbersome, and there is neither a central argument nor a narrative thread that unifies the text. Sometimes, the book feels as congested as the description of London streets. Cockayne has a tendency to catalogue her examples, providing neither setting nor follow-up analysis. For instance, in a brief discussion of clothing as property that attracts thieves, we learn that Thomas Sevan was caught wearing three stolen shirts. Elizabeth Pepys lost her farandine waistcoat to a thief while sitting in traffic. Highway robbers grabbed John Elliott’s “hat, wig, waistcoat and shoes” (77). With minimal identification and little or no context, the information is hard to digest. There are also some puzzling references, such as an observation about James Boswell’s “chagrin” at physicians’ transition to “lighter bag-wigs” (68). Again, without a context for Boswell’s response, or an explanatory note with a primary source, the reader is left wondering about the significance of this example.

Another feature that sometimes leads to confusion is the mix of literary characters with historical figures. When plainly identified,
the literary examples can be quite helpful and enlightening. But at times, a literary character such as Tom Jones’ landlady from Fielding’s novel is treated in the same way as Samuel Pepys’ wife (146). Moreover, Tobias Smollett’s character Matt Bramble, from The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker, is listed as one of the “inpers” and is presented as Smollett’s “alter ego” (6-7). Using a character as the voice of the author requires at least a brief contextual discussion of representation—a recognition of the difficulties and limitations of such an approach. In addition, Bramble should be clearly identified as a literary character when citing examples of his sensory responses to London and Bath.

In the last chapter, “‘Such Things as These ... Disturb Human Life,’” Cockayne acknowledges the need “to draw multiple experiences into a coherent picture” and to establish “broad themes” from the details of her research (230). By way of conclusion, she observes that what was considered a nuisance or disturbance in the eighteenth century depended largely on the wealth and status of the individual and on the consensual norms of the citizenry. She also notes that reactions to the noise, filth, and smells of England changed as the environment changed. The 1770s seems to be the decade in which some cities like London began to clean themselves up. She quotes Dorothy George, who suggests that London in the 1780s was “‘not the London of Fielding and Hogarth, its dirt and insecurity were no longer worthy of a medieval town’” (246). The Improvement Act of 1766 brought reconstruction to Bath, and the Mileways Act (1771) brought developments to roads and highways in Oxford. However, improvements did not reach everyone. Cockayne reminds us, through the words of Samuel Johnson, to “‘survey the innumerable little lanes and courts’” to fathom “‘the wonderful immensity of London’” (247-48). There we are likely to find the urban sights and smells that have been forced from the “great streets” to the sequestered alleys. Moreover, not all urban centers saw a renaissance in quality of life; Manchester, for example, went into decline as it became more and more industrialized.

I expect that Hubbub will be of most use to other historians. The primary sources that Cockayne consults are impressive. Additionally, the illustrations are plentiful, and they provide an important dimension to Cockayne’s study. However, without a coherent central argument or a sustained narrative, Hubbub is less likely to be enjoyable to the general reader or of interest to those teaching eighteenth-century studies. Because there are few sustained examinations of specific topics, it is difficult to imagine assigning a chapter to a class for reading. Cockayne offers an abundance of informative tidbits on what made Britons itch, or what made them
gloomy. But one wishes that Cockayne spent more time reflecting analytically on her findings and providing some guidance through the filth, noise and stench of England. —NANCY E. JOHNSON

Tian Ming Cai, trans.: The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia


Less a book review and more a report: readers of the Johnsonian News Letter will hereby be put on notice that what we know as The Prince of Abissinia a Tale, by Samuel Johnson, London, MDCCLIX is, at long last, available in Chinese. The translator is Tian Ming Cai, educated in Zhan-gshan University, Guangzhou, the Chinese Academy of Social Science, Beijing, and Edith Cowan University, Perth, Australia.

The book is almost entirely in Chinese, except for the occasional English translation of a bold-faced Chinese version of a famous aphorism (e.g., “Example is always more efficacious than precept”), a few names in what I assume to be the “Acknowledgments” and “Introduction” sections, and a partial bibliography of editions of Rasselas in the library of John Byrne of Subiaco, Western Australia, and an English language bibliography of reference and other scholarly works. Mr. Byrne, a dedicated Johnsonian, member of The Johnson Society of Australia, and contributor to its interesting newsletter The Southern Johnsonian, has been a supporter of Tian Ming Cai’s Johnsonian labors for a number of years, and was a contributor, both moral and bibliographic, to the effort that led to this handsome soft-cover edition, with a design and graphic display handsome, even if unintelligible to the eye untrained in Chinese.

My copy of this book, courtesy of John Byrne, came with an inscription by the translator, and a two-page essay by him entitled “Dr. Johnson in China,” which is both a brief history of the rise and fall of Johnsonian interest in China, and an explanation of “Why
Johnson?,” the question put to the translator by his publisher. From this we learn that before the 1949 revolution “everyone in the [Chinese] social, academic and literature world generally knew and talked of Johnson in many ways.” After 1949, Johnson was associated with “counterrevolutionary, conservative and religious beliefs,” and thus was no longer mentioned or studied. Although, since the so-called “cultural revolution” of 1966-1976, China has been increasingly receptive to a broader spectrum of ideas, Johnson has never returned to his former position in the intellectual canon of Chinese culture.

As to the question, “Why Johnson?,” it is perhaps best to quote from the translator himself:

A question I also keeping asking myself all the time while doing the job. The significance of Johnson’s thinking of subordination might not matter so much, if resolution in China did not have a history of class struggles or violence. Ironically, at present and to a certain point, the Chinese need Johnson much more than at any other period, when the Chinese leaders called to “build a harmonious society,” which Johnson could provide some useful thoughts, because he always said that “I am a friend to subordination. It is most conducive to the happiness of society.” But bear in mind the record of human right and the existing economic reforms rather than the political reforms. I should mention what the other side of Johnson had said, if government abused its power, mankind would not bear it; against a tyrant, the people would rise and cut off his head (see introduction the Life of Johnson). Johnson is a rationalist in everything, but I love to pay attention to his picture of “the dangerous prevalence of imagination,” and his words that “there are a thousand familiar disputes which reason never can decide” (see introduction Rasselas), when thinking of Bush’s war on Iraq at the beginning of the twenty first century. Simply put, why Johnson, because what we need is Johnson’s broad mind and humanity (good heart), which can lead us walk out of the shades of the Vanity of Human Wishes. Dr. Johnson and his spirit will be welcomed and such enjoyment by the Chinese generations to come, no need to say, Dr. Johnson’s views of China “possess a peculiar significance.”
You might, as I did, wonder (based on the literary quality of the foregoing), how well the Chinese translation would capture the sense, let alone the language, of Johnson. The translator himself observes in his essay that “it is not easy to read Johnson.” Nor translate him, one might add. Thus I was pleased to have a chance to show the translation, and a copy of a first edition of The Prince of Abissinia, to Gunnar Malmqvist, a member of the committee of the Swedish Academy that selects the Nobel Prize for literature, and himself a translator of Chinese into Swedish. Prof. Malmqvist’s English, charmingly accented orally, is fluent and flawless syntactically. He studied both the Chinese and English texts carefully (although, one must admit, after a quite Boswellian dinner), and, even without looking at the English version, read to me from the Chinese, translating into English as he went, an arbitrarily selected passage. I was astonished. It was as Johnson had written.

I regret—or rather I am pleased—to inform readers of this journal that the excellent first edition of Rasselas in Chinese is sold out. I do not know whether there will be a second printing. But it is comforting to have evidence that globalization has brought more than Kit-Kat bars to China from England. And that, Robert Frost to the contrary notwithstanding, in this case the poetry was not lost in the translation.

—PAUL T. RUXIN

Sophie Gee: The Scandal of the Season


Alexander Pope’s The Rape of the Lock used to be taught as part of the A-level English literature syllabus in England, before such texts were deemed far too ancient for contemporary schoolchildren. (There was a time when Johnson’s Rasselas also featured in the curriculum.) I wonder what callow, sexually confused sixth-formers used to make of it? All that fuss about a lock of hair. Social mores have changed so completely since Pope’s mock-heroic cantos were first published in 1712 that much of his wit, his telling details, his rebellious darts against the inflated pomposity of early Augustan society have lost their resonance. “Puffs, Powders, Patches, Bibles, Billet-doux” have long
since disappeared from the bedroom. Those bright, shining ringlets which Belinda flaunts to fatal effect would have no such pulling power in today's world of hair extensions and floaty frocks lined with Velcro to preserve the immodesty of the wearer. Who now would be shocked when Belinda sits at her toilette as if at an altar, performing “the sacred rites of Pride”? Or even catch the allusions to Catholic ritual?

The poem, then, would seem a strange inspiration for the young Australian academic Sophie Gee (now teaching at Princeton), whose literary début takes us backstage into the darker side of Pope's glittering world. What were the “am'rous causes” and “mighty contests” that provoked him into writing his poem? Why, too, was its publication such an extraordinary succès de scandale?

Gee's scintillating novel opens in London in 1711, as the young Pope arrives from the country, dreaming of fame. His Essay on Criticism has just been published, and on his first meeting with Richard Steele, at Pontack's in the City, he is delighted to be told, “Your ‘Pastorals’ made something of a success, Pope. I hope that more will soon flow from your pen to take the town by storm.” But Pope has yet to prove his genius. In the hectic life of the burgeoning capital, he hopes to find a subject fit for a masterpiece to rival the works of Steele, Swift, or even Milton.

But Gee must first establish the febrile atmosphere of London at the time, less than a generation since the Glorious Revolution, with the threat of rebellion still lurking from across the border in Scotland and over the Channel in France. She takes us immediately into this murky underworld, as a little man in priest's garb hurries away from a midnight masquerade at the brilliantly lit French Embassy on the Strand. Two men in black, one of whom speaks with a French accent, hijack his hackney cab, knives are drawn, and murder is committed. The capital is rife with plots against Queen Anne and its dark alleyways are filled not just with the stench of ordure but also the whiff of treason. Pope as a Catholic is unsure about his literary reception, but he is even more wary of the threat to his very existence.

The incident upon which Pope's The Rape of the Lock revolves, and which Gee brings to vivid life, would seem superficially to be of no great significance. The Queen has adjourned to Hampton Court, where Pope's "heroes and nympha" disport themselves to take tea. After an elaborately detailed game of cards, Lord Robert Petre (the Baron in Pope's poem) humiliates his lover, Lady Arabella Fermor (Belinda in The Rape), by dramatically seizing a lock of her hair and cutting it off in front of the crowd of society belles and "birthnight beaus." Petre has exposed Arabella to public ridicule and,
worse still, to the shame of openly demonstrating his intimate familiarity with her. Her family is outraged, especially when two months later Lord Petre marries a very rich heiress, dashing Arabella’s hopes of reconciliation.

Gee reimagines just how, and why, the “rape” took place, introducing us to Lady Arabella as she first encounters Lord Petre and suggesting that there are Jacobite undercurrents to Petre’s behavior. To ensure that we do not fail to make the connections with Pope’s poem, Gee reminds us of it throughout, by using quotations from *The Rape of the Lock* as epigraphs for each of her chapters. When Pope arrives in town, the chapter is headed, “He saw, he wish’d, and to the prize aspir’d.” As he sits down to write his poem after the infamous incident, Gee teasingly implies, “Love in these labyrinths his Slaves detains, / And mighty Hearts are held in slender Chains.”

Those who know their Pope will revel in the allusions, as will aficionados of eighteenth-century life in London. Every so often, Gee veers from her plot into a detailed description of making coffee or buying bonnet ribbons. A fashionable beau named Harry who boasts of using up fifteen shirts in a week reminded me of Elizabeth Carter’s nephew for whom she laboriously stitched countless shirts before sending him out into the world. As in Pope’s poem, Gee recreates an entire trick of the three-handed card-game, ombre, in which the women are the players, egged on by the noble (Catholic) lords, Petre and Beaufort. (Is Gee, I wonder, as painstakingly accurate as Pope?)

Arabella succumbs to Lord Petre’s advances, her downfall plotted scene-by-scene as if in a series of Hogarth drawings. Pope, meanwhile, is enamoured of Arabella’s cousin, Teresa Blount, ignoring the more subtle and enduring charm of Martha, Teresa’s sister (whom in real life Pope admires). Adding depth to her portrait of this fashionable, leisureed society, we also encounter greedy slavers and Grub Street publishers, blackmailing valets and the owners of a cookshop in Chancery Lane. Lady Mary Pierrepont (the future Lady Mary Wortley Montagu) makes a fleeting appearance as a formidably sharp woman with a gambler’s instinct for winning at cards.

Gee writes with equal relish of the disposal of night-soil and the rising of the sun across the Thames, of the arcane worlds of female underwear and copyright law. Here she is on Pope’s arrival in the Haymarket for a night at the opera:

A jam of carriages and sedan chairs had accumulated at either end of the street, and ladies picked through the
dung and straw in their silk slippers to reach the theatre. A fur tippet fell to the ground, and a lady’s footman struggled with the filthy street urchin who darted in to steal it. Chair carriers battled to deposit their passengers under the arcade of the building, ramming the carrying-poles into the backs of unsuspecting theatre-goers. A hogman, not knowing or not caring that it was an opera night, turned into the street with a snorting, scuffling pack who smeared their flanks across the ladies’ fronts, ruining silk stockings with each kick of their muddy trotters.

You can almost visualise the film set—Keira Knightley and Anne Hathaway as the Blount sisters stepping out of their sedans just as James McAvoy (as Pope) arrives with his older and wiser friend Colin Firth. In such a film, the role of Arabella would surely be taken by either Scarlett Johansson or Penélope Cruz with perhaps Cate Blanchett as Lady Mary Pierrepont.

Pope, a friend of the Fermors, was encouraged to flex his writerly muscle in defence of Arabella’s reputation, and thereby to heal the rift between two of the wealthiest Catholic families in England. He was expected to create a comic poem that would satirise events, making light of what happened, in the hope that this would “laugh them together again.” But Pope, with extraordinary originality, saw an opportunity to create something quite new, writing in an epic style as if he were an English Virgil or Homer but describing the most trivial of incidents. His characters are played upon by “cosmic powers,” but they find themselves embroiled in a domestic drama, armed only with bodkins and scissors.

Gee, in contrast, has created in The Scandal of the Season a brilliantly vivid tableau of London life circa 1711, but perhaps because it is so far removed from our own reality, our own experience of life, there is no edge to it, no sense of bathetic contradiction. The problem, I think, is that by choosing to write a fictional, rather than factual, account of the incident, she has curiously curtailed her imaginative freedom. Her characters have become ciphers rather than living, breathing people, caught up in the real-life dilemmas of divided loyalties, forbidden love and blighted circumstances. Her book is a colorful entertainment, creating scenes as if in a painting by Boucher or Watteau, but it lacks the compelling spirit of a Hogarth or Rowlandson.

—KATE CHISHOLM
Remembrances

Morris Ruggles Brownell III

Morris Brownell died last March at the age of 73. He was professor emeritus at the University of Nevada at Reno where he spent most of his academic career after earning his doctorate at the University of California at Berkeley. Morris is well known in Johnsonian circles for Samuel Johnson's Attitude to the Arts (1985) and for his lively presence over many years at conferences and meetings. His first book, Alexander Pope and the Arts of Georgian England (1978) won the coveted Gottschalk Award for the best book of the year in eighteenth-century studies. His last book was The Prime Minister of Taste: A Portrait of Horace Walpole (2001). Morris was himself a minister of taste adept not only in the sister arts of poetry and painting but also in music. An accomplished musician himself, he was in his last years at work on a book called "Boswell's Ballads." As he reported in the JNL for September 2003,

For more than a decade my wife Ann [now also deceased] and I have been collecting tunes and texts of songs mentioned in Boswell's journals. We have so far identified more than one hundred and fifty songs in the Journals, Tour, and Life, supplemented by about fifty songs of Boswell's own composition in manuscripts at Yale and the Bodleian Library. We believe that the wealth of popular song we are calling "Boswell's Ballads" offers a comprehensive illustration of the song culture of the later eighteenth century that will bear comparison to the songs in Pepys's diary, and the Child Ballads of the nineteenth century. (LIV, 1: 50)

An obituary in the Reno Gazette-Journal suggests that this work will be published posthumously, but we know no more than that. We hope the book will appear soon, because "Boswell's Ballads" will certainly make an important contribution to our knowledge of the age of Johnson.

Before becoming a professor and a Johnsonian, as the Reno Gazette-Journal reports, Morris graduated from Princeton and
Remembrances

“sailed as an able seaman and boatswain on the Albatross, a north German Lloyd Line topsail schooner, from Rotterdam to San Francisco.” He also “served two years as a forward observer in the 45th Field Artillery Batallion in Germany” before discovering a vocation for teaching as an instructor in Latin at the Shady Hill School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Those who knew Morris even as slightly as I did could see that he was a man of wit, judgment, and taste—a forward observer of culture and the arts, and a truly knowledgeable Johnsonian. We lament his passing.

—ROBERT DEMARIA, JR.

Bruce Purchase

A founding member of Lawrence Olivier’s National Theatre company, Bruce Purchase was a distinguished Shakespearian actor who supported the most famous actors of his time and played important lead roles himself in many venues. He was in the inaugural production of the National, Hamlet, at the Old Vic with Peter O’Toole. With the same company, later, he was Balthazar in Much Ado about Nothing and Edward IV in Richard III. He appeared again in the film version of Richard III with Ian McLellan. He was in Polanski’s Macbeth and the National Theatre company’s film Mary Queen of Scots, with Vanessa Redgrave and Glenda Jackson. He also had many starring roles, including Doolittle in My Fair Lady to Richard Chamberlain’s Higgins on a European tour, Othello at the Mermaid theatre, and Macbeth at Theatr Clwyd.

The London Times notice (12 June 2008), from which I draw my information, provides a longer, though still much abbreviated list of Bruce Purchase’s many, many credits as an actor. However, he will be best remembered by Johnsonians for his one-man performance of Johnson is Leaving, a play written especially for him by the biographer and novelist John Wain. Bruce first performed the play for the Royal Shakespeare Company at the Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon in 2003. In 2005 he brought the show to the United States, performing (among other places) at Vassar College, the site of that year’s meeting of the American Johnsonians. Bruce was a brilliant Johnson. He had the body and the countenance to pull it off, and his polished professional skill as an actor enabled him to

63
bring the character to life with very few props and no gimmicks at all. Part of his performance, a bit of which I first heard in his garden in Putney Bridge, was his sensitive modulation of Johnson's accent. He could swing into a countrified, Staffordshire lilt when Johnson imagined his life as child or his arguments with his father, and then he could step gracefully back into higher, London accents as the aged Johnson reinhabited the present in his London attic. Bruce was a virtuoso actor who had an affinity for Johnson and rendered him credibly and graciously. His performance was perhaps the nearest thing we could have in this world to meeting Johnson himself in some DeQuincy-esque imaginary scene in the next. Bruce's own large soul will be missed by all Johnsonians who had the good fortune to meet him.

—ROBERT DEMARIA, JR.