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## Historical Background to Restoration & Eighteen-Century English Literature

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*Restoration & Eighteenth-Century English Literature (ANGBA3- Literature Survey Course)*

# Historical Background to Restoration & Eighteenth-Century English Literature

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## SUMMARY:

This lesson will introduce the necessary historical and cultural background for the appreciation and interpretation of the literary text written in the period of Restoration and the eighteenth-century England, particularly as they will pertain to concepts now familiar but first institutionalized in this period: the English novel (gothic in particular), the anglophone brand of musical theatre, the concept of the author as owner of her or his own work, and literary criticism that will eventually foster the study of literature in English as a valid academic subject.

Topics will include:


- Restoration of the monarchy in 1660 and its historical background (constitutional crisis), the religious issues contesting the political settlement;
- the Glorious Revolution of 1688; the Bill of Rights (1689) limiting the power of the Crown, and the Toleration Act (1698) granting a limited freedom of worship to Nonconformists;
- the Union Act of 1707 creating Great Britain (the joining of the Kingdom of England and Kingdom of Scotland) and its emergence as a colonial power following the War of the Spanish Succession (1702-1713) and the Seven Years' War with the French (1756–1763);
- rise of population and urban centres, nascent Industrial Revolution, crime and punishment;
- the chartering of the Royal Society for the Improving Natural Knowledge in 1662; Newtonianism; John Locke and the first copyright law;
- publishing boom in eighteenth-century Britain and the fostering of newspaper culture.


# 1 THE CROWN RESTORED AND LIMITED

Although this is not a course in history, some knowledge of the historical events of the period are necessary for the comprehension of its exuberance and ambivalent (i.e. piety vs libertine) nature, as well as for the understanding of its topical preoccupations.

**Restoration itself refers to the restoration of monarchy in 1660 with the return of Charles II (Stuart) from his exile in France following the Interregnum and the, so called, Protectorate of the English Commonwealth.**


To understand the impact restoration of monarchy had on England's cultural life, one needs to remember that the Commonwealth or the Interregnum period was ushered in by a **constitutional crisis** due to a functional breakdown in the relationship between the king and the political nation, the later fearing that that royal policy was favoring "popery and arbitrary power" (cf. Bill of Rights). Initially, this crisis of 1640-41 had led to the successful efforts of the Long Parliament to reverse the absolutist trend in royal policy and to put limits on the King for the future, however, it took a **civil war** (1642-1651) between the **Parliamentarians**

 The **constitutional crisis** was long in brewing and we can discern its early signs in two works published in Scotland. One was [\*De Jure Regni apud Scotos, Dialogus\*](#) [*A Dialogue on the Law of Kingship among Scots*] by **Scottish historian and humanist George Buchanan**, defending the right of the people to resist and depose a king turned tyrant, and arguing the need for monarchs to rule "in accordance with some form of social contract with their people." The first printed edition (1579) was dedicated to Buchanan's star pupil, James VI. The other was [\*The True Law of Free Monarchies\*](#) published in 1598, ironically, by Buchanan's erstwhile pupil King James VI of Scotland (later becoming King James I of England), **introducing the theory of the divine right of kings** into England. The divine right of kings "is the absolutist idea that a monarch's authority to rule comes directly from God and that he or she is not subject to any earthly authority." Buchanan's dialogue, although popular on the continent, was first translated to English in 1680, following the restoration, and reissued in 1689 despite the royal incentive to burn his works by the common hangman in 1683.

 The Royalists (i.e. supporters of the king) called the period between the execution of Charles I (January 30, 1649) and the restoration of his son, Charles II, as the ruling monarch of England (May 29, 1660) the **Interregnum**. The very same period for the supporters of the Parliament was called the **Commonwealth**, when England and Wales (and later Scotland and Ireland) was ruled as a republic. A particular period of the Commonwealth was called the **Protectorate**, starting in 1653 with the appointment of Oliver Cromwell as the Lord Protector, and ending in 1659 when Cromwell's son, Richard Cromwell, abdicated from the inherited post.



Coronation portrait of Charles II by John Michael Wright (c. 1671-6). Oil on canvas | 281.9 x 239.2 cm. The Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace. Click on the image for a larger resolution.

 Read the excerpt of *The True Law of Free Monarchies* from the [\*NAEL\*](#) and note what metaphor is being used for describing the relationship between the monarch and his subjects, and what are the perceived norms of such a relationship.

(*Roundheads*) and the **Royalists** (*Cavaliers*) to secure those limits and introduce new demands for the “liberty of conscience.” Peaceful settlement was not reached, and King Charles I (son of James VI of Scotland and I of England under that name) was put on trial and [executed in 1649](#).

Although the strife was predominantly **over the mode of government** (the Parliamentarians striving for constitutional monarchy in place of the absolutist tendencies of Charles I), it also had an ostensible religious nature because many of the Puritans and Presbyterians were in support of the Parliamentary forces chiefly because the royally sanctioned Church of England was prohibiting and penalizing nonconformist worship practices. After the Parliamentarians won the civil war, they abolished the Book of Common Prayer, and in their extreme zeal for reformation **closed all the theatres because they were deemed the hotbeds of loose morals and transgressive practices** (cf. the textbox on the right). The impact this had on the theatrical life of England will be dealt in the lesson on Restoration Theatre (and especially Comedy).

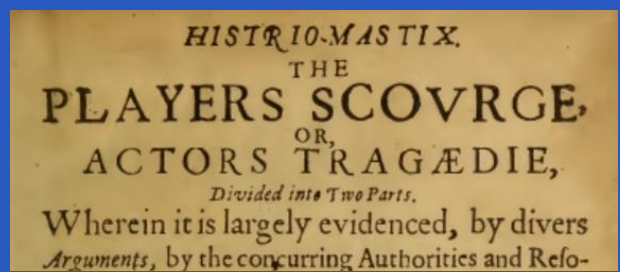
With the restoration of the monarchy came the restoration of the established church which again led to the prohibition of Nonconformist religious meetings, forcing everyone to either attend Anglican church services or to be excluded from public life, or worse, to serve time in prison (Test Act of 1673). The backlash against the religious strictures of Presbyterians and Protestant Dissenters experienced during the Commonwealth manifested itself in barbed caricatures (e.g. Samuel Butler’s *Hudibras*).

With a bit of exaggeration, one might claim that the only thing the different fractions of protestant denominations shared and agreed upon at this point was their fear of Catholic succession which brought on the so called “**Exclusion Crisis**” (1679–1681). For although King Charles II had conformed to Anglicanism, his Catholic sympathies made the anti-Catholic Parliament wary, especially since Charles had no legitimate heir and the next in line to the throne was his brother James, the Duke of York, a professed Catholic (he refused to take the oath of the Test Act). The Parliament wished the King to exclude James from the line of succession (hence the name of the crisis), however, the King’s response was to dissolve the Parliament yet again demonstrating a royal penchant for “popery and arbitrary power.” The Crisis was also the inception of the political groups, **the Whigs** supporting the exclusion and **the Tories** supporting the king (Charles II).

 &  | Read and note!

William Prynne’s *Histrio-mastix, or the Player’s Scourge*, published in 1633, was the most popular Puritan attack on the stage in the seventeenth century.

Click on the title page image to read the page in full. Notice portions of its summary argument that hint at the connection between the author’s political stance and his religious condemnation of theatres. What other practices were condemned in the title? For the text’s transcript click [HERE](#).



The strength of the anti-Catholic sentiment of the English nation can be aptly demonstrated by the hysterical spread of the so called **Popish Plot** conspiracy, invented by Titus Oates, according to which the Catholics were conspiring to assassinate Charles II to put the Catholic James on the throne. It held the nation’s imagination in thrall between 1678 and 1681, resulting in the executions of at least 22 men, and instigating the Exclusion Crisis itself. Eventually, Oates’ accusations were proven false and he was convicted of perjury.

A good example of England’s obsession with popish conspiracies is a broadside of [Popish Plots and Treasons](#) from 1625 at the British Library.

**i** Following the Restoration, London has been through a **Great Plague (1664-65)** killing almost a quarter of the city's population and through a **Great Fire (1666)**, destroying much of the inner city. Take a look at Wenceslaus Hollar's map of London [before the fire](#) and [after the fire](#), and read Samuel Pepys's diary entry [on the Great Fire](#) (NAEL 1C.86-90). Both events were often seen as premonitions of God's displeasure because of Charles II Catholic sympathies. John Dryden's long poem *Annus Mirabilis* (i.e. "year of wonders") is offering a slightly different interpretation of the 1666 Fire:

Yet London, empress of the northern clime,  
By an high fate thou greatly didst expire;  
Great as the world's, which at the death of time  
Must fall, and rise a nobler frame by fire.

[...]

Me-thinks already, from this chymic flame,  
I see a city of more precious mold:  
Rich as the town which gives the Indies name,  
With silver paved, and all divine with gold.

(NAEL C.36)



*The Great Fire of London, with Ludgate and Old St. Paul's.* Anonymous artist, ca. 1670. Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection. [Click on the image for a larger resolution.](#)

Following the death of Charles II (1685), King James II suspended the Test Act which prevented Catholics (and Nonconformists) from holding public offices. In 1688 James II had a son which, yet again, brought to the fore the fear of a succession of Catholic monarchs and spurred the secret negotiations of the Whigs to secure on the throne a protestant king in the person of William of Orange, son-in-law and nephew to King James II (cf. [the House of Stuarts](#)). The same year, in 1688, William of Orange lead a small army to England and sized the power in what was to be called **the Glorious (or Bloodless) Revolution**.

The Glorious Revolution introduced two major changes into the political life of England. On the one hand, the Parliament issued the **Bill of Rights in 1689** limiting the power of the Crown, establishing constitutional monarchy in England, and settling the question of protestant succession for once and all (with the Act of Settlement in 1701 ascertaining the succession of Sophia, electress of Hanover). On the other hand, the **Toleration Act of 1689** allowed freedom of worship to all Protestant Dissenters (i.e. non-Anglicans) rallying for the new king a broader Protestant support. Viewed by modern standards, the Toleration Act was very limited for it still required that every person dissenting from the Church of England make and subscribe to the declaration of fidelity to the Crown (cf. the Bill of Rights) and a profession of their Christian belief, the wording of which exempted Jews, Catholics, and non-Trinitarian Protestants from the enjoyment of "the benefits, privileges, and advantages [...] which any other dissenters shall or ought to enjoy by virtue of this act." Also, since the Test Act of 1673 was still in force, only Anglicans could serve in Parliament and hold high offices. Despite its limitations, the Toleration Act marked the end of religious wars in England, although, religious issues will remain strongly imbedded in its public discourse (cf. [the Gordon Riots](#) in 1780).

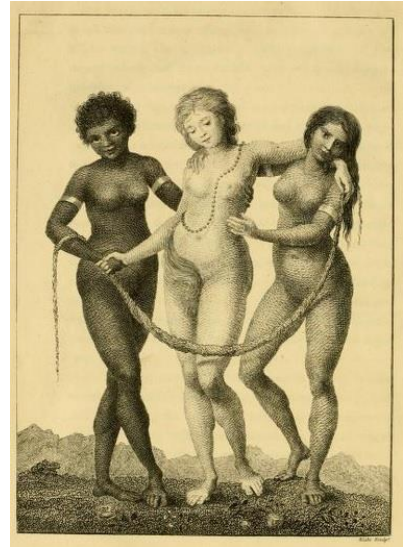


## 2 CITY, COUNTRY, COLONIES AND CRIME

By the time of **Queen Anne's** reign (1702-1714) — the youngest Protestant daughter of James II — London has been slowly emerging from the Great Fire of 1666 rejuvenated, or in Dryden's words, "New deified she from her fires does rise / Her widening streets on new foundations trust, / And, opening, into larger parts she flies" (NAEL 1C.36-7). Already in the 17<sup>th</sup> century the city has undergone a rapid expansion that necessitated a city map to made in 1653 as "[a guide for Cuntrey men](#)" so that they would not get lost in its labyrinthine streets, but it was after the calamities of 1665-66 that its population doubled during the 18<sup>th</sup> century — roughly from 400,000 to 800,000 — and the city became the prefiguration of the modern metropolis it has since become.

The rise of the city was intrinsically connected with the emergence of Britain as a colonial power, following (a) the **Act of Union in 1707** — which effectively united the two kingdoms (England and Scotland) "into One Kingdom by the Name of Great Britain" — and (b) the **War of the Spanish Succession (1702-1713)** that thwarted the colonial ambition of France and Spain while bolstering that of Britain. The London merchants and the Whigs (supporting the "new moneyed" interest, as opposed to the Tories who prioritized landownership as the basis of wealth) grew rich from the spoils of the war which included not only access to resources from the new colonies but also the *asiento*, a Spanish royal licence to supply slaves to the Spanish colonies in America. The latter was contracted to the South Sea Company (founded in 1711) and the expected profit of the company created frenzied speculations that eventually resulted in the stock market crash called the "South Sea bubble" in 1710. Despite its ups and down, the slave trade remained a fixture in Britain's economy till the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. More on Britain's slave trade and its narratives will be dealt in the lesson on travel novels (cf. Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*).

The downfall of many due to the "South Sea bubble" debacle was occasion for the rise of **Robert Walpole**, dubbed **Britain's first "prime minister."** As the scandal following the stock market crash cleared many powerful men from the administration, Walpole was effectively the only viable person left to be appointed First Lord of the Treasury, Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader of the House of Commons in 1721. His ability to restore the credibility of the King and the Whig Party in the House of Commons, to effectively negotiate between the two (i.e. the crown and the Commons), and his shrewd skills in money juggling made him the longest running prime minister in the history of Britain (1721-1742). However, his administration of patronage ("Robinocracy") became the symbol of political corruption and degradation of society parodied and attacked in many of the contemporary literary works of art, such as, John Gay's *Beggar's Opera* (1723), Henry Fielding's *Johathan Wild* (1743), Jonathan Swift's *A Modest Proposal* (1729), and Alexander Pope's *Dunciad* (published in three different



*Europe supported by Africa & America*, an engraving by William Blake, ca 1796. The plate was published in J. G. Stedman's *Narrative of a five years' expedition against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam... from year 1772 to 1777*, published in 1813. Click on the image for a larger resolution.



*Idol-worship or the way to preferment* (1740). Print made by anonymous artist, satirizing Robert Walpole. The British Museum.

versions between 1728 and 1743). Walpole's fall in 1742 was due to his unwillingness to go to war against the French and the Spanish — he deemed it a too costly endeavour.

It was William Pitt the Elder that advocated the expansion of the British empire and commerce overseas with success, and he was credited by contemporaries for the victory over the French in the **Seven Years' War (1756–63) consolidating British colonial rule both in North America (Canada) and India**. Consequently, the long rule of **George III (1760–1820)** had to contend with two major issues: the rise of Britain's colonial power — hardly diminished by the American Revolutionary War and the loss of its colonies (1775-1783) — and the need for new social order and reforms to appease the discontent at home.

Colonial commerce gave rise to the **Industrial Revolution**, the transition to new manufacturing processes made possible especially by three 18<sup>th</sup>-century inventions: John Kay's flying shuttle (1733) and the James Hargreaves' Spinning Jenny (1764) revolutionizing the textile industry, and James Watt's steam engine (1775). At the same time in the country, enclosures were going rampant. **Enclosures** were legal processes consolidating smaller lands, previously in common use, into larger enclosed landmasses, their use being restricted by the owner. All of these contributed to the rapid urbanization cities as landless people, bereft of livelihood in the countries, flooded into London and industrial centres in search of jobs. Economic and social tensions were inevitable.



Read E. P. Thompson vivid description of the dark side of these changes in the 18<sup>th</sup> century:

In the years between the Restoration and the death of George III the number of capital offences was increased by about 190 [...] no less than sixty-three of these were added in the years 1760–1810. Not only petty theft, but primitive forms of industrial rebellion—destroying a silk loom, throwing down fences when commons were enclosed, and firing corn ricks— were to be punished by death. [...] the death sentence, if respited, was generally exchanged to the terrible living death of the hulks or to transportation. The procession to Tyburn (later, the scaffold outside Newgate) was a central ceremonial of the 18<sup>th</sup>-century London. The condemned in the carts — the men in gaudy attire, the women in white, with baskets of flowers and oranges which they threw to the crowds — the ballad-singers and hawkers, with their “last speeches” (which were sold even before the victims had given the sign of the dropped handkerchief to the hangman to do his work): all the symbolism of “Tyburn Fair” was the ritual at the heart of London's popular culture.

The commercial expansion, the enclosure movement, the early years of the Industrial Revolution — all took place within the shadow of the gallows. The white slaves left our shores for the American plantations and later for Van Diemen's Land, while Bristol and Liverpool were enriched with the profits of black slavery; and slave-owners from West Indian plantations grafted their wealth to ancient pedigrees at the marriage-market in Bath. It is not a pleasant picture. (1966, 60–61)



“The Idle Prentice Executed at Tyburn” (plate 11) from William Hogarth's twelve plate series *Industry and Idleness* (1714). For a larger resolution click on the image. Credit: *The Hogarth Project*. *La Clé des langues* (dir. Clifford Armion) and ENS Média (Vincent Brault, photo).

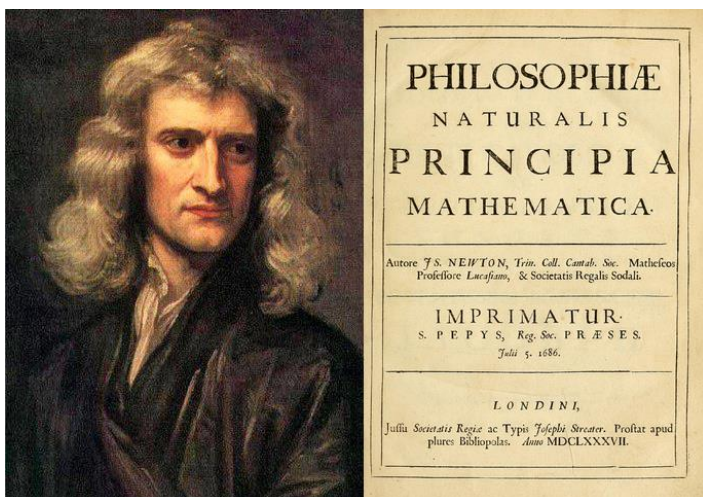
### 3 THE ROYAL SOCIETY AND THE FREEDOM OF PRESS

The year of the Restoration is the year of the founding of the first national scientific society in the world, **the Royal Society** of London for Improving Natural Knowledge, at an informal gathering following a lecture by **Christopher Wren** at Gresham College. Wren was at the time the astronomy professor of the college, but also a distinguished mathematician-physicist, however, best known latter for his architectural achievements, especially in the city renovations following the Great Fire of London (St Paul's Cathedral). The Society was granted a charter of incorporation by Charles II in 1662 providing institutional structure. However, despite its royal support the society was a voluntary organization, independent of the government. It had its own periodical from 1665 (published by the secretary, Henry Oldenburg, and becoming the official journal of the society in 1753), *Philosophical Transactions*. Amongst its presidents were notable mathematicians, physicists, astronomers and authors/statemen of the age, such as, Christopher Wren, Samuel Pepys, Charles Montagu, Sir Isaac Newton, and Sir Joseph Banks (a distinguished naturalist and botanist, accompanying James Cook on his first great voyage sponsored by the Society in 1768–71).

By far the most renowned scientific achievement of the age was the publishing of **Sir Isaac Newton's *Principia*** (*Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*) in **1687** with the imprimatur — official endorsement — of the Royal Society. In the *Principia* Newton laid down his computations and demonstrations on the laws of motion and gravitation. It brought him instant international fame. The practical effects of Newton's ambitious mathematical theories on the mechanical creations and innovations of the nascent Industrial Revolution were not easily discernible as it was considered too incomprehensible and experimental. Rather, they were due to the proliferation of public lecturers, Newton's advocates, popularizing his ideas and addressing “an audience no longer limited to the Royal Society or to the townhouses of the aristocracy” (Stewart 1986, 47). Most importantly to our present topic, these lectures were also delivered in writing, in the




Simon Schaffer (Cambridge University) on the most startling contribution of Newton's *Principia*. *NewtonMSSProject* YouTube channel (published November 22, 2011).



booming publishing media of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In an age that witnessed the rapid, radical development of commerce and colonial expansion, people in general craved information, novelties, not only related to natural philosophical (i.e. scientific) discoveries, but marvels and prodigies domestic and foreign, reports of criminal trials and executions, of stock market speculations, accounts of salvation and of moral reform, and instructions on sensible, polite societal behaviour.



Another contributing factor to the booming of the 18<sup>th</sup>-century publishing was **the loosening of the legal restraints on printing**. Before the Restoration the licensing strictures were suppressing writings even prior to their publications (cf. Milton *Areopagitica*). However, with the Restoration the Licensing Act (1662) — An act for preventing the frequent abuses in printing seditious treasonable and unlicensed books and pamphlets and for regulating of printing and printing presses — was no longer in the hands of the Crown only but shared with the Parliament. Still, it generated a fair amount of criticism. In the reign of William III, the Parliament decided not to renew the Act, partly because the two emerging political parties, the Tories and the Whigs, realized the disadvantage of a prepublication censorship should one of them be out of power. Moreover, **in 1710 the Parliament enacted the Statue of Anne** (An act for the encouragement of learning, by vesting the copies of printed books in the author or purchasers of such copies, during the times therein mentioned). Effectively it was Britain's first copyright law that sparked the 18<sup>th</sup>-century book trade as it gave control over works and their profit primarily to their authors.

 **John Locke** (1632–1704), considered the “Father of Liberalism” and the first of the empiricist (following the teachings of Sir Francis Bacon), **wrote a “memorandum” in 1694/95 addressing the issue of renewing the Licensing Act of 1662**. It was most likely addressed to Edward Clarke, a member of Parliament Locke was close with. In the memorandum he criticises the absurdity of prepublishing censorship, and the monopoly of the Stationer's Company over all publishing (although Locke seems to be especially outraged for their monopoly over the classical authors) in Britain. The following two excerpts (as published in [Peter King's \*The Life of John Locke\*](#), with extracts from his *Correspondence, Journals, and Commonplace Books*, 1829) show some of the issues debated in the Parliament concerning the renewal of the Licensing Act:

I know not why a man should not have liberty to print whatever he would speak; and to be answerable for the one, just as he is for the other, if he transgresses the law in either. But gagging a man, for fear he should talk heresy or sedition, ha no other ground than such as will make gives necessary, for fear a man should use violence if his hands were free, and must at last end in the imprisonment of all who you will suspect may be guilty of treason or misdemeanour. To prevent men being undiscovered for what they print, you may prohibit any book to be printed, published, or sold without the printer's or bookseller's name, under great penalties, whatever be in it. And then let the printer or bookseller, whose name is to it, be answerable for whatever is against law in it, as if he were the author, unless he can produce the person he had it from, which is all the restrain ought to be upon printing. (202)

... Upon occasion of this instance of the classic authors, I demand whether, if another act for printing should be made, it be not reasonable that nobody should have any peculiar right in any book which has been in print fifty years, but any one as well as another might have the liberty to print it; for by such titles as these, which lie dormant, and hinder others, many good books come quite to be lost. But be that determined as it will, in regard of those authors who now write and sell their copies to booksellers, this certainly is very absurd at first sight, that any person or company should now have a title to the printing of the works of Tully, Caesar, or Livy, who lived so many ages since, in exclusion of any other; nor can there be any reason in nature why I might not print them as well as the Company of Stationers, if I thought fit. This liberty, to any one, of printing them, is certainly the way to have them the cheaper and the better; and it is this which, in Holland, had produced so many fair and excellent editions of them, whilst the printers all strive to out-do one another, which has also brought in great sums to the trade of Holland. (204)

The publishing boom of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the emergence of new readerships will be discussed further in lessons on periodical publications and the rise of novel.



Test your knowledge with the following quiz: [01\\_R18CEL](#).

## 4 TIMELINE

Historical contexts	Primary texts
<b>1660</b> Charles II restored to the throne. The theatres are reopened	<b>1660</b> Samuel Papys begins his diary
<b>1662</b> Chartering of the Royal Society.	<b>1662</b> Samuel Butler, <i>Hudibras</i> , part 1
<b>1664-66</b> Great Plague of London	
<b>1666</b> Great Fire of London	
	<b>1667</b> John Milton, <i>Paradise Lost</i> (in 10 books). John Dryden, <i>Annus Mirabilis</i>
<b>1668</b> Dryden becomes poet laureate	<b>1668</b> Dryden, <i>Essay of Dramatic Poesy</i>
<b>1673</b> Test Act requires all officeholders to swear allegiance to Anglicanism	
<b>1675</b> Construction of the new St. Paul's Cathedral commences (designed by Christopher Wren)	
<b>1678</b> The "Popish Plot" and the resurgence of anti-Catholicism	<b>1678</b> John Bunyan, <i>Pilgrim's Progress</i>
<b>1681</b> Charles II dissolves Parliament (cf. Exclusion Crisis)	<b>1681</b> Dryden, <i>Absalom and Achitophel</i>
<b>1685</b> Charles II dies and is succeeded by James II, his Catholic brother	
	<b>1687</b> Sir Isaac Newton, <i>Principia Mathematica</i>
<b>1688-89</b> The Glorious (Bloodless) Revolution. James II flees into exile, succeeded by his Protestant daughter Mary, and her husband, William of Orange (also nephew to James II)	<b>1688</b> Aphra Behn, <i>Oroonoko</i> . Henry Purcell's opera <i>Dido and Aeneas</i> probably composed this year.
	<b>1690</b> John Locke, <i>An Essay Concerning Human Understanding</i>
	<b>1692</b> Purcell, <i>The Fairy-Queen</i> opera (adaptation of Shakespeare's <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> )
	<b>1700</b> William Congreve, <i>The Way of the World</i> . Mary Astell, <i>Some Reflections upon Marriage</i> . Death of John Dryden.
<b>1701</b> Act of Settlement establishes Protestant Hanoverian succession	

**1702** War of the Spanish Succession. Death of William III. Succeeded by Anne (Protestant daughter of James II)

**1707** Act of Union uniting Scotland with England and Wales (Great Britain)

**1712** George Friedric Handel settles in London

**1713** Treaty of Utrecht ends War of the Spanish Succession

**1714** Death of Queen Anne. George I (great-grandson of James I) becomes the first Hanoverian king.

**1720** South Sea Bubble collapses

**1721** Robert Walpole, first “prime minister”

**1727** Death of George I. Succeeded by George II

**1739** John Wesley’s first open-air sermon

**1742** Walpole resigns

**1744** Pope dies

**1745** Swift dies

**1704** Jonathan Swift, *A tale of a Tub*. Newton, *Opticks*

**1711** Alexander Pope, *An Essay on Criticism*. Joseph Addison and Sir Richard Steele, *Spectator* (1711–12, 1714)

**1713** Scriblerian Club formed in London by Swift, Pope, Congrave, etc.

**1716** Lady Mary Wortley Montagu writes her letters from Turkey (1716–18)

**1717** Pope, “The Rape of the Lock.” Premiere of Handel’s *Water Music* on the river Thames

**1719** Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*

**1726** Swift, *Gulliver’s Travels*

**1728** John Gay, *The Beggar’s Opera*

**1729** Swift anonymously publishes *A Modest Proposal*

**1732** William Hogarth, *A Harlot’s Progress* (the engravings)

**1733** Pope, *An Essay on Man*

**1740** Samuel Richardson, *Pamela*

**1741** Henry Fielding, *Shamela*

**1742** Fielding, *Joseph Andrews*. Premier of Handel’s *Messiah* in Dublin.

**1743** Pope, *The Dunciad*. Hogarth, *Marriage A-la Mode* (1743–45)

**1746** The Battle of Culloden, the end of the Jacobite rising of 1745

1750 Johann Sebastian Bach dies

**1751** The British East India Company sizes Arcot, ascertaining their control over India

1755 Great earthquake of Lisbon

**1756** Commencement of the Seven Years' War (1756–63). Mozart born

**1759** The British capture Quebec ascertaining their control over Canada

**1760** George III succeeds to the throne

**1763** Treaty of Paris ending the Seven Years War and consolidating the British rule over Canada and India

**1765**(-75) James Watt improves Newcomen's steam engine (1712); commencement of the industrial age

**1768** Captain James Cook voyages to Australia and New Zealand. Joshua Reynolds becomes the first president of the Royal Academy of Arts

**1775** The American Revolutionary War starts (1775-83; precursors since 1765).

**1776** James Watt's steam engines go into production

**1778** Modern flush toilet invented ✓

**1780** Gordon Riots in London

**1783** William Pitt becomes prime minister

**1784** Death of Samuel Johnson

**1787** Founding of the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade. William Wilberforce begins agitating against slavery in the British colonies

**1789** French Revolution (the storming of Bastille)

**1747** Richardson, *Clarissa*

**1749** Fielding, *Tom Jones*

**1751** Thomas Gray, "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard"

**1755** Samuel Johnson, *Dictionary*

**1557** Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry*

**1759** Johnson, *Rasselas*. Voltaire, *Candide*

**1760** Laurence Stern, *Tristram Shandy* (1760-67)

**1764** Horace Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*

**1765** Johnson's edition of Shakespeare

**1770** Oliver Goldsmith, "The Deserted Village"

**1776** Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*

**1778** Frances Burney, *Evelina*

**1779** Johnson, *Lives of the Poets* (1779-81)

**1783** George Crabbe, "The Village"

**1785** William Cowper, *The Task*



## 5 REFERENCE LIST

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