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BIOGRAPHIES IN THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, 1740'S AND 1790'S

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This dissertation is cheerfully dedicated to my parents, who thought it should have been completed a year earlier, and to my friends, without whom it would have been.

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BIOGRAPHIES IN THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, 1740'S AND 1790'S

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

A man born in 1721 and living his three score and ten years could have read on first publication some of the greatest biographies in English: Roger North's memoirs of his brothers, 1742 and 1744; William Mason's "Life of Gray," 1774; Oliver Goldsmith's lives of Voltaire, 1761, Bolingbroke, 1770, Thomas Parnell, 1770, and Richard Nash, 1762; Samuel Johnson's lives in the Gentleman's Magazine, 1738-54, and the Lives of the English Poets, 1778-81; and James Boswell's Life of Johnson, 1791.

It is no wonder that the time is called the great age of biography. The writing of lives was "a natural pastime and a national art,"¹ and they were turned out by the hundreds by scholars and hack-writers, clergymen and friends of the deceased. In his Bibliographical Supplement to The Art of Biography in Eighteenth Century England, Donald A. Stauffer lists about two thousand biographical works, many of them collections (the seven-volume Biographia Britannia, 1747-66, for instance, is one item, and John Nichols's Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century, 1812-15, originally issued in 1782, which contained hundreds of biographical notices, is another). And Stauffer does not even con-

sider biographies published as articles in periodicals unless they were also published separately. Even allowing for some duplication, thousands of men and women must have had their lives written in the century.

A second literary phenomenon of the eighteenth century was the birth of the magazine as we know it today, a periodical publication of news, essays, reviews, advertisements, illustrations, announcements, abridgements, letters--which probably does not cover all the contents of the Gentleman's Magazine, first magazine to achieve great success and a long publication history (until 1907). Its popularity was tremendous: there were several reprintings of early issues before it was ten years old.

Edward Cave, founder and editor for twenty-three years of the Gentleman's Magazine, was not a sensitive author or dealer with authors, but he was devoted to the magazine and eager for any contributions that would please readers. One such was biographical articles, ranging in length from a few lines, possibly on a recently executed criminal, to twenty thousand words, published in installments over a period of months. A few brief biographies were published in the Magazine in the early 1730's, but the genre did not become a major part of it until Samuel Johnson joined the staff, either full or part-time, in 1737. In the next thirteen years he wrote nine of the nineteen biographies in the magazine, including the longest two, those of the admirals Francis Drake and Robert Blake. If the editors' headnotes can be trusted, biographies pleased the readers, who wrote in asking for more. Cave responded with staff-written lives of men and women eminent in their fields, whether poetry, warfare, or rebellion.

Half a century later, under the editorship of John Nichols, readers were responding not only with letters of praise but also with biographies from their own pens. The subjects of Gentleman's Magazine biographies of the early 1790's are not exactly obscure--many are listed in the Dictionary of National Biography--but they are not of the eminences of the subjects of the 1740's. Rather, they are well-known gardeners or mathematicians, doctors or clergymen. Many of these lives were written for the magazine in response to queries from other readers or from Nichols (usually under a pseudonym), who was collecting lives for his Literary Anecdotes.

This paper will demonstrate, through discussions of individual articles of the periods 1737-49 and 1790-94, the changes in subjects, purpose, and style that occurred in the biographical contents of the Gentleman's Magazine in the half-century between the beginning of Johnson's career in London and the publication of his biography, the most famous of the era. I begin with 1737 because Johnson, the major writer and subject of biography in the eighteenth century, contributed his first life, that of Father Paul Sarpi, to the magazine that year. Only five years of the second decade are considered because by that time the magazine had so expanded that each year required two volumes; thus, approximately the same number of pages in each period is considered.

The first section is a survey of critical theory on biography from the late seventeenth century through 1800, concentrating on the issues considered important by major critics -- use of personal detail, the question of how much to tell, moral value, use of anecdotes, subjectivity, and truth-- and a brief consideration of developments in the practice of

biography outside the magazine. Chapter Two takes up the development of magazines to 1731, when the Gentleman's Magazine was founded, its early years, and the careers of the two men who were its editors during the periods discussed here. The third and fourth chapters consist of discussions of every biography in the magazine in 1737-49 and 1790-94 with regard to style, subject, purpose, and contents. The final chapter is a short summary of the major differences observed between the two periods.

CHAPTER TWO
SURVEY OF EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY BIOGRAPHICAL
THEORY AND PRACTICE

Criticism dealing with biography as a genre was rare until after about 1750, and even thereafter most comment occurs in introductions and reviews. The first may be justification of the particular work and the second may be colored by the reviewer's opinion of the subject; a grain of salt is probably appropriate to either. Rare are critics like Samuel Johnson or Vicesimus Knox, who devote two essays each to the type.

Even when a number of sentences and paragraphs are plucked from letters, reviews, conversations, and prefaces from 1660 to 1800, generalizations are not easy. To say that late seventeenth-century works tended to be moralistic and impersonal, using Gilbert Burnet's "Matthew Hale," 1682, as an example, and that late eighteenth-century works were full of anecdotes and personal details, using Boswell's Life of Johnson, 1791, would be simple; but Izaak Walton in his Lives, written from 1640 to 1678, like Boswell, strove to present a living man, and Andrew Kippis in his Life of Cook, 1788, like Burnet, considered private actions out of place in his book. There are also contradictions within a few years between theory and practice. Thomas Fuller in 1662 felt himself "bound . . . by the rules of charity to conceal his subjects' faults, for they ought "to be buried in their graves with forgetfulness."¹ A few years

later, however, Burnet went out of his way to detail the excesses of Lord Rochester, so as to warn the reader against them. In 1786, a Gentleman's Magazine writer accused Boswell's Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides of "triviality" because it had too many details (GM, 1786, p. 386),* but a few years later the Monthly Review complained that another book lacked clear and specific detail (MR, 1800, p. 2). And even if exceptions do prove rules, sometimes it is difficult to ascertain which example is the exception and which the rule. With that caveat, I shall try to suggest some of the major values, difficulties, and objectives of eighteenth-century biography.

The standards of biography in the period can be deduced, even if unanimity among critics or writers is rare. Generally, truth was valued, if with reservations regarding exposing vices or supplying personal details. Objectivity was praised if not always practiced, and biographers who confessed fondness for the subjects, as Conyers Middleton and Boswell did, announced their intentions to be objective anyway. The desirability of art in biography was denied in the seventeenth century (though Walton certainly used it) and discussed little in the eighteenth, when it was accepted.

Difficulties the biographer faced were, naturally, written about more by practitioners than by critics. Their problems were both ethical and practical: if they reported the character flaws of the subject, might readers be led astray? might pain be given survivors if the subject were recent? A practical problem was the trouble involved in re-

*References to eighteenth-century periodicals will be given in parentheses following the quotations; year of publication rather than volume number is given because the former is more significant.

search when great libraries were not available to everyone. Only one of the stature of Johnson could write an editor, "Little things, if I omit them, you will do me the favour of setting right yourself."² Or a biographer might be acutely aware, as Boswell was, of the limitations of the language and of his own mind. Handling of information, once obtained, was also a problem--deciding whether the private details and anecdotes would be dull or illustrative.

Such decisions were usually governed by the writer's objectives. The most common in the eighteenth century were to commemorate a great figure, to pay a debt to an illustrious person or to posterity, to teach or entertain, to render a person realistically in words, and to satisfy curiosity. No biography can be put exclusively in any one category--a work like the Life of Johnson certainly falls into all of these. The variety of objectives gave rise to a variety of flaws, which eighteenth-century critics inveighed against (without, however, protesting the objectives). For instance, desire to commemorate could lead to exaltation of the subject and suppression of detail, while desire to present a living man could result in a forest of anecdote for the reader to lose himself in, without a theme to lead him out.

This chapter will be a survey of the forest of critical theory and practice of biography between 1650 and 1800, based on more than ninety sources of the period, including prefaces, introductions, reviews, letters, biographies, reported conversations, and essays. It will be seen that only the most general of generalizations--such as that truth was highly regarded--hold true for the whole century, and that the result of even that credo early in the century will be different from the result later,

because of a change in the concept of truth.

Ideals and Values

The ideals and values biographers considered in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were not very different from those of the twentieth century, but the emphases shifted drastically between the times of, say, Burnet and Boswell. Both men valued truth and both valued objectivity, but the resulting works on Hale and Johnson are far apart in style and mood because of the difference between their methods. For Burnet the two words went together--"objective truth." Thus truth was what could be checked on and verified by another researcher, what could be found in public records--Matthew Hale went to Oxford in 1626--what could be learned by asking the same questions of the same people. As a result, Burnet was limited to the public man. Boswell, on the other hand, certainly meant to be objective, to let his own opinion color his work as little as possible, and just as certainly sought the truth about Johnson; witness his wish to withdraw by having Johnson speak for himself whenever possible. But Boswell's truth is not like Burnet's, for it depends on hundreds of little truths--quips, anecdotes, conversations, letters--most of which are not verifiable by later writers. It is tempting to say that Burnet was neo-classical, seeking what all men could agree on, and that Boswell was romantic, seeking to write what only he could write;* but to imply a close relation between Boswell and the romantics is unjust because of his intention to present Johnson

*Francis Hart suggests that latter in "Boswell and the Romantics, a Chapter in the History of Biographical Theory," ELH, 27 (1960), 44-65.

as he was, his assiduity at ascertaining fact and reporting even passages unflattering to Johnson or to himself, and his penchant for supplying information for which he could supply no meaning.

Burnet, Johnson, and Boswell thus each sought "truth" but meant not quite the same by the word; Johnson is chronologically and semantically in the middle. Like Burnet's, his lives were meant to be not only accounts of men's lives, but also works from which the reader might draw moral guidance. Both Burnet and Johnson wrote of men whose actions they considered deplorable; both deplored them. But Burnet carefully restricted himself in content, whereas Johnson included personal material when it was obtainable (such as the anecdotes of Pope told him by Lord Marchmont³). The personal information in Johnson's works does not come alone--comment is made, morals are drawn, heads are shaken over human folly. The technique of Boswell, on the other hand, is accumulation, the reasoning being that the more little facts one has about a man, the more accurate will be one's whole picture of him. Of comment there is little; the reader is on his own. Thus truth and objectivity shift between Burnet and Boswell. Burnet offers a limited, verifiable truth, with the didactic implication that if the reader will behave himself and work hard, he too will be successful in this world and in the next. Johnson offers personal details occasionally, but they are not the truth he strives for--his object is general truths about the nature of temporal existence, the truths to be attained by observation of common experience. Sports held little interest for him. Boswell's conceptions of truth have a cause-and-effect relationship, for his object was the truth of Samuel Johnson the man, and his means were thousands of details, all true and

making up a true whole, the composite being more than the sum of the parts.

Not only did the kind of truth striven for by seventeenth-century biographers exclude the compilation of a myriad of details, but it also seemed to them to exclude art, at least in theory. Izaak Walton, for example, intended to write the life of Robert Sanderson "with all truth and equal plainness,"⁴ implying that the two were somehow related. Thomas Fuller, however, who did not mention truth as one of his five goals, did say he would "flesh out" his dull facts with pleasant stories, "not as meat, but as condiment."⁵ That is, apparently he considered anecdote not an essential part of the truth of his work, but as something to be tossed the reader to hold his attention. No pleasant stories deck the lives of Burnet, who even believed he might write a better life for not having known Hale; although he therefore could say nothing from his own observation,

I do not know whether this may not qualify me to write more impartially, though perhaps more defectively: for the knowledge of extraordinary persons, does, most commonly, bias those, who were much wrought on, by the tenderness of their friendship for them to raise their style a little too high, when they wrote concerning them.⁶

A "high style," in Burnet's opinion, would be a detriment to a good biography, a violation of the "exactness of truth" he praised in the preface to another biography.⁷ In contrast to Walton and Burnet was John Aubrey, who did collect detail and anecdote, in pursuit of "nothing but the truth," but even he requested Anthony Wood to edit and amend, as

*Stauffer, however, in English Biography Before 1700 (Cambridge, 1930), maintains that Walton's arrangements and transitions show considerable consciousness of biography as an art (pp. 110-120).

if art--arrangement and deletion--were something to be imposed upon fact.⁸ There was suspicion of art, or artfulness, for it could conceal truth or bias; hence art and the desired qualities of truth and objectivity could be mutually exclusive.

With Roger North, whose lives of his three brothers were written from the 1690's until his death in 1734 but not published until 1742, art became compatible with good biography; his manuscript revisions show that he turned at last to dialogue from indirect discourse. Possibly the first English biographer, according to James L. Clifford, both familiar with his subject and intent upon giving a complete picture, North praised complete truth and impartiality in the "General Preface" to the lives of John, Dudley, and Francis. He anticipated Johnson and Boswell in his belief that good biography must be based on familiarity, buttressed with a journal by the author, accounts set down daily, and letters and personal papers of the subject.⁹ Although praise for truth and objectivity continued throughout the century--in Johnson, David Mallet,¹⁰ a 1777 letter to the Gentleman's Magazine (GM, 1777, p. 625), Matthew Maty,¹¹ Boswell, Vicesimus Knox,¹² a Gentleman's Magazine review of Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides (GM, 1785, p. 289)--the answer to the question of whether a biographer should know his subject personally began to change from Burnet's "no" to Boswell's "absolutely." Clearly Addison thought that while an author should not know his subject, he might use information from someone who did.¹³ But as Goldsmith suggested in the advertisement for "The Life of Richard Nash," familiarity can have a direct relation to truth, guaranteeing the work. The possession of Nash's papers, he wrote, insured the reader "the Satisfaction of

perusing an account that is genuine, and not the work of the Imagination, as Biographical Writings too frequently are."¹⁴ The Life of Johnson has shown to many readers the value of familiarity between author and subject. Boswell, more than Johnson, proved Johnson's assertion that "the incidents which give excellence to biography are of a volatile and evanescent kind, such as soon escape the memory, and are rarely transmitted by tradition" (Rambler 60) and therefore must be obtained by one who has "eat and drunk and lived in social intercourse" with his subject (quoted in Life, II, 166).

Although the value of biography written by an intimate is mentioned again and again in Johnson's works and in the Life, he came finally to believe that autobiography is superior, for the author is at least capable of knowing the truth about his subject. A biographer, as Johnson told Thomas Warton, no matter how close to his subject, may not "know what to remark about him" (Life, II, 446); no matter how well supplied with documents and acumen, he is at last reduced to facts and interpretation of them;¹⁵ and, because he generally has a motive for writing a particular man's life, he is tempted to color or select facts according to his feelings. But, as Johnson pointed out in Idler 84, the autobiographer has the inestimable advantage of knowing the truth and is at least as likely as the biographer to tell it--more likely, perhaps, wrote Johnson: "that which is fully known cannot be falsified but with reluctance of understanding, and alarm of conscience: of understanding, the lover of truth; of conscience, the sentinel of virtue" (Idler 84). Although Johnson "never had persevering diligence enough to form [notes on his life] into a regular composition" (Life, I, 25), he urged the

task on others: in a letter to Edmund Allen 17 June 1777, he wrote in regard to William Dodd, the divine hanged for forgery:

If his remissions of anguish, and intervals of devotion leave him any time, he may perhaps spend it profitably in writing the history of his own depravation, and marking the gradual declination from innocence and quiet, to that state in which the law has found him. Of his advices to the Clergy, or admonitions to Fathers of families there is no need; he will leave behind him those who can write them. But the history of his own mind, if not written by himself, cannot be written, and the instruction that might be derived from it must be lost.¹⁶

Johnson evidently felt the autobiographer would display an honesty not always possible to the biographer. ("I speak from the grave," Mark Twain was to write in his own autobiography, "rather than with my living tongue for a good reason: I can speak thence freely."¹⁷)

The solution of the problems of attaining and conveying the truth thus changed between 1660 and 1800 from reliance on public record to reliance on private knowledge. The attitude toward familiarity between author and subject changed from suspicion of bias to confidence of truth, and close association between them came to be regarded almost as a requirement.

Handling of Materials

If the prospective biographer was familiar with his subject and had memory and materials to serve him, he still faced constraints when he sat down to deal with them; if he was not, he sometimes faced also great difficulties in ferreting out facts. Besides that physical constraint were the moral ones: danger of causing pain to the living and possibility that a detailed description of the vices of a great man might have an untoward effect on the reader.

The problem of obtaining biographical materials in the eighteenth century is astounding to scholars accustomed to computers, interlibrary loans, and the Library of Congress cataloguing system. Documents existed but were scattered in family papers locked in family attics, and London had no general public library until the foundation of the British Museum in 1753 (rather, until its opening in 1758).¹⁸ And much had been lost for lack of recording. Aubrey recognized and lamented the scarcity of men like himself and Wood:

'Tis pitty that such minutes had not been taken one hundred yeares since or more: for want thereof many worthy men's names and notions are swallowd-up in oblivion; as much of these also would, had it not been through your instigation.¹⁹

Johnson, whose letters to John Nichols show an effort to ascertain facts not always credited him,²⁰ spoke in 1776 of the difficulty of gathering information: having asked Owen MacSwinnay about Dryden, he learned only that "at Will's Coffee House, Dryden's chair was by the fire in winter and called his winter chair and on the balcony in summer and called his summer chair" (Life, III, 71). The Rev. John Duncombe in a review of the first edition of Literary and Biographical Anecdotes of William Bowyer enumerated the halting steps of the biographer:

Let the reader recollect the name of any single author whose writings have delighted him, with whom he has even been acquainted, but of whom no life has hitherto been written. Let him minute down the result of his recollection; and he will immediately perceive how deficient the narrative will appear in facts and dates. He may apply to some common acquaintance, who will add a single circumstance; a second will suggest that an enquiry of some third person, who lives, perhaps, at the extremity of the kingdom, may lead to information. Here some light appears to dawn; but when an answer comes, the distant correspondent recollects nothing with certainty, and is perhaps offended at being troubled with what he considers an impertinent enquiry. After much difficulty, the Biographer learns where the deceased author was buried, and dispatches a request

to the minister of the parish, for the date of his interment and a copy of the monumental inscription. When this can be obtained, it is a great acquisition. But now the labour of research begins again. Discovering by the epitaph, that the man of eminence was born in such a town, and was educated at such a college, recourse must be had to the place of his nativity, for the history of his birth, family, and early habits; and to Oxford or Cambridge, for the dates of his admission, his degrees, &c.; when a new enquiry arises, after ecclesiastical or city preferments; and another, more useful, but not quite so difficult, after the various books he has published.

(GM, 1782, 582-83)

The work of Nichols himself and his army of correspondents would make the work of future biographers easier. Excusing the "want of a regular arrangement" in the Literary Anecdotes, Nichols wrote in the preface to the last volume, "It is a mine of literary materials, whence future Biographers and Historians will readily and unsparingly collect what may serve their several purposes."²¹ The last two centuries have borne him out.

The materials once in hand, the biographer had to consider the possibility of giving pain to the living. If publication could be delayed, there was little hesitation on the part of a man like Aubrey to record "the naked and plaine trueth, which is here exposed so bare that the very nudenda are not covered, and affords many passages that would raise a blush in a young virgin's cheek." Aubrey, however, requested that Wood "sowe-on some figge-leaves" or cautioned that "those arcana are not fitt to lett flie abroad, till about thirty yeares hence; for the author and the persons (like medlars) ought to be first rotten."²² But delay of publication was not always possible, or even desirable. Johnson, approaching his own times in writing the Lives of the Poets, apparently began as early as "Addison" to learn facts he hesitated to transcribe.

The necessity of complying with times [he wrote], and of sparing persons, is the great impediment of biography. History may be formed from permanent monuments and records; but Lives can only be written from personal knowledge, which is growing every day less, and in a short time is lost for ever. What is known can seldom be immediately told; and when it might be told, it is no longer known. The delicate features of the mind, the nice discriminations of character, and the minute peculiarities of conduct, are soon obliterated; and it is surely better that caprice, obstinacy, frolick, and folly, however they might delight in the description, should be silently forgotten, than that, by wanton merriment and unseasonable detection, a pang should be given to a widow, a daughter, a brother, or a friend. As the process of these narratives is now bringing me among my contemporaries, I begin to feel myself "walking upon ashes under which the fire is not extinguished," and coming to the time, of which it will be proper rather to say "nothing that is false, than all that is true."²³

Sometimes, of course, scurrilous details did make it to the pages of a biography, and the authors were roundly attacked. Letitia Pilkington's Memoirs were called in the Gentleman's Magazine "a disgrace to biography; which if the compiler and publisher are not ashamed to have exposed, the readers ought to be ashamed to read" (GM, 1792, p. 49). Not only information that might pain the living was frowned on; the maxim de mortuis nil nisi bonum still had some force. Though praising William Mason's method of interspersing biographical narrative with letters, a Gentleman's Magazine reviewer drew the line at letters showing Gray in a bad light. One letter referred to a Cambridge doctor who "was gone to his grave with five fine mackarel (large and full of roe) in his belly He had not been hearty all week, but after this sixth fish, he never held up his head more, and a violent looseness carried him off.--They say he made a very good end." And the Magazine:

On this last, we cannot but remark, that, if Mr. Gray, in his gaieté du coeur, could prevail with himself to be thus jocose and sarcastic on the dead, it may, perhaps, be urged in his excuse, that he wrote at the moment in question, and never

intended this letter for the public; but this excuse cannot be alleged for its present publication, which a little more philanthropy, and even regard to the memory of the writer, would surely have prevented.

(GM, 1790, p. 290)

One wonders what excuse can be alleged for the publication of the letter in the Magazine. An anonymous reviewer of Mrs. Piozzi's Anecdotes was dismayed at what Johnson's old friend revealed: "To point out all the parts of these anecdotes which friendship would have suppressed, were an easy, but a tedious office" (Monthly Review, 1786, p. 377). (A viable objection of the reviewer is that speeches that in print look rude probably were delivered in a jesting manner.) The bluestocking Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu had a similar objection to Boswell's Journal. After observing that "poor Mr. Boswell is very often in that condition in which men are said to see double," she asked, in a letter to Mrs. Piozzi,

Would any man who wish'd his friend to have the respect of posterity exhibit all his little caprices, his unhappy infirmities, his singularities; these were excused by friends & intimates who are soften'd by experienced kindness & demonstrated virtues but they disgrace a character to a reader as wens and warts would do to a statue or Portrait to a spectator.²⁴

The fear that the association of vices with a great man would adversely affect the mass of readers was the second objection to publishing the wicked habits, character flaws, or discreditable actions of a subject. Whether to mention them would have been no problem to Mrs. Montagu, but it was a question that the century eventually answered with an uncertain "yes." The reasoning behind the objection to such publication was not so much prudish as it was moral and aristocratic--after all, the ribald passages of a man's life must have been known by

some people before a William Mason could face the problem of whether to publish them.²⁵ The fear was also that they would discredit the memory of the poet, as some readers felt even the rearranged and expurgated letters did.²⁶ Conversely, elaboration of the vices and sufferings of a man whose wickedness was generally acknowledged might be expected to drive readers to virtuous lives. Such was the announced intent of Burnet, who promised in the "Preface to the Life of Lord Rochester," 1682, "to govern myself by the exact rules of truth," a policy ordered by the lord himself, who on his deathbed told Burnet to tell anything that could be of use. "My end in writing, is so to discharge the last commands this lord left on me, as, that it may be effectual to awaken those, who run on to all the excesses of riot"²⁷ Similarly, David Mallet in his 1740 biography of Bacon mentioned the ancient Egyptian practice of submitting the actions and characters of the dead to certain judges, who would regulate what was due their memories. The biographer, he believed, should, as such a judge, not ignore anything he knows of his subject. "He is fairly to record the faults as well as the good qualities, the failings as well as the perfections, of the Dead; with this great view, to warn and improve the living." Therefore, while he would take pleasure in recording Bacon's "shining part," he would not "deign to conceal or palliate his blemishes," for "it equally concerns the public to be made acquainted with both."²⁸ The utilitarian end was not mentioned by Aubrey, who requested Wood to make a "castration" of his notes.²⁹ A case in which a moral was pointed from a life of folly not by the author but by a commentator is that of Mrs. Pilkington's Memoirs, published in 1748.

A Gentleman's Magazine author warned:

Thus died Letitia Pilkington--the Companion of Swift yet the tool of Worsdale; betray'd like many others by wit to folly and by pride to meanness. To those who read her life she cannot surely have lived in vain since she has scarce related a single incident which does not concur to prove that no natural excellence can atone for moral defects nor any power of pleasing others secure an equivalent for the chearful independence of honest industry.³⁰

Thus, although Mrs. Pilkington probably gave not the least thought to "honest industry," her story could be used to prove its benefits.

Whether those benefits would obtain with the average reader, however, is a problem concerning which Johnson had reservations. His fear of giving pain to particular people through "wanton merriment and unseasonable detection" was less serious than his fear of leading readers astray by showing the vices of the famous. In response to a statement by Boswell, he said in 1777 that there is no question about recording a man's peculiarities;

'the question is, whether a man's vices should be mentioned; for instance, whether it should be mentioned that Addison and Parnell drank too freely: for people will probably more easily indulge in drinking from knowing this; so that more ill may be done by the example, than good by the telling the whole truth.'

(Life, III, 155)

But in Edinburgh in 1773, he had answered that objection, saying "it would produce an instructive caution to avoid drinking, when it was seen, that even the learning and genius of Parnell could be debased by it" (Life, III, 155). Other statements in his works or recorded by Boswell substantiate the latter opinion, for two reasons: Johnson's feeling that not to record flaws would be to make readers give up hope of imitation and his great regard for truth. After publication of his

Lives, Edmund Malone told Johnson that some people believed the story of Addison's having Steele dunned for a hundred-pound debt should have been omitted. Johnson answered that if only the virtues of the great were told, "we should sit down in despondency, and think it utterly impossible to imitate them in any thing." But relation of both vicious and virtuous actions "kept mankind from despair, into which otherwise they would naturally fall," did they not remember that others as well had sinned and by correction had been "restored to the favour of Heaven" (Life, III, 53). In Rambler 60, published in 1750, he deplored those "who think it an act of piety to hide the faults or failings of their friends," for, although something is owed their memory, "there is yet more respect to be paid to knowledge, to virtue, and to truth." A year later, in Rambler 164, he issued a caution to biographers, lest the "faults of a man loved or honoured sometimes steal secretly and imperceptibly upon the wise and virtuous."

Almost thirty years later, in Hypochondriack 35, 1780, Boswell would voice a similar caution, noting that men are inclined to imitate the vices of the great, forgetting that they lack the good qualities that counterbalance the flaws, and that these flaws lessen the greatness. True, "the crimes even of saints and martyrs" occur in holy writ, but ordinary works, such as biography, cannot pretend to the same standards. He concluded that a biographer should tell "imperfections and faults," being careful to separate them from his subject's excellences, so that readers will "be anxiously disposed to avoid what hurts even the most exalted characters, but would utterly sink men of ordinary merit." No character flaw or vicious action that would "sink men of ordinary

merit" appears in the Life of Johnson despite Boswell's assertion that he would "delineate him without reserve" and describe a life not "entirely perfect" (Life, I, 30). However, it appears to be with the greatest reluctance that Boswell dealt with Johnson's early years in London, when

his conduct, after he . . . had associated with Savage and others, was not so strictly virtuous, in one respect, as when he was a younger man. It was well known, that his amorous inclinations were uncommonly strong and impetuous. He owned to many of his friends, that he used to take women of the town to taverns, and hear them relate their history. --In short, it must not be concealed, that, like many other good and pious men, among whom we may place the Apostle Paul upon his own authority, Johnson was not free from propensities which were ever warring against "the law of his mind," --and that in his combats with them, he was sometimes overcome.

(Life, IV, 395-96)

Then, after several paragraphs defending Johnson against an assumed accusation of hypocrisy, and no further elaborations on the "amorous inclinations," Boswell added,

I am conscious that this is the most difficult and dangerous part of my biographical work, and I cannot but be very anxious concerning it. I trust that I have got through it, preserving at once my regard to truth,--to my friend,--and to the interests of virtue and religion.

(Life, IV, 398)

Boswell's regard for truth evidently permitted him to keep a good deal of it hidden: accounts of Johnson's getting drunk, of his considering taking a second wife, of Boswell's discussing with a friend rumors of Johnson's impotence.³¹ Despite his restraint, made evident by the twentieth-century research on Boswell's papers and the manuscript of the Life, Mrs. Montagu considered the Journal a herald of a "new invented mode of disgracing the dead & calumniating y^e living" and feared that "better pens, with still worse intentions," might adopt it,

& the Grave be no longer the place where the Wicked cease from troubling, & the holiest Christian, the sincerest Patriot will not be sure he may not after his death be made to talk blasphemy or utter treason.³²

Doubtless Mrs. Montagu was pleased to hear from her friend Dorothea Gregory Alison that Boswell's "gross gossipation must have banish'd him from [society] as I know how . . . well he deserves what he daily meets with [/] that of people shutting their doors against him as they wd against any other wild Beast."³³ Similarly cool responses met Mrs. Piozzi's Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson in 1786 in the Monthly Review article by Dr. Burney (MR, 1786, pp. 373-74) and in The English Review.³⁴ And in John Wolcot's burlesque "Bozzy and Piozzi" Mrs. Piozzi accuses Boswell:

I'm sure you've mention'd many a pretty story
Not much redounding to the Doctor's glory.
Now, for a saint upon us you would palm him—
First murder the poor man, and then embalm him!³⁵

Of the three problems that hampered the biographer in relation to his subject an audience in the eighteenth century, only one seems not to be operative today: fear that readers may imitate the viciousness of the subject. The didactic power of biography, or at least estimation of it, has declined. Danger of causing pain to the living may be endemic to the genre, as James Clifford suggests by using the Manchester/Kennedy and Moran/Churchill brouhahas as modern examples of the problem.³⁶ The constraint sometimes failed to operate in both centuries: Mary Gallagher's recently published memoirs of Jacqueline Kennedy's household are as distressing to friends of the former first lady as Boswell's Life was to some friends of Johnson. The problem of locating and using the sources for biography is also common to all centuries, but

before the foundation of large public libraries it was a greater one than it is now. Technological advances, from the airplane to the Xerox machine, have made the scholar's job easier. The danger of causing pain to the living was as great then as it is now, but the eighteenth-century biographer was handicapped also by the fear of misleading his reader and difficulty of securing materials: thus the result of his work was rarely the frank, vacuum-cleaner approach to the facts we have come to expect in this century.

The character and attitudes of the biographer himself also affect his handling of materials. Nichols, whose making available of seven volumes of factual material on eighteenth-century writers was, to be sure, a great service, seems to have remained undisturbed by the absence of the je ne sais quoi that makes a life of a biography. Johnson accepted his own limitations; Boswell fretted over his. Speaking to Malone of the dunning of Steele by Addison, Johnson admitted that someone might propose that Steele did not repay the debt to see whether Addison would be petty enough to dun him; "'But of such speculations there is no end: we cannot dive into the hearts of men; but their actions are open to observations'" (Life, IV, 53). Boswell, although his use of observations was far superior to Johnson's partly by nature of his subject, did not share Johnson's gruff acceptance of the limitations of his abilities. He fretted even about limitations of the language:

The great lines of characters may be put down. But I doubt much if it be possible to preserve in words the peculiar features of mind which distinguish individuals as certainly as the features of different countenances. The art of portrait painting fixes the last; and musical sounds with

all their nice gradations can also be fixed. Perhaps language may be improved to such a degree as to picture the varieties of mind as minutely. . . . I cannot pourtray the Councillor Cochrane as he exists in my mind.³⁷

The language may not have served Boswell well, but the practice of publishing the private moments of his subject did, although it caused him trouble socially.

The ethics of the use of private letters and of private details was a question solved soon in the century by practitioners of biography but still debated as late as the 1790's by critics. Usually biographers of the late seventeenth century felt that privately known material had no place in a publicly disseminated work. The feeling sprang not only from fear of exposing their subjects but also from the assumption that interest in a great man is not only inspired by but also limited to his public actions. Thomas Sprat, writing in 1668 of Abraham Cowley, referred to letters in which Cowley revealed "the native tenderness and innocent gaiety of his mind," but then drew back from further comment.

But nothing of this nature should be published. The truth is, the letters that pass between particular friends, if they are written as they ought to be, can scarce ever be fit to see the light. . . . In such letters, the souls of men should appear undressed; and in that negligent habit, they may be fit to be seen by one or two in a chamber, but not to go abroad in the street.³⁸

That attitude persisted as late as 1788, when Andrew Kippis wrote in the preface to his Life of Cook that the book must consist mainly of his voyages and discoveries, as "the private incidents concerning him, though collected with the utmost diligence, can never compare, either in number or in importance, with his public transactions. . . . therefore, they are the grand object to which the attention of his biographer must be directed."³⁹ Abundance of personal detail is a crutch

used to swell biographies, wrote Gilbert Burnet in 1682, scorning writers who used "trifling accounts of the childhood and education, and the domestic or private affairs, of those persons of whom they write, in which the world is little concerned."⁴⁰ So, when he wrote "The Life of Matthew Hale," he would "draw a veil" over his "domestic concerns, since, though in these he was a great example, yet it signifies nothing to the world to know any particular exercises that might be given to his patience."⁴¹ As a result, Johnson was to say of Sprat's "Cowley" that "he writes with so little detail, that scarcely any thing is distinctly known, but all is shown confused and enlarged through the mist of panegyrick."⁴² Burnet, however, did not adhere closely to his own pronouncement. In his rather moralistic "Matthew Hale"⁴³ he alluded only vaguely to a "grievous circumstance" in one son's death and gave but one paragraph to each of two wives,⁴⁴ but he did use anecdotes to exemplify Hale's integrity. And he quoted Hale's scheme for a diary and then accounted for imperfections in the wording by saying they show "they were only intended for his privacies."⁴⁵ Dryden, contrasting biography with annals and history, took an opposite view, that the "descent into minute circumstances" is the very quality that distinguishes the former. To him it was the function and utility of life-writing to do what was below the dignity of the other two.⁴⁶ Dryden's reasoning was somewhat negative—the others cannot, so biography should. To Roger North, writing in the first third of the eighteenth century, the use of private letters and documents and creation of dramatic dialogue were means to his end of giving as complete a rendering of the subject as possible.⁴⁷ Thus the attitude of some biographers toward the genre

and its purpose operated as a constraint on their choice of materials; neither Sprat nor Burnet could have written a Life of Johnson, for they would have considered many of its passages beneath their notice.

A biographer need not have been a drone to sate his reader with detail. Rather, he may have been, according to Thomas Warton, "betrayed into minute researches" by his interest and enthusiasm and reveal a lack of sympathy with the reader through over-sympathy with his subject. "The curiosity of the reader is seldom proportioned to that of the writer. . . . Every incident, relating to a favourite character which the mind has long contemplated with attention, acquires importance."⁴⁸ Apparently the thirst for anecdote was beginning to decline years before collections of ana were to peak with those about Johnson. The first edition, only six volumes, of Nichols's Anecdotes was greeted with a rather cool review in the Monthly Review asserting that he, "to gratify a hungry hunter of biography with all the sport he can desire, starts more game than a person less keen in the chase hath any inclination to pursue, or any appetite to partake of" (MR, 1782, p. 272). But the coolness of the review was betrayed by the willingness to quote directly several lives from the Anecdotes and to give the whole of Bishop Warburton's the next month (MR, 1782, pp. 328-39). One trouble with using anecdotes was that they were entertaining in themselves and therefore, to some writers, seemed to have strength to stand alone with little or no drawing of morals or connecting narrative. Nichols published in 1781 Biographical Anecdotes of William Hogarth, a work "so incompact and disjointed" that he apologized for presenting it; but "his numerous engagements did not afford him leisure to arrange his materials

by that regular method which was necessary to make his work a complete and finished narrative" (MR, 1781, p. 444). One of the first criticisms of the Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides was an accusation of "triviality" in a letter signed "Pro me," who evidently did not feel that every fragment of Johnson should be presented: the book, he said, "should teach us how scrupulously careful we should be in the selection of anecdote, which the present age is so inquisitive after" (GM, 1786, pp. 386-87). But Boswell was careful in comparison to the author of Anecdotes of Peter the Great, who was so slipshod as to present his stories in the order in which they came to his attention, so that the account of Peter's death preceded that of his birth. A Monthly Review writer, however, supportive to the end of anecdotes, maintained that they did serve to "illustrate" Peter's character (MR, 1789, 130-31). The most effective ridicule of the taste for detail and anecdote was published by John Wolcot ("Peter Pindar"), who, addressing Boswell as a "charming haberdasher of small ware," mock-rhapsodized,

How are we all with rapture touch'd, to see
Where, when, and at what hour, you swallowed tea;
How, once, to grace this Asiatic treat,
Came haddocks, which the Rambler could not eat!⁴⁹

In "Bozzy and Piozzi; or the British Biographers," Wolcot pictured the two competing with anecdotes in couplets before Sir John Hawkins, who at last is driven to cry,

What have I done, inform me, gracious Lord,
That thus my ears with nonsense should be bored?⁵⁰

Adverse criticism of the use of detail and anecdote, then, was generally inspired by one of two reactions: shock and distaste, as in the case of Mrs. Montagu, or boredom, as in the case of Wolcot.

It was left to Samuel Johnson to demonstrate a one-hundred-and-eighty-degree reversal of the Sprat-Burnet theory. Their disdain of personal detail had probably sprung from a regard of biography as a poor relation of history; history records great events of a nation; biography, great events in the life of a mere individual. For Johnson, on the other hand, the purpose of biography was to instruct; the subject was less important than the way he lived. And therefore a writer may gain attention by dealing with famous figures,

but the business of the biographer is often to pass slightly over those performances and incidents, which produce vulgar greatness, to lead the thoughts into daily life, where exterior appendages are cast aside, and men excel each other only by prudence and by virtue.
(Rambler 60)

Johnson cherished details that reveal character—not that Addison's pulse was irregular, but that Catiline walked now quickly, now slowly, deserved recording. The first fact is meaningless, the second indicative of Catiline's state of mind. William Oldys in his 1736 biography of Sir Walter Raleigh had quoted with approval a similar statement by his subject, "that a great discovering of genius may be made through a small and sudden repartee."⁵¹ Whether an anecdote or detail was meaningful, however, was open to question, and it was easier for an author to collect anecdotes than to draw conclusions. In 1772, Thomas Warton condemned "the many trifling discoveries, and intricate discussions of insignificant circumstances, with which personal history so much abounds."⁵² But just three years later William Mason published privately his Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Thomas Gray, which depended for its worth partly on Mason's detailed knowledge of the poet,

based on a friendship of almost a quarter of a century, but even more on private documents and the letters Gray had written him and several other friends. (Conyers Middleton had used Cicero's own words in the 1741 biography, but the words came from Cicero's works;⁵³ Mason's was the first major biography to depend heavily on material written privately by his subject.⁵⁴) Mason was aware of his innovation and, referring to Sprat's injunction, conceded the bishop might have "reason on his side; but I believe that the generality will, notwithstanding, wish he had been less scrupulously delicate and lament that . . . the letters in question are not extant."⁵⁵ The use of detail reached a peak in Boswell's Journal, 1786, and the Life of Johnson, 1791; Boswell, who consciously modeled his work on "the excellent plan of Mr. Mason," could not "conceive a more perfect mode of writing any man's life, than not only relating all the most important events of it in their order, but interweaving what he privately wrote, and said, and thought" (Life, I, 29-30).

Despite the success of Mason's work, criticism continued to oppose heavy use of detail, especially after the publication of Mrs. Piozzi's and Boswell's books in 1786. Objections centered on two counts: the meaninglessness of the details and the blots on the memories of the subjects. Vicesimus Knox, who in a 1778 essay praised Plutarch for assiduous collection of facts,⁵⁶ wrote in 1787 that "some foibles and weaknesses . . . should be shut up in the coffin with the poor reliques of fallen humanity."⁵⁷ "Pro me," in his letter to the Gentleman's Magazine cited earlier, concluded huffily: "If these are the ana of the present age, and half those of the past age are no better, how much more would

it conduce to the credit of the parties and biographers, that such anecdotes should die . . . inedited!" (GM, 1786, p. 387). An anonymous Monthly Review reviewer of the Journal wished Boswell had, like Plutarch, "left in shade what tended to diminish Johnson's greatness, or sully his virtues" (MR, 1786, p. 277). But this reviewer, like the Gentleman's Magazine reviewer of Mason, did like the presentation of the subject in the "recesses of private Life" and the "hours of social ease" (MR, 1786, p. 282). Such ambivalence was rare, however; more common was the Rt. Rev. Thomas Percy's allegation in a 1791 letter, an echo of Sprat, that Boswell had violated "the primary law of civil society in publishing a man's unreserved correspondence and unguarded conversation."⁵⁸ Although twentieth-century approval of Mason's and Boswell's accomplishments may be undermined by knowledge of their practices--the former's bowdlerizing⁵⁹ and the latter's agreeing not to publish letters given him if they had "anything which should render them improper for the publick eye"⁶⁰--in eighteenth-century practice the use of personal detail, even if detrimental to the reputation of the subject, was established.

Objectives

The difference of opinion regarding use of personal detail in biography stemmed from a disagreement regarding its effect and, more basically, regarding the proper object of life-writing itself. Critics felt that excessive detail tended to tarnish the memories of the great, and advocates, that it served to render them as human beings rather than as saints. The Monthly Review writer quoted above believed John-

son's virtues sullied by Boswell's details and considered that Johnson himself had "exposed his own weakness" by approving Boswell's journal (MR, 1786, p. 277), while Knox alleged of the same book, that the "biographical anatomy, in minutely dissecting parts, destroys the beauty of the whole."⁶¹ Such attitudes reveal a belief that the purpose of biography is to present a flawless object worthy of imitation in all respects. If, on the other hand, the object is to render a person in language, use of detail is not only desirable but mandatory. That was Boswell's belief and accomplishment: "I will venture," he wrote of the Life, "that he will be seen in this work more completely than any man who has ever yet lived" (Life, I, 30).

Of the many possible motives for writing lives--to commemorate, to honor, to teach virtue, to capitalize on news, to entertain, to abuse, to satisfy curiosity about the famous, to rouse the affections, to present a human being, to explore the nature of man--all were operative in the eighteenth century. The desire to commemorate came first in recorded history, for the tombs of the Egyptian kings bear records of their existence.⁶² From ancient Egyptians' fear of oblivion for their great it is not a long leap to the object of the Biographia Britannia, as stated by the first editor, William Oldys:

to collect into one Body, without any restriction of time or place, profession or condition, the memoirs of such of our countrymen as have been eminent, and by their performances of any kind deserve to be remembered. . . .⁶³

And the Monthly Review noted the fourth volume in somewhat the same terms, saying that "To rescue . . . the characters of the Great and Worthy, from misrepresentation [is] a plan highly deserving the atten-

tion and encouragement of the public. . . ."⁶⁴ The concept of biography as an obligation was not new in England; Sir Fulke Greville had seen his Life of the Renowned Sir Philip Sidney, written in 1612, as a tribute to his friend,⁶⁵ and Dryden had called biography "the best thanks which posterity can pay."⁶⁶ The debt that might be paid by the writing of a life was conceived to be not only to the subject, but also to posterity, for, as Walton pointed out as early as 1670, "it is an honour due to those that shall live."⁶⁷ If there appear too many articles in the Bio-graphia Britannia, or too lengthy articles, "let it be considered," Oldys wrote in the preface,

how far the reputation of our country, the honour of our ancestors, the respect due the memories of great men, and the vast importance of setting worthy examples before the eyes of posterity, are concerned.⁶⁸

The idea that life-writing is an obligation persisted through the end of the century, when an anonymous reviewer of the Memoirs of Jortin commented that "to give such a name a distinguished place in the rolls of biography, is a deed of gratitude which the public, in return for the instruction and amusement that they have received, are bound to pay" (MR, 1792, p. 413). And John Nichols quoted approvingly a 1798 review of five volumes of A New and General Biographical Dictionary that calls biography "the termination to which Virtue looks for its temporal reward, and Justice for retribution."⁶⁹ The feeling that biography was a form of paying off obligations was especially strong in Nichols, whose seventeen volumes of Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century and Literary Illustrations of the Eighteenth Century began in 1778 as a fifty-two-page pamphlet, of which twenty copies were privately printed, called

Biographical and Literary Anecdotes of William Bowyer, a tribute to his master, employer, and partner.⁷⁰ And it was reviewed in those terms in the Gentleman's Magazine (of which Nichols was already the printer and soon to be editor), which called the quarto edition of 1782 "a vast, accumulated debt of gratitude, a rare production in this degenerate age" (GM, 1782, p. 348). (The magazine had already published a three-part biography, the headnote signed "J.N.," of Bowyer in 1778). The New Annual Register for 1782, reviewing the first edition of Literary Anecdotes, praised Nichols's "ardent zeal to perpetuate the memory of our English worthies."⁷¹ Volume I of the nine-volume 1812-16 edition of the Anecdotes has an epigram from William Oldisworth: "To preserve the memory of those who have been in any way serviceable to mankind, hath been always looked upon as discharging a debt which we owe to our benefactors."⁷²

The concept of biography as the just due of our benefactors has a serious flaw in logic, perceived by most eighteenth-century writers of lives: that the subject of the work can in no way benefit from it. Obviously, the publishing of biographies of John Howard (GM, 1790, pp. 287-89) and Henry Flood (GM, 1790, pp. 1224-34 and 1792, pp. 44-48) did those men no good, but it might inspire imitation of their philanthropic works by the readers. The two ideas are linked by William Burton in An Account of the life and writings of Herman Boerhaave: "Two of the principal inducements to record the lives of those, who by their distinguish'd merit have done honour to mankind, are, to reflect that honour on their memory, and to excite posterity to a noble emulation."⁷³

Those two inducements, along with a desire to enhance oneself,

produced in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries one of the two major types of life-writing, "the formal panegyrick, which stemmed from the pious saints' lives of the middle ages."⁷⁴ * Such a panegyric, according to Johnson, was Sprat's "Life of Cowley." The belief that it is the peculiar excellence of biography to instruct in virtue was probably based on the prevalence of saints' lives, but by the end of the seventeenth century Burnet condemned that style of writing because each age strived to present its heroes as superior to those before, "so that, one would have thought, that indecent way of writing could rise no higher."⁷⁵ He implied what Johnson was to tell Malone years later, that such a style would make the average reader despair of emulation. Neither are the lives of princes of much benefit, according to Burnet, for they belong rather to general histories and are usually written from a biased viewpoint, so that "there is not much to be built on them."⁷⁶

But the lives of private men, though they seldom entertain the reader with such a variety of passages as the other do, yet, certainly, they offer him things that are more imitable; and do present wisdom and virtue to him, not only in a fair idea, which is often looked on as a piece of the invention or fancy of the writer, but, in such plain and familiar instances, as do both direct him better, and persuade him more. . . .⁷⁷

Like many writers before and after him, Burnet linked the instruction of biography with the delight to be derived from it,⁷⁸ but the latter was decidedly of less moment; near the end of the preface to the "Life of Matthew Hale," he said he would "avoid saying any thing of him, but

*The other type of biography is the hurried and often scurrilous production of Grub Street, written about the unfortunate by the unscrupulous.

what may afford the reader profitable instruction."⁷⁹ A few years later, Dryden, admitting biography lacks the dignity of annals and history, yet claimed for it even more "pleasure and instruction," as, being contracted into a single individual, the examples of virtue "strike upon our minds a stronger and more lively impression" than is possible to history.⁸⁰ Although later biographers supplied examples of virtuous action, few stated expressly that they were adhering to Dryden's theory; usually, rather they seemed bent on glorifying their subjects. Nor did critics pick up Dryden's potentially anti-intellectual idea that a lively impression could conduce more to good behavior than reasoned persuasion. Through the first half of the eighteenth century, there was little critical theory on biography except for North's "General Preface," still unpublished in its whole,⁸¹ and only occasional comments in other prefaces. But in 1750 Johnson echoed the utile-dulce theme:

. . . no species of writing seems more worthy of cultivation than biography, since none can be more delightful or more useful, none can more certainly enchain the heart by irresistible interest, or more widely diffuse instruction to every diversity of condition.

(Rambler 60)

As an old man, in reference to his Lives, he wrote on Good Friday, 1779, "written I hope in such a manner as may tend to the promotion of Piety."⁸² By 1762 pleasure was taken for granted, and it was usefulness that Goldsmith thought underrated; he praised biography not only for the former, but also for the "instruction it artfully and unexpectedly conveys to the understanding."⁸³ One could, of course, read biography especially for its benefits, which, toward the end of the century, tended to be less celestial (as in saints' lives) and more secular. A good biography,

rightly used, could be an eighteenth-century "how-to-succeed" manual. Matthew Maty, in the "Introduction" to his Memoirs of Chesterfield, did not mention pleasure but rather recommended biography as a means of learning about human nature.

From the life of almost any one individual, but chiefly from the lives of such eminent men as seemed destined to enlighten or to adorn society, instructions may be drawn, suitable to every capacity, range, age, or station. Young men aspiring to honours cannot be too assiduous in tracing the means by which they were obtained: by observing with what difficulty they were preserved, they will be apprised of their real value, estimate the risks of the purchase,⁸⁴ and discover frequent disappointments in the possession.

Similarly, in an enthusiastic review of the Lives of the English Poets, the Monthly Review in 1779 praised Johnson for being ever aware that biography ought to be a "lesson in virtue" (MR, 1779, p. 7).

But after Johnson, and especially after publication of the Life of Johnson, the question of utility, though still honored in the observance, was beginning to suffer breaches. True, as late as 1790 and 1791, the Gentleman's Magazine published letters praising biography as "universally useful" (GM, 1790, p. 910) and as instructive of youth (GM, 1791, p. 713), and as late as 1799 the Monthly Review commentator on General Biography devoted almost as much space to utile as to dulce (MR, 1799, p. 241). More typical, however, was the Gentleman's Magazine writer who called the Journal "instructive and edifying" but who devoted a good deal more space to the book's truthfulness and manner of composition (GM, 1785, p. 889). A 1792 review of the Memoirs of Jortin mentioned the instruction and amusement afforded by the subject but of the biography only lamented that there was not any more "personal information" (MR, 1792, p. 413). Interest had turned from utility to two other

qualities: realism (desire for which James Clifford suggests is a reason for the rise of intimate biographies⁸⁵) and arousal of emotions.

Realism is not so much an objective standard--after all, one can speak of the "realism" of a piece of fiction--as it is an effect. That is, it is different from fact in that the latter remains constant, no matter what the terms, whereas realism is the effect of a certain arrangement and choice of fact. A better sense of life may be obtained from a novel like Moll Flanders than from a factual but dry recital of the education and posts of a Matthew Hale. Whether a novel or biography is realistic depends greatly upon the reader--the creation of a sense of life in him is required. Thus, the fact that most readers agree that the Life of Johnson is realistic is a result not only of the qualities of the work but also of the eighteenth-century favorite, the uniformity of the human heart. In biography, realism depends on the reader's sense of a living man, with virtues and flaws mixed, kindness to animals aligned with arrogance to servants, flashes of altruism with stinginess, inexplicable quirks with orderly account books. None of his qualities are unique, but their arrangement and intensity in him are.⁸⁶

Not realism, nor uniqueness, nor creation of a lively image was commonly a goal in pre-Walton biographies. Rather, establishment of a healthy distance between saint and reader would keep the reader in his place. Sprat may have sighed as he put aside the Cowley letters, but his concern was with the public Cowley, not the private one. A few years later Burnet chose to say nothing of Hale's "domestic concerns." Such biographies might tell of public actions revealing viciousness, but not a private letter revealing a sense of humor; they would describe

evidence of public munificence but not of private hatefulness. Dryden, however, saw the possibilities of biography as revelatory of what all men share; although practice would not catch up with him for many years, he saw that, ideally, in biography,

The pageantry of life is taken away; you see the poor reasonable animal as naked as ever nature made him; are made acquainted with his passions and his follies, and find the demi-god, a man.⁸⁷

That Roger North meant to create living men is evident from changes in his manuscript in which indirect discourse became dramatic dialogue.⁸⁸

Realism in biography, as in the novel, began to be a value, not a flaw, in the eighteenth century, and ways were discovered to create it. In contradistinction to Sprat, use of private correspondence and diaries became popular, and the autobiographical way of writing a biography--heavy reliance on the words of the subject--culminated in the works of Mason and Boswell. Letters had been used in a number of English biographies, from Eddius's life of Wilfred in the early eighth century to the Renaissance, Walton's Lives, and several seventeenth-century biographies by intimates of the subject; Sprat was inveighing against an accepted practice.⁸⁹ Letters had been published in the eighteenth century by the writers themselves, such as those by Pope, but Conyers Middleton's Cicero, 1741, was the first major biography to use them extensively as source material.⁹⁰ (Roger North had earlier used letters and memoranda in the lives of his brothers, but these were not published until 1742.⁹¹)

Once the concept of research in biography had passed beyond official documents and public records, the work of Boswell with letters, diaries, conversation, and interviews with friends was inevitable,

although to some readers he seemed the farthest swing of the pendulum. Creation of the sense of a living man was not a desirable goal, however, to such as Vicesimus Knox, who complained about the Journal:

Is it to be believed that the greatest men in all history, would have appeared almost uniformly great, if the taste of their age, and the communicative disposition of their intimate friends, had published with private conversation, the secrets of their closets and their chambers?⁹²

Knox even feared that Johnson's moral writings would be less effective now that readers knew so much of him. (Implicit in Knox's statement are two beliefs: first, that the purpose of biography is to show the greatness of great men; second, that no man portrayed with fidelity will be believed great; hence, a "true" biography defeats the purposes of the genre.) The Monthly Review's Samuel Badcock also would have preferred a more shining report on the venerated Johnson, but was puzzled about where to put the blame for what he considered the Journals indiscretions:

. . . when a great man is exhibited in those moments in which he forgets his dignity, we rather blame the historian who records his weakness, than the hero, who in common life is no more than a common man. If, however, the hero is pleased to see himself reduced to the level of frail mortality, who will then find fault with the historian? If Dr. Johnson was satisfied to have the foolish speeches he made, and the perverse things he did, recorded with fidelity;--if on reviewing them, he pronounced them to be faithful representations of his principles, his manners, and his conversation, who will blame Mr. Boswell?

(MR, 1786, p. 277)

Several people would, among them Elizabeth Montagu and Bishop Percy, already quoted. But the Gentleman's Magazine reacted enthusiastically to Boswell's method, more impressed by the detail and presumed factuality than by anything else.

This journal was composed during the actual performance of the Tour, and must consequently be far more faithful than

the details which are the result of recollection. Whilst . . . we reflect that it is not a selection of whatever was great and good in our illustrious biographer, but a plain and simple narrative of the ordinary business and manner of his life, we must be impressed with wonder and veneration. (GL, 1785, p. 889)

And finally, in a review of the Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 1800, the main complaint is of the lack of detail, and the question "When is biography interesting?" is answered partly, "when it excites curiosity by reporting the little things of great men" (MR, 1800, p. 2)--that is, when it shows them as human beings rather than as mannequins.

That review goes on to elaborate on the concept of dulce, defining an effect of biography that Dryden only alluded to and few others had mentioned--the touching of the reader's heart. Biography is interesting when it, among other effects, "elevates affection by tales of distress or goodness" (MR, 1800, p. 2). The utilitarian result, always a leader before, now trails a poor fifth in that list, and the arousal of emotion, previously suspect, is a primary goal. Aubrey wrote Wood 15 June 1680 that some passages of his notes "would raise a blush in a young virgin's cheek"---but those are the ones that should be removed.⁹³ The suggestion of emotional effect occurs in Dryden's comparison of biography to sunbeams focused to a point, whereby they "have a greater force" and "strike upon our minds a stronger and more lively impression."⁹⁴ The necessity of attracting the reader's attention was apparent even to Burnet, who saw that princes' lives amused the reader's fancy without giving him anything useful; therefore, Burnet reasoned, the lives of private men would be more beneficial, as they would touch the reader's heart by displaying "wisdom and virtue . . . in such plain and familiar stances" that he

would thus be more effectively directed to virtue.⁹⁵

The efficacy of specific instances in directing the reader toward virtue, through arousing his emotions, is attributed to history also by Bolingbroke: "Example appeals not to our understanding alone, but to our passions likewise. . . . Example sets passion on the side of judgment. . . ." ⁹⁶ The beneficial effect of biography need not have to do with specific examples of virtue. Boswell wrote in 1778 that biography served him by "withdrawing [his] attention" from himself to others, besides "entertaining" him "with real incidents" of existence.⁹⁷ One reason, then for the phenomenal number of biographies of middle- and lower-class persons in the eighteenth century may be the realization that readers want to read about people like themselves, because for them there is morerealism in a novel about Pamela than in a factual account of a prince. The "greater force," which Dryden believed would better impress on the mind examples of virtue in action, would later become not a means but an end, and, fascinated by the range of fact, anecdote, and subject matter available, writers from Grub Street to Streatham indulged in collections of ana without moral purpose.

English biography moved a long way between Sprat's omission of Cowley's letters and Goldsmith's statement in 1762 that "affections and follies are properly the materials [the historian or biographer] has to work with." Like Burnet, Goldsmith believed that general histories and governors' lives could benefit few, as only a few lived similarly, but the homely details of even princes' lives might be of use, for

the generality of mankind find the most real improvement from relations which are leveled to the general surface of life; which tell, not how men learned to conquer, but how

they endeavoured to live; not how they gained the shout of the admiring croud, but how they acquired the esteem of their friends and acquaintance.⁹⁸

The theme was still utility, but the rousing of the reader's emotions was beginning to usurp the place of logical exposition as a means to teach him virtue. In 1752 Thomas Warton wrote in praise of facts that they are "impressed upon the mind by the passions" and therefore better vehicles for instruction.⁹⁹ The preface to The Life of Petrarch by Mrs. Susanna Dobson in 1775 announced that the book would be instructive of human nature because it would "so affectingly exhibit to mortals" (italics mine) the trials of earthly life.¹⁰⁰ The two qualities of emotional response and instruction, which had a causal relation for Dryden, Burnet, and Johnson, were separated in a Monthly Review comment on Johnson's Lives, which praised the author for his comments, interspersed with the narratives, which "either direct the judgment or meliorate the heart" (italics mine) (MR, 1779, p. 7).

That Johnson ever wrote solely to meliorate the heart, without moral purpose, is to be doubted. Although he complained that the lifelessness of Sprat's "Cowley" was a result of too little detail, he did not, in theory or practice, fall into the trap of reciting ana. Even as he recognized that the moving of the passions and arousal of sympathy is an excellence of biography and that "there has rarely passed a life of which a judicious and faithful narrative would not be useful," he knew that biographers were liable to include inconsequential details, such as the rate of Addison's pulse (Rambler 60). Johnson himself did not fall into that trap and has been criticized for not including anecdotes or details when he must have known them, as in "The Life of

Savage." He, who spoke and wrote so eloquently on the use of detail, "made no more than a feeble effort himself . . . to preserve the man entire and in action in the Boswellian manner."¹⁰¹ Boswell, before the fact, defended Johnson from that twentieth-century accusation, singling out for praise his "minute selection of characteristical circumstances" in the 1754 "Life of Cave" (Life, I, 256).

The term "characteristical circumstance" is the operative one, suggesting a motive more for reading biography than for writing it, one which was articulated more and more after 1750, although the goal was a neo-classical byword--general nature. Johnson would have details and anecdotes chosen for their implications about the character of the subject, and, by extension, about the character of mankind. An indulgence in ana might even have a negative effect on the reader, as pointed out by Walter Jackson Bate in his summary of Johnson's thought on the subject:

. . . an overconcentration on the specific particular not only diverts the gaze from the central and ideal reality to the defective accident, but also, because the particular by itself usually appeals only to changing conditions and interests, it may also fail to affect the reader except momentarily.¹⁰²

But, despite Johnson, as biography began to be valued by commentators as a textbook on man, what he would have called numbering the streaks of the tulip increased rather than declined. The conviction that the human heart is in everyone the same was expressed in Goldsmith's "Nash":

The great and the little, as they have the same senses, and the same affections, generally present the same picture to the draughtsman; and whether the hero or the clown be the subject of the memoir, it is only man that appears with all his native minuteness about him.¹⁰³

Thus biography, like death, is a leveler. Realization of that essential likeness might have its own utilitarian effect on the soul of a reader. Demonstration of the variations of fortune to which "beings like ourselves are liable in every rank and profession of life," believed Mrs. Dobson, would humble the pride and touch the heart, causing the reader to consider not this life but the one beyond.¹⁰⁴ Despite Mrs. Dobson, usually knowledge of human nature was considered an end in itself, whatever the possessor might care to make of it. Knox praised Suetonius's pictures of men, though "loathsome to behold," for they would help the philosopher "form a more complete idea of human nature in all the gradations of degeneracy and perfection."¹⁰⁵ Thus, although he accused Johnson of indulging in spleen in harsh accounts, Knox would admit that unattractive aspects of life could be included if they contributed to a picture of human nature.* So would Johnson, as revealed in the Sibbald incident: Boswell had the manuscript of the life of Scottish antiquarian Sir Robert Sibbald, who was converted to the Catholic faith but while spending the winter with the Duke of Perth, who had attracted him to Catholicism, "found the rigid fasting prescribed by the church very severe upon him," reconsidered the matter, "and having then seen that he was in the wrong, returned to Protestantism." Mrs. Thrale discouraged publication, for "To discover such weakness exposes a man when he is gone." Johnson: "Nay, it is an honest picture of human nature. How often are the primary motives of our greatest actions

*Evidently he did not believe in 1787 that Boswell's account in the Journal of Johnson's "foibles and weaknesses" did so (On the Character of Doctor Johnson and the Abuse of Biography, The British Essayists, 38, 72).

as small as Sibbald's, for his re-conversion" (Life, III, 227-28). The importance Johnson attached to the story was not that it illustrated an inconsistency on Sibbald's part, but that Sibbald's inconsistency is typical of human nature.* Matthew Maty in 1777 also called biography a teacher of general nature. "It is from observing different individuals that we may be enabled to draw the outlines of that extraordinarily complicated being, man."¹⁰⁶ Concern with general nature declined, however, as emphasis came in the latter part of the century to be put on the differences between men rather than on their similarities. The particular, or detail, was studied for "the revelation of its essential nature as as particular" rather than for the generality it might suggest.¹⁰⁷ That change, beginning most spectacularly with Boswell's work,** would affect the method of biography, but the conviction that all men were essentially alike was not lost. As late as 1851, Thomas Carlyle wrote in The Life of John Sterling that "a true delineation of the smallest man, and his scene of pilgrimage through life, is capable of interesting the greatest man; . . . all are to an unspeakable degree brothers, each man's life a strange emblem of every man's."¹⁰⁸ To learn about another man was to learn about all men, even oneself, and the

*One wonders what general statement Johnson would have drawn from his own refusal to tell Boswell what he did with scraped and dried orange peels (Life, II, 330-31)--possibly that most men have inexplicable quirks of character, or that they like to tease persistent and curious friends.

**The difference between the works of Johnson and Boswell is the difference between personal and impersonal biography, according to Elizabeth Drew in The Enjoyment of Literature (New York, 1935), p. 96. Johnson's practice was to "direct the reader's attention to a certain evaluation of the facts;" Boswell's, to "collect the evidence and let the hero speak for himself," the reader to evaluate the facts.

introspective urge of the writers of the first half of the nineteenth century altered only the materials of biography, not the basic craving for it.

The craving for biography in the early eighteenth century, although it included a desire for collected lives of botanists and regicides, Indian converts and empresses, men who died in 1711 and ancient philosophers,¹⁰⁹ often centered on the lives of famous men, and the public's curiosity about the great was balanced by the writers' desire to make money by satisfying it. Of course, the writing of any life for publication assumes some interest in it, but some biographers had to create a demand for their work--Mrs. Pilkington, for instance, by promising scandal about those who did not subscribe to it--whereas it could be assumed that a reading, buying public awaited the lives of those who had made news. Contrary to the thought of some seventeenth-century theorists, the public's curiosity would not be satisfied by what could be found in the public records; when a figure was sufficiently eminent, no detail was too small to please some eighteenth-century readers. The anonymous Monthly Review commenter on Nichols's Biographical Anecdotes of William Hogarth transformed what some would call nosiness into a universal aspect of human nature:

When a man hath distinguished himself by any extraordinary efforts of genius, and gained the summit of popular fame, we naturally wish to be acquainted with the most interesting circumstances of his life and character: and even those circumstances, which may be trifling in themselves, and which by no means would bear to be recorded, did they refer to persons of little fame, yet, when connected with a character that hath excited our admiration, or with works that we have contemplated with delight, they derive a kind of adventitious consequence from their relation, and are sought after with infinitely more avidity than greater matters of lesser men.

(MR, 1781, p. 443)

Or, the bigger the man, the smaller the pleasing detail. Public curiosity, especially about literary figures, was recognized, satisfied, and capitalized upon by Nichols, who in the Gentleman's Magazine columns was able to request information from his readers and to publish it—usually ending with a request for more. Answers to queries in Magazine columns appeared later in Nichols's editions of Swift's Works, Atterbury's Letters, and Steele's Correspondence.¹¹⁰ Such a businessman would not have produced his seventeen volumes of Anecdotes and Illustrations had he not published the truth in a Magazine review of Literary and Biographical Anecdotes of William Bowyer: "The perpetual enquiries of our correspondents after anecdotes of eminent writers may be fairly mentioned as a proof of the utility of such a book" (GM, 1782, p. 582). The "utility" has presumably changed from the work's effect on the reader's inclination to virtue to its efficacy at scratching an intellectual itch. That readers are interested in minutæ about the famous was not questioned by most reviewers, but the biographers' judgment often was, for over-abundance of detail was a common complaint after mid-century. The issue was enlivened by Boswell's Journal in 1786 and the Life in 1791. An extremely stated but typical advocacy of the use of detail appeared in the Monthly Review notes on the Life, which admitted that though too much detail can be dull,

where the biographer has for his subject the life and sentiments of so eminent an instructor of mankind as Samuel Johnson, and so immense a store-house of mental treasure to open and disclose to the eager curiosity of rational and laudable enquiry, there can be no just exception taken against the number and variety of the objects exhibited. He will ask "What conversation could have passed, where so great a genius presided, at which every man of learning and taste would not wish to have been present, or, at least, to have it faithfully

reported to him?" To the reporter, would he not say "Give us all; suppress nothing; lest, in rejecting that which, in your estimation, may seem to be of inferior value, you unwarily throw away gold with the dross."

(MR, 1792, pp. 3-4)

Devotees of Johnson such as Nichols and Boswell, of course, thought nothing of the man too small to be preserved, though they might not print all that they knew. Nichols, wrote Boswell in praise, "seems justly to think that every fragment of so great a man is worthy of being preserved" (Life, IV, 37, n. 4).

Adverse Criticism

Overuse of detail was but one of a multitude of faults the biographer was liable to; a reviewer of General Biography epitomized them in 1799:

Some have collected facts which they committed to paper without order or selection; others have selected facts, but with the sinister intention of consigning their subject to unmerited infamy, or of bedecking him with undeserved praise. Some have been impartial, but have been indolent in research, and destitute of discrimination; while many have brought to their task impartiality, industry, and good sense, but have wanted taste, learning, and skill in composition, to illustrate and adorn the subject on which they wrote.

(MR, 1799, p. 242)

The flaws or perversions of biography as an art can generally be traced to concentration on the purpose or objective rather than on the subject. Biographies intended to honor men exalt them beyond credibility; like those intended to commemorate them, they are paeans, not lives. The saint's-life syndrome was condemned by Burnet, who, as we have seen, called it an "indecent way of writing" that depended on "out-lying" other writers.¹¹¹ The ethical fault was not so likely, however, as the æsthetic one--lifelessness. Johnson complained of Sprat's "Cowley"

that the subject could not be seen through the "mist of panegyrick."¹¹² Desire to exalt one's subject could lead to accidental or intentional misinterpretation of fact or to a kind of intellectual myopia. For instance, in the biography of French physician Lewis Morin that Johnson translated for the Gentleman's Magazine, it was said that Morin's index to Hippocrates required the "assiduity and patience of a hermit." Johnson's footnote huffed:

This is an instance of the disposition generally found in writers of lives, to exalt every common occurrence and action into wonder. Are not indexes daily written by men who neither receive nor expect any loud applause for their labours?

(GM, 1741, p. 377)

That affection could color judgment was a danger most biographers and critics were aware of. Early in the century Joseph Addison said flatly that it was unfit for the history of any public person to appear, "till envy and friendship are laid asleep, and the prejudice both of his antagonists and adherents have, in some degree, softened and subdued."¹¹³ Not only friends and enemies are capable of writing biassed biographies, of course, for a writer may develop a real affection for one long dead, or for political reasons may wish to abuse one he never knew. Conyers Middleton pointed out in the preface to Cicero the psychological fact that a writer of biography tends to choose a subject with whom he is sympathetic and that therefore the biography is apt to be partial; he admitted to a favorable opinion of Cicero but tried to let the facts "speak for themselves."¹¹⁴ Not only a favorable but also an unfavorable attitude could govern the writing of biographies. Johnson--twenty years after the lives for the Gentleman's Magazine, twenty years before the Lives of the English Poets--stated, in support of autobiography:

He that writes the life of another is either his friend or his enemy, and wishes either to exalt his praise or aggravate his infamy: many temptations to falsehood will occur in the disguise of passions, too specious to fear much resistance. Love of virtue will animate panegyric, and hatred of wickedness embitter censure. The zeal of gratitude, the ardour of patriotism, fondness for an opinion, or fidelity to a party, may easily overpower the vigilance of a mind habitually well disposed, and prevail over unassisted and unfriended veracity.

(Idler 84)

In other words, the ills that human nature is heir to will almost always prevent perfect truthfulness in biography.

The inclination to abuse, if judgment can be made from the comments on it, was less prevalent than that to exalt. And today no one would agree with Mrs. Montagu's opinion that the Life of Johnson qualified as malicious dishonoring on Boswell's part. But that book inspired her to write despairingly to Mrs. Piozzi on the tendency of late eighteenth-century biography: "May the new invented mode of disgracing the dead & calumniating y^e living perish with the short lived work of Master Boswell."¹¹⁵ The abundance of what she considered unattractive or denigrating detail about Johnson brought forth that tirade; thus the growing tendency to attempt to present a living man, requiring intimate and homely detail, could be interpreted by reactionaries as a tendency to abuse.* Since the eighteenth century, biographers have moved so far past Boswell in revelation that one reviewer has called this "the age of the voyeur," asking,

*Possibly detail was not the sole reason to blame biography as abuse. The reviewer in Gentleman's Magazine, 1792, of the Memoirs of the Life of Gilbert Wakefield wrote, "We observe, with pain, that modern biography is become a vehicle for abusive reflections on the writer's contemporaries and acquaintance. For this we may thank Monsieur Bayle, who took every opportunity of introducing into his Biographical Dictionary sentiments repugnant to Religion and Morality" (p. 737).

What moral right have we to be party to the anatomical details of Ernest Hemingway's collapse into alcoholic rage and creative impotence? Are the illustrious dead, to whose gifts we owe so much, to go as naked as the living?¹¹⁶

Mrs. Montagu might have asked the same question, and her reason might have been similar; the twentieth-century critic concluded that of the very great writers "we ought not to know too much." Such "banal intimacy" as he found in Carlos Baker's Ernest Hemingway should be avoided, for it blurs rather than sharpens the reader's focus on Hemingway's works.¹¹⁷ Of course, Mrs. Montagu's standard of simple decency is not the same as the critic's standard of literary appreciation, but their answer to the question of how much to tell is the same: not everything.

For most critics, however, the possibility of abuse was a less serious threat than an artistic one. The use of intimate detail is essential to the creation of the sense of a living man, but it is a practice that can easily be overdone. To readers and critics, accustomed to the saints'-lives style, homely details showing a subject as a human being were dull, pointless, and distasteful. If a man made his name as a public servant, they reasoned, his public activities were the only ones that could be of interest. Comment has been made on the paucity of personal information in the lives by Burnet, who considered "trifling accounts, of the childhood and education, and the domestic or private affairs" as mere padding.¹¹⁸ After Burnet and until after 1750, I found no derogatory comment about the proliferation of personal detail or anecdote, but it is hard to say whether the practice of using them went into eclipse or readers simply became accustomed to them and liked them. Since most biographies of the first half of the century dealt with men dead some years (excepting the Grub Street works about men

sometimes not yet buried)--Middleton's Cicero, Mallet's Bacon, Johnson's "Blake" and "Drake"--such detail or anecdote probably was not available and research was limited to public records. After 1750, however, there were numerous complaints that biographers were failing to use taste or judgment in the selection of detail, beginning with Rambler 60's condemnation of meaningless detail. Johnson's opinion was echoed eight years later in a Monthly Review article on John Jortin's Erasmus, which called detail-gatherers "laborious drones" without "genius, taste, or learning."

These industrious drudges, equal to any fatigue themselves, seem to imagine that their readers can never be tired They, no doubt, think it the office of a faithful historian, not to omit the most trivial anecdote; and they often insult our patience with tedious relations, as uninteresting as if they were to acquaint us--That on such an hour, of such a day, in such a year, the Hero of their endless tale sat down, to pair his nails.¹¹⁹

A corollary to the surfeit of detail about great figures was a surfeit of biographies about small ones. Because there were just so many major figures around, the popularity of life-writing was extended to men and groups of men who previously would have been allowed to rest unmemorialized. From monarchs to chimneysweeps was the progress of James Granger's Biographical History,¹²⁰ and presumably these volumes were snapped up, for a total of seventy-eight biographical collections appeared in England between 1660 and 1800¹²¹--totaling more than one every two years, most in the eighteenth century. They, and the many more biographies that appeared in magazines and newspapers, can be accounted for by the antiquarian impulse (which produced hundreds of the lives in Nichols's Anecdotes) and the desire of friends or relatives

or parishioners to preserve the memory of a loved one. The effect was, however, according to a writer in The Lounger of 1785, to debase the form:

That department of writing. . . has been of late so much cultivated, that it has fared with biography as with every other art; it has lost much of its dignity in its commonness, and many lives have been presented to the publick, from which little instruction or amusement could be drawn. Individuals have been traced in minute and ordinary actions, from which no consequences could arise, but to the private circle of their own families and friends, and in the detail of which we saw no passion excited, no character developed, nothing that should distinguish them from common occurrences, 'which dully took their course, and were forgotten.'¹²²

The Anecdotes, warmly praised in the Gentleman's Magazine as a valuable collection of information, has indeed served as Nichols meant it to, as a mine for the future--the Dictionary of National Biography is heavily indebted to it¹²³--but Horace Walpole believed it was not worth Nichols's pains, and wished "that he would not dub so many men great. I have known several of his heroes, who were very little men."¹²⁴

Summary of Theory

Nichols doubtless did err in calling many of his subjects "great," but Walpole was bucking the trend of the century when he sneered at the littleness of the figures in the Anecdotes (and by implication in the Gentleman's Magazine, for many of the lives in the former were first published in whole or in part in the latter). Choice of biographical subjects moved during the century from kings to cabbage-growers, and the "democratization," as Stauffer calls it,¹²⁵ was felt in the Magazine.

The purposes of Gentleman's Magazine writers changed too. Like other biographers in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth cen-

turies, those of the 1740's sought to satisfy public curiosity by publishing information about well-known persons. Usually they also painted the subject's virtues so glowingly that the reader might be inspired to emulate them. Although the purpose of satisfying curiosity about the famous never waned, by the end of the century Gentleman's Magazine biographers had another purpose, to preserve the memories of those who were not famous or to pay tribute to an old friend or teacher. Although establishment of the truth was a goal in the 1740's and the 1790's, in the latter decade "truth" seemed to mean any fact a writer could find and set down, rather than the general truths that Johnson inserted in his Magazine biographies (arising from the particulars of his subject's life).

The issues of eighteenth-century biographical theory--use of anecdotes, of intimate detail, and of discrediting facts--are not much evident in the Magazine biographies of either decade. The few anecdotes are usually illustrative of character, and there are no details that a twentieth-century reader would consider "intimate" (except, perhaps, the existence of a natural daughter or intrigues with women, but these are rare). Since the majority of the biographers were presenting their subjects as good men or women, neither are there any discrediting facts, except when the thesis of the biography demanded them, as in the cases of the executed Scot rebels (slurs are made on their "principles") and of the demagogue Rienzy in the 1740's. No Magazine subject in the 1790's is presented as so wicked as those, but there is somewhat greater honesty in the description of characters--one man was quick-tempered, another impecunious. Still, no real moral lapses are named.

Although they may have faced the same problems of finding and selecting facts, Magazine biographers rarely mentioned them. They often listed their sources, which were usually public records or printed material in the 1740's, sometimes personal material (such as private or family papers) in the 1790's. In both decades complaints were made about untruths circulating about their subjects, which this biography would clear up. If they had to decide whether to make public a scurrilous detail, there is no evidence of it in the biographies, and nothing is there, in the judgment of a twentieth-century reader, that might pain a survivor. In neither decade, then, did Magazine biographers face the criticism leveled at James Boswell after his revelations about Johnson. In attitude toward subjects if not in subjects, the Gentleman's Magazine at the end of the century was publishing biographies very like those it published at mid-century.

Biographies Outside the Gentleman's Magazine

Outside the Magazine, however, change is more apparent. To show that Nichols, although a diligent compiler, did not go as far as his contemporaries in the changes in the form, style, and subject of biography, this section will summarize Donald A. Stauffer's observations in The Art of Biography in Eighteenth Century England on the trends of the century in life-writing outside periodicals.

The word that best describes the history of biography in the eighteenth century is "expanding"—expanding in subject matter, in materials, in forms, and in audience. Spurred by the success of novels and autobiographies and inspired by their methods, biographers increased

in number too, as did the outlets for their writing. The number of biographies of literary value or importance in the history of the genre may be an index of its vitality, for Stauffer lists six for the first decade of the eighteenth century, twenty-two for the fifth, and fifty-seven for the tenth.¹²⁶ The popularity of collections of lives, Christian lives, and sensationalism remained high in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but in the latter there were also some changes: increasing subjectivity, expansion of the number of subjects suitable for biography, more use of details, greater regard for truth, and new attention to form and style.

Some tendencies of biography with roots in the seventeenth century persisted throughout the eighteenth. Antony Wood's collection of lives of Oxford scholars was one of many collections of lives, and one on comparatively logical grounds at that. Limited collections continued to be popular in the late eighteenth century. Horace Walpole, in his collection of the lives of noble and royal authors, listed collections on odder principles:

Balthazar Bonifacius made a collections of such as had been in love with statues: Ravisius Textor, of such as have died laughing: Vossius, of chronologers: Bartholinus, of physicians who have been poets. There are catalogues of modern Greek poets; of illustrious bastards; of translators; of Frenchmen who have studied Hebrew. . . .¹²⁷

Other more general collections were Thomas Fuller's The History of the Worthies of England, 1662, and Edmond Bohun's The Great Historical, Geographical and Poetical Dictionary, 1694; in the same tradition were Thomas Mortimer's British Plutarch, 1762, and Silvester Harding's The Biographical Mirrour, 1795-1802. The epitome of collected biographies would have been the second edition of the Biographia Britannia, which

finally foundered under its own weight after the fifth volume (F).¹²⁸ Such collections result from the penchant for organizing, classifying, and displaying knowledge, the same penchant that resulted in the foundation of the British Museum in 1759 and the first parts of the Encyclopædia Britannica in 1768.

One of the earliest kinds of subjects of biography remained popular throughout the eighteenth century, the Christian life. Some of the earliest biographies in English, Ælfric's saints' lives of the last decade of the tenth century, are in the same tradition that produced Izaak Walton's lives of Anglican divines in the mid-seventeenth century and the "Memoirs of Bernard Gilpin" in the 1794 Gentleman's Magazine. In the late seventeenth century came collections of Christian biographies: Samuel Clarke's Marrow of Ecclesiastical History, 1650, and William Winstanley's A Loyal Martyrology, 1662.¹²⁹ In the eighteenth century Christian divines gave way to Christian laymen, martyrs to those who triumphed on earth, biography to autobiography and theology to emotion, but the interest in Christian life was maintained. With the decline of the number of clergymen so honored came the decline of interest in theology; the laymen who replaced them as subjects displayed more emotional vigor than intellectual. Most of the eighteenth-century lives were by or about Quakers and Methodists, but Baptists, Puritans, Catholics, and Presbyterians also had their spokesmen; the Anglicans were relatively quiet, except about political issues.¹³⁰ Quakers by 1725 had published more than eighty confessions and journals, mostly concerned with conversion and religious life.¹³¹ The most prominent Methodist example is John Wesley, whose Journal was not published until

1827 but of whom there was a biography as early as 1792, the year of his death, by John Whitehead. That other Methodist biographies were written is partially attributable to Wesley, who required that his itinerant preachers submit to him a record of their lives, conversions, and ministerial careers; these were often used in the Methodists'

Arminian Magazine.¹³² Emphasis in all these non-Anglican lives was on individual experience and response¹³³ rather than on external events, an emphasis that coincided with that of non-religious biographies.

Satisfaction of vulgar curiosity was a third tendency of biography that persisted throughout the century. Although the purpose of such works as criminals' lives or accounts of crimes was sometimes ostensibly to point with alarm, little moral value could be attributed to, say, The case of John Atherton, Bishop of Waterford in Ireland. Who was convicted of the sin of uncleanness with a cow, and other creatures, for which he was hanged at Dublin, Decem. 5, 1640. Curiosity about quirks of nature, both human and external, was catered to by such publications as these, found in a single volume at the Bodleian:

accounts of Newgate criminals; taunts against the French king; prophecies of James Ussher, Archbishop of Armagh; stories of fires, Quakers and impostors; or coronation ceremonies; ghosts, and sextuplets; of devils which appeared to old bawds and of unnatural and cruel fathers, sons, daughters, and uncles; a life of the murderer Edward Jefferies and another of the adventurer Captain Avery.¹³⁴

Stories of man's inhumanity to man poured from the presses: anecdotes of John Reinhold Patkul (1761), who was broken alive on the wheel, the sufferings of a Protestant galley-slave on a French ship (translated by Oliver Goldsmith in 1758). The reward for lack of virtue was often biographical attention, for criminals' stories, usually published just

before or after their executions, were immensely popular in the first third of the century. For twopence one could buy a collections of the confessions and dying words of the unfortunates executed at Tyburn on a given day; these were verified and signed by the prison chaplain, for those who wanted authenticity.¹³⁵

If one's stomach were not up to the bestial or the criminal, he could take refuge in what was potentially a more harmful form of the study of human nature in books: gossip, sometimes meant to hurt. Thomas Whitehead, butler, angry because the Duchess of Kingston tried to cut off his legacy from the Duke, turned out Original Anecdotes of his late master in 1792 to show what life was like ⁱⁿ a noble's home.¹³⁶ Both Letitia Pilkington, whose ^lmemoirs were published at mid-century, and her son John Carteret Pilkington, whose Real Story was published in 1760, were masters of the art of biographical blackmail; those who refused to subscribe to their works were pilloried in succeeding volumes.¹³⁷ A trifle higher on the scale of moral value, perhaps, were the lives of soldiers, sailors, adventurers, and travelers. Travel stories, for instance, could be as revealing of character as straight biography; witness Boswell's and Johnson's accounts of their journey in Scotland. And travel stories could be educational--how else might the average reader find out about life in Patagonia (as told by John Byron, 1768) or Kamchatka (as told by the Count de Benyowsky, 1790)?¹³⁸ A soldier who wrote his memoirs in prison was the Scot Major Alexander Rankings, who had served twenty-eight years in five countries; his story, which Stauffer praises as adding art to truth, was published in 1719.¹³⁹ William Fuller, impostor, prisoner, and spy, wrote his own story, published in

1701, and Abel Roper's and two anonymous biographies of him were published in 1692, 1700, and 1701, respectively.¹⁴⁰ Another odd character was Bampfylde-Moore Carew, who abandoned his schooling to become king of the beggars; two biographies of him were published in the 1740's. The appeal of such lives seems to have been in their deviation from the ordinary; the reader bought them to marvel at the variety of possibilities open to human life, for in reading them he could rarely feel that he and the subject had a great deal in common.

A biographical form deriving from fiction (rather than history) was the life-and-adventures or life-and-loves type. The former substituted real people for the heroes of picaresque novels, and the latter is kin to the seventeenth-century French romance. For instance, the fictional Robinson Crusoe was followed by Isaac James's factual biography of Alexander Selkirk, 1800. Novels by Eliza Heywood and Mrs. Manley, usually historical romances, were followed by the biographies and autobiographies of Constantia Phillips, George Anne Bellamy, and Sarah Gooch (1748, 1785, and 1792).¹⁴¹ Readers' interest in personality and emotional involvement remained constant, but true stories were substituted for fiction.

Interest in biography was high in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but the contents of the works changed from records of public actions to record of (or speculation on) private feelings. Although "truth" remained the nominal goal, the eighteenth century "at least began to realize that truth is not necessarily or wholly discoverable in outward action."¹⁴² Stauffer lists as main causes for the shift the growing use of literary methods and the increasing writing of Christian

biographies and autobiographies.

Created characters in novels or on the stage could be exposed and dissected in detail, and readers, ever interested in another's most intimate feelings, were delighted to know a stranger, say, Clarissa Harlowe, as well as they knew themselves. The appeal of the practice of recording not only external actions but also the mental activity that led to them was apparent to biographers. The result was increasing use of private papers, letters, diaries, and meditations that would reveal the subject's private character and personality. Sprat refused to use Cowley's letters in the late seventeenth century, but by the last quarter of the eighteenth letters were a major part of Mason's biography of Gray and a large part of Boswell's Life of Johnson. Another way that interest in literature promoted subjectivity in biography was that the public was interested in lives of literary men, who usually did not lead lives packed with adventure; hence, any biography of an author must concentrate on what went on in his mind. Subjectivity was promoted also by the growth of autobiographies, especially spiritual records, and biographies of eminent Christians. As Johnson pointed out, autobiography is potentially more truthful than biography, for a man's real feelings and reasoning are known only to himself.

Seeking the appeal of the representation of internal debate and conflict, some biographers assumed the mantle of omniscience and treated their subjects as subjects of novels. As early as 1708 was published the anonymous Secret History of the relationship of Queen Elizabeth and the Earl of Essex, in the form of narrative by the queen and others; in mood it is similar to the late seventeenth-century

romances.¹⁴³ Biographies of Biblical characters, such as "a lady's" The Life and Actions of Jesus Christ, 1785, were especially susceptible to hypothesis, speculation, and sheer fiction, including speeches with very little Biblical substantiation. An instance is a life of Pontius Pilate, published in 1753, in which "psychological speculation and historical background" conceal the fact that almost nothing is really known about him.¹⁴⁴ Most attempts at reproducing the mind of the subject, however, were more convincing; Boswell, for instance, is rather better substantiated. The increasing emphasis on subjectivity had several results. Biographers had to have more than an infinite capacity for research; if possible, they had to know their subjects personally; if not, they had to have deep empathy with them. Biographies could be read with greater sympathy, if to understand all is to forgive all. And the reader, seeing that the motives of a great man's great actions might be the same as his motives, for a small one, could hear the beat of the unchanging human heart.

The growth and influence of autobiographies by members of all classes was also part of a second change in biography during the eighteenth century, the expansion of subject matter, or "democratization." Kings and eminent clergymen were, before 1700, almost the only biographical subjects, the one representing the state and the other representing the future state. A third possible kind of subject was the great private man, whose story would be told as part of the history of a great family (and that as part of the history of the nation). Examples are the lives of Charles I, John Donne, and the three North brothers. Seventeenth-century subjects were characterized by devotion to political

or religious ideals; eighteenth-century subjects, by energy, ability, oddity, or devotion to a mercantile ideal.* The change is evident in the abundance of biographies of members of all ranks of society, the writing of biographies for profit, and the publication of lives that had no significance except for the subjects.

It is indeed an innovation of the century that a twenty-six-year-old nobody should record his life only because he has been transported to the Colonies for seven years for robbery; that the life of a pious servant-girl in France, to whom nothing except her death ever happened, should be widely read; that a nameless household drudge should write, almost from the parish workhouse, her own detailed story of starvation and scourgings; and that the wastrel son of Irish Quaker parents should believe all the world was eager to hear of his debts and mistresses. . . .¹⁴⁶

Not all the subjects were so unimportant: Robert Walpole, of the upper middle class, was the subject of seven biographies (two largely anecdotal) and six biographical attacks between 1729 and 1799 because of his political power and abilities.¹⁴⁷ Many middle- and lower-class subjects, however, were relatively unimportant--among the subjects were merchants, Dissenters, aldermen, antiquarians, booksellers, financiers, soldiers, and apothecaries. Such biographies must have satisfied the desire of the middle and lower classes to read about someone like themselves: lives and problems of kings probably sounded like romance to them; lives and problems of merchants were real.

The expansion of the reading public to merchants' families and servants furthered the third major change in biography in the eight-

*The importance and power of money is indicated by the building of amusements parks such as Ranelagh and Vauxhall (for the benefit of all but the poorest classes), the new gambling craze, and, perhaps most significant, the making of forgery a capital offense.¹⁴⁵

eenth century: the increasing use of detail and of anecdotes. The new public sought entertainment in its reading and was pleased by stories of runaways, students-cum-beggars, and female soldiers; but it also sought the convincing, and it could be convinced only by the "sense of actuality" given by concrete detail.¹⁴⁸ The anecdote, the single most striking characteristic of post-1750 biographies, satisfied the desires to be entertained and to be convinced, and the word is incorporated into more than eighty titles and sub-titles in Stauffer's Bibliographical Supplement; many more works, judging by his comments, consisted largely of anecdotes. Examples are Biographical Anecdotes of the Founders of the French Republic, 1797, Biographical Anecdotes of William Hogarth, 1781, and The Witticisms, Anecdotes, Jests, and Sayings, of Dr. Samuel Johnson, 1791. Ideally, the anecdote was witty, brief, and revelatory of character, serving to flavor rather than to dominate. Actually, it became the only ingredient of a number of "biographies," or ana, the little stories strung together pointlessly with little or no chronological thread. An example of such a compiler is John Nichols, who at least claimed his object was the preservation of facts rather than the art of composition. Some authors or editors evaded the demands of biography by naming their works ana: Atterburyana and Whartoniana, both published in 1727 and denounced by Stauffer as "pointless jumbles beneath contempt"; Drossiana, 1789; and Walpoliana, 1799.¹⁴⁹ Although it is doubtful that every shred of information regarding Johnson deserved to be recorded, as Boswell believed, the use of anecdote is thoroughly justified in the Life. That was, of course, not always the case, and the value of anecdotes and collections of them was

determined by the judgment and integrity of the author or collector.

Craving for a moral lesson gave way to plain curiosity as a motive for reading biography in the eighteenth century, and the change led to another shift in values for the genre: from moral value to truth. No longer did a biographer have to edit his material so as not to raise a blush in a virgin's cheek, nor did he have to pick out actions and quotations to serve as lessons in virtue (or in how to avoid vice). He could, rather, record what was interesting and distinctive about his subject, and let the reader make of it what he would. Read fifty saints' lives, and you may feel that you have read but one, for holiness in one man is very like holiness in another. But the eighteenth century began to seek the qualities that made men different.

And if Columba, Cuthbert, Odo, and Dunstan alike possessed fortitude, patience, humility, charity, and the rest, no one in England but Samuel Johnson went through London touching every other lamp-post, twitching spasmodically, collecting orange-peel, or muttering "too-too-too" under his breath.¹⁵⁰

The ideal of truth did not win an overwhelming victory, even in the latter part of the century--Mason altered Gray's letters, and Boswell did not tell all he knew--but at least biographies, except for those in funeral sermons, no longer read like Sunday-school lessons.

At the same time that biographers were freed from the didactic obligation, they began to give more attention to form and style. Correctness in prose expression had been valued since the time of Dryden, and many eighteenth-century lives were written in his formal but easy way. Some biographers imitated the "informal, flowing, conversational style" of Laurence Sterne, and others, usually preachers, mastered an

"oral" style developed from their speaking experience.¹⁵¹ The variety of ways to impose form on a kind of work that is basically chronological is surprising. The Plutarchan scheme of balancing two lives was used in Curious Particulars and Genuine Anecdotes Respecting the late Lord Chesterfield and David Hume, with a Parallel Between These Celebrated Personages, 1788.¹⁵² Pope's theory of the ruling passion was embodied in a number of biographies in which details were arranged around a single idea. An example is the Biographical Sketch, in Fugitive Crayons, of Horace Walpole, Earl of Orford, 1799, by John Pinkerton, who considered Walpole's passion his "sense of caste."¹⁵³ Some biographers concentrated on a single event or fact, usually the *raison d'être* of the work: the conversion of a Turk to Christianity, dwarfhood, deformity, or blindness.¹⁵⁴ One of the earliest forms tried was also one of the oddest, John Dunton's Life and Errors, 1705, in which there is an alternation of chapters between the life as it was lived and the life as it should have been lived.¹⁵⁵ Novelty of presentation persisted throughout the century.

These trends, continuing and new, show up in varying degrees in the Gentleman's Magazine. The use of collections of lives was almost nil in the early years, consisting of a group of criminals in 1731 (given a paragraph each) and a group of Scot rebels executed in 1746, but in the early 1790's came several large groups of poets and of heraldic writers. The Magazine under neither Cave nor Nichols published many "Christian" biographies, strictly speaking, for in the lives of various divines the main interest seemed to lie elsewhere than in religion: in Father Paul Sarpi's rebelliousness, for instance, in Johnson's 1738 life. Although

religion--always Christian--was mentioned occasionally, to demonstrate a Christian life does not seem to have been the main purpose in any case. Of the seven clergymen's lives in the early 1790's Magazine, three were written as answers to queries, and one consists of several letters of bickering over the subject's reputation--only that of Bernard Gilpin approached the old saint's-life style. In neither decade was there the sensationalism of, say, the criminals' lives of the first third of the century or of the life-and-loves stories of the second third. The curiosity satisfied in the Gentleman's Magazine was not vulgar, but the number of queries published monthly, under the title "Index Indigator," indicates that it did satisfy proper curiosity.

The three major shifts in the century, increasing subjectivity, use of detail, and democratization, are slightly less apparent within the Magazine than outside it. Magazine biographies of the 1790's were more likely to be memoirs of the subject than the results of research; thus personal detail was available to the later biographers. They did not, however, delve into internal conflict or speculate on hidden motives, for usually they seemed to want to present only a placid exterior portrait of an old friend. The historical importance of the subjects of the 1790's is considerably less than that of the subjects of the 1740's, which seems to bear out Stauffer's observation of democratization; certainly no Blake or Drake was written about in the latter period. However, the subjects of that time must have had some importance in their own era, for today sixty-five, or about 77 per cent, of the subjects of the biographies of the 1790-94 Magazine are listed in the Dictionary of National Biography. (Of the subjects of 1738-49, seven of eight English-

men, or $87\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, are included there.)

The Gentleman's Magazine, then, followed some trends of the century and avoided others. In both periods to be considered in this paper, the interests and personalities of the editors guided the editorial selection, and both Cave and Nichols doubtless sought what they believed would please their readers.

CHAPTER THREE

BACKGROUND OF MAGAZINES AND THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE

If a magazine is, as Edward Cave defined it in an "Advertisement," a storehouse of abridgements of the best items from a myriad of news-sheets and essay journals, collected monthly that they should not be lost,¹ the Gentleman's Magazine was perhaps, as C. Lennart Carlson calls it, "The First Magazine." But the honor is specious, considering the hundreds of publications before 1731 from which Cave gleaned techniques and objectives. Cave's title is credited by the New English Dictionary as the first use of the word "magazine" to refer to a periodical publication, but "Sylvanus Urban" himself, writing in 1856, admitted that Cave invented the name but not the thing. That honor Urban gave the Monthly Recorder (Crane and Kaye No. 1730) (GM, 1856, p. 6). The uniqueness of Cave's work was in the peculiar combination of old practices rather than in innovation of new ones.

Other Magazines

Even before 1700, more than seven hundred serial publications, both periodicals and newspapers, had been offered the English public,² some enduring only one issue. Richmond Bond divides them, and those of the first three decades of the eighteenth century, into several general types, each of which contributed some of its qualities to the

Gentleman's Magazine: the miscellany, the essay journal, the historical collection, and the review. Peter Motteux's Gentleman's Journal; or, The Monthly Miscellany (Crane and Kaye No. 276), published from January 1692 to November 1694, was the first of the purely literary miscellanies, offering very little news.³ A typical issue included "A Discourse on the true Beginning of the Year," essays on time and on eternity, an installment of a novel, verses, and "A Discourse on the Question, whether Love is sooner lessen'd by the Cruelty of a Mistress, than by her Kindness."⁴ But Motteux's intention of being "but the editor of others' verse and prose" did not work out--contributors were few, then non-existent. Motteux was having to write whole issues by himself and by 1693 was begging his readers for contributions.⁵ Imitators of the Gentleman's Journal included John Oldmixon's Muses Mercury (Crane and Kaye No. 588), 1707-08, and Monthly Miscellany (Crane and Kaye No. 1726), 1707-10, both primarily literary.⁶

The essay journal, the type read and studied most today, attracted some of the best writers of the Augustan period: Joseph Addison, Richard Steele, and Daniel Defoe. One of the longest-lived essay journals was Defoe's Review, 1704-13, which began as comment on the affairs of France but whose most timeless and popular section was "Advice from the Scandalous Club," a question-and-answer section that enabled him to criticize a variety of contemporary ills.⁷ For instance, in the "Miscellanea" of 15 August 1706, a letter concerning a debtor inspired Defoe's article on the cruelty of the Law of Escapes.⁸ Lineage of the periodical essay genre is traced to the Tatler department, "From My Own Apartment," in which Steele was free to write on any subject that

interested him. For instance, in an essay from his apartment 16 March 1710, Steele marveled at the variety and lack of consequence of the complaints he received from people sunk in melancholy over a lost lap dog or misplaced muff. The essay ends in a "dream," the idea of which is that any possession or quality can cause calamity or joy, depending on the recipient.⁹

The idea of summarizing the news in a monthly publication, usually from more frequent sheets, was as old as the 1645 Monthly Account (Crane and Kaye No. 1714). Other seventeenth-century publications on the same principle were the Monthly Intelligencer, 1660 (Crane and Kaye No. 1709); the Monthly Recorder; Modern History, 1687-89 (Crane and Kaye No. 560); and The Present State of Europe, 1690-1736 (Crane and Kaye No. 746). The advantages customarily claimed by these collections were that they were cheap, usually a penny, time-saving, and truthful.¹⁰ In 1702 Samuel Buckley made the same claims for his newspaper The Daily Courant, London's first daily paper (consisting only of translations of articles from Dutch and French newspapers, nothing local)¹¹ and in 1703 for his Monthly Register (Crane and Kaye No. 579). The monthly news reviews had the advantage of being able to weigh various reports against one another and to choose the most credible or to combine stories from several sources.

Review journals, at first consisting of extracts and summaries rather than of comment on new books, followed the founding of the Gentleman's Magazine but are akin to learned journals, which came long before. The first of the latter was the Royal Society's Philosophical Transactions, 1665-present (Crane and Kaye No. 798), which started the service

of reporting on discoveries and experiments. It and the Philosophical Collections, 1679, 1681-82 (Crane and Kaye No. 713) also published abstracts of scholarly books.¹² Periodicals on books or dealing with them in sections tended to summaries, extracts, and lists rather than opinion until the middle of the eighteenth century, when foundation of the Monthly Review in 1749 (Crane and Kaye No. 580) and the Critical Review in 1756 (Crane and Kaye No. 156) expanded the coverage from learned or scientific books to those of general interest for the general reader.¹³

These four types--miscellany, essay journal, historical collection, and review--although not strictly divisible, were distinguishable by objectives and appeals. Belles-lettres was the primary interest of such as the Gentleman's Journal, and although the motto was "prodesse et delectare," the "prodesse" was to be that obtaining in literature, and there was no attempt to please the middle-class merchant or artisan reader. Readers were sought among women, and Motteux even called one issue the Lady's Journal. Judging by diversity of content, Bond calls the Journal the "first magazine."¹⁴ Appeal of the essay journals was somewhat more intellectual. Under the surface entertainment was criticism of manners and mores, suggested by the quibbles and absurdities of fictitious clubs and question-and-answer columns. Appeal of the learned journals was less general, as their object was to provide a medium for exchange of scientific information and a forum for new ideas. Extracts from books in them and in review journals might also supply an average reader with all he needed or wanted to know of current science. The sole object of the historical collections was to supply accounts of major news

events, domestic or foreign, as concisely and truthfully as possible; this was usually done by giving the extracts from other publications and their dates, without comment.

The Gentleman's Magazine

The limitations of the types discussed above--and of journals in dialogue, questions and answers, or of poetry and fiction¹⁵--and the contrasting variety of content and appeal of the publications beginning with the Gentleman's Magazine were apparent even within the century to Andrew Kippis, who distinguished between previous periodicals and those calling themselves "magazines."

The invention of this new species of publication may be considered as something of an epocha in the Literary History of this Country. The periodical publications before that were almost wholly confined to political transactions, and to foreign and domestic occurrences. But the Magazines have opened a way for every kind of enquiry and information. The intelligence and discussion contained in them are very extensive and various; and they have been the means of diffusing a general habit of reading through the Nation; which, in a certain degree, hath enlarged the public understanding. Many young Authors, who have afterwards risen to considerable eminence in the literary world, have here made their first attempts in composition. Here, too, are preserved a multitude of curious and useful hints, observations, and facts, which otherwise might have never appeared; or, if they had appeared in a more evanescent form, would have incurred the danger of being lost.¹⁶

Kippis probably did not, however, use "magazine" as Cave had, to mean a collection of extracts, but to mean what the Gentleman's Magazine tended toward in the next decade, a medium for letters requesting and supplying information and as a repository for original material.

Probably the first issue of the Gentleman's Magazine, coming out in early February 1731, would not have called forth such an encomium as

Kippis's, although the title page did indicate the generality of appeal that would make the magazine famous and profitable. The contents were divided into ten sections: "A VIEW of the Weekly Essays and Controversies," poetry, domestic happenings, "Melancholy Effects of Credulity in Whitchcraft" (sic), stock prices, list of sheriffs, advertisements, foreign affairs, list of books recently published, and gardening tips and fairs. Under the first section were listed the subjects of the month's essays: Queen Elizabeth, ministers, treaties, liberty of the press, the Riot Act, armies, traitors, patriots, reason, criticism, versifying, ridicule, humours, love, prostitutes, music, pawnbrokers, surgery, and law--something for everyone.

The major part, thirty pages, was "A View of the Weekly Essays" and consisted of thirty-four summaries of essays, each given in the present tense: four from the Craftsman, four from Fog's Journal (both Tory papers), five from the London Journal (pro-Walpole), four from the Grub-street Journal, four from the Weekly Register, five from the Universal Spectator, four from the Free-Briton (pro-Walpole), two from the British Journal, one from the Daily Courant (Whiggish), and one from Read's Weekly Journal (Tory). The summaries were arranged by date--the four from the Craftsman, chronologically, the four from Fog's Journal, and so on--and balanced politically. The Craftsman's four essays, including two praising Queen Elizabeth for increasing the wealth and strength of England through exercise of power and another indirectly attacking Walpole though still without mentioning his name, were followed by the four from the London Journal which attacked the Craftsman by name and date. The first London Journal essay argued for the insti-

tution of law, even though some may be inconvenienced; another essay attacked the Craftsman's content and method; still another agreed that Queen Elizabeth was a good ruler, but added that the present Constitution and government were superior to hers. The essays from Fog's Journal then attacked a defence of the administration and the London Journal itself. The less political Grub-street Journal contribution was an essay on the use of criminals for medical experiments, which had been proposed by a Dr. Cheselden, particularly in the case of a man named Ray who had been condemned to death. The Grub-street Journal mocked the doctor by extending his argument--why not test the theory of humours by removing a man's spleen and seeing whether his temper improved? The Weekly Register extract was a criticism of the use of ridicule, aimed particularly at the Grub-street Journal. On the lighter side side are the Universal Spectator extracts, the first of which was a query: may a woman entertain several lovers at a time? The answer hedged: if nothing were meant but the choosing of the most deserving for a husband, all right; but considering the inconvenience, usually it would be unwise. A second query was ostensibly from a nineteen-year-old girl asking which of two suitors would be better, one favored by each parent; but the answer should be given quickly, as she intended to elope with a poor man she loved on Tuesday next.

Extracting from the essay journals was the nearest to an innovation that Cave accomplished, for the material in the rest of the magazine was familiar. That first issue had four pages of "poetry," mostly poor, including "The Ode for the new Year," by Colley Cibber, an ode by Stephen Duck, other poems on the new year, and "ingenious Epitaphs and

Epigrams." The section that makes the best reading today is probably the "Monthly Intelligencer," in which the news items, for which no sources are given, were arranged by date. It includes, besides lists of births, deaths, marriages, burials, and christenings in London, a subsection called "Casualties," which lists, usually in one or two sentences and without names, all the violent deaths the editor had heard of. For instance, "Mr. Morris, Peruke-Maker in Pall-Mall, hang'd himself, being Lunatick." Other "casualties" were a barbarous murder, a dreadful fire in the Brussels palace, the deaths of forty monks from a viper in a wine cask, and the wiping out by fire of a French village. Although the Gentleman's Magazine seemed to frown on belief in witches, which led to torture of innocents, it reprinted, with apparent seriousness, a story "given by a Gentleman of Unexceptionable Honour and Veracity" lately published at Edinburgh, concerning the appearance of a murderer in the guise of a gray dog. Items of such sensational quality were not to be unusual in the magazine.

The next few pages list deaths and marriages by dates, civil and military promotions, ecclesiastical preferments, and sheriffs appointed for the next year. After two advertisements, one seeking an arsonist in Southampton and one for an ague cure, are the stock prices. Another major section is the "Foreign Affairs," beginning with an epitome of the situation at the end of 1730, taking from the Post-Boy. Other items are from Constantinople, Venice, Vienna, Moscow, Paris, and Bern, with no sources listed. The rest of the first magazine comprises a list of fairs from 1 February to 12 March, advice for gardeners, and a list of books published in January (with prices, but no sellers).

During the next year, the magazine changed only slightly, and most alterations and innovations were directed at making it more useful to readers. In February 1731 they were requested to send the editor notices of fairs lest they be missed, and in March the table of contents was moved from the last page to the verso of the title page. At the end of June issue were lists of the contents of the magazines of the first six months, for the convenience of those who wished to bind them half-yearly. Another index, for all of 1731, followed the December issue. In October the title page for each month began carrying, above the list of sections, the line, in black-letter, "more in Quantity, and greater Variety, than any book of the Kind and Price." Also in October, Cave began inserting capital letters, A through I, between the two columns on each page, to make reference easier. The verso of the title page for the whole 1731 volume, with the emblem of a bouquet of various flowers in a closed hand, supplies the titles of eight papers excerpted frequently, "with their nominal authors."

By the second issue, Cave showed he would not waste the magazine's space: he gave only the gist of a Craftsman essay, then added, "but this Discourse consisting more of Invectives than Argument, we imagin'd our Readers would not be pleas'd with such personal Altercations." And an extract from the London Journal ended with the advice to refer to the previous month, where the same argument had appeared. A typographical device enabling the reader to grasp a conflict easily was stolen from Fog's Journal: The points of the Craftsman's "Vindication" were set in the left column, and extracts from a pamphlet of "Remarks" on the "Vindication" were set in the right (GM, 1731, pp. 251-53).

Internal evidence of Cave's success occurs on the July and August title pages, under the names of places where the magazine could be bought: "Where may be had any of the former numbers, the first being reprinted." The December 1731 advertisement on the contents page for sets of the magazine on "fine Royal Paper" with marble covers, at one shilling a number, indicated that such an offering was believed profitable. Foundation of the London Magazine in April 1732 was also evidence of Cave's success. Without naming his competitor, Cave ran a "letter" on the verso of the title page that month, ostensibly summarizing the magazine's services:

The Gentleman's Magazine is, perhaps, one of the most useful Things of the Kind that has been at any Time set on Foot; But this Usefulness must in Justice and Gratitude . . . be attributed to your unbyas'd Impartiality and Industry.
/The magazine/ will be many Years hence, an Authentick Collection for Historians to refer to when Disputes arise on the Manner and Spirit with which the present Controversies are carried on . . . many Historical Occurrences may here be found

(GM, 1732, p. 117)

Although the London Magazine had usually six pages more than the Gentleman's, there was in it less material, for larger type and larger slugs between the lines made up the difference.¹⁷ The following month, in May 1732, Cave responded to the competitor by better organizing the list of books recently published, arranging them under twelve separate headings, and in June he requested in an advertisement that booksellers send him the titles of their publications, which up until then he had gleaned from newspapers and advertisements (GM, 1732, p. 834, misnumbered "14"). Expansion of the magazine in the second year is indicated by the index, which in 1732 lists many more items than in the first year. Although the London Magazine was the most serious rival and the only one

that impelled Cave to make alterations in the Gentleman's, there were several other imitators, listed in a footnote to the "Preface" to the 1738 volume, by Samuel Johnson: Gentleman's Magazine and Monthly Oracle, 1736-38 (Crane and Kaye No. 1369a), Literary Magazine or the Select British Library, 1735 (Crane and Kaye No. 379), Eee; or, Universal Weekly Pamphlet, 1733-35 (Crane and Kaye No. 43), Country Magazine, General Magazine, Oxford Magazine, Distiller's Magazine, Manchester Magazine, Leeds Magazine, and Dublin Magazine (the last seven not listed by Crane and Kaye). Editorial sniping between the Gentleman's and the London magazines continued in columns and prefaces throughout the decade, but the result was rather publicity for both than any harm to circulation. "The Gentleman's Magazine is read as far as the English Language extends, and we see it reprinted from several places, in Great Britain, Ireland, and the Plantations," Johnson wrote in the "Preface" to the 1741 volume.

Two of Cave's major projects in the 1730's were improvement of the poetry section and publication of the Parliamentary debates. The April 1733 issue announced a contest for poems on the busts recently set up in the Queen's grotto at Richmond, for which first prize would be a volume of the magazine on the best paper, bound; second prize was a volume on common paper. For the same prize a second contest was announced in 1734, the subject to be astronomy. Unfortunately, the winners of the first two contests were the same two men, Moses Browne and John Duick, both of whom had contributed to the magazine previously. To attract other poets, Cave announced in July 1734 a prize he considered would lure major names--fifty pounds--and the subject, "Life, Death,

Judgment, Heaven, and Hell," to be treated in one poem, not individually (GM, 1734, p. 382). To Cave's surprise, "men of wit and genius" did not respond to such a sum, and the prize went again to Browne and Duick. Their poems were published in a "Gentleman's Magazine Extraordinary" at the end of August 1735 that also included "Proceedings of the last Session of Parliament." The unconquerable Browne also won the last poetry contest for a poem on the divine attributes, announced in April 1739.

A shift from emphasis on the essay extracts to Parliamentary news occurred in both the Gentleman's and London magazines in the mid-1730's, a change barely foreshadowed in a new index head in the June 1732 issue, "Political Points, Proceedings, and Debates in the English and French Parliaments." At first these were mere summaries, following the summaries of essays, but in August 1732 they were the lead feature. Despite the expiration of the Press Act in 1695, editors remained cautious, and when individuals' speeches were printed, names were slightly concealed: Sir Robert Walpole became "Sir R-----t W-----e." Accounts of Parliamentary proceedings were not published until the end of the session, so January's speeches did not appear until July, and sometimes this meant that the speeches of one session were still being published as the next began. In April 1738 the House of Commons resolved that it was a breach of privilege to publish accounts of its proceedings, either during or after a session, but both magazines found means to circumvent the edict. The Gentleman's began in June 1738 to publish "Debates in the Senate of Magna Lilliputia," ostensibly a report by the grandson of Lemuel Gulliver. The masquerade was carried out by assigning anagrammed names to Parliament members: Walpole was Walelop, Halifax was Haxilaf. Just in

case someone missed the names, an explanation appeared in the Supplement of 1739.

Edward Cave

Edward Cave's father was village cobbler of Rugby, Warwickshire, and it was because of a school policy to admit boys of small means, not his family's standing or wealth, that he was able to enter Rugby school in 1700, when he was eight.¹⁸ At school he was apparently called by his father's occupation--late in life, on visiting a school friend who had become a man of consequence, Cave sent the message by a servant that "Ned Cave the Cobler was come to visit him."¹⁹ At school the Rev. Mr. Holyock detected Cave's abilities and encouraged his progress, intending him for the university, but schoolboy pranks, including the loss of the reverend's wife's favorite cock, were blamed on Cave, and favor was withdrawn. The youth was not removed summarily from school, but given extra work and accused of selling help to his fellows; thus he was forced to quit the school and give up hopes for a university education and a literary profession.²⁰

Briefly Cave was clerk to an excise-collector and employee of a timber-merchant, but he stayed with neither. At the unusual age of twenty, he apprenticed himself to Freeman Collins, a successful London printer who in just two years sent him to Norwich to establish a newspaper. Cave was apparently successful there, but Collins died and Cave quit the apprenticeship on a "stipulated allowance," married a young widow, and joined the London printing house of John Barber. Barber, eventually Lord Mayor of London, influenced him for the Tories, and

Cave became a familiar in the offices of Mist's Journal, where he may have met Daniel Defoe.²¹ A clerkship in the London post office furthered his journalistic career, for it enabled him to obtain country newspapers, from which he could sell news to city papers for a guinea a week. This was so successful that he began also to send city news to the country.²²

Savings from his post office salary and correspondence fees enabled Cave to buy a small printing house at St. John's Gate, Clerkenwell, and to put into effect a plan he had for several years attempted to persuade printers and booksellers to join him in. The success of his project, the Gentleman's Magazine, was such that within fifteen months a coalition of powerful booksellers established the London Magazine, which copied the Gentleman's almost department for department; it survived until 1785,²³ but a number of other imitators rose and fell within a few years. Success is also indicated by the demand for reprint of early issues: the first two issues were in their fourth printing by August 1732, the June 1732 issue was reprinted just two months later, and by December 1733, some of the 1731 issues were being reprinted for the fifth time.²⁴ The ordinary standard by which success is measured, circulation, it is not possible to determine, although by 1746 Cave claimed in the "Preface" to be selling three thousand copies monthly; readership would be several times as large. (Carlson believes that Johnson's claim of ten thousand copies and John Hawkins's of fifteen thousand in the 1740's were exaggerations.²⁵)

Cave's journalistic and business acumen was strangely balanced by a tendency to publishing projects that did not work and a lack of

literary judgment. True, he recognized Johnson's ability and gave him the important task of writing the Parliamentary debates in 1741; but he considered he was giving Johnson quite a treat by introducing him to Moses Browne, pen-cutter turned poet.²⁶ Although phlegmatic of temperament, Cave was daring enough in print and was one of the first editors, in the 1730's, to publish Parliamentary debates. His source was at first Abel Boyer's Political State (Crane and Kaye No. 733) and later journals of the two houses and members of Parliament.²⁷ He was also interested in publishing poetry; although his own was bathetic, he occasionally was presumptuous enough to anger contributors by tinkering with poems published in the magazine.²⁸ This practice he defended in an essay on the verso of the 1737 title page; the changes were made that the poems "may be agreeable to the many Persons eminent for their Learning, Wit, and Quality, who are our Readers." Perceptive enough to devise the system of extracts that made the Gentleman's Magazine different and popular, Cave could be almost rude to writers and visitors to St. John's Gate. To an author he once said, "Mr ----, I hear you have just published a pamphlet, and am told there is a very good paragraph in it upon the subject of music: did you write it yourself?"²⁹ Although John Hawkins called him an "incompetent . . . judge of Johnson's abilities,"³⁰ Johnson himself retained an affection for his first patron and in 1756 wrote to Elizabeth Carter of "Poor Dear Cave" (then dead two years) that he "owed him much."³¹ Cave had not been particularly generous to Johnson, who remembered him in 1784 as a "penurious paymaster" who "would contract for lines by the hundred, and expect the long hundred," but also as "a good man [who was] always delighted to have his

friends at his table."³² Perhaps the most engaging of Cave's characteristics was his utter devotion to the magazine, the most successful of his publishing projects. Both that devotion and his naivete are revealed in Johnson's memory that

such was then his minute attention and anxiety that the sale should not suffer the smallest decrease, that he would name a particular person who he heard had talked of leaving off the Magazine, and would say, "Let us have something good next month."³³

In Nichols's report to Boswell on Johnson's last days is the note that Cave "never looked out of his window, but with a view to the Gentleman's Magazine."³⁴ That obsession, although charming, did not contribute to the man's charm, and, while Johnson's memoir of him (in the magazine immediately after his death in early 1754) is affectionate, strain is evident in the effort to speak well of the dead. Despite his success, Cave could never relax, was never quite at ease with the literary figures who needed him as much as he needed them.

John Nichols

Son of an Islington baker named Edward Nichols, John Nichols was apprenticed 6 February 1759 for twenty pounds to the William Bowyer printing house, known for its fine scholarly work.³⁵ John, then in his fourteenth year, had had eight years of schooling at John Shield's academy, where he studied Latin, arithmetic, geography, and merchant's accounts, and his education was furthered by lectures he attended with Bowyer as an apprentice.³⁶ He must have been the traditional good apprentice, for Bowyer not only returned to Edward Nichols one half the apprenticeship fee, payable at the end of the apprenticeship if John behaved well, but in 1766, on admission to the Stationers' Company, the youth

became his master's partner. Evidence of Bowyer's regard for him is not only in the partnership (which followed the failure of a partnership with another man), but also in a letter of instructions sent John, who was on a mission to Cambridge. The letter ends,

My pride will be to see you come forward, & in the way to make a Figure like the Strahans & the Woodfalls, much greater than, Good John, Y^r sincere Friend and Well-wisher,
W. Bowyer.³⁷

And Bowyer, dying 18 November 1777, left to John Nichols a large part of his library and all the personal estate not left to his family.³⁸

Nichols's first editorial contribution to the Gentleman's Magazine was an affectionate memoir of Bowyer that ran four installments.³⁹

The year after Bowyer died, Nichols began printing part of the Gentleman's Magazine and bought into it, though the David Henry family retained a majority share. He was sole printer after 1781 and sole manager and editor after Henry's death in 1792, continuing so until his own death in 1826. During his nearly half-century association with the magazine, it was at the height of its quality and strength.⁴⁰

But editorship of a major magazine was not to Nichols a full-time job, for he continued as head of an active printing house and in 1804 was elected Master of the Stationers' Company.⁴¹ In his biography of himself in Literary Anecdotes are listed fifty-seven items, printed by his house, that he either edited or wrote, most of them multi-volume works such as The History of the County of Leicester, an edition of the Tatler, Steele's Correspondence, The Works of Swift, Progresses and Processions of Queen Elizabeth, A Collection of Wills, History and Antiquities of Dorset, History and Antiquities of Leicestershire, Antiquaries'

Museum, and the seventeen volumes of Literary Anecdotes and Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century.⁴²

The Anecdotes and Illustrations grew from the Biographical and Literary Anecdotes of William Bowyer, a 626-page volume published in 1782. By 1812-16 this had grown to nine volumes, mostly organized on the basis of a chronological list of the publications of Bowyer's press from 1699 on. Footnotes supply authors' biographies, references, bibliographies, epitaphs, and letters, gleaned from other books, newspapers, and Bowyer's files. For instance, pages 438-53 of Volume I have only two lines of text each (page 451 has three), the remainder of the pages being notes on the author, letters from or about him, and anecdotes about him. The increase in size of the 1812-16 work over the 1782 volume was a result not only of additional information but also of the end of some restraints, as Nichols noted in his preface:

The discoveries produced by diligent enquiry and friendly communications, and ever by the loss of friends whom it would have been indelicate to mention whilst living, have removed the veil under which many curious particulars, highly honourable to the persons of whom they are related, were unavoidably concealed.⁴³

Such discoveries are related in biographies proper in each volume, following the publications list. In Volume II, for instance, there are 461 pages of "Annals of Mr. Bowyer's Press, from 1752 to 1765," then "memoirs" of sixteen men. An example of Nichols's organization, or lack of it, is that the article on John Jortin notes that it was first abridged by Samuel Johnson and adds that "this is not the proper place for introducing any regular Memoir of Dr. Johnson." But then Nichols chronicles his acquaintance with Johnson and, in five pages of footnotes,

quotes six letters from him.⁴⁴ Volume III has 293 pages of "Annals" and fifty-nine biographies, including that of Nichols's partner David Henry.⁴⁵

Nichols did not, of course, personally do all the research, the poking into old church records and interviewing of survivors and friends that elicited the facts in those hundreds of biographies. Rather, he was a medium of exchange, often printing a brief account of a life in the magazine in hopes of calling forth additions and corrections from his readers. Less subtly, he used several pseudonyms--M. Green, Eugenio, Alphonso, A London Antiquary, J.N.⁴⁶--to request information on writers he meant to publish. In November 1778, "J.N." asked specific information on Swift;⁴⁷ Nichols's supplements to Swift's Works came out from 1775 to 1779. In 1782 "J. Nichols" wrote "Mr. Urban" asking Mrs. Atterbury's maiden name, as John Nichols was working on the Atterbury Correspondence.⁴⁸ Great as was Nichols's literary interest, the results of these queries show almost no literary ability. His aim was preservation and compilation of fact, not entertaining presentation. Although frequent anecdotes lend interest to his histories of eighteenth-century literature, the biographies themselves show no adjustment of the form to fit the subject. The pattern is like that of the 1790's Gentleman's Magazine lives: birth, ancestry, education, posts, deathbed scene if possible, publications, and character. The virtues of Nichols's work in biography, both in the magazine and in the Anecdotes, are completeness and accuracy. "I scarce ever saw a book so correct as his Life of Mr. Bowyer," Horace Walpole wrote a friend in 1782."⁴⁹ It is for that accuracy and completeness that Johnson and

Boswell, and biographers ever since, have reason to thank Nichols, who from a twentieth-century vantage point, "compiled more biographical detail concerning Eighteenth Century men of literature than all other writers of the time combined."⁵⁰

The help Nichols gave Johnson was not wholly altruistic, of course, as Nichols was printer for the Lives and had an interest in getting copy quickly and accurately. Letters between them and comparison of the texts indicate that Johnson was indebted to Nichols for information on Richard Duke, James Hammond, William Broome, Gilbert West, William King, and Elijah Fenton.⁵¹ "I had the good fortune to conciliate his esteem, by several little services," Nichols wrote of that help, "though, at the same time, I was perpetually goading him to furnish the press with copy."⁵² To Johnson Nichols was not an errand boy or mere printer, but a respected editor and friend. "I have looked often into your 'Anecdotes,'" he wrote Nichols in October 1782, "and you will hardly thank a lover of literary history for telling you, that he has been informed and gratified."⁵³ Help was given Nichols by Johnson too. Only a few days before his death in December 1784, he sent a list of authors of the Antient Universal History to Nichols, who proudly stated that the magazine was "selected as the repository of perhaps the last scrap he ever dictated for the press."⁵⁴ The last service Nichols performed for Johnson was joining the throng who attended the body to the Westminster Abbey grave,⁵⁵ and the first for James Boswell was giving him an account of Johnson's conversation during his last days, which Boswell gives verbatim (Life, IV, 408-10).

Besides that, Nichols helped Boswell with anecdotes of Johnson that

had already been printed in the Gentleman's Magazine and collected more for him. That Nichols was a regular help during the writing of the Life is indicated by a 1788 letter from Boswell to Johnson's former servant Francis Barber, asking help in getting copies of Johnson's diplomas. "I do not employ Mr. Nichols's friendly interposition at present, as he is in distress on account of the death of his wife." Some anecdotes appeared in a 1791 letter signed "J.N." praising the first edition of the Life, and these Boswell incorporated into the second. Nichols's advice to Boswell was practical as well as literary. As early as 1785, he advised the prospective biographer to write Johnson's life first, then sell it, for he would get "three--nay, 10--times as much."⁵⁷ Later, when Edmond Malone and Charles Dilly agreed that one method of printing would be better for the Life (involving using the same type for the quarto and octavo editions), Nichols persuaded Boswell that it was a poor idea because errors would be carried over and people would wait for the cheaper edition. Print fifteen hundred in quarto and there will be no trouble selling them, Nichols advised. "I was much obliged to this worthy, liberal-minded man," Boswell wrote.⁵⁸

Lest it be supposed that Nichols was ever collecting facts or juggling accounts, here is part of Boswell's letter to Malone of 8 March 1791:

Supped at the London Tavern with the stewards of the Humane Society, and continued till I know not what hour in the morning. John Nichols was joyous to a pitch of bacchanalian vivacity.⁵⁹

Nichols was also, according to Boswell (Life, IV, 254), a member of a club Johnson established at an ale-house on Essex Street. (Sir Joshua

Reynolds said it was "composed of a strange mixture of very learned and very ingenious odd people," named five of the learned, and added that it would not be proper to enumerate the latter; as John Nichols was not named, it may be assumed Reynolds considered him one of the "very ingenious odd people."⁶⁰)

CHAPTER FOUR

SURVEY OF MAGAZINE BIOGRAPHIES, 1731-49

This chapter will survey the biographies published in the Gentleman's Magazine from its founding in 1731 through 1749, concentrating on subjects, purposes, emphases, and biases. Although my main interest is in the lives published from 1738 to 1749, the few that appeared before then require consideration to show that publication of biographies did not begin in 1740, but with the first year of the magazine's history.

The Early Biographies

Not until Samuel Johnson joined the staff in 1737 did biographies appear often in the Magazine, but Cave had shown interest in them before. As early as the third issue there was "An Account of the Malefactors executed at Tyburn," short biographies of five men, with their names in black-letter, describing in a paragraph or two their crimes, lives, and deaths. The most significant parts of the stories, judging by the placement at the end, were the accounts of their deaths: John Chapel "was very Penitent to the moment of Death," but George Wych "seem'd to have but little contrition but what proceeded from the near approach of Death" (GM, 1731, p. 128). Reasons for publication of these lives were probably two: they had news value, as they men had been recently hanged, and their lives and ends were bad examples that surely would

serve as a negative incitement to virtue.

If one discounts those criminals' stories as real "life-writing," the first biography in the Magazine was published in June 1732 in the form of an extract, fewer than two hundred words, from a letter to Applebee's Journal.¹ Evidently it was the answer to a question that had appeared in the Journal, judging by the first sentence:

A.B., A Cantabrigian Correspondent, informs us, that those poems on Divine Subjects call'd, Steps to the Temple, were writ by Mr Crashaw, who had his Education at first at the Charter-house, then at Peter-house, Cambridge; was early acquainted with the Muses, and intimate with Mr Cowley.

(GM, 1732, p. 802)

The remainder of the paragraph mentions Crashaw's translations and conversion to Catholicism, ending in a rush:

But being seduced from his Faith by Romish Emissaries, went to Paris, where Mr Cowley met him in a poor and low Condition, and for the sake of their old Friendship, recommended him to the Protection of Q. Henrietta Maria, who sent him with Letters to Rome, whereby he was made a Canon of St Mary at Loretto, and died there 1650.

(GM, 1732, p. 802)

No editorial comment was offered, and it is impossible to say whether interest was supposed in Crashaw or whether his life was to be an example of a good English youth turned wrong by perfidious Catholics. The gracelessness of the prose indicates that art was the least of Cave's concerns in the publication of lives at that time. Truth was perhaps a greater concern, for he had published in April a summary of a letter to the editor of Fog's Journal:

A Correspondent desires Fog to resolve this Question, how long Time must pass after a King's Death, before it may be lawful and safe to publish his true and impartial Character? Nothing is more absurd than that old saying, De mortuis, nil, nisi bonum, it should rather be verum; nothing but Truth of the Dead.

(GM, 1732, p. 712)

Again, no comment was made, but the letter may refer to George I, who had died in 1727. The two other biographies I have found that were published in the 1730's were of well-known figures, more political than personal. Read's Journal had published extracts from Voltaire's Charles XII, which were in turn extracted for the Gentleman's Magazine and which caused comment in both the Craftsman and the Daily Courant; the comment was also repeated in the Gentleman's.² The English public was interested in Sweden's hero king and resentful of Voltaire's comments on the English; hence the extracts had high readership.³ The other biography appeared in 1735, from Fog's Journal, and was an "Extract of the Life of Sir Robert Cochran, prime minister to King James III. of Scotland." The sources were historians Lindsey and Buchanan, Lindsey quoted directly, and the life is wholly political, with nothing of the man himself except that he was hanged; the parallel to be drawn was doubtless with Sir Robert Walpole.

What the biographies of the 1730's had in common--and this was to persist through the 1740's--was public interest in the subjects, whether criminals or kings. The crowds that gathered for the execution of the "malefactors" and the multiple publication of the extracts from Voltaire are evidence that there was a market for the Gentleman's Magazine biographies. Cave was, to be sure, informing his readers, but he was satisfying public curiosity rather than creating interest.

Magazine Biographies from 1738 to 1749

The nineteen biographies that appeared in the Gentleman's Magazine between 1738 and 1749 had in common only that readers were likely to

have known something of the subjects already. Of the eight Englishmen described, the lives of seven appear in the Dictionary of National Biography, indicating substantial fame. Of the seven foreigners, four are described in the Encyclopædia Britannica of 1966. Otherwise, they may be categorized in several ways: there were eight Englishmen, four Scots, seven Europeans; three doctors, two poets, two clergymen, three sea captains, two scholars, two government figures, four rebels, one astronomer; eighteen men and one woman. More significant are the apparent reasons for publication: ten biographies had news value, as the subjects had only recently died; seven, judging by authorial comment, were designed as examples to the reader. One, although clearly a good example, also commemorated the subject, another simply assumed interest in him, and a third was meant to drum up interest in a forthcoming edition of the subject's work. (These total more than nineteen because some had dual purposes.) None of the lives were sensational; all the subjects were eminent in their fields by dint of hard work, and thus some utile might be drawn from any. The values the lives try to inculcate, in general, are patriotism, integrity, and scholarship.

With few exceptions, these biographies begin pedestrianly with "John Doe was born . . . ," briefly take up parentage and education, concentrate on public achievements, describe the deathbed scene, and conclude with a character sketch. (The exceptions are cases in which the life of the subject was less important than his character, as a good or bad example; it could also be that the information was not available.) The life-death-character pattern is a vestige of the seventeenth-century confusion of biography and character-writing, which Stauffer calls "an

unfortunate convention,"⁴ for the separation of events and character conveys a false impression of lack of relation between them.

Truth, if not always objectivity, was the main stated value of the Gentleman's Magazine authors. Several biographies have headnotes (or internal comment) like that to "The Life of Dr. Boerhaave":

We could have made it much larger, by adopting flying Reports, and inserting unattested Facts; a close Adherence to Certainty has contracted our Narrative, and hindred it from swelling to that Bulk, at which modern Histories generally arrive.

(GM, 1739, p. 37)

Truth is also vouched for, ostensibly, by allusion to well-known works such as Clarendon's History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England or by supplying sources in footnotes. The ideal of absence of bias (presentation of all facts whether favorable or unfavorable to the subject), on the other hand, is never mentioned in headnotes and is often openly, though not offensively, flouted. The biography of Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe, written by Henry Grove and Theophilus Rowe for her Miscellaneous Works,⁵ is like a saint's life in its unremitting praise. "The Life of Sir Francis Drake" is heavily colored by anti-Spain remarks, reflecting the war with Spain of the early 1740's. "A Panegyric on Dr. MORIN," translated from Fontenelle, is the title of one life (GM, 1741, p. 375). And, without always specific statements, the eight biographies of Englishmen convey a chauvinistic impression.

Although constraints on the biographers to whitewash their subjects was not apparently active, the fact that discreditable actions were reported in only six biographies--those of the four Scottish rebels, an English justice, and an Italian demagogue--suggests that it was in some cases operative. But it is probably less that authors feared readers

would pick up vicious ways than that they wrote with theses and simply omitted what was not corroborative. Although Mrs. Rowe did not have any "vicious habits," she probably did have some flaw in her character; but the object was to present her as a pious woman, and flaws would not have contributed to that picture. A dearth of information was occasionally mentioned as a problem, or, as in the case of the Boerhaave life mentioned above, an untrustworthy abundance. The headnote to "Some Account of the Life of John Philip Barretier" confessed frankly that materials for the life had not been procured, so extracts would be taken from his father's letters. Usually, however, sources were not mentioned.

Private information, except in the case of the Rowe biography, was not made use of by Gentleman's Magazine biographers of the 1740's, unless it came through another biography and hence was not really private any more. Too, several of the subjects had been dead many years, and personal and homely details not previously transcribed had been lost. "Characters" were given, but the traits mentioned are those having to do with public lives, such as Blake's integrity, exemplified by his taking command of a ship away from a brother who had not performed well (GM, 1740, p. 307).

The unstated objective of every biography in the magazine, of course, was readership--Edward Cave was too good a businessman to publish what might turn readers away. Ten of the 1740's lives had news value in that the subjects were eminent in their fields and had recently died. Boerhaave died in September 1738, his biography began in January 1739; Barretier died in October 1740, his life ran in December 1740. News value was especially obvious in the lives of three Scottish rebels hanged

22 August 1746; their brief lives appeared in the Gentleman's Magazine for that month.

But the rebels' lives had not only news value, or the quality of satisfying readers' curiosity about criminals. They were also good exempla--hanging is the just desert of rebels. Derogatory references were made to their "principles"; one had had his principles "poisoned"; another had kept company with rebels and "imbibed their principles." Another life presented as a bad example is that in January 1746 of Nicholas Rienzy, demagogic Roman tribune murdered by a mob in 1354, "a remarkable instance of the infatuation of prosperity" (GM, 1746, p. 3). Examples of another kind are the English admirals Francis Drake and Robert Blake, whose heroics in warfare and exploration were obviously meant to contrast with the assumed inadequacies of contemporary English admirals, such as Edward Vernon. The purpose of these biographies was pointed up by indirection in the headnote to Blake's:

At a time when the Nation is engaged in a War with an Enemy, whose Insults, Ravages and Barbarities have long called for Vengeance, an Account of such English Commanders as have merited the Acknowledgements of Posterity, by extending the Power, and raising the Honour of their Country, seem to be no improper Entertainment for our Readers. We shall therefore attempt a succinct Narrative of the Life and Actions of Admiral Blake, in which we have nothing farther in View than to do Justice to his Bravery and Conduct, without intending any Parallel between his Atchievements and those of our present Admirals.

(GM, 1740, p. 301)

The lives are so written that their utilitarian purpose is obvious; virtues and rewards are pointed out, viciousness is ended by public execution. Beyond the single word in the headnote above, however, nothing is said of entertainment, although it must have been assumed that there would have been pleasure in the reading. Incidents are few,

promotions and travels are many. Nor is there any discernible attempt to make the subjects come alive. Direct quotations are almost always missing, and there are few anecdotes. Thus, arousal of emotions, or sympathy, was not an object of these lives, except for the pride of country that the lives of Englishmen might inspire. Benefit to posterity, always tacit in descriptions of rewards to the virtuous, is stated openly as a goal after Johnson's plea that incidents of Boerhaave's life be preserved:

The skill to which Boerhaave attained, by a long and unwearied Observation of Nature, ought therefore to be transmitted in all its Particulars to future Ages, that his Successors may be ashamed to fall below him, and that none may hereafter excuse his Ignorance by pleading the Impossibility of clearer Knowledge.

(GM, 1739, p. 173)

Satisfaction of curiosity about the dead and commemoration of them are both accomplished in most of these biographies. The fame of the Dutch professor Dr. Boerhaave was such that Johnson could allude to "flying Reports" in the headnote, and months after the doctor's death his cure for gout was published in the Magazine. Interest in Mrs. Rowe was claimed in the headnote, which said the editors "daily receive Encomiums in Verse" on her (GM, 1739, p. 261); the biography turned out to be a panegyrical commemoration of her life and virtues. In a way, the lives of Blake and Drake, intended as examples, commemorate them, for they serve to call the man to the minds of eighteenth-century readers, who probably felt little curiosity about them. The first sentence of the life of Sir Thomas De Veil, a successful though not wholly virtuous man--"he served himself by means of his office with a variety of women" (GM, 1747, p. 563)--announced its intention to satisfy curiosity:

As Sir Thomas De Veil passed thro' many scenes of life, and raised himself from the station of a common soldier, to make a considerable figure, and much noise in the world, some account of him will be wanted by your readers.

(GM, 1747, p. 562)

De Veil is presented not exactly as a good or bad example, but rather as an oddity, an instance of how a man's faults may aid him in worldly affairs (GM, 1747, p. 564). As such, it is probably the most realistic of the 1740's Gentleman's Magazine lives.

The realistic description of De Veil as a person of mixed character is the closest the biographies come to the depiction of general nature, or what most men are. Generalizations about the nature of life and the consequences of action are frequent, especially in Johnson's contributions. For instance, in the life of Dutch scholar Peter Burman, he alluded to the effect of academic honors on most men,

who, having in their own opinion no higher object of Ambition, have relapsed into Idleness and Security, and spent the rest of their Lives in a lazy Enjoyment of their Academical Dignities.

(GM, 1742, p. 207)

In the life of Roscommon, an allusion to his passion for gaming and duels introduces this statement:

This was the fate of many other men, whose genius was of no other advantage to them, than that it recommended them to employments, or to distinctions, by which the temptations to vice were multiplied, and their parts became soon of no other use than that of enabling them to succeed in wickedness.

(GM, 1748, p. 215)

And such moral generalities are implied in several deathbed scenes, when virtuous lives end easily and piously.

The following section will substantiate the generalizations I have made above about the early Gentleman's Magazine biographies with a more

detailed examination of all nineteen. The main variance in them is style, which ranges from the rhetoric of Grove and Rowe to the flatness of the statements of the rebels' lives to the "nervousness," as the century would put it, of Samuel Johnson's style. What they had in common was organization, concern with truth (on the part of the writer), and morality (on the parts of the subject and the reader), and an interest in famous people (on the parts of the writer and reader).

Father Paul Sarpi

Samuel Johnson's second letter, 12 July 1737, to Edward Cave-- apparently nothing came of the first, 25 November 1734, offering poetry to the Gentleman's Magazine (Life, I, 92)--contained a proposal for a new English translation of Father Paul Sarpi's History of the Council of Trent, which was to lead to Johnson's first published biography. The letter, written from "Greenwich, next door to the Golden Heart," observed that there was already an English translation but "that the Stile is capable of great Improvement" and asked for a "speedy answer."⁶ Cave may have met Johnson that summer, before the latter returned to Lichfield to move his wife Tetty to London in the autumn.⁷ By the next spring he was a regular employee of the Magazine, to which his first contribution was a complimentary set of Latin verses, "Ad Urbanum," published in March 1738. By early August Johnson was receiving payments of one, two, three, or four guineas for his work on the translation of Sarpi, and payments continued for about eight months.⁸ Although in an undated letter, probably written in early fall, Johnson referred to "impediments" in the translating,⁹ Cave was confident enough of it in November to publish a short life of Sarpi. The translation eventually

came to nought. After advertisements for subscribers had appeared, the Rev. John Johnson, a librarian, complained in the Daily Advertiser of 20 October 1738 that he had worked for some time on the same translation, and the rivals "destroyed each other, for neither of them went on with the work," according to Boswell (Life, I, 135).

The remains of the aborted plan is "The Life of Father Paul Sarpi," the advertising function of which is evident in the passage on the History, described as,

a Work unequal'd for the judicious Disposition of the Matter, and artful Texture of the Narration, commended by Dr Burnet, as the completest Model of Historical Writing, and celebrated by Mr Wotton as equivalent to any Production of Antiquity. . . .

(GM, 1738, p. 583)

and so on. Other works are called "of little consequence." Thus the object, publicity, governed at least part of the content.

The life, for which no sources are given and which is only slightly more than two thousand words, is patterned like the others although in different proportions. For instance, more than one fourth of the biography deals not with Father Paul at all, but with a quarrel between the senate of Venice and Pope Paul V. The gist of the defence of Venice by Sarpi is given, but the emphasis of the section is on the irrationality of the pope's demands, not on the priest. Another fourth of the life is devoted to Sarpi's career as a priest and his studies; much is made of his scientific interests (in anatomy, chemistry, and astronomy) and very little of his theological work. Even his preferments in the church are vague: "he passed successively through the Dignities of his Order" (GM, 1738, p. 532).

Thus, a reader has little idea of the priest as a man, except that he had "a natural aversion to pleasure and gaiety" (GM, 1738, p. 581). The man must be derived from his actions: his precociousness from finishing school-learning at thirteen; his determination from having chosen against his family's wishes to join a hard and austere order of priests, the Servites; his courage and integrity from his opposition to the pope. The only detail given emphasizes his study of the Bible: it was his habit to underline words he meant to study more carefully, and there was no word in his New Testament not underlined. It is possible that personal details or anecdotes were not available to Johnson, except concerning Sarpi's death; at any rate, those are the only ones used, except in the thirteen per cent of the life devoted to his death. The only direct quotation is in this section, his prayer during sickness: "Lord! now let thy Servant depart in Peace." The last week of his life is described day by day: Sunday he attended mass, Monday became weak, Thursday received the viaticum, and the next Sunday died (GM, 1738, p. 583). The life itself is given in generalities, the leaving of it in particulars.

The only other particulars bear out the major theme of the life: Father Paul's essential Protestantism, a quality that no doubt endeared him to Johnson. As author, he approved his subject's opposition to papal authority in the dispute with Venice, calling him "eminently distinguish'd" by his writings at that time, for which Sarpi was called before the inquisition at Rome; "but it may be easily imagined that he did not obey the Summons". (GM, 1738, p. 582). Departing from the life of Sarpi altogether, Johnson called the pope's arguments "equally shock-

ing, weak, pernicious, and absurd; which did not require the Abilities or Learning of F. Paul, to demonstrate their Falshood, and destructive Tendency" (GM, 1738, p. 582). By implication, Johnson considered even God on the side of the Venetians. After peace was made between the town and the pope, Sarpi was attacked and left for dead by five hoodlums who afterward were "pursued by divine Justice, and all, except one Man who dyed in Prison, perished by violent Deaths" (GM, 1738, p. 583). The only quotation from Sarpi's writings is also rebellious toward Rome: "'There is nothing more essential than to ruin the Reputation of the Jesuits; by the Ruin of the Jesuits, Rome will be ruin'd; and if Rome is ruin'd, Religion will reform of itself'" (GM, 1738, p. 583). Sarpi is made to sound as Protestant as the Church of England, for which Johnson alleges he had a "high Esteem." The evidence for that "esteem" is that a good friend of Sarpi's, "who had adopted all his Notions," gave communion to an English gentleman who fell ill at Venice (GM, 1738, p. 583).

The life of Sarpi was calculated to make him ... attractive to the English readers, potential buyers of Johnson's ill-fated translation of the priest's works. The subject was not promising: an Italian with a drive toward the monastic life who became a Catholic priest at twenty-two, who lived when many men were leaving the Church of Rome but who did not leave it. Of this man Johnson made a figure sympathetic to the English by virtue of his scholarship, honesty, and courage.

Dr. Herman Boerhaave

"The Life of Dr. Herman Boerhaave," acknowledged by Johnson as his (Life, I, 17), appeared in the Gentleman's Magazine in four installments, January through April, 1739, beginning four months after the doctor's death.* Arrangement of the facts, for which no source is given, is according to the seventeenth-century character-life: birth, family, childhood and education, attendance at university, studies, posts and promotions, final illness and death, physical description, character and virtues, family, and publications. If there is any theme, it is Boerhaave's overcoming through determination, diligence, and ability great difficulties on his way to becoming a famous professor of physick. Few personal details are given and only four or five anecdotes, each illustrative of Boerhaave's character. For instance, his "Fortitude and steady Composure of Mind" are demonstrated by the way he diverted himself during a long, painful, and sleepless illness, which was to meditate on his studies, remember what he had learned, and review his "Stores of Knowledge" (GM, 1738, p. 173).** Emphasis is constantly placed on the man's piety, learning, application, and sagacity—and the success and acclaim following therefrom. A logical pattern of cause and effect is discernible in Boerhaave's life: he was hard-working and intelligent, therefore successful; he turned to exercise instead of drink for relaxation, therefore avoided drunkenness. But the element of chance also affected his life, even changing it. His intent to enter

*Gentleman's Magazine, 1739, pp. 37-38, 72-73, 114-16, 172-76.

**Since future references will be to this volume, only the page number will be given in parentheses.

the ministry was sabotaged by malicious rumors at the University of Leiden that he was an atheistic follower of Spinoza, rumors begun when he humiliated a man for denigrating Spinoza without having read him. Another characteristic of the biography is occasional Johnsonian generalizations about human existence, some only tangential to Boerhaave's life. For instance, of his decision to take a degree in medicine as well as in the ministry, Johnson wrote:

It is, I believe, a very just Observation, that Men's Ambition is generally proportioned to their Capacity. Providence seldom sends any into the World with an Inclination to attempt great Things, who have not Abilities likewise to perform them. To have formed the Design of gaining a compleat Knowledge of Medicine by way of digression from Theological Studies, would have been little less than Madness in most Men, and would have only exposed them to Ridicule and Contempt, but Boerhaave was one of those Mighty Geniuses. . . .

(p. 72)

The biography opens with an error in sense usual in the century:

"Dr Herman Boerhaave was born on ^ey last Day of December, 1668. . . ."

(p. 37). Babies are born, not doctors. The father, James, was credited with "Prudence, Tenderness, and Diligence" and scholarship in history, genealogy, and languages. Johnson indulged in speculation about the mother, "from whom [Herman] might, perhaps, derive an hereditary Inclination to the Study of Physick, in which she was very inquisitive;" but she died when he was but five and could not teach him (p. 37). His father, who directed his studies toward theology, gave him farm jobs to relax his mind, thus protecting him from the ill effects of uninterrupted study, "from which, Students, not well acquainted with the Constitution of the human Body, sometimes fly for Relief to Wine instead of Exercise, and purchase temporary Ease by the Hazard of the most dreadfully Conse-

quences" (p. 37). (At the time of writing that, Johnson was abstaining from liquor, although he had drunk before 1736 and was to drink heavily after 1757 (Life, I, 103, n. 3).*)

Approvingly Johnson cited Boerhaave's first serious illness, occasioned by a malignant ulcer on his left thigh, which "first inclin'd him" to medicine, for he "began to practice honestly, on himself," and at last cured it by "fomenting the Part wth Salt and Urine" (p. 37). The result of the illness also was to teach him compassion for others, Johnson said, and "his Experience of the Inefficacy of the Medicine then in Use incited him to attempt the Discovery of others more certain" (p. 37). Thus from Boerhaave's childhood illness and cure, Johnson draws his sympathy with suffering, his natural aptitude for healing, and the first inclination to the medical profession.

Suspense is created briefly, then shattered, in the account of James Boerhaave's taking his son for medical help with the ulcer to Leiden, where he entered the public school and in a year passed through more than two classes, winning first prizes in each. "Thus did our young Student advance in Learning and Reputation, when, as he was within View of the University, a sudden and unexpected Blow threaten'd to defeat all his Expectations" (p. 38). The blow was the death of his father, which might have meant the end of his education, "but with a Resolution equal to his Abilities, and a Spirit not so depressed or shaken," he persuaded his guardians to let him spend his patrimony as far as it

*Clifford in Young Sam Johnson, p. 312, speculated that he may have given up spirits as an example to his wife Tetty, who drank excessively.

would go on his schooling. Graduation from the university was accompanied by a discussion of the natures of the soul and body and confutation of "all the Sophistry of Epicurus, Hobbes and Spinoze" (p. 38), a philosophical position probably concurred in by his biographer.

The first installment ends with Boerhaave's response to his reading of commentators on Scripture, and the second begins with his need to support himself; there seems no artistic reason for the break at that particular point. The second installment, like the first and third about fifteenth hundred words, contains not only several direct quotations from Boerhaave but also the first real anecdote about him. His praise of English Dr. Thomas Sydenham was "that he frequently perused him, and always with greater Eagerness" (p. 72), and there is a direct quotation of his intention to preach after mastering physick. The anecdote is about Boerhaave's overhearing on a boat a conversation on the "impious and pernicious Doctrine of Spinoza," ending with one man's zealous invective. Boerhaave humiliated him by inquiring whether he had ever read the philosopher. A stranger asked his name and wrote it down, and a few days later it was said in Leiden that Boerhaave had revolted to Spinoza. Johnson tells the story,

not only to satisfy the Curiosity of Mankind, but to shew that no Merit, however exalted, is exempt from being not only attacked but wounded by the most contemptible Whispers. Those who cannot strike with Force, can however poyson their Weapon, and, weak as they are, give mortal Wounds and bring a Hero to the Grave: So true is that Observation, that many are able to do hurt, but few to do good.

(p. 73)

The fact of Boerhaave's being thereby prevented from the ministry provoked Johnson's comment that such rumors are kept alive not only by the

malice of bad men but also by the zeal of good men, who think it wise to keep even suspected men from public service on the theory "That the Safety of Many is to be preferred before the Advantage of Few" (p. 73).

The third installment begins with Boerhaave's early practice and adherence to the resolution that prosperity should be the result of "real Merit, and solid Learning," proved by his refusal of an offer from the court to settle at the Hague (p. 117). Much of the article concerns his promotions and orations at the University of Leiden, though the only oration quoted is one strongly in favor of experimental knowledge, which, in Johnson's words, Boerhaave

reflects with just Severity upon those arrogant Philosophers, who are too easily disgusted with the slow Methods of obtaining true Notions by frequent Experiments, and who, possest with too high an Opinion of their own Abilities, rather chuse to consult their own Imaginations, than enquire into Nature, and are better pleased with the charming Amusement of forming Hypotheses, than the toilsome Drudgery of making Observation.

(p. 115)

Untested hypotheses were to Johnson as empty as uncharacteristic detail. That oration, however, incurred the wrath of a professor who supported Descartes and said Boerhaave's speech was in opposition to Christianity. "So far can Prejudice darken the Understanding," said Johnson, "as to make it consider precarious Systems as the chief Support of sacred and unvariable Truth" (p. 115). The offending professor was forced to apologize and recant by supporters of Boerhaave, who on being offered more satisfaction, "return'd an Answer not less to his Honour than the Victory he gain'd, 'that he should think himself sufficiently compensated, if his Adversary received no farther Molestation

on his Account'" (p. 116).

The last and longest installment, almost thirty-four hundred words, opens with a reference to "this weak and injudicious Attack," as though the reader must have just read about it, and lists the honors from both France and England bestowed on Boerhaave. He was honored also by his own university, for he was not one of the scholars

of whom the World has seen too many, that disgrace their Studies by their Vices, and by unaccountable Weaknesses make themselves ridiculous at Home, while their Writings procure them the Veneration of distant Countries, where their Learning is known, but not their Follies.

(p. 172)

Boerhaave's lectures and practice were slowed by a six-month battle with gout, of which Johnson wrote sympathetically, "The History of his Illness can hardly be read without Horrour" (p. 172). Although a second illness in 1726-27 forced him to cut activities, his consultations continued because of his reputation for sagacity. Although Johnson had heard wonderful tales of Boerhaave's diagnostic ability, none are given in the life.

I mention none of them, because I have no Opportunity of collecting Testimonies, or distinguishing between those Accounts which are well proved, and those which owe their Rise to Fiction and Credulity.

(p. 173)

The account of the doctor's death is marked by repeated attestations to his piety and humility, "Constancy and Firmness." Assured by a visitor that it was not reproachable in torment to wish for death, as Boerhaave confessed he had done, the doctor answered that "He that loves God, ought to think nothing desirable but what is most pleasing to the supreme Goodness'" (p. 173). Such sentiments were cited with

apparent approval by Johnson. Following the paragraph on his death are two and one-half columns on his physical appearance, temperament, virtues, and daily habits. There are two indirect quotations, one on his mastery of a naturally quick temper and the other his usual response to hearing of a criminal condemned to death: "Who can tell whether this Man is not better than I? Or, if I am better, it is not to be ascribed to myself but to the Goodness of God" (p. 176). To Johnson, Boerhaave was not only of news value but also a worthy example.

May his Example extend its Influence to his Admirers and Followers! May those who study his Writings imitate his Life, and those who endeavour after his Knowledge aspire likewise to his Piety!

(p. 176)

The only allusion, outside of the mention of his daily habits, to his personal life is in a single paragraph immediately preceding a bibliography, which says he married the only daughter of a Leiden burgomaster and had four children, all but one of whom died in infancy (p. 176).

Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe

By the spring of 1739 Cave had published two biographies recently, both by Johnson. The popularity of those lives of "eminent Persons" and popular interest in poetess Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe, who had died two years before, were factors, according to the headnote, in the publication of her biography in three parts, beginning in May 1739. Although in fewer installments, the Rowe life is slightly longer than the previous one, more than seven thousand words to Boerhaave's sixty-five hundred. The form--life, death, character--is like that of the lives of Boerhaave and Sarpi, but the stylistic flourishes, fulsome praise, and

snobbish taint eliminate Johnson as a possible author. According to Jacob Leed, the Gentleman's Magazine article is an abridgement of the life in the posthumously published Miscellaneous Works in Prose and Verse and was written by Henry Grove and Theophilus Rowe, the latter editor of the Works and her brother-in-law.¹⁰ Sources of information were personal acquaintance, knowledge of her intimates, and Mrs. Rowe's own works: about her father one of her own letters is quoted.

The content is effusive and the style heavy-handed. Mrs. Rowe's parents did not just meet and marry; their "Acquaintance commenced" and "terminated in the Nuptial Union." Pleasure in comment occasionally leads the authors far from the facts, as in the account of Mr. Singer's visitors and why they liked him:

. . . such a Charm is there is unaffected Goodness, and so naturally do kindred Souls, warmed and actuated by the same heavenly Passion, and pursuing the same glorious End, run and mingle together with the greatest Pleasure.

(GM, 1739, p. 261)

The authors' deft use of balance, occasionally economical of words, is pleasing. For instance, introducing the subject's husband-to-be; "Mr Thomas Rowe was the Person reserved by Heaven, both to be made, and to make happy" (p. 282). And on her childhood training:

She received the first serious Impressions of Religion, probably, as soon as she was capable of it; at once perceiving her Obligations to the Author of her Being, and, in the same Measure, as her opening Reason discovered these to her, feeling the Force of them.

(p. 261)

A stylistic flaw is lack of transition; the biography sometimes reads as though it were written at several sittings. The paragraph ending with a quotation from her Devout Exercises is followed by the sentence,

"There is so great a Similitude between Painting and Poetry, that is is no way surprising, one who possessed the latter of these Faculties in so high a Degree of Perfection, did very early discover an Inclination to the other . . ."(p. 261). No previous mention had been made in the life of her poetry. A paragraph of critique of Thomas Rowe's lives (those omitted by Plutarch he intended to supply), posthumously published, is followed, jerkily, by the account of his introduction to Elizabeth.

An irritating quality of the biography, deriving not so much from the style as from the choice of facts, is that the characters are unbelievably and unquestionably good. Mrs. Rowe's parents met because the mother considered herself "obliged" to visit those imprisoned for nonconformity during the reign of Charles II. Singer was one of those imprisoned in her home city, Ilchester, and no doubt as they were both of them "Persons of very great Worth and Piety," the attraction was instant and mutual. After his wife's death, Mr. Singer moved to Frome, where he became well known for his "good Sense, primitive Integrity, Simplicity of Manners, uncommon Prudence, Activity and Faithfulness in discharging the Duties of his Station, inflexible Adherence to his Principles, and at the same Time truly catholic Spirit" (p. 261). His daughter was an "extraordinary Person" (p. 261), of "shining Merit" (p. 282), of "exalted Merit" (p. 283), and "amiable Qualities" (p. 283) and "Godlike Disposition" (GM, 1740, p. 71). Her husband had "superior Genius" and "insatiable Thirst after Knowledge" (GM, 1739, p. 282), "Virtue and Prudence," "Love of Liberty," "prodigious Strength of Memory, and inexhaustible Fund of Wit" (p. 283). About the only good quality he lacked

was health; he died at twenty-eight. Even the sister who is only mentioned once was "a lovely Concurrent in the Race of Virtue and Glory" (p. 261).

The authors of "The Life of Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe" never let the reader lose sight of the fact that she was not of the upper classes and that in spite of all her virtue and all her piety, social intercourse with them was an honor to her. The same was true of Mr. Singer, held in esteem "even by Persons of Superior Rank." Specifically, Lord Weymouth not only wrote him, but honored him with visits (p. 261). A copy of Mrs. Rowe's verses first introduced her to "the noble Family at Longleat," who apparently called her to them. Thus began a friendship that was

not more to her Honour, who was the Favourite of Persons so much superior to her in the outward Distinctions of Life, than to the Praise of their Judgment who knew how to prize, and took a Pleasure in cherishing so much Worth.
(p. 262)

The compliment is graceful because both parties are praised equally, but still the lines are drawn, and it is to the family's "credit" that they were willing to honor her. The affection between them was none the less real, for on the death of the Countess of Hertford's mother, Mrs. Rowe was called to her side at the "Importunity of her noble Friends" (p. 284). The final honor was after her death:

And there cannot be a more advantageous Conclusion of the Character of this excellent Person, than letting the World know, that her life was honour'd with the Friendship, and her Death lamented with the Tears, of the Countess of Hertford.

(GM, 1740, p. 72)

In such a compliment, the weight of the honor bestowed on the recipient

must be determined by the weight of one's esteem for the Countess of Hertford, an esteem of which the authors showed no doubts.

Writing as personal friends of Mrs. Rowe, the authors of her life assumed a license for vagueness and speculation that are unseemly in a biography. Unlike Johnson, the authors were sure that childish omens of talent existed, for

Those who were acquainted with this extraordinary Person in her childish Years, observed a great many Things not common in that Age of Life, which then promised the bright Day that afterwards ensued. . . .

(GM, 1739, p. 261)

But none are supplied. Much is made of the fact that as a child Mrs. Rowe showed enough skill in drawing to be tutored, but there is no indication that the authors ever saw any of her work. The speculation is not extravagant or unwarranted, but neither is it necessary. For instance, "It must have been with peculiar Satisfaction that Mr Singer . . . beheld the early Dawnings of a great and good Mind in this his charming Daughter" (p.261). Concerning her death, Mrs. Rowe had often hoped it might be sudden lest in pain she not behave as a Christian, "So that the Suddenness of her Death may be interpreted as a Reward of her singular Piety, and a Mark of the divine Favour in Answer to her Prayers" (GM, 1740, p. 71). The assumption of entrance to Singer's thoughts is probably valid enough, but interpretation of the signs of God seems presumptuous.

Despite stylistic offenses, the biography has virtues. The familiarity with the family and with Mrs. Rowe's friends is obvious, for they are probably the sources of the information on the parents and childhood. Appropriate use is made of the subject's writings; in the paragraph on

her religious education is a quotation from her Devout Exercises, and in the description of her character is a quotation by Mrs. Rowe on her pledging half her income to charity (GM, 1740, p. 71). Remarks on her writings are not reserved to the last but inserted in the account of her life; thus the writings are made to seem more a part of the life than is usual in early eighteenth-century biography.

Otherwise the organization of the life is according to the usual pattern. Like the life of Boerhaave, it began with the subject's birth and family: "Mrs Elizabeth Rowe was born at Ilchester in Somersetshire, Sept. 11, 1674, being the eldest of three Daughters of Mr Walter Singer, a Gentleman of a good Family, and Mrs Elizabeth Portnell, both of them Persons of very great Worth and Piety." Little solid fact is given about the childhood except that young Elizabeth Singer and a sister often studied until midnight, "so great was their Thirst of Knowledge, and the Pleasure they had in gratifying it." A paragraph is given on childhood omens of talent and early teachings in religion, and then comes the meat, her artistic bent (GM, 1739, p. 261).

The arrangement skillfully emphasizes poetry. Her first inclination was to drawing, which she began "when she had hardly Strength and Steadiness of Hand sufficient to guide" the pencil and continued until she was near death. As befit one of her piety, her taste in music ran to the "solemn kind"; an affinity for music could be supposed, the authors said, by anyone acquainted with "such a well tuned Soul" (p. 262). (I do not know whether "well tuned Soul" was a common expression and the authors were punning or whether it is simply a labored analogy.) But most striking was her innate skill at poetry, so great that "she

could hardly write a familiar Letter but it bore the Stamp of the Poet." She began to write poetry at twelve and published a collection of poems at twenty-one, at the desire of her friends, of course, not seeking fame or profit. The authors did not at that time know her, for it was said that her pseudonym "Philomela" was "most probably" given her on this publication, as her modesty would not permit that her name should be attached. The pseudonym was appropriate, according to the biographers, "happily expressing the Sureness and Harmony of her Verses, not less soothing and melodious than the Strains of the Nightingale" (p. 262). Such extravagant judgment seems forced. Later in life these poems were to worry Mrs. Rowe, lest they be less than perfectly pious, for, "not satisfied to have done no Injury to the sacred Cause of Piety, she was displeased with her having writ any Thing that did not directly promote it." That feeling apparently met with the approval of the biographers. After the paragraph on her first publication and consequent meeting with the family at Longleat comes one of those abrupt changes: this time to her French and Italian tutor and skill at reading Tasso's Jerusalem. The first installment ends here, having covered her birth, family, and education (p. 262).

The second installment switches to an entirely new subject, her admirers and husband-to-be. A sketch of the life of Thomas Rowe includes his birth, family, upbringing, character, talents, and literary ambitions, with a hint of his early death. Then the authors must back-track slightly to their meeting in 1709. Rowe enjoyed but a brief life in this biography--slightly less than four columns, including a

poem he wrote to her. The remainder of the second installment is about her retirement in widowhood, two publications (Friendship in Death and History of Joseph), and death, which she regarded as much as a beginning as an end, and which the authors called "this grand Event." From the description of her joy and transport during illness, one might think she was born to die. Death came only a few hours after an apoplectic attack, and the authors remarked with satisfaction that, judging by a book left by her, her last conscious act was "reading pious Meditations, or forming devout Ejaculations for the divine Favour and Assistance" (p. 285). Again with no transition, the authors followed the death with a paragraph on Mrs. Rowe's temper, one on her physical appearance, and one on her manners, and the second installment closes abruptly in the middle of her "character."

The first two installments appeared in May and June 1739; for the third readers had to wait until February 1740. It begins with a critical attitude evidently shared by authors and subject, distaste for "wit"; Mrs. Rowe was "entirely free from that Severity of Temper which has made the Character of a Wit unamiable if not infamous" (GM, 1740, p. 70). After that, nothing is said of her poetry, much of her conversation (eloquent), pastimes (virtuous), feeling about riches (contemptuous), and charity (great). The latter is substantiated with quotations and anecdotes--she gave "in the Joy and Gratitude of her Soul," and once sold a piece of gold plate to relieve a poor family. The most revealing quotation, perhaps, is of what she said on hearing some thankless poor mutter about the quality of the food she gave: her reasoning was "That they expected something better than ordinary from

her Table" (p. 71). The biography ends, after paragraphs on her piety and friendships, as with a drum roll, with another allusion to her friendship with an "illustrious Ornament of the Age," the Countess of Hertford (p. 72).

Robert Blake

War with Spain, beginning as the War of Jenkins's Ear and blending into the War of the Austrian Succession, had been declared in October 1739. Although England had a fine naval tradition and as many ships as Spain and France combined, the war at sea had suffered from a lack of direction from the Admiralty and a lack of leadership in the fleet, a failing vaguely hinted at in the headnote, quoted on p. 97 of this paper, to the life of Robert Blake.

"The Life of Admiral Blake" is the first of Johnson's biographies that was politically inspired, and it is perhaps for that reason that he offered so many sources for it. The one used, or certainly quoted, most is The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England by Clarendon, whose praise of Blake is doubly impressive since they were on opposite sides in the war. Direct quotation from Clarendon is indicated by italics in three passages, and some incidents are supported by "as Clarendon relates." At one point Johnson referred to accounts of a battle from "the Dutch writers," whom he may have consulted. Later, Johnson's assertion that the Dutch lost heavily in a battle is supported by references not only to the "more impartial Historians," but also by quotations from two Dutch admirals (GM, 1740, p. 305). And at the last, Blake's character is given in a two-hundred-word quotation from Lives English and Foreign. The buttressing of the facts by frequent

allusions to other writers, impartial or not, gives this meaningful biography an air of credibility and ingenuousness.

No account existed for Blake's earliest years, Johnson admitted, and he could therefore "amuse the Reader with none of those Prognosticks of his future Actions, so often met with in Memoirs" (p. 301). The first source quoted is a jumping-off point for a Johnsonian weighing of the evidence, conclusion based on the facts, and general statement. Antony Wood in Athenae Oxonienses said Blake was refused a fellowship at Wadham College, Oxford, for either "want of Learning, or of Stature." But the same writer had already said Blake rose early and studied diligently, so the refusal must have been because of his height. Too, it was known that the Warden of that College was accustomed to give much regard to the appearance of those who applied for preferment. "So much do the greatest Events owe sometimes to Accident or Folly!" (p. 301). Another example of generalization occurs later in the life, after the description of two English victories. Johnson wrote that the Dutch were repairing their fleets and that the English were made "factions by success," jealousy having arisen between civil and military leaders.

Such is generally the Revolution of Affairs in every State; Danger and Distress produce Unanimity and Bravery, Virtues which are seldom unattended with Success; but Success is the Parent of Pride, and Pride of Jealousy and Factions; Faction makes way for Calamity, and happy is that Nation whose Calamities renew their Unanimity. Such is the Rotation of Interests, that equally tend to hinder the total Destruction of a People, and to obstruct an exorbitant Increase of Power.

(p. 303)

About Blake's political preference little is said, for it was not that of Johnson or of Johnson's time. Blake's first public post was

Burgess for Bridgewater, in Somersetshire, which he obtained through his opposition to Bishop Laud and refusal to participate in the bishop's new ceremonies. The virtue of his conduct during the war is pointed out and substantiated: courage and resolution are apparent in his refusal to surrender Taunton, of which he was governor, before an army of ten thousand. Yet he did not approve the execution of Charles I, and even declared that "he would venture his life to save him, as willingly as he had done to serve the Parliament" (p. 303).

The majority of the biography concerns Blake's naval activities, divided into five parts: capture of a seventeen-ship fleet in a Portuguese harbor, capture of a French man-of-war and battle with a French ship in reprisal for privateering, five campaigns or battles against the Dutch during the England-Holland war of the 1650's, a foray into the Mediterranean, and the campaign against Spain begun in 1656. The point of the biography, of course, was the contrast between the victories of Blake and the bungling of the 1740's admirals, but, except for the headnote, the comparison must be inferred. The only direct allusion to a contrast occurs after a reference to the French molestation of English trade, called "an Injury which, in those Days, was always immediately resented, and, if not repaired, certainly punished" (p. 302). Comparison might also be inferred from Johnson's generalization about Blake's defeat of a forty-five-ship Dutch fleet on the English coast with a force of twenty ships. "It is indeed little less than miraculous that a thousand great Shot should not do more Execution, and those who will not admit the Interposition of Providence, may draw at least this inference from it, that the bravest Man is not always in the most

Danger" (p. 302).

Johnson did not conceal Blake's only serious defeat but did everything possible to palliate its effect on the reader: the fleet had been weakened, it was ill-provided, and the Dutch Admiral Van Trump probably knew of his problems. Blake was perhaps betrayed by "his natural Ardour" and lack of information on the enemy. Still, there was no excuse for Blake's having encountered a fleet so superior when he could have retreated. Johnson weighed the evidence in characteristic style:

To say he was ignorant of ^g
strength of the Dutch fleet,

is to impute to him a very
criminal Degree of Negligence
. . .

To urge the Ardour of his
Sailors

is to divest him of the Author-
ity of Commander

To mention ^g Impetuosity of
his own Courage,

is to make the Blame of his
Temerity equal to the Praise
of his Valour. . .

The conclusion is that "Blake was once betrayed to an inconsiderate and desperate Enterprise, by the resistless Ardour of his own Spirit, and a noble Jealousy of the Honour of his Country" (p. 304). Even Johnson could not resist that "noble Jealousy."

Of personal detail there is little. Johnson included one quotation from Blake, for which no source is given, on his principle of conduct, a statement that enemies are foreigners and that domestic disputes should not hinder action against them (p. 305). A second detail is revealed in the account of the refusal of the Tunisians to allow him to take in water: "Fired with this inhuman and insolent Treatment, he curled his Whiskers, as was his Custom when he was angry. . . ." The

curling might be taken as evidence of Blake's restraint of his temper, except that he then destroyed or captured almost every ship in the harbor (p. 306).

Such regard of England first is the theme of the biography. What Johnson sought to inculcate is a sense of a man who earned respect for his country and strengthened it materially. Even when his men provoked an attack by Spaniards on a Malaga street by mocking a religious procession, Blake threatened to burn the town if the priest who incited the mob were not sent to him in three hours, on the grounds that an Englishman is to be punished only by an Englishman (p. 306).

The customary summaries of Blake's accomplishments and character are supplied not in Johnson's words, but rather by quotations from Clarendon and Lives English and Foreign. Johnson's own conclusion is: the incident illustrating Blake's integrity, in which he removed his brother from command of a ship because he had not done his duty, but still left to him his estate; the brother was able to behave well privately although not to serve well his country, and Blake "had therefore not suffered him to rob it" (p. 307).

Francis Drake

Interest in naval affairs was running high that summer of 1740 because of the war with Spain, and in July Cave reached back in history for a "Memorial Against Sir Francis Drake," written 16 October 1585 by Alvaro Bazan, High Admiral of Spain. The memorial had no editorial comment until the end, where an editor, possibly Johnson, added that since the account of Blake in the previous issue of the magazine "was

not disagreeable to the Publick," the next month would be published "The Life and Actions of Sir FRANCIS DRAKE," including many of the "most memorable Transactions of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, in which our long continued Wars with the Spaniards laid the Foundations of that settled Animosity which yet continues between the two Nations." As though to ward off invidious comparison of Drake and contemporary admirals, the writer added that it was not only for his military prowess that Drake was to be honored, but also for his "Fortitude in surmounting Difficulties and encountering Dangers of a different Kind, his Spirit in forming great Designs, and his Resolution in prosecuting them." For all these qualities he should be held up "to the Imitation of every Age," and England was more indebted to navigation than to arms for her "Wealth and Power" (GM, 1740, p. 352). The emphasis in the Drake biography then would be less military than in the Blake, and possible imputations about naval leadership in the war would be played down.

As it turned out, the tone and emphasis of the life of Drake were controlled in large part by Johnson's sources. The introductory matter is from Nathaniel Crouch's The English Hero (of which the fourth edition appeared in 1695), and the rest from a reprint of four pamphlets published in 1652 and 1653 by Nicholas Bourne (Johnson's following of typographical errors shows the reprint rather than the original was used).¹¹ According to Clifford, "supplementary" material came from other authorities.¹²

The biography is the longest to appear in the Gentleman's Magazine in the decade, almost twenty-four thousand words, but very infrequently

are sources alluded to: "What Riches they acquired, is not particularly related . . ." (p. 447) and "this Transaction is related in so obscure and confusing a Manner, that it is difficult to form any Judgment upon it" (p. 514). The sources had faults, but apparently they were all he had to work with and had to be treated the best he could.

The Drake biography is like the others in pattern--little on the childhood, emphasis on the career and public life--but different in that no specific section summarizes his character and that a single paragraph describes his death and funeral. No account exists, Johnson said, of Drake's early years, so that, as in the case of Boerhaave, we do not know of "any Disposition to Hazards and Adventures which might have been discovered in his Childhood, or of the Education which qualified him for such wonderful Attempts" (p. 389). Of the four installments, most of the first, all the second and third, and most of the fourth describe his voyages in 1572-73, 1577-79, 1585, and 1595. Only Drake's place and abilities in English history as a sea captain make him worthwhile to Johnson as a subject, for when he leaves the sea Johnson leaves him:

It is not necessary to give an Account equally particular of the remaining Part of his Life, as he was no longer a private Man, but engaged in public Affairs, and associated with other Generals, whose Attempts, and the Success of them, are related in the Histories of those Times.

(GM, 1741, p. 44)

His character must be derived from side comments and from the reader's interpretations of his action: he was bold, courageous, cunning, determined, patriotic, pious, and unselfish, but these qualities are mentioned one by one in relation to particular adventures, not piled up at the

end in a few sentences.

The Drake biography has no headnote indirectly inviting comparison with contemporary English admirals, but surely the accounts of his successful voyages contrasted with their mediocre work just as Queen Elizabeth's strengths had contrasted with Walpole's failures in the series of essays in the Craftsman in the early 1730's. There was yet another parallel: at both times England's main enemy was Spain, and the anti-Spanish element is obtrusive in the life. On the first pages, Johnson referred to the "Malice of the Spaniards," who considered that other nations' efforts to follow them into the New World were invasions of their rights (GM, 1740, p. 389). The criticism of Spain is occasionally gratuitous:

The Arrows of the Indians were made of greenWood, for the immediate Service of the Day, the Spaniards, with the Fear that always harrasses Oppressors, Forbidding them to have any weapons. . . .

(p. 603)

Not only are the Spaniards contrasted with Englishmen, but also their character is opposed to Drake's. After losing most of his fortune in an expedition attacked by a Spanish ship, Drake elected to try another voyage, "by which the Spaniards should find out how imprudently they always act, who injure and insult a brave man" (p. 380). His object was no more honorable or worthy than revenge, but Johnson made no comment on it; perhaps "Reprisals upon the most powerful Nation in the World" (p. 390) was not a petty object.

As the advertisement in the July issue promised, the biography did provide a model for the ordinary person as well as for the aspiring sailor. Drake's virtues and strengths and the resulting benefits to

him personally and to his country are named and elaborated on in every installment. For instance, he began on the sea as an apprentice to the owner of a small trading ship, who, on dying without a family, left his vessel to Drake as reward,

a Circumstance that deserves to be remembered, not only as it may illustrate the private Character of this brave Man, but as it may hint to all those who may hereafter propose his Conduct for their Imitation, that Virtue is the surest Foundation both of Reputation and Fortune, and that the first Step to Greatness is to be honest.

(p. 389)

So in a nutshell we have diligence and honesty as two of Drake's characteristics and a reminder to the reader that of such characteristics virtue is not the only reward. Unwilling to let the subject drop, but aware that he may be running the subject into the ground, Johnson started the next paragraph, "If it were not improper to dwell longer on an Incident at first View so inconsiderable, it might be added . . ." and he did add that people who are assigned tasks not worthy of their abilities and treat them contemptuously, dreaming of larger projects, may learn from Drake that "Diligence in Employments of less Consequence is the most successful Introduction to greater Enterprizes" (p. 389). He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. Many of Drake's qualities were imitable by anyone, such as his piety (which Johnson illustrated by his prayers of thanksgiving), his good sense (illustrated by his refusal to indulge in melancholy reflections upon his past miscarriages) (p. 444), his generosity (illustrated by his putting a treasure of gold into the common stock rather than keeping it) (p. 447), his courage (illustrated by his concealing a wound in his leg lest it discourage his men (p. 391), and his astuteness (illustrated by

his ability to perceive "all the circumstance and Inconveniencies of every Scheme") (p. 446). His choice of a course that would take him and his company through Spanish-held territory demonstrated his courage. His intrepidity was mentioned several times--he dared to anchor and stay where Spaniards knew his location, simply because it was the best place (p. 390), and he raised his men's spirits when it seemed the Spaniards were about to capture their ships (p. 446). Thus Drake was presented as a man worthy of emulation both by the stay-at-home reader and by the leader of men. Only one of Drake's actions so baffled Johnson that no quality could be assigned to it: his learning before leaving on the voyage around the world that one of the crew, Thomas Doughtie, joined the expedition only to murder its leader, and appearing to place great trust in him before announcing the plan, somewhere off the coast of South America, to the other officers. The motives of both men escaped Johnson:

How far it is probable that Drake, after having been acquainted with this Man's Designs, should admit him into his Fleet, and afterwards caress, respect, and trust him; or that Doughtie, who is represented as a Man of eminent Abilities, should engage in so long and hazardous a Voyage with no other View than that of defeating it, is left to the Determination of the Reader. What Designs he could have formed with any Hope of Success, or to what Actions worthy of Death he could have proceeded without Accomplices, for none are mentioned, is equally difficult to imagine. Nor, on the other Hand, tho' the Obscurity of the Account, and the remote Place chosen for the Discovery of this wicked Project, seem to give Reason for Suspicion, does there appear any Temptation, from either Hope, Fear, or Interest, that might induce Drake, or any Commander in his State, to put to death an innocent Man upon false Pretences.

(p. 514)

In that sort of action, perhaps Drake was not to be imitated.

In the life of Drake more than in the previous lives, Johnson made some attempt to read the mind of his subject, or to imagine what must have been his feelings. Previously, he had let actions speak for themselves, but here are in every installment phrases like "It is easy to imagine that . . ." and "Doubtless it was not easy for Drake . . ." and "Perhaps they thought that" Once Johnson speculated as to the effect of Drake's bravado on the Spaniards: "Perhaps the Spaniards, whose Notions of Courage are sufficiently romantic, might look upon him as a more formidable Enemy, and yield more easily to a Hero of whose Fortitude they had so high an Idea" (p. 394). And he pondered the nature of the Indians of South America:

What were their Manners before the Arrival of the Spaniards, it is not possible to discover; but the Slaughter made of their Countrymen, perhaps without Provocation, by these cruel Intruders, and the general Massacre with which that Part of the World had been depopulated, might have raised in them a Suspicion of all Strangers, and by Consequence made them inhospitable, treacherous and bloody.

(p. 513)

He cannot, of course, say for sure, but the implication is that that is just what happened. The use of speculation is commonly based on Johnson's knowledge of what was likely to occur--that is, his knowledge of human nature, derived from what men had done before, their motives, and the results.

Frequently Johnson used events in Drake's life as springboards for generalizations on human conduct, although these usually have little or nothing to do with the ostensible subject of the work. For instance, in describing the early exploring voyages to America and the tales told by the sailors, Johnson noted that "it may easily be concluded that the

Relaters did not diminish the Merit of their Attempts, by suppressing or diminishing any Circumstance that might produce Wonder, or excite Curiosity" (p. 389). Thus Johnson, without specific events to back up an assertion, called upon his knowledge of human nature to make a statement about which readers (depending on their knowledge of human nature) will not disagree. Such generalizations were often tucked into long and action-filled sentences:

In their Way there fell a violent Shower of Rain, which went some of their Bow-strings, and extinguish'd many of their Matches; a Misfortune which might soon have been repaired, and which perhaps the Enemy might suffer in common with them, but which however on this Occasion very much embarrass'd them, as the Delay produced by it repressed that Ardour which sometimes is only to be kept up by continued Action, and gave time to the Timorous and slothful to spread their Insinuations, and propagate their Cowardice.
[italics mine]

(p. 391)

Thus generality and substantiation from Drake's experience seem a compact whole. The account of a battle between soldiers guarding Spanish silver and Drake's men ends with the comment that the heat of the battle indicated "with how much greater Ardour Men are animated by Interest than Fidelity." The "Interest" was that the sailors expected portions of the loot, "and every Man imagined himself secure from Poverty and Labour for the remaining Part of his Life" (p. 446). The longest comment on human nature occurs before the description of Drake's voyage around the world and concerns the opposition he met to the plan. His merit alone had won him some enemies, according to Johnson, for his "Reputation was now sufficiently advanced to incite Detraction and Opposition." Those men are merely potty, he implied, but the analysis of the other kind of opposition Drake met is as applicable in these days

of space travel as it was in those of sea travel:

There are some Men of narrow Views, and grovelling Conceptions, who, without the Instigation of personal Malice, treat every new Attempt as wild and chimerical, and look upon every Endeavour to depart from the beaten Track, as the rash Effort of a warm Imagination, or the glittering Speculation of an excited Mind, that may please and dazzle for a Time, but can produce no real or lasting Advantage.
(GM, 1740, p. 509)

The vehemence of Johnson's digression suggests that he had in mind opposition he had himself met. Adversity could also come by chance, even as an indirect result of Drake's sense of responsibility. For instance, he never delegated to a subordinate the task of examining a bay or harbor in which he was considering anchoring, but on one occasion when he was away from his ship doing so, a sudden storm prevented him from returning. The occurrence was to Johnson an example of the perversity of fate:

By so many unforeseen Accidents is Prudence itself liable to be embarrassed! So difficult is it sometimes for the quickest Sagacity, and most enlightened Experience, to judge what Measures ought to be taken! To trust another to sound an unknown Coast, appeared to Drake Folly and Presumption; to be absent from his Fleet, tho' but for an Hour, proved nothing less than to hazard the Success of all their Labours, Hardships and Dangers.

(p. 511)

On that occasion, one of the fleet ventured into the bay and rescued Drake, but those that stayed outside in the sea were damaged, and one ship was driven away.

In the account of Drake's two-year circumnavigation of the earth, to which Johnson devoted about thirteen thousand words, is a kind of digression that, unlike those on human nature, had not appeared before in Johnson's writings for the Gentleman's Magazine. The observations

on natural history and the customs of the natives Drake met are usually dropped into the text without transition; the two paragraphs on the flying fish and the cuttil, for instance, could have been omitted or placed elsewhere with no greater jar to the reader's senses. Of the flying fish Johnson gave a physical description, his manner of "flying," and his enemies (calling him "this unhappy Animal"). Of the cuttil we learn only that "whole shoals will sometimes rise at once out of the Water" (p. 511). Later, Johnson gave a paragraph to a strange bird found on an island and described its nesting habits (p. 600).

Comment on the habits of the people of South America was more profitable, for Johnson could move from their custom of painting themselves to the Picts' doing the same to the conclusion that covering the body with paint must protect it from the extremities of weather and to the generality that "So well do either Reason or Experience supply the Place of Science in Savage Countires! [sic]" Other practices were equally wild, by Johnson's lights--one man expressed gratitude to Drake by pushing an arrow into his leg, "testifying, as it is probable, that he valued Drake's Friendship above Life" (p. 513). The simplicity of the savages' existence inspired a contrast between their way of life and that of the civilized man's with the conclusion that

Happiness and Misery are very equally diffused thro' all States of human Life. In civilized Countries where regular Policies have secured the Necessaries of Life, Ambition, Avarice, and Luxury, find the Mind at Leisure for their Reception, and soon engage it in new Pursuits; Pursuits that are to be carried on by incessant Labour, and whether vain or successful, produce Anxiety and Contention. Among Savage Nations, imaginary Wants find, indeed, no Place, but their Strength is exhausted by necessary Toils, and their Passions agitated not by Contests about Superiority, Affluence, or Precedence, but by perpetual Care for the present

Day, and by fear of perishing for want of Food.
(p. 601)

It cannot be said, the implication of the passage is, that one way of life is better than the other, except in specifics. The dress, houses, and temper of the people on an island off South America are described in several paragraphs, capped by a Johnsonian refutation of a notion commonly received, that those people are happier in their ignorance than the English in their knowledge. Those who think so, he argues, miss the point: "The Question is not whether a good Indian, or bad Englishman be most happy, but which State is most desirable, supposing Virtue and Reason the same in both." Too, these people's innocence is not praiseworthy, for "He that never saw, or heard, or thought of strong Liquors, cannot be proposed as a Pattern of Sobriety" (GM, 1741, p. 41). To prefer the life of a savage to that of an Englishman would have been to Johnson sheer nonsense, a perverse refusal to benefit from accumulated discoveries, inventions, and writings.

The close of the account of the trip around the world is very nearly the close of the biography, although Drake had sixteen more years to live. He made a voyage to the West Indies in 1585-86, and took part in the battle against the Armada in 1588, but that battle, though "memorable," was "less necessary to be recited in this succinct Narrative," which, as advertised, dealt with little but the exploration (p. 44). Of his military action, Johnson said only that his promotion to vice-admiral of England was "sufficient Proof, that no Obscurity of Birth, or Meanness of Fortune, is unsurmountable to Bravery and Diligence" (p. 44). Death came to Drake while on a voyage to the Indies in 1595, and Johnson published but did not agree with a report

that the failures of the expedition speeded his death, reasoning that as all his successes did not make him vain or negligent, no change of fortune would have thrown him into dejection. That comment is the only one in the closing relating to his character; the usual list of characteristics is missing here, Drake's strengths having been mentioned in the text along with examples of them.

John Philip Barretier

John Philip Barretier, scholar and prodigy, died 5 October 1740 in Halle, Prussia, and a two-part biography, acknowledged by Johnson as his, ran in the December 1740 and February 1741 issues of the Gentleman's Magazine. (A note at the end of the December installment promised a continuation in the Supplement for 1740, but no apology is made for the non-appearance there.) More than a year later, Johnson published in the May 1742 Magazine "An Additional Account of the LIFE of Mr John Philip Barretier," notes and corrections of the previous account.

It was the shortest biography Johnson had contributed since that of Father Paul Sarpi, fewer than three thousand words, with about two sevenths in the first installment. At least the name of Barretier was probably known to the magazine's readers: his translation of The Travels of Rabbi Benjamin had been published in 1734, his Anti-Artemonius in 1735, and his disquisition on the apostolic succession in 1740. That Johnson's assumption of interest in Barretier was not wrong is indicated by the publication in 1742 of William Whiston's account of his studies on the primitive church and J.H.S. Formey's Vie in 1755.

Johnson's own biography was reprinted as a twenty-eight-page pamphlet in 1744 by J. Roberts.¹³ Although the biography had news value, like that of Boerhaave, it cannot be argued that Barretier's qualities were to be emulated by the reader--the life of a prodigy, master of five languages at nine, is presented rather as an oddity or curiosity, like the account of a woman who could speak without a tongue (disputed in GM, 1743, p. 149) or the letter written by a duke's gardener just before he slit his throat (GM, 1743, p. 543). Utile could be derived from Barretier's life, Johnson believed, if it were possible to learn the method of education used by his father, a Calvinist minister, and he asked that anyone knowing it "not to deny Mankind so great a Benefit as the Improvement of Education" (GM, 1740, p. 612).

For to prolong Life, and improve it, are nearly the same.
 If to have all that Riches can purchase is to be rich, if
 to do all that can be done in a long Time, is to live long,
 he is equally a Benefactor to Mankind, who teaches them to
 protract the Duration, or shorten the Business of Life.
 (p. 612)

To the father's teaching Johnson attributed the son's phenomenal success, and he assumed that the same method would benefit a youth of ordinary intelligence.

In a hurry to get an article on Barretier into print, Johnson admitted in the headnote that, unable to secure materials for a "complete Life," he was yet "willing to gratify the Curiosity" of the public, and therefore would supply these "Extracts of Letters" by the prodigy's father (p. 612). He did not say whether the letters were published or simply fell into his hands; that the father wrote them he did not doubt, although he did quibble with almost as much as he believed in them.

The paraphrase of the letters does not seem to begin until the third paragraph, following the request for more information and praise for the unknown method of education. The very first letter quoted, however, is disputed by Johnson. The father had written that John Philip was by nine years the master of five languages and understood the holy writers better in their own tongues than in his own. That the boy may have grasped certain difficult passages better in the original than in translation Johnson would allow, but if the senior Barretier meant the boy knew the languages of the Bible better than his own, "he must be allowed to speak hyperbolically, or to admit that his Son had somewhat neglected the Study of his native Language: Or, we must own, that the Fondness of a Parent has transported him into some natural Exaggerations" (p. 612). Of the contents of that letter, of 3 March 1730, Johnson wrote he was tempted to leave out some, "being unwilling to demand the Belief of others to that which appears incredible to myself"; but for three Johnsonian reasons, he will continue with it:

as my Incredulity may, perhaps, be the Product rather of Prejudice than Reason, as Envy may beget a Disinclination to admit so immense a Superiority, and as an Account is not to be immediately censured as false, merely because it is wonderful. . . .

(p. 612)

The accomplishments Johnson found hard to credit were the extent and depth of the boy's Biblical and linguistic study, including a translation from Hebrew to French of The Travels of Rabbi Benjamin. He disagreed too with the father's antipathy toward linguistic and etymological study that dwells on details and accents, asserting that linguistic knowledge is necessary and that scholars of dead languages did not waste

their time, "since it was to the Labour of such Men that his Son was indebted for his own Learning" (p. 87).

At fifteen Barretier was called to the court of the King of Prussia and requested by him to study history and government, but the youth refused to give up "Science and Quiet." To that refusal his father attributed the postponement of royal favor he had hoped for, as the king had wanted to train the boy for the ministry. Johnson interposed here that "paternal Affection" had perhaps given him wrong ideas, for he had also conceived the notion that the king meant Barretier to tutor his children--just because he was introduced to them (p. 89). Although the biography purported to consist of extracts of Barretier's father's letters, Johnson could not resist acting not only as an editor but also as a balance wheel, pointing out incredibility and unfairness.

In the discussion of the Travels, there is a hint that the letters were not the only source consulted, for Johnson commented without allusion to the father that "These Notes contain so many curious remarks and inquiries . . . that the Reader finds in every Page some Reason to persuade him that they cannot possibly be the work of a child" (p. 87). Johnson may have been that reader. Yet, that Barretier was the author is proved by the testimony of a clergyman associate of the father, "so that the Fact is not to be doubted without a Degree of Incredulity, which it will not be very easy to defend" (p. 87). It sounds as though Johnson himself had doubts, but that the weight of evidence against them was too much.

As in the Boerhaave biography, there are similarities between author and subject that suggest Johnson may have had a more than

ordinary sympathy with Barretier. Both had physical disabilities: Johnson's scars from scrofula suffered as a child, Barretier's painful tumor on the left hand. Neither had money for as many books as he would have liked, so that Barretier "was obliged to borrow the greatest Part of those which his Studies required, and to return them when he had read them, without being able to consult them occasionally, or to recur to them as his Memory should fail him" (p. 88). As Johnson probably did, he was forced to make extracts from Books which he would not be able to use a second time (GM, 1742, p. 245). The third similarity is perhaps more apparent than real, snubbing or mistreatment by potential patrons. Barretier by the age of fifteen had published his Anti-Artemonius and attained such a degree of reputation that not only the public but "Princes, who are commonly the last by whom Merit is distinguished, began to interest themselves in his success" (GM, 1741, p. 88; italics mine--the clause may have been a slap at England's King George II). The major difference between them was Barretier's temper: he ever was "gay, lively, and facetious," despite his "recluse Life," want of books, and illness (p. 88). His "gayety," which did not leave him until ten days before his death at twenty, contrasts with the fits of melancholy Johnson suffered much of his life.

The two parts of the biography end without the usual "character"--Barretier simply "resigned his Soul into the Hands of his Saviour, with Confidence and Tranquility" (GM, 1742, p. 89). That lack is supplied in the "Additional Account," evidently published because more facts had come to Johnson's attention by May 1742. A headnote explained that the nature of the magazine required that its accounts should be early,

asked the reader's pardon if they were occasionally incomplete, and promised correction of errors and defects when additional information came to hand. The information in this "Account" elaborates upon rather than corrects the first two. Still more additions appeared in 1744 when the bookseller James Roberts reprinted the life of Barretier as a pamphlet.¹⁴ Even in 1742, though, interest was in the boy's mind rather than in his character, for it was only in his mind that he was remarkable; Barretier had never taken employment whereby he could contribute to civilization. Johnson did not give Barretier unqualified praise, perhaps agreeing with the King of Prussia that "active Life was the noblest Sphere of a great Genius" (p. 88). His scheme for determining longitude, sent to the Royal Society in 1735, was praiseworthy, but it was a method already tried and found wanting.

Such will be very frequently the Fate of those whose Fortune either condemns them to study without the necessary Assistance from Libraries, or who in too much Haste publish their Discoveries.

(p. 243)

Barretier's withdrawal from the world prevented him from knowing what had been accomplished and from learning from others, Johnson implied. Still, his diligence and extent of learning were worthy of admiration by themselves, and Johnson obviously admired a man who was

desirous of nothing but Knowledge, and entirely untainted with Avarice or Ambition. He preserved himself always independent, and was never known to be guilty of a Lie. His constant Application to Learning suppressed those Passions which betray others of his Age to Irregularities, and excluded all those Temptations to which Men are exposed by Idleness or common Amusements.

(p. 245)

The qualities of his character, if not those of his brain, might be emulated by the reader, as they were striven for by the author.

Dr. Lewis Morin

The translation of Fontenelle's "Eloge de Morin" was the second of three biographies Edward Bloom believes Johnson influenced Cave to publish because they had a personal appeal for him (the others were those of Boerhaave and Sydenham, also scientists)¹⁵ Johnson's source was the Eloges des Academiciens de l'Academie Royale des Sciences, 1731, and the translation, judging by a reprint in Fontenelle, is almost if not quite literal.

Morin, who lived from 1635 to 1714, exemplified several qualities Johnson is known to have admired and either shared or attempted to emulate. As a youth, the eldest of sixteen, Morin sought lessons in botany from a rural salesman of apothecary supplies and paid him with his tiny earnings and money his parents gave him for food.

Thus Abstinence and Generosity discovered themselves with his Passion for Botany, and the Gratification of a Desire indifferent in itself, was procured by the Exercise of two Virtues.

(GM, 1741, p. 375)

Denial of physical appetites to gratify the mental was a practice Johnson applauded. It was not only ethically praiseworthy, but also beneficial to the body, for Morin's limitation of himself to bread and water and fruits enabled him to preserve "a constant Freedom and Serenity of Spirits" (p. 375). Morin's ability to set and live by such an austere regimen--he retired at 7 p.m. and rose at 2 a.m., spent three hours at prayer, the rest of the day at work (p. 377)--doubtless impressed a man whose Meditations are marked by repeated intentions to do so. Morin's practice of charity was also one Johnson approved: the doctor's increase in salary did him no good,

except the Power of more extensive Charity; for all the Money which he received as a Salary, he put into the Chest of the Hospital, always, as he imagined, without being observed. Not content with serving the Poor for nothing, he paid them for being serv'd.

(p. 376)

Last was the man's unremitting honesty, shown by his telling the Princess, when she believed herself recovering from an illness, that her death was inevitable. Perhaps to an even greater degree than Boerhaave, Morin was a man whose qualities Johnson praised and strove for all his life.

Despite Bloom's statement that Fontenelle is followed closely, there are phrases and sentences in the text similar to those in other of Johnson's works. The author sympathized with Morin's lack of recognition and his unworldliness in the matter of getting on in society. Apparently Morin failed to get a promotion due him at the Hotel Dieu, the reason being that "mere unassisted Merit advances slowly, if, what is not very common, it advances at all" (p. 376). The conditional clause is Johnson's. Regard for ability unattended by craft was not the way of the world in Paris or London. Even fame gained is not necessarily fame retained, as Fontenelle observed in the account of Morin's having been honored by having a plant named for him, the Morina Orientalis; that was a compliment proper for a botanist, "for a plant is a Monument of a more durable Nature than a Medal or an Obelisk." Yet, lest the reader be carried away by emotion, he added that even such an honor will not necessarily endure, for the Nicotiana plant "is now scarcely known by any other Term than that of Tobacco" (p. 377). Even when their heroes were recognized, Fontenelle and Johnson were gloomy about their chances for enduring renown. Johnson questioned too Morin's

habit of drinking an increasing amount of wine, though measured carefully and taken as a medicine. In a footnote, he said that

The Practice of Dr Morin is forbidden, I believe, by every Writer that has left Rules for the Preservation of Health. . . . it is generally agreed, that as Men advance in Years, they ought to take lighter Sustenance, and in less Quantities; and Reason seems easily to discover that as the concoctive Powers grow weaker, they ought to labour less.
(p. 377)

Fontenelle's praise of Morin's Greek and Latin index to Hippocrates, which required "the Assiduity and Patience of an Hermit," Johnson quoted but added the irascible footnote quoted above (p. 49). Though his admiration for Morin was unquestionable, Johnson might disagree with Fontenelle.

The pattern of the two-thousand-word life of Morin is similar to that of the others: birth and family, education, posts, and promotions, illness and death, habits and character. The only item resembling an anecdote is his telling the princess she would surely die and receiving from her a ring as a pledge of affection. There are a few personal details, mostly relating to Morin's simple life: rice and water added to his diet when he was about sixty, his bedridden state for his last six months, and his daily schedule from 2 a.m. to 7 p.m. There is but one direct quotation from him: "Those that come to see me do me Honour, and those that stay away do me a Favour" (p. 377). Except for the adverse comment on his drinking wine late in life, there is no criticism of his life; thus the biography does live up to its title, "A Panegyric on Dr MORIN." Nowhere is it said in so many words that Morin ought to be imitated; the utile of the life is to be derived from the reader's admiration of him and from his observation of the beneficial effects of

his way of life. His estate was indicative of the kind of man he was--a collection of medals, one of herbs, and a library valued at two thousand crowns--which, Johnson's and Fontenelle's final observation is, "make it evident that he spent much more upon his Mind than upon his Body" (p. 377).

Peter Burman

No sources for Johnson's information on Peter Burman are mentioned in the life itself; Boswell supposed it "chiefly taken from a foreign publication; as indeed, he could not himself know much about Burman" (Life, I, 153). Information might have been gleaned from editions of Burman's works available in England; thirty-one of the thirty-four titles listed in the British Museum Catalogue were published before 1742.

Though not the prodigy Barretier was, Burman made his name as a scholar in classical studies and law and as a teacher at the universities of Leiden and Utrecht. Like those of Boerhaave and Barretier, his three-thousand-word life had news value: Burman died in March 1741, the life appeared in the Magazine of April 1742. Johnson's quibbles with Barretier's father enlivened that biography, but nothing of the sort appears here.

The account of Burman is his progress in education as a youth and his promotion from post to post as an adult, punctuated only by his publications. The form of the life is similar to that of the lives of Blake and Boerhaave: birth and family, education, posts and publications, death, and habits and character. Near the end of his life, in "The Life

of Addison," Johnson was to write that "No to name the school or the masters of men illustrious for literature, is a kind of historical fraud, by which honest fame is injuriously diminished: I would therefore trace him through the whole process of his education."¹⁷

So he does here: the importance of a good teacher and teaching methods is emphasized by the credit given Grævius, who superintended Burman's work at the University of Utrecht. Grævius's particular skill was his ability to determine just what field of literature a student was suited to; Burman, he said, was meant for classical studies. Fortunately, the skill of the teacher was matched by the aptitude of the student. Burman's qualities as a scholar--diligence, eloquence, power at argument, curiosity--are worked into the account of his education and teaching.

Personal details are few, and only one anecdote is offered: on a 1714 visit in Paris to the famed Father Montfaucon, Burman did not reveal his name until the father pronounced him "a very uncommon Traveller" (GM, 1742, p. 208), and was amazed to discover he had been talking to a man he admired. The incident indicates a sense of humor and flair for the dramatic that Johnson did not elaborate on. The only other time the subject comes to life is in the account of his affliction with the scurvy; at the re-creation of physical pain Johnson shone. "The Violence of his Pain produced irregular Fevers, deprived him of Rest, and entirely debilitated his whole Frame" (p. 209). Somehow that descriptions makes him come more alive even than the paragraph on his marrying a young lady of genius and beauty and having ten children, eight of whom died before their father did. Only experience that Johnson had

shared did he re-create for the reader.

Despite the overall dullness of the life, certain stylistic habits identify it as Johnson's. Burman was admitted to the university at twelve and passed in two years what an English student would take ten for. Either Dutch teachers must be far better than English, said Johnson, or Burman was superior to the greatest English scholars. Neither seemed likely, he admitted, so "it is necessary that Admiration should give Place to Enquiry" (p. 206). The fact was that the English student must be far better prepared to enter a university than was the case in Holland; thus it was probable that Burman had less proficiency at composition or languages than would be found in the "higher Classes of an English School" (p. 207). Thus what sounded marvelous turned out to be not so marvelous after all; Burman was remarkable, but not that remarkable. In this biography are almost none of the fact-to-generalization constructions that mark the others as Johnson's, possibly because the life of Burman offered few facts involving the choice or decision on his part. At nineteen he earned a doctor of laws degree, and his response inspired this generalization:

The Attainment of this Honour, was far from having upon Burman that Effect which has been too often observed to be produced in others, who, having in their own Opinion no higher Object of Ambition, have relapsed into Idleness and Security, and spent the Rest of their Lives in a lazy Enjoyment of their Academical Dignities.

(p. 207)

In Burman's life as in his own, Johnson discovered the reluctance of the public to reward scholarship: the University of Leiden offered him three professorships, which he at last accepted, "finding the solicitations from Leiden were warm and urgent, and his Friends at Utrecht, though

unwilling to be deprived of him, yet not zealous enough for the Honour and Advantage of their University, to endeavour to detain him by greater Liberality" (p. 208).

Thus Johnson might have had a personal sympathy with Burman, but whether the sympathy was also intellectual cannot be discovered from the life in the Magazine, for, although many of Burman's works are mentioned by name, there is no intimation of what he thought. References to his works tell no more than that he

showed, by the Usefulness and Perspecuity of his Lectures, that he was not confined to speculative Notions on the duty and office of a professor of polite literature, having a very happy Method of accommodating his Instructions to the different Abilities and Attainments of his Pupils.

(p. 209)

With no substantiation, the reader is told that Burman's knowledge "appears rather from judicious Compilations than original Productions" (p. 209). Johnson may have read some of his prose, in order to give a judgment on his style as "lively and masculine" (p. 209), but of how he used that style he told nothing, beyond listing at the end five classical works Burman edited. Evidently what Burman thought was not so important as his finding and publishing works which had lain "neglected by the greatest Part of the learned World" (p. 209).

Johnson honored Burman not only for that work but also for his piety, recording that he bore a "tormenting disease" without "unbecoming or irrational Despondency," seeking comfort in the Duties of Religion" (p. 209). There had been questions about his religion, which Johnson said were removed by his behavior during his illness. The description of his character might equally well apply to the author:

In his Hours of Relaxation he was gay, and sometimes gave Way so far to his Temper, naturally satirical, that he drew upon himself the Ill-Will of those who had been unfortunately the Subjects of his Mirth; but Enemies so provoked he thought it beneath him to regard or to pacify; for he was fiery, but not malicious, disdained dissimulation, and in his gay or serious Hours preserved a settled Detestation of Falshood.
(p. 209)

Still, the sympathy with Burman was not so great as that with Boerhaave.

Confucius

A DESCRIPTION of the EMPIRE of CHINA and Chinese Tartar, together with the Kingdoms of Korea and Tibet, translated from the French of J.B. Du Halde, Jesuit. . . . Printed for E. Cave.

(GM, 1742, p. 280)

The "Essay on the Description of China of Du Halde," appearing in the June, July, and September issues of the 1742 Gentleman's Magazine was an advertisement for the two-volume translation that Edward Cave had been printing serially for six years.¹⁸* Boswell attributed all three parts to Johnson on the basis of internal evidence (Life, I, 17); David Nichol Smith believed the June section was Johnson's but not the other two;¹⁹ Edward A. Bloom²⁰ and Jacob Leed agree with Boswell on the basis of textual similarities to his other biographies; too, the inclusion of the life of Confucius in the July part is consistent with Johnson's preferences.²¹

The purpose of the extracts, of course, was to attract notice to

*The British Museum Catalogue does not include an edition by Cave. It does list the Description Geographique, Historique, Chronologique et Physique de l'Empire de la Chine et de la Tartarie Chinoise published in Paris in 1735 (second edition, 1736) and the four-volume Richard Brookes translation published in London in 1736. The University of Oklahoma has the third edition of the Brookes translation, published by J. Watts in 1741.

the books Cave was trying to sell; hence the extractor should have chosen the most interesting and dramatic parts. But in the part to be extracted for the July issue, he discovered the life of Confucius and ceased his "sketchy running account"²² in favor of a summary of the life of the sage. Any man's life would probably have attracted Johnson's attention, but Confucius's was one with which he might have special sympathy.

He was in his Childhood eminently serious and thoughtful, negligent of Trifles and without any Regard to the common Amusements of that Age; at fifteen he applied himself to the Study of the ancient Books, and to the Collection of such Maxims and Principles as might most contribute to the Establishment and Propagation of Virtue, an Employment which was very little interrupted by Domestick Cares, tho' he married at the Age of nineteen.

(GM, 1742, p. 354)

Such industry and single-mindedness Johnson would have admired, as he would Confucius's resistance to the temptations of sex. On one occasion his maxims had produced so great a change in the kingdom of Shan tong that a neighboring king resolved to undermine the good wrought by tempting the court with a "great number" of beautiful maidens who distracted the governors with their airs and arts. Confucius alone of the government was unaffected by "so fatal a Contagion; a Contagion against which the Preservatives of Philosophy have been often found of very little Effect" (p. 354-55). Leaving that kingdom, Confucius found no court receptive to his services and was reduced to poverty, about which he did not complain, reasoning that he saw "'a Dignity or Wealth unjustly acquired, as Clouds driven by the Wind.'" Johnson: "This Constancy cannot raise our Admiration after his former Conquests of himself for how easily he may support Pain, who has been able to resist Pleasure"

(p. 355). Confucius's indifference to fluctuations of fortune attracted Johnson's attention if not his imitation. Like Johnson, he was a creature of contrasts.

Confucius, say his Disciples, had three Contraries in his Character, which scarcely any other man has known how to reconcile. He had all the Graces of Politeness with all the Awefulness of Gravity; uncommon Severity of Countenance, with great Benignity of Temper; and the most exalted Dignity, with the most engaging Modesty in his Air.
(p. 356)

Bertrand Bronson could have said the same, except for the last phrase, in Johnson Agonistes.

The form of the life of Confucius follows closely that of the Du Halde book, which is like that of the other biographies: birth and family, life and works, death and character, with the addition of paragraph-long summaries of three of his works. It is different from Johnson's previous biographies in the number of direct quotations and the inclusion of two anecdotes, all from Du Halde. Besides the quotation on his indigence quoted above are his deathbed statement on the moral disintegration of the Chinese empire and an anecdote illustrating his stoicism. When a Mandarin of war ordered his execution for criticizing his conduct, Confucius, despite the advice to run in the face of the raised sword, only answered, "If we are protected by Heaven [Tyen], what have we to fear from this Man, though he be President of the Tribunal of the Army?" (p. 355). Confucius's disregard for temporal life probably went further than Johnson's although the latter would probably have admired the sentiment.

Most of the changes Johnson made for the GM "Essay" were condensations of rambling paragraphs and omissions of trivial facts; he even

altered the quotations from Confucius to make them more aphoristic. In the magazine article, only the Christian date of the sage's birth is given, not the Chinese dating or dynasty, and the classes of his disciples are omitted. Of the family, Du Halde supplied something of the mother's ancestry and of Confucius's son and grandson; Johnson gave only the facts apparently most significant to him, that the father was of an "Illustrious Family" and died, leaving little, when his son was three (p. 354). The three paragraphs that summarize his works in the article were taken from Du Halde's eighteen pages.²³ The differences between Confucius's statements in the book and the extract is that the latter's are more concise; for instance, in the Brookes translation Confucius's response to the Mandarin is, "If the Tien, replied he, protects us, of which he has just given us a sensible proof, how can the rage of Huan ti do us any hurt, notwithstanding he is President of the Tribunal of the Army?"²⁴ I have not discovered whether Johnson's version is his own or comes from a translation other than Brookes's; it is certainly less clumsy.

Johnson added also two editorial comments and shifted one quotation from the discussion of the works to the biography. In the account of the rival monarch's sending lovely maidens to distract the other court, he called the scheme "Means which have seldom failed of Success, and by which the greatest Monarchs have been destroyed, when neither Policy could circumvent, nor Armies oppose them (p. 355). Both the sense and the expression are Johnsonian; neither occurs in the Brookes version. Even more typical of him is the detection of incompleteness in the anecdote of the Mandarin who had sentenced Confucius to death:

We are not informed whether he escaped this Danger by the Veneration which his Intrepidity produced in the Officer, or by the Interposition of others. . . or whether the Mandarin designed in reality only to try whether his Principles were sufficient to support him under immediate Danger.

. . .

(pp. 355-56)

The last possibility, after weighing of the evidence, is most likely to Johnson. Du Halde ignores the inconsistency between the raised sword of the executioner and the fact that Confucius was to die peacefully in bed at seventy-three. Johnson, on the other hand, admits the lack of information, suggests other possibilities, and chooses for the reader the most likely.

The approximately twenty-three hundred words on Confucius ended the July extract, and no more was said of him in September. The biography was preceded by an account of the method of educating Chinese children and an allusion to the degrees and honors conferred on the Chinese learned, of whom Confucius certainly was one; therefore "It cannot be improper to give an Account of his Life" (p. 354).

Dr. Thomas Sydenham

Johnson's "The Life of Dr. Sydenham" was published first as part of John Swan's edition of The Entire Works of Dr Thomas Sydenham, newly made English from the Originals. Jacob Leed maintains that because that work preceded the December 1742 publication of the life in the Gentleman's Magazine (it was advertised as "published this day" in the Daily Advertiser of 19 November 1742), the magazine publication was not meant to publicize the Swan work,²⁵ though it seems to me that the magazine life might be just as effective an advertisement after publication

of the Works as before. The life was republished in four more editions of Swan's work (1749, 1753, 1763, and 1769), George Wallis's edition in 1788 (all in London), and two Benjamin Rush editions in Philadelphia in 1790 and 1815.²⁶

Lack of reliable information hampered Johnson in the writing of this life, for most of the approximately twenty-five hundred words refute rumors rather than supply hard facts. Even the exact birth date was not known, only that he was born in 1624. The only source cited is public registers, the kind of source that could tell him that his subject entered Oxford in 1642 and obtained his degree in physick in 1648. Sydenham's own writings must have been consulted also--"for he informs us himself, that he was withheld from the university by the commencement of the war"--but Johnson did not know what he did during "that long Series of publick Commotion." To Johnson it was "reported" that he fought on the king's side (GM, 1742, p. 633), but in truth he was a cavalry captain for Cromwell.²⁸ No incidents can be supplied to substantiate the character of Sydenham offered at the end of the biography, to the effect that he was benevolent, candid, and communicative, sincere, and religious (p. 635), and the list is somewhat trite, excluding as it does any unpleasant characterization.

The greater part of the "Life" is Johnson's refutation of error of fact and misinterpretation of action. "It is the general Opinion that he was made a Physician by Accident and Necessity, and Sir Richard Blackmore reports in plain Terms . . . that he engaged in Practice without any preparatory Study" (p. 633), he reported, but the truth is that a Dr. Cox was treating Sydenham's brother in 1646 and recommended

to him his profession. Since medical knowledge is required for the degree of doctor of physic he received in 1648, it can be assumed that he spent those two years in study. Too, Sydenham went after Oxford to the University at Montpellier, to study further at the "most celebrated School of Physick" (pp. 633-34). Blackmore also said in the preface to his Treatise on the Small Pox that he asked Sydenham to recommend books to read to prepare himself for medicine and was told, Don Quixote. Blackmore evidently believed Sydenham meant to condemn all medical texts, but Johnson preferred to re-interpret the remark; Sydenham could not, he reasoned, have believed medical writing was useless, for he himself had written.

That he recommended Don Quixote to Blackmore we are not allowed to doubt; but the Relater is hindered by that Self-love which dazzles all Mankind from discovering that he might intend a Satire very different from a general Censure of all the ancient and modern Writers on medicine, since he might perhaps mean, either seriously, or in jest, to insinuate that Blackmore was not adapted by Nature to the Study of Physick, and that, whether he should read Cervantes or Hippocrates, he would be equally unqualified for Practice, and equally unsuccessful in it.

(p. 633)

Another "common opinion" Johnson sought to scotch was that Sydenham composed his works in English and had them translated into Latin by a friend, Dr. Mapletoft; he reminded his readers "how unlikely it is that any man should engage in a work so laborious and so little necessary, only to advance the reputation of another;" therefore it is more likely that Sydenham did his own Latin composing. Why should such rumors, both malicious and illogical, be spread about a man of ability? Human nature, according to Johnson, was the answer.

But if it be, on the other Part, remembered, how much

this Opinion favours the Laziness of some, and the Pride of others; how readily some Men confide in natural Sagacity, and how willingly most would spare themselves the Labour of accurate Reading and tedious Enquiry; it will be easily discovered how much the Interest of Multitudes was engaged in the Production and continuance of this Opinion, and how cheaply those, of whom it was known that they practiced physick before they studied it, might satisfy themselves and others with the Example of the illustrious Sydenham.
(p. 634)

Thus one use of Sydenham's biography would be to remove the excuse offered by the proud, timorous, and idle and to prove to them "that the only Means of arriving at Eminence and Success are Labour and Study." Thus Johnson used logic, common sense, and his knowledge of human nature based on experience to disprove several common misconceptions about his subject and to clear his name of mud applied by the inept and jealous.

The same technique is used in the first paragraph in reference to the lack of information about whether Sydenham "gave any presages of his future Eminence in Medicine" (p. 633). The biographer and reader must repress their curiosity about possible childish omens of his adult abilities, but Johnson did not doubt that such omens existed. Generalizing on the basis of experience, he wrote that "there is no instance of any Man, whose History has been minutely related, that did not in every Part of Life discover the same Proportion of intellectual Vigour" (p. 633). Unfortunately, he added, it was the fate of scientists to leave behind "no Remembrance of their domestick Life," indicating that if such were available, they would be proper material for the biographer. Thus, beyond the quibble with Blackmore, there are no anecdotes in this life and no quotations from the subject, aside from one from his work,

to the effect that "he applied himself in earnest to the study of physick⁷ and spent several years in the university" (p. 634).

The primary source of the life of Sydenham, despite Leed, was to attract notice to Cave's edition of his works, but Johnson used it also as an act of justice, the reasoning away of doubts as to Sydenham's education and abilities. It served also to commemorate a major English physician, whose works were translated and published in Geneva, Amsterdam, and Madrid and in whose honor the Sydenham Society was named in the nineteenth century.²⁸ However, if Dryden is right in saying a lively impression conduces to teaching of virtue, no virtue will be inculcated by this life despite Sydenham's worthy attributes.

Nicholas Rienzy

"The Life of Nicholas Rienzy" is an exemplum demonstrating the misdeeds, disgrace, and death of a Renaissance Italian politician who, governed by ambition and avarice, misused his intelligence and charm. The author's attitude toward his subject is indicated in the divisions mentioned in the "Contents" for January, 1746: "Life of Nicholas Rienzy, senator of Rome under Clement VI . . . His seditious harangues to the populace of Rome . . . The pompous manner in which he creates himself a knight" (GM, 1746, p. 2). No other biography in the Gentleman's Magazine of the 1740's was so blatantly meant to instruct; because of the confident tone, heavy use of incident and direct quotation, and rapid pace, no other so well holds the reader's attention.

The theme of the biography is the tragedy of the perversion of great natural abilities to selfish ends, and the reader is never allowed

to forget it. No detail is supplied that does not contribute to the impression that Rienzy could have been a benevolent, merciful, and constructive ruler but wanted only power; thus nothing is said of his birth, family, or education. The first sentences epitomize his character, so that no mistake will be made about him:

NICHOLAS RIENZY, whom the disorders of Italy encouraged to exalt himself from the lowest state to sovereign authority, was endued with a quick apprehension, a lofty and enterprizing genius, an excellent memory, a subtle and judicious understanding, an easy address, a heart capable of falshood and dissimulation, and a boundless ambition.

(GM, 1746, p. 3)

Without those strengths he would not have risen twice to rule Rome; without those failings, he would have been a good ruler.

The biography begins rather than ends with Rienzy's character and takes up his life in 1372 (actually 1343, according to three modern sources²⁹), when he was sent by Rome to attempt to persuade the pope to return from Avignon. A secondary theme of the article is anti-Catholicism, or the potential in the Catholic hierarchy for corruption. The pope was at that time "squandering in pomp and pleasure the revenues sent him by his vicars at Rome. . . who greatly oppressed the people" (p. 3). The pope refused to come and Rienzy fell briefly into disfavor. But, "as men of learning were then in some esteem among the great," he ingratiated himself with a cardinal and attached himself to a legate returning to Rome, "resolved to employ the pope's favours to gain his own ends" (p. 4). When Rienzy usurped the power of the governor (on the latter's absence from Rome), he had the pope's vicar named his colleague in "commission from the people" to take over

for, while Rienzy aimed at no less than to destroy the pontifical authority, he pretended the greatest respect and

fidelity to his Holiness, and to act in his name.
(p. 5)

All his hypocrisy, however, did not save him from being accused of treason (after threatening to execute a member of the nobility), and he was forced again to court the favor of the pope at Avignon. His eloquence prevailed and his life was spared, though he remained a prisoner until, by a stroke of fortune, the pope decided to use him to put down another rebel in Rome, one who had taken Rienzy for his model. Again Rienzy took power, but again his extravagance aroused the anger of the people, and this time he was murdered by a mob.

The life of a man shrewd enough to twice take supreme power in Rome and foolish enough twice to lose it doubtless held many lessons for politicians. His possible strengths and devious methods are summed up in the second paragraph:

His person was majestic, and he was a strict observer of the laws. By this he gained the esteem and love of the people. He had even the hypocrisy to make religion subservient to his views, by pretending visions and revelations in his favour. He was so bold as to boast of his supporting the papal authority, while he secretly endeavoured to undermine it. Insolent in prosperity, yet discouraged at the least misfortune, till his judgment recover'd itself, and taught him the most desperate ways to rise again.
(p. 3)

Hypocrisy, boldness, and cunning lifted him and destroyed him. His method was that of demagogues before and after him: pretense at concern for the welfare of the people and apparent willingness to work for their relief. When a speech in a public assembly drew to him only the ridicule of the authorities, he resorted to art, having pictures hung in various public places, to depict the past glories and present unhappiness of the city of Rome, succeeding in arousing factional spirit

among the poor against the rich. After forcing the support of several merchants, he waited until the governor was gone and then marched from the church of the Holy Masses to the capitol, under three standards: one with emblematic figures, one with pictures of the saints Peter and Paul, and the last the standard of St. George. The nobility was put down and Rienzy was master of Rome, at first a good one, eliminating abuses, punishing criminals, capturing highwaymen, and passing laws promoting peace, commerce, and justice. The Romans loved him and neighboring princes sought his recognition and favor. But his character was not strong enough for success.

The wisdom of Rienzy was not proof against this sudden flow of honours and prosperity. Vanity, the love of pleasures, avarice, and cruelty, threw him by turns into extravagancies, which brought on a strange turn of fortune.

(p. 5)

Especially resented were the expensive and ostentatious ceremonies, described in detail, in which Rienzy had himself invested as a knight, and his scheme to put to death some of the nobility. That plan was scuttled when he became aware of the people's resentment, but his pretended clemency did not fool them, and he was forced to leave Rome. On his return, after making up with the pope, his conduct did not improve. "Prosperity was a second time pleased to smile on Rienzy, who knew not how to use her well" (p. 66). After his murder, his body remained three days on a gibbet, then was burned. Lest the point be missed by the casual reader or prospective politician, the biography closes not with another "character," but with these moralistic sentiments:

Thus we behold in this man a remarkable instance of the infatuation of prosperity! The turns of his life are surprising, and had he used his last good fortune with

moderation, he might have escaped his fate. But as he twice fell, he remains a stronger proof of that maxim, Quos Deus vult perdere, prius dementat: and shews, that the highest professions of zeal for the establishment of right and justice, when they rise only from ambition, introduce cruelty and confusion, and terminate in the disappointment and destruction of the deluded people.
(p. 67)

No source or inspiration for the four-thousand-word life of Rienzy is mentioned in the text.* Had it occurred earlier in the century, it might have referred to Robert Walpole; later, it might have referred to John Wilkes. But it is unlikely that the Pelhams, in power in 1746, were feared as demagogues. The anti-Catholic sentiment was probably buttressed, if not inspired, by the fears aroused in 1745 by the aborted rebellion led by the Young Pretender from Scotland.

Four Scot Rebels

Donald Mac Donald, James Nicholson, and Walter Ogilvie were hanged 22 August 1746, and the Gentleman's Magazine for that month, published in the first week of September, carried brief accounts of their lives and deaths, totaling some two thousand words. The theme of the three lives is the folly of rebelling against "the present happy establishment" (GM, 1746, p. 401), and the source was, judging by internal evidence, their appearances in court and accounts from observers of their prison activities; for those two reasons, concentration in the biographies is on their actions in the Forty-five. Youth and education are ignored.

These biographies are more like news reports than any of the

*However, the account of Rienzy's attempted escape in disguise and his murder are very close to that quoted by Cotterill, which is from a Vita of Rienzy written by an anonymous contemporary (pp. 48-49).

previous ones are, for there is very little generalization, summary, or comment on their milieus. And their ends indicate their characters. The pace is rapid; there is no headnote to the article, which begins with this sentence, if not rhetorical, certainly breath-taking:

DONALD MAC DONALD, aged 25, born near Inverness, was of the Mac Donalds of Keppoch, a clan remarkable for encouraging rebellions, and was one of the first that, with his uncle, old Mac Donald, joined the young Pretender; for which reason he caress'd them very much, and made his uncle a colonel, and him a captain, though he knew little of military discipline; but his uncle, who was an experienced warrior, and in the last rebellion, soon taught him the use of arms, threatening to shoot him if he did not perform his exercise justly, and like an officer, as it would bring a very great disgrace on the family.

(p. 400)

The pace and organization are similar for the other two lives: birth, names of parents, accounting for joining the rebel army, participation in the rebellion, and behavior during imprisonment. The author was clearly most sympathetic with Nicholson. The other two were sullen and rude, but he "always behaved with great composure and decency" and was visited daily by his "beautiful, tender, affectionate, and virtuous wife," by whom he had six children, and who wept at every meeting though never "upbraided him with his ill conduct."

As it is impossible to describe the affecting distress, which filled every eye with tears at the last parting of this unhappy couple, we shall leave it intirely to the reader's imagination.

(p. 401)

Possibly the author was an eye-witness to that parting, as he apparently was to the court appearances. The account of Mac Donald's military career is punctuated with "he said" and "he ramed" and "he thought," indicating that his testimony was being quoted. Direct quotation is

used in the description of his being brought to the bar; he was asked whether his name was Donald Mac Donald, and he answered, "I can't tell my name; I don't know that I was ever christen'd" and he left the bar "in a sullen insolent manner" (p. 400). Information was also obtained from someone who observed him in prison: "While in prison he often was ludicrous with his fetters, and said, 'if they were knocked off, and a pair of bag-pipes were in the gaol. . . .'" Nicholson too is quoted as hoping he would meet his death prayerfully and as saying he was "dazzled" by the prospects of the rebellion. The only quotation from Ogilvie is indirect, that he believed in the righteousness of the rebel cause.

Despite sympathy for Nicholson, the author's attitude is clearly anti-Jacobite, judging by the snide or derogatory allusions to the cause. Mac Donald is quoted as saying that the actions of the rebels at Perth were even to him "so cruel and brutish, that is often shocked him" (p. 400); later, in jail, he criticized the French king, "who he said was not to be depended on by prince or subject" (p. 401). The wiles the rebels used to lure innocents to their cause were illustrated in the case of Nicholson, a coffee-house keeper who had his principles "poisoned" by a Captain Gadd, who charmed him with "chimerical notions of the honour he would acquire by re-seating an exiled prince upon his throne" (p. 401). Similarly, Ogilvie, although of "creditable parents," kept company with rebels and "imbibed their principles." Each of the three men, it seemed, was drawn to the cause by relatives or friends, not by individual study of politics or consideration of the consequence; they were good, brave men, but foolish and careless of their duty to

the English king. Therefore they must be punished.

Almost a fifth of the article is devoted to their executions, before which they "continued steadfast in the principles which had ruin'd them, to the last" (p. 402). It is described, as by an eye-witness, how a person "suspected to be a popish priest" went to the jail and talked privately with Mac Donald and Nicholson. On the sledge which was to be pulled out from under them, Ogilvie read a Protestant prayer. "Mac Donald and Ogilvie dy'd very hard, being young men." The three were disembowelled, decapitated, and buried in one grave in Bloomsbury. The details in the last scene are doubtless by a witness to the deaths, possibly a staff member of the Gentleman's Magazine.

Some elements of sympathy for the men can be detected, but none occurs in the "Account of the Behaviour and Execution of the late Ld LOVAT, and some further particulars of his Life, published in April 1747, a few weeks after his death. Lovat's character, or lack of it, was summed up in a speech at Edinburgh in 1706 by Lord Baltimore, who said the then Simon Fraser "deserved, if practicable, to have been hanged five several times, in five different places, and upon five different accounts at least." Besides treason, he named attempted murder, apostasy, and rape (GM, 1747, p. 159). A previous article on Lovat had said he seized the Lady Dowager Lovat, had a clergyman marry them without her consent, stripped off her clothes with a dirk, and raped her (GM, 1746, p. 325). A "character" of him appeared in July 1746, to the effect that he was "a cruel master, an imperious husband, a tyrannical parent, a treacherous friend, and an arbitrary

chief," a character that is disputed in a footnote citing the loyalty of his family and friends (p. 339). In general, however, there was strong feeling against Lovat; a letter he wrote asking mercy of the Duke of Cumberland was published in the July 1746 Gentleman's Magazine but mocked by being turned into six quatrains in the same issue (p. 381). An "answer," also in verse, refusing Lovat his life, was published in September (p. 491).

More than half the "biography" concerns Lovat's execution, and the account of it rates a subhead in the article: "BEHAVIOUR on the Day of his EXECUTION." The source of this section must have been an eye-witness, for there are such details as his hour of rising, his breakfast, and drinking of healths, and request to see his lady (who was too much overcome). Lovat kneeled and prayed on the scaffold, gave orders as to the disposition of his clothes and body, drank some burnt brandy and bitters, and gave the executioner ten guineas. The old man became attractive at the time of his death, and his words were touching:

God save us . . . why should there be such a bustle about taking off an old grey head, that cannot get up three steps without three bodies to support it [and to a friend] Chear up thy heart, man, I am not afraid, why should you? [and to James Fraser] My dear James, I am going to heaven, but you must continue to crawl a little longer in this evil world.

(GM, 1747, pp. 161-62)

Placing his head on the block, he said a short prayer and dropped his handkerchief as a signal to the executioner, who severed his head with one blow.

Even the anti-rebel writer of the biography is almost won over by the manner of Lovat's death, but he and his readers are not to be fooled. The decency and dignity with which Lovat died do not nullify

the wickedness with which he lived, but render him

yet more odious and contemptible, as such a conduct can proceed only from insolence, ignorance, or insensibility. Let us not, therefore, be deceived by specious appearances, or dazzled with a false lustre: Let us not judge of the man or the cause in which he dies by the manner of his dying; but rather censure, or approve, his dying behaviour, by comparing it with the general tenor of his life, and then only yield our approbation to the appearances of fortitude, serenity and cheerfulness, when his moral conduct seems to afford him such a prospect of eternity . . . as is consistent with knowledge, reason, and humility.

(p. 162)

Lovat died well, but he must be judged by his life.

The tenor of the Gentleman's Magazine lives and deaths of these four rebels is a regretful sternness. They made wrong choices and had to pay for them. Had they chosen otherwise, their talents could have been turned to good use by their country, but they chose to follow one who wished to overthrow the English government, and they could not be forgiven.

Edmund Halley

"The Elogy of Dr Halley" was, like the life of Morin Johnson translated in 1741, taken from Bernard de Fontenelle's lives, or elogies, of members of the French Royal Academy. (Besides the Eloges, 1731, sixty-nine more lives were published in the Histoire du Renouvellement de l'Academie Royale des Sciences, Paris, 1744.) It is, however, much longer than the account of Morin, about six thousand words divided into two installments published as the lead articles in October and November 1747. The first was signed "By M. FONTENELLE of the ROYAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES at Paris." No translator's or editor's name is given.

Ostensible purpose of the article was to give a summary of Halley's

astronomical knowledge, but an underlying theme was praise of all kinds of scientific study and of princes who patronize it. Before a proper biography of Halley could begin, Fontenelle believed, several hundred words had to go to the status of astronomy in England, Holland, France, and Prussia at the time; he began his work about 1676. Each of the other countries had one scholar named; France had seven. Fontenelle's chauvinism was further revealed by his reference to contemporary study by the French: "Learned expeditions! renewed in our days, under a reign not less auspicious to the sciences and polite literature, than that of Louis the Great" (GM, 1747, p. 456). But any king who supported study was worthy of praise. A comparison of King Charles II to Augustus was implied in the reference to two English government figures, the secretary of state and the master of the ordnance, who helped pay for Halley's voyage to St. Helena, as his "Mecenas's in the court of of K. Charles II." Halley named a constellation for the Oak that hid Charles from Cromwell, thus recording "his gratitude in those very skies, which the patronage and liberality of that prince enabled him to discover." And, in reference to England's sending an astronomer to Surat to see a transit of Mercury across the sun: "The honour resulting to a nation, in which instances of a like curiosity, satisfied at a equal expense, are frequent, is universally acknowledged" (p. 456).

Fontenelle's praise was non-political: William III also won his approbation for giving Halley command of a man of war to sail to the South Atlantic and "fix the laws of the magnetic variation in those parts" (p. 503). Not only patrons, royal and governmental, had to be won to the necessity of celestial study, but also the general public.

Like the authors of articles about space travel, Fontenelle and the Gentleman's Magazine emphasized the practical benefit of knowledge of the stars. For instance, Halley's study of the irregularities of the magnetic needle at various places on the globe resulted in the discovery of a pattern of irregularities that would enable a mariner to establish his longitude. The praise for rich supporters of research and assurance that they would not be forgotten, and emphasis on the practicality of earth and sky study accorded well with the interests and bias of the Gentleman's Magazine editors, who in 1742, 1743, 1744, and 1745 had published a series of letters from R. Yates, Edmund Weaver, W.T., and X.Y. on theories of comets and the moon's eclipses.

The form of Halley's life was as consistent with previous lives as the sentences of Fontenelle were with the attitude of the magazine. The birth and education section is followed by the account of astronomy "in order to set a just value on Mr Halley's improvements of this science" (p. 455), but the latter is the only digression from a recital of his travels, researches, posts, writings, and character. The only source mentioned (besides the implied use of Halley's writings) is a memoir by Martin Folkes, president of the Royal Society of London from 1741 to 1753 and successor of Halley in the French Royal Academy. The account of his peaceful death—"by the gentle course of uninterrupted nature he ceased to live" (p. 505)—is followed by a summary of his observations and deductions, publications, translations, and character, although the qualities of the latter had been alluded to previously. For instance, he knew the distance of the sun from the earth could be determined nearly on 5 June 1761, during a passage of Venus over the

sun, and he urged "in the most pathetic terms, all astronomers who shall be then alive" to be prepared to study such an important occurrence. "He indulged no flattering hope of being himself witness to this appearance, but he was no, on that account, less solicitous about the event, or negligent of any thing which might contribute to its success" (p. 456).

His unselfishness is indicated by his urging Sir Isaac Newton to publish his Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy and offering to prepare it for the press, thus spending his time in the aggrandizement of another's reputation. The fact that during a two-year voyage during which he crossed the Equator four times, not one man was lost from his ship, is attributed to his "compassionate care, and that humane disposition, which principally distinguished his character" (p. 504). Even in the summary, his qualities were not named without substantiation. His ease in society is illustrated by his charming Peter the Great on a visit in England, his responsibility by his work as controller of the mint at Chester, his generosity by his writing a private letter to a man who published an erroneous calculation in physics rather than correcting him publicly. Because of these and other illustrations, the character section of the article is almost a thousand words long.

Personal anecdotes and life are at a minimum in the life. The only incident not told as revelatory of his character deals with Halley's meeting with Helvelius at Dantzic in 1679: "The two astronomers made their observations together the same night, as persons who had been long intimate with each other, and with that common country which

was the object of the mutual attention (p. 457). A paragraph is given Halley's marriage (but in the same paragraph "we find him again traversing the seas"), and another to the fates of his son and two daughters (p. 507). Although they were contemporaries, there is no evidence in the biography that Halley and Fontenelle met.

To Fontenelle it was the progress of science more than the man that was important; Halley's character may have made him a better scientist, but his domestic life was irrelevant. The life of Halley is a good example of what an editor said of Fontenelle's eulogies, that "ils ne sont rien de moins que l'histoire d'une époque incomparablement importante de la civilisation."³⁰

George Fleming

The life of George Fleming, Lord Bishop of Carlisle, is not so much a "Character," as the title has it, as it is a eulogy apparently contributed by a family member, clerical hanger-on, or effusive parishioner. The bishop died 2 July 1747, and his life appeared in the Gentleman's Magazine of that month. Although the pattern is conventional, the parts are proportioned differently from the other lives: of the fifteen hundred words, about two hundred are devoted to Fleming's family (back to the Norman Conquest), and about five hundred to his character. The rest is divided almost equally between his education and posts and his decline and pious death.

The theme of the life is Fleming's familial, ecclesiastical, and political orthodoxy; here is a man who lived as a gentleman of the upper gentry ought to live. His father Daniel, a knight, disposing

"of all his Sons in the most advantageous Way he could, consistently with his Interest and Ability" (GM, 1747, pp. 324-25), intended George, the fifth of eleven sons, for the clergy, and there is no indication that he ever disputed his destiny. After Oxford, George Fleming was chaplain, vicar, arch-deacon, dean, and bishop of the diocese of Carlisle. His character is intimated by his father's boast that "not one of his Progenitors had, since the Norman Conquest, been an Opposer of the Crown; not one, since the Reformation, had been a Papist, nor a Dissenter, in any Shape, from the Church of England" (p. 324). Although nothing is specifically said of their politics, the Flemings were evidently, wisely, on the side of William in 1688, for George's teachers at Oxford "printed congratulatory Verses on King William's victorious Return from Ireland" (p. 325). Or perhaps the Flemings, like Dryden, changed with the nation.

More important, judging by the space given it, than his life and promotions was his character. No anecdotes or direct quotations illustrating these qualities are given, but the reader is told that Fleming was modest, affable, neat, cautious, independent, charitable, frugal, and serene of temper. Although the information on his family had been given in a rush of one-hundred-word sentences, the description of his character (placed before that of his death), has several consciously styled sentences, including four "As . . . so . . ." and three "Though . . . yet . . ." constructions. For instance, "As he was not elated with Acquisitions, so was he not dejected with Losses . . ." and "Though his Sensations were quick and strong, and his Temper naturally warm; yet, . . . Reason constantly maintained its

proper Sway over his Passions" (p. 325). (The reference to his temper is the only hint of a fault.) The style changed again in the account of Fleming's "approaching Dissolution" and death, leaning heavily on jerky phrases punctuated by dashes. With his death,

human Society has lost one of its most valuable Members,--the Church of England one of its chiefest Ornaments,--his present Majesty one of his most firm and faithful Subjects,--so have his Clergy lost the best Diocesan,--his Children the best Father,--his Servants the best Master,--the Poor their best Benefactor,--and Numbers of Men the best Friend,--who regret his Death, and revere his Memory.

(p. 326)

In that fulsome sentence is the first and only mention of Fleming's family; a wife is never mentioned.

The Fleming biography, with its emphasis on character and dying day, is closer to an obituary than the other lives published soon after the subjects' deaths. The lives of Boerhaave, Burman, and Barretier had been presented as though to satisfy public curiosity about them; no such curiosity is assumed here, and the publication of the life of Fleming must be justified by emphasis on his exemplary habits. The object was not to give the facts of a man's life--few more than two hundred words are devoted to that purpose--but to pay tribute to him, to commemorate him, and to encourage emulation of him.

Not a biography proper, but a "character" inspired by the life of Fleming was a brief article published the next month in the Gentleman's Magazine and contributed by "constant reader, J.S." The "character" of Bishop Hooper is just that, with no dates or specific facts, though taken from the General Dictionary. The headnote provided the only facts, that Hooper was for twenty-eight years bishop of the See of

Bath and Wells. That he too was presented as an example is indicated in that note, which closes, "But I fear, with the satirist, that there are not now many such" (p. 386).

Thomas de Veil

Sir Thomas de Veil is one of the few subjects of biographies in the Gentleman's Magazine of the 1740's who is today mentioned in neither the Dictionary of National Biography nor the Encyclopædia Britannica (others are such small fry as the Scot rebels Nicholson, Ogilvie, and Mac Donald.) In the fewer than two thousand words of the magazine life, no oddities of character or achievements of note demand the reader's attention, nor--and this is a peculiarity of the biography, not the man--is he presented as a model worthy of imitation, implicitly or explicitly. Why then does the magazine bother with him? The answer contains the only allusion to that ever-rising middle class eighteenth-century historians are so fond of:

As Sir Thomas de Veil passed thro' many scenes of life, and raised himself from the station of a common soldier, to make a considerable figure, and much noise in the world, some account of him will be wanted by your readers.

(GM, 1747, p. 562)

The most striking aspect of De Veil's rise in the world (to readers of eighteenth-century biographies) is that it was accomplished not by virtue and merit, but by exercise of what are usually flaws; that fact was not glossed over by the anonymous author of the life, but pointed out:

Upon the whole, he seems to have been a remarkable instance how far vices themselves may, with respect to the public, supply the want of private virtue. If his natural temper had not been unrelenting and severe, his zeal to

punish would have been less; and if his desires had been more temperate, he would probably have wanted sufficient motives to carry him through a multiplicity of business so important to society.

(p. 564)

That vices or faults are not always detriments to worldly advancement must have been known, but this is the first suggestion of it in the Gentleman's Magazine biographies.

After the first paragraph, quoted above, the biography is conventional in form. The father was a learned reverend, the mother a "good oeconomist," and "Thomas passed his childhood under strict discipline, both as to his morals and learning" (p. 562). His rise from mercer's apprentice to justice is covered in fewer than four hundred words; his character and methods were more important. Early in life he met an obstacle: the mercer to whom he was apprenticed failed, and his father could not afford to pay another fee, so he had to join the army as a common soldier. After his regiment was disbanded, De Veil's practical abilities--knowledge of several foreign languages and knack for drawing up memorials and petitions--supported him until friends obtained for him a commission as justice of the peace in 1729, a post he refused until he had "acquired a perfect knowledge of the nature and power of that office" (p. 562). The account of his service as a justice and in the Forty-five is followed by that of his death, mention of his family, and character.

As an officer of the court De Veil was efficient and honest, not one of the so-called "trading justices," for he did not consider justice "meerly as a commodity which he was to vend for money"; the post infected him with ambition, but that ambition served him by making it necessary

for him to be a superior justice to satisfy it. He wanted a voice at court, "access to the great," power, and profit, all of which he obtained through courage, zeal, diligence, and craft at his job, for

he knew how to improve the slightest circumstance, to confound those he examined, to catch up their unguarded expressions, to piece together broken hints, and compel them to detect themselves; so that he was rarely deceived.

(p. 562)

But he could be prudent and withdrawing when it was necessary. During an election fracas at Westminster, his support of persons in power drew on him popular disapproval, to which he paid little attention; when those who could not bear public disapproval discussed suppressing public feeling by force, De Veil pretended illness, "which, without rendering him suspected by his great friends, for disapproving an impolitic measure, kept him from being involved in its ill consequences" (p. 563). During the Forty-five he labored enough for the crown to obtain for his son an ensign's commission. The account of De Veil's careers suggests absolutely no wrong-doing in office, but rather a calculated right-doing. The utile resulting from such an account is unquestionable in a practical way, but doubtful in an ethical one.

Specific incidents and personal details are few, except for the naming of several cases in which De Veil demonstrated courage and assiduity. (Two of these had been covered in previous Gentleman's Magazines, 1740, p. 198, and 1741, p. 441, though without mention of his name.) His death on 7 September 1746 is dealt with in one paragraph, and his four wives and twenty-five children in the next. There is no evidence that the author of the biography, which appeared in the Gentleman's of December 1747, knew De Veil except by reputation, nor

any mention of the source of his facts.

The character section of the biography is most striking because of its bluntness, revealing detail, and pace. It is this passage that suggested to Carlson that Johnson may have been the author of the life, or part of it:

As to his character, if he had little virtue, it must be confessed he had less hypocrisy. He was of an aspiring temper, and knew how to bustle thro' the world; As he loved money, magnificence and pleasure in an equal degree, so he was at once rapacious and profuse.

(p. 563)

His dalliances with women he did not keep to himself, but "frequently made these amours the subject of his discourse, relating them indeed not directly of himself, but of one of his age" (p. 563). As he grew older, he became in his dealings petulant, proud, and domineering, but was ever a good justice, "never assuming any power of construction" of the law. Flaw and virtue combined in him to make a good officer: "solicitous to approve himself to his superiors, he was negligent of popular resentment" (p. 564). The account of a mixture of qualities makes the De Veil biography the most realistic and readable one in the magazine during the decade.

Earl of Roscommon

The fewer than four hundred and fifty words that comprise the "Life of the Earl of Roscommon," in the Gentleman's Magazine of May 1748, are wholly factual and without incident or quotation. Although acknowledged by Johnson (Life, I, 18), the article is "a minor and unimportant essay,"³¹ saved only by the some two thousand words in the footnotes, which offer anecdotes, quotations, verses, and Johnsonian

criticism and generalization.

Nothing even so specific as the earl's birth and death dates is given in the text or notes (he was born about 1633 and died in 1685). His youth, education, and father's death are covered in two long sentences, the notes to which are more interesting. The text says only that he was born in Ireland and educated in England, the notes that despite his place of birth, no collection of English poets' lives is complete without him, for this reason:

Though every country imagines itself intitled to the reputation of those who happened to be born in it, this claim may be sometimes not unreasonably disputed; for that nation has at least as good a right to the honours paid to literary merit, which has given masters to him who obtains them, as that which has given parents.

(GM, 1748, p. 214)

The note to the next sentence supplies an anecdote, taken from Aubrey's Miscellany, that he cried out at play, "My father is dead," though he was in France and the father in Ireland. By temperament Johnson was inclined to skepticism, and he admitted that Aubrey's name did not much recommend the story; the story ought, however, to be preserved, for there are obstacles both to belief and to disbelief:

here is a relation of a fact given by a man who had no interest to deceive, and who could not be deceived himself; and here is, on the other hand, a miracle which produces no effect

(p. 214)

No absolute determination of the truth can be made, though.

That was the only use made of Aubrey, and most of the life is credited to Elijah Fenton's notes on Waller. From them came the fact that Roscommon frequently engaged in duels and the incident of his resigning his post as captain of the guards to give it to an impoverished

gentleman who helped him in a fight. Of the passion for gambling and duels, Johnson commented, as quoted on p. 99, that it was the fate of many men of genius to succeed only in wickedness (p. 215). The clause "here he formed a design of instituting a society for the reformation of the English language" is elaborated upon in a footnote from Fenton (mentioning Dryden), which in turn is followed by a paragraph by Johnson relating later events of the drive for language reform.

But Johnson did not lean indiscriminately upon Fenton. The biography proper lacks a character sketch, but its want is supplied by a footnote in which Johnson criticized Fenton's "character" of Roscommon as "too general to be critically just," Fenton had referred to a "richly furnished mind," and Johnson complained that such a phrase implied the existence of many volumes from Roscommon's pen, whereas the truth was that his writings comprised less than a volume. Fenton had written that his imagination might have been more "fruitful and sprightly, if his judgment had been less severe," which, Johnson wrote, could have been answered,

by a remarker somewhat inclined to cavil, by a contrary supposition, that his judgment would probably have been less severe, if his imagination had been more fruitful. It is ridiculous to oppose judgment and imagination; for it does not appear that men have necessarily less of one as they have more of the other.

(p. 216)

Fenton had failed, however, to give Roscommon enough credit for his verse, but Johnson pointed out that he was "perhaps, the only correct writer in verse before Addison." Also in a footnote, Johnson quoted Dryden's praise of Roscommon's "Essay on Translated Verse," but called it "little more than one of those cursory civilities, which one author

pays to another" (p. 217). Johnson quoted fifty-five lines of the "essay," then concluded that the content was neither original nor unusual and that Roscommon should have been rather praised for his art than his thought.

This is a life in which little of the flavor of the man comes through. Although reprinted later in Johnson's Lives, it was hack work extracted from Aubrey and Fenton. The most Johnsonian, and therefore the most interesting, parts are the comments he made in the footnotes on Roscommon and on his sources. The scheme of the biography was that on which the magazine had been founded: extraction of the essence of an article for republication and dissemination to a larger audience than the original would have found.

Michael de Ruyter

The four-part biography of Michael de Ruyter, vice-admiral-general of Holland, was the longest life the Gentleman's Magazine had published since that of Drake in 1741, running more than eleven thousand words, divided approximately equally among the issues for the last four months of 1748. The account is apparently a translation of Het Leven en bedryf van der Heere Michiel de Ruiter (Amsterdam, 1687) by Gerard Brandt,* a Dutchman whose bias for his country is commented on only once, in a footnote to the assertion that the English had sent an arsonist to fire the Dutch fleet: "In several places this author is partial; but here seems injurious to truth, and our national character,"

*Or of the French translation by N. Aubin, La Vie de Michel de Ruiter (Amsterdam, 1698).

say the Magazine editors (GM, 1748, p. 537).

More than the life of a man, this article is a naval history of Holland from 1651, when Ruyter left merchant service to command a squadron in the war with England, until 29 April 1676, when he died of wounds received in a sea skirmish with the French near Palermo. Politics, naval campaigns, and the making and breaking of treaties claim most of the text; Ruyter's military character is described, but not, for instance, his marriage or family (except that his son and son-in-law were honored with appointments). A typical paragraph is the one that began the second installment:

Whilst Ruyter was sailing for the Sound, the ambassadors of France and England, together with some deputies of the States, negotiated a truce at the Hague for three weeks, during which interval the fleet which the Protector had sent into the Baltic, and that of Holland were to remain neuter, without assisting either Sweden or Denmark. Ambassadors were sent on both sides to the two kings, who twice lengthen'd the truce for three weeks, then for a fortnight, using all their endeavours to bring about peace, but without effect.

(p. 441)

Ruyter's part in his own "biography" was to carry out the decisions of the ambassadors and kings. "Ruyter's fleet obliged [the Swedish] to surrender. . . . Ruyter kept the Swedish fleet block'd up in Landscreon harbour. . . . Ruyter was employ'd, during the two following years, in scouring the Mediterranean of pirates" (p. 441). After the account of his childhood, during which he "showed an uncommon courage and dexterity," was "too volatile" to study well, and joined the navy at fifteen (p. 387), nothing is said of anything Ruyter did not related to the sea, or, especially, to his career in the navy. Of his work as captain of a merchant ship it is said that he displayed "skill, sagacity

and probity," but no illustrations of those virtues are given.

Examples of his virtues and abilities as a navy leader are given, however, and they take the place of the usual post-death character. He had a temper but could control it; having saved a number of Spanish sailors from a man of war he had sunk, Ruyter asked the captain whether he would have shown the same kindness had the victory been his. "The Spaniard surlily answered, that he had purposed to have thrown them all overboard into the sea." Enraged, Ruyter at first ordered that the fate be given the Spanish, but later relented (p. 387). Personally, Ruyter must have been charming: captured by a French privateer, he so impressed the captain that he was set free; at Sallee, the Cid, failing to persuade Ruyter to betray the owners of his cargo, said, "'What pity is it that so honest a man should be a christian!'" (pp. 387-88). Although the north African pirates at first refused to negotiate with him, they had so much respect for Ruyter that they supplied him with free water and food (p. 441). Two incidents revealing his humanity are related of a 1664 voyage along the west African coast: he supplied a beaten enemy with provisions, "tho' his own fell short at the same time," and he spared a man condemned to death when, after the hanging, signs of life were perceived in him (pp. 442-43). The incidents illustrating Ruyter's humanitarian qualities, however, are not told as though such qualities made him a good captain; rather, they are seen as unusual in such a man but worthy of emulation by persons of any profession or estate.

There are no details of Ruyter's personal life in the biography. Once, during a brief period of peace, it was stated that he lived at

"Amsterdam, where his retired, quiet and moderate way of living, gained him no less esteem and admiration, than his vigilance, activity, and bravery, when at the head of a fleet" (p. 445)--even his leisure must be related to his career. In that period he was honored and consulted by ambassadors and princes of many nations on problems of navigation and piracy. In the last installment are three personal mentions: Ruyter's joy at his son's appointment as rear-admiral of Amsterdam, his presage that a mission to the Mediterranean would be his last and according farewell to his family, and his fatal wound and burial. The biography ends anti-climactically. The King of Spain, before hearing of Ruyter's death, had conferred on him the title of duke, and Brandt ended the life with this sentence:

This is not only an honourable circumstance in Ruyter's life, but shews on what account he is stiled Duke, that being a degree of nobility qui te foreign in Holland.
(p. 540)

CHAPTER FIVE
SURVEY OF MAGAZINE BIOGRAPHIES, 1790-94

By the 1790's, when the Gentleman's Magazine was sixty years old, biography was as much a staple of its pages as any kind of writing that was not in a department. In the first ten volumes of the decade (1790-94) there were fifty-eight biographical articles, almost one per issue, dealing with ninety-one persons. The ninety-one, like the nineteen of the 1740's, can be classified in several ways: there were ninety men and one woman; ninety English and one foreigner; thirteen of the sixteenth century, twenty-one of the seventeenth, and fifty-seven of the eighteenth. By activity they included one Catholic martyr, one seaman, three statesmen, two physicians, seven clergymen, three mathematicians, one gardener, one botanist, thirty-nine poets, three teachers, twenty-one heraldic writers, one philanthropist, one artist, four writers, two historians, and one antiquarian.

The relatively high number of subjects who lived in the eighteenth century indicates that many of the articles had some news value, and indeed many of those fifty-seven who lived then had died only a few months before publication of their lives (and of course thirty-four of the biographies were of "Living English Poets" and one about a living physician). The news value of the biographies, however, was probably less than it had been in the 1740's, for few of the authors assumed any

public curiosity about, or even previous knowledge of, their subjects. J.D., writing of John David Michaelis, did assume knowledge, but did not, judging by the first paragraph, assume great public curiosity:

As the works of the late Professor MICHAELIS are held in the highest estimation in this country, I hope the following account of that justly celebrated scholar . . . will be deserving a place in your valuable Magazine.

(GM, 1792, p. 202)

"The curiosity of future generations" is what K.Z. sought to satisfy, but he practically admitted there was no present interest in his list of living English poets and even added that the information he submitted might be "otherwise in future forgotten" (GM, 1792, p. 504). A few of the biographers could honestly say they were satisfying the curiosity of the public, even though it might be the curiosity of only one reader of the Magazine--those who wrote in answer to queries that had been published in previous issues. Examples are the writers on Peter King, Henry Felton, and Robert Parsons. It is probably safe to say that, had it not been for those questions, the lives would not have been written, so the Magazine was not only their repository but also their instigator.

Although some authors omitted any statement of purpose and simply plunged into the facts (thereby perhaps assuming public interest), several stated that they wrote in order that their subjects not be forgotten--that is, they had done so little of note that only the industry of the biographers would save them from oblivion. Since there was no public demand, the reason usually advanced for their writing was that the subject was so "good" that he should not be forgotten. Typical was the opening to the piece on George Maxwell, who T.C.R. said was

"one but little known, but whose merits deserve a much abler pen to record them" (GM, 1790, p. 201). Although "Julian's" purpose was "general instruction," he admitted that he wrote "lest by universal silence such a character as the late Timothy Hollis should sink into oblivion" (GM, 1791, p. 306). The lives of Thomas Wright, William Aiton, and John Oakman also included references to the fact that the authors meant to save them from oblivion. Salvation from oblivion, if one were a relative nonentity, was a chancy thing--what those men had in common was a friend who would write their lives and send them to the Magazine. Although many of these biographies list printed sources. (usually Wood's Athenae Oxonienses and the Biographia Britannica), many also refer to private papers or manuscripts they had. The tone of several of these biographies leads one to suspect the author knew the subject, and the authors of several others actually said they did--for instance, the writers on George Maxwell, Timothy Hollis, and Thomas Cooke. Thus the desire to honor a friend was occasionally the writer's motive.

Some authors apparently wrote to set straight the historical record, such as those who contributed information on Bishop Thomas Watson (his own relation clearly wanted to defend him) and possibly to aid future biographers, such as the writers on Sir William Trumbull and Sir Philip Warwick). Only guesses can be made as to the purposes of the authors who contributed pieces on Robert Fludd, John Landen, or Robert Henry, for they plunged right into the facts. Of the twenty-four authors who did announce a purpose, six were answering queries in the Magazine; six wished to preserve the memory of their subjects; three

mentioned the utile/dulce function of biography; four desired to present the facts; and five believed the public would like to read about their subjects.

With some exceptions, the form of biographies in the early 1790's is the same as that of the 1740's: family and birth, posts or publications, death, and character. Much less information was given about the twenty-one heraldic writers Ferd. Stanley and R.D. corresponded about in 1793, for to them only the writings were important and much must have been lost about the subjects anyway (since all had died before 1700). The lives of writers easily degenerated into a list of their publications, as with the piece on John Landen. The lives of others were little more than outlines, as that of Sir William Trumbull, with each paragraph beginning with a year, followed by what the subject did then. The longest biography considered in this paper, that of Thomas Cooke, shows almost no consciousness of form on the part of the author, Joseph Mawbey, who seemed to insert bits of information as they came to hand or mind; he "life" of Cooke is superimposed on a list of his publications. The other authors did not set down the facts out of chronological order but beyond that did not adhere to any form more sophisticated than their predecessors of the 1740's did.

Nor did they use as much as non-Magazine authors materials now considered grist for lives: anecdotes and letters. Despite the fact that many of the articles had "anecdotes" in the titles, indicating that the word might draw readers, many had none at all (even those called "curious anecdotes of . . ."). The few anecdotes that were used usually illustrate some aspect of the subject's character, even if they

have little to do with him, such as the one about the thief who returned Bernard Gilpin's horses because Gilpin was such a good man. Although a few of the biographies included letters, only that of Thomas Cooke had letters by the subject--all others were either about or to him, which do not reveal anything of the man himself beyond what someone else thought. It is impossible to believe that, as several of the biographers were personal friends of their subjects, there were no letters from them available.

There are at least two possible reasons for the omission of personal letters, assuming that they existed. One is the innate conservatism of Gentleman's Magazine correspondents. True, critics felt that intimate detail was a necessary part of biography and that a man could not be rendered wholly without it. But readers who wrote tended to prefer not to know too much about their heroes and were sensitive to the slights suffered by, say, Samuel Johnson, when so much was revealed about him in the decade after his death. And most of the biographies discussed here were written by faithful Magazine readers, whose object was not so much to render the man wholly as to, as noted above, preserve his memory. The second reason is that those readers, possibly somewhat self-conscious about writing for such a popular magazine, tended to a more stilted and formal style than was used by more sophisticated writers, such as James Boswell. Although he might be writing about an intimate friend, a contributor could sound as distant from his subject as though all his information had been gathered from public records.

Despite the fact, then, that most of the biographers were closer

in time and space to their subjects than the biographers of the 1740's had been, the articles themselves do not have the intimacy and revelation that one might expect. Rather, they tend to be formal, sometimes almost panegyric, with few anecdotes and fewer direct quotations, and with very little remarking of failings. The following section examines the fifty-eight biographical articles appearing in the *Gentleman's Magazine* from 1790 through 1794, concentrating on the material used, the form, and the author's bias and motive.

William Trumbull

In the preface to volume nine of his Literary Anecdotes, John Nichols apologized for the "want of a regular arrangement," excusing himself on the grounds that his work was but a mine of literary materials for the benefit of future writers.¹ Nichols's attitude was sometimes shared by his correspondents, including ND.OR., who wished to "afford some assistance to the future biographers" of Sir William Trumbull, 1638-1716, minor statesman and friend of Pope. Observing that present accounts of Trumbull's life were "so very short and even defective as to the place of his nativity and burial," ND.OR. believed that an "outline of the principal transactions of his life, taken from his own manuscripts," would be satisfactory to readers (GM, 1790, p. 4). The stated reason for the letter, then, was that no accurate account of Trumbull existed; the assumption was that one should.

Most of the life is literally an outline, in this form:

- 1638. Born at Easthampsted, Berkshire, in August.
 - 1644. Receives early instructions in Latin and French. . . .
 - 1649. Sent to Oakingham School.
 - 1670. Married a daughter of Sir Charles Cotterell. . . .
- (p. 4)

And so forth. Obviously, little character delineation is possible in such a form, and the only notion given of the subject is roundabout: allusion is made to his grandfather's "care, industry, vigilance, and sufficiency," with the note that the grandfather was the "family pattern and model" (p. 4). Nor does Trumbull's personality emerge from the fewer than one thousand words, unless an ironical nature can be deduced from his comment on ingratitude, that there is a "great difference between the value of assistance when wanted, and after it is given and done with" (p. 5).

The weight of the biography concerns Trumbull's schooling at Oxford and his public service. Although the first paragraph alluded to his friendship with Pope, there is no further mention of the poet, except, in a footnote, that Pope wrote Trumbull's epitaph. Nothing is said of the subject's personal life, except the date of his marriage, although the source was Trumbull's own papers, then belonging to a great-nephew. NDOR also tantalized the reader by mentioning his subject's family and saying he could fill a volume on the grandfather, who left a collection of letters, memoirs, and accounts of "all the great men of his time, with whom he maintained a constant and familiar correspondence" (p. 4). But none of that. The article is but a listing of William's public actions.

Dr. Benjamin Moseley

The author of the sixteen-hundred-word sketch of Dr. Benjamin Moseley appearing in the January 1790 Gentleman's Magazine showed considerably more art than the writer on Trumbull. "EDIT," as he signed himself, began with a paragraph on the delights of the biographies of self-made men and closed with a paragraph on the purpose of that particular life. And in the middle were paragraphs on the effects of life in an isolated West Indian colony and on the folly of publishing medical research before practice had proved it. "EDIT" apparently did not consider there was equal folly in publishing the biography of one yet living; Moseley did not die until 1819.²

"EDIT's" theory that "Biography delights in tracing the steps of genius and in delineating the progress of men who break through surrounding difficulties" (GM, 1790, p. 9) is not borne out in his life of Moseley, however, for not enough is made of whatever difficulties the doctor faced. The reader does not have a sense of overcoming difficulties, nor does he feel Moseley's triumph in devising a new way to treat the bloody-flux (dysentery). Nor is the reasoning of the last paragraph justified: "This sketch of his character [shows] by what means he has acquired the professional knowledge which he has so well applied to the public good" (p. 11). Just how Dr. Moseley did his research on the bloody-flux in the West Indies, or the study of coffee in 1785, is not mentioned.

The purpose of EDIT. seems rather to be eulogy of the doctor, for no unfavorable circumstance of his life is supplied. Although the life begins conventionally enough, with Moseley's ancestry, home

county, education, and first post in the Indies, it soon disintegrates into a list of his publications and praise for them. The real events of the man's life, birth, death, and marriage, are not even dated. Even in his eulogizing, EDIT. spoke in generalizations rather than in instances.

In this view, though it is probable DR. MOSELEY must have considered the state of our West-Indian islands, we are certain he contributed to render it otherwise, not only in his medical capacity, but by his exertions as a magistrate, and encouragement of whatever had the public good for its object; and that his literary talents, in conjunction with those of a few other literary men, were often employed in promoting useful knowledge, correcting abuse, and chastising the vicious. . . .

(p. 10)

One longs for specific instances of his work as a magistrate, the abuses he corrected, the vices he chastised. What EDIT. gives us instead is a list of Moseley's publications and comments on the popularity of each rather than on the contents. His character and personality are described in generalities and suppositions on the author's part. Although the style is pleasing--there are several parallel sentences--there are too few facts in proportion to the length.

John Landen

Although the running headline is "Biographical Memoirs of John Landen, Esq.," this article is in the form of a letter to Mr. Urban, dated March 21, and consists mainly of a listing of Landen's seventeen mathematical publications. The only personal items punctuating the listing, besides Landen's birth in 1719 and death in 1790, are his appointment as agent to Earl Fitzwilliam and his election to the Royal Society in 1766.

Lives of literary men are usually histories of their works, the author, who did not identify himself, observed, "and the observation was never more fully justified than it will be in what I have to offer the publick, concerning Mr. Landen" (GM, 1790, p. 189). The bulk of the article, of some twenty-six hundred words, is exposition of the proofs, theories, and computations Landen devised, usually published first in the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society. The style is monotonous, each paragraph beginning "In the year 1755, Mr. Landen published . . ." or "In the 65th volume of the Philosophical Transactions, for 1775, he gave . . ." or "About the beginning of the year 1782. . . ." Although the author claimed a special ability to speak concerning Landen's writings, as he had enjoyed "a long and very intimate correspondence with him" (p. 189), there is almost nothing in the article that would require any knowledge beyond that to be gained by reading the works.

The only exception to that is the mention, between publications sixteen and seventeen, of a bladder stone that incapacitated Landen toward the end of his life; "yet even this dreadful disorder did not abate his ardour for mathematical Studies . . ." (p. 194), and the last paragraph of the article, following his death, is a fairly conventional character sketch mentioning his "moral Virtues, . . . strict integrity of his conduct, his great humanity, and readiness to serve every one to the utmost of his power" (p. 194). And his loss will be regretted by all who knew him. No example of those virtues or that humanity is given, however, and it is obvious that the author's interest in Landen was limited to his mathematical achievements.

The author supplied no particular reason for having written the biography-letter; the opening sentence corrected the Gentleman's Magazine obituary, which had given the first name as "James," but no further corrections were made. This is one of the few biographies of more than a column that has not a word on the subject's family or schooling. Landen's is one of the most objective biographies ever to appear in the Magazine, if that term can be applied to an article that is little more than an annotated bibliography.

George Maxwell

"Character of Mr. George Maxwell, and excellent young Artist," in the March, 1790, Gentleman's Magazine, is the first life in the decade to show considerable consciousness of style, drama (or melodrama), and imagery. The author, who signed himself T.C.R., supplied his credentials at beginning and end: he was an intimate companion of Maxwell and knew him eighteen years (GM, 1790, pp. 201, 204).

Although the article, of some twenty-three hundred words, is more properly a character than a chronological account of Maxwell's life, there are enough facts in it to warrant its inclusion here. But T.C.R. encountered the same problem Goldsmith did in writing the lives of Voltaire and Parnell: paucity of event. The only incidents are "the common fate of all," that he lived and now is dead (p.202). That is not quite true, for there were three exhibitions (1787, 1788, and 1789) and a ramble in Staffordshire and Derbyshire in the fall of 1789.

By and large, however, T.C.R. concentrated on Maxwell's interests, abilities, virtues, and failings. One of the interests was natural

history, which afforded T.C.R. an opportunity for a Johnsonian generalization: "The melancholy pleasure attendant on the researches into the fragments of Antiquity, known only to the few, had the strongest charms for him. . ." (p. 202). The virtues--sincerity, justice, generosity, and humanity--are enumerated but not demonstrated. Fairly, neither are the failings, ambition, contempt for inferiors, and inclination to dispute.

T.C.R. was exceedingly conscious of his authorship, over-diffident at the opening and over-dramatic at the end. He began almost apologetically:

"O! early lost!"

I should not have troubled you with a desire to insert any thing from my hand, had not the melancholy subject, to which the motto alludes, obliged me to think it more immediately my duty than any others to pay the following small and richly-deserved tribute to the memory of a most intimate companion and contemporary.

(p. 201)

Such obsequiousness, as he must have known, was not necessary for publication in the Gentleman's Magazine. He closed with an allusion to the old conventional spur to life-writing, instruction:

. . . his fate should not retard the rising Genius, but it may teach him to work out his obscurity, like his salvation, with fear and trembling; lest, like the above, he may, after having surmounted, with incessant and Herculean labours, the tedious and tremendous obstacles that ever block up the entrance of the road to fame, after having stretched forth his hand to gather of that immortal laurel, the passport to the fame of future renown, the tree should prove forbidden, and Death, when least expected, should snatch him from all his hopes, and plunge him forever into the silent irredeemable shades of Oblivion and the Grave.

(p. 204)

That quotation illustrates another characteristic of the author, his wish to be considered creative and learned. The article opens with a

quotation and includes two others, neither essential. And the paragraphs on Maxwell's faults are introduced with an image and a balanced sentence: "The moon has her dark place, but is still lovely. Let those who would transplant his beauties, avoid his blemishes" (p. 203). Near the end T.C.R. pointed out, in case we missed it, his own ability: "The discerning will easily perceive that, as far as possible, this outline is impartial. . ." (p.204). In sum, the sketch of Maxwell is a good deal easier to read than that of, say, Landen, but it affords few solid facts. T.C.R. was too fascinated by his own rhetoric to produce a convincing as well as impartial sketch or life.

Thomas Watson

The reputation of Bishop Thomas Watson, dead those seventy-three years, was debated in a series of letters in April, May, June, and July in 1790. The first letter, signed "D.H.," relied on six sources, with the weight given to an enemy of Watson; the second and shortest, unsigned, quoted only one source, condemning Watson; the third and longest, signed "Tho. Watson," depended on a 1704 defense of the bishop and family tradition.

Although the first letter, of some twenty-four hundred words, was headed "Biographical Anecdotes of Bishop Thomas Watson," it actually consists of a crisp summary of the bishop's career, a long quotation from Gilbert Burnet's History of His Own Time, a shorter quotation from "The Bishop of St. David's Vindicated," another from Browne Willis's History of Bishops of St. David's, a few lines from Antony Wood's Athenae Oxoniensis, and a brief anecdote, unrelated to the body of the

article, concerning Bishop Watson's ghost. Following the Burnet excerpt is a five-item bibliography, "at the service of any person who chuses to compile the Bishop's life" (GM, 1790, p. 322). D.H., therefore, did not consider his work a proper biography of Watson, but rather a summary of the evidence for and against him. The bishop's conviction of simony by an ecclesiastical court was supported by Burnet, who called the bishop

one of the worst men in all respects that ever I knew in holy orders, passionate, covetous, and false in the blackest instances, without any one virtue or good quality to balance his many bad ones.

(p. 321)

It is not a surprising opinion, as Burnet was a member of that court. The next two sources (combined, not as long as Burnet) defended or excused him on various grounds. The first emphasized the proceedings against him, and Willis said the bishop was "much maligned" and the charges were "pretended." The lines from Wood added that he "did suffer and endure many affronts and intolerable abuses from the rabble" (p. 323).

D.H. offered no reasons for contributing the life of the bishop, having apparently meant only to give "the representations of both parties on this unfortunate prelate," but the reason may have been simply that the issue was still alive, for the next month the Gentleman's Magazine published two more letters on the bishop, one unsigned and against him, the other signed "Tho. Watson" and for him. The anonymous correspondent alluded to the April article and offered a four-hundred word quotation from a biography of Archbishop Tillotson by Thomas Birch, who in turn quoted Wood and Burnet (using the line quoted

above), and the Memoirs of Sir John Reresby. The letter added only a few facts, all of them concerning the public career of Watson or the fate of his bishopric.

The second letter in May is the longest, best written, and most impassioned of the three. The epigram is a quotation from the Memoirs of Sir John Dalrymple asserting the infidelity and bias of Burnet as a historian, so that the reader is prepared for a defense of Watson. The author modestly announced that he made it a rule to "trouble" the Magazine editors only with letters requested and with information "which you would not probably receive equally authentic from any other person" (p. 405). The basis for the "authenticity" of the information is hinted in the next paragraph, in which the source of the bishop's birthdate is "the authority of family tradition" (p. 405), but it is not until the end of the article that one learns "no person now living is more closely related to him" than the author, whose name is also Thomas Watson. The young Watson's defense of his relation is based on "The Bishop of St. David's Vindicated," published in 1705 (mentioned by D.H.) and attacks on the points raised by Burnet (for instance, Burnet's accusation that the bishop was covetous was answered by a listing of the recipients of the bishop's charity, with amounts). The charge that Watson was "passionate and false," his defender admitted, is hard to disprove at such a distance of time, but "the charge comes ill-supported by the mere ipse dixit of this historian" (p. 407). A good point is scored in this generalization on the relations between Bishop Watson and Burnet: "But how unfortunate, Sir, is the man who has the most violent of his enemies both for his judge and his historian!"

(p. 606). The young Watson also buttressed the defense of his kinsman by pointing out the differences between then and now: while under the "effects of a settled constitution," his readers will find it hard to believe that such corruption existed in the church court, "yet am I convinced, that five English prelates were so blinded by party-zeal" (p. 407). The last paragraph of the letter proper included a wish for any other particulars, "whether to his honour or discredit" and the artful closing sentence,

If he were the most sordid wretch that ever lived, I can assure B.L.A. that this vice in particular is not inherited, but that, in all varieties of fortune, an honest and generous disposition has been

"the jewel of our house,
Bequeathed down from many ancestors;"
and it is hoped that the young [sic] man, who has now the honour of addressing you (and whose income, arising solely from two small curacies, in the present humour of public opinion, will scarcely be supposed to equal the revenues of a bishoprick), will also in his generation remember, that to part with it would bring a real, because a merited, disgrace on the name of

THO. WATSON.
(p. 408)

The effect of that flight into rhetoric is rather blunted by young Watson's thanking the Gentleman's Magazine in a postscript for a good review of a sermon published anonymously when he was but twenty-five.

The most striking quality of the information supplied in the three Watson letters is the scrupulosity regarding facts, balance, and sources. None of the three authors offered an opinion not backed up by sources contemporary with the bishop; D.H. really offered no opinion at all. Their collective object seems to have been to collect in one place all the facts obtainable regarding the bishop so that posterity might judge. Except for Burnet's attack on his character and Watson's defense of it,

nothing personal of the bishop is given; the reader is told (in the first and last letters) where the bishop studied, but never whether he married. With the facts they did give, all three wrote as objectively as possible; only in the last letter can a reader gather anything about the personality of the author.

The correspondence did not cease in May. In June letters from both D.H. and young Watson were published, the former expressing sorrow that his letter, which was only to answer queries, had "hurt the feelings" of the bishop's kind, and the latter expressing his willingness to comment further but his fear that "your readers may well be tired of the subject." And "I therefore drop it" (p. 516). In still another letter, published in July, Watson assured D.H. that his feelings were not hurt and said he still thought the guilt of the bishop "doubtful" (p. 616).

Soame Jenyns

"Sketches of the Life of Soame Jenyns, Esq." is taken from C.N. Cole's edition of his Works, published in 1790 and, as the reader might expect, contains nothing derogatory about him. Its original purpose in the Works was to inform and attract, and it followed closely the pattern used in many earlier lives: family, education, posts, marriage, death, and character, plus notes on his writings, an assertion of the truth of the sketches, and a copy of Jenyns' epitaph.

Fewer than twelve hundred of the more than three thousand words in the "Sketches" are devoted to the subject's life as such, and part of them concern his family and ancestry, with emphasis on his father,

Roger, a magistrate knighted by King William III. The paragraph about Jenyns's mother illustrates the saccharine quality of the whole article:

. . . a most beautiful woman, and endued with an excellent understanding, which she had improved by reading, much beyond what was the fashion of those times in the education of the daughters of gentlemen. She was well instructed in the principles of Religion, which she manifested both by her life and in her conversation; and these excellences were still heightened by the most polished manners.

(GM, 1790, p. 596)

No childhood incidents ominous of future fame are supplied, but the choice of both his tutors and later his college is described (none of these, of course, choices of the young Jenyns). His behavior at Cambridge "was most orderly and regular," just about what one would expect from a youth who signed his first work, on dancing, "Lady Fanny Fielding" (p. 597).

The character of Jenyns is wholly laudatory and wholly unsubstantiated by examples of the virtues, wit, or service attributed to him. Part of the character does give further details about his life: service as magistrate, support of Walpole ("that able and honest minister") and dire predictions that someday the American colonies "would think themselves entitled to ask for emancipation from their parent state" (p. 598). The section on his writing places him "amongst the purest and correctest writers of the English language," using as an example "The Free Enquiry into the Nature and Origin of Evil" (p. 599).

In short, the "Sketches" qualifies as panegyric, the effusiveness of which may be attributed partly to the maxim de mortuis and partly to the original intent of the author, to attract buyers for the edition.

Jenyns is viewed through rosy glasses and remains far on the other side of them. No anecdote or quotation enlivens the article, and there is no evidence that the writer knew him. No sources are mentioned, and no personal information on Jenyns is given.

Sir Philip Warwick

The sixteen-hundred-word life of Sir Philip Warwick, in the September 1790 Gentleman's Magazine, is unusual in two respects: the author, "D.R.," enclosed an engraving of the bust of his subject, and he used his subject's own words both to give information and to illustrate his character. The "Biographical Account of Sir Philip Warwick" was written out of D.R.'s concern that he was the only historian of the Restoration whose life had not been written; so, "I have put together what I have been able to collect respecting him, hoping that the Editors of some future Biography will, in this instance, avail themselves of the materials you so frequently afford to works of that kind" (GM, 1790, p. 781).

Arrangement of the facts of Warwick's life is conventional: family, education, posts, and assignments during the Civil War, marriage, death, character, and epitaph. Following those is a short passage from his Memoirs of the Reign of Charles I, "a specimen of the author's candour and simplicity of style" (p. 783). The passage is just that, mentioning that he saw Cromwell first in a plain, ill-fitted cloth suit, but later was to respect him, "having had a better taylor, and more converse among good company" (p. 783). The effect of the quotations from Warwick himself is, of course, to make him seem more real

than if he had been limited by dates and places or gilded with the usual phrases (his "reality" may be partly due to the self-deprecation and irony discernible in the quotations—that is, the technique of quoting might not work with every subject). The conventionality of the biography has one strange effect—there is nothing of Warwick's life between the end of the war and the first Parliament of the Restoration, except that "he was busy engaged in private conferences with the chief promoters of the Restoration" (p. 781). There are two possible reasons for this hiatus: one, that the man enjoyed no appointments nor served in any post; and two, that he wrote nothing about that period in his Memoirs, D.R.'s major source.

Despite the choice of a subject from a previous century, this biography is typical of the Magazine of the 1790's. The author had no time peg on which to hang it; the subject interested him, so he wrote it. The headnote mentioned his concern with compilation and preservation of fact, which was shared by the editor of the Magazine. The scrupulous documentation reveals a care for precision and accuracy—ten sources are footnoted twenty-nine times.

John Campbell

The notice of the Vice-Admiral John Campbell's death in the December 1790 Gentleman's Magazine prompted "P.Q." to contribute two anecdotes and a brief notice of his posts and character for the February, 1791, issue. The short, fewer than seven hundred words, letter contains nothing specific of the vice-admiral, not even his birth date, and might better be called a character sketch with illustrative anecdotes.

P.Q. did not name his source beyond calling it "authority which I esteem very good" (GM, 1791, p. 100).

The character sketch and the anecdotes, however, are separated by a paragraph on Campbell's promotions. The last paragraph calls him a "man of undaunted courage" who had "a dry, sarcastic mode of expression" (p. 100), and the two stories bear out these statements. The first tells of an incident in his youth when, as an apprentice seaman, he voluntarily took the place of a mate who was about to be impressed into the navy. It is one of the few stories preserved from childhood included in the 1790's Magazine biographies. The second story describes his reaction to the possibility he might be knighted.

"Troth, my Lord," said the Captain, who retained his Scotch dialect as long as he lived, "I know of no use that will be to me."—"But your Lady may like it," replied his Lordship. "Well then," rejoined the Captain, "his Majesty may knight her, if he pleases."

(p. 100)

The use of direct quotation and evidence of wit make this obscure captain come more alive than many of the subjects of biographies of whose lives we have many more conventional details.

The purpose of this article was not, obviously, to provide the facts of Campbell's life. The preservation of his memory in the Magazine pages is a more likely object; P.Q., although he did not say so, may have expected that a future biographer would consult the Magazine for information on the admiral, as did ND.OR, contributor of the life of Trumbull the previous year.

Philip Howard

Not a proper biography, the March, 1791, letter from "J.C.B.," inspired by a tour of the Tower with a Society of Antiquarians, still contains enough facts on Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel, to be included here. J.C.B. wrote mainly to report the finding in Beauchamp tower of a number of inscriptions, of which he sent two, "for your entertaining Miscellany, because they relate to a person of considerable note" (GM, 1791, p. 218). The first was a Latin statement by the Earl, the second a drawing of his family badge, probably by a priest once confined there.

The facts offered on the life of Philip Howard tell more about his character than about his whole life. Although no "sketch" section concludes the piece, Howard's character can be deduced from some of his actions, such as turning from Protestant to Catholic during the reign of Elizabeth and bearing her proceedings against him to the point of refusing to leave the Tower to attend church with her and by so doing regain his freedom and honors. His time in prison was spent in prayer, conversation with priests, and translating books of devotion (pp. 218-19).

J.C.B. apparently had access to no private papers of the Earl, for he used a history of the times, Antony Wood, and a manuscript life of him by a priest who lived with the widow. It is the latter source that supplied the prison activities and manner of death, but J.C.B. did not question the possible bias. In the last paragraph is a piece of information he must have picked up on his own, for, after noting the removal of the earl's body twenty-nine years after his death to the family vault, he wrote that in 1777 the coffin was found when the vault

was opened for another burial. The Latin inscription on the coffin mentioned his imprisonment and the fine under Elizabeth for his Catholicism, his death in the Tower in 1595 (with suspicion of poison), and the movement of the body in 1624 under James I (p. 219).

Although the running headline of the letter is "Curious Anecdotes of Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel," there is nothing really "curious" in the information offered. J.C.B. gave no reason for the contribution to the Magazine and even suggested there was no need for one: "The Earl of Arundel's life being very much the subject of our Peerages, and the general history of the times in which he lived, it is only necessary here to say, that he was committed to the Tower in 1585 . . ." (p. 218). The only part of Arundel's life that interested J.C.B. was that spent in the Tower where he left the inscription that inspired the letter.**

Edward Holdsworth

No reason is offered for the approximately six hundred words devoted to Edward Holdsworth, Dissenter, scholar, and tutor, in the April, 1791, Gentleman's Magazine. The first section, supplying only his birthdate, posts, death, and one-line panegyric, was sent by O. Jennens, who added

*At least, nothing in the sense of "ingenious," a 1771 meaning of the word. Nor is the information the result of "minute inquiry" (1742), "abstruse" (1664), or "calling forth feelings of interest" (1773). It might be called "precise" (1764) or "taking the interest of the connoisseur" (1751) (New English Dictionary).

**In early 1970, announcement was made of Pope Paul's plans to canonize Howard for his sufferings in behalf of the faith (Time, "Religion," VC (January 19, 1970), 46.

From so amiable a character as Mr. Holdsworth had in private life, and from the excellence of the few publications of his which have been given to the publick; you will perhaps, Mr. Urban, have no objection to print the following short abridgement of what is said of him in the "Anecdotes of Mr. Bowyer:"

(GM, 1791, p. 306)

Mr. Urban, of course, had no objection to printing an excerpt from John Nichols's work. The excerpt repeated part of Jennens's information and, oddly, gave Holdsworth's death date as 1747 instead of Jennens's 1746; no editorial note is made of the discrepancy. Added is a list of Holdsworth's works and a letter from Dr. Cobden, who lamented that despite Holdsworth's excellent character, he fell into "one error, by which he became lost to his country long before he died." As the author of the Anecdotes, Nichols disagreed with Cobden on the "error," pointing out that Holdsworth tutored young Englishmen in Rome and taught them "the practice of virtue and piety." As editor of the Magazine, "J.N." added the note that "Any further particulars of Mr. Holdsworth would be a desirable acquisition" (p. 306).

No anecdotes or personal details enliven the accounts of Holdsworth or shed light on his personality. This is one of the few biographies of the 1790's Magazine that included a personal letter, but it is about rather than by the subject. Besides the list of his works, the only mention of an exercise of his mind or personality is the fact that he resigned his post at Oxford rather than swear allegiance to the new government in 1715. Publication of this biography seems to be in accord with Nichols's earnest desire to preserve information on any man of letters in the century.

Timothy Hollis

The "Character of the Late Timothy Hollis, Esq." is so unlike a conventional biography that it lacks the subject's birth and death dates, education, and posts, but it was written with utile in mind. The author, who signed himself "Julian," apparently knew Hollis, at least at the end of his life, and cited no sources, public or private. The purpose was announced in the first sentence:

Lest by universal silence such a character as the late Timothy Hollis should sink into oblivion, one, who had the happiness to know him, is at length induced to mark the progress of his virtues for general instruction.
(GM, 1791, p. 306)

A footnote added what was obviously a typographical error, that Hollis died 14 December 1791—the letter appeared in April, 1791, so Hollis must have died the previous December, in 1790.

The approximately eleven hundred words consist entirely in a list of Hollis's practices, which were liberal and generous. The only mention of his family is that he was a nephew of Thomas Hollis, a benefactor of Harvard, and Julian linked that fact with Timothy's sympathy with the American revolutionaries and their principles. "He abhorred the assertion, that the English Government had a right to bind the Americans in all cases whatever" (p. 306). Nothing is said of whether Hollis married, only that he left nothing to charities, "from considering the abuse and perversion of them" (p. 307). The only concrete action of Hollis's that is recorded is that every summer he surveyed "his own beloved island" (though whether Julian meant England or some private island is not clear) and collected books on natural history and travel.

No anecdote illustrates his character, which we must take from

Julian's praise and the fact that Hollis bore uncomplainingly the pains of age. Although the announced purpose of the letter was to preserve the memory of Hollis's virtues, the affectation of the style suggests that Julian wished to exercise his pen, as illustrated in the last paragraph:

After having considered with the severest justice this excellent character, nothing remains but to keep his memory alive by imitating his example; and for our consolation, to reflect that he is gone to the mansions of the spirits of just men made perfect, and to receive the rewards of his virtues, and to join that illustrious assembly may be esteemed the greatest happiness.

(p. 307)

Bishop Jeremy Taylor

A query from R.N. in the 1790 Gentleman's Magazine (p. 301) brought forth in June 1791 "Early Particulars in the Life of Bishop [Jeremy] Taylor" from "E.J.," a resident of Uppingham, parish where Taylor was rector just before the Civil War. The manner of writing involves the reader in the difficulty of finding information--E.J. first searched the parish registry, then was fortunate enough to be presented a small book, The Life of Bishop Taylor, of which the "life" section was included in a sermon preached at his funeral.

Much of the letter, some eight hundred words, is quoted from that source, the style of which is more appealing than that of E.J. At the beginning of the war, Taylor and his fortune "were ship-wrecked in that great hurricane that overturned both Church and State. . . . This fatal storm cast him ashore in a private corner of the world" (GM, 1791, p. 515). The account of the deaths of his sons is thus softened:

When he had spent some years in this retirement, it pleased God to visit his family, and to take to him the dear pledges of his favour, three sons, of great hopes and expectations.

(p. 515)

E.J. also used church records. The Registry Book, which he complained was not complete and completely missing for part of Taylor's stay at Uppingham, supplied the dates of Taylor's marriage and the death of his son, and the Parish Vestry Book recorded his constant attendance at meetings for the appointments of parish officers, some in Taylor's own hand.

E.J. speculated that Taylor spent the years during and after the war in Wales, for the Life included a sermon preached by him at a funeral there. Speculation, a Life published one hundred and twenty-two years after the bishop's death, and a few church records, then, were E.J.'s only sources. The letter was not a proper biography, saying nothing of Taylor's birth date or ancestry or becoming bishop—it is rather an answer to R.N.'s query with what information E.J. had at hand. His purpose was not only to satisfy R.N. but also to honor Taylor, for he wrote in the first paragraph,

A veneration for the memory of that able and amiable man and divine, induced me to communicate to you all the intelligence that has very recently occurred to me, in consequence of my present situation.

(p. 515)

A few months later, in November, R.N. wrote again, offering to share his personal library and listing four items he had on Bishop Taylor, for anyone "with the intention of undertaking a Life of the Bishop con amore" (p. 1018).

John Wilson

"Anecdotes of Mr. John Wilson, a celebrated Botanist" is a misnomer for an article in the September, 1791, Gentleman's Magazine, for it contains only two anecdotes and debunks one of those. Hardly any mention is made of his character; the biography is unusual in that the subject was a member of a lower class, first apprenticed to a shoemaker and later to a baker. Wilson deserved a place in the Magazine, according to the anonymous author, because he was the first to try to classify English plants in the English language (GM, 1791, p. 804).

The British Topographer and Wilson's own work are the only sources mentioned, and the author did not claim to have been an intimate of Wilson or his family. He accused the author of the former of depending on "false information," as when he published an anecdote about how Wilson sold a cow (threatening ruin to his family) to buy a book on botany. "The story is striking, but wants authenticity" (p. 804). The other anecdote was apparently gleaned from one of the "neighbours and contemporaries" who still recalled Wilson's "pertinent and frequently original" conversation. After being insulted by a person who fancied himself socially and botanically Wilson's superior, Wilson plucked a stray plant and asked the person to identify it. Told it was a "weed," Wilson replied, "A weed is a term of Art, not a production of Nature" and thus proved his antagonist a "gardener, not a botanist" (p. 805).

Although the article generally praises Wilson and his abilities, the author revealed a certain snobbery himself. The subject is called

"unlettered" and his condition "humble."

It will appear a matter of surprise, to such as are ignorant of his manner of life, how a mechanick could spare a very large portion of time from engagements which ought to engross the attention of men in low circumstances, for the sole purpose of devoting it to the curious but unproductive researches of a naturalist. *[italics mine]*

(p. 805)

But Wilson, he explained, was lucky enough to have a wife capable of running the bakery and an asthmatic condition that required fresh air and moderate exercise.

Besides the two anecdotes described above, no personal items on Wilson or his family are given. The author seems nearly as much motivated by patriotism as by interest in Wilson, for he emphasized that Wilson would have been much more famous had the work of Linnæus not appeared. No "character" concludes the life, but a note on Wilson's botanical contributions.

Robert Henry

Not until the last paragraphs of "Memoirs of the Life of Dr. Robert Henry" does it become apparent that the anonymous author may be writing an advertisement for the sixth and last volume of Henry's History of Great Britain, which "it is hoped . . . may be ready for publication some time in the present winter, or the spring of 1792" (GM, 1791, p. 911). The rights to the History by that time had been sold to Cadell and Strahan for a sum of which the author of the life was not sure, "as they are set down from memory" (p. 911).

Emphasis in the thirty-one-hundred-word article is on Henry as an author, not as a man, and comparatively little is devoted to his educa-

tion, early posts, and marriage; some four hundred words, in fact, are enthusiastic praise from an unidentified reader of the first two volumes of the History, which were thought "well entitled to be inserted in a narrative of Dr. Henry's life" (p. 910). The events of Henry's life--birth, schooling, pastoral appointments and honors--are given short shrift, except for his institution of a plan to provide for ministers' widows and children. The section on the conception, research, writing, style, and reception of the History takes up about three quarters of the whole article and is unremitting praise for Henry's industry, style, perseverance, and grace in the face of early critical abuse.

Except for those qualities, none of which is substantiated by examples, little of the doctor's personality is rendered in the article. The only part resembling an anecdote recounted how an anonymous letter appeared in a newspaper defending the History and how Dr. Henry himself was accused of writing it (actually, it was by the "learned and respectable Dr. Macqueen") (p. 909). Some personal information is offered in the sentence on his physical decline at the time of writing the last volume--"the tremulous motion of his hand had increased so as to render writing much more difficult than it had ever been" (p.911)--but by and large the good doctor remains a stranger to us. No formal "character" concludes the sketch; following the story of the publication of the History is an account of his decline and death and mention of his burial site.

James Cawthorn

"Original Memoirs of Mr. James Cawthorn," in the December, 1791, Gentleman's Magazine is more a list of annotated dates than a biography. The author, E. Goodwin, did not claim to have known the poet-clergyman, who had died thirty years before. The first three paragraphs (not in the form of a letter) supply the subject's birth, family and early education, and the rest is either a list of his poems or a list of dates, in this form:

Sept. 13. Horace, Ode IV. Book I. translated.

Oct. 3. On Steele's "Christian Hero."

• • • •

1747. His wife died, and was buried. . . .

• • • •

1761. April 15, he unhappily lost his life by a fall from a horse.

(GM, 1791, pp. 1081-82)

The list of dates is followed by a brief character which paints Cawthorn in glowing colors: ". . . as a husband, was tender, polite, and obliging; as a master, humane and solicitous for the welfare of his servants He was hospitable and generous, yet an œconomist" (p. 1082).

Although Cawthorn was a school-master and a clergyman, the reason for the "Memoirs" appears to have been his work as a poet, critic, and translator, judging by the bibliography. Although there are no anecdotes to substantiate Goodwin's claims for his virtues, the note on his death concludes by mentioning that he had, just before his death, asked that Virgil's fifth Eclogue be recited at the next performance by a company—"when, alas! it had a peculiar unexpected propriety" (p. 1082). The best quality of this biography is its precision; the sixteen hundred

words are backed up with twenty-four footnotes listing seven sources, from the family Bible to Cawthorn's personal papers, then in Goodwin's hands. Most of the notes supply only sources, but one is from the Magazine editor, to the essay on Steele: "May we beg a copy of it? EDIT" (p. 1081).

Thomas Cooke

The five-installment "Anecdotes of Mr. Thomas Cooke, the Poet" is potentially the best of the biographies in the Gentleman's Magazine of the early 1790's, considering the opportunities of the author and the wealth of information presented. Joseph Mawbey had been a personal friend of Cooke, as both he and an uncle had belonged to a club with the poet, and they shared many friends. The five letters, addressed to Mr. Urban, published in the December and Supplement issues of 1791 and January, March, and April issues of 1792, however, are a hodge-podge of biographical facts, irrelevant anecdotes, generalizations on the nature of poetry and poets, criticism of other poets, paeans to Mawbey's friends, criticism of Swedenborg, and celebration of the French Revolution. These irrelevancies are attached to Cooke's life with varying degrees of firmness. After quoting Cooke's ridicule of the Muggletonians, for instance, Mawbey added, "The more recent doctrines of Swedenborg appear to be equally reprehensible," and launched into several hundred words of abuse of the Swedenborgians (GM, 1792, 218), of whom Cooke himself apparently never had heard.

Despite Mawbey's flights into personal opinion, much can be learned here of Cooke. He quoted extensively from Cooke's works and common-place

book and used the poetry as a basis for speculation on his feelings. Snatches of conversation enliven the articles, as do occasional personal letters, from and about Cooke, from a Collection of Antient Letters. Mawbey, while favoring Cooke, did not attempt to whitewash him, including adverse quotations from Pope (who put Cooke in the Dunciad). Nowhere did he say that he was writing from memory, and the reader can tell what Mawbey's source was for almost every paragraph. The abundance of sources gave Mawbey more information to deal with than most Gentleman's Magazine biographers had, and his job must have been one of selection.

The selection is probably fair enough--there is an anecdote displaying the poet's hasty tongue as well as long quotations from his verse--but one could wish for better editing and arrangement. Though he began conventionally enough with his subject's birth and education, an allusion to Alexander Pope led him into criticism of that poet, starting, "Allow me, Mr. Urban, to remark, now I am on the subject of Pope's conduct, . . ." (GM, 1791, p.1093). In the next installment, following a mention of Cooke's opinion of Samuel Johnson, Mawbey inserted his own opinion of Johnson and wrote of his own meeting with Johnson and the latter's opinion of him. Johnson, it seemed, lumped Mawbey with George Savile, the mention of whom sent Mawbey into a four-hundred-word tribute, beginning mildly--"I am unwilling to introduce the name of Sir George Savile in a desultory account of a poet . . . without adding . . ." and ending with the exuberant prophecy that as long as Englishmen enjoy liberty and love virtue, "they will love the name; and venerate the memory, of Sir George Savile!" (pp. 1184-85). Another

irrelevant tribute to someone Mawbey admired occurs in the third installment, when he told about collecting money to help the widowed Mrs. Cooke. Unexpectedly Mr. Macklin gave him two guineas, an act that earned him a psæan in Cooke's biography. The longest digression in the "Anecdotes" concerns the French Revolution and is introduced with a sentence on Cooke's love of liberty. "If he had lived to this time, he would have rejoiced extremely at the recent revolution in France . . ." (GM, 1792, p. 30). This undue speculation on Mawbey's part is followed by more than sixteen hundred words of Mawbey's own feelings about the revolution, all favorable, drawn out so long that the running headline becomes "Reflections on the late revolution in France." Without these gratuitous comments on poetry and politics, unrelated to Cooke's life, the biography would probably be about half as long as the present twenty thousand words.

Mawbey's use of anecdotes was consistent—if he had it, he used it, relevant or not to Cooke. The first relates to a production of one of Cooke's plays, during which one of the audience made a witty reply to a character on stage. That occasion reminded Mawbey of the time another member of another audience made a witticism at the expense of James Thomson; both incidents resulted in laughter at the expense of the poets, but that is the only relation. The second installment, appearing in the Supplement to the year 1791, contains three anecdotes, all irrelevant to Cooke's life. One is introduced in this flimsy manner: "Cooke . . . held the Scots in general cheap Dr. Johnson imbibed the same prejudice . . . and the mention of Johnson's name reminds me of an anecdote of him, which I had from Garrick . . ."

(p. 1183). In the March 1792 installment are two anecdotes, one relevant to Cooke's religion, the other to Lord Chesterfield's deism. Mawbey's selection of anecdotes was on a par with his ability to arrange them.

Although most of the "Anecdotes of Mr. Thomas Cooke" is organized on the basis of his publications, the article seems to have been written as it was being published. In the middle of the third installment, by which time he had reached 1751 in the listing of publications, Mawbey inserted, "I have lately discovered from his common-place book, that he first came to London in March 1722, then aged about nineteen." From a description of the houses Cooke and his family occupied, Mawbey moved on to his death and the generosity of several friends, Mawbey among them, to the dying poet and his wife and child. Next is an irrelevant tribute to Macklin, then a paragraph describing the fate of Cooke's daughter, Elizabeth, whom Mawbey chastised because of her "disgraceful connexions." After her death, Mawbey heard she had been admitted to a workhouse "in a state of pregnancy and disease" (GM, 1792, pp. 28-29)--no concealing of distasteful facts for Mawbey, no matter how irrelevant to the life of Cooke himself. Not until the last installment, April, 1792, does the reader learn anything of Cooke's father, and then only that he was still living in 1728. That bit is followed by general comments on Cooke's lack of financial success, including an anecdote concerning his receiving money from a friend, who slipped it into his hand,

remarking at the same time, "that it was very cold;" Cooke immediately replied, "I am glad to find your hand as warm as ever." He died a day or two after Christmas, 1756, then

aged about 53.

(GM, 1792, p. 315)

The juxtaposition of charity and death is startling.

Mawbey himself offered two reasons for writing Cooke's life.

First was public interest: "As the publick listens, with avidity, I believe, to anecdotes of literary and other memorable characters, I am induced to send you some of Mr. Thomas Cooke the poet . . . " (GM, 1791, p. 1090). Second, private obligation:

I flatter myself with the idea of having discharged a debt I owed to the memory of one who always fanned my love for poetry, and sometimes commended the compositions of my own, which I was accustomed at a very early age, from seventeen to twenty-three, to send . . . to your and other Magazines . . . If I have interwoven into this account certain political opinions of my own, . . .

(GM, 1792, pp. 315-16)

"If!" Mawbey, it appears, could not even write a conclusion without some self-advertisement.

Richard Lovelace

"Cliffordiensis" introduced his critical biography of Richard Lovelace in the November, 1791, Gentleman's Magazine, although it did not start until December. The tone is modest and the purpose humble:

As sketches and hints of biography, and critical remarks upon our English poets, have been, for a long course of years, favourite subjects of your most invaluable Miscellany, I trust I shall be performing no disagreeable task by sending you a series of anecdotes and remarks on many of our English Bards; particularly those who, though not the least beautiful, are the most obsolete.

(GM, 1791, p. 981)

The purpose was consistent, for the last installment, in November, 1792, began with the author's "faint hopes that (through the channel of your publication, which is so much attended to) this elegant poet may be

brought to the recollection of the Editors of the Biographia Britannia, from the first edition of which he seems to be unfairly excluded" (GM, 1792, p. 971). Cliffordiensis's motive then is to give Lovelace the fame and stature merited by his abilities.

His method was not strict biography, although the first installment did supply such necessities as family, birthdate, education (ancestors or traced back to the time of Edward III). But only a couple hundred words are devoted to the poet himself before Cliffordiensis reached his imprisonment at Westminster, during which he wrote "To Althea, From Prison."

As this little poem appears to me by far the most beautiful composition of its kind in the English language, and as it is printed incorrectly in his Poems . . . you will give room for the following copy of it.

(GM, 1791, p. 1095)

In the second installment, in February, 1792, Cliffordiensis dispensed quickly with Lovelace's military service in favor of a long description of the publication of the first volume of poems, Lucasta, and a verse quotation from Andrew Marvel on it. Quotations from the volume take up most of the third installment, in the April, 1792 Magazine, which of Lovelace's life has only a quotation from Antony Wood regarding his poverty after the second release from prison, the fact that another historian did not agree with Wood, and Cliffordiensis's agreement with Wood (GM, 1792, p. 321). The last installment, published seven months later, in November, 1792, consists almost entirely of quotations from the poet's work and did not even give the date of his death (only that the second edition of Lucasta, 1659, was published posthumously (p. 971).

To supply the facts of Richard Lovelace's life, or his character,

or anecdotes concerning him, was not Clifffordiensis's purpose, despite the running headlines, for there are few facts and no character or anecdotes in the four installments. It was, as stated in December, 1791, to publicize a poet he considered "deserves a better fate" (p. 1094), and he did that by long quotations from his poems and occasional reliance on the facts of his life, as derived from Wood's Athenae Oxoniensis and Edward Hasted's history. The facts are always less important to him than the poetry.

Heraldic Writers

What Stauffer calls the "antiquarian spirit, the desire to collect many biographies in a single work," which persisted throughout the eighteenth century,³ must have inspired a series of short lives of sixteen writers on heraldry from "Ferd. Stanley" in May, June, and September, 1792, and a response of corrections to those in November, 1792, and the addition of five more writers in June 1793, both from "R.D." The running headlines are variously "Biography of several Valuable Heraldic Writers" (GM, 1792, p. 417), "Biographical Notices of Eminent Heraldic Writers" (p. 522), and "Heraldic Notes" (p. 988), but the form is the same with both contributors.

Stanley began unassumingly:

It may not be unentertaining, or totally useless to the curious readers who delight in your Miscellany, to collect together a short list (even though imperfect) of our old English writers upon HERALDRY.

(p. 416)

Wood was to be his main source, and the only merit he claimed for his work was "juxta-position" (p. 416). (Another source is described and

dated, but Stanley ended, "This book, however . . . I never saw" (p. 416). Thoughtfully, he supplied the exact volume and page number where Wood's account of each man could be found.

Most of the biographies themselves are less than four hundred words long, and even a good writer, which Stanley was not, would find it hard to render a man in such a space. One reads in toto:

Edmund Boulton, a Papist, published "The Elements of Armory." London, 1710, Quarto. (Wood's Ath. II.19).
(p. 918)

Most of them, however, manage to supply the names of the parents, the places of schooling, and a longer list of publications. Occasional comment is made on the quality of their work, but there are few direct quotations. Response from the readers is expected: a 1667 book is mentioned with the question, "Can any of your correspondents, Mr. Urban, inform me whether this book is scarce, or where it may be had?" And later, "I wish to know also where this book may be had" (p. 522). His own failings did not faze him. Randle Holme published a book about 1670, "of which I forget the title" (p. 523). Most of Stanley's sixteen lives consist of facts and dates and publications, but occasionally they are amusing. One heraldic writer exasperated him by becoming "so addicted to astrology, that he scribbled over half the vacant pages of the Heralds books with its unintelligible jargon" (p. 524).

By the time of the June issue of the Magazine, Stanley already had responses to his first article from R.D. (the initials were always in black-letter), who corrected a minor error and suggested other sources. In July Mr. Dallaway sighed about the lack of interest in heraldry in England, where the "science" began, and in August Samuel Getholl asked

for a continuation of the series. The continuation came the next month, when Stanley modestly wrote he was "almost ashamed to have obtruded my superficial information in the face of men of research so much more careful, and opportunities apparently so much greater" (p. 780), but added four more writers anyway, following four quatrains he wrote "in a moment of melancholy." Although he continued to quote Wood, he warned the reader in one case that Wood seemed "to have some prejudice" against one writer" (p. 782).

In November, 1792, and June, 1793, Stanley got perhaps more response than he had bargained for. R.D. contributed not only some small corrections but added six more heraldic writers to the list, most described in more detail than Stanley gave. R.D. also used Wood, plus Clem. Walker's History of Independency, Peacham's Complete Gentleman, Dugdale's Baronage, the Biographia Britannia, Anstis's The Black Book of the Order of the Garter, Fasti. Oxon., and the heraldic writers' own works.

Stanley said in his headnote that the list of heraldic writers would be neither "unentertaining, or totally useless" to Gentleman's Magazine readers (GM, 1792, p. 416), and, judging by the response, he was at least read with interest. R.D.'s purpose was more ambitious, although he did not mention utile or dulce; at the end of his second letter, as if fearful that Stanley would be miffed by his corrections, he wrote:

Mr. Stanley, I am persuaded, will pardon the freedom I take in these strictures, which proceed only from a desire of contributing my endeavours towards rendering the biography of Heraldic writers as perfect and complete as possible.
[italics mine]

(GM, 1792, p. 989)

To R.D., the words "perfect," "complete," and "biography" seem to be the operative ones; that biography should be written and that it should be perfect and complete are his assumptions, and he expects the editors and the readers to share his beliefs. The value of the knowledge of these lives in particular, heraldic writers dead before 1700, was also evidently a shared one, for it was never questioned.

Living English Poets

Considering how the standards of biography had risen and changed in the eighteenth century, the mind boggles to find this introduction by "K.Z." to the "Biographical List of Living English Poets," which ran in the Gentleman's Magazine in June, July, and August, 1792.

Since your Magazine is often employed in reviving the memory of our deceased poets, it seems to me a proper regard to the curiosity of future generations to throw together a few circumstances now known, but which may be otherwise in future forgotten, of those now living. All the present merit, therefore, to which this list will lay claim, will be that of juxta-position; and aiding the memory in comprehending at one view the names, situations, and principal poems, of our modern poetical writers. In doing this, I have endeavoured to avoid every thing of too private a nature; every thing improperly minute; and every thing of censure in my criticisms, which are therefore purposely superficial. Nor have I had the patience to act as a compiler; I have been too lazy to turn over books and title-pages; I have entirely written from my memory, and may therefore, perhaps, incur the censure of being frequently too general. Italics, except for the second, mine

(GM, 1792, p. 504)

The biographies are skimpy--ten are in the first installment of some twelve hundred words--but K.Z.'s memory must have been good. He supplied no birth dates, but did give the families, educations, and some publications of each author. No anecdotes brighten the articles, but K.Z.'s

comments are sometimes crisp. One complete biography reads:

John Sargent, Esq. another man of fortune in Sussex, has shewn great ingenuity in endeavouring, in his dramatic poem of The Mine, to combine poetry and philosophy, but it is my decided opinion, that whoever attempts this, attempts impossibilities.

(p. 505)

K.Z. used the pieces to urge further production; of James Beattie he inquired, "But why has that inspired voice been so many years closed in silence?" (p. 505). Of the thirty-four living poets K.Z. mentioned (and some are only mentioned), he was most enthusiastic about William Cowper, whose "The Task" he called "a poem so beautiful, so true an exemplification of the force of that divine art, that all language fails me when I attempt to do it justice" (p. 616). But he was short with the poet most famous in the twentieth century:

Of Burns, the Airshire ploughman, the poems, selected to attract the notice of the publick, were certainly eminently beautiful; but an examination of the other compositions in his book does not confirm the same degree of admiration.

(p. 691)

At the end of the August installment, K.Z. reiterated his own deficiencies--some modern writers he did not know of, others he may have forgotten--and there is a wish "that this catalogue may not be considered as attempting any order." Then he promised that if the poets received approval, "the list of Poetesses shall follow it" (p. 691).*

Not poetesses but an additional two biographies (of the Rev. Joseph Pott and the Rev. Cartwright) appeared in the November, 1792, Gentleman's Magazine, brought on when K.Z. felt obliged to defend his list against

*A letter published in November corrected K.Z.--one of the "living poets" had died--but hoped K.Z. would "favour us with a list of the living poetesses" (p. 793).

an attack by S.H. (p. 876). In that defense he described its worth and manner of composition:

The List of living Poets . . . has no claim (I am as ready as S.H. to allow) to any degree of merit. It was carelessly and thoughtlessly put together at a moment of vacancy, when my long and familiar correspondence with you, Mr. Urban, induced me in that manner to sport with my pen. To its superficiality, therefore, and insipidity, I am most willing to agree. . . . But the most careful perusal will enable him to find nothing more there than a catalogue of names, with just so much of their connexions, education, and residence, added to the titles of their principal poems, as to identify their persons, and aid the memory in peculiarizing their characters. That such lists, if well done, are both useful and entertaining, in assisting the recollection, in directing the uninformed to elegant amusement, and the studious to standards of taste, there is no shadow of doubt.

. . .

(p. 1005)

That may well be a gentlemanly deprecation of effort, but his slighting attitude toward "private anecdotes" and "improper minutiae" reveal a Montaguish feeling that was certainly not shared by the editor of the Magazine. "Useful" the list may be, but "entertaining" it is not, although it is significant that those were K.Z.'s standards for lives. In that art, drama, and creation of personality were not among his skills, he did not go beyond his announced goals.*

*The poets K.Z. discusses, however briefly, are these: Joseph Warton, Christopher Anstey, Edward Jerminham, Francis Noel Clarke Mundy, the Rev. Richard Polwhele, French Laurence, John Hoole, the Rev. George Crabbe, Dr. John Wolcot, John Bampfylde, Hugh Downman, William Mason, George Keate, William Hayley, William Cowper, Joseph Richardson, Samuel Egerton Brydges, W.L. Bowles, Della Crusca (Mr. Merry), Thomas Warwick, Robert Burns, James Beattie, William Jones, John Sargent, the Rev. William Bagshaw Stevens, Thomas Tickell, the Rev. James Hurdie, Mr. Richards, Bertie Greathead, the Rev. Mr. Potter, and the Rev. Joseph Holden Pott.

John David Michaelis

In March, 1792, five months after the death of John David Michaelis, the Gentleman's Magazine published three letters, totaling just over twenty-four hundred words, inaccurately titled "Memoirs of Michaelis" on the first page and more accurately "Memoirs and Writings of Professor Michaelis" on the next (GM, 1792, pp. 202-203). "J.D.," author of the first, contributed the most facts, mostly on the doctor's education (as befits a scholar), posts in various universities, and honors paid by various academic clubs, including the Royal Society. A brief paragraph on his character concentrates on his ability as a scholar, and nothing at all is said of his personal life. More than a thousand of the sixteen hundred words by J.D. are in a seventy-eight-item bibliography listing Michaelis's works from 1741 to 1787 (pp. 203-04).

The bibliography is continued, with a few additional facts on his travels, in a shorter letter by "Exoniensis," which immediately followed the first. One sentence suggested something of the man: "Till the age of seventy-four he continued to pursue his studies with the same spirit that animated him at the commencement of his career, and he died full of years and honour" (p. 205). "M. Green" (a pseudonym John Nichols used), author of the third letter, added only the named of three translations of the doctor's works into English and a reference to a letter by him that appeared in the Magazine in 1781.

The account of Michaelis was apparently published for the same reasons as those of Boerhaave and Burman earlier in the century. The subject had recently died, his works had been published in England, and

his recent death gave them news value. The works were held, according to J.D., "in the highest estimation in this country" and he expected that a life and catalogue would be "thought deserving of a place in your valuable Miscellany" (p. 202). None of the three letters has a direct quotation from the subject or anecdote about him. The only distinguishing mark of the series is that a full-page engraving of Michaelis's bust, the face with a queer little smile, is opposite p. 203.

William Budworth

The lead article of the August, 1792, Gentleman's Magazine plunged into the middle of the life of the Rev. William Budworth, which the author, "M.N.," said had been requested "some time ago" (GM, 1792, p. 683). M.N. had been, evidently, although he did not say so, a student of Budworth at the Brewood grammar school and did not work from printed sources. He knew his own failings:

I wish I could recover the dates and the names; but every one knows with what difficulty these are remembered, there being nothing in a name, generally speaking, to fix the idea. Perhaps, however, some other of your correspondents will be kind enough to supply these, together with an account of his parentage and education.

(p. 683)

So M.N. must needs begin with Budworth's troubles with woman.

The first few paragraphs of the letter describe the death of his wife after childbirth (during which an experiment was tried which, according to parish women, dried up her milk) and his unsuccessful attempts at courting two prospective second wives. The stories of his failures and the reasons for them are crisply told and unobtrusively revelatory

of the clergyman's character. It was about that time, 1736, according to Boswell, on information that Nichols gave him, that Samuel Johnson applied to Budworth for the position of assistant at the school. He was refused because Budworth felt Johnson's "paralytick affection" might make him an object of laughter among the pupils (Life, IV, 408, note). But M.N. added that Budworth already employed a curate and an usher who could help him in his two vicarages as well as in the school, which Johnson, not in orders, could not have done (p. 684). M.N. did not contradict Nichols's story (which also appears in Hawkins's biography) but added a more practical reason for Johnson's failure.

The arrangement of the article has no logic. The diffident introduction is followed by accounts of the two courtships, which are separated by the paragraph on Johnson. In the second courtship account is a quotation from Budworth on the practice of eating blood (he was against it). And then there is a paragraph on the apoplectic fit in the summer of 1744, with the note that he never spoke afterward but with no mention of his death (which did not occur until 1745). The remainder of that letter and all the next, which appeared in the next month's issue, consisted of a physical description of the man, anecdotes concerning his abilities, and accounts of his habits. The sketch runs to about fifty-six hundred words, much of which is in long and sometimes irrelevant footnotes.

The virtue of the article is the vividness with which the reader perceives Budworth, proud but bending among friends, desirous of a wife but unwilling to play "the fond or tender lover," stern with his students but remembered fondly but at least M.N., who wrote, "Methinks I now see

him; I hear, I feel, those peculiarly striking remarks, those extremely happy allusions. . ." (p. 685). The second letter is rather better organized, moving to Budworth's health, love for music, taste for sports, politics ("I think I could take a good broad sword against the Pretender"), and his opinion of Methodists. M.N., however, manages to soften the latter by describing Budworth's sensitivity in these terms: "He felt the slightest reflection as sensibly as Mr. Pope or Dr. Johnson, and, like them, never forgot it" (p. 786). Proud among his parishioners, who blushed when they met him, he was "dreaded like old Frederick the First of Prussia" (p. 787).

Despite the jerky arrangement and the unappealing nature of the subject, the "Memoirs of Mr. Budworth" is one of the most readable of the biographies of the 1790's in the Magazine. The anecdotes, even if not all relevant (one in a footnote is about Bishop Warburton as a youth), are to the point and revelatory. The style is casual, almost gossipy, as if M.N., as an old man, were setting down a combination of tribute to a favorite master and snatches of conversation by an arrogant but respected parish leader.

John Locke

Although there are several allusions to previous Gentleman's Magazines, "H.F.Y." named no specific source for his "Historical Account of the Locke Family," in which almost four hundred words are devoted to the life of John Locke. The whole letter, of some twenty-six hundred words, traces the Locke family from the fourteenth century to the eighteenth, with steadily more detail as H.F.Y. approached his own time.

There is no indication that the author knew any of the Lockes personally, but his letter is dated from East Brent, which adjoins Looktown, named for an early family member.

The section on John Locke is impersonal and succinct. After college, he

became secretary to Sir William Swan, and English envoy to one of the foreign courts, in 1664; travelled with the Earl of Northumberland in 1668; began to write his "Essay on Human Understanding" in 1670; made Fellow of the Royal Society in 1671; Secretary of the Presentations under Lord Chancellor Cowper in 1672. . . .

(GM, 1792, p. 801)

And so on. There is neither character sketch nor anecdote about Locke, and but one quotation from him, on the occasion of refusing to plead guilty of libeling the government: "'He had committed no crime, and therefore should not plead guilty'" (p. 801). Two sentences on his death and works conclude the paragraph, although nothing is said of the contents of those works or their effects on philosophy.

"The Historical Account of the Locke Family" is an example of the use of the Magazine as a forum, for it was written in response to an inquiry from "A.B." in the June issue on the family and concluded with a postscript asking how the Rev. William Locke of Burwell was connected to the family. And an earlier mention of Peter King in the article would elicit from "Everard" in November a sketch of that man.

Peter King

In a long letter covering several subjects, "Everard" included about four hundred words on the life of Peter King, scholar, public official, peer, and Lord High Chancellor, consisting mainly of his posts

and publications. The information, published in November, 1792, was in answer to a query from H.F.Y. in September.

The notes are conventional in arrangement and in what they offer: family, birth, study, publications, and various posts of public service. The only individualizing note is that the study was carried on during his leisure time, "so that he became an excellent scholar before the world suspected any such thing" (GM, 1792, p. 997). His character is not described specifically, but can be guessed from the fact about his study and the note that he took the advice of John Locke, a relative, to study law, by which profession he made his name.

Locke left King his library--and that is the only personal information we are given. There is no room for anecdote or quotation; or perhaps there was no knowledge of them. Everard did not name his source.

Thomas Wright

The life of a mathematician was the first biography in the Gentleman's Magazine in 1793, and for no other reason than that no one before had "attempted to save from oblivion the memory of Mr. Thomas Wright" (GM, 1793, p. 9). "A.M.R.," the author, who remained anonymous until the last installment, in March, claimed to have "authentic anecdotes of this singular character, collected from his own notebooks and manuscripts" (p. 9) but did not claim to have known him, although Wright had died in 1786, just seven years before.

The promised "anecdotes" did not appear, however, and the arrangement of the life is conventional: family, birth, schooling and independent study, apprenticeship and its failure, trial at seamanship (he

was seasick), and the opening of a school of mathematics. The account of his youth, before he became successful, is the best part of the life--his failure to persuade a clergyman's daughter to run away with him, his bad luck in producing an almanac for 1732 (too late to be printed for that year), his gathering nine hundred subscribers for an almanac for 1733 and belief that his fortune was made. "Under those visionary hopes, his steps were light, and with an exulting heart he presented his work to the Company of Stationers," which "regarded his subscription with a jealous eye" and refused to deal with him (p. 9). Not until a former enemy, a clergyman, became his friend did Wright have leisure to write and invent and meet people who furthered his career.

From that point on, the life is a list of his publications, inventions, and wealthy friends who offered their hospitality. Lengthy footnotes explain his inventions and detail his visits. There is a short formal character at the end of the second installment, in February, not substantiated by examples; better evidence of his character is in the fact that he continued his studies even while visiting "illustrious personages" and rejected an offer from the Czarina of Russia to teach there for three hundred pounds a year (p. 12). The character given him is not wholly favorable, mentioning stiff manners and eccentric notions (p. 127). Of his personal life or habits there is nothing except an allusion to a natural daughter who survived him (p. 127).

Having saved Wright from oblivion, A.M.R. closed with a description of his house, which showed his "wildness of fancy" (p. 127). In the early parts of the biography there is evidence of an attempt at "fine

writing," but most of the letters are a straightforward account. A full-page portrait precedes the articles.

Sarah Steer

What purports to be "The life and character of Sarah Steer, of Epsom" turns out to be a letter opposing English Poor Laws on the grounds that the state does not have the right to "forestall and controul the charity of its people" (GM, 1793, p. 27).

Sarah Steer, a widow who had died the month before publication of the letter in the January, 1793 issue, is used to prove the author's contention that the poor should be left to the voluntary charity of individuals. Of the events in Mrs. Steer's life we learn only that she spent her life in Epsom and that her husband "did not outlive his ability to labour" and that as a young woman she had held in her arms the king (Frederick's household had been for a while in Epsom during George III's childhood). But that latter fact is tucked at the end as an afterthought. Of her character we learn "she had a virtuous pride, that restrained her from ... soliciting parochial aid "(p. 27). Fortunately, she had benefactors to provide food and clothing for her, one of whom gave her dinner and supper daily.

"J.B.," author of the article on Mrs. Steer, apparently knew her, as his letter is dated from Epsom. But his subject, despite his humble introduction—

You have not, I believe, often been asked to admit an account of the death of a mere pauper into your obituary. Permit me to hope, however

(p. 26)

was not the woman, but the Poor Laws, and his interest was in what her

history could do to bring about abolishment of them. J.B. probably erred in thinking that all poor old widows would be as fortunate as Mrs. Steer.

William Aiton

"Kewensis" began the "Biographical Anecdotes of the late Mr. Aiton," published in May, 1793, with praise for the Gentleman's Magazine obituary section, which "must be extremely beneficial to the cause of virtue," pointing out that "when a man's conduct is just he prospers" (GM, 1793, p. 389).

Such a man, presumably, was William Aiton (whose first name is not mentioned in the article), superintendent first of the botanic garden at Kew and later of the pleasure and kitchen garden there, under royal patronage. Pattern of the article is ordinary: birth, botanical study, appointments, publication of a catalogue of the Kew garden, death, character, and burial, all in some one thousand words. Although Kewensis did not say so, it is probable that he was acquainted with his subject, for there is nothing in the letter detrimental to Aiton's reputation or critical of his personality. The whole almost amounts to a panegyric of the subject and of the king, who, "with his usual attention and benignity to his faithful servants," appointed Aiton's son to succeed him. Beyond the existence of the son, three daughters, and a widow, Kewensis told nothing of his personal life.

The purpose of the letter was apparently to preserve Aiton's memory. A notice of his death had appeared in the February issue, but Kewensis felt "his life was too valuable to be consigned to the short annal

usually appropriated to the memory of insignificant men." Therefore he hoped the editor would insert in the "valuable Miscellany a few anecdotes relating to so good, and in consequence, so useful a character" (p. 389). The purpose is laudable, but it is hard to see how a life in so vague terms could be efficacious. The most interesting quality of that paragraph, in contrast to the biographies of the 1740's, is its open admission that the subject was insignificant and that the purpose of the article was to preserve his memory rather than to satisfy curiosity.

T. Jeffreys

The "Anecdotes of Mr. Jeffreys," contributed by "J.C." to the May, 1793, Magazine, contains no anecdotes and not much life. Jeffreys's claim to fame seems to have been that he was a "traveler for subscriptions for a book which he intended publishing" and, indeed, for which he had "the signatures of more than 14,000 persons, many of them people of eminence and distinction" (GM, 1793, p. 404). But before publication (perhaps before writing) Jeffreys died of a fever in April, 1793.

J.C. evidently was a friend of the prospective author, for his papers came into his hands, "and from those the hasty sketch that follows is collected." A footnote from the editor added that information had been added from papers Jeffreys himself had given the Magazine for that purpose (GM, 1793, p. 404). The life is short, about eight hundred words, and concentrates on Jeffreys's travels and plans to write. Jeffreys may have been something of a hoax, for J.C. found no notes for either of the two advertised works among his papers; and in one set of

proposals, he called himself a member of "the honourable Cymmrodorion and Gwyneddigion Societies of Antient Britons" (p. 404). But the character J.C. wrote is sympathetic and nothing adverse is said. The only personal bit afforded is a quotation from the subject on the good effects of rewarding wit and genius.

The piece was written to satisfy the curiosity of J. Henn, who had written the Magazine in August and October (pp. 681 and 910) inquiring about Jeffreys.

Henry Miles and Humphrey Ditton

"L.B.S.," indignant that a historian of the village of Tooting would omit mention of Dr. Henry Miles (a review of The Environs of London had been published in the May Gentleman's Magazine), wrote for the June, 1793, issue a notice of him. "It was not to be expected, perhaps, in this present state of parties," he wrote coldly, "that a clergyman of the Church of England should pay much attention to a man whom he would consider as a sectary. However, Dr. Miles's fame stands on superior grounds to any party attachments" (GM, 1793, p. 497).

L.B.S. was obviously sympathetic to Dr. Miles, and the short life contains no adverse reflection on him. Dr. Miles was distinguished by his lack of liberal education as a youth and his "adapting himself to a life of study" until being elected minister of the Tooting Dissenters in 1726. A quotation from Thomas Birch praises Miles's help on an edition of Boyle's works, but there are no quotations from the doctor himself, nor any mention of his own works. The end of the biography departs somewhat from the usual pattern: mention of his marriage comes

after his character, and his death follows both. The praise in the character section is not substantiated by quotation or incident (p. 497).

To the notes on Miles L.B.S. appended two paragraphs of a letter from Richard Horton on Horton's father-in-law, Humphrey Ditton, a late seventeenth-century mathematician. The first paragraph covers Ditton's birth, family, religion, and relations; the second, his ill health, preaching, appointment as a mathematics professor, and publications (mentioned, not named). His character is not described. In so short a space, of course, there is no attempt to individualize Ditton; the purpose was to memorialize him.

Neither of these short biographies, totaling about nine hundred words, shows any indication that it was written by an acquaintance of the subject, although the former could have been and the latter probably was. It was the antiquarian rather than the creative impulse that inspired them both.

Dr. Henry Felton

The preface, by his son, to a volume of sermons published in 1748 was the source of the information in "Biographical Memoirs of Dr. Henry Felton," submitted to the June, 1793 Gentleman's Magazine by "J.N.," initials used by editor John Nichols. The total article is more than twelve hundred words long, including almost four hundred words of a character sketch quoted directly from the son's work, which notes no faults in Felton.

The factual part of the biography, in one long paragraph, consists

mainly of a list of his publications (with such titles as "The Common People Taught to defend their Communion with the Church of England against the Attempts and Insinuations of Popish Emissaries") (GM, 1793, p. 507). Possibly because of the source, the article is rich in detail (although not of the sort that would make the man come alive to the reader): Felton studied at Westminster under Dr. Shirley, at the Charter-house under Dr. Walker, and at Oxford under Dr. Mills, later Bishop of Waterford. The precise dates of his degrees and publications are also given. The section on his death is comparatively long, beginning with the rheumatic disorder and ending with the place of burial and his wish that there be no epitaph.

Despite his many publications there are no quotations from any of them (of course, the original was a preface to a volume of sermons, so it would have been redundant to quote them there). Nor are there illustrations of the manners, breeding, sense, and charity the son and J.N. claimed for him in the character. The only part approaching a personal glimpse of the man is that describing his preparation for death, which began with a "defluxion" and fever.

He was very sensible of his approaching change, made the necessary preparation for it, and behaved, under his long and painful sickness, with the resignation and piety becoming a Christian. . . .

(GM, 1793, p. 507)

In publishing the life of Felton, Nichols was not only fulfilling his concept of the Magazine as an antiquarian repository, but also, he felt, adding contemporary biographies for the benefit of the future. The headnote mentioned queries from correspondents (although Felton had died more than half a century before, in 1739) and said the article "may

possibly suggest some hints to the editors of the Biographia Britannica; whose Fifth Volume, I am happy to inform you, is on the eve of publication" (p. 506).

Dr. Ralph Bathurst

The "Biographical Anecdotes of Dr. Ralph Bathurst," an abridgement of the life written about 1763 by Thomas Warton, has really no anecdotes at all. Except for the introduction, which went off on a tangent concerning other clerical deans who had been doctors, it was conventional in order: birth and degrees in two sentences, medical practice, clerical appointments, marriage, writing style, death, and epitaph. A proper character is missing, but the information is inserted throughout the article.

The contributor, J. Crane, included no anecdotes of Bathurst—perhaps there were none in the original—but several quotations from him on why he turned to medicine (no matter what happened in the Civil War, he could "get a tolerable livelihood) and three Latin passages (one an epigram on an execution) (GM, 1793, p. 590). There are several items relating to his medical practice, including his membership in the meetings that became the Royal Society. Emphasis in the article is on Bathurst's variety of talents: he was not only a physician but also a philosopher and classical scholar, in addition to returning to clerical posts late in life. The biography closes with the precise cause of his death (broken thigh bone), his burial and epitaph, and the remark that he was not the only Dean of Wells to be a practicing physician (p. 592).

The approximately eighteen hundred words of the sketch give a

better idea of the subject than other, longer articles, despite the lack of anecdotes. The virtues listed are not substantiated with examples but occasionally with facts, as in this case:

The doctor was remarkably fond of the company of young men, which is no uncommon case; but that young men should eagerly court him is a proof of his amiable and chearful disposition.

(p. 591)

And there is a testimonial from a recently deceased earl, who recalled "being charmed with Dr. Bathurst's conversations" (p. 591). Such proofs make the generalizations more palatable.

There was no apparent reason for the publication of Bathurst's biography at that time, when he had been dead eighty-nine years. J. Crane, a resident of Wells, only supposed that "an abridged account of this celebrated dean may be acceptable to some of your readers who have not seen Mr. Warton's publication" (p. 590).

John Oakman

The recent death of John Oakman prompted H. Lemoine to write a short (about five hundred words) "Character of John Oakman" for the December, 1793, Gentleman's Magazine. It is notable for being one of the very few to admit (though without details or anecdotes) that the subject was not only less than but nowhere near perfect. Oakman's apprenticeship to an engraver did not work out because "the volatility of his disposition led him into so many follies that his master was glad to get clear of him"; by that time, however, Oakman had seduced his daughter. For a time Oakman was a partner of a man who died "in an accidental scuffle after a midnight debauch" (GM, 1793, p. 1080). Dur-

ing his travels in England and Wales, the "droll situations into which his misconduct had led him made him an entertaining narrative companion" (p. 1081). One wishes for details of those "droll situations."

Lemoine made no claim to have known Oakman personally, although it is possible he did, judging by a detail of his death, "at his sister's a butcher's shop, in King-street, in Westminster" (p. 1081). Besides that, however, there is nothing on his family and little on his adult life beyond the names of six of his many pot-boiler novels (one about a Negro he met in the Liverpool jail). Lemoine believed Oakman should be chiefly remembered for his collections of popular songs, which were the pop songs of the resorts.

The author, who called himself in the first paragraph "solicitous to preserve the memory of ingenious though indigent merit, however the talents may have been misapplied," believed it was for those contributions to the public entertainment that Oakman, "one of the improvident sons of the Muses," deserved a place in the Magazine (p. 1080). There is, needless to say, no mention here of imitating the subject's qualities.

Bernard Gilpin

"Memoirs of Bernard Gilpin" is in sharp contrast to the sketch of Oakman, which it follows immediately in the December, 1793, Magazine, being the life of a sixteenth-century Catholic-turned-Anglican clergyman famous for his good works. The article (not in the form of a letter but signed "W.P.") differs from the other biographies in the 1790's in

that the subject's character follows his birth and family and in that three anecdotes and a death scene substantiate what is said of him. The article is, as the editor said, "accompanied with an elegant Portrait" (opposite p. 1081).

W.P. did not give the source of his information, except to say "the bishop of Chichester hath preserved a story of him in his infancy, which will shew how early he could discern not only the immorality, but the indecorum, of an action" (p. 1081). The incident is his noticing, as a child, that a man could preach against drunkenness after being drunk the night before. "Incidents of this kind soon discovered the seriousness of his disposition, and gave his parents an early presage of his future piety" (p. 1081). This is one of the few biographies in the Magazine with information on the subject's childhood, including even a direct quotation from him (through, of course, the bishop). It is reminiscent of the childhood incidents in the old saints' lives that were supposed to demonstrate that the saintliness was evident in the cradle. The other anecdotes are more credible, occurring in Gilpin's adulthood—one on a sermon he made at court when the king was absent, another on the theft of his horses (he was so good that the thief, on learning the horses were Gilpin's, returned them) (p. 1082). Gilpin's decline and pious death take up almost four hundred of the some twelve hundred words of the article. The effect on the reader was probably supposed to be the same as the effect on those who were called to the rector's bed to hear his final admonitions.

The "Biographical Anecdotes of Bernard Gilpin" is the closest article to a saint's life in the Magazine of the early 1790's. As such

the appeal is in the demonstration of a good life attained despite the disadvantage of being a younger son and despite the "load of calumny, ingratitude, and ill-usage, with which he undeservedly met" (p. 1082). The latter phrase arouses curiosity, for absolutely nothing adverse is told of Gilpin that might arouse such strong feelings. The bias of W.P. is wholly pro-Gilpin, and the effect of the article is more that of a saint's life than that of the rendering of a man.

Robert Parsons

A query from "B." in the December, 1793, Gentleman's Magazine prompted "P." in May, 1794 to send a "few particulars" of the "History of Parsons the Jesuit," totaling about six hundred words. The information P. sent is almost wholly impersonal, probably because his source was the Athenae Oxoniensis, where he referred his reader for more facts. Another correspondent also responded to B.'s query, for an editor's note said that a portrait had been received (and was published opposite the opening of the letter).

The impersonality of the source is reflected in these "particulars," which include family, birth, education, posts, travels, and death, but no character sketch. The whole is one long paragraph, artlessly written, with no anecdotes or quotations. Neither good nor bad qualities are mentioned unless virtue is seen in the statement that the young Robert early gave "proofs of a great genius" (GM, 1794, p. 409), or vice may be deduced from the fact that he resigned his fellowship at Oxford in 1574, "as some authors say, to prevent expulsion" (p. 409). It is possible, although P. did not say so, that Parsons was beginning to lean

toward Catholicism and could not hold his fellowship, for the next year he entered the Society of Jesus at Rome. Ambition on Parsons's part may be read into the fact that, after traveling in Spain, he returned to Rome, "in hopes of obtaining a cardinal's cap; but being disappointed of his wish, he died through grief, 1597" (p. 410).

The life of the Catholic convert, unlike that of Philip Howard in March, 1791, is, although not exactly unfriendly, decidedly objective and without warmth. The only purpose seems to have been to answer the query of B. five months before.

Robert Blair

The small amount of information on Robert Blair submitted by "B.A." to the June, 1794 Gentleman's Magazine is derived wholly from notes in the Life of Johnson by Boswell and a short account by Henry Lemoine that had appeared in a 1790 rendering of "The Grave" into rhyme by Lemoine. The account, in the form of a letter, is as much an attempt to pry more information from others as it is an answer to "An ignorant Cockney," for B.A. had doubts about Lemoine's facts.

The Magazine letter consists of a long quotation from Boswell, including an adverse comment from Johnson on "The Grave" and mention of other comment and two editions. Lemoine's account, apparently quoted in its entirety, supplied the usual information, birth, education, posts, and death, which Lemoine said was "all [he] could gather from the most diligent enquiry." B.A., however, was not satisfied, and wished to see a letter named as a source. He pointed out too that the publishers of the poem might have some "anecdotes" on the author and that

"there must be several persons alive who have it in their power . . . to gratify curiosity relative to a poet of such merit." And he hoped his letter might attract to the Magazine such information.

This sketch of Blair differs from other biographies in that absolutely nothing is said of the man's character. T. B.A., Lemoine, and Johnson, the only part of Blair's life with any importance was his writing "The Grave," so that much of the seven hundred words is concerned with criticisms, editions, and re-writings of it. B.A. did show, however, proper biographical spirit in asking for anecdotes from readers.

Lemoine's response, in the October, 1794, Magazine, explained that his information came from papers he bought at a sale of the library of Thomas Dawson, which included papers in the hand of John Jones, a chaplain at Walwyn. Some of the letters had already appeared in the Magazine through a correspondent who called himself "Eugenio" (another of Nichols's pseudonyms). And Samuel Johnson was known to have used the papers.

John Williams

Although the letter from "R.R. et P." in the June, 1794, Gentleman's Magazine is fifteen hundred words long, only about four hundred deal with the first subject, Archbishop John Williams of York. The rest of the letter consists in "a curious letter" from the antiquary Robert Vaughan and information on the letter.

The biography of Williams is one of the shortest in the Magazine (with the exception of the lists of poets and heraldic writers), and

much of the space is taken by the Latin inscription on his gravestone. In four sentences R.R. et P. moved from Williams's father and birth to his death, with phrase-long stops at his birth and appointments to four episcopal posts. Nothing in the sentences suggests the character or personality of the man, and the whole letter seems to have been hastily put together: the birth date is given as 1582 and the death date as 1794, although the epitaph says the death was in 1659, a more likely date (GM, 1794, p. 515). The long epitaph, which, if it may be believed, told more of Williams than the text, is attributed to Joseph Hackett, whose life of Williams was R.R. et P.'s source.

No reason for the writing of the life or its publication was given, only that "a few particulars respecting so distinguished a character in his time as Dr. John Williams, Archbishop of York, may not be unacceptable to some of your numerous readers" (p. 515). The man had then been dead one hundred and forty-four years; it was probably R.R. et P.'s and Nichols's antiquarian spirits that produced this memorial.

Robert Fludd

Henry Lemoine gave no reason for his brief biography of Dr. Robert Fludd, seventeenth-century physician, author, and Rosicrucian philosopher, and its publication in the June, 1794 Gentleman's Magazine was probably a result of Nichols's desire to preserve and publish every fact he got his hands on. It is another of those biographies in which nothing is given but a listing of the subject's places of schooling and an account of his career.

Even through the flat statements of Lemoine, however, one can see

that Fludd's life might have been material for an interesting biography. Lemoine identified him as "an author of a very peculiar cast" but did not explain what that meant. He was called a "very voluminous author," but none of the works were listed or quoted. He was "in great reputation for his reputed medical capacity," but we do not learn why Lemoine called it a "reputed" ability. The author seemed to lack faith in his own subject: "The celebrated Gassendus had a controversy with him; which shews, at least, that he was not considered in his day as an insignificant writer" (GM, 1794, p. 531).

Lemoine's sources were probably Athenæ Oxoniensis and James Granger's Biographical History, to both of which he referred. In Fludd's major work, according to Granger, were "'some very singular prints, which are only to be understood by a second-sighted adept'" (p. 531). The reader longs for an explanation of these singular prints, or at least a description of them. Facts are supplied in this sketch, but they serve more to whet the curiosity than to satisfy it.

The Stacpooles

"D.H." contributed in August, 1794, "the inscriptions on three prints" which he saw in the possession of Mr. Throsby of Leicester. The first subject was the most distant of those of the biographies considered from the 1790's, having lived in the eleventh century; the second and third were of the eighteenth century.

The first inscription dealt as much with the whole Stacpoole line as with any one individual. The first was Richard, knighted by William the Conqueror, and his line was traced down to the eighteenth century.

As important to D.H. as the persons involved is the fate of the estate, which was at the time of writing the property of the son of one Pryse Campbell (relation to the Stacpooles not stated) (GM, 1794, pp. 715-16). The second inscription dealt wholly with John Stacpoole, a descendant of the Irish branch, who had died in 1771. Nothing is given of his life, beyond that it lasted ninety-seven years, but much of his character, kind and generous though economical. His character is illuminated with two couplets on the fact that if virtue makes for immortality, "he had 'scap'd the grave" (p. 176). The last inscription dealt with Philip Glover, "a steady disinterested friend, who never courted popularity, but was ever deserving of it." And that is all.

The three inscriptions were copied and submitted by D.H. simply for the sake of preservation, and it is by coincidence rather than design that two of them have to do with the preservation of a family history of a life.

Thomas Strong

The life of Thomas Strong, antiquarian, 1736-94, is chronicled briefly in the last monthly Gentleman's Magazine of 1794 by "J.C.," a friend for many years. His birth, education, and profession get short shrift, and his ancestry none at all: the importance of Strong was his antiquarian avocation, not his legal vocation.

Despite the brevity of the sketch, some three hundred words--there is no list of his publications, as he never published, no anecdotes, no quotations--the reader perceives a real emotion on the part of J.C. and a real desire to preserve the memory of his friend. "Such unaffected

manners and goodness of heart are but rarely to be met with as were united in him" (GM, 1794, p. 1108). Though his virtues are not substantiated by example, there is no doubting J.C.'s sincerity. The only reason for the sketch is to pay tribute to his friend "as I wish to do justice to his memory" (p. 1107).

CHAPTER SIX

BETWEEN THE 1740'S AND THE 1790'S: SUMMARY OF CHANGES

The qualities of biography as a genre, as noted by commentators, changed somewhat between the 1740's and the 1790's. Truth remained the most important standard, although its meaning expanded in two directions: first, not only was a biographer expected to record the public events of his subject's life, but he was also expected to render an accurate idea of him; second, more emphasis was placed on ascertaining and preserving every personal detail, from ancestry to habits, that the biographer could assemble.

Changes in Criticism and Writing

The materials of the biographer expanded also. Letters were used in at least one major biography of the 1740's, Middletons' Life of Cicero, but by the end of the century there was an epistolary deluge. Use of such material concerning a contemporary was popularized by Mason's Gray, 1775, and by the 1790's, the practice of reading other people's mail had so increased that the Gentleman's Magazine readers frequently contributed letters of well-known persons, with or without comment, although they were not often included in the biographies. Then as now, critics and readers bickered over the propriety of publishing the vices or intimate details of famous and respected subjects,

with the Mrs. Montagus in the minority.

A reason for the increase in controversy over the proper biographical materials was that more such materials were available, since biographers were tending to write about contemporaries rather than reaching twenty, a hundred, or seventeen hundred and fifty years back for subjects. Middleton made his name with Cicero, Boswell his with Johnson. More was known, more was remembered by others, and more was preserved—the average biographer of the 1790's had a greater wealth of sources than he of the 1740's. The Gentleman's Magazine of the latter decade, of course, had published biographies of persons only recently dead, but they were usually foreigners such as Boerhaave and Barretier) and only printed sources were used by the authors.

"Truth" was still the standard, but its meaning was fidelity to the whole idea of a man as well as to details. "Vigorniensis" in a letter published in the 1790 Gentleman's Magazine praised the publication of men's letters, partly "on account of their authenticity" (GM, 1790, p. 1063)* and the Rev. Thomas Adam in 1795 wrote of the "fidelity" with which Johnson had been described by Boswell.¹ Although readers' desire for truth was often satisfied by truthful details or faithful relation of the events of a subject's life, something more was wanted, a rendering of the totality of the subject. Two reviews of Boswell's Journal illustrate that desire. "The Doctor's conversation . . . is here retailed with wonderful accuracy and minuteness. It is a true picture of the man and his manners . . ." (MR, 1786, p. 281).

*"Authenticity" of his Life was a standard for Boswell, as he told the Rt. Rev. Thomas Percy in a letter 9 April 1790 (Letters, II, 294).

Samuel Badcock, author of that review, apparently believed that an accurate picture of the whole man could be conveyed through details sufficient in number and accuracy. The Gentleman's Magazine review, although agreeing with the objective of the book, did not agree that the Journal was successful:

In the beginning of the book we find an elaborate character of Dr. Johnson, which, though minutely particular in its descriptions, most of which are perhaps correct and true, yet seems to us, when collectively taken, to want some general distinguishing trait, which may enable the reader to form a just and determinate idea of his character . . . we will venture to remark, that the character drawn in the present performance does not give an entire and adequate idea of Dr. Johnson.

(GM, 1785, p. 889)

To give an "idea" of Samuel Johnson in the Life was the announced goal of Boswell, who believed his subject would be "seen in this work more completely than any man who has ever yet lived" (Life, I, 30). Whether or not critics agreed on his success, Boswell's goal was approved as a proper one for biographers of the 1790's.

From the biographies in the Gentleman's Magazine of the 1790's, the reader rarely grasps an idea of the subject, although he certainly cannot complain about lack of facts. Unfortunately, except in rare cases, the facts are either matters of public record or those submitted by friends of the subject; the pendulum swings only from pedantry to panegyric. Although many of the subjects were contemporary, there are few of the details and anecdotes that could make them come alive. The kind of truth that Magazine readers obtained tended to be pedantic recitation of appointments and publications, an occasional anecdote which might or might not be revelatory of character, or the objective truth

derived from personal letters (objective because the letters were usually printed without comment) or from transcriptions of epitaphs (always laudatory).

Critical feeling by the 1790's was generally in favor of publication of anecdotes and details, with or without generalizations to make them meaningful to the reader. An exception was "Pro me," a Magazine correspondent who accused the Journal of "triviality" because of the abundance of anecdote; but even he admitted that anecdote was what "the present gossiping age is so inquisitive after" (GM, 1786, pp. 386-87). In the same year, the Monthly Review complained that Mrs. Piozzi's work did not have enough anecdotes or details of Samuel Johnson (MR, 1786, p. 385), as though readers of biographies were justified in expecting them. Even a collection of anecdotes of Peter the Great, without a chronological thread, had value because they illustrated his character (MR, 1789, p. 131). "Vigorniensis," in his introduction to two letters in the 1790 Magazine, said he had

received much pleasure and much information from your entertaining Miscellany; particularly from those parts of it which contain anecdotes of men, eminent either for literature, or for the situations they had filled in society.

(GM, 1790, p. 1063)

"Information" was to him seemingly a value in itself, not necessarily related to morals or modes of living (that is, this is not the old utile-dulce theme). Of details, the Monthly Review review of Life of Johnson ended, "Give us all" (MR, 1792, p. 4), and in the same year another review lamented the lack of "more personal information" in a biography of John Jortin (MR, 1792, p. 413). The reader of a biography, by the 1790's, had come to expect a certain amount of detail and anecdote, and

he was put out if they were not supplied. By 1793 there was published a book called A Dissertation on Anecdotes, the reviewer of which devoted little space to the author's defense of them and much to his own disparagement. In history, the latter wrote, anecdote is but "a mass of gossip, scandal, and improbability, which a grave and sensible historian would be ashamed of" (GM, 1793, p. 1120); the effect of anecdote on biography, he said, is to blow it up "like some meat; to give it an appearance of solidity and substance, but in reality to tend to sink it sooner into disgusting decay" (p. 1121). The bias of that reviewer was toward history, where he felt anecdotes had no place except perhaps in notes; the objection seems to be that anecdotes were so easily misused by writers with axes to grind that a true historian would not use them at all, as they had no relation to a larger scheme.

"Relation to a larger scheme" was a demand that readers and writers of anecdotes in the Magazine rarely made, however, and the columns at the end of the century were full of letters beginning as this one did:

Mr. URBAN, The late Sir John Goodricke, bart. who died in the year 1789, used to relate an anecdote of Oliver Cromwell, told him when a boy by a very old woman. . . .

(GM, 1791, p.200)

The anecdote concerned Cromwell's habit of praying every night on his knees for a long period, but nothing is said about the piety the story might prove. Rather, the rest of the letter gave the history of the "very old woman" and added that although the house since had been torn down, the floor of the room where Cromwell lay was saved. Perhaps the birth, death, and marriage of the old woman lent "authenticity" to the whole story.

Anecdotes appeared occasionally in obituaries, as in that of Henry Eaton (GM, 1790, p. 672), although not as often as the title of the obituary section, "Obituaries of Considerable Persons, with Biographical Anecdotes," implied. The anecdotes published in the Magazine almost always concern famous persons, and John Nichols probably thought of them as materials for future biographers. Thus the magazine itself did not have to give any *raison d'être* for them. For instance, a person signing himself "✱13" contributed in 1791 a Samuel Johnson anecdote told him by a divine, in which Johnson, having been refused an audience with Lord Chesterfield, complained to Robert Dodsley that he had been "only gilding a rotten post" (GM, 1794, p. 18). In this case, the eminence of Johnson was sufficient reason to publish a story about him.

Letters asking for or supplying details about the famous also abounded in the Gentleman's Magazine, and readers often sent in letters to, from, or about famous persons, for no other apparent reason than that they had fallen into their hands and should be shared. For example, in June, 1791, "Philologus" requested a biography of Mr. Upton, prebendary of Rochester, disappointed that "amidst the biographical entertainments of this curious and communicative age" no one had written of him (GM, 1790, p. 613). Only three months later, John Beckley wrote in with a short account of Upton's career and publications (GM, 1790, 792-93). Facts or biographies were requested on such figures as T. Jeffreys (GM, 1791, p. 910), John Ross (GM, 1791, p. 980), Admiral Carter (GM, 1792, p. 409), and "Dog" Smith (GM, 1792,

p. 328). Although those queries and many more in the same period were on specific persons, the compilers of a history of Cumberland wrote the Magazine in 1792 asking for unpublished biographical anecdotes of any native of that county.

Though, Mr. Urban, these enquiries may seem local and partial, it is for the general interest of good learning and good manners that due notice should everywhere be taken of men of worth.

(GM, 1792, p. 1073)

That letter appeared in the December issue; by the time the Supplement to the year came out, an answer had been received (GM, 1792, p. 1100).

More evidence of Gentleman's Magazine readers' interest in detail is the number of letters written to correct facts or impressions left by the articles. A long obituary of John Howard, Dissenter, Member of Parliament, philanthropist, appeared in the March, 1790, Magazine, and in April were published a series of corrections and additions in five indignant letters on the first few pages of the issue. Corrections of obituaries were most common (for instance, on William Sellon, GM, 1790, 994, and on William Stanger, GM, 1790, p. 999), but when the Life of Johnson was published the Magazine was regarded as the natural place to correct Boswell's slips. The very first mention of the Life in the Magazine was in a letter from "N.N.," who asserted that Johnson did not write a certain set of verses for Lucy Porter, as Boswell reported, but for a friend (GM, 1791, p. 396). And in 1792 "Sciolus" published a page-by-page list of niggling corrections of Boswell's phrasing and facts (GM, 1792, p. 213). The next year J. Henn suggested that it was to the Appleby school that Johnson applied to the

headmaster (GM, 1793, p. 408), "E.E.A." disagreed with the Boswell interpretation of the letter Johnson signed "impransus" (GM, 1793, p. 778), and Anna Seward protested Boswell's correction in the second edition of a story she gave him for the Life (GM, 1793, p. 875). A series of letters between Boswell and Miss Seward (polite on his side, indignant on hers) and their supporters continued until late 1794, despite an editor's note in February that "we heartily hope that this will be the last letter we may receive on a subject which it is now certainly proper to terminate" (GM, 1794, p. 121). That Nichols did not then simply stop publishing the letters indicated that he believed readers liked them.

Not only letters from readers dealing with biographies but also letters they sent in from or about famous men indicates a lively interest in other people's personal lives. Vigorniensis's enthusiasm for the publication of private correspondence may have been influenced by the fact that he was submitting two letters to the Magazine (from Thomas Leland and J. Baretti) (GM, 1790, pp. 1063-64), but he was far from being alone. Judging by their publication in the Magazine, letters were interesting in themselves, unrelated to other events in a man's life, detached from a formal biography. Letters were not often published in the body of the magazine's biographies, but frequently appeared alone. For instance, an anonymous correspondent in 1790 submitted a letter John Hawkesworth wrote in 1771 (GM, 1790, p. 692), and in 1791 W. Wallis sent a 114-year-old letter from John Wallis and "T.S." sent a letter from Miles Coverdale (GM, 1791, pp. 404, 415). Without comment, a plaintive letter from Dean Swift to John Towers was printed

the same year (GM, 1791, p. 718), as were letters from Isaac Newton to John Aubrey (p. 504) and from Joseph Addison to Dr. Chartlett (p. 698). Readers' desire for famous men's letters had been whetted by Mason's Gray and Boswell's Life, and reader "Z." in late 1792 wrote the Magazine requesting that someone write a life of Sir Joshua Reynolds "on the plan of Mason's life of Gray" (GM, 1792, p. 1200). It must have been a real coup for the Magazine when an anonymous correspondent in July, 1794, submitted two of Jonathan Swift's letters not printed in any of his works, both to the Rev. Mr. Windar of Kilroot. "Although the matter of both be familiar and trivial, they may serve to throw some new light on the two periods of his life to which they relate," the contributor commented (GM, 1794, pp. 625-26). But he must have known well that "familiar and trivial" matters were just what Nichols and his readers delighted in.

Twentieth-century magazines follow eighteenth-century practice in publishing lives, letters, and anecdotes of the famous, of course, but the curiosity of modern readers is not satisfied by a kind of material that Gentleman's Magazine contributed regarding both known and unknown: epitaphs. Proper biographies, such as those of Soame Jenyns, William Budworth, and Ralph Bathurst, sometimes ended with a copy of the epitaph and almost always with a notice of where the subject was buried, but most of the epitaphs stood alone and were offered in the spirit of informing: a March, 1792, letter opened, "Mr. Urban, the inscriptions in the church of Culworth, co. Northampton, which I collected in the year 1788, are at your service" (GM, 1792, p. 305). The feeling among these antiquarians of epitaphs seemed to be that anything worth carving

was worth publishing, and Nichols must have agreed to an extent, for the Magazine of the 1790's included transcriptions of the epitaphs of such luminaries as John Tillis, Catherine Thorpe, John Ballard, Francis Bagshaw, John Free, William Edwards, and Anne Chamberlayne. For the readers whose taste inclined to necrophilia, a columnist calling himself "Inspector" promised in 1791 a real treat: a selection of epitaphs from every church in Worcestershire (GM, 1791, p. 810).

The concern for truth of whatever kind--public honors or private scurrility--and of whatever source--private letters or public tombstones--commanded much more critical space in the latter part of the eighteenth century than the pleasure-and-instruction theme echoed ever since Horace. True, it can be argued that truth is always instructive and that it is always pleasing; but commentators rarely, if ever, argued that knowledge of the identity of John Wesley's grandfather, as established from the Athenae Oxoniensis by B.D. (GM, 1792, p. 331), either entertained or improved the reader. It was just a fact, and hence worthwhile. And even when the conventional terms "useful" or "instructive" were used in regard to such facts, it is hard for a modern reader to see just how they would be useful. The Gentleman's Magazine reviewer of Boswell's Journal referred to its "great variety of entertainment and instruction" (GM, 1785, p. 889) and later to the "pleasure and profit" it afforded him (GM, 1785, p. 890), but the nature of the pleasure and profit is not clarified, and one suspects they have become tag words to be applied to whatever the reviewer liked. The clearest statement is in a sober letter from "London" in 1790. Of all parts of the Magazine, he wrote,

I look upon the Obituary to be the most universally useful and entertaining. . . . We all know we must die, and are, therefore, interested in knowing in what manner others acquit themselves in and under a situation in which . . . we are sure to follow them.

(GM, 1790, p. 910)

It is impossible to believe, however, that critics who were not so specific on the meaning of utile referred, like "London," to learning how to die. Perhaps "C.P.," writing to Mr. Urban in 1791, stated a more general feeling when he suggested that "contemplative biography" could serve to inspire "the cautious and indolent" and to temper "the warm and impetuous" (GM, 1791, p. 713). Although the letter is rather general and idealistic, those are practical and worthwhile goals; the question remains whether a biography that is faithful to its subject can also be so composed as to deter its readers from impetuous action. The useful goal stated by K.Z. in answer to criticism of his list of living English poets is more attainable:

That such lists, if well done, are both useful and entertaining, in assisting the recollection, in directing the uninformed to elegant amusement, and the studious to standards of taste, there is no shadow of doubt.

(GM, 1792, p. 1005)

To "assist the recollection" is a rather trivial form of improvement or profit in comparison to the older form, to make the reader a better person by displaying attractive examples of virtue (or ugly examples of vice), which was overt in the lives of Boerhaave and Nicholas Ridenzy in the 1740's Magazine. The concept of biography as a means of moral improvement of the reader is rare in the 1790's. One of its few appearances was in a 1790 review of a biography of the Rev. Micaiah Towgood: "The author seems to write from the heart; and we cannot but

approve of the warmth with which he admires and recommends the virtue which passes under his review. This, certainly, ought ever to be the great object of biographers" (GM, 1790, p. 835). Similarly, in the 1794 Magazine, "Indigator" defended his inclusion of an anecdote unflattering to Mark Akenside first by praising the truth, whatever it is, and then by citing the teaching function:

As long as /description of vice/ disgusts, and deters from criminality, by its distorted deformities and heightened colouring, I trust, for the cause of virtue, that it will not only be tolerated but encouraged.

(GM, 1794, p. 13)

But Indigator was an exception. Only in three others of the fifty-eight biographical articles in the Gentleman's Magazine of the early 1790's did I find any explicit reference to the teaching of virtue and the giving of any kind of pleasure, and most of these allusions were understated. The biographers seemed not so confident of the utile-dulce function of biography as they were in the 1740's. T.C.R., for instance, sent his life of George Maxwell because the Magazine had published many anecdotes that "might conduce to the amusement or instruction of the public." (GM, 1790, p. 201); but he did not state that the Maxwell anecdotes might also so conduce. Ferd. Stanley nodded in that direction in the opening paragraph of the series on heraldic writers, which he said might not be "unentertaining, or totally useless to the curious readers" (GM, 1792, p. 416). The biographer of Sarah Steer opined that an account of a pauper "may be instructive" and not "wholly uninteresting" (GM, 1793, p. 27). Both the double negative and the "may be" construction suggest diffidence on

the part of the author, who seemed to present his piece almost off-handedly. Implicitly, however, the utile impulse was almost as strong as ever. None of the biography subjects of the early 1790's was villainous, and the characters of only two or three were even a bit shady. The unremitting praise of morality and sweetness of character that occurred in many of the others (such as those of Henry Felton and Bernard Gilpin) is evidence that these are men worthy of the reader's imitation. If utile is understood to refer to teaching of virtue by example, many of these biographies have it.

Another change in life-writing, one that Stauffer found typical of the whole eighteenth century, is "democratization."² In the century, the nature of the reading public changed as the ability to read spread lower on the social and economic scales, and this new public found men "interesting in their own rights."³ Sensation and violence were sought by the new public and found in the criminal biographies popular in the first part of the century. Johnson's belief that any man's life is worth recording was implicit in the writing of lives of middle- and lower-class persons (merchants, sailors, grocers, apothecaries, antiquarians, and book-sellers) written even before he was born.⁴

The trend of democratization is evident in the Gentleman's Magazine between the 1740's and the 1790's. The earlier lives were almost always those of men already known to the readers, so that they had news value. If headnotes may be believed, there was considerable interest in figures such as Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe and Dr. Herman Boerhaave. But

no such claim is made for the subjects of the 1790's. The biographer of the 1740's Magazine was usually satisfying readers' curiosity, but in the 1790's he might have to create that curiosity. Biographies were offered to the reader diffidently, almost apologetically. One begins, "Observing you have given anecdotes of many, almost indifferent, characters to the world . . . I flatter myself that the particulars of one but little known . . . will not be unacceptable to you" (GM, 1790, p. 201). And another: "I hope . . . you will permit me to request you to insert in your valuable Miscellany a few anecdotes . . ." (GM, 1793, p. 389). In general, the Magazine in the 1740's was publishing biographies, if not of kings, churchmen, and statesmen, at least of men and women who were unusual in some way or the best in their fields. While such lives were still published in the 1790's, the ordinary man or woman had a much better chance then of being memorialized in the Magazine. All he really needed was a friend who could write.

Changes in the Gentleman's Magazine

Between the 1740's and the 1790's, the nature of the Gentleman's Magazine biographies changed, as did the magazine itself. It had begun as a repository of extracts of articles in London newspapers, the Reader's Digest of its time, boasting nothing original. Its emblem, a hand offering a bouquet of various kinds of flowers, symbolized Edward Cave's intention of selecting and editing the best from other pens--the Gentleman's Magazine would be a journalistic parasite. But "Original Essays" began appearing as early as the mid-1730's, and

readers began writing in; during the 1740's the space given to essays written specifically for the magazine increased, and the space given to essays and extracts from other publications decreased. By the 1790's, the Magazine had become a forum of exchange among readers and editor, and the extracted material had given way to readers' letters, illustrations, original essays, and book reviews.

The biographies changed too in that half-century, most obviously in bulk. From 1738 to 1749, twelve years, the magazine published in its twelve volumes thirty-six biographical articles dealing with nineteen persons; in the five years from 1790 to 1794 (ten volumes), it published fifty-eight biographical articles dealing with ninety-one persons. Judging by the subjects, the authors and editors became more chauvinistic toward the end of the century: in the first period studied in this paper, only eight of the subjects were English; in the second, ninety were English. The range of potential subjects of biography expanded--those of the 1740's shared a total of eight occupations; those of the 1790's had twice as many. That expansion can be demonstrated in another way: biographers of the 1790's used lesser known subjects, for whom they occasionally almost apologized.

Thus did the trend of democratization affect the Gentleman's Magazine. The earlier biographies had been about men and women well known to the public, in whom interest was alive, such as Mrs. Rowe and Peter Burman; in making such assignments or selections, Cave was following public taste. John Nichols, of course, also published biographies of well-known figures, such as Michaelis and Jenyns, but he was as likely to publish a letter with the biography of someone who

otherwise would not be remembered, such as George Maxwell, or a series of letters on heraldic writers, about whom there had not even been an inquiry. Thus Nichols was guiding public taste as well as following it.

The purposes of Magazine biographies changed with the subjects. The biographers of the 1740s, as they satisfied public curiosity, also presented examples of virtue (sometimes rewarded with peaceful deaths) for the benefit of the reader, who might even be exhorted to improve himself through emulation. The utile function of biography was overt. The intention was even political in some cases; despite ironic headnotes, the pieces on British admirals Blake and Drake Johnson wrote in 1742 demonstrated the gulf between their abilities and the abilities of England's contemporary admirals. But authors' purposes in the 1790's were far less explicitly moral. Although some of the subjects were so praised for their good works that one may assume a moral function, many of the article that did offer a reason for their being said only that the public might find them "acceptable" or that the memory of John Doe should not be lost. In the 1740's, biographies were written because a man was famous; in the 1790's there was a consciousness of a biography as the vessel of memory and fame.

In both decades authors were aware of the necessity of keeping or setting the record straight and of the folly of permitting untruths to go unchallenged. The editors of the Gentleman's Magazine, especially, were conscientious about the veracity of their columns, a quality seen not only in corrections and apologies but also in the biographies them-

selves: Johnson announced that he would use no "flying Reports" or "unattested Facts" in his life of Boerhaave, and fifty-one years later ND.OR. wrote that one of his purposes was to straighten the record on Sir William Trumbull. Ascertaining and publication of truth, then, was a consistent goal of the Magazine editors, as it is of any responsible editor. In biographies outside the Magazine, however, a new concept of biography had developed by the end of the century, which was that the biographer should give the reader an idea of the subject, should use details to render the man himself. This was, of course, more often tried than accomplished, more wished for than obtained--but details and facts alone were no longer the whole of a biography. The rendering of a man was not often accomplished in the Magazine biographies, whose authors often continued to use the Gilbert Burnet style of life-writing, the recording only of publicly known or recorded facts.

What might have made the biographical articles come alive--anecdotes, letters, and intimate details--were not used in the Gentleman's Magazine to the extent one might expect by authors who often knew their subjects (and even if they did not, many of the 1790's subjects were within living memory). Only a few letters were included in the articles, and only in the biography of Thomas Cooke were they by the subject. Anecdotes were used, but not so extensively as in non-Magazine biographies, such as the Life of Johnson, judging by public and critical comment, pro and con. Magazine biographers of the 1740's had used even fewer, probably because anecdotes were not known to them; had they been, Johnson, at least, might have used them, in accordance with his feeling that "the incidents which give excellence to biography are

of a volatile and evanescent kind" (Rambler 60).^{*} Personal details were more often used in the 1790's than in the 1740's, but they were never as explicit or intimate as are found in the post-Freud, post-Strachey twentieth-century biographies. Details rarely were more personal than the manner of death or the daily habits of the subject. In neither decade was it common to publish anything detrimental to the memory of the subject (unless, of course, that were the purpose of the article, as in the case of Rienzy in 1746). Intrigues with women or the existence of a natural child were mentioned but not emphasized, and mentioned only rarely. Most of the writers of the 1740's had a point to make about their subjects, and those of the 1790's usually wanted to preserve their memories, and unpleasant detail would not serve either purpose.

The antiquarian impulse that had resulted in Wood's collection of lives of Oxford graduates in the late seventeenth century did not affect the Gentleman's Magazine of the 1740's (where the only "collection" was of executed Scot rebels). But it flourished in the 1790's Magazine under the indefatigable fact-collector Nichols. Two authors submitted to him collections of lives of which the main merit would be "juxtaposition" (Ferd. Stanley and K.Z., who wrote on the heraldic writers and living English poets). The collections were not so much

^{*}Johnson used few anecdotes or personal details in his Magazine biographies, but all of them were written from printed sources; he knew none of his subjects. However, it might be argued that when he might have included much personal detail, in the "Life of Savage," he did not. Also, C.R. Tracy argues that Johnson did not use anecdote effectively in his Lives, in "Johnson and the Art of Anecdote," University of Toronto Quarterly, XV (1945), 86-93.

biographies as annotated names, often without birth or death dates. But the facts were welcomed by Nichols, who often used the Magazine columns to ask his readers to send answers to specific questions for the local histories he compiled and published. The antiquarian spirit also caused publication of a number of epitaphs from English churchyards--some in biographies, some standing alone--and of portraits, neither of which had appeared in the 1740's. Publishing the work of the antiquarians was one way the Magazine of the 1790's satisfied its readers' interest in their fellow men, the same interest that led to publication of anecdotes, letters, and biographies.

No precise reasons for the changes in the Magazine's biographies can be assigned, for hardly any factors remained constant: editors and readership changed, the temper of the times changed, the printing process improved, the genre changed. Certain of those, however, must have had effects on the content of the Magazine, and reasonable suppositions can be made.

Within the Magazine, editorial policy was leaning more and more toward original material even during Cave's editorship (which ended in 1754 with his death). Under David Henry and John Nichols it was converted almost entirely to original essays, letters, articles, illustrations, biographies, reviews, financial and weather reports, and news. The publication of letters and original essays brought forth more of them from readers, who often wanted to write about their friends. Nichols's interest in other publishing ventures led him to use the Magazine both as a sounding board for ideas and as a forum whereby he might secure information for his county histories or antiquarian works

without hunting in old church records. Edward Cave was a follower, who published what he was sure would be liked (either because it had been a success elsewhere or because he knew there was interest), but Nichols made the Magazine create interest as well as follow it. An antiquarian himself, Nichols published the work of other antiquarians and so encouraged still others to submit their work. Non-antiquarians could write on what they did know--the life and character of the old parson who just died--and Nichols would publish that too. Thus the change in editors was probably one of the factors in the increase and change in Magazine biographies.

Outside the Magazine offices, other conditions affected it. The technique of engraving and reproducing portraits made possible the greater number of illustrated articles in the 1790's; true, only five biographies were accompanied by portraits, but in the 1740's none were. The democratization process that influenced the choice of subjects outside the Magazine pages affected it too; the curiosity about famous men that produced biographies of kings, statesmen, and churchmen in the seventeenth century and of famous people in the 1740's Magazine extended by the 1790's to all people. The declining attention to the moral function of biography meant that no didactic form had to be imposed on a life--anyone who had the facts could write one. Those who wrote the Gentleman's Magazine biographies in the 1790's might indicate that their subjects were worthy of imitation, but their main purpose was rather to prove them worthy of remembrance. Impetus was given to biography as a genre by the many notable lives and collections of lives that were published between 1740 and 1790: Biographia Britannia, 1747;

Biographical History, 1769; Mason's Life of Gray, 1775; Boswell's and Mrs. Piozzi's works on Johnson, 1786, for instance. The success of those works inspired more biographies, and the interest in life-writing found a ready outlet in the Gentleman's Magazine.

NOTES

I. Introduction

¹Donald A. Stauffer, The Art of Biography in Eighteenth Century England (Princeton, 1941), p. 552.

II. Survey of Eighteenth Century Biographical Theory and Practice

¹History of the Worthies of England (New York, 1965), I, 100.

²The Letters of Samuel Johnson, ed. R.W. Chapman (Oxford, 1952), II, No. 709. (Hereafter this work will be cited as "Letters.")

³James Boswell, The Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D., ed. George Birkbeck Hill, rev. L.F. Powell (Oxford, 1934-50), III, 392. (Hereafter this work will be cited as "Life" and references will be given in parentheses following the quotation.)

⁴The Lives of Dr. John Donne, Sir Henry Wotton, Mr. Richard Hooker, Mr. George Herbert, and Dr. Robert Sanderson (n.c., n. d.), p. 86.

⁵History of the Worthies of England, I, 12.

⁶Lives, Characters, and an Address to Posterity (London, 1835), p. 7. (Hereafter this work will be cited as "Burnet's Lives.")

⁷Ibid., p. 170.

⁸Brief Lives, Chiefly of Contemporaries, ed. Andrew Clark (Oxford, 1898), I, 11. (Hereafter this work will be cited as "Brief Lives.")

⁹James L. Clifford, "Roger North and the Art of Biography," Restoration and Eighteenth Century Literature (Chicago, 1963), pp. 275-285.

¹⁰The Life of Francis Bacon (London, 1760), p. 1.

¹¹"Memoirs of His Life," Miscellaneous Works of the late Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield (London, 1777), I, 2.

¹²Knox's Essays, No. 94, The British Essayists, ed. James Ferguson (London, 1823), XXXVI, 94.

¹³Freeholder No. 55, The Works of Joseph Addison, ed. Henry G. Bohn (London, 1898), V, 29.

¹⁴Collected Works of Oliver Goldsmith, ed. Arthur Friedman (Oxford, 1966), III, 287.

¹⁵Anthony Tillinghast, "The Moral and Philosophical Basis of Johnson's and Boswell's Idea of Biography," Johnsonian Studies, ed. Magdi Wahba (Cairo, 1962), p. 122.

¹⁶Letters, II, No. 519.3.

¹⁷Autobiography of Mark Twain, ed. Charles Neider (New York, 1959), p. xxviii.

¹⁸Arundell Esdaile, The British Museum Library (London, 1946), pp. 1, 41.

¹⁹Brief Lives, I, 11.

²⁰Letters to Nichols or others requesting information are in The Letters of Samuel Johnson, Nos. 526, 530, 551, 597, 611, 651, 558, 671, 673, 683, 694, 695, 696, 698, and 812; references to his own research at the Bodleian are in Nos. 532 and 533. Textual comparison has shown that Johnson was especially indebted to Nichols for help on the lives of Richard Duke, James Hammond, William Broome, Gilbert West, William King, and Elijah Fenton, according to Edward Hart, "Some New Sources of Johnson's Lives," PMLA, LXV (1950), 1099-1101.

²¹Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century (London, 1812-16), IX, iv. (Hereafter this work will be cited as "Anecdotes.")

²²Brief Lives, I, 11-12.

²³"Life of Addison," The Lives of the English Poets, ed. George Birkbeck Hill (Oxford, 1905), II, 116.

²⁴Quoted by James L. Clifford in "How Much Should a Biographer Tell?" Essays in Eighteenth Century Biography, ed. Philip Daghlion (Bloomington, 1968), p. 87.

²⁵George Carver, Alms for Oblivion (Milwaukee, 1946), p. 145.

²⁶Ibid., p. 146.

²⁷Burnet's Lives, p. 170.

²⁸The Life of Francis Bacon, p. i.

²⁹Brief Lives, I, 11.

³⁰Quoted by Donald A. Stauffer, The Art of Biography in Eighteenth Century England (Princeton, 1941), p. 103. (Hereafter this work will be cited as "The Art of Biography.") Stauffer's source was the flyleaf of a 1749 copy of the Memoirs in the Bodleian, suggesting that, like me, he was unable to find this paragraph in the Gentleman's Magazine of 1749. Perhaps the source listed the wrong magazine, for Mrs. Pilkington did not die until 1750, and the only Magazine reference to her in that year is in "A List of Deaths" under 29 August: "At Dublin, Mrs. Letitia Pilkington" (GM, 1750, p. 320).

³¹Clifford, "How Much Should a Biographer Tell?" p. 85.

³²Ibid., pp. 87-88.

³³B.L. McElderry, Jr., "Boswell in 1790-91: Two Unpublished Comments," Notes and Queries, 207 (1962), 267-68.

³⁴The English Review, VII (1786), quoted by Clifford in "How Much Should a Biographer Tell?" p. 91.

³⁵John Wolcot, The Works of Peter Pindar, Esq. (London, 1794-96), IV, 365.

³⁶Clifford, "How Much Should a Biographer Tell?" pp. 67-69.

³⁷Private Papers of James Boswell, ed. Geoffrey Scott and Frederick A. Pottle (n.c., 1934), VI, 17.

³⁸"An Account of the Life and Writings of Mr. Abraham Cowley," Prose Works of Abraham Cowley, Esq. (London, 1826), xxviii-xxix.

³⁹Quoted in an anonymous Review, Monthly Review, 79 (1788), 394.

⁴⁰Burnet's Lives, p. 6.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 8.

⁴²"Life of Cowley," The Lives of the English Poets, I, i.

⁴³Burnet's Lives, pp. 1-164.

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 115-16.

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 23-25.

- ⁴⁶"The Life of Plutarch," The Works of John Dryden, ed. Sir Walter Scott, rev. George Saintsbury (London, 1892), XVII, 62.
- ⁴⁷Clifford, "Roger North and the Art of Biography," pp. 275, 285.
- ⁴⁸The Life of Sir Thomas Pope (London, 1772), p. [iii], quoted by Stauffer, The Art of Biography, p. 536.
- ⁴⁹"A Poetical and Congratulatory Epistle to James Boswell, Esq.," The Works of Peter Pindar, I, 480.
- ⁵⁰Ibid., 348.
- ⁵¹"The Life of the Author," prefixed to Sir Walter Raleigh's The History of the World (London, 1736), I, vii.
- ⁵²Life of Thomas Pope, quoted in The Art of Biography, p. 536.
- ⁵³Conyers Middleton, The Life of Cicero (London, 1877), p. xi.
- ⁵⁴Carver, p. 143.
- ⁵⁵Ibid., p. 144.
- ⁵⁶"Cursory Thoughts on Biography," in The British Essayists, XXXVI, 183.
- ⁵⁷"On the Character of Doctor Johnson and the Abuse of Biography," The British Essayists, XXXVIII, 72.
- ⁵⁸Letter quoted in The Letters of James Boswell, ed. Chauncey Brewster Tinker (Oxford, 1924), II, 394, n. 1.
- ⁵⁹Carver, pp. 145-46.
- ⁶⁰Letter from Warren Hastings to Boswell, 2 December 1790, quoted in Life of Johnson, IV, 67.
- ⁶¹"On the Character of Doctor Johnson and the Abuse of Biography," The British Essayists, XXXVIII, 73.
- ⁶²John Garraty, The Nature of Biography (New York, 1957), p. 31.
- ⁶³Preface to the first edition (London, 1747), I, viii, quoted by Stauffer in The Art of Biography, p. 250.
- ⁶⁴Monthly Review, 17 (1757), 578, quoted by Stauffer in The Art of Biography, p. 251.

- ⁶⁵Stauffer, English Biography Before 1700, p. 140.
- ⁶⁶"The Life of Plutarch," The Works of John Dryden, XVII, 60.
- ⁶⁷Walton's Lives, p. iv.
- ⁶⁸Quoted by Waldo Dunn in English Biography (New York, 1916), p. 95.
- ⁶⁹British Magazine, XII (1798), 245, quoted in Literary Anecdotes, IX, 209, footnote.
- ⁷⁰Albert H. Smith, "John Nichols: Printer and Publisher," The Library, 5th ser., XVIII (1963), 182.
- ⁷¹Quoted in Literary Anecdotes, III, 300.
- ⁷²Ibid., I, v.
- ⁷³Quoted by Stauffer, The Art of Biography, p. 549.
- ⁷⁴Clifford, "How Much Should a Biographer Tell?" p. 76.
- ⁷⁵Burnet's Lives, p. 4.
- ⁷⁶Ibid., p. 1.
- ⁷⁷Ibid., p. 2.
- ⁷⁸Ibid., p. 1.
- ⁷⁹Ibid., pp. 8-9.
- ⁸⁰"The Life of Plutarch," The Works of John Dryden, XVII, 60.
- ⁸¹Clifford, "How Much Should a Biographer Tell?" p. 72.
- ⁸²Diaries, Prayers, and Annals, in The Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson (New Haven, 1958), I, 294.
- ⁸³"Preface" to Lives, Collected Works of Oliver Goldsmith, V, 226.
- ⁸⁴Miscellaneous Works of the late Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield, I, 3.
- ⁸⁵"How Much Should a Biographer Tell?" p. 79.
- ⁸⁶Houghton W. Taylor, "'Particular Characters': An Early Phase of a Literary Revolution," PMLA, LX (1945), 162.

- 87 "The Life of Plutarch," The Works of John Dryden, XVII, 62-63.
- 88 Clifford, "Roger North and the Art of Biography," pp. 277-78.
- 89 Stauffer, English Biography Before 1700, pp. 257-60.
- 90 Garraty, p. 83.
- 91 Clifford, "Roger North and the Art of Biography," pp. 275-76.
- 92 "On the Character of Doctor Johnson and the Abuse of Biography," The British Essayists, XXXVIII, 73.
- 93 Brief Lives, I, 11.
- 94 "The Life of Plutarch," The Works of John Dryden, XVII, 60.
- 95 Burnet's Lives, pp. 1-2.
- 96 Letters on the Study and Use of History (London, 1752), I, 17.
- 97 No. 6, The Hypochondriack, ed. Margaret Bailey (Stanford, 1928), I, 149.
- 98 "The Life of Nash," Collected Works of Oliver Goldsmith, III, 290.
- 99 The Adventurer, No. 16 (London, 1806), I, 102.
- 100 The Life of Petrarch (nc., n.d.), p. v.
- 101 C.R. Tracy, "Johnson and the Art of Anecdote," University of Toronto Quarterly, XV (1945), 90-95.
- 102 From Classic to Romantic (New York, 1961), p. 64.
- 103 Collected Works of Oliver Goldsmith, III, 290.
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- 105 "Cursory Thoughts on Biography," The British Essayists, XXXVI, 185.
- 106 "Memoirs of His Life," Miscellaneous Works of the late Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield, pp. 2-3.
- 107 Elizabeth Drew, The Enjoyment of Literature (New York, 1935), p. 96;
- 108 The Life of John Sterling, in The Works of Thomas Carlyle (London, 1851), XI, 7.

- 109 Stauffer, Art of Biography, p. 48, footnote.
- 110 Edward Hart, "An Ingenious Editor: John Nichols and the Gentleman's Magazine," Bucknell Review, X (1962), 236-37.
- 111 Burnet's Lives, pp. 4-5.
- 112 "Life of Cowley," Lives of the English Poets, I, 1.
- 113 Freeholder No. 35, The Works of Joseph Addison, V, 30.
- 114 The Life of Cicero, p. ix.
- 115 Quoted by Clifford in "How Much Should a Biographer Tell?" p. 87.
- 116 George Steiner, "Across the River and Into the Trees," The New Yorker, XLV (September 13, 1969), 155.
- 117 Ibid., 156.
- 118 Burnet's Lives, p. 6.
- 119 Monthly Review, XIX (1758), quoted by Stauffer, Art of Biography, p. 537.
- 120 Stauffer, Art of Biography, p. 255.
- 121 Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature (Cambridge, 1940), II, 921-26.
- 122 Quoted in Literary Anecdotes, III, 390.
- 123 Hart, 238.
- 124 The Letters of Horace Walpole, ed. Mrs. Paget Toynbee (Oxford, 1903-05), XII, 302.
- 125 Stauffer, Art of Biography, p. 475.
- 126 Stauffer, Bibliographical Supplement (Princeton, 1941), pp. 285-87, 291-92.
- 127 A Catalogue of the Royal and Noble Authors of England, Scotland and Ireland (London, 1806), I, xvi.
- 128 Stauffer, Art of Biography, p. 249.
- 129 George Sherburn, A Literary History of England, ed. Albert G. Baugh (New York, 1967), p. 791.

- ¹³⁰Stauffer, The Art of Biography, p. 459.
- ¹³¹Luella M. Wright, The Literary Life of the Early Friends 1650-1725 (New York, 1932), p. 110.
- ¹³²Stauffer, The Art of Biography, p. 260.
- ¹³³Ibid., p. 259.
- ¹³⁴Ibid., p. 197.
- ¹³⁵Ibid., p. 200.
- ¹³⁶Ibid., p. 202.
- ¹³⁷Ibid., p. 484.
- ¹³⁸Ibid., p. 208.
- ¹³⁹Ibid., pp. 212, 217.
- ¹⁴⁰Ibid., p. 222.
- ¹⁴¹Ibid., pp. 460-61.
- ¹⁴²Ibid., p. 308.
- ¹⁴³Ibid., p. 262.
- ¹⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 264-65.
- ¹⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 475-77.
- ¹⁴⁶Ibid., p. 478.
- ¹⁴⁷Stauffer, Bibliographical Supplement, p. 261.
- ¹⁴⁸Stauffer, The Art of Biography, p. 485.
- ¹⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 491-92.
- ¹⁵⁰Ibid., p. 495.
- ¹⁵¹Ibid., pp. 502-03.
- ¹⁵²Ibid., p. 330.
- ¹⁵³Ibid., p. 324.

¹⁵⁴Ibid., p. 328.

¹⁵⁵Ibid., p. 504.

III. Background of Magazines and the Gentleman's Magazine

¹Advertisement preceding the June 1731 issue.

²Richmond Bond, "Introduction," Studies in the Early English Periodical (Chapel Hill, 1957), p. 3.

³Walter Graham, English Literary Periodicals (New York, 1930), p. 51.

⁴Dorothy Foster, "The Earliest Precursors of Our Present-Day Monthly Miscellanies," PMLA, XXXII (1917), 29-30.

⁵Ibid., 27-28.

⁶Graham, pp. 61-62.

⁷Bond, p. 18.

⁸Review, III (1706), 391-92.

⁹The Tatler, No. 146, in The British Essayists, III (London, 1804).

¹⁰Bond, pp. 24-25.

¹¹The Daily Courant, 11 March 1702, reproduced in Stanley Morison, The English Newspaper (Cambridge, 1932), opposite p. 74.

¹²Bond, p. 31.

¹³Ibid., pp. 33-37.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 21.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 15.

¹⁶Quoted in Literary Anecdotes, V, 6.

¹⁷Carlson, p. 66.

¹⁸Carlson, p. 3.

¹⁹Literary Anecdotes, V, 43.

²⁰Samuel Johnson, "The Life of Cave," Gentleman's Magazine, XXIV (1754), 56.

- ²¹Johnson, 56, and Carlson, pp. 5-7.
- ²²Johnson, 56, and Carlson, p. 8.
- ²³"The Autobiography of Sylvanus Urban," Gentleman's Magazine, XX, new series (July 1856), 535.
- ²⁴Carlson, pp. 63-64.
- ²⁵Ibid., p. 63.
- ²⁶Literary Anecdotes, V, 54.
- ²⁷Carlson, pp. 89-94.
- ²⁸"Autobiography," 133.
- ²⁹Literary Anecdotes, V, 50.
- ³⁰Johnsonian Miscellanies (Oxford, 1897), II, 88.
- ³¹Letters, I, No. 87.
- ³²Life of Johnson, IV, 409.
- ³³Ibid., III, 322.
- ³⁴Ibid., IV, 409.
- ³⁵Albert H. Smith, "John Nichols's History and Antiquities of Dorset," The Library, 5th ser., XV (1960), 83.
- ³⁶Albert H. Smith, "John Nichols, Printer and Publisher," The Library, 5th ser., XVIII (1963), 170-71.
- ³⁷Smith, "John Nichols, Printer and Publisher," 173.
- ³⁸Ibid., 175.
- ³⁹Gentleman's Magazine, III (1778), 409-12, 449-56, 513-16, 569-72.
- ⁴⁰Edward Hart, "An Ingenious Editor: John Nichols and the Gentleman's Magazine," Bucknell Review, X (1962), 232-233.
- ⁴¹Smith, "John Nichols, Printer and Publisher," 177.
- ⁴²Literary Anecdotes, VI, 630-37.

- ⁴³Ibid., I, 2.
- ⁴⁴Ibid., II, 550-54.
- ⁴⁵Ibid., III, iii-iv.
- ⁴⁶Ibid., VI, 628.
- ⁴⁷Gentleman's Magazine, XLVIII (1778), 521-23.
- ⁴⁸Hart, "An Ingenious Editor," 237.
- ⁴⁹Horace Walpole, The Letters of Horace Walpole, ed. Mrs. Paget Toynbee (Oxford, 1904), XII, 302.
- ⁵⁰Hart, "An Ingenious Editor," 234.
- ⁵¹Edward Hart, "Some New Sources of Johnson's Lives," PMLA, LXV (December 1950), 1088.
- ⁵²Literary Anecdotes, II, 550.
- ⁵³Letters, II, No. 810. This letter was also published in the Gentleman's Magazine, 1784, p. 1893; in Literary Anecdotes, II, 550; and in the Life of Johnson, IV, 161.
- ⁵⁴Literary Anecdotes, II, 554.
- ⁵⁵Ibid., 555.
- ⁵⁶Life of Johnson, IV, 408-10.
- ⁵⁷Letters, II, No. 249.
- ⁵⁸James Boswell, Private Papers of James Boswell, XVI, 96.
- ⁵⁹Ibid., XVIII, 20.
- ⁶⁰Letters of James Boswell, II, No. 296.
- ⁶¹Johnsonian Miscellanies, II, 221.

IV. Survey of Magazine Biographies, 1731-49

¹Carlson does not consider these, the Charles XII extracts, or the Cochran biography real biographies; he calls Johnson's "Life of Father Paul Sarpi" the first biography in the Gentleman's Magazine, in The First Magazine, p. 128.

²An extract is in Gentleman's Magazine, 1732, pp. 715-16; comments from the Daily Courant, pp. 666 and 703; and from the Craftsman, p. 701.

³Carlson, p. 128.

⁴English Biography Before 1700, pp. 271-273.

⁵Jacob Leed, Samuel Johnson and the Gentleman's Magazine: Studies in the Canon of His Miscellaneous Prose Writings, 1738-1744, unpublished dissertation (University of Chicago, 1958), p. 44, note 1.

⁶Letters, I, No. 4.

⁷James L. Clifford, Young Sam. Johnson (New York, 1955), p. 183.

⁸Life, I, 135-36, and Clifford, Young Sam Johnson, p. 198.

⁹Letters, I, No. 9.

¹⁰Leed, p. 44, note 1.

¹¹E.L. McAdam, Jr., "Johnson's Lives of Sarpi, Blake, and Drake," PMLA, LVIII (1943), 474-75.

¹²Young Sam Johnson, p. 251.

¹³British Museum Catalogue.

¹⁴Young Sam Johnson, p. 252.

¹⁵Samuel Johnson in Grub Street (Providence, 1957), pp. 19-20.

¹⁶Fontenelle, ed. Émile Faguet (Paris, 1912), pp. 227-30.

¹⁷Lives of the English Poets, II, 79.

¹⁸Leed, p. 31.

¹⁹Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature, II, 681.

²⁰Bloom, p. 265.

²¹Leed, pp. 43, 45, and 48.

²²Ibid., p. 38.

²³Jean Baptiste Du Halde, The General History of China, trans. from the French by Richard Brookes (London, 1741), III, 303-320.

²⁴Ibid., p. 299.

²⁵Leed, p. 7.

²⁶Lawrence McHenry, "Samuel Johnson's 'The Life of Dr. Sydenham,'" Medical History, VIII (1964), 186.

²⁷Ibid., 185.

²⁸British Museum Catalogue.

²⁹Encyclopædia Britannica, 1966, XIX, 326; H.B. Cotterill, Italy from Dante to Tasso (New York, 1919), p. 33; and Luigi Salvatorelli, A Concise History of Italy (New York, 1939), p. 294.

³⁰Emile Faguet, Fontenelle, p. 310.

³¹Carlson, p. 132.

V. Survey of Magazine Biographies, 1790-94

¹Literary Anecdotes, IX, iv.

²Dictionary of National Biography.

³The Art of Biography, p. 458.

VI. Between the 1740's and the 1790's: Summary of Changes

¹Advertisement to Private Thoughts, quoted by Stauffer, The Art of Biography, p. 497.

²The Art of Biography, p. 475.

³Ibid., p. 478.

⁴Ibid., p. 481.

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