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Edited by James T. Boulton

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DANIEL DEFOE

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OF
DANIEL
DEFOE

Edited by
JAMES T. BOULTON
*Professor of English Studies, University of
Birmingham*

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Preface

Paradoxically Defoe is diminished by his popularity as the author of a handful of important novels, since the remainder of his voluminous writings suffer undue neglect. Fully to understand him he should be taken whole but his authorship of over 500 publications—the *Review*, which normally appeared thrice weekly for over nine years, counting as one—renders this feat wellnigh impossible. The purpose of this selection, then, is to enable the reader to make or renew the acquaintance of Defoe on some of his favourite topics such as trade and politics, manners and morality, in poetry as well as in prose, and in works like *A True Relation of the Apparition of One Mrs Veal* and *Memoirs of a Cavalier* which are characteristic blends of fact and fiction. Equipped with the insights possible from this sample, the reader—it is hoped—will return to the major novels with a keener appreciation of their distinctive quality and a livelier sense of their author and his defiant adherence to ‘Reason’, ‘Nature’, and ‘Experience’.

Both as man and novelist Defoe has received a great deal of critical attention over the last 40 years. His language and rhetoric have, however, been relatively disregarded; for this reason the introductory essay is devoted to these aspects of his achievement. For biographical and other critical data the reader should consult the list of books given overleaf.

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Acknowledgment

Thanks are due to Professor George R. Healey, editor of *The Letters of Daniel Defoe*, and the Clarendon Press, for permission to reproduce the text of six letters. Acknowledgment is also due to the Trustees of the British Museum for permission to reproduce the facsimile of Defoe's handwriting on page XII.

The editor would also like to express his appreciation of the assistance so generously given during the preparation of this volume by Professor G. Aylmer, Mr W. R. Chalmers, Mr G. Eltringham, Mr P. Russell-Gebbett, Professor J. Sutherland, and the Librarian and his staff of Nottingham University Library. A special word of gratitude is due to Professor Kinsley for his very helpful reading of the introductory essay in draft form, and to the late Professor Vivian de Sola Pinto, for his wise counsel on this as well as on many other previous occasions. Acknowledgment must, finally, be made of the immeasurable benefit derived from the authors and editors of the works listed below:

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| Healey, G. H. (ed.) | <i>The Meditations of Daniel Defoe</i> (Cummington, Mass.), 1946
<i>The Letters of Daniel Defoe</i> (Oxford), 1955 |
| Lee, W. | <i>Daniel Defoe: Life and Recently Discovered Writings</i> , 1869 |
| Novak, M. | <i>Economics and the Fiction of Daniel Defoe</i> (Berkeley), 1962
<i>Defoe and the Nature of Man</i> (Oxford), 1963 |
| Moore, J. R. | <i>Daniel Defoe</i> (Chicago), 1958
<i>A Checklist of the Writings of Defoe</i> (Indiana), 1960 |
| Morley, H. | <i>The Earlier Life and the Chief Earlier Works of Daniel Defoe</i> , 1889 |
| Payne, W. L. | <i>The Best of Defoe's Review</i> (Columbia), 1951 |

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|----------------|--|
| Secord, A. W. | <i>Studies in the Narrative Method of Daniel Defoe</i>
(Urbana), 1924 |
| (ed.) | <i>A Review of the Affairs of France</i> (Facsimile Text
Society, New York), 22 vols., 1938 |
| | <i>Robert Drury's Journal and Other Studies</i>
(Urbana), 1961 |
| Sutherland, J. | <i>Defoe</i> , 1937 |
| Watt, I. | <i>The Rise of the Novel</i> , 1957 |

Note on the Text

Except where otherwise indicated all texts are based on the first editions. Other than the correction of obvious errors and the expansion, where possible, of Defoe's abbreviations and contractions, no textual changes have been introduced.

For references to Defoe's novels the edition of *The Works of Defoe* by G. H. Maynadier (Boston, 1903) has been used.

The place of publication of all works quoted is London unless stated otherwise.

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Defoe's Life: A Chronological Survey

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 1660 | Daniel Foe born in London; son of a tallow-chandler |
| c. 1671–9 | Pupil of Rev. James Fisher (Dorking), and then at Rev. Charles Morton's Dissenting Academy (Newington Green) in preparation for the Presbyterian ministry |
| c. 1682 | Established as a merchant in the hosiery trade |
| 1684 | Married Mary Tuffley; received a dowry of £3,700 |
| 1685 | Brief involvement as a supporter of Monmouth's rebellion |
| 1685–92 | Merchant dealing in wine, tobacco and other merchandise; travelled extensively in Europe (probably in France, Holland, Italy and Spain) |
| 1688 | Published first extant (though possibly his third) political tract: <i>A Letter to a Dissenter from his Friend at the Hague</i> |
| 1692 | Bankrupt for £17,000; agreed to pay his creditors in full |
| 1697–1701 | Agent for William III in England and Scotland |
| 1701 | <i>The True-Born Englishman</i> |
| 1702 | <i>The Shortest-Way with the Dissenters</i> |
| 1703 | Arrested on account of <i>The Shortest-Way</i> (January); he stood in the pillory (29–31 July). His imprisonment led to the failure of his brick and tile factory. Robert Harley (the moderate Tory Minister) arranged for Defoe's release |
| 1703–14 | Government agent under Harley, serving as pamphleteer, reporter and adviser; he travelled widely in England and Scotland, and actively promoted the Anglo-Scottish Union |

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CHRONOLOGICAL SURVEY

- 1704–14 Wrote the *Review*
- 1708 Fall of Harley; succeeded by Sidney, Earl of Godolphin, whom Defoe served
- 1710 Resumed service to Harley who was again leading the Ministry
- 1713 Twice arrested, for debt and for publishing ironical pamphlets in support of the Hanoverian succession; released on both occasions through governmental influence.
- 1714 Accession of George I; fall of the Tory Ministry. Defoe served under Whig Ministries until 1730
- 1715 *An Appeal to Honour and Justice*, an autobiographical justification of Defoe's previous conduct under Tory Ministries
- 1719 *Robinson Crusoe*
- 1722 *Moll Flanders*
- 1722 *A Journal of the Plague Year*
- 1722 *Colonel Jack*
- 1724 *Roxana*
- 1724 *A Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain*
- 1731 Last publication: *An Effectual Scheme for the Immediate Preventing of Street Robberies*
- 1731 Defoe died (24 April)

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Pardon me ^{My} to believ yo Lordships favour to me has at least. So
 much share in y^e conduct of it, if not in y^e substance, that I am perswaded I can
 not be more oblig'd to y^e Donor, than to your Lordships singular goodness,
 which tho' I can not deserve, yet I shall always sensibly reflect on, & improve,
 and should be doubly blest, if Providence would put it into my hands, to
 render yo Lordship some service, suited to y^e service I have of yo Lordships extra-
 ordinary favour.

And yet I am yo Lordships most Humble Petitioner, that if I might
 may know the Originals of this Munificence, sure that I am that I can
 suppose me to merit so much regard, must believ me Witt to be trust'd
 wth the knowledge of my benefactor, and incapable of discovering any
 part of it, that should be conceal'd. But I submit this to yo Lordship and
 the Person concern'd.

I frankly acknowledge to yo Lordship, and to y^e Unknown Rewarders
 of my Mean Performances, that I do not see y^e Merit they are thus pleas'd
 to Value, the most I wish and wish I hope I can answer for is, that I shall
 allways prefer the Homely Despicable Title of an Honest Man, if this
 will recommend me, yo Lordship shall never be assur'd of giving me
 that Title, nor my Enemies be able by Fear Or Reward to make me other
 wize.

In all other things I justly apprehend yo Lordships Disappointment
 and that yo Lordship will find little Pleas^{ur} in me wth yo^e Notice.

I am
 May it Please yo Lordship
 yo Lordships Highly Oblig'd
 Most Humble and Most Obedient
 Servant
 Daniel Defoe

Facsimile of Defoe's handwriting