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Oliver Goldsmith , Edited by James Watt  
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THE CAMBRIDGE EDITION OF THE  
COLLECTED WORKS OF  
OLIVER GOLDSMITH

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COLLECTED WORKS OF  
OLIVER GOLDSMITH

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OLIVER GOLDSMITH

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The Citizen of the World

*Edited by*  
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[More Information](#)

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*For*  
ALISON AND FRASER

CONTENTS

*List of Illustrations*   page [x]  
*General Editors' Preface*   [xi]  
*Acknowledgements*   [xiii]  
*Chronology*   [xv]  
*List of Abbreviations*   [xxiii]  
*Introduction*   [xxv]

The Citizen of the World   [1]

*Textual Introduction*   [683]  
*Copy Text and Bibliographic Descriptions of Lifetime Editions*   [692]  
*Emendations to the Copy Text*   [697]  
*Historical Collation*   [698]  
*Line-End Hyphenation*   [872]  
*Bibliography*   [880]  
*Index*   [901]

## ILLUSTRATIONS

- 1 *The Public Ledger, or, Daily Register of Commerce and Intelligence*, 24 January 1760. Front page. Microform, *Early English Newspapers*. Reproduced by kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library.
- 2 Oliver Goldsmith, *The Citizen of the World* (volume one), 1762. Title-page. Reproduced under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC-BY) licence with the permission of the National Library of Scotland.
- 3 Oliver Goldsmith, *The Citizen of the World* (volume two), 1762. Title-page. Reproduced under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC-BY) licence with the permission of the National Library of Scotland.

## GENERAL EDITORS' PREFACE

*The Cambridge Edition of the Collected Works of Oliver Goldsmith* is the first scholarly edition of Goldsmith's writings in sixty years. It succeeds the fine editorial work by Arthur Friedman published by Oxford University Press in 1966. Friedman's five-volume edition was the most comprehensive to that point, supplanting those of James Prior (1837), Peter Cunningham (1854), and J. W. M. Gibbs (1885–6) and, as a collection that moves across all of the genres in which Goldsmith wrote, was the most advanced in its editorial apparatus. Drawing upon the work of several bibliographical scholars between the 1820s and 1960s, Friedman gave as firm an account of the canon of tendentiously attributed periodical and other writings as was then possible, excluding pieces which had not been satisfactorily proven to be the work of Goldsmith. However, the oeuvre has not been the subject of extensive editorial scholarship and criticism since the 1960s when, along with Friedman's *Collected Works*, Goldsmith's poems – anthologized with those of Thomas Gray and William Collins – were edited and extensively annotated by Roger Lonsdale (1969). The first decades of the twenty-first century have seen old attributions questioned, new attributions made, and a steady stream of critical commentary on his elusive politics. Much Goldsmith criticism has focused on the question of whether he should be understood as a sentimentalist or as a satirist, as the oeuvre as a whole exists along a seam between the satirical tenor of his Augustan predecessors and the emerging sensibility of his literary milieu and an expanding middle-class audience. More broadly, as fresh critical and generic emphases have been applied to eighteenth-century writing, Goldsmith has come to be understood as a writer who drew on both Irish and British cultural identities. This edition presents Goldsmith's work in these new and rich contexts.

This eight-volume edition builds on its predecessors in its inclusion of a longer critical and bio-bibliographical heritage, including



## GENERAL EDITORS' PREFACE

succinct accounts of the evolution of debates around Goldsmith's legacy generally and around individual works. Detailed introductions give an account of the wealth of biographical, critical, and bibliographical study pertinent to Goldsmith, with particular attention to the emphases which have arisen in recent studies, as part of expanded treatments of the critical heritage.

The edition's principle is to choose a best text as copy text and introduce emendations where they are clearly warranted. From volume to volume, best texts are often the last texts in which Goldsmith is known to have had a hand. In cases where a text other than the last is given, a specific rationale is provided. Volumes will provide compositional and textual histories.

The edition offers comprehensive annotation that will both satisfy the specialist scholar and make Goldsmith accessible to the advanced undergraduate reader: useful definitions for archaisms are given in the annotations to assist the non-specialist; Goldsmith's references to other works within and outside the oeuvre are also fully annotated. Each volume illuminates Goldsmith's debt to his antecedents and the significance of his influence on later literary culture.

No edition of Goldsmith could claim to be definitive or complete. A full 'Collected Works' in the literal sense is in the case of Goldsmith something of an impossibility: the histories, national and natural, are too voluminous to present in their entirety, and are often mixtures of synthesis, compilation, and translation; the canon of periodical writing is itself also in near perpetual flux. Previous editors have offered only the introductions Goldsmith wrote to important texts such as his histories of England, Greece, and Rome; and *An History of the Earth, and Animated Nature*. This edition, in recognition of the growing field of eighteenth-century historiography and natural sciences writing, offers significant extracts of these texts in order that scholars will be able to consider Goldsmith 'in the round', as a writer who engaged fully with a multitude of the intellectual concerns circulating in Enlightenment Ireland, Britain, and continental Europe.

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[More Information](#)

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

work on the following was done during the irregular hours that came with lockdowns and home schooling, but for all the general grimness of the period, the experience of putting this edition together was for the most part very enjoyable – thanks above all to Alison and Fraser for their love, support, and encouragement throughout.

## CHRONOLOGY

**1718** May: Anglican minister the Reverend Charles Goldsmith (c.1693–1747) marries Ann Jones (c.1697–1770), daughter of the Reverend Oliver Jones, after whom Goldsmith is named.

**1718** October: death of Thomas Parnell. November: Voltaire, *Cedipe*. December: War of the Quadruple Alliance begins.

**1719** March: Declaratory Act, confirming Westminster's powers in Ireland, passed. April: Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*. June: death of Joseph Addison.

**1720** January: Spain joins Quadruple Alliance and war with Spain ends. October–November: South Sea Company share prices collapse, bringing financial ruin to many investors.

**1721** April: Walpole administration.

**1722** January: Defoe, *Moll Flanders*. March: Defoe, *A Journal of the Plague Year*. May: Atterbury Jacobite plot uncovered. Leading Jacobites arrested. July: William Wood granted patent to mint copper coins in Ireland.

**1724** March: first of Jonathan Swift's *Drapier's Letters* responds to Wood's halfpence. April: John Carteret becomes Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

**1725** March: Alexander Pope's edition of Shakespeare. April: Pope's translation of Homer's *Odyssey*. September: Wood's halfpence cancelled.

**1726** October: Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*.

**1727** February: conflict breaks out between Britain and Spain. June: death of George I, accession of George II.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1728** Birth on 10 November of Oliver Goldsmith, probably at Pallas, Co. Westmeath, Ireland, fifth child and second son of Charles and Ann Goldsmith. Charles is appointed curate in Kilkenny West shortly after Oliver's birth. The Goldsmiths subsequently move to Lissoy, to the southeast of Pallas, along the Longford/Westmeath border.
- 1735–45** Goldsmith is educated through various diocesan schools in the Longford/Roscommon region.
- 1728** January: John Gay, *The Beggar's Opera*. May: Pope, *Dunciad*. October: Samuel Johnson enrolls in Pembroke College, Oxford.
- 1729** April: Pope, *Dunciad Variorum*. October: Swift, *A Modest Proposal*.
- 1731** January: Edward Cave's *Gentleman's Magazine* begins.
- 1732** December: death of Gay.
- 1733** February: Pope, *Essay on Man*, 4 epistles–1734. May: Eliza Haywood, *The Opera of Operas*.
- 1734** November: George Faulkner's Dublin edition of Swift's *Works*, 4 vols.–1735.
- 1736** July: anti-Irish riots in East London.
- 1738** May: Johnson, *London: A Poem*.
- 1739** October: outbreak of War of Jenkins's Ear between Britain and Spain.
- 1740** November: Samuel Richardson, *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*. December: War of the Austrian Succession begins.
- 1741** April: Henry Fielding, *Shamela*. October: David Garrick's stage debut at Goodman's Fields Theatre as Richard III.
- 1742** January: William Collins, *Persian Eclogues*. February: Carteret administration; Fielding, *Joseph Andrews*. March: Pope, *The New Dunciad*. June: Edward Young, *The Complaint, or, Night Thoughts*, 9 parts–1745.
- 1744** February: Johnson, *Life of Savage*. March: France declares war on Britain. April: Haywood's *Female Spectator* begins. May: death of Pope; Sarah Fielding, *The Adventures of David Simple*. November: Pelham administration.

## CHRONOLOGY

**1745–50** Goldsmith studies at Trinity College Dublin. It is a largely unhappy experience but he graduates with a BA in February 1750.

**1750–2** Goldsmith works as a tutor in Roscommon. Various efforts are made to emigrate to America and to London but with no success.

**1752–3** Goldsmith reads medicine at the University of Edinburgh with financial assistance from relatives, including brother-in-law Daniel Hodson and uncle Thomas Contarine.

**1745** August: Jacobite Rebellion. October: death of Swift.

**1746** February: Pelham administration resigns but quickly reforms. April: defeat of Jacobites at Culloden.

**1747** April: Garrick and James Lacy acquire ownership of the patent for Drury Lane Theatre Royal; Thomas Warton, *The Pleasures of Melancholy*. November: Richardson, *Clarissa*, 7 vols.—1748.

**1748** January: Tobias Smollett, *Roderick Random*; Robert Dodsley, *A Collection of Poems*. February: Laetitia Pilkington, *Memoirs*, 3 vols.—1754. April: Mary Leapor, *Poems upon Several Occasions*, 2 vols.—1751. November: Montesquieu, *L'Esprit des lois*.

**1749** January: Johnson, *The Vanity of Human Wishes*. February: Fielding, *Tom Jones*. May: Ralph Griffiths's *Monthly Review* begins. September: Buffon, *Histoire naturelle*, 36 vols.—1804.

**1750** March: Johnson, *Rambler* begins. May: adoption of reformed Gregorian Calendar.

**1751** February: Thomas Gray, *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*; Smollett, *Peregrine Pickle*. June: Denis Diderot commences the *Encyclopédie*. October: Haywood, *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*.

**1752** March: Charlotte Lennox, *The Female Quixote*.

**1753** February: Smollett, *Ferdinand Count Fathom*.

December: William Hogarth, *The Analysis of Beauty*.

## CHRONOLOGY

**1754–5** Goldsmith continues his medical studies at Leiden University in Holland.

**1755–6** Goldsmith journeys around Europe, largely on foot, debating and playing music to support himself. He visits Flanders, France, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy.

**1756–7** Goldsmith arrives in London in February 1756. He works at various jobs: as an assistant to an apothecary, as a physician in Southwark, and as an usher at a boy's school in Peckham in Surrey. He may also have been a proofreader in Samuel Richardson's printing-house. In April 1757 he begins work at the *Monthly Review*, edited by Ralph Griffiths.

**1758** Goldsmith plans to travel to Coromandel, on the southeastern coast of the Indian subcontinent, as a physician with the East India Company, but his application to work as a hospital mate is unsuccessful.

**1759** He begins to contribute to Tobias Smollett's *Critical Review* in January. Meets Reverend Thomas Percy in February. Following the publication of *An Enquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe* in April, Goldsmith's literary acquaintance comes to include Edmund Burke and Samuel

**1754** March: Newcastle administration. November: David Hume, *History of England*, 6 vols.–1762.

**1755** April: Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language*.

**1756** March: Smollett's *Critical Review* begins. April–May: Seven Years' War with France begins. May: Edmund Burke, *Vindication of Natural Society*. June: loss of Minorca. November: Pitt-Devonshire administration. December: Voltaire, *Essai sur les mœurs et l'esprit des nations*.

**1757** April: Burke, *Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*; Smollett, *A Complete History of England*, 9 vols.–1765. May: Horace Walpole, *Letter from Xo Ho*. July: Pitt-Newcastle administration.

**1758** April: Johnson, *Idler* begins.

**1759** January: Voltaire, *Candide*. April: Johnson, *Rasselas*. May: Young, *Conjectures on Original Composition*. December: Laurence Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*, 9 vols.–1767; Arthur Murphy, *The Orphan of China*.

## CHRONOLOGY

Johnson. However, the work is savagely reviewed by William Kenrick, the first attack of a long-running feud. Goldsmith seeks a number of Irish subscriptions for the *Enquiry*. He writes *The Bee*, his own periodical, in October and November.

**1759–61** Goldsmith writes essays for a number of periodicals: the *Busy Body*, the *Weekly Magazine*, the *Royal Magazine*, and the *Lady's Magazine*. In January 1760 he begins his 'Chinese Letters' series in the *Public Ledger*, published by John Newbery. The series continues until August 1761.

**1762** Goldsmith contributes essays to *Lloyd's Evening Post* in the first half of the year. His 'Chinese Letters' are published as *The Citizen of the World* in May. Newbery contracts him to write what would become *A Survey of Experimental Philosophy*, eventually published two years after the author's death. This work signals a marked shift in his writing towards professional work in history and popular science. Between May and November Newbery publishes *Plutarch's Lives*, which Goldsmith had completed with translator Joseph Collyer, and in October *The Life of Richard Nash*. After some effort by Johnson, Newbery also acquires the rights for Goldsmith's novel *The Vicar of Wakefield*: he promptly resells a third share of the rights to Benjamin Collins and another third to William Strahan.

**1760** January: Smollett, *British Magazine* begins, featuring first instalment of his *Launcelot Greaves*. June: Macpherson, *Fragments of Ancient Poetry*. October: death of George II, accession of George III.

**1761** March: Charles Churchill, *Rosciad*. July: death of Richardson. October: Bute-Newcastle administration.

**1762** February: Frances Sheridan, *Memoirs of Miss Sidney Bidulph*. June: John Wilkes's *North Briton*, in which the Bute administration is attacked, begins. October: Sarah Scott, *Millenium Hall* (in which Goldsmith may have had an editorial hand).

**1763** February: Treaty of Paris ends the Seven Years' War. April: Grenville administration; arrest warrant issued for Wilkes for attacking the king in *North Briton*. May: Mary Wortley Montagu, *Letters ... written during her travels in Europe, Asia, and Africa*. December: Wilkes goes into exile following publication of *An Essay on Woman*.



## CHRONOLOGY

**1764** In February Goldsmith becomes a founding member, with Samuel Johnson, David Garrick, Edmund Burke, Christopher Nugent, and others, of The Club. His *History of England, in a Series of Letters from a Nobleman to his Son* is published in June. Probably in the summer he composes an oratorio libretto titled *The Captivity*. Newbery publishes his major poem *The Traveller, or a Prospect of Society*, dedicated to his brother Henry, in December: it is the first work published under Goldsmith's own name.

**1765** Revised editions of *The Traveller* appear from March to August, as does, in June, a collection of Goldsmith's *Essays*. An early version of his ballad *Edwin and Angelina* is privately printed for the Duchess of Northumberland.

**1766** *The Vicar of Wakefield* is published in March. Goldsmith develops friendship with the Horneck sisters, Catherine and Mary, through Joshua Reynolds. A second edition of Goldsmith's *Essays* and his anthology *Poems for Young Ladies* appear, in April and December respectively.

**1767** Goldsmith's comedy, *The Good Natur'd Man*, is submitted to George Colman after David Garrick is equivocal about the play's prospects. Goldsmith rebuts an accusation of plagiarism made by Kenrick

**1764** May: James Grainger, *The Sugar-Cane*. July: Voltaire, *Dictionnaire philosophique*. December: Horace Walpole, *Castle of Otranto*.

**1765** January: Elizabeth Griffith, *The Platonic Wife*. February: Thomas Percy, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*. March: American Stamp Act. April: *The History of Goody Two Shoes* (in which Goldsmith may have had a hand). July: first Rockingham administration. October: Johnson's edition of Shakespeare.

**1766** February: George Colman and Garrick, *The Clandestine Marriage*. March: Repeal of Stamp Act. May: Smollett, *Travels through France and Italy*. July: Chatham administration.

**1767**: June: duties imposed on import of tea into America. July: Sheridan, *The History of Nourjahad*; George Colman, Thomas Harris, John Rutherford, and William Powell acquire the patent to Covent Garden Theatre Royal.

## CHRONOLOGY

in a letter to *St. James's Chronicle*.  
 Goldsmith's anthology, *The Beauties  
 of English Poesy*, appears in April.

**1768** *The Good Natur'd Man* is first  
 performed at Covent Garden on  
 29 January. Johnson supplies the  
 prologue. William Griffin publishes  
 the play in February. Goldsmith's  
 brother Henry dies in May.

**1769** William Griffin contracts  
 Goldsmith to write a natural history  
 in February. His *Roman History* is  
 published in May. Thomas Davies  
 contracts Goldsmith to write a history  
 of England in June. He is appointed  
 Professor of Ancient History at the  
 Royal Academy in December.

**1770** *The Deserted Village* is  
 published in May. It is dedicated  
 to Sir Joshua Reynolds. William  
 Hodson, son of Daniel, arrives in  
 London. Goldsmith tries to find  
 his nephew a place. Goldsmith  
 spends six weeks in France with the  
 Horneck sisters and their mother.  
 Goldsmith's life of the Irish poet  
 Thomas Parnell is published in July,  
 his life of Bolingbroke in December.

**1771** Goldsmith's *History of England,  
 from the Earliest Times to the Death  
 of George II* is published in August.  
 He begins to write *She Stoops to  
 Conquer*.

**1772** Goldsmith's *Threnodia  
 Augustalis*, in memory of the  
 Princess Dowager, Augusta, is  
 performed in February.

**1768** January: Hugh Kelly, *False  
 Delicacy*. February: Sterne, *A  
 Sentimental Journey through France and  
 Italy*. March: Wilkes elected MP for  
 Middlesex. May: Wilkes imprisoned for  
 attacking the King in print. October:  
 Grafton administration. December:  
 death of Newbery.

**1769** January: the letters of Junius  
 (–1772), possibly by Sir Philip Francis,  
 begin in the *Public Advertiser*. February:  
 Wilkes expelled from Commons;  
 Lennox, *The Sister*. July: Wilkes  
 reinstated.

**1770** January: North administration;  
 Kelly, *Word to the Wise*. March: Boston  
 Massacre. April: Burke, *Thoughts on the  
 Causes of the Present Discontents*.

**1771** January: Richard Cumberland, *The  
 West Indian*. April: Henry Mackenzie,  
*The Man of Feeling*. June: Smollett,  
*Humphry Clinker*. September: death of  
 Smollett.

**1772** May: William Chambers, *A  
 Dissertation on Oriental Gardening*.  
 June: Samuel Foote, *The Nabob*. July:  
 William Kenrick, *Love in the Suds*.

## CHRONOLOGY

**1773** *She Stoops to Conquer* is performed at Covent Garden on 15 March with David Garrick providing the prologue and John Quick as Tony Lumpkin. Later the same month he assaults Thomas Evans in response to an ad hominem attack in the *London Packet*. The success of *She Stoops* leads Goldsmith to write *The Grumbler*, a one-act comic afterpiece, for Quick's benefit night in May.

**1774** Goldsmith dies on 4 April having suffered renal infection and fever. His poem *Retaliation*, a satiric riposte to some teasing he received at The Club earlier that year, is published a fortnight after his death. John Nourse publishes Goldsmith's *History of the Earth, and Animated Nature* in July. His *Grecian History* is published shortly after. The second edition of his *History of England* is announced in December.

**1776** *The Haunch of Venison: A Poetical Epistle to Lord Clare* is published in May. Goldsmith's *Survey of Experimental Philosophy*, a two-volume compendium of science, is published in July. His friends arrange for a monument by Joseph Nollekens to be erected in his memory at Westminster Abbey.

**1773** September: Phillis Wheatley, *Poems on Various Subjects*. December: Boston Tea Party protest against importation of East India Company tea into America.

**1774** September: First Continental Congress in Philadelphia agrees to defy British coercion of America. August: George III proclaims rebellion in America.

**1775** January: Johnson, *Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland*; Richard Brinsley Sheridan, *The Rivals*. May: Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia names George Washington commander-in-chief of American forces.

**1776** January: Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*. February: Edward Gibbon, *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, 6 vols. –1788; Hannah Cowley, *The Runaway*. March: Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*. July: American Declaration of Independence.

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>The Bee</i>	<i>The Bee: Being Essays on the Most Interesting Subjects</i> (London: J. Wilkie, 1759)
Bowen, <i>Geography</i>	Emanuel Bowen, <i>A Complete System of Geography [...]</i> , 2 vols. (London, 1747)
Clarke, <i>Brothers of the Quill</i>	Norma Clarke, <i>Brothers of the Quill: Oliver Goldsmith in Grub Street</i> (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016)
<i>Critical Heritage</i>	<i>Goldsmith: The Critical Heritage</i> , ed. G. S. Rousseau (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974)
d'Argens, <i>Chinese Letters</i>	Jean-Baptiste de Boyer, Marquis d'Argens, <i>Chinese Letters. Being a Philosophical, Historical, and Critical Correspondence between a Chinese Traveller at Paris, and his Countrymen in China, Muscovy, Persia and Japan</i> (London, 1741)
<i>Deserted Village</i>	<i>The Deserted Village, a Poem</i> 4th edn (London, 1770)
Du Halde, <i>Empire of China</i>	Jean-Baptiste Du Halde, <i>A Description of the Empire of China and Chinese-Tartary [...]</i> From the French of P. J. B. Du Halde, 2 vols. (London, 1738, 1741)
<i>Enquiry</i>	<i>An Enquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe</i> (London: R. and J. Dodsley, 1759)
Forster, <i>Life</i>	John Forster, <i>The Life and Adventures of Oliver Goldsmith</i> (London, 1848)
Friedman	<i>The Collected Works of Oliver Goldsmith</i> , ed. Arthur Friedman, 5 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966)

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Le Comte, <i>Memoirs and Remarks</i>	Louis Le Comte, <i>Memoirs and Remarks Geographical, Historical, Topographical, Physical, Natural, Astronomical, Mechanical, Military, Mercantile, Political, and Ecclesiastical, Made in above Ten Years Travel through the Empire of China</i> (London, 1737)
Letters	<i>The Letters of Oliver Goldsmith</i> , ed. Michael Griffin and David O’Shaughnessy (Cambridge University Press, 2018)
OED	<i>Oxford English Dictionary Online</i>
Pope, <i>Poems</i>	Alexander Pope, <i>The Twickenham Edition of the Poems of Alexander Pope</i> , ed. John Butt, Maynard Mack, and Geoffrey Tillotson et al., 11 vols., 3rd edn (London: Methuen, 1961–9)
Prior, <i>Life</i>	James Prior, <i>The Life of Oliver Goldsmith, M. B. From a Variety of Original Sources</i> , 2 vols. (London: John Murray, 1837)
Prior, <i>Miscellaneous Works</i>	<i>The Miscellaneous Works of Oliver Goldsmith, M.B.</i> , ed. James Prior, 4 vols. (London, 1837)
<i>Spectator</i>	<i>The Spectator</i> , ed. Donald F. Bond, 5 vols. (Oxford University Press, 1987)
<i>Traveller</i>	<i>The Traveller; or, A Prospect of Society. A Poem</i> , 6th edn (London, 1770)

## INTRODUCTION

On 28 February 1909, the American modernist poet Wallace Stevens wrote to Elsie Moll that ‘for a change’ he was ‘loafing’ at home rather than taking his customary Sunday afternoon walk. He prefaced this mundane piece of information with a quotation – ‘The distant sounds of music that catch new sweetness as they vibrate through the long drawn valley, are not more pleasing to the ear than the tidings of a far distant friend’ – and by adding ‘so said the Chinese philosopher’ he prompted his fiancée to recognize these lines as deriving from Oliver Goldsmith’s *The Citizen of the World*.<sup>1</sup> Stevens’s letter appears to assume that its addressee is aware of Goldsmith’s work, and his quotation from the text – though it comes from a letter written by Lien Chi Altangi’s friend Fum Hoam rather than the ‘Chinese philosopher’ himself – nicely captures the availability of *The Citizen of the World*, published nearly 150 years earlier, as a cultural reference point. Stevens wrote from his apartment in New York, and his letter to his fiancée exemplifies not only the long afterlife of Goldsmith’s work but also its transatlantic circulation.

On the appearance of *The Citizen of the World* in two volumes in May 1762, the *British Magazine* nonetheless described it only as ‘Light, agreeable summer reading, partly original, partly borrowed’.<sup>2</sup> At least until the publication in 1966 of Arthur Friedman’s *Collected Works*, which helped to open new pathways for Goldsmith scholarship, the terms of this review retained critical currency. Early in 1760 the bookseller John Newbery contracted Goldsmith, for £100 per annum, ‘to

- 1 *Letters of Wallace Stevens*, ed. Holly Stevens (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 132.
- 2 Cited in A. Lytton Sells, *Oliver Goldsmith: His Life and Works* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1974), 250.

## INTRODUCTION

furnish papers of an amusing character twice a week<sup>3</sup> for the *Public Ledger, or, Daily Register of Commerce and Intelligence*, and from the outset commentary on *The Citizen of the World* pointed to the origin of its constituent ‘Chinese Letters’ in a commercialized print culture in which novelty was at a premium. As the *Critical Review* noted in May 1762, ‘These letters ... made their first appearance in a daily news-paper, and were necessarily calculated to the meridian of the multitude’, and although they were lacking by any ‘standard of originality’, they were the product of a ‘fruitful’ authorial imagination able to ‘supply ... a variety of tastes’, and to ‘sustain the fatigue’ of doing this over a period of more than eighteen months.<sup>4</sup> The short letter introducing the Chinese traveller Lien Chi Altangi and his letter describing his arrival in London were printed in the *Public Ledger* on 24 January 1760, and two further letters appeared in January before subsequent letters were numbered to signal that they were part of a larger series. The last of the 119 letters to appear in the *Public Ledger* was published on 14 August 1761, and four more, together with an ‘Editor’s Preface’, were added to make up the single work titled *The Citizen of the World*.<sup>5</sup>

In contrast to the much-revised poem with which he made his literary reputation, *The Traveller, or A Prospect of Society* (1764), Goldsmith’s ‘Chinese Letters’ were hastily produced to a publisher’s deadline, and they have often been regarded as comparatively slight for that reason. ‘Lien Chi Altangi became real, and lived’, however, as biographer John Forster observed in 1848, whereas other fictional correspondents who made their debut in the *Public Ledger* at the same time did not: ‘Sir Simon Swift and his “Ranger”, Mr Philanthropy Candid and his “Visitor”, struggled and departed as newspaper shadows are wont to do.’<sup>6</sup> The contemporary profile of the letters of Altangi

3 James Prior, *The Life of Oliver Goldsmith, M. B. From a Variety of Original Sources*, 2 vols. (London: John Murray, 1837), 1:356.

4 *Critical Review*, 13 (May 1762), 398.

5 See Arthur Friedman, ‘Introduction’, *The Citizen of the World in Collected Works of Oliver Goldsmith*, ed. Friedman, 5 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), 2:ix–xii.

6 John Forster, *The Life and Adventures of Oliver Goldsmith* (London, 1848), 222.



## INTRODUCTION



1. The Public Ledger, or, Daily Register of Commerce and Intelligence, 24 January 1760. Front page. Microform, Early English Newspapers. Reproduced by kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library.

and his network is indicated by the fact that with only a few exceptions, they assume the position of the opening article on the first page of the newspaper. The different materials of various kinds that sit adjacent to the letters squarely situate them in important larger contexts too. As Richard C. Taylor states, the *Public Ledger* was a 'serious and topical news' that was concerned with foreign intelligence dominated by accounts of military operations, port and domestic news, and



## INTRODUCTION

advertisements.<sup>7</sup> It was embedded in networks of global commerce, most overtly via the central role of shipping notices in its pages, and it also supplied the latest information regarding the progress of the ongoing Seven Years' War (1756–63), at a time when – after the French invasion threat of early summer 1759 had passed – opinion as to the continuation of the conflict was increasingly divided.

While the immediate context of their publication gave Goldsmith's ostensibly ephemeral Chinese letters wider cultural importance, their subsequent packaging under the title of *The Citizen of the World* further helped to frame them in significant ways too. It is not clear as to whether Goldsmith was aware of it, but just over a decade earlier Louis-Charles Fougeret de Monbron published a 'fictional satire' titled *Le Cosmopolite ou Le Citoyen du Monde* (1750), which had gone through four editions by the time that Goldsmith's work appeared.<sup>8</sup> Mary Helen McMurren writes that 'Fougeret de Monbron's eponymous hero bears out Diogenes' example of deracinating himself by leaving his homeland, but fails in his attempt to be a stranger nowhere. In his discovery that other nations are equally distasteful, he is alienated everywhere and returns home in misanthropic resignation.'<sup>9</sup> Goldsmith's work can be seen at once to 'cast doubt on world citizenship' (as McMurren argues) and to take this ideal seriously, as in Letter 23 when Altangi presents 'citizen of the world' as the self-description of an English contributor to a subscription fund to provide support for French prisoners of war.<sup>10</sup> The title adopted by Goldsmith in 1762 conveys 'the broadness of vision and liberality needed to evaluate English society fairly and accurately', as Taylor suggests, and in the context of the Seven Years' War it also more specifically appears to signal Goldsmith's adoption of a critical distance on the conflict of a

7 Richard C. Taylor, *Goldsmith as Journalist* (London: Associated University Presses, 1993), 119.

8 Mary Helen McMurren, 'The new cosmopolitanism and the eighteenth century', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 47/1 (2013), 19–38 (at 31). According to A. Lytton Sells, 'Si Goldsmith n'a pas lu le *Cosmopolite*, cette coïncidence est curieuse', *Les Sources françaises de Goldsmith* (Paris: Librairie Ancienne Édouard Champion, 1924), 97.

9 McMurren, 'New cosmopolitanism', 31.

10 *Ibid.*, 30.