

Samuel Johnson's Dictionary



13 THINGS



Samuel Johnson: Growing Up in Lichfield

Born
September
18th, 1709

Scrofula and a
troubled
childhood

Refuge in
books





Cornelius Ford: An
inspirational tutor

13 Months at Oxford

Voyage to Abyssinia
and Johnson's
natural gift

Marriage to
Elizabeth Porter

Life in London,
Gentleman's
Magazine

Savage, Illness and
Poverty



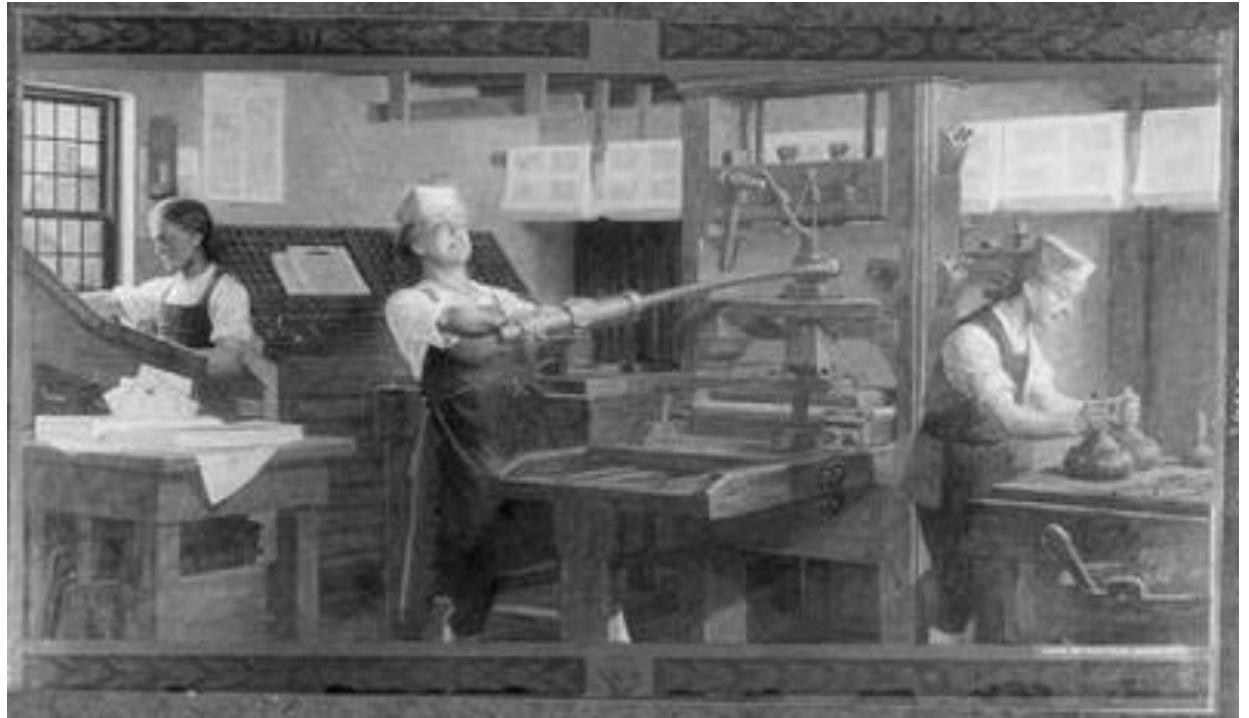
Education and Early Career



Evolving attitudes towards the dictionary

A revolution in the print industry

Imperialism and “Britishness”



A Sociocultural Context

Making the Dictionary

THE
P L A N
OF A
DICTIONARY
OF THE
ENGLISH LANGUAGE;

Addressed to the Right Honourable

PHILIP DORMER,
Earl of CHESTERFIELD;

One of His MAJESTY'S Principal Secretaries
of State.

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. and P. Knapton, T. Longman and
T. Shewell, C. Hitch, A. Millar, and
R. Dodiley. MDCCLXVII.

80 LOGICK: Or, Part I.

SECT. I.

Of gaining clear and distinct Ideas.

G THE first Rule is this/*Seek after a clear and distinct Conception of Things as they are in their own Nature, and do not content yourselves with obscure and confused Ideas, where clearer are to be attained.*

H There are some Things indeed whereof distinct Ideas are scarce attainable, they seem to surpass the Capacity of the Understanding in our present State; such are the Notions of *Eternal, Immense, Infinite*, whether this *Infinity* be applied to *Number*, as an infinite Multitude; to *Quantity*, as infinite Length, Breadth; to *Powers and Perfections*, as *Strength, Wisdom, or Goodness infinite, &c.* Tho' Mathematicians in their Way demonstrate several Things in the Doctrine of *Infinity*, yet there are still some insolvable Difficulties that attend the Ideas of *Infinity*, when it is applied to *Mind or Body*; and while it is in Reality but an *Idea ever growing*, we cannot have so clear and distinct a Conception of it as to secure us from Mistakes in some of our Reasonings about it.

S There are many other Things that belong to the material World, wherein the sharpest Philosophers have never yet arrived at clear and distinct Ideas, such as the particular *Shape, Situation, Consistence, Motion of the small Particles of Minerals, Metals, Plants, &c.* whereby their very Natures and Essences are distinguished from each other. Nor have we either Senses or Instruments sufficiently nice and accurate to find them out. There are other Things in the World of Spirits wherein

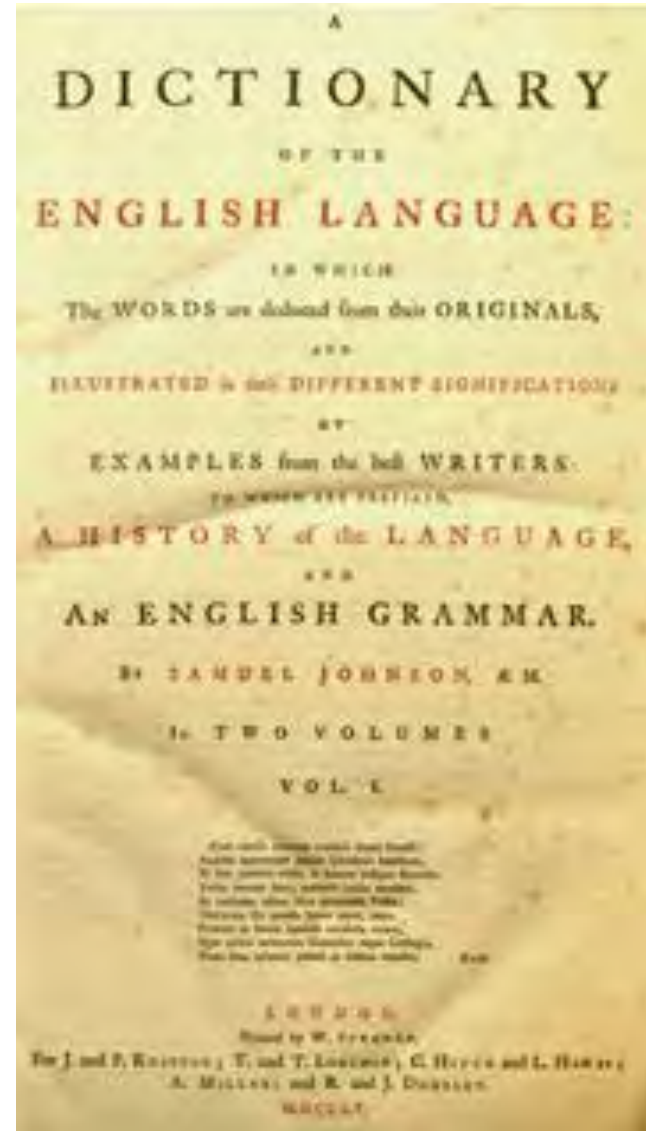


A Finished Product

Critical reception

An abridged version

Johnson after the dictionary



The Author in the Text



- Moral, Political and Marital Opinions



Some Witty Entries



- **Distiller:** One who makes and sells pernicious and inflammatory spirits.
- **Dull:** Not exhilarating (sic); not delightful; as, to make dictionaries is dull work.
- **Excise:** A hateful tax levied upon commodities, and adjudged not by the common judges of property, but wretches hired by those to whom excise is paid.
- **Far-fetch:** A deep stratagem. A ludicrous word.
- **Kickshaw:** A dish so changed by the cookery that it can scarcely be known.
- **Oats:** A grain, which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland appears to support the people.
- **Patron:** One who countenances, supports or protects. Commonly a wretch who supports with insolence, and is paid with flattery.
- **Pension:** An allowance made to any one without an equivalent. In England it is generally understood to mean pay given to a state hireling for treason to his country.
- **Politician:** 1. One versed in the arts of government; one skilled in politicks. 2. A man of artifice; one of deep contrivance.