

INFORMATION TO USERS

This material was produced from a microfilm copy of the original document. While the most advanced technological means to photograph and reproduce this document have been used, the quality is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original submitted.

The following explanation of techniques is provided to help you understand markings or patterns which may appear on this reproduction.

1. The sign or "target" for pages apparently lacking from the document photographed is "Missing Page(s)". If it was possible to obtain the missing page(s) or section, they are spliced into the film along with adjacent pages. This may have necessitated cutting thru an image and duplicating adjacent pages to insure you complete continuity.
2. When an image on the film is obliterated with a large round black mark, it is an indication that the photographer suspected that the copy may have moved during exposure and thus cause a blurred image. You will find a good image of the page in the adjacent frame.
3. When a map, drawing or chart, etc., was part of the material being photographed the photographer followed a definite method in "sectioning" the material. It is customary to begin photoing at the upper left hand corner of a large sheet and to continue photoing from left to right in equal sections with a small overlap. If necessary, sectioning is continued again — beginning below the first row and continuing on until complete.
4. The majority of users indicate that the textual content is of greatest value, however, a somewhat higher quality reproduction could be made from "photographs" if essential to the understanding of the dissertation. Silver prints of "photographs" may be ordered at additional charge by writing the Order Department, giving the catalog number, title, author and specific pages you wish reproduced.
5. PLEASE NOTE: Some pages may have indistinct print. Filmed as received.

Xerox University Microfilms

300 North Zeeb Road
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106

76-11,965

BOWMAN, Sylvia P., 1931-
THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH
BIOGRAPHICAL FORM, 1668-1781.

The City University of New York
Ph.D., 1976
Literature, general

Xerox University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106

© 1976

SYLVIA P. BOWMAN

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH BIOGRAPHICAL FORM, 1668-1781

by

SYLVIA BOWMAN

**A dissertation submitted to the Graduate
Faculty in English in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy, The City University
of New York.**

1976

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in English in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Jan. 20, 1976
date

Allen Mandelbaum
Executive Officer

Frank Brody

Samuel Mintz

Irene Tayler
Supervisory Committee

The City University of New York

Contents

Introduction	5
I. The Origins and Development of Topical Biography to 1720	18
II. Experiments in Chronological Form Prior to 1720	42
III. Professionalism and Biographic Differentiation	64
IV. New Perspectives and Techniques: 1740-1750	94
V. Rules, Reaction, and Derivative Biographical Forms after 1750	125
VI. Variations of Established Forms	146
Conclusion	158
Bibliography	159

Introduction

Prior to the Restoration few prose biographies were written and printed in England. As Chambers observes, biographers had composed their works for the education or entertainment of their acquaintances, in the main, though the hope of preserving the memory of great men for posterity was not lacking.¹ If writers had sought a general market for their lives, they would have encountered difficulties, since the customary subjects of biography -- spiritual, political, and military leaders -- might be heroes through one reign and villains through the next in the troubled political climate of England. So works readily available today, such as Capgrave's Augustine, Cavendish's Wolsey, and Harpsfield's or Roper's lives of More,² were quite unknown at the time when Bacon, surveying the field, wondered "that the writing of lives should be no more frequent. For

¹ R. W. Chambers, Thomas More (Ann Arbor, 1958), pp. 31-42.

² John Capgrave, Lives of St. Augustine and St. Gilbert of Sempringham, ed. J. J. Munro (London, 1910). Munro states in his preface that these lives were written about 1451, probably for the edification of a small group of nuns. George Cavendish, The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey, ed. Richard S. Sylvester (London, 1959). Composed between 1554 and 1558, this work was first printed in 1641. Nicholas Harpsfield, The Life and Death of Sir Thomas More, ed. E. V. Hitchcock (London, 1932). This is the first publication of the life, which was written about 1550. William Roper, The Lyfe of Sir Thomas More, Knyghte, ed. E. V. Hitchcock (London, 1935). Written about 1550, this life was first printed in 1626.

although there be not many sovereign princes or absolute commanders, yet are there many worthy personages that deserve better than dispersed report or barren eulogies."³

After the Restoration biography emerged as a profitable and popular branch of literature. The change was signalled by Fuller's announcement in 1662 that the expectation of monetary profit had been one of his reasons for writing the Worthies of England,⁴ and by the notable success of Walton's Lives.⁵ Biographies proliferated and the range of subjects expanded, as if in belated response to Bacon's remarks. Poets, scientists, actors, lawyers, diplomats, and even merchants were accorded biographies. Lives became the standard materials for prefaces to literary collections and the staple fare of eighteenth-century journals.⁶ In 1758 one critic even complained of a surfeit of biographies, writing that "The seeming facility of the employment has

³ Francis Bacon, "Of the Advancement of Learning" (1605), The Essays, ed. A. W. Pollard (London, 1906), p. 244.

⁴ Thomas Fuller, The History of the Worthies of England (London, 1662), p. 3.

⁵ Isaak Walton, The Lives of Dr. John Donne, Sir Henry Wotton, Mr. Richard Hooker, Mr. George Herbert, Etc. (London, 1670). Several of these lives had been published previously in somewhat different forms: Donne, in 1640; Wotton, in 1651; Hooker, in 1662. The collection ran to four editions between 1670 and 1675.

⁶ C. Lennart Carlson remarks in The First Magazine: A History of "The Gentleman's Magazine" (Providence, 1938), p. 127, that biographies came to be considered "more fruitful and generally adapted to the demands of magazine publication" than were fictional pieces during the second quarter of the eighteenth century.

induced many laborious drones to commence biographers."⁷

This survey of the development of biographical form in England will cover the years between the publication of Sprat's Life of Cowley in 1668 and Johnson's Lives of the Poets, 1779-81, a period marked by the introduction of a considerable number of new compositional methods and techniques. As interest in the genre increased, writers discovered that such formal models as existed were often ill-suited to their subjects, purposes, or perspectives; so they adapted traditional patterns and invented new forms.

The newly expanded range of valid biographical subjects presented problems because the lives of authors, etc., rarely contained the dramatic or significant incidents which had shaped the lives of saints and rulers. As Gilbert Burnet observed in 1682, "few have been able to imitate the patterns Suetonius set the world in writing the lives of the Roman Emperors 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."⁸ The difficulty lay in selecting and disclosing to the reader significant or useful elements of these relatively private lives. Whether biographers agreed with Sprat and Burnet that the subject's

⁷ Owen Ruffhead, rev. of Jortin's Life of Erasmus, Monthly Review, XIX (Oct. 1758), 386.

⁸ Gilbert Burnet, "The Life and Death of Matthew Hale" (1682), in Lives, Characters, and an Address to Posterity, ed. John Jebb (London, 1833), p. 2.

career accomplishments should be the main focus, or whether they believed, as did Johnson, that "there are many invisible circumstances which . . . are more important than public occurrences,"⁹ they had to devise methods for effectively presenting their materials. The use of the subject's correspondence or of extracts from his more formal writings, the merits of dramatized anecdotes or evaluative commentaries, the possibilities of topical or chronological exposition are technical matters familiar to present-day biographers;¹⁰ but to writers in this earlier period, they were experiments.

Biographies came to serve new functions, and these too required new formal techniques. While models existed for eulogistic and exemplary lives, there were no precedents for the preface life which combined detailed literary criticism with biography.¹¹ Biographical dictionaries had been

⁹ Samuel Johnson, Rambler No. 60 (September 13, 1750) in Essays from the Rambler, Adventurer and Idler, ed. W. J. Bate (New Haven, 1968), p. 112. The idea was as ancient as Plutarch's life of Alexander, written about 100 A.D., but was revitalized during this period. See John Dryden, "The Life of Plutarch" prefixed to Plutarch's Lives Translated . . . by Several Hands (London, 1683), I, 56; and Walter Pope, The Life of Seth, Lord Bishop of Salisbury (London, 1697), Luttrell Society Reprint No. 21 (Oxford, 1961), p. 137.

¹⁰ Catherine Drinker Bowen, Biography: The Craft and the Calling (Boston, 1965) and Paul M. Kendall, The Art of Biography (1965; rpt. New York: Norton, 1967) offer contemporary analyses of such technical matters.

¹¹ Examples of the types of biography mentioned in this paragraph will be discussed in later chapters.

compiled, but none had comprised the variety of professional, social, and domestic data that appealed to eighteenth-century readers. While character summaries had become a commonplace element in biography, they had not been designed to show the complexities and shadings of individual character. As Clifford observes, "the balanced, revealing type of life had simply not yet been invented",¹² and in a society increasingly interested by psychological theories, convinced that "The proper study of Mankind is Man,"¹³ biographers set about inventing such lives.

Throughout this period major shifts of biographical perspectives affected the construction of lives. Roy Pascal sums up the most important of these in pointing to the "striking discovery . . . that a man is not a state of being, but a process of development."¹⁴ This discovery, as reflected in biographical form, involved a gradual abandonment of the Renaissance view of man's constitution and of his position in the universe, and the substitution of a relatively modern perspective. The Renaissance man, supposedly situated in a particular area of a fixed universal

¹² James L. Clifford, "How Much Should a Biographer Tell? Some Eighteenth-Century Views," Essays in Eighteenth-Century Biography, ed. P. B. Daghlion (Bloomington, 1968), p. 77.

¹³ Alexander Pope, Essay on Man, II, 2. Concerning interest in psychological theories see Kenneth MacLean, John Locke and English Literature in the Eighteenth Century (New Haven, 1936).

¹⁴ Roy Pascal, Design and Truth in Autobiography (Cambridge, Mass., 1960), p. 50.

Chain of Being, and ranked within that area as the aggregate of his social, moral, and intellectual qualities seemed to place him closer to the angels above or the beasts below,¹⁵ had been presented in biography as a fixed and finished being. His various attributes had been illustrated through topical divisions of his biography. While works of this sort often presented a detailed portrait, Bietenholz remarks that their effect is static, that the subjects do not seem to lead lives, but simply to fill roles.¹⁶ The editor of Roper's More notes the baffling lack of chronological sequence in the work;¹⁷ and a recent editor of Stapleton's More observes that "the Vita Mori is not a biography in our accepted sense of the term; it does not follow a chronological scheme."¹⁸ Thus the modern biographical perspective does not focus on status in an eternal order, but instead records progress through time. As Kendall states the modern

¹⁵ The Renaissance view of man is examined by Herschel Baker, The Dignity of Man (1947; rpt. New York under the title The Image of Man: A Study of the Idea of Human Dignity in Classical Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance; Harper and Row, 1961) and by E. M. Tillyard, The Elizabethan World Picture: A Study of the Idea of Order (1943; rpt. New York: Vintage-Knopf, 1959), pp. 68 ff., among others.

¹⁶ P. G. Bietenholz, History and Biography in the Work of Erasmus of Rotterdam (Geneva, 1966), p. 69.

¹⁷ William Roper, The Lyfe of . . . More, ed. E. V. Hitchcock, p. xlix.

¹⁸ Thomas Stapleton, The Life and Illustrious Martyrdom of Sir Thomas More (1588), trans. P. E. Hallett, ed. E. E. Reynolds (New York, 1966), p. viii.

view, biography must show "not only the grand chronology of growth, maturity, death, but also the lesser patterns of sequential experience . . . from which emerge new tendrils of relationship between the man and his world."¹⁹ Although the concepts of developmental process and progress were neither well defined nor generally accepted in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, a number of biographers began to devise chronological patterns and to experiment with cause-and-effect sequential exposition.²⁰ Their difficulties and successes will be further discussed in chapter II of this study.

A second notable shift in biographical perspective occurred in the eighteenth century when historians advanced arguments to the effect that man and his works could be understood only when viewed in relationship with the total environment -- political, social, physical, and intellectual -- which had accompanied their development.²¹ Conyers

¹⁹ P. M. Kendall, The Art of Biography, p. 24.

²⁰ The ideas of progress and developmental process, as they existed in this period, are discussed by J. B. Bury, The Idea of Progress: An Inquiry into Its Growth and Origin (New York, 1920); by Richard Foster Jones, Ancients and Moderns: A Study of the Rise of the Scientific Movement in Seventeenth-Century England, 2nd ed. (Berkeley, 1961); and by René Wellek, The Rise of English Literary History (Chapel Hill, 1941).

²¹ See Sir Leslie Stephen, History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century (1876; rpt. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1962), I, 213-234; Donald M. Foerster, Homer in English Criticism: The Historical Approach in the Eighteenth Century (New Haven, 1947). This perspective is considered in Chapter III below.

Middleton, being one of the historians who had argued on this line in theological controversies, utilized it as a formal principle in his *Life of Cicero* (1740). Authors of literary biographies began to enlarge upon the milieu of their subjects. With increasing frequency political figures were shown against a detailed historical background. Thus a species of biography appeared which contained a larger cast of characters and a wider range of information than had earlier lives, and writers introduced novel techniques to display the interaction of their subjects with this enlarged background.

Critics often link the development of a "modern conception of biography" during this period to the concurrent rise of realism in fiction.²² However the relationship between the two is not clear. While many realistic fictional works were presented as autobiography or biography (the novels of Defoe and Fielding, for example), few elements of fiction appeared in biography.²³ The common factor in the development of fiction and biography may have been the immense popularity of personal memoirs in England toward the close of

²² Mark Longaker, "Influences which Made Possible the Modern Conception of Biography," chap. II, English Biography in the Eighteenth Century (Philadelphia, 1931); Donald A. Stauffer, "Biography and the Novel," chap. II, The Art of Biography in the Eighteenth Century (Princeton, 1941); and James L. Clifford, "How Much Should a Biographer Tell?" (see n. 12 above).

²³ The appearance of somewhat novelistic plots in works by Johnson and Ayre will be considered in chapter IV.

the seventeenth century.²⁴ English memoirs, such as William Temple's (published by Swift in 1691), and the many French court memoirs which were translated into English at that time contained well-rounded characterizations, realistic details of everyday life, and a lively picture of manners; so the subsequent appearance of these features in novels and biographies might be considered imitative or derivative.

In studies of the development of the genre, scholars and critics have generally agreed that recognizably modern biography first appeared at the end of the eighteenth century.²⁵ In general, they perceive the distinctive features of modern biography to be chronological exposition, realistic detail and setting, historical accuracy, and incisive psychological portraiture.²⁶ Some believe that "the perfection of literary form" is a particular goal, and a rare

²⁴ This thesis is advanced persuasively by John Campbell Major, The Role of Personal Memoirs in English Biography and Novel (Philadelphia, 1935). Sections of Major's work which are particularly pertinent to this paragraph are pp. 36 ff. and pp. 94 ff.

²⁵ This view is taken by Harold Nicolson, The Development of English Biography (New York, 1928); John Garraty, The Nature of Biography (New York, 1957); and P. M. Kendall, The Art of Biography, among others. In contrast, R. W. Chambers, On the Continuity of English Prose from Alfred to More and His School (London, 1932), singles out Harpsfield's sixteenth-century More as the work transitional from early to modern biographical form.

²⁶ John Butt contrasts the modern biographer's concern for historically accurate dates and data to Walton's and Johnson's lack of interest in such matters in Biography in the Hands of Walton, Johnson, and Boswell (Los Angeles, 1966), p. 4. See also David Novarr, The Making of Walton's "Lives" (Ithaca, 1958), p. 493, and Nicolson, The Development of English Biography, pp. 141 ff.

achievement of the modern biographer.²⁷ Certainly none of the lives written between 1668 and 1781 can match these criteria. Since the period marks a transition from Renaissance to modern methods of composition, a time when there was "no accepted principle of what a biographer should do,"²⁸ many of the works then written embody a tension between old and new modes of exposition. The resultant effect is often one of disorder, disproportion, and even formlessness, particularly notable in lives written prior to 1750.

This has led to a general neglect of the mass of such lives. While praising the excellence of outstanding works, North's Lives, Johnson's Savage, and Mason's Gray,²⁹ studies of English biography have bypassed or rejected as unworthy of consideration the many lives which illustrate the gradual variation, enrichment, and clarification of biographical form. Waldo Dunn devoted more particular attention than

²⁷ Nicolson believed that the dual interest of biography was "scientific" and "literary" (a shift from the duality of scientific and moral interest proposed by Samuel Johnson in Rambler No. 60), and argued that biographers should produce a synthesis "combining the maximum of scientific material with the perfection of literary form," in English Biography, pp. 142-143. Ralph W. Rader, defining literature as a "series of symbolic solutions" to the conflict between man's ethical sense and his psychological imperatives, states that only through literary construction can works based on fact sustain this theme, in "Literary Form in Factual Narrative: The Example of Boswell's Johnson," Essays in Eighteenth-Century Biography (Bloomington, 1968), pp. 3-42.

²⁸ Lawrence Lipking, The Ordering of the Arts in the Eighteenth Century (Princeton, 1970), p. 159.

²⁹ See Stauffer, 18th Century, and Nicolson, English Biography.

have other scholars to lives written between 1668 and 1750, but he acknowledged that these lives are "hard to read," attributing the difficulty to structural defects.³⁰ Nicolson, citing Burnet's Bedell (1685) and Hackett's Scrinia Reserata (1695) as particular examples, dismisses virtually all lives written in this period as "not readable biographies."³¹ Gordon Goodwin states that John Strype's "lack of literary style, unskillful selection of materials and unmethodical arrangement render his books tiresome to the last degree,"³² and Stauffer overlooks the technical advances in the period, remarking that "experiments in style and form were sporadic and without influence."³³

Yet the authors of these lives recognized that they were crafting new biographical methods and patterns. Burnet's introduction to Hale is an argument favoring the invention of new methods and pointing out why the techniques of hagiographers and such classical biographers as Suetonius and Diogenes Laertius were unsuited to contemporary life-writing. Walter Pope, Toland, Strype, North, and several

³⁰ Waldo Dunn, English Biography (London, 1916), p. 95.

³¹ Nicolson, p. 71.

³² Gordon Goodwin, "John Strype," DNE, XIX, 68.

³³ Stauffer, Eighteenth Century, p. 547. In English Biography before 1700 (Cambridge, Mass., 1930) Stauffer held that "the number of first attempts in biographic forms later to prove most fruitful" had been greatest in the early seventeenth century (p. 34). A similar view is advanced by George Carver, Alms for Oblivion: Books, Men, and Biography (Milwaukee, 1946), p. 57.

generations of biographers after them described their own methods as novel contributions to the genre. By the middle of the eighteenth century critics looked back on these earlier writers not with contempt, but with recognition of their skill as biographers. For example, Warburton in 1737 wrote to Birch that "the life-writers we have had before Toland . . . are indeed strange insipid creatures,"³⁴ implying that Toland had been the first of a new school of biographers. Birch himself wrote that he wished he could compose biography as effectively as had Burnet.³⁵ And Johnson, in compiling a reading list for a friend, included but one biography -- Burnet's Hale.³⁶

The areas of technical development which will be particularly traced in the following study are the overall organization of lives, whether topical, chronological, essay, narrative, or mixed; the scale of biography, ranging from limited resumes of life data to full accounts of the individual in his various life relationships; the presence or lack of unifying principles such as rhetorical control, thematic counterpoint, or plot; the methods used to reveal

³⁴ Despite his recognition of Toland's place in the development of the genre, Warburton denounced the method of Toland's Milton as being "nauseous." This letter appears in James Boswell, Life of Johnson, ed. G. B. Hill, revised by L. F. Powell, 6 vols. (Oxford, 1934-64), I, 29.

³⁵ Thomas Birch, "The Life of the Hon. Robert Boyle," prefixed to The Works of . . . Boyle (London, 1744), p. iii.

³⁶ Boswell, Johnson, IV, 311.

the subject's character and the individualizing qualities of his literary or other accomplishments; and the structural relationship of disparate elements within the works.

Since development in these areas was neither steady nor linear, its exposition will necessarily take a somewhat uneven course. Topical biography, which exercised a strong conservative influence throughout this period, will be considered first. As background to understanding not only the methods of Sprat, Dryden, and their followers, but also the organization of "character" sections, the distinctive elements of topical form will be briefly traced from Suetonius' original patterns to Walton's experimental innovations. The major adaptations of traditional topical schemes between 1668 and 1720 will be taken up next, to be followed by a study of experiments in chronological modes during the same period. Formal differentiation of the literary, historical, and reference species of biography between 1720 and 1740 and the concurrent development of character-revealing methods will be considered next. The complex and influential works published between 1740 and 1745, Middleton's Cicero, Johnson's Savage, and North's Lives, will require more particular analysis both as to structure and effect upon later biographers' techniques. Reactionary tendencies at mid-century, and the consolidation of technical advances thereafter will comprise the concluding topics.

I. The Origins and Development of Topical Biography to 1720

The analytic biographical method, in which several aspects of the subject are dealt with as separate topics rather than as part of a life history, had dominated the genre for centuries before Sprat composed his influential Life of Cowley (1668) or Dryden his much copied Life of Plutarch (1683). Throughout the middle ages works written in this mode followed closely the pattern developed by Suetonius in the Lives of the Twelve Caesars, written about 120 A. D.¹ During the Renaissance a more strictly divided form came into favor, reflecting contemporary development of rhetorical theory, yet retaining enough of the original pattern to render identifiable the "resolute 'Suetonianism'" of biographers up to the seventeenth century.² Why the form of the Twelve Caesars achieved such lasting favor among biographers is difficult to determine; but in fact it quite eclipsed the potential influence of the biographical patterns developed earlier in

¹ There are many translations of the Twelve Caesars, the liveliest being Robert Graves's. But few include the additional lives of the poets, etc., as does Lives of the Twelve Caesars by G. Suetonius Tranquillus, to which are added his Lives of the Grammarians, Rhetoricians, and Poets, trans. Alex Thomson, revised by T. Forester (London, 1855).

² P. G. Bietenholz discusses 15th- and 16th-century 'Suetonianism' in History and Biography in the Work of Erasmus, pp. 53 ff. Renaissance preoccupation with strict topical divisions, headings, and commonplaces was studied by Charles Sears Baldwin, Renaissance Literary Theory and Practice: Classicism in the Rhetoric and Poetic of Italy, France, and England, 1400-1600, ed. D. L. Clark (New York, 1939).

the works of Nepos, Plutarch, and Tacitus.³

Specific elements of the original pattern and of its principal derivatives are important as precursors of elements in Restoration and eighteenth-century biography. Peculiar features like the formal "character" and physical description, often inserted between the life history and a death scene, or the inclusion of sections listing the subject's friends, are among many biographical components which are best understood when their traditional nature becomes apparent.

As succinctly outlined by Stuart, in the Twelve Caesars "normally the body of each biography consists in a record of deeds and a description of all manner of characteristics, thematically organized, and forming a huge parenthesis, as it were, inclosed between chronological narratives treating the preliminary stage of a career and

³ Burckhardt wrote that the Viri Illustres of Nepos and such parts of Plutarch's works as had been translated served as models for fourteenth-century biographers, though Suetonius remained the chief model (Jacob Burckhardt, "Biography," The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy, Part IV, ch. 5). A translation of the fifteenth edition of Burckhardt's work by S. G. C. Middlemore is available in paperback, 2 vols. (New York: Harper and Row, 1958).

The methods of Nepos (99-24 B.C.) are described by Edna Jenkinson, "Nepos, An Introduction to Latin Biography," Latin Biography, ed. T. Dorey (London, 1967), pp. 1-15. Briefly, his lives are parallel, peripatetic, and ethical, like those Plutarch wrote circa 100 A.D., though with a stronger rhetorical form. The methods of Tacitus (55-120 A.D.) are compared to those of Suetonius by T. Dorey in "Agricola and Germania," Tacitus, ed. T. Dorey (London, 1969), p. 2.

its closing phases."⁴ Actually the inclosing sections, while chronological, are non-narrative. Instead, certain topics are presented in a fixed order. The preliminary group includes family, omens (if any), birth. Next, the subject's youthful years and education are shown through anecdotes indicative of the bent of the individual. The concluding section of each work describes the death of the subject. Preceding or following the death scene there is a detailed physical description of the subject as he appeared in his mature years, and a few variable items such as the subject's will, progeny, and reputation. The Lives of the Grammarians, which served as a model for subsequent literary histories,⁵ contained only sketchy biographical data supplemented by outlines of the subjects' writings or ideas.

Prior to the Renaissance most biographers adhered closely to the pattern of the Twelve Caesars,⁶ and such

⁴ Duane R. Stuart, Epochs of Greek and Roman Biography (Berkeley, 1928), p. 185.

⁵ Burckhardt stated that the Grammarians set the pattern of such histories (see n. 3 above), and indeed the Suetonian mode appears in Laertius' 3rd-century Greek lives of philosophers. But Richard Hope does not associate the two biographers in The Book of Diogenes Laertius: Its Spirit and Method (New York, 1930).

⁶ See E. K. Rand, "On the History of the De Vita Caesarum of Suetonius in the Early Middle Ages," Harvard Studies in Classical Philology, XXVIII (1926), 1-48; G. B. Townsend, "Suetonius and His Influence," Latin Biography, ed. T. Dorey (London, 1967), pp. 79-113; A. J. Grant, ed. and trans., Early Lives of Charlemagne by Egenhard and the Monk of St. Gall (New York, 1966). The last details the minute fidelity with which Einhard fit his 9th-century Vita Karoli to the pattern of Suetonius' Augustus.

distortions as occurred took the form of swelling out the "huge parenthesis" with documents, quotations, and stories (or miracles, in the case of saints).⁷ However from the fourteenth century onward the traditional central section of Suetonian biography was frequently schematized out of existence. As in Boccaccio's Vita Dante,⁸ chosen topics were developed in separate chapters, and thus the elements which Suetonius had relegated to the introductory and concluding sections of his lives became proportionately as weighty as the "life" topic itself. For example, Boccaccio organized his work under five heads: illustrious parentage, life,

⁷ The fourth-century Historia Augusta is the most noted example of an imitation of Suetonian form puffed out with spurious materials; it is studied by Ronald Syme, Emperors and Biography: Studies in the "Historia Augusta" (Oxford, 1971), and by Arnaldo Momigliano, "An Unsolved Problem of Historical Forgery," Studies in Historiography (New York, 1966), pp. 143-180.

Concerning traditional hagiography, C. F. Mullett wrote that "Didactic, edifying, stylized saints' lives seemed scarcely more than a collection of deeds and borrowed anecdotes," in Biography as History: Men and Movements in Europe since 1500 (Baltimore, 1963), p. 7. Limited studies of this species have been written by Benjamin P. Kurz, "From St. Anthony to St. Guthlac: A Study in Biography," University of California Publications in Modern Philology, XII (1926), 103-146; and by Roy J. Defarri, ed., "Early Christian Biographies," Introduction to Vol. 15, The Fathers of the Church, A New Translation (1952).

⁸ The Earliest Lives of Dante, translated from the Italian of Giovanni Boccaccio and Lionardo Bruni Aretino, trans. James R. Smith (New York, 1901). The method and influence of Boccaccio's other biographical work, De Casibus Virorum Illustrium, will be discussed in connection with the development of chronological exposition in Chapter II.

Burckhardt considered the Vita Dante to be "the first great original effort" in Renaissance biography (see S. G. C. Middlemore's translation, II, 325).

studies, habits, and writings. The separate discussion of an author's writings was of course within the Suetonian tradition, but never before had items like genealogy, life-history, and studies been presented as co-equal topics in biographies.⁹

In England the number of topics taken up in biographies of this type proliferated, in the course of time, until all proportion was lost. When the topics were few and distinct, chaptered analytic lives had a compositional resemblance to formal pictorial portraiture, although the vitality of the Suetonian anecdotal style was lacking. An eighteenth-century biographer, justifying his use of this topical mode, wrote that "as in a composition in Painting there ought to be certain Groups or Masses, that the eye may not be Perplexed and Confounded, . . . there should be the Like Art used to assist the Reader to View and Comprehend the Whole, Clearly and at Ease."¹⁰ But when the notion was accepted that life-writers should "tell every deed, word, sign or token that may signify

⁹ Boccaccio's method may be compared to the rhetorical formulas for encomiums or descriptions of a person which were taught in the fourteenth century and earlier. These required an ordered exposition of specific data: birth and family, native city, education, nature of soul, nature of body, deeds, etc. See Charles Sears Baldwin, Renaissance Literary Theory and Practice, p. 55; Charles Sears Baldwin, Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic (New York, 1928), pp. 31-32; and James J. Murphy, Rhetoric in the Middle Ages (Berkeley, 1974), pp. 41, 131.

¹⁰ Jonathan Richardson, Sr., Explanatory Notes and Remarks on Milton's "Paradise Lost," with a Life of the Author (1734), rpt. in Early Lives of Milton, ed. H. Darbishire (London, 1932), p. 278.

either his manners, his nature, his affections, thoughts, or any manner or motion of his mind,"¹¹ the biographical portrait became fragmented. Capgrave, about 1450, described St. Augustine under twenty-four topical heads.¹² Harpsfield, a century later, developed his life of More in six sections. But in several of these he presented a number of distinct topics.¹³ In 1588 Stapleton divided his life of More into twenty-two topical sections;¹⁴ and Paule, in 1612, presented the life of Whitgift in 139 numbered topics, plus a coda on the times in which Whitgift lived.¹⁵

Throughout the development of this highly analytic form there had been little change in the grouping of physical description-will-reputation, etc., which had served as the

¹¹ Thomas Blundevill, summing up the precepts of Patrio and Tridentino "in our vulgar speech" under the title The True Order and Method of Wryting and Reading Histories (London, 1574), University Microfilms No. 11047.

¹² John Capgrave, Lives of St. Augustine and St. Gilbert of Sempringham, ed. J. J. Munro, EETS No. 40 (London, 1910).

¹³ Nicholas Harpsfield, The Life and Death of Sir Thomas More, ed. E. V. Hitchcock, EETS No. 186 (London, 1932). Harpsfield covered 1) birthplace, parentage, and public life up to resignation of the Chancellorship; 2) "Private, Secret, and Domestical Life and Trade"; 3) "His Books"; 4) "His Friends, Fame, and Learning"; 5) "Trial and Martyrdom"; and 6) "Reflections."

¹⁴ Thomas Stapleton, The Life . . . of Sir Thomas More, trans. P. E. Hallet, ed. E. E. Reynolds (New York, 1966).

¹⁵ George Paule, The Life of . . . John Whitgift (London, 1612). Paule provided specific descriptions of Whitgift's domestic life, his styles of preaching and writing, etc., but sections 82 to 120 were devoted to good works, in the manner of saints' lives.

penultimate or final topic in the Twelve Caesars. Suetonius' peculiar photographic description of the subject remained the invariable model for detailing physical appearance, and still was placed adjacent to the death scene.¹⁶ The reputation often appeared as a final topic, expanded by quotations of epitaphs or other tributes. Odds and ends such as the subject's financial provisions or progeny occasionally fell into this grouping, as did general remarks about his outstanding moral traits. This unmethodical, but traditional, section of biography came to be called the "character" when, during the sixteenth century, the word acquired the meaning of "an aggregate of all the qualities of a person."¹⁷ It had little resemblance to the characters inserted in histories, and no relationship to the Theophrastan characters so popular during the seventeenth century. Historians had adopted the Suetonian physical description as an element of their character sections during the Renaissance; but these sections were mainly devoted to ethical evaluation of the

¹⁶ Methods of physical description in Suetonius' works and in those of other classical authors have been compared by E. C. Evans, "Roman Descriptions of Personal Appearance," Harvard Studies in Classical Philology, XLVI (1935), 43-84; and Geneva Misener, "Iconistic Portraits," Classical Philology, XIX (1924), 97-123. Misener stated that "from the time of Suetonius the photographic iconismos becomes the accepted mode of description in Latin biography" (p. 117).

¹⁷ Benjamin Boyce, The Theophrastan Character in England to 1642 (Cambridge, 1947), p. 302. Boyce here suggests that the Theophrastan character had some influence on the style of early seventeenth-century biographical and historical characters.

character.¹⁸ The evaluations were of two sorts: the "commonplace," in which the good and bad qualities of the subject were weighed against each other; and the "observation," the more speculative assessment of character found in Bacon's and Clarendon's histories.¹⁹ The Theophrastan character, traditionally used to ridicule types of socially eccentric behavior through depiction of specific actions, had no significant influence on the character sections of either histories or biographies.²⁰

Prior to 1668 Walton was the only biographer who made notable attempts to change the dominant topical form of biography. In each of his lives he distinguished the character section from the main body of the work by setting it in italics;²¹ and further, in the life of Herbert, he scattered the italicised elements of the character throughout the work

¹⁸ See Blanchard W. Bates, Literary Portraiture in the Historical Narrative of the French Renaissance (New York, 1945), pp. 5, 40, 141, and throughout; and Peter Burke, The Renaissance Sense of the Past (New York, 1970), p. 106.

¹⁹ E. I. Berry analyzes these types in "History and Rhetoric in Bacon's Henry VII," Seventeenth-Century Prose, ed. S. E. Fish (New York, 1971), pp. 281-308. See also David Nichol Smith's "Introduction" to Characters from the Histories and Memoirs of the Seventeenth Century, ed. D. N. Smith (Oxford, 1920).

²⁰ See Boyce, n. 17 above; and R. G. Ussher, ed., The Characters of Theophrastus (New York, 1960). This genre became popular in England following Isaac Casaubon's translation of Theophrastus into Latin in 1592. Many imitative works were written, each varying somewhat from the original pattern.

²¹ David Novarr notes that Walton considered his lists of "generalities" to be distinct from the lives themselves, in The Making of Walton's Lives (Ithaca, 1958), p. 69, n. 7.

instead of grouping them at the end. Walton's biographies are more narrative than most lives written earlier, but the effect of chronological coherence is an illusion. Novarr has shown that Walton rearranged the actual order of time, facts, and materials in order to illustrate certain themes or develop topics.²²

Effective and influential reorganization of the topical pattern began with the preface-lives composed by Sprat and Dryden. The very fact that these works were designed to stand as prefaces to literary collections dictated that bounds be set to their length.²³ But the problems each writer faced in developing a work of suitable length were diametrically opposed. Sprat had a wealth of information about Cowley, who had been a friend and an associate of his in the Royal Society for many years, while Dryden could find scarcely any biographical data on Plutarch. So for Sprat the problem was to condense and concentrate his material; for Dryden, to expand and diffuse his small collection of facts.

²² Novarr, p. 493, et passim. For example, Novarr sees the first part of Herbert's life constructed to show that men of station and education should consider the Church a worthy profession, and the last part to show the proper functions of a parson (p. 315).

²³ Preface lives, though of ancient lineage (see Edna Jenkinson, "Nepos," Latin Biography, ed. T. Dorey [London, 1967], pp. 1-15), came to be considered an essential part of literary collections only after the Restoration, according to L. J. Wylie, "The English Essay: A Study in Literary Development," Social Studies in English Literature, by L. J. Wylie (Boston, 1916), p. 26. Stauffer saw the demand for succinct prefatory lives as a major factor determining the form of 17th-century biography (Before 1700, p. 269).

In consequence, Dryden turned to time-honored rhetorical devices for amplifying a discourse,²⁴ and Sprat relied upon his distinctively compact, yet lucid compositional methods -- a style well described by Glanville as "not loose and unjointed, rugged and uneven; but polite and fast as marble."²⁵

Before examining the particular methods of these authors it may be noted that Sprat, "who with his contemporaries had all the authority of a pundit,"²⁶ may have set the precedent which prompted the many efforts in biography made by Royal Society members;²⁷ but the pattern he introduced in Cowley was not widely imitated until after 1720. In contrast, the rhetorical method of Dryden's Plutarch at once drew a flock of imitators. The explanation of the latter's popularity among writers in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries is suggested by Bevilacqua's observation that the "scientific method" as applied to the composition of factual literature, i.e., research, followed by analysis of

²⁴ Dryden's use of rhetoric in criticism and poetry is analyzed by Lillian Feder, "John Dryden's Use of Classical Rhetoric," Essential Articles for the Study of John Dryden, ed. H. T. Swedenberg, Jr. (Hamden, 1966), pp. 493-518.

²⁵ Joseph Glanville, Plus Ultra (1668), quoted by R. F. Jones, "Science and English Prose Style . . .," The Seventeenth Century: Studies . . . by R. F. Jones and Others (Stanford, 1951), p. 88.

²⁶ Nicolson, p. 70. Nicolson deplored Sprat's method and his influence on the genre, writing that "Cowley is as cold as any cenotaph, as stilted as any obituary" (p. 69).

²⁷ Prominent among Royal Society members who undertook biography were Dryden, John Aubrey, John Evelyn, Gilbert Burnet, and Walter Pope.

the significance or interrelationship of data, followed by actual composition, was not generally practiced or understood until after 1720.²⁸ Instead, writers more readily apprehended the rhetorical approach to composition in which invention ("the devising of matter, true or plausible, that would make the case convincing"),²⁹ arrangement, and style furnished a discourse on any subject. So whether their materials were slight or ample -- as in the cases of Rowe writing on Shakespeare or Walter Pope on Seth Ward, respectively -- many biographers prior to 1720 were predisposed toward the rhetorical mode.

Sprat's reworking of the topical pattern had unprecedented simplicity and balance. Three aspects of Cowley's life were presented as major topics: his public life up to his retirement; his writings; and his character, chiefly drawn from his activities during retirement. Sprat unified the work and provided a specific direction for his comments by writing the life in the frame of a letter to M. Clifford, another friend of Cowley's. Gosse has ridiculed the epistle device,³⁰ and indeed Sprat's references throughout to "my

²⁸ Vincent M. Bevilacqua, "Philosophical Influences in the Development of English Rhetorical Theory: 1748-1783," Proceedings of the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society (Literary and Historical Section), XII (1968), 191-215.

²⁹ Anon. (pseudo-Cicero), Ad C. Herennium: de Ratione Dicendi (Rhetorica ad Herennium), with an English translation by H. Caplan, Loeb Classical Library (London, 1964), p. 7.

³⁰ Edmund Gosse, "The Custom of Biography," Anglo-Saxon Review, VIII (1901), 200.

dear Sir" tend to rebuff and exclude the reader. But the device did establish a perimeter, holding the work together despite its topicality. The three topical divisions of the biography are approximately equal in length (running nine to twelve pages each in the 1668 edition), and by means of subordination they comprise much of the data which Renaissance biographers had presented as distinct topics. For example, Cowley's friends are not introduced in a single section, as an illustration of status or character, in the manner which Harpsfield and Stapleton had employed in their lives of More. Instead, Cowley's prestigious friends in political circles are relevantly mentioned in the section on his public career. In the section on Cowley's writings Sprat nicely suggests the poet's intellectual milieu by reminding Clifford that the Society, represented by Clifford and Sprat himself, had invited Cowley to write a definitive treatise on the English language. And in the character section Cowley's domestic relationships are described.

Johnson criticized Sprat for having emphasized the character of Cowley, at the expense of the life.³¹ The biography is notably lacking in vital details and illustrative materials which might have contributed to a more vigorous realization of Cowley's life. But in point of form Sprat developed a method for comprehending the various aspects of

³¹ Samuel Johnson, "Cowley," Lives of the English Poets, ed. George Birkbeck Hill (Oxford, 1905), I, 1.

a writer's life under a few topical heads, the whole work being clearly divided, yet unified by the epistle frame. The epistle form was adopted by Evelyn for his life of Mrs. Godolphin,³² and reappeared in several mid-eighteenth-century works, being considered a particularly dignified biographical technique at that time.³³ However Sprat's most enduring contribution proved to be the three-part organization of literary biography. Although it was temporarily eclipsed by the popular model of Dryden's Plutarch, the tripartite scheme gradually emerged as a customary pattern after 1720, providing the structure for literary lives written by Fenton, Crusius, Johnson, Birch, Spence, and others. Variations of the pattern will be discussed in later chapters.

Dryden's method differed from Sprat's in almost every way, except in being a topical, rather than chronological, scheme. Where Sprat had taken a dignified, literary tone, as one gentleman writing to another about a deceased friend, Dryden adopted a conversational tone which he varied within the rhetorical range between "dignified" and "facetious"

³² John Evelyn, The Life of Mrs. Godolphin, ed. Harriet Sampson (Oxford, 1939). This work remained in manuscript until edited and published in 1847.

³³ David Mallet, Memoirs of . . . Bolingbroke (London, 1752), and John Boyle, Earl of Cork and Orrery, Remarks on the Life and Writings of Dr. Jonathan Swift (London, 1752) used epistle form. Harold Williams states that Orrery believed that the form connoted rank or dignity, in "Swift's Early Biographers," Pope and His Contemporaries, eds. J. L. Clifford and Louis Landa (Oxford, 1949), p. 119.

address.³⁴ Where Sprat had directed his remarks away from his readers, Dryden drew in his audience with such devices as a frank admission that he lacked both the materials and the proper method to compose a biography -- a technique designed to present the speaker as "friendly both to the hearers and the truth."³⁵ Sprat had held his work to a concentrated focus on his subject; but Dryden amplified his perspective with citation of earlier critics of Plutarch, comparisons, and a major digression into the definition of biography.³⁶ In short, Sprat had developed a method for composing clearly structured, strictly pertinent topical biography, but Dryden introduced a discursive method which had the advantages of being more entertaining and more open to a variety of related information and ideas.

Dryden's use of the conversational voice to hold and direct the readers' attention, while commenting upon his own compositional techniques, was widely imitated by biographers.

³⁴ Ad Herennium, p. 197, distinguished conversational tones: "the Dignified, the Explicative, the Narrative, and the Facetious." The last is not intended to be frivolous, but "can on the basis of some circumstance elicit a laugh which is modest and refined."

³⁵ Ad Herennium, p. 353.

³⁶ Dryden's analysis of biography did not differ materially from Bacon's. Both considered lives a type of history which excelled other types in profit or instruction and pleasure, since, to quote Bacon, "lives, if they be well written, propounding to themselves a person to represent in whom actions both greater and smaller, public and private, have a comixture, must of necessity contain a more true and lively representation" (The Essays, ed. A. W. Pollard, p. 242).

For decades after the publication of Plutarch topical biographies were related and commented upon by a sort of biographer-persona: informal, friendly, self-deprecatory.³⁷ This is the voice used by Walter Pope remarking, "If I should persist in this way of enumerating the Bishop's friends; There's one, there's two, and so on like Faggots, I should tire the Reader and myself: therefore as to those that remain, I shall serve them up in Clusters."³⁸ Or the tone of Rowe observing, in apology for his slight materials pertaining to Shakespeare, "we are hardly satisfy'd with an account of any remarkable person 'till we have heard him describ'd even to the very cloaths he wears."³⁹ And Theobald saying, "I doubt not but the Reader will forgive me for transcribing the Orator's Sentiments so fully"⁴⁰ The high esteem in which Dryden's style was held may have prompted some direct imitations, notably Rowe's Shakespeare, of which Monk remarked, it "seems almost deliberately modelled on Dryden's

³⁷ James Sutherland discusses the prevalence of conversational patterns in prose during this period in "Some Aspects of Eighteenth-Century Prose," Essays on the Eighteenth Century presented to David Nichol Smith (Oxford, 1945), pp. 94-110. However, Dryden was the first biographer to employ the conversational voice.

³⁸ Walter Pope, The Life of Seth, Lord Bishop of Salisbury (1697), ed. J. B. Bambrough, Luttrell Society Reprints No. 21 (Oxford, 1961), p. 95.

³⁹ Nicholas Rowe, "Some Account of the Life, etc. of Mr. William Shakespeare" (1709), Eighteenth-Century Essays on Shakespeare, ed. D. N. Smith (New York, 1962), p. 1.

⁴⁰ Lewis Theobald, The Life . . . of Cato, 2nd ed. (London, 1713), p. 10.

prefaces, for it is loosely organized, discursive, intimate."⁴¹ Yet further, writers at that time evidently doubted that the lives of relatively ordinary persons (as compared to rulers, warriors, or martyred saints) could interest and entertain readers; and, as J. A. K. Thomson suggested in a wider context, biographers are inclined to turn to commentary when they lack confidence in the value or interest of their materials.⁴² Apologies for the dullness of their subjects' lives, coupled with complaints concerning the paucity of their materials, were frequent in the works of discursive biographers, and eventually became a cliché introduction to literary biography.⁴³

Following the method of Dryden, writers often provided digressions from their particular biographical subject as extra entertainment for readers. Walter Pope's digressions were so numerous, and occasionally so far-fetched, that a contemporary critic accused him of having modelled his life

⁴¹ Samuel Holt Monk, "Introduction" to Rowe's Some Account of . . . Shakespeare, Augustan Reprint Society No. 17 (Los Angeles, 1948).

⁴² Thomson pointed out that English biographers generally failed to follow Suetonius' practice of letting the facts speak for themselves (Classical Influences on English Prose London, 1956 , p. 100).

⁴³ Perhaps these commonplace complaints derived from Dryden's justifiable mention of the difficulty of finding biographical data on Plutarch. Already common when George Granville, Lord Lansdowne wrote, "It has always been the complaint of those who have written the Lives of Men of Letters that the Materials they afford are insufficient to Furnish out an entertaining discourse," in opening his Life of Wycherley (London, 1718), the formula was yet current when Owen Ruffhead wrote The Life of Alexander Pope (London, 1769).

of Seth Ward on Don Quixote.⁴⁴ Pope himself argued that he had abandoned a plan of "continuous narration" in favor of a chaptered topical pattern, replete with digressions, out of consideration for the "weary Reader."⁴⁵ Similarly George Mackenzie dropped his project for a catalogue of Scotch authors in favor of a series of biographies, citing Dryden as his model, and promising that: "Moreover, for the Reader's greater Diversion, whenever I find an Author engaged in a Controversy of any moment, I shall give a short historical Deduction of that Controversy."⁴⁶ Theobald added copious historical digressions to the second edition of his life of Cato.⁴⁷ And Gildon, in the section of Lansdowne's Wycherley authored by him, developed a digression on patrons of the

⁴⁴ The critic was Thomas Wood, and his comments are cited by J. B. Bamborough (Pope's editor; see n. 38 above), pp. 6-7. Bamborough suggests that Pope's digressions were artfully interspersed to cover "tender" parts of the Bishop's life which Pope chose to omit.

⁴⁵ Pope did not provide chapters in the Renaissance manner to separate and distinguish various topics, although such was the effect. His purpose was to have chapters serve "as Benches on a long walk," indicating a shift from the static to the progressive view of biography.

⁴⁶ George Mackenzie, The Lives and Characters of the Most Eminent Writers of the Scots Nation, 3 vols. (Edinburgh, 1708-1722; rpt. New York: Garland, 1971), I, ii.

⁴⁷ This work, following on the heels of Addison's successful play (Cato, 1713), was perhaps more informative than the "six-penny" lives which Stauffer states came in floods after such popular productions as Rowe's Jane Shore (1714). But it typifies the way in which contemporary writers seized opportunities to profit from the popularity of the two genres -- drama and biography. See Stauffer, "A Parasitic Form of Biography," MLN, LV (1940), 289-292.

arts around a single anecdote which described the impoverished poet Butler seeking an introduction to Buckingham, who was dining at the Cock in Suffolk Street. The interview had scarcely begun, when "of a sudden they heard the squeaking of Fiddles and the chattering of Whores in an adjacent room," to which the Duke at once repaired, forgetting poor Butler entirely.⁴⁸ So in many biographies the digression, whether it was introduced to divert attention from slight materials or from a dull subject, often served to enrich the social or historical background of the life, "to represent as it were to the eye, the places, Customes and Fashions, that were of old Times."⁴⁹

In literary biography, writers frequently developed a critical digression. Discussion of a subject's writings in biographies written before Dryden's Plutarch had been mainly descriptive. For example, Sprat had mentioned the various genres in which Cowley had worked and had listed some of his themes or subjects; but he had not undertaken to evaluate or characterize Cowley's writings beyond offering general praise

⁴⁸ Lansdowne, Wycherley, p. 9. George Sherburn (TLS, May 1, 1922) wrote that Charles Gildon had in fact written all of this life except for the literary character inserted by Lansdowne. Gildon's presentation of the Butler-Buckingham story appears to be the first and best use of the anecdote, which was later remodelled by Major Pack, Some Memoirs of William Wycherley (London, 1728), and by Samuel Johnson in the Life of Butler.

⁴⁹ John Aubrey, quoted without reference by Oliver Lawson Dick, ed., Aubrey's Brief Lives (Ann Arbor, 1962), p. cvi. Aubrey held that a biographer's task included diligent research and verification of anecdotes.

and remarking that Cowley's love poems gave no offense to modesty. But about the turn of the eighteenth century many biographers began to consider themselves competent or entertaining critics of literature. Rowe thus became the first of Shakespeare's biographers to include a critical evaluation of the poet in his work, and John Hughes introduced criticism into Spenserian biography in his 1715 life of Edmund Spenser.⁵⁰ Often, however, such critiques were nothing more than flimsy puffs and copious quotations which served mainly to swell the volume and price of a book, as Gildon remarked when revising Langbaine's Lives.⁵¹

In the extreme case of one fifty-six page life of Addison,⁵² all but ten pages were taken up by a rambling essay on the subject's writings. This illustrates the harmful aspect of Dryden's influence on topical form: hack writers could assemble a biography out of a few matters of public record (the birth date, cause of death, provisions of the will, titles of works or positions held), and fill in the spaces with conversational chatter or digressive criticism.

⁵⁰ Concerning Rowe's contribution see S. Schoenbaum, Shakespeare's Lives (Oxford, 1970), pp. 134 ff. Concerning Hughes's, see A. C. Judson, "The Eighteenth-Century Lives of Edmund Spenser," Huntington Library Quarterly, XVI (1953), 161-181.

⁵¹ Gerard Langbaine, The Lives . . . of the English Dramatic Poets, revised by Charles Gildon (London, 1698).

⁵² Anon. (dedication signed G. J.; printed for E. Curll), Memoirs of the Life of the Right Honorable Joseph Addison (London, 1719).

Addison himself had deplored this development of biography in 1716.⁵³ And Capell, surveying the field retrospectively in 1767, summed up such lives as "an imperfect and loose account of his father, and family; his own marriage and the issue of it; some traditional stories . . . together with his life's final period as gathered from his monument, is the full and whole amount of historical matter that is in any of these writings; in which the critic and essayist swallow up the biographer."⁵⁴

Writers who adopted Dryden's topical method generally omitted character sections. None had been supplied by Dryden in Plutarch. But this traditional section gradually reentered topical biography during the second decade of the century. In literary lives, critical digressions were customarily inserted between the scraps of life-data and the section containing cause of death, provisions of the will, and an occasional epitaph. To the last section some writers added photographic physical descriptions and tag-line characterizations, e.g., that Addison left the character of a

⁵³ Joseph Addison, Freeholder No. 35 (Friday, April 20, 1716) noted that contemporary Grub Street biographers had no greater stock of authentic materials than a few dates, the cause of death, and the last will and testament.

⁵⁴ Edward Capell was specifically deploring the traditional lives of Shakespeare, though his remarks have wider application. (Capell, The Works of Shakespeare [London, 1767], I, 72). Rowe's Account had become the basic eighteenth-century life of Shakespeare, revised by Pope and reused by Hanmer, Warburton, etc.

"Great and Good Man," or that Wycherley deserved to be called "Manly Wycherley." So however distended and ill-proportioned it seemed, the literary biography by 1720 showed signs of settling into a distinct pattern of life-works-character.

In contrast, the character section was widely used by writers of chronological biography during this period, and it was slowly expanded from the huddled grouping of random items seen, for example, in Walton's life of Donne (1640), to a relatively spacious, orderly topical appendix. In Strype's works the character sections were similar to multi-chaptered Renaissance-style topical biographies, lacking only the topic of life-history. Thus Strype covered the life of John Cheke in five chapters and then devoted three more to Cheke's posterity, his religion and principles, and his learning and writings -- each chapter being neatly subdivided into numbered topical sections. Following the life of Cranmer, Strype announced that he would gather up "some few fragments more";⁵⁵ and proceeded through seventeen chapters and more than one hundred pages to detail his subject's physical appearance and constitution; his finances and possessions; his family and friends; his intellectual and moral attributes;

⁵⁵ John Strype, Memorials of . . . Thomas Cranmer (1694); new edition, Oxford, 1821. Cranmer was Strype's earliest, longest, and most unwieldy work. His later works were composed on the same pattern but are shorter and relatively well-proportioned. These are: The Life and Acts of John Aylmer (1701); The Life of the Learned Sir John Cheke (1705); The History of the Life and Acts of . . . Edmund Grindall (1710); The Life and Acts of Matthew Parker (1711); all available in the new editions of Oxford, 1821.

and his just reputation (rejecting calumnies against Cranmer, and so forth). No other writer presented the character in such schematic detail; but the pattern of physical constitution, domestic concerns, moral and intellectual constitution, and reputation, became quite standard, and is evident in Burnet's biographical characters,⁵⁶ as well as in Roger North's concluding character of Francis North.⁵⁷

Several scholars have suggested that the seventeenth-century funeral sermons had some influence on contemporary biography.⁵⁸ If so, such influence must have been on the

⁵⁶ Burnet's biographical characters are best developed in the Life of Hale and The Life of William Bedell (London, 1685). His sermon style of characterization may be seen in the "Funeral Speech on Robert Boyle, Jan. 7, 1691/2," appended to Eustace Budgell, Memoirs of the Lives of the Illustrious Boyles (London, 1737). His most extensive character study is the Essay on the Memory of the Late Queen (London, 1695). He simplistically defined historical characters in terms of a ruling passion in the posthumously published History of My Own Time (1723-34); see Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time (Oxford, 1833), I, 165-192.

⁵⁷ Roger North, The Life of the Right Honorable Francis North (London, 1742). James L. Clifford dates the composition of this work at about 1706 in "Roger North and the Art of Biography," Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Literature: Essays . . ., ed. C. Camden (Chicago, 1963), pp. 275-285; while P. T. Millard argues that it was written between 1710 and 1718 in "The Chronology of Roger North's Main Works," RES, n. s. XXIV (Aug. 1973), 233-294.

⁵⁸ Stauffer, Before 1700, pp. 265 ff.; and Frank L. Huntley, ed. Two Funeral Sermons (1635), Augustan Reprint Society No. 62 (Los Angeles, 1956), p. lv. Huntley describes the forms of both the 17th-century funeral sermon and funeral oration.

The classical or original tie between funeral orations and biography is outlined by J. G. C. Anderson in the introduction to De Vita Agricola by Tacitus, ed. H. Furneaux (Oxford, 1922).

development of the character section, for in respect to overall form there is no apparent relationship between most biographies of the period and the form of funeral sermon then current. The latter opened with a biblical text, then analyzed the ways in which the deceased person's life reflected the text, and concluded with a summation of the exemplary points of the life and character. An anonymous life of Bedell, most probably written by Archbishop Sancroft,⁵⁹ Burnet's Essay on the Memory of the Late Queen,⁶⁰ and Stackhouse's Memoirs of . . . Atterbury,⁶¹ contain the point by point analysis and interpretation of life and/or character typical of funeral sermons; but these works were clearly designed as exemplary or argumentative character studies rather than as biographies.

To summarize the developments in topical form prior to 1720, before considering the problems of chronological form,

⁵⁹ Anon., A True Relation of the Life and Death of . . . William Bedell, ed. T. Wharton Jones (Westminster, 1872). Jones attributed the work to Sancroft on the basis of correspondence between Sancroft and Bedell's son relating to a projected biography; and suggested that the work remained in manuscript because Burnet's Bedell appeared in print before Sancroft's was completed.

⁶⁰ This lengthy character study, published in London, 1695, became something of an international best-seller, "widely read and translated into French and Dutch," according to G. P. Gooch, Courts and Cabinets (New York, 1946), p. 92.

⁶¹ Thomas Stackhouse, Memoirs of the Life and Conduct of Dr. Francis Atterbury (London, 1723). The author stated that this work was designed to show that Atterbury had been guilty of treason, and that everything "done in these papers is with a Design subservient to that End."

the unbounded Renaissance method of composition was variously limited and unified after 1668. Sprat introduced the tripartite literary life, unified by the device of epistle form. Dryden popularized the discursive essay biography, a digressive pattern rendered coherent by rhetorical skill. In the hands of less able rhetoricians than Dryden, the essay biography lost its coherence; but the digression emerged as a useful vehicle for social or historical enrichment of the biographical picture. Digressions into literary criticism were more or less flatulent, but they established the formal juxtaposition of an author's career, his art, and his character as a standard method of composing literary biography.⁶² Topical organization of character sections replaced the tossed together, odds-and-ends grouping used in earlier times, permitting an orderly expansion of the unit. In short, the vigor and variety of Renaissance biography had been pruned away; but the topical forms which existed about 1720 held promise of accommodating new sorts of material and of depicting the biographic subject in a wider perspective.

⁶² Richard D. Altick states that Samuel Johnson's "innovation, such as it was, lay in his juxtaposing the man and the poet," though without any implication of interconnection between the poet's personality and his art, in Lives and Letters: A History of Literary Biography in England and America (New York, 1965), p. 57. In fact the patterns used by Johnson in the Lives of the Poets had been standard long before 1779.

II. Experiments in Chronological Form Prior to 1720

Biographers who attempted straightforward chronological exposition during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were doubly hampered by a lack of useful formal precedents and by the pull of the traditional topical organization of lives. In consequence, their formal experiments do not match the present-day reader's expectations of a chronological narrative; most of their works are deficient in continuity, and oddly-proportioned, owing to topical insertions and appendices. However, in meeting specific technical challenges, these biographers developed compositional methods which were to be used with increasing sophistication throughout the eighteenth century.

The only chronological pattern well-established before 1668 was the exemplary de casibus form, descended from Boccaccio's De Casibus Virorum Illustrium, introduced to England about 1430 by Lydgate's Falls of Princes, popularized by successively expanded editions of The Mirrour for Magistrates (1559, 1568, 1574, 1578, 1587, and 1610),¹ and used as the framework for a prose life in Cavendish's Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey (written about 1554 and printed in 1641). Since this form could be applied only to the lives

¹ John Lydgate's expanded verse version was based on de Premierfait's prose work, Des Cas des Nobles Hommes, which was itself based on Boccaccio's poems. The Mirrour for Magistrates is verse with prose links.

of persons who rose in the world, flourished, and then suffered a sudden reverse of fortune, its usefulness to biographers was very limited. In the hands of a determined exemplum writer perhaps the lives of Milton or Harrington could have been molded into the de casibus scheme; but many worthy subjects had lives of an even tenor, or of progressive success, prosperity, and happiness. John Foxe, in The Actes and Monuments, had introduced the technique of expanding and illustrating biographical narrative with correspondence and reconstructed dialogue,² a technique adopted by many of the late seventeenth-century writers; but Foxe's limited narratives, focused on the martyrdom of numerous Protestants, did not provide structural models for full-scale chronological lives.

Even histories offered no example of how factual materials might be presented with meaningful continuity in a temporal scheme. As Kracauer observes: "Our present Western conception of history as an immanent and continuous process

² This work was first published in English in 1563 and reissued in enlarged editions in 1570, 1576, 1583, 1596, with four more printings during the seventeenth century. Nicolson (p. 31) and R. W. Chambers ("On the Continuity of English Prose," p. clix) credit Roper with introducing dialogue into English biography in his life of More. However Roper's work, first printed in 1626 and not reissued until 1716, had no appreciable influence on the genre.

Foxe was certainly the first to use masses of personal letters in biographical narrative; e.g., the letters from the imprisoned John Careless to his family in The Actes and Monuments, ed. G. Townsend (London, 1849), VIII, 171-200.

in a chronological, or secular, time is of modern origin."³ As late as 1566, when Bodin proposed that the key to understanding history was the principle of time and that accurate chronology was essential as a guide in the labyrinth,⁴ the writers of histories were not inclined to accept his view. Seventeenth-century historians did not present events as occurring in linear chronological sequence, but instead attributed major events to the accidental concatenation of random factors or even to divine intervention, though the latter attribution was uncommon.⁵ They "aimed at factual truth, not at interpretation of causes or examination of consequences," in the late seventeenth century;⁶ and therefore sequential coherence and interpretive periodization were rarely displayed in their works.⁷ Not until the middle of

³ Siegfried Kracauer, "Time and History," History and Theory, Beiheft 6 (1966), 65-78.

⁴ Jean Bodin, Method for the Easy Comprehension of History, trans. B. Reynolds (New York, 1966), Ch. 3 and throughout.

⁵ For example, Thomas Hobbes, Behemoth: The History of the Causes of the Civil Wars (1682); or Edward Hyde, first Earl of Clarendon, History of the Rebellion (written 1650-70). Clarendon saw the causes of the Rebellion to be the tempers of the times and the people coming together in a "mass of confusion" (W. Dunn Macray, ed. [Oxford, 1888], I, 4), and attributed the Restoration to the hand of God (VI, 234).

⁶ Arnaldo Momigliano, "Ancient History and the Antiquarian," Studies in Historiography, p. 21.

⁷ F. Smith Fussner identified the mid-seventeenth century as the time when historians began to distinguish certain periods in the course of history, in The Historical Revolution: English Historical Writing and Thought, 1580-1640 (London, 1962), p. 304.

eighteenth century could a critic of historical writing observe that although current events seem "very often original, unprepared, single and unrelative," in histories "we see them as they followed one another, or as they produced one another, causes and effects" ⁸

So the technical difficulties of composing chronological biographies which are readily anticipated, or recognized, by writers of the present day were scarcely perceived, until encountered, by Restoration biographers. ⁹ The problems of abstracting significant lines of development from the mass of life-data, coping with gaps in information, emphasizing the points in time which appear to mark the beginning of a new period in career or character orientation, indicating habitual behavior without repetition, etc., required innovative solutions.

In trying to establish a sequential, or narrative line, a number of writers simplified their task by considering only one aspect or major area of their subjects' lives. The most common practice was that which Burnet attempted in the life of Hale: to pursue the subject's "history and character in

⁸ Henry St. John, Lord Bolingbroke, Letters on the Study and Use of History (1752). The edition cited is London, 1770, p. 34. Leo Braudy discusses Bolingbroke's idea that historical continuity is a product of literary imagination in Narrative Form in History and Fiction (Princeton, 1970), pp. 27-28.

⁹ The presently recognized technical problems of the chronological biographer are discussed by Catherine D. Bowen, Biography: The Craft and the Calling (Boston, 1965); and by Paul M. Kendall, The Art of Biography, Ch. I.

the public and exemplary parts of his life without interrupting the thread of the relation with what was private and domestic."¹⁰ But the relating of preferments, studies, writings, anecdotes or notable events in chronological order, without any implication of a developmental process in the life, did not clarify biographic form. Instead it produced a fragmentary topical pattern. For example Aubrey's life of Hobbes, studded with accurate dates (a rare addition even to chronological biography at the time), takes up the subject's studies at a certain period, then describes his health at that time, supplies an anecdote revealing his reputation as it stood at the moment, and so forth, before proceeding to the same, or different topics under a later temporal heading.¹¹ In Strype's works a stronger narrative line occasionally emerges; but most often the biographic subject is buried beneath the author's extensive illustrations of the ideas, manners, and institutions of earlier times. Burnet introduced a suggestion of development in the life of Hale by emphasizing the change which came over Hale when he discovered in himself a fascination with the study of law. The

¹⁰ Hale, p. 115.

¹¹ John Aubrey, "Thomas Hobbes," in Aubrey's Brief Lives, ed. O. L. Dick, pp. 147-159. Dick states that Aubrey intended this life, written in 1679, to be an informal supplement to the impersonal Latin life which Hobbes himself had composed; and quotes Aubrey's remarks to the effect that in his first draft he had put down every trivial particular which he remembered (including some inaccurate dates), and then had decided to let the work stand as written (pp. lxxxii-lxxxiii).

former dreamer and play-goer adopted an austere, unfashionable mode of dress, snubbed his light-hearted friends, and devoted his time to exhaustive study and research in his chosen field. This single-minded drive provides the basis for Hale's continuous advancement in his legal career both before and after the Restoration. Yet as Butt remarked, Hale seems overstuffed,¹² and essentially non-progressive, despite Burnet's attempt to establish a "thread of relation."

Writers who emphasized the private and domestic areas of their subjects' lives often produced interesting and intimate character studies. In the case of Evelyn's subject, Mrs. Godolphin, a character study was equivalent to a biography, since the lady had scarcely any external or public life before her early death. But in their treatments of Milton and Sir William Temple, Phillips¹³ and Lady Giffard,¹⁴ respectively, passed lightly over the important political and literary contributions of their subjects, and thus provided only supplements to, or materials for fuller biographies.

¹² John Butt, defending Walton's editing of Donne's letters in Biography in the Hands of Walton . . ., p. 18, pointed to Burnet's overstuffed lives as examples of poor editing.

¹³ Edward Phillips, "Life of John Milton," originally prefixed to Letters of State, written by John Milton (London, 1694); available in Early Lives of Milton, ed. H. Darbishire (London, 1932).

¹⁴ Martha Giffard, The Life and Character of Sir William Temple (written circa 1690; printed in abridged versions in London, 1728, 1730); in The Early Essays and Romances of Sir William Temple, ed. G. C. Moore Smith (Oxford, 1930), pp. 1-31.

Yet such works demonstrated that minor or mundane details, actions, and ideas, when related in a cumulative, chronological scheme, could provide "a glimpse of the intense individual existence" of the subject -- a feature which Strachey remarked in North's life of his brother John North.¹⁵ Stauffer has observed that few eighteenth-century biographers seemed to recognize that character develops; and Sutherland noted that personality, the quick, observable aspect of character, was scarcely evident in late seventeenth-century lives.¹⁶ However both character development and personality are suggested in these lives, all of which were written by close relatives or friends.

When writers narrowed their biographic focus to a single strand of the subject's life, sequential continuity was readily achieved. In dealing only with Rochester's religious beliefs in his biography, Burnet had a ready chain of development from non-belief, through conversion, to faith.¹⁷ Toland undertook a more complex task in elucidating the

¹⁵ Lytton Strachey, "The Life, Illness, and Death of Dr. John North," Portraits in Miniature (1931; rpt. New York: Norton & Co., 1962), p. 30. Strachey nevertheless considered North's work (written circa 1610, published in The Life of the Hon. Sir Dudley North, Kt. . . . and of the Honorable and Reverend Dr. John North [London, 1744]) an "absurd memoir," and vainly tried to improve upon it.

¹⁶ Stauffer, Eighteenth Century, p. 356; and Sutherland, English Literature of the Late Seventeenth Century (Oxford, 1969), p. 256.

¹⁷ Gilbert Burnet, The Life and Death of John, Earl of Rochester (1680); ed. John Jebb, Lives . . . by Gilbert Burnet, London, 1863).

intellectual development of Harrington, from his awakening interest in republican government, prompted by a prolonged visit to Venice, through the writing of (and ideas expressed in) Oceana, to his firmness under examination in the Tower, and eventual insanity and death.¹⁸

Such fluent sequential patterning as Toland's being the exception, many of the early chronological lives contradict Chase's assertion that "historical biography . . . is easier than history: the scene is narrower, there is a natural form and a natural unity and coherence,"¹⁹ and come closer to confirming Stauffer's idea that biography might effectively imitate the "formlessness of life itself."²⁰ Yet within the somewhat incoherent temporal arrangement of life data most biographers tried to define certain periods of time, either as simple punctuation of chronology or as significant structural elements of their subjects' lives. Strype's marginal notations of the passing years and Phillips' division of Milton's life according to domicile, i.e., relating what had happened while Milton resided at this house, and then at the next house, and so forth, were certainly not designed to enhance the reader's understanding of transitional moments

¹⁸ John Toland, The Life of James Harrington (1699), later prefixed to The Oceana and Other Works, ed. Thomas Birch (London, 1737).

¹⁹ Eugene P. Chase, "Recent English Political Biographies," Journal of Modern History, III (1931), 614.

²⁰ Stauffer, Eighteenth Century, p. 423. Stauffer's remark was directed toward what he perceived as the formlessness of Boswell's Johnson.

of importance in the subjects' life histories. Even North's device of dividing the life of Francis North into four consecutive time units, each concluded with a character, was evidently a technical convenience, not an effort on the part of the biographer to act as an "informing intelligence,"²¹ shaping raw life data in order to provide the reader with specific insights. As North explained his plan, "It will be hard to lead a Thread, in Good Order of Time, through his Lordship's whole Life; for there are many and various Incidents to be remembered, which will interfere, and make it necessary to step back sometimes, and then again forwards."²² Therefore the periodic breaks in the chronological exposition of Francis North's public career were needed so that North could fill in the domestic developments (courtship, marriage, etc.) which had transpired during the preceding unit of time.

Meaningful periodization, as Fussner defined it, requires recognition and explanation of how and why successive eras differed from one another.²³ Fussner's discussion

²¹ The phrase was used by Leon Edel, Literary Biography: The Alexander Lectures 1955-56 (Toronto, 1957), with Boswell as the example.

²² Francis North, p. 10. In the lives of Dudley North and John North the problems of chronological exposition were handled without the aid of periodization. Therein North shifted from narrative to topicality with such an announcement as, "I shall here insert some few Memoirs, which will not fall apter in any other place" (Dudley North, p. 113). George Carver, Alms for Oblivion, p. 119, remarks that such insertions detract from the vitality of North's Lives.

²³ F. Smith Fussner, The Historical Revolution, p. 304.

pertained to historiography; but in the narrower range of biography both Burnet and Toland experimented with techniques for emphasizing points of transition in their subjects' lives without extensive interpretive comment. Their techniques involved a change of tempo and style sufficiently abrupt or protracted to distinguish important transitions from the regular course of the biography. In his early work, the Life and Death of . . . Rochester, Burnet resorted to extreme structural exaggeration as well. The first thirty-three years of Rochester's misspent life were compressed into fifteen pages, and the final few weeks of life after his death-bed conversion were stretched out to cover another fifteen pages. Separating these periods, Burnet developed a fifty-page paraphrase of the discussions he had held with the dying Rochester -- discussions which had effected the Earl's conversion. Concerning this strenuously periodized work, Johnson is said to have remarked, "We have a good Death; there is not much Life."²⁴ In later works Burnet avoided such authoritative shaping. In his life of Bedell, only one-sixth of the work is devoted to the first fifty-eight years of Bedell's life; but the reason for the disproportion is clearly stated by Burnet in a transitional announcement: "In laying open his designs and performances in this last and greatest period of his life I have further materials than in the former parts For my [subject] was particularly

²⁴ Boswell, Johnson, III, 191-192.

known."²⁵ The use of direct quotation of speech or writings to distinguish significant transitions is an effective technique in Toland's biographies. In the Life of Milton, wishing to emphasize his subject's controversial political ideas as a distinct period in the intellectual life-history,²⁶ Toland shifted from expository prose to extensive quotation of Milton's reply to Salmasius and of Salmasius' defense.²⁷ In Harrington, he inserted a lengthy, dramatized account of the examination in the Tower, a device very similar to the dramatized trial-scene traditional in criminal biography.²⁸

In summarizing the habitual or routine activities of

²⁵ Gilbert Burnet, Life of William Bedell, p. 41.

²⁶ Toland's works should be included among the early examples of "intellectual biography" which Paul J. Korshin identifies among the works of Aubrey, Johnson, etc., in "Ana-Books and Intellectual Biography in the Eighteenth Century," Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture, ed. H. E. Pagliaro, Proceedings of the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, Vol. 3 (Cleveland, 1973), pp. 191-204.

²⁷ John Toland, "Life of John Milton," originally prefixed to A Complete Collection of the Historical, Political, and Miscellaneous Works . . . (Amsterdam, 1697); in H. Darbishire, ed., Early Lives of Milton (London, 1932).

²⁸ Criminal biographies generally reflected the classical Suetonian pattern, sketching a subject's background and life up to the time he became a criminal; then depicting his criminal activities in an extensive group of anecdotes; then shifting to a detailed or dramatized account of the closing period of the life.

The traditional elements of this species are detailed by William R. Irwin, The Making of Jonathan Wild: A Study in the Literary Method of Henry Fielding (New York, 1941). Examples are The Life and Death of Gamaliel Ratsey, a Famous Thief of England (1605), Shakespeare Association Facsimiles No. 10 (Oxford, 1935); and History of the Lives of the Most Remarkable Criminals (1735), ed. A. L. Hayward (London, 1927).

their subjects, most biographers had recourse to the appended character section. With the exceptions of Aubrey and North, the writers under discussion lacked skill in presentation of anecdotes which might illustrate or illuminate habitual behavior or patterns in the life. When used, as in Burnet's Hale, anecdotes often appeared heavy-handed and clumsily patched into the work. Strype used anecdotes to illustrate aspects of the times in which his subjects had lived, e.g., class relationships, peculiar applications of Church law, etc., but few of these focused on the behavior of the man about whom he was writing.²⁹

Beyond the obvious difference between chronological and topical composition of biography, there were several notable contrasts between the works written by the chronological biographers and those composed by the imitators of Dryden. First, writers in the former group usually stated that their works had some didactic benefits, in that they illustrated history, virtue, or manners; while the latter group stressed the entertainment value of their works. Thus Burnet wrote that the aim of his Rochester was to improve others; that his Hale would reveal "wisdom and virtue . . . in such plain and familiar instances" as might be applied to the readers' own

²⁹ Strype's works might well have been cited by Dunn among the early examples of "the habit of making biographical narrative serve the purposes of history." Dunn's examples were White Kennet's History of England (1706) and Hackett's Scrinia Reserata (written 1657, printed 1693), in English Biography, pp. 68, 90.

lives; and that his Bedell would be of more use to the cause of religion than some far-fetched saint's life because "there is nothing that can have a stronger operation to overcome all prejudices against Episcopacy, than the proposing of eminent patterns, whose Lives continue to speak still, though they are dead."³⁰ Toland asserted that "Writings of this nature should, in my opinion, be designed to recommend Virtue and to expose Vice; or to illustrate History and to preserve the memory of extraordinary things."³¹ Aubrey's aim was to bring to life not only the people, but also the customs and fashions of former times, as previously noted; and Strype always announced in his sub-titles that some particular area of history would be "greatly illustrated."

But when the bulk of these works are described by Stauffer as "pious and exemplary,"³² or assumed to have been mere panegyrics by Clifford and Longaker,³³ or dismissed by

³⁰ Gilbert Burnet, Life of Hale, p. 3; and Life of Bedell, unpagged prefatory remarks. Sprat, in concluding the Life of Cowley, had similarly suggested that the life might serve as an example to others; but this mild hint of didacticism was exceptional in topical biographies, particularly in those written in the discursive essay mode.

³¹ John Toland, Life of Milton, p. 83.

³² Stauffer, Before 1700, p. 265.

³³ James L. Clifford, "How Much Should a Biographer Tell? Some Eighteenth-Century Views," Essays in Eighteenth-Century Biography, ed. P. B. Daghljan (Bloomington, Ind., 1968), pp. 67-95; and Mark Longaker, English Biography in the Eighteenth Century, Ch. I.

Nicolson as "impure biography," tainted by the authors' intentions to do more than depict individual personality,³⁴ it should be observed that they are not homiletic, eulogistic, or instructional. Certainly, as Johnson observed, "He that writes the life of another is either his friend or his enemy."³⁵ But the chronological biographers, unlike the discursive, topical biographers, generally reserved their evaluations and comments to introductory or concluding remarks. In the actual lives, they presented a variety of biographical facts and documents (letters, memorandums, excerpts from diaries) which the reader could evaluate for himself. Thus Burnet, in writing about Bedell, had a subject whose martyrdom at the hands of the Irish had similarity to the fates of various saints, yet he avoided presenting his material in a high, hagiographic style. And John Evelyn, who considered his young friend, Mrs. Godolphin, a saintly figure, wrote her life in an unembellished, straightforward manner. Her letters, in which she fortified her mistrust of marriage with arguments in favor of the single state, her little designs of friendship knots, her thoughtlessness in failing to advise Evelyn of her marriage, are presented so simply that although the author believed she was a saint, the reader may well conclude that Mrs. Godolphin was merely a proper, shy

³⁴ Nicolson, pp. 10, 64.

³⁵ Samuel Johnson, Idler No. 84 (Nov. 24, 1759), in Essays from the "Rambler," "Adventurer" and "Idler," ed. W. J. Bate (New Haven, 1968), p. 348.

young person.³⁶

Thus the didactic or exemplary intent of biographers was not expressed in lecturing and preaching. Instead, a somewhat objective or Baconian attitude prevailed. As expressed by Burnet, the concept was that "Lives must be written with the strictness of a severe historian I will give only a bare and simple relation of his life, and will avoid bestowing on him or his actions such Epithets and Praises as they deserve; but will leave that to the reader. For in writing of Lives all big words are to be left to those who . . . make Lives rather than write them; the things themselves must praise the person."³⁷ When biographical facts might bring dispraise upon the subject, writers employed different means for dealing with the problem. Burnet simply ignored (or perhaps did not know) the cruel face Matthew Hale had shown to his wives and children, an aspect gratuitously sketched by Roger North.³⁸ Toland presented Milton's

³⁶ In fact the style and content of hagiography were "violently hated" for several decades before and after the turn of the eighteenth century, according to Gordon Hall Gerould, Saints' Legends (Cambridge, Mass., 1916), a point exemplified by Burnet's scornful description of the species in his preface to Hale, p. 4.

³⁷ Preface to Bedell. Bacon, in The Advancement of Learning, had written a comparable passage, i.e., "it is the true office of history to represent the events themselves together with the counsels, and to leave the observations and conclusions thereupon to the liberty and faculty of every man's judgment" (Essays, ed. A. Pollard, p. 241).

³⁸ Francis North, p. 63. As a young lawyer Francis North had loathed Lord Chief Justice Hale, a fact which colors Roger North's portrait of Hale and provides an interesting contrast to Burnet's view.

most controversial ideas in Milton's own words, so "that those who approve his Reasons may owe all the obligation to himself."³⁹ Yet he could not refrain, in Milton, from interjecting his own scornful analysis of Salmasius' arguments, and thus managed to outrage many contemporary readers. In his next work, Harrington, Toland simply provided detailed outlines of the ideas presented in his subject's books on government. And Strype, who feared that he might be censured for his "plain and impartial way of writing, and blamed, that I have not put some veil or varnish upon some things which might reflect some blemish upon the man I write of,"⁴⁰ quoted extensively from correspondence, court records, and other contemporary materials to authenticate his data.

A second major contrast between the chronological and the topical biographies was that the former presented men in current and continuous relationship to the world of their time, while the latter rather isolated them from their milieu. With the exception of North, whose "great graphic and dramatic skill"⁴¹ set his works apart from the general run of biographies, no writers developed a detailed, complex, and

³⁹ Milton, p. 84.

⁴⁰ John Strype, Aylmer, p. vii.

⁴¹ Nicolson, pp. 76-77. Here he suggested that North "links the 'actuality' of Aubrey with the 'actuality' of Boswell." Longaker states that North added the most important new materials and methods to biography from the time of Walton to that of Johnson (English Biography, p. 165).

lively picture of their subjects' professional and domestic environment; nor did they provide extensive and significant studies of interaction between the man and the society of his time. But their efforts signalled an advance toward such complex biography. For example, with regard to introducing friends and associates into biography, the most noteworthy innovation in topical form had been Walter Pope's insertions of brief biographies of such persons.⁴² These little lives did not cast any light on the quality of Seth Ward's friendships or particular alliances in Church circles; but they were an improvement over the Renaissance method of listing names and occupations of the subject's important friends, for the reader could gather some picture of the activities, lifestyles, characters and ideas of the persons with whom the main biographical subject associated. However, in chronological lives, friendships appeared as developments related to the course of life. Thus when Bishop Wilkins and Tillotson, then prebend of Canterbury, come to call on the ailing Matthew Hale, the reader can perceive how far up in the world diligence and ambition have raised the once obscure orphan, Hale. Similarly, in discussing published writings the topical biographers had separated them from the life. But when

⁴²Roger North believed that he himself was the first to incorporate "petit biographies" -- as he termed the detailed character studies developed in Francis North (see Preface to Francis North). With respect to influence on the genre, he might as well have been. The device was not widely used until after Francis North was published in 1742.

Burnet, Toland, or Tickell⁴³ presented their subject's works in a temporal context, the external circumstances which contributed to the writing of a certain sermon, treatise, or essay could be taken into account, and the immediate reception of the work (whether enthusiastic, indifferent, or hostile) could be seen as it then affected the writer's hopes, temperament or prospects.

Further, the chronological biographers frequently presented a variety of viewpoints, while the topical lives were customarily related and commented upon from a single point of view, the author's. The evaluations made by contemporaries were occasionally supplied in letters written about the subject, such as a lengthy appraisal of Bedell sent by Henry Wotton to Charles II, quoted in full by Burnet. Adverse contemporary opinions of the subject and specific pejorative interpretations of his actions were presented by Strype, Toland, and North, providing the reader with a somewhat rounded view despite the biographers' unfailing identification of such opinions as "calumnies." The most interesting viewpoint presented was that of the subject himself. Extensive extracts from diaries and personal correspondence revealed what the writer considered important at various points in his

⁴³ Thomas Tickell, "Life of Addison," prefixed to The Works of the Right Honorable Joseph Addison (London, 1721). To this sensibly organized life (criticised by Johnson in Rambler No. 60 for lack of individualizing details), Tickell appended encomiastic verses written by himself, evidently intended to stand as a character section.

life, how he approached or reflected upon experiences. Letters, of course, are not the most reliable representation of what the writer truly thinks; and it may be that Bedell did not take up his position as Bishop of Kilmore among the hostile Irish with quite the confidence, tolerance, and "noble temper of mind" shown in his letters, or that Mrs. Godolphin was not always as exquisitely moral as she appears in her letters to Evelyn. But personal diaries, if not written with an eye to future publication, private memoranda, quick notes (rather than carefully composed letters) convey with more certainty what the writer was concerned with at the moment.

Moreover such materials often illuminate aspects of the subject's character which might not otherwise be apparent in the life-history. As Roger North wrote, justifying his inclusion of selections from Francis North's private papers: "these will represent his Lordship's Way of Reasoning with himself, and others, and how close his thoughts were applied to the substance and Truth of Things, more perhaps than (as was hinted of painters) his fuller tracts will appear to do. And by this means I hope to give a clear account of all I know or can gather of his Lordship's Life, interior and exterior."⁴⁴ So where such materials were included, as in Burnet's Hale, Evelyn's Godolphin, and North's Lives, the biography not only demonstrated the subject's continuous

⁴⁴ Francis North, p. 11.

relationship to the external world, but also to some extent revealed his self-awareness and self-determination.

In general, while topical organization continued to be a popular biographical method, many writers perceived and presented their subjects' lives more as an organic whole, in a temporal scheme. The circumstances, character, and achievements of the individual, instead of appearing as disparate facets, became interrelated factors of the life. With regard to chronological sequence, biographers did not try to impose their personal interpretations of psychological or sociological cause and effect on their life histories, except in simple and factual matters, e.g., that Harrington's stubborn insistence on publishing anti-royalist theses despite the obvious danger to himself, and in defiance of the warnings of his friends, was decidedly the cause of his subsequent misfortunes. The lack of authoritative shaping often resulted in biographies which seem overstuffed and static, such as Burnet's Hale, or which rush along without pause from beginning to end, like Giffard's Temple. But several techniques for setting the chronological pace and perspective were established. Letters, excerpts from personal papers, dramatized scenes, inserted into the expository prose life, served to distinguish certain periods within the life and to provide reflections upon events or character from a variety of viewpoints.

The unity of chronological biographies did not depend upon rhetorical control, as did that of topical lives; nor

did it derive from presentation of the life as a developmental process, as in modern chronological schemes. Instead the duration of personal character, immanent in a variety of situations, relationships, endeavors, or writings emerged as a constant element unifying the lives written by Burnet, Toland, North, and others. Further, the individual's character, in conflict or commerce with the immediate world, appeared as a new determinant force in chronological lives. The notions that Providence or Fortune shaped human life had yielded gradually, since the late Renaissance, to the idea that character had a major role in the course of events;⁴⁵ and in biographies such as Burnet's Bedell and Hale or Toland's Harrington the latter concept provided thematic coherence.

As Nicolson observed, public and professional interest in biography declined for a number of years, notably between

⁴⁵ The concept of Providence, Fate, or Fortune had been modified during the late Renaissance by a new appreciation of the role of character in shaping historical or life events, a change discussed by R. G. Collingwood in The Idea of History (Oxford, 1946), pp. 49-57. Several late entries in the Mirror for Magistrates have been cited as evidence of the new concept of character as a determinant force, i.e., J. R. Hale in his Introduction to The Evolution of British Historiography from Bacon to Namier (London, 1967), p. 12, cites the life of Fabian; and W. Farnham cites "Jack Cade" in "The Mirror for Magistrates and Elizabethan Tragedy," JEGP, XXV (1926), 72.

Burnet, an exponent of the new concept, wrote in the History of His Own Time that "nothing guides one's judgment more truly in a relation of matters of fact than knowing the tempers and principles of the chief actors" (I, 5).

1715 and 1725, and formal innovation lapsed.⁴⁶ However, the development of distinct sub-species of biography after 1725 -- the standardized literary life, the reference biography, and historical and genealogical forms -- was not a new beginning, as will be shown in the following chapter, but a continuation of the prior development of the genre.

⁴⁶ Nicolson, surveying the field from the ninth century to the twentieth, estimated the lapse of interest in the genre to be much longer, from Dryden's Plutarch (1683) to Johnson's Savage (1744).

III. Professionalism and Biographic Differentiation

In the second quarter of the eighteenth century a new attitude toward life writing emerged. No longer did writers adopt the roles of the casual essayist or the severe historian. Instead they assumed a professional approach to biography, engaging in independent research, comparing earlier works pertaining to their subjects, and generally trying to produce a clear, comprehensive, informative body of biographic works. The principal figures in this "Age of Diligence," as Lipking called it,¹ were Thomas Birch, who said of himself, "the only qualities I can engage for are industry and fidelity";² and William Oldys, who believed that "all we can do is diligently to assemble every unextinguished spark which darts any light this way."³ Yet less noted biographers such as Crusius, Fenton, Budgell, James Campbell and many others contributed to the new spirit and to the new wave of thoroughly researched lives.

These writers, identifying themselves with a distinct

¹ Lawrence Lipking, "William Oldys and the Age of Diligence, Chapter III, The Ordering of the Arts in Eighteenth-Century England (Princeton, 1970).

² Birch, "The Life of . . . Robert Boyle," prefixed to The Works of . . . Boyle (London, 1744), p. iii.

³ Oldys, "The Life of Sir Walter Raleigh," prefixed to Raleigh's History of the World (London, 1736), I, 360. This life is also available in The Works of Sir Walter Raleigh, Kt. (Oxford, 1829), I, 1-586.

genre, began to differentiate species of biography according to the subject, the intended use, or audience; and then to formulate methods of composition which seemed particularly suited to the type of biography they were writing. In the area of dictionary or reference lives, designed to be "a Supplement and a Key, not only to our General Histories, but to particular Memoirs,"⁴ there was immediate and lasting acceptance of the method introduced by Birch in the General Dictionary⁵ of 1734, discussed below. Literary biography, traditionally prefaced in England by complaints to the effect that "poets are generally too inactive to furnish out a busy scene,"⁶ became a distinct species after writers accepted the tri-partite pattern of life-character-works. Historical biography, dealing chiefly with persons who had figured in political or military affairs, received some definition from controversies concerning the proper methods of writing histories, controversies into which a number of biographers

⁴ William Oldys, Preface to the Biographia Britannica, or the Lives of the Most Eminent Persons who have flourished in Great Britain (London, 1747), I, xiii.

⁵ John P. Bernard, Thomas Birch, John Lockman, et al., A General Dictionary Historical and Critical (London, 1734). Although Birch had several collaborators in this project, his personal contribution of over six hundred lives and his direction of the entire project entitle him to credit for the work. See James M. Osborn, "Thomas Birch and the General Dictionary, 1734-1741," MP, XXXVI (1938), 25-46.

⁶ Lewis Crusius, The Lives of the Roman Poets (London, 1726), I, [i]. Concerning the traditional nature of this complaint see Dunn, English Biography, p. 87; or for specific additional examples, Lansdowne's Wycherley and Fenton's Waller.

entered with a vigor which indicates that they considered their area of life-writing to be related to historiography. Yet in composing lives they did not bury their subjects in history, as had Strype, for example. Instead they seemed to be striving for a balance between the life and times.

Before considering in detail the formal innovations which served to clarify certain types of biography, it may be observed that the spirit of industry and fidelity did not extend to all biographers during the second quarter of the century. A number of them pursued their researches no further than the first work which might be slightly rearranged and served up as a new biography. Major Pack's Wycherley, as previously noted, was a brief piece built around an anecdote evidently taken from Lansdowne's Wycherley;⁷ and Johnson's Sarpi was taken directly from Le Courayer's biography, with some condensation, rearrangement, and commentary added.⁸ Such simple practices should be distinguished from the techniques of contemporaries who often, in compiling lives, digested or paraphrased material from a number of sources. For example, Fenton relied on Clarendon and on the anonymous preface to a

⁷ Major Pack, "Some Memoirs of William Wycherley, Esq.," prefixed to the Posthumous Works of . . . Wycherley, ed. L. Theobald (London, 1728), pp. 1-14. Lansdowne's work and the anecdote are discussed ante, p. 35.

⁸ Samuel Johnson, "The Life of Father Paul Sarpi," The Gentleman's Magazine, VIII (Nov. 1738), 581-583. Johnson's use of this source was examined by E. L. McAdam, Jr., in "Johnson's Lives of Sarpi, Blake, and Drake," PMLA, LVIII (1943), 466-476.

1690 edition of Waller's works for much of the descriptive and critical material in his life of the poet;⁹ but Fenton acknowledged his sources, and the work as a whole reflects "a careful survey of available materials," pains in establishing dates, influences, and so forth.¹⁰ Birch noted his use of Phillips, Anthony Wood, Toland, and Fenton in his life of Milton,¹¹ and although the material is subdued, a reader may infer that Birch's paragraphs on the controversy with Salmasius derive from Toland's emphasis on the matter and may recognize Birch's digest of Phillips' mnemonic, or periodization device: the listing of houses.¹² These, and many other examples which could be listed, did not amount to plagiarism.

⁹ Elijah Fenton, "Life of Waller," prefixed to Poetical Works of Edmund Waller (London, 1729).

¹⁰ Earl Harlan, Elijah Fenton: 1638-1730 (Philadelphia, 1937), pp. 168 ff., for the extent of Fenton's researches between 1724 and 1728 in preparing the life of Waller.

¹¹ Thomas Birch, "An Historical and Critical Account of the Life and Writings of Mr. John Milton," prefixed to The Works of John Milton, 2nd ed. (London, 1743), pp. i-lxxviii. The life is advertised as "enlarged and improved" over that offered in the first edition (London, 1738).

¹² Samuel Johnson in his Milton, written some forty years after Birchs's, suggested that unconscious respect had led biographers to mention Milton's domiciles, "as if it were an injury to neglect naming any place that he honored by his presence." In fact, Johnson's familiarity of Birchs's methods (see Boswell, Johnson, I, 159-160) must have apprised him that Birch included every scrap of verifiable data in his major lives not out of respect for the subject, but simply because the data was there -- in this case, in Phillips's domestically oriented memoir. See "Milton," Lives of the English Poets, ed. G. B. Hill (New York, 1905), I, 127.

1690 edition of Waller's works for much of the descriptive and critical material in his life of the poet;⁹ but Fenton acknowledged his sources, and the work as a whole reflects "a careful survey of available materials," pains in establishing dates, influences, and so forth.¹⁰ Birch noted his use of Phillips, Anthony Wood, Toland, and Fenton in his life of Milton;¹¹ and although the material is subdued, a reader may infer that Birch's paragraphs on the controversy with Salmasius derive from Toland's emphasis on the matter and may recognize Birch's digest of Phillips' mnemonic, or periodization device: the listing of houses.¹² These, and many other examples which could be listed, did not amount to plagiarism.

⁹ Elijah Fenton, "Life of Waller," prefixed to Poetical Works of Edmund Waller (London, 1729).

¹⁰ Earl Harlan, Elijah Fenton: 1638-1730 (Philadelphia, 1937), pp. 168 ff., for the extent of Fenton's researches between 1724 and 1728 in preparing the life of Waller.

¹¹ Thomas Birch, "An Historical and Critical Account of the Life and Writings of Mr. John Milton," prefixed to The Works of John Milton, 2nd ed. (London, 1743), pp. i-lxxviii. The life is advertised as "enlarged and improved" over that offered in the first edition (London, 1738).

¹² Samuel Johnson in his Milton, written some forty years after Birchs's, suggested that unconscious respect had led biographers to mention Milton's domiciles, "as if it were an injury to neglect naming any place that he honored by his presence." In fact, Johnson's familiarity of Birchs's methods (see Boswell, Johnson, I, 159-160) must have apprised him that Birch included every scrap of verifiable data in his major lives not out of respect for the subject, but simply because the data was there -- in this case, in Phillips's domestically oriented memoir. See "Milton," Lives of the English Poets, ed. G. B. Hill (New York, 1905), I, 127.

In fact, such concern with faithful and minute use of sources led to the first survey of the biographical canon of a subject -- a type of study more familiar to the twentieth century¹³ -- in John Campbell's 1750 life of Thomas Hobbes.¹⁴ Campbell's survey was necessarily short, and it was more descriptive than critical; but it represented a new and useful way of introducing sources at a time when biographers were hard-put to acknowledge the many works which they had consulted as sources for each brief life.

Why biographers at this time became interested in the tasks of research and verification of data can only be conjectured. Since such writers frequently identified their undertaking as that of "compiling" a life, it seems that they did not consider themselves men of letters, bound to provide literary entertainment in the style of the biographers who had adopted Dryden's essay method. Their lack of reference to didactic or exemplary intentions indicates that they did not think of biography as inherently useful. Apparently they were the intellectual heirs of the scholarly turn-of-the-century antiquarians and historians "whose main concern was

¹³ Modern examples of this type of study include: James M. Osborn, John Dryden: Some Biographical Facts and Problems (New York, 1940); A. C. Judson, "The Eighteenth-Century Lives of Edmund Spenser," Huntington Library Quarterly, XVI (1953), 161-181; Wayne Warnke, "Samuel Johnson on Swift: The Life of Swift and Johnson's Predecessors in Swiftian Biography," Journal of British Studies, VII (1958), 56-64; and S. Schoenbaum, Shakespeare's Lives (Oxford, 1970).

¹⁴ John Campbell, The Moral and Political Works of Thomas Hobbes, to which is prefixed the Author's Life (London, 1750).

to ascertain the truth of each event by the best method of research."¹⁵ This diligence was not universally admired. Such influential writers as Pope and Swift ridiculed the antiquarians, considering them pedants; and Pope wrote in annoyance at Birchs's inquiries concerning the life of Gay, "as to that of his being apprenticed to one Willet, etc., what are such things to the public? Authors are to be remembered by their Works and Merits, not Accidents of their Lives."¹⁶ But such criticism did not deter the biographers who interested themselves in the collection and preservation of accurate facts.

In undertaking the compilation of the General Dictionary, Birch planned to produce a more comprehensive reference work than any previously published. His prefatory survey of biographical dictionaries from Conrad Gesner's Bibliotheca Universalis (1545) to Pierre Bayle's Dictionnaire Historique et Critique (1695-97) emphasizes the defects of these earlier works. Concerning Fuller's Worthies, for example, Birch quoted Bishop Nicholson's criticism, that "it

¹⁵ Arnaldo Momigliano, "Ancient History and the Antiquarian," Studies in Historiography, p. 20. In English Scholars: 1660-1730 (London, 1939), David Douglas argued that the spur to such scholarship was the belief that precedents could provide solutions to contemporary problems (see pp. 17, 24, and throughout).

¹⁶ Quoted by E. L. Ruhe, "Pope's Hand in Thomas Birch's Account of Gay," RES, V (1954), 171-74. Mistrust and satires of "pedantry" have been discussed by George W. Sherburn, The Early Career of Alexander Pope (Oxford, 1934), pp. 74 ff.; and Ricardo Quintana, "Controlling Ideas," Chap. IV, The Mind and Art of Jonathan Swift (Gloucester, 1936).

was huddled up in haste, for the procurement of some moderate profit for the author and [the lives] of his greatest heroes are commonly misshapen scraps, mixed with tattle and lies."¹⁷ He faulted Anthony Wood's Athenae Oxoniensis (1691-92) for its limited scope, and for the author's overconfidence in the reliability of his sources. Birch did not bother to mention the whimsical collections which purported to recount the lives of English writers, although these better represented the sorry lack of useful reference works than did Wood's respected compilation. Typical of the irresponsibility of those collections is Winstanley's summation of Milton: "his fame is gone out like a candle in a snuff, and his Memory will always stink."¹⁸ And indicative of their inattention to biographical details is Jacob's entire entry on Gay: "To this Gentleman we are obliged for the following poems, viz:"¹⁹ In criticizing Bayle's dictionary Birch observed that the author had selected only the subjects and

¹⁷ General Dictionary, I, p. 7. Fuller's method of categorizing persons by profession and the shire in which they had lived was imitative of medieval local biographical collections, as remarked by Douglas Bush, "History and Biography," English Literature in the Earlier Seventeenth Century: 1600-1660 (Oxford, 1945), p. 220. Jacob Burckhardt described the medieval species in detail in Part II, Chap. 3, The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy.

¹⁸ William Winstanley, The Lives of . . . English Poets (London, 1687), p. 195.

¹⁹ Giles Jacobs, Historical Account of . . . Our Most Considerable English Poets (London, 1720), p. 60.

particulars which suited his views, and that therefore he did not produce a general collection.²⁰

Concerning the form of Bayle's work, Birch quoted the laudatory, but accurate, descriptive remarks of Desmaizeaux:

It is a Dictionary of a new and singular kind, and comprehends a prodigious variety of particulars. In the text or body of the Articles, Mr. Bayle gives a succinct, though very exact account of those persons, whose lives he writes; but then he fully gratifies the Reader's curiosity by the remarks subjoined to the text, which are a commentary on it. He there draws the characters of such persons, relates the particulars of their lives, discovers the several springs of their actions, and examines the judgment that has been, or may be formed of them.²¹

Specifically, Bayle had invented a system of notes which permitted the abstraction of marginally relevant data and of critical or illustrative materials from the body of his biographical articles. The threefold system included: 1. bibliographical notes to the main text, set in the margins of the text; 2. notes illustrating or enlarging upon the text,

²⁰ Birch did not specify what Bayle's views were. In fact there is yet considerable disagreement as to Bayle's views. One opinion, advanced by Richard H. Popkin, ed. and trans. of selections from Pierre Bayle, Historical and Critical Dictionary (New York, 1965), is that Bayle in all contexts was intent on showing that reason fails to make the real world intelligible, and that his cross-references were designed to illustrate this thesis.

²¹ Apparently this quotation is a translation of Pierre Desmaizeaux' comments in his life of Bayle, which had been prefixed to the most recent French edition of the Dictionnaire (Amsterdam, 1730). The same remarks were used to describe Birch's Dictionary by a contemporary critic, Archibald Bower, in Historia Litteraria, IV (1733), 75, as quoted by Leo P. Courtines, Bayle's Relations with England and the English (New York, 1938), p. 284.

set in two columns beneath the body of the work; 3. bibliographical references to the footnotes, located in the margins. Bayle's work was well known in England, both in the original French edition and through the English translation of 1710.²² But Birch was the first to see that Bayle's copious footnoting and complex cross-referencing techniques might be simplified and adapted to the requirements of a uniform, factual, reference work.

Birch developed his main texts as objective accounts of the background, education, and career of each subject, giving a much fuller account than had Bayle, whose texts had often been negligible in proportion to his notes. In footnotes Birch provided information which was complimentary to the text, rather than a commentary upon it. Domestic concerns appeared here. Traditional rumors were mentioned or refuted, e.g., that Gilbert Burnet had married for financial advantage, when in fact he had signed away any claim on the fortune of Lady Margaret Kennedy.²³ In footnoted illustrations of the literary styles of prominent writers Birch took care to include not only passages of their works which had been widely praised, but also examples of works which had been ridiculed or condemned. Similarly, he quoted both favorable and unfavorable evaluations of the subject's character, abilities, etc., which had been made by men who had known him

²² Courtines, Bayle's Relations with England, p. 73.

²³ General Dictionary, III, 702.

or who had written about him with some authority. Thus Birch's footnotes served somewhat the same purposes as did character sections in biographies, but they provided an unusually varied perspective. Since Birch avoided any judicial commentary, his notes did not degenerate into the "mechanical balancing of virtues against vices,"²⁴ a formula emergent in the character sections in contemporary histories. Instead, the reader who wanted to evaluate the subject could investigate further in the source materials noted by Birch.

Oldys adopted the method of the General Dictionary for the Biographia Britannica (1747), a work in which he was assisted by James Campbell and others. But Birch's Baylean system was not solely applied to the composition of reference works. Glosses became something of a fashion in general and preface biographies, despite the fact that Baylean form was not suited to every sort of biography.²⁵ In Oldys' Raleigh the marginal bibliographic references and footnotes contained useful supplementary information, including extracts from earlier histories and memoirs which might not have been readily obtainable. Robert Campbell's long life-and-times study

²⁴ J. R. Hale in the introduction to The Evolution of British Historiography, p. 21, states that by mid-century the historical character had assumed this pattern. Cf. a contemporary review of David Hume's History of England, Vol. II, which perceived "all characters distorted into grotesque figures made up of conceit and antithesis," in histories other than Hume's (Critical Review, II [Dec. 1756], 386).

²⁵ Lipking particularly remarks the incompatibility of Baylean form and literary biography, in The Ordering of the Arts, p. 80.

of John, Duke of Argyle,²⁶ would have benefited from such pertinent and impersonal marginalia; but instead, it illustrates the tendency among biographers to use notes not only for the several functions assigned to them by Birch, but also as a vehicle for subjective commentary on the subject. Campbell's notes, comprising bibliographical references, announcements of topics, and extensive analyses of the causes and significance of events, often outran his text by several pages. In relatively brief lives, such as Johnson's Roscommon²⁷ or John Campbell's Hobbes, the texts were unnecessarily stripped of material by the placement of illustrative materials and critical commentary in the footnotes.

The fashion of glossing which followed the publication of Birch's General Dictionary died out at mid-century. Footnotes appeared thereafter only as necessary illustration or reference, usually in historically oriented biographies such as Maty's Chesterfield (1777).²⁸ Johnson's Roscommon, revised

²⁶ Robert Campbell, The Life of . . . Prince John, Duke of Argyle and Greenwich (London, 1747).

²⁷ Samuel Johnson, "The Life of the Earl of Roscommon," The Gentleman's Magazine, XVIII (May, 1748), 214-217. C. Lenart Carlson states that Johnson's magazine lives were not conceived as serious biographical studies, in most cases, but as "plugs" for Edward Cave's literary projects, in The First Magazine: A History of "The Gentleman's Magazine" (Providence, 1938), p. 131.

²⁸ M. Maty, Miscellaneous Works of the Late . . . Earl of Chesterfield . . . to which are Prefixed Memoirs of his Life, 2nd ed. (London, 1777).

for Cibber's Lives of the Poets in 1753,²⁹ accommodated within the text the material which had originally appeared in disproportionately long notes. And Birch, perhaps in reaction against the excesses of the Baylean method which he himself had introduced, provided no notes or references in his 1751 life of Raleigh, although the work was presented as a 'reduction of all facts previously gathered.'³⁰

Literary biography, or literary preface-lives, had been cast in a fairly conventional topical form for many decades. As previously mentioned, the topical form had become rambling and ill-proportioned during the first two decades of the century, when conversational rhetoric took the place of biographical facts and critical acumen. But biographers generally followed the pattern of presenting an author's life, then his writings, and his character. The subject's death was treated as part of the character section rather than as the conclusion of the life section, a peculiarity of Suetonian form which perhaps persisted because Sprat had employed it in the Life of Cowley. This arrangement contributed to the rambling quality of literary biography, since discursive

²⁹ William R. Keast briefly traced the development of this life from its form in The Gentleman's Magazine, through David Shiel's rearrangement of it for Theophilus Cibber's Lives of the Poets (1753), to Johnson's Lives of the Poets (1781), in "Johnson and 'Cibber's' Lives of the Poets, 1753," Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Literature, ed. C. Camden (Chicago, 1963), pp. 89-102.

³⁰ Thomas Birch, "Life of Raleigh," originally prefixed to Miscellaneous Pieces (London, 1751); in The Works of Sir Walter Raleigh, Kt. (Oxford, 1829), I, 570-648.

critical commentary often forced a wide gap between the subject's life and his death. Lipking has stated that eighteenth century writers did not recognize literary biography as a separate genre;³¹ but the early establishment of formal conventions in this area indicates that writers did distinguish authors' lives from other types of biography.

During the second quarter of the eighteenth century brief lives of authors were shaped in a more coherent chronological pattern than formerly, and writers instituted a number of techniques for enriching the critical and character sections of tripartite lives. In considering these formal advances, it could be shown that Alexander Pope first reunified the life section of a literary biography by joining the death to the life when remodeling Rowe's Shakespeare to serve as the prefatory biography in his own 1725 edition of Shakespeare;³² that the critical remarks which Fenton appended to his immensely successful Milton (1725) represented the first serious attempt to provide useful and interesting criticism in a biography since Dryden's Plutarch;³³ that Birch devised

³¹ The Ordering of the Arts, p. 67.

³² David Nichol Smith outlined Pope's revision, and the further use of Rowe's work during the eighteenth century in Eighteenth-Century Essays on Shakespeare, ed. D. N. Smith (New York, 1962), pp. xxxviii-xxxix.

³³ Elijah Fenton, "The Life of John Milton," prefixed to Paradise Lost [by] John Milton (London, 1725). One of the most popular lives of Milton ever written: five English editions in six years; translated into French in 1729. See Harlan, Elijah Fenton, pp. 139 ff; and Walter Good, Studies in the Milton Tradition (Evanston, 1913), p. 212.

methods for illustrating both the literary style and the intellectual processes of an author by analysis of manuscript revisions;³⁴ and that Johnson's Savage³⁵ was the first major attempt to integrate an author's writings with the story of his life. However, Crusius' Lives of the Roman Poets illustrates in many respects the formal and critical patterns which were to dominate the field of literary biography for more than fifty years after its publication in 1726, so particular attention may be paid to the innovations and trends represented in this work.

In respect to the overall patterns of biography, Crusius distinguished between the minor and major poets in his collection by composing the lives of minor poets as relatively short chronological units, while developing tripartite biographies comprising the lives, characters, and writings of major poets. Within collections, this formal distinction was observed by Cibber (or Shiels) in his Lives of the Poets (1753) and by Johnson in 1778.³⁶ The chronological literary lives gradually emerged as a popular form not only in collections but also in the area of preface-lives.

³⁴ Birch introduced this technique in his 1743 Milton.

³⁵ Samuel Johnson, An Account of the Life of Mr. Richard Savage (London, 1744). Further references in this text are to Samuel Johnson: "Life of Savage," ed. Clarence Tracy (Oxford, 1971).

³⁶ That David Shiels, aided by Samuel Johnson, was the author of Cibber's Lives of the Poets has been established for some time. See Walter Raleigh, "Early Lives of the Poets," Six Essays on Johnson (Oxford, 1910), pp. 98-127.

The problems presented by this form, at the immediate technical level, involved the proportioning or interweaving of literary criticism and characterizing data with the course of life events. More fundamentally, the juxtaposition of a writer's external life circumstances -- financial, domestic, or social -- with an account of the works which he undertook at various points in his lifetime implied an interrelationship which biographers had difficulty proving. The existence of such an interrelationship had been assumed by biographers long before 1758 when John Upton wrote: "As every original work, whether of the poet, philosopher, or historian, represents, mirrour-like, the sentiments, ideas, and opinions, of the writer; so the knowledge of what relates to the life, family, and friendships of such an author, must in many instances illustrate his writings; and his writings again reflect the image of the inward man."³⁷ But the extent to which a biographer might derive a man's character from a reading of his poetry, or might attribute his literary works to particular life circumstances remained unsettled. Birch displayed caution in his lives of Milton and Spenser³⁸ with

³⁷ John Upton, ed., Spenser's Faerie Queene: A New Edition with a Glossary (London, 1758), I, v.

³⁸ Thomas Birch, "Life of Spenser," prefixed to The Faerie Queen by Edmund Spenser (London, 1751), I, i-xxxvii. Alexander C. Judson attributed the defects of eighteenth-century Spenserian biography to lack of sources and "the failure to develop an intense and unfaltering interest in Spenser the man, as well as in Spenser the poet," in "The Eighteenth-Century Lives of Spenser," Huntington Library Quarterly, XVI (1953), 181.

regard to biographical anecdotes which had been accepted, through tradition, as illustrations of certain poems. In contrast, Johnson and Ayre, in their respective lives of Savage and Pope,³⁹ projected a tight unity of character, circumstances and writings which verged upon fictionalized or plotted biography. These latter works will be discussed in some detail in the following chapter, since they represent a new formal dimension in eighteenth-century biography; but it may be recognized that they also represent an exaggeration or intensification of contemporary trends in chronological patterning of literary biography.

In tripartite lives, Crusius' character sections did not notably advance the revelation of the inner man. Topical exposition of the subject's physical appearance and constitution, his behavior toward social superiors and inferiors, his finances, romances, friends, pastimes, and reputation, was largely redundant, since most of these matters had been touched upon in the life section of the biography. In describing physical appearance, however, Crusius' technique signalled a shift away from the Suetonian photographic representation toward a livelier depiction of appearance and deportment. For example, he related that Virgil's bashfulness gave him an ungenteel air in company, for he would "shun the

³⁹ William Ayre, Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Alexander Pope, 2 vols. (London, 1745). "Ayre" is assumed to be an alias for Edmund Curll by Ralph Straus, The Unspeakable Curll (London, 1927), p. 193.

eyes of every observer." Such active portraiture was timely, for the Suetonian description had diminished in value since the Renaissance. Engraved portraits served as frontispieces to lives quite frequently during the seventeenth century,⁴⁰ and evenly commonly during the eighteenth. The dozens of lives published by Edmund Curll were accompanied by portraits, if such could be obtained;⁴¹ and the excellent engravings by Jacob Houbraken and George Vertue prompted Birch to write two volumes of lives to accompany the portraits.⁴² In 1756 the Reverend James Granger undertook "a catalogue of above 4000 English heads of eminent and extraordinary persons, from Egbert the Great, to George III," a work which sparked a rage for illustrated biography when it appeared in 1769.⁴³ Clearly, engravings could supply the permanent image

⁴⁰ Blanchard W. Bates observed that despite the increased use of engraved portraits after the mid-Renaissance, detailed literary description in biographies persisted, in Literary Portraiture (New York, 1945), p. 43.

⁴¹ Peter M. Hill suggested that Curll's lives represented the first systematic effort to supply portraits for biographies, in Two Augustan Booksellers: John Denton and Edmund Curll, University of Kansas Publications, Library Series #3 (Lawrence, 1958), p. 27.

⁴² Thomas Birch, Heads of Illustrious Persons of Great Britain engraven by Houbraken and Vertue, 2 vols. (London, 1747, 1752).

⁴³ James Granger, A Biographical History of England . . . Adapted to a Methodical Catalogue of Engraved British Heads, 6 vols. (London, 1769). The Advertisement to the 5th edition of this work (1824) states that "on the appearance of Mr. Granger's work, the rage to illustrate it with portraits was so prevalent, that scarcely a copy of a book ornamented with portraits could be found in an unutilated state."

of the biographical subject more satisfactorily than had the Suetonian verbal description.

Authentic sketches or anecdotes portraying the characteristic behavior and demeanor of the subject were needed; but unless the biographer had himself known or observed his subject, such materials were not readily available. Even then, the biographer might fail to select the particular gesture or scene which might have distinguished a particular character -- a point which Johnson remarked in The Rambler No. 60 (October 13, 1750), citing the example of Tickell's ill-defined characterization of his friend Addison. Fortunately for those who wished to write about Pope's circle, Joseph Spence had diligently collected anecdotes and observations upon conversations for several decades.⁴⁴ Writers whose subjects had lived in other times, or had frequented other circles, could at best check the sources noted in Birch's and Oldys' dictionaries in search of materials which illuminated individuality. Among these sources Aubrey's biographical notes and Budgell's anecdotal history of the Boyle family⁴⁵ provided lively sketches of Renaissance and

⁴⁴ Joseph Spence, Observations, Anecdotes, and Characters of Books and Men collected from conversation, ed. James M. Osborn (Oxford, 1966). The authenticity of Spence's material, which was used in manuscript form by Ruffhead, Malone and Johnson, has been favorably evaluated by Austin Wright, "The Veracity of Spence's Anecdotes," PMLA, LXII (1947), 123-129.

⁴⁵ Eustace Budgell, Memoirs of the Lives and Characters of the Illustrious Boyles extracted from Original Papers and Manuscripts (London, 1737).

seventeenth-century persons. However, as the critical notion developed that it "should always be an object of attention" to supply characteristic anecdotes,⁴⁶ and as the Age of Diligence waned, Goldsmith and many another biographer, no doubt, turned to the expedient of making up anecdotes to suit their needs.⁴⁷

While Crusius' work illustrates the emergence of new trends in the formulation of life and character materials, it is most significant in the area of criticism: specifically, in the application of contemporary critical ideas to the problems of literary biography. Where earlier biographers had catalogued or described their subject's writings, and added subjective critical analyses in some cases, Crusius enlarged his critical perspectives by considering the effects of environment upon arts and learning, and the very nature of poetic genius.

Since the late seventeenth century these questions had generated many essays and arguments. William Temple had been the first critic who "developed the suggestion of Bacon . . . as to the interdependence of art and national cultures."⁴⁸

⁴⁶ John Seddon, rev. of A New and General Biographical Dictionary, Monthly Review, XXVIII (Jan. 1763), 35.

⁴⁷ Oliver Goldsmith's inventions in The Life of Richard Nash, Esq. (London, 1762) have been noted by Arthur Sherbo, "A Manufactured Anecdote in Goldsmith's Life of Richard Nash," MLN, LXX (Jan. 1955), 20-21; and by Morris Golden, "Another Manufactured Anecdote in the Life of Richard Nash," N&Q, CCII (1957), 120-121.

⁴⁸ Clara Marburg, Sir William Temple: A Seventeenth-Century "Libertin" (New Haven, 1932), p. 88.

In his essays On Ancient and Modern Learning and On Poetry he had argued that "pureness of Air, equality of Clymate, long tranquillity of Empire or Government,"⁴⁹ were the principal factors in the advancement of learning among men; and that genius, an innate power of invention, could be improved by judgment and learning, and yet was largely shaped by environmental factors. Although Temple's theories implied "a transition from the absolute manner of judging literature to a more tentative, historical approach,"⁵⁰ subsequent criticism in these lines was limited almost exclusively to the writings and genius of Homer for several decades.⁵¹ Pope's "Preface to the Translation of the Iliad" (1715) furthered the environmental approach to reading Homer which culminated in Blackwell's Enquiry (1735);⁵² and Pope's Essay on Criticism (1711), together with Addison's Spectator No. 160 (Sept. 3, 1711) established the custom of comparing the quality of Homer's genius to that of Virgil's. Addison included the

⁴⁹ J. E. Spingarn, ed., Sir William Temple's Essays "On Ancient and Modern Learning" and "On Poetry" (Oxford, 1909), p. 15.

⁵⁰ Clara Marburg, Sir William Temple, p. 92.

⁵¹ See Donald M. Foerster, Homer in English Criticism: The Historical Approach in the Eighteenth Century (New Haven, 1947).

⁵² Thomas Blackwell, Enquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer (London, 1735). This exhaustive examination of the relationship between Homer's writings and the climate, customs, religion, and government of his time was not only a landmark in Homer criticism, but also influential in the development of the historical approach in general literary criticism, according to Donald M. Foerster (n. 51, above).

relatively modern figures of Shakespeare and Milton in his classification of geniuses; but biographers of both ancient and modern authors ignored the pertinence of such criticism to the development of their genre.⁵³

Therefore Crusius' introductory essays on environment and literary genius and his development of these topics in the biographies of the major Roman poets marked an advance in his field. Henceforth, the form of literary biography and of lives in general was to be shaped, in part, by authors' efforts to bring these critical concepts to bear upon their subjects. Middleton's Cicero, Johnson's Savage, and other works which will be considered in the following chapter, represented their subjects in interaction with a complex, particularized environment. At mid-century the historical approach to criticism received new stimulus from Thomas Warton's Observations on the "Faery Queen" of Spenser (1754).⁵⁴

⁵³ John Dart's 1721 life of Chaucer (prefixed to John Urry's edition of Chaucer's works) consisted largely of fourteenth-century social and political history, and may be seen as a rudimentary application of the historical approach in literary biography. Dart's work influenced most later eighteenth-century lives of Chaucer. See William L. Alderson and Arnold C. Henderson, Chaucer and Augustan Scholarship, University of California English Studies, No. 35 (Berkeley, 1970), pp. 82, 138.

⁵⁴ In a wider context, Edmund Gosse suggested that the most far-reaching element of the Wartons' literary criticism was the avoidance of moral and didactic sentiment, in "Two Pioneers of Romanticism: Joseph and Thomas Warton," Proceedings of the British Academy, 1915-1916 (London, 1916), pp. 145-163.

And Joseph Warton influenced many later biographical analyses of literary genius with the first volume of his Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope (1756).⁵⁵ Homer remained, to some biographers, the prototype or standard of literary genius. Upton drew a detailed parallel between Spenser and Homer,⁵⁶ and Murphy tried to measure the genius of Henry Fielding against that of Homer.⁵⁷ But on the whole, the application of contemporary critical theories expanded the perspective of literary biography.

Historical biography presented special problems which distinguished it from other species of life-writing. Thus Fiddes in 1723 proposed to compose his life of Wolsey in a "Stile which is properly Historical. For a sensible difference in the Manner of Expression ought always to be observed, according to the diversity of the subject matter."⁵⁸ The difficulties of the species derived from the fact that its

⁵⁵ The development of psychological and critical definitions of genius is traced by Paul Kaufman, "Heralds of Original Genius," Essays in Memory of Barrett Wendell, ed. Paul Kaufman (Cambridge, Mass., 1926), pp. 189-217; and by Ronald S. Crane, "English Neoclassical Criticism: An Outline Sketch," Critics and Criticism, ed. R. S. Crane (Chicago, 1952), pp. 372-388.

⁵⁶ John Upton, ed., Spenser's Faerie Queene, I, xx-xxxiii.

⁵⁷ Arthur Murphy, "An Essay on the Life and Genius of Henry Fielding," originally prefixed to Vol. I of The Works of Henry Fielding (1762; rpt. Gainesville: Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints, 1968).

⁵⁸ Richard Fiddes, Life of Cardinal Wolsey (London, 1723), p. iii.

subjects were persons who had figured in complex political, religious, or military events. Where Sprat or Burnet had simply omitted explanations of the historical context in which their subjects operated, or where Strype had often sacrificed biography to the minutiae of church history, writers after 1720 tried to elucidate the major events in which their subjects participated.

In such endeavors, maintaining a balance between history and biography proved difficult. The expository technique which most writers adopted was to present the life in a chronological line which was interrupted by topical abstracts or illustrations of history, a technique which Piper remarks in some fiction of that time -- following "the main chance, whether that turned out to be an illustrative story, a chronological extension, a topical division, or a new idea."⁵⁹ Yet when historical background material was topically inserted into the biography, it often dominated the work as a whole or obscured, at least temporarily, the biographical subject. For example, Robert Campbell's Duke of Argyle disappears in the third and final part of his biography, which is devoted to "Events that have happened in Europe during his time; in most of which His Grace was in some measure concerned." And Budgell's Boyles often take second place to anecdotes about

⁵⁹ William B. Piper, "Moll Flanders as a Structure of Topics," Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900, IX (1969), 495. Piper writes that Defoe depended on topics to control his material and "to give his works at least the appearance of overall plan and order."

their contemporaries. John Campbell's four volume Lives of the Admirals unfolds as a chronological history of British naval exploits, with biographical sketches of such prominent seamen as John Cabot or Edward Howard inserted at relevant points.⁶⁰ In his Memoirs of Bolingbroke, composed as a series of nine letters, David Mallet traced the history of party and faction since the sixteenth century in six letters, devoting the remaining three to an appraisal of his subject's family, of his conduct in government, and of his last years.⁶¹ Again, in his life of Bacon, Mallet quite buried his subject by opening with "a general prospect of the two reigns in which Bacon flourished and fell," and further supplying a survey of learning up to the time of Bacon in order to locate his subject's place in the progress of philosophy.⁶² Somewhat similarly, Johnson opened his brief magazine life of

⁶⁰ John Campbell, Lives of the Admirals and other Eminent British Seamen (London, 1742, 1744). This work was enlarged and reissued by John Kent as Biographia Nautica in 1776.

⁶¹ David Mallet, Memoirs . . . of Bolingbroke (London, 1752). Stauffer suggested that Mallet wrote with Tacitus as his model (see Eighteenth Century, p. 242); but Mallet's massive historical digressions within biography might as well have been influenced by Voltaire's internationally acclaimed History of Charles XII (Rouen, 1731). Tacitus' exposition of the history of Roman Britain in Agricola is more than matched by Voltaire's histories of Sweden and Russia in Charles XII; and the latter work is divided into eight books, rather than the numbered paragraphs used by Tacitus, but not by Mallet.

⁶² David Mallet, "The Life of Francis Bacon, Lord High Chancellor of England," prefixed to The Works of Francis Bacon (London, 1750).

Admiral Blake with an outline of the supposed causes of war between England and Holland in 1652.⁶³

In contrast, where every biographical particular of an individual's actions in the political or military scene was supplied, as in Oldys' Raleigh, but sufficient historical context was lacking, the significance of such actions could not be immediately perceived. The dangers and hardships which Raleigh repeatedly went out to meet in the Americas, for example, appear to have little relationship to national policies and endeavors, in Oldys' work. And Raleigh's speeches in Parliament (quoted at length by Oldys as examples of his subject's oratorical style) focus on issues the merits of which are not revealed to the reader.

The problem of supplying adequate historical context for the lives of public or military persons brought biographers into a contemporary historians' controversy concerning the propriety of evaluative reflections. The rationale for such reflections, as stated by Fiddes, rested on the idea that the author was necessarily better acquainted with his subject than was the reader; and that his opinions would therefore serve as an aid, or guide to the reader's judgment. Yet Fiddes acknowledged that some readers and critics disliked such commentary, observing that "if any Person will

⁶³ Samuel Johnson, "Life of Admiral Blake," The Gentleman's Magazine, X (June, 1740), 301-307.

still prefer a simple and dry narrative of Facts as more agreeable to the strict critical Rules of writing History, I would not be thought to prescribe to him."⁶⁴ The controversy over reflections was part of a profound conflict "between the old-fashioned historical method of the erudits or antiquarians and the new-fangled approach of the philosophic historians."⁶⁵ Where the former group did prefer a dry narrative of verified facts, the latter school, as described by Momigliano, "selected what they thought the most relevant facts according to a preconceived theory. They discussed rather than narrated."⁶⁶ In terms of form the question was whether "Reflections are another Branch of History . . . necessary to compleat the Piece,"⁶⁷ as Whalley asserted; or whether by "this rage of reflecting, and even of dogmatizing . . . Histories are metamorphosed into dissertations; the chain of events is broken, the reader's attention is diffused, and his judgement anticipated."⁶⁸

⁶⁴ Richard Fiddes, *Wolsey*, p. vii.

⁶⁵ Arnaldo Momigliano, "Gibbon's Contribution to Historical Method," Studies in Historiography, p. 42. Momigliano discusses Gibbon's method as a reconciliation of the old and new approaches to historiography.

⁶⁶ "Gibbon's Contribution," p. 43.

⁶⁷ Peter Whalley, An Essay on the Manner of Writing History (1746), ed. Keith Stewart, Augustan Reprint Society No. 80 (Los Angeles, 1960), p. 16.

⁶⁸ Review of David Hume's History of England, Vol. II, Critical Review, II (Dec. 1756), 386.

Notably, biographers whose subjects had not taken part in major political or military events could moralize or interpret their materials without being drawn into the reflections controversy. Evidently critics distinguished various species of biography, and held that lives written with an admixture of public history should conform to the supposed rules of history-writing. Thus Johnson or Ayre might shape their materials in order to structurally support their interpretations of the lives of Savage or Pope, and might even intersperse their works with moral and philosophical commentary; but criticism would not be focused on that aspect of their works.⁶⁹ However Middleton's Cicero⁷⁰ became the subject of critical attacks based on political and historiographical controversies. Some critics argued that Middleton had deliberately shaped Cicero's life to support and defend, by suggestive parallelism, the currently unpopular policies of Robert Walpole.⁷¹ The Biographia Britannica suggested that he had prejudicially interpreted his subject, having

⁶⁹ The major critical work on Ayre's Pope was Remarks on Squire Ayre's Memoirs of Pope, by J. H. (1745), designed to ridicule the style and person of Edmund Curll, whom J. H. assumed had written this life of Pope.

⁷⁰ Conyers Middleton, The History of the Life of Marcus Tullius Cicero, 3 vols. (London, 1741).

⁷¹ See Eric Rothstein, "The Framework of Shamela," ELH, XXXV (1968), 381-402.

The practice of writing lives of men long-dead, with parallelism to living persons, flourished in the 17th century, as detailed by Hugh MacDonald, "The Law and Defamatory Biographies," RES, XX (1944), 177-198.

"spent six years in working up the character of his darling old Roman to that perfection which alone in this subject he could be content with."⁷² And Colley Cibber attacked Middleton's reflections, censuring the author for "assuming the usual Air of an Author dogmatically dictating to the Judgment of his Reader."⁷³ Reviews of such historically oriented biographies as Gilpin's Bernard Gilpin and Warner's More emphasized the matter of interpretive commentary, the first work being praised for the pertinence of the author's reflections,⁷⁴ and the second recommended because the author refrained from "disgusting us with any affected importance, by moralizing on every circumstance."⁷⁵ And Gibbon, having surveyed the biographies of Raleigh as a preliminary to writing a new life, approached the problem of composition by asking himself "what lights could I reflect" on the subject.⁷⁶

⁷² Biographia Britannica, V (1747), 309.

⁷³ Colley Cibber, The Character and Conduct of Cicero Considered, from the History of his Life by . . . Middleton (London, 1747), p. 274. Cibber pretended in this long, vapid work to improve upon Middleton's Cicero. In the field of life-writing Cibber's outstanding contribution is the autobiographical Apology for the Life of Mr. Colley Cibber, Comedian . . . With an Historical View of the Stage (London, 1740).

⁷⁴ William Rose, rev. of William Gilpin's Life of Bernard Gilpin, Monthly Review, VII (July, 1752), 25.

⁷⁵ Benjamin Dawson, rev. of Ferdinando Warner's Memoirs of the Life of Sir Thomas More, Monthly Review, XIX (1758), 64.

⁷⁶ Edward Gibbon, The Autobiography of Edward Gibbon, ed. Lord Sheffield with an introduction by J. B. Bury (London, 1907), p. 120.

Thus historical biography was initially distinguished from other types of lives by its subjects, by the quantities of historical background material it contained, and by the manner in which such material was discussed, interpreted, or moralized upon. By the final quarter of the century, however, this species was no longer characterized by topical exposition admixed with chronological narrative and reflections. Instead, the "official biography" began to emerge as the customary form for lives of politicians and such -- two or three volumes dealing with public events to the exclusion of personal and private detail, "usually less the story of a man than a chapter of national history."⁷⁷ This tendency to ignore the non-public life of the subject became a further distinguishing feature of historical biography, since other species were increasingly oriented toward bringing out the individual qualities of the subject through personal and social portraiture.

In sum, the second quarter of the century saw a growing sophistication of biographical methods, marked by the recognition that different formal techniques were needed to deal with the problems peculiar to reference, literary, and historical biography. Major critical and philosophical concepts of the period came to be applied to the composition

⁷⁷ Eugene P. Chase, "Recent English Political Biographies," Journal of Modern History, III (1931), 614. See also Robert R. James, "The Strange Art of Political Biography," Essays by Divers Hands, IV (1966), 124-141.

of lives, enlarging the genre's perspectives in some areas, narrowing them in others; but in all cases such applications were significant of continuous, vigorous interest in the development of biographical form.

IV. New Perspectives and Techniques: 1740-1750

The high point of eighteenth-century experimentation in biographical form occurred between 1740 and 1750, a period distinguished by the publication of Middleton's Cicero, North's Lives, Johnson's Savage, and many less-noted, but equally innovative lives. For the first time English writers attempted and sometimes achieved what Dilthey later called "the dual point of view of the biographer,"¹ a complex perspective "from which the general historical horizon can be seen; while at the same time the individual must remain in the center of a dynamic and meaningful system."² Thus the world in which the biographical subject lived was not merely described in topical essays, but took on a continuous existence, or role, in biography, as contemporary social, legal, economic, political, or other aspects of that world affected, or were affected by the persons figuring in the biography. The immediate milieu of the subject took on an independent and dynamic quality as biographers described the activities and attitudes of others who had roles in the principal's life story. And yet the biographical subject remained

¹ Wilhelm Dilthey, Pattern and Meaning in History, ed. H. P. Rickman (New York, 1962), p. 92. This translation of selected portions of Dilthey's writings, with editorial commentary, was first published under the title Meaning In History (London, 1961). Chapter II, "The Historical Relevance of Autobiography and Biography," is particularly pertinent to this study.

² Pattern and Meaning in History, p. 91.

central in such works, for writers introduced techniques by which the subject's thoughts could be revealed, and thus his reflections upon and responses to various situations, his conscious motives or psychological predisposition toward certain courses of action became a dominant force in his biography.

Of the materials and methods which contributed most significantly to the effect of complex vitality in biographies during this period, some were traditional and some were relatively modern. Correspondence, which had often been included in earlier biographies, was now introduced in greater quantity and for a wider variety of purposes than previously.³ Brief lives of persons contemporary to the main subject, rarely used by biographers since introduced by Walter Pope in 1697, became a popular device for enlarging the social perspectives of biography. Newly sophisticated narrative techniques came into use. Some biographers adopted the role of the omniscient narrator, interpreting their subject's thoughts and motives to the reader and supplying hints as to the outcome of the life story. Some, whose subjects were authors, managed to integrate the history of a literary career with the story of the individual's social and domestic

³ John Foxe in the Acts and Monuments (1563) had used series of letters, instead of narrative, to depict the difficulties of some of his subjects (e.g., John Careless, Acts and Monuments, ed. G. Townsend [London, 1849], VIII, 171-200). Despite the continuing popularity of his work, later biographers had not imitated this feature of Foxe's biographies.

life. And many writers chose to develop not only the public or exemplary scenes of a life, but also the mundane, private, and even discreditable scenes, thereby increasing the realism of biographical portraiture.

Particular uses of these materials and methods will be discussed further in this chapter; but first it may be noted that the developments in biographical form during this period seem related to, and possibly stimulated by developments in other fields of study. Thus the positioning of the biographical subject within the context of his times and social milieu corresponded to the contemporary idea that individual abilities were defined, to a great extent, by the climate, religion, learning, economic conditions, civil institutions, and manners to which the individual had been exposed. The application of this idea to literary criticism had been most extensively explored by Blackwell in his Enquiry (1735). In the field of philosophy, it provided the basis for Middleton's attacks on scriptural authority⁴ and for David Hume's speculative essay "On the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences."⁵ With respect to history, it was implicit in Voltaire's theory, published in 1744, that a study of trade,

⁴ See Leslie Stephen, History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century, Part VI, ch. iv, sect. 66.

⁵ First published in David Hume's Essays, Moral and Political (Edinburgh, 1742), II; available in Essential Works of David Hume, ed. R. Cohen (New York, 1965), pp. 421-441.

arts, and manners would produce a true "History of Mankind, itself."⁶

Similarly the biographers' intensified concern for disclosing patterns of thought and motivation reflected, no doubt, the growing interest in psychology evident in England since the publication of John Locke's Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1790). Basil Willey states that "Locke's picture of the human mind came to be, in the eighteenth century, the normal possession of the educated and enlightened in Europe."⁷ But Locke's theories, emphasizing the common patterns of intellectual development, were not particularly useful to biographers who wanted to distinguish the peculiar individuality of their subjects.⁸ The concept of the "ruling passion," however, was readily applicable to the revelation

⁶ The quotation is from "Some New Reflections with Regard to History by M. Voltaire," The Gentleman's Magazine, XIV (1744), 420-421. It is not clear where the magazine obtained this article which seems to anticipate the Essai sur les Moeurs, a work which Voltaire was composing at the time, although it would not be published until 1754. J. B. Bury notes that parts of the Essai appeared in the Mercure de France between 1745 and 1751, in The Idea of Progress, p. 148.

⁷ Basil Willey, The Seventeenth-Century Background (1940; rpt. Garden City: Doubleday Anchor, 1965), p. 264. Of the many studies devoted to Locke's extensive influence on eighteenth-century thought, the one most useful in the present context is Kenneth MacLean, John Locke and English Literature of the Eighteenth Century (New Haven, 1936).

⁸ Paul Fussell points out that Locke's theories supported the idea of uniform (rather than diverse) human nature in "The Uniformity of Human Nature," Ch. 3, The Rhetorical World of Augustan Humanism: Ethics and Imagery from Swift to Burke (Oxford, 1965).

of character in biography. The theory of the ruling passion, placing "emphasis on a fatalistic, temperamental independence of each individual,"⁹ did not require complex psychological interpretations. As set forth by Alexander Pope,¹⁰ the theory denied that a man's essential character could be read from his actions, his evident passions, or his professed opinions; but it held that a unique, consistent motivation lay behind all the observable behavior of each man. "This clue once found, unravels all the rest."¹¹ Thus a biographer who chose to identify a ruling passion in his subject could present all actions and accomplishments in terms of that passion, and thereby unify his work with a theme of psychological motivation. Stauffer cited several examples of the ruling passion theme in late eighteenth-century biography,¹² remarking that these were novice attempts in using biography as a means to understanding human nature.

⁹ Paul Kaufman, "Heralds of Original Genius," Essays in Honor of Barrett Wendell, ed. Paul Kaufman (Cambridge, Mass., 1926), p. 199. Kaufman discusses the combined influence of the ruling passion theory and the historical approach to criticism upon new definitions of original genius in the mid-eighteenth century.

¹⁰ Notably in Epistle I (1734) of the Moral Essays. Kenneth MacLean briefly compares Locke's theories to Pope's in John Locke (see n. 7 above), pp. 45-48.

¹¹ Alexander Pope, Epistle I of the Moral Essays, line 178.

¹² Stauffer, Eighteenth Century, pp. 323-326. Specifically cited are William Hurd's life of John Fothergill (1781) and William Coxe's three-volume life of Robert Walpole (1798, 1800).

Prior to mid-century, however, writers tried to show that both psychological and environmental forces affected the course of the individual life. Biographical exposition of the simultaneous actions and interactions of these forces was a challenging task which required innovations in the traditional methods of presenting materials.

In non-biographic branches of literature, letters and series of correspondence had been used frequently since the turn of the century to reveal these forces in specific human situations. Heroic epistles, whether they constituted an exchange of letters as in John Oldmixon's Amores Britannici or appeared as a single letter, e.g., Pope's Eloisa to Abelard (1717), provided vital portraits of individual passions in conflict with reason and society.¹³ Prose correspondence, such as John Hughes's popular translation of some spurious Eloisa-and-Abelard letters,¹⁴ allowed for a fuller exposition of social context than was possible in the heroic epistle form. Further, as Montesquieu demonstrated in his prodigiously successful Persian Letters (1721), a series of

¹³ A succinct history of the development of the heroic epistle in England is given by Geoffrey Tillotson in Alexander Pope: "The Rape of the Lock" and other Poems, ed. G. Tillotson, 2nd ed. (London, 1954), pp. 275-278. See also Lawrence S. Wright, "Eighteenth-Century Replies to Pope's Eloisa," SP, XXXI (1934), 519-533.

¹⁴ Hughes's translation was published in 1713. The background of the letters, their international popularity, and Pope's use of them have been studied by Emile Audra, L'Influence française dans l'oeuvre de Pope (Paris, 1931), pp. 399-444.

letters could support a plot-line, while also revealing qualities of individual character and illustrating contemporary society.¹⁵

So when biographers after 1740 began to use letters in quantity, and for a number of purposes, they were not breaking new ground in literary methods, but they were innovating with respect to the methods of composing biography. Earlier biographers such as Burnet, Toland, and Strype had supplied excerpts from correspondence and had pointed out, in one way or another, the resultant advantage of "revelation rather than description in depicting character and motive."¹⁶ But Middleton, in the introduction to his Cicero, announced both a new technique for handling letters in biography and a newly broad spectrum of information to be conveyed by the letters and speeches quoted in his work. He wrote that such items

¹⁵ The Persian Letters was valued, originally, not only as a satire of contemporary French society, but also as an epistolary novel. Montesquieu observed in his "Reflections on The Persian Letters" (1754) that "Nothing . . . pleased readers more than to find in the book, without expecting to, a kind of novel. The reader can see its beginning, its development, and end." This quotation is taken from The Persian Letters, a New Translation, edited, translated and introduced by J. Robert Loy (New York, 1961), p. 39.

The development of epistolary fiction has been studied by Robert Adams Day, Told in Letters: Epistolary Fiction before Richardson (Ann Arbor, 1966); and G. F. Singer, The Epistolary Novel: Its Origin, Development, Decline and Residuary Influence (New York, 1963).

¹⁶ This is identified as the primary advantage of the epistolary method by Robert A. Day, Told in Letters, p. 7. Early English biographers, while pointing out the advantage, often supplied their opinions of what character traits or motives each letter revealed.

should be "managed so, as not to appear to be sewed on, like splendid patches, but woven originally into the text, as the genuine parts of it. With this view I have taken occasion to introduce several of his letters, with large extracts from such of his orations, as gave any particular light into the facts, or customs, or characters, described in this History."¹⁷

Middleton's work is supposed, by some, to have been a plagiarism of an obscure seventeenth-century life of Cicero written by William Bellenden.¹⁸ But the charge, if true, in no way diminishes the importance of the work with respect to the development of eighteenth-century biography. Its method demonstrated that letters, when presented in a fluid social and historical context, could more immediately illuminate a variety of facts, relationships, and attitudes than could many pages of narrative exposition. For example, a particular letter in which Cicero refused to use his political influence in a judicial matter is clearly indicative of the writer's integrity.¹⁹ However, when seen in context, as a

¹⁷ Middleton, Cicero, I, xxi.

¹⁸ In History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century (1876; rpt. New York: Harbinger Books, 1962), I, 216, Leslie Stephen mentioned that Middleton had been "apparently convicted of plagiarism." The charge, detailed in the Encyclopaedia Britannica (Chicago, 1955), XV, 452, is that Middleton used Bellenden's unfinished De Tribus Luminibus Romanorum (Paris, 1633), a very rare book since all but a few copies had been lost in transit to England.

¹⁹ Middleton, Cicero, I, 246.

response to a "peevish and complaining" letter from the tribune Metellus Celer, the letter further shows Cicero's tact and subtlety in dealing with prominent contemporaries. And the situation which prompted the correspondence, although it was barely sketched in Middleton's text, illustrates some aspects of political life in Rome.

Cicero's correspondence was particularly well-suited to the formal needs of a life-and-times biography. As A. Curtis Clark observed, "Cicero's letters are the chief and most reliable source of information for the period. It is due to them that the Romans of the day are living figures to us, and that Cicero, in spite of, or rather in virtue of his frailties, is intensely human and sympathetic."²⁰ But biographers managed to use effectively less far-reaching correspondence by following the method introduced by Middleton. In general, they presented the situations out of which some correspondence arose, and the nature or circumstances of the recipient of a quoted letter, within a coherent, chronological narrative. Evidently they recognized that "Letters reveal the writer's life at the time of writing. But they are influenced by the fact that they are directed to a recipient."²¹ So even if the letters of Robert Boyle or of

²⁰ A. Curtis Clark, "Cicero," Encyclopaedia Britannica (Chicago, 1955), V, 697.

²¹ Wilhelm Dilthey, Pattern and Meaning in History, p. 91. Dilthey believed that letters "show the individual as a centre of forces which act on him and proceed from him"; but that letters could not convey "the meaning of a life."

Alexander Pope lacked the power of Cicero's to illustrate many aspects of contemporary history, they could yet cast light on the writer's life at significant points in time while revealing the qualities of various continuous relationships. Thus Birch provided insights, by means of letters, into Boyle's method of considering scientific problems; and he simultaneously displayed the frank and friendly attitude of the scientist toward others in the philosophic community. He presented Boyle's domestic views by quoting a letter written to a favorite young niece who had suggested to Boyle that he should marry. In each of these instances, the content and context of the correspondence yielded further information on a particular area of contemporary life -- social or intellectual. Similarly the correspondence which Ayre wove into his curious life of Pope revealed the special qualities of Pope's friendships with Swift, Gay, or Atterbury; yet at the same time it showed aspects of the literary and political rivalries of the time.

Several biographers used letters to replace or further narrative exposition. In his life of Dudley North (first published in 1744), Roger North obviated a lengthy account of the merchant seaman's early travels to Russia, Italy, and Turkey by supplying extracts from the letters which the young (and often sea-sick) sailor had written to his parents. In dealing with the many years which Dudley had spent as a business man in Turkey, North avoided what could have been, at best, a detailed account of trade and life in the isolated

Christian community. Several long letters sufficed to give Dudley's impressions of the difficulties encountered in dealing with Turkish laws, customs, and people. Oldys, Johnson, and others used letters in a different way. Typically, they would announce an event such as Ann Oldfield's death,²² or Savage's arrest, and then furnish letters which detailed the scene, the behavior of the principal and others present, and the immediately ensuing events. Usually these narrative and descriptive letters had been written by the biographical subject himself. Oldys, however, gave considerable weight to letters written by persons who had witnessed major events in Mrs. Oldfield's history. The death scene was necessarily reported by an observer, rather than by the principal. The crucial scene in which Mrs. Oldfield (then a seamstress) caught the attention of the playwright Farquahar was conveyed through the reminiscent letter of an attendant servant. Such witness-letters were evidently intended to enhance the credibility of the facts related, in addition to their obvious function of expanding and emphasizing important moments in biography. William Chetwood, estimating the value of such letters in his life of Ben Jonson, remarked, "Tis certain an Epistle from one Acquaintance to another, concerning a third Person known to them both, when the writer does not seem to

²² William Oldys, Memoirs of . . . Ann Oldfield (London, 1741); bound with Thomas Betterton, History of the English Stage, and usually catalogued under Betterton.

be prejudiced, is more than painting the features; it shews the Mind and the Temper."²³ Yet, as Day indicates, witness-letters are most effective in clusters which "present a rounded picture of an event by recording it from several points of view."²⁴ A single letter about a particular event somewhat speciously invites the reader's credence; and Oldys' method in this area seems to parallel the techniques of landscape-architect William Kent, of whom Walpole reported: "In Kensington Garden he planted dead trees, to give a greater air of truth to the scene."²⁵ Witness-letters, although frequently used by writers during this period, remained a less significant biographical element than the subject's own letters and other writings.

Personal memoranda, diaries, and poems appeared to serve many of the same functions as did personal correspondence in biographies. Thus the story of the subject's childhood was taken directly from his own memoirs by Birch, in his life of Boyle, and by Ayre, in the section on Buckingham within the life of Pope. To characterize the relationship which had existed between Pope and his parents, Ayre quoted Pope's own verses (lines 382-405 of Arbuthnot) on the

²³ William R. Chetwood, Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Ben Jonson (Dublin, 1756), p. 56.

²⁴ Robert A. Day, Told in Letters, p. 7.

²⁵ Horace Walpole, The History of the Modern Taste in Gardening (1770), rpt. in Horace Walpole: Gardenist, by Isabel W. Chase (Princeton, 1940), pp. 1-40.

subject. Similarly, Birch quoted Milton's sonnet on his blindness in the Account of . . . Milton as the complete representation of the poet's intellectual and emotional response to being blind. Johnson wove Savage's autobiographical poems into his biography to illustrate a causative link between the poet's social, familial, or financial circumstances and his disreputable behavior.²⁶ From the private memoranda of Francis North, Roger North extracted sketches of contemporary persons which he amplified with biographical data, thereby giving both his subject's point of view and a relatively objective summary of secondary figures in the biography. And Ayre, analyzing the Dunciad, took occasion to identify many of Pope's antagonists and to explain why each had been included in that satire. Even the manuscript revisions of authors were put to biographical use as indicators of individual mental processes. Johnson made a point of describing Savage's "superstitious Regard to the Correction of his Sheets,"²⁷ and Birch, in the second edition of his Milton, included parts of a masque and various sonnets, with manuscript revisions noted, and the several drafts of a letter which Milton had written to a friend.

The appearance of masses of letters, orations, poems,

²⁶ Clarence Tracy, in the introduction to his edition of Savage, remarks that Johnson provided enough extracts from Savage's works "to make up an anthology"; and states that this feature of the work evidently was intended to be a selling point, or particular attraction to the public.

²⁷ Savage, p. 58.

etc., in biographies required readers to spend a proportionately large amount of time considering the subjects' minds and characters. The life activities took on a relatively less significant biographical role. In such a strongly character-oriented work as Birch's Boyle, the public career and achievements of the subject were quite eclipsed.²⁸ And yet the inclusion of numerous self-revelatory documents contributed to an effect of actuality, of a life being lived. Thus, as Locke proposed that one's knowledge of personal identity proceeds from the consciousness of being "the same thinking thing in different times and places,"²⁹ so in these works the repeated evidence of Boyle, or Pope, or Cicero applying his mind to different problems and directing his thoughts to a variety of persons gradually builds the certainty of uniqueness, centered in a particular individual, and having continuity through a certain time, in an actual world.

The credible vitality of the world in which the subject lived was enhanced, in a number of lives published after 1740, by relatively detailed accounts of the lives and characters of contemporaries. Friends, enemies, and professional acquaintances were no longer indistinct figures

²⁸ Later Birch thoroughly buried a subject by using unprecedented quantities of letters in the Memoirs of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth (London, 1754).

²⁹ John Locke, "Of Identity and Diversity," Ch. XXVII, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding.

having no evident existence beyond their contact with the principal figure in the biography; to some degree they could be seen as real people, involved in their own lives. This effectively populated the biographical world, suggesting a complex and busy society.

Middleton perceived difficulties in distinguishing each of the characters in Cicero from all the others, since he assumed that they would exhibit a certain uniformity because of prolonged exposure to one and the same environment, in terms of climate, education, institutions, etc.³⁰ Therefore, he chose to relate more of the actions and events which might individualize the lives of secondary figures in the biography. Further, at the point in his narrative when any important contemporary of Cicero died, he supplied a short summary of the man's lineage, tastes, or temperament. The summary, however brief, was clearly related to the character sketches which historians had developed in their works. Since Middleton considered his work to be, in part, a history of the times in which Cicero had lived, he probably included these obituary characters in conformity with the traditional patterns of that genre. Certainly they are less effective in bringing out the individuality of secondary characters in the biography than are Middleton's narrative passages concerning the actual lives of such persons.

After the publication of Roger North's Francis North

³⁰ Middleton, Cicero, I, xviii.

in 1742, the development of complete little biographies of contemporary figures within the main biography emerged as a popular technique for building a complex picture of the principal subject's world. North used relatively few of these subsidiary lives, in proportion to the overall size of his work. But Birch, in his life of Boyle, and Ayre, in his Pope, developed subsidiary lives as a major component of biography. Each may have done so because his subject's known life lacked the sort of activity and eventfulness which might furnish a lively narrative. Boyle had been a retiring and studious bachelor; and Pope's biography, as Ayre measured it, would scarcely fill one page unless amplified, since "the two great actions of his Life are, that he went from London when young to live at Windsor Forest, and in the year 1716 moved to Twickenham, for the Remainder of his days."³¹

The five subsidiary lives which Birch included within his brief (seventy-seven page) life of Boyle outlined the careers and characters of Boyle's chief correspondents: two intimate friends, a fellow scientist, and two churchmen. Each life was introduced at the point in the biography where Birch quoted letters which Boyle had written to that person. So considerable portions of the biography alternated between illustrations of the method and content of Boyle's letters,

³¹ Ayre, Pope, II, 153. In addition to using new techniques of amplification, Ayre employed every time-honored method of expanding his work. For example, this quotation serves as an apology for a seventy-four page digression on pastoral poetry.

and sketches of the lives of persons to whom he addressed his thoughts. In effect, Birch repeatedly revealed the process of connection between Boyle's intellect and the ongoing, external world; and while showing Boyle's clear and extensive manner of thinking, he simultaneously suggested the narrow range of his social acquaintance.

Ayre's technique differed from Birch's in that his subsidiary lives and character sketches were not closely tied to the structure of the biography as a whole. The most prominent lives (of Buckingham, Atterbury, Gay, and Savage)³² were approximately forty pages long, and were constructed as independent topical biographies. The very length of these lives, together with the wide variety of data provided under Ayre's fragmented topical scheme, necessarily distinguished them as independent units, quite unrelated to the continuity of Pope's life history. Ayre did place the major lives, as well as the briefer biographical sketches of Addison, Rowe, Dennis, and Swift, at points in the work where Pope's relationship to the particular friend or enemy was mentioned; but he did not focus on that relationship within the lives.

Instead he emphasized the different careers, controversies, accomplishments, and failures of the subsidiary figures, and thus cumulatively built a picture of the lively

³² These lives in Ayre's Pope occur as follows: Buckingham, I, 114-155; Atterbury, I, 155-198; Gay, II, 94-124; Savage, II, 276-308.

and diverse world. From Buckingham's recollections of life in the Navy under Charles II (abstracted from his Memoirs as quoted in Giles Jacob's Lives)³³ through discussion of the Duke's activities in Parliament; from analysis of the charges of treason against Atterbury, with abstracts from his speech of defense, to elucidation of Oldmixon's accusation that Atterbury and two other bishops had tampered with the text of Clarendon's History; and from aspects of Swift's, Addison's, and Savage's lives, there gradually emerged the image of a society pervaded by politics. The varied literary world of the time was revealed not only by extracts from the writings of these subsidiary figures, but also through specimens of the criticism which Dryden, Wycherley, Pope, Dennis and others applied to those writings. Glimpses of contemporary country life appeared in the biography of Gay, and Buckingham's description of the fine town house designed for him by Wren suggested something of the grandeur of city life in wealthy circles. Savage's life afforded views of urban poverty. So in total the subsidiary lives illustrated many facets of contemporary society which did not immediately involve Pope, but which comprised his general milieu.

Subsidiary lives did not flourish after mid-century. Chetwood prefaced his life of Jonson with a few irrelevant

³³ Ayre quoted extensively from letters, memoirs, and earlier biographies in the subsidiary lives. Clarence Tracy remarks that much of Ayre's "Savage" was stolen from Johnson, in his edition of Johnson's Savage, p. xxx.

biographical sketches of prominent men in the courts of James I and Charles I, and Birch evidently overfreighted his life of Tillotson with this device. William Rose's criticism of the latter work points to the benefits and defects of subsidiary lives. He observed that "our author has given us a variety of particulars concerning the lives and characters of some of the principal persons he has occasion to mention; and though this will no doubt be to many an additional recommendation of his book; yet as it diverts the attention of the reader from the principal object, it will probably be looked on by others, only as an unnecessary addition to the bulk of the volume."³⁴ When not controlled in relationship to the main subject of the biography, the lives merely functioned as entertaining digressions.

The development of plot in biography was another short-lived experiment in this period. Despite the emergent dominance of chronological exposition, no writers had tried to subordinate their subjects' life data to a plot-line since the Renaissance Mirroir for Magistrates.³⁵ Attempts by Johnson and Ayre to order their materials in this mode lacked sophistication and credibility. They signified, however,

³⁴ William Rose, rev. of The Life of the Most Reverend Dr. John Tillotson by Thomas Birch, Monthly Review, VII (Nov. 1752), 322.

³⁵ Richard Fiddes' Wolsey (1724), a long and detailed historical biography, followed the traditional tripartite periodization of Wolsey's career; but Fiddes did not prune or distort his materials to emphasize this structure.

a new approach to the psychological import of biography.

Specifically, Johnson presented Savage's life in a tripartite de casibus pattern, arranging the order of events to produce a central period of felicity and success between periods marked by bitterness, poverty, and failure. When Savage went to live for some years with the wealthy Lord Tyrconnel, in his narrative Johnson asserted that "This was the Golden Part of Mr. Savage's Life; and for some time he had no Reason to complain of Fortune."³⁶ In actuality, Savage had much to complain of during that period because the woman he believed to be his mother continued to reject him and the post of Poet Laureate, which Savage had hoped for, was given to another. As Clarence Tracy notes, "all of Savage's most merciless attacks on his alleged mother were published whilst he enjoyed his lordship's favor, and at least two must have been written in his house."³⁷ But Johnson supported the structure which he had imposed on the life by transposing the incident of the lost Laureateship from its historical date, 1730, to some vaguely suggested moment following the break with Lord Tyrconnel in 1735.³⁸ Further, he repeatedly suggested that Savage's poem The

³⁶ Savage, p. 44.

³⁷ Savage, p. 44, n. 39.

³⁸ The transposition was remarked by G. B. Hill, ed., Lives of the English Poets, II, 381, n. 2; and by Clarence Tracy, ed., Savage, p. 75, n. 51.

Bastard had been a product of the last, miserable period of the life, e.g., "He now thought himself again at Liberty to expose the Cruelty of his Mother, and therefore, I believe, about this Time, published The Bastard."³⁹

Ayre, with great originality, structured the life of Pope toward a climax in the writing and publication of the Dunciad, an event which occupied the final one-hundred pages of his first volume.⁴⁰ The poet was presented as one who pursued, above all, fame and the power which fame would bring. Anticipating Pope's intentions, Ayre repeatedly stated that Pope prudently perfected his literary skills while deferring the moment when he had sufficient power to reward his friends and punish his enemies. Whatever happened, he "treasur'd it up, to help furnish fresh Matter for the Dunciad."⁴¹ This theme gave a certain unity, direction, and suspense to Ayre's first volume, but consigned much of Pope's career to a meandering, catch-all second volume. After his climactic analysis of the Dunciad, the biographer evidently noticed that he had neglected to consider, in proper chronological order, Pope's friendship with Gay, his views on pastoral poetry, and his edition of Shakespeare;

³⁹ Savage, p. 70. This sentence introduces the third section of the biography.

⁴⁰ Pope, I, 246-337. This section included numerous sketches of Pope's relations with minor figures in the Dunciad.

⁴¹ Pope, I, 60. This theme is specifically restated in Vol. I, pp. 68, 85, 91, and 208.

and that he had yet to cover such major works as the Essay on Man, and the Moral Essays, and various satires. The attempt to weave these materials into a somewhat coherent volume is not successful.

As a method of organizing biography, plotting showed some technical advantages. First, whatever facts or materials the author chose to use could be presented in fluent relationship to the major theme, instead of standing as quite discrete units of information. However comprehensive and accurate an unplotted chronological biography might be, its contents generally lacked developmental coherence. In Oldys' exhaustive life of Raleigh, for example, the relationship between the subject's early poems and his History of the World was merely that the works had been authored by a single person, at different points in time. The tie between Raleigh's adventures in America and his later imprisonment in London was, again, no more than the string of events and occupations which occurred in the intervening biographical time, since Oldys' suggestion of a de casibus turn was more ornamental than formally implicit.⁴² In contrast, Johnson and Ayre introduced the poems written by their subjects as organic essentials in the structure of their lives; Pope's writings became the line of action in

⁴² Oldys introduced the period of Raleigh's trial, etc., with a rhetorical paragraph, not typical of his style ("... now sets the sun of Raleigh's external honor and felicity"), implying that the subjects downfall was produced by some ineluctable fate. See Raleigh, p. 360.

his biography, and Savage's served as a line of thought, reflecting the doomed pattern of the subject's life. Pope's friendships, rivalries, or enmities appeared not as particular episodes, but as an ongoing motive for his actions. And Savage's vicissitudes were not mere events, linked together in order of happening; they were the inescapable process of his life.

A second, more profound advantage of plotted biography was the placement of the subject's character at the very center of the life. Martin Price has argued that the "conception of plot" is tied to the fact that "causality . . . enters into our most fundamental conception of character."⁴³ In these biographies of Pope and Savage it is the principals' characters which emerge as the dominant, constant causative agents, as the reason why these lives developed in their particular directions. Notably, in neither work does the subject's character itself change or mature, although Johnson suggested that Savage might have been a very different person, given a wholesome moral education in youth.⁴⁴ But the characters, as drawn, are fixed, and each is governed by a sort of ruling passion. In Ayre's Pope, the passion for fame and power is primary. It is the spur to the poet's

⁴³ Martin Price, To the Palace of Wisdom (Garden City, 1964), p. 235. Price's study at this point is related to character as a causative principle in the work of Mandeville and Pope.

⁴⁴ Savage, p. 75.

diligence, the cause of his prudence, the sustaining principle in his human relationships. In *Savage*, "the reigning Error of his Life was, that he mistook the Love for the Practice of Virtue."⁴⁵ William Vesterman remarks that Johnson's "tendency to relate his subject to general principles operates so powerfully in The Life of Savage that actions often appear to proceed from the principles rather than the other way around."⁴⁶ Yet the abstract error which Johnson identified as the chief causative element in the life lay within, or dominated *Savage's* character. And thus the repetitive pattern of the life, in which brief episodes of success and subsequent disgrace underscore the overall de casibus form, appears not as a whim of fate or of the author's didacticism, but as the inescapable consequence of the "reigning error."⁴⁷ Further, the vagaries and irregularities of the poet's behavior seem consistent if they all are seen to proceed from *Savage's* mistaken faith in his own

⁴⁵ Savage, p. 74.

⁴⁶ William Vesterman, "Johnson and The Life of Savage," ELH, 36 (1969), 666.

⁴⁷ For other views on the basic patterns and principles of Savage see Benjamin Boyce, "Johnson's Life of Savage," SP, LIII (1956), 576-598, wherein Boyce argues that the traditional criminal life provided Johnson's structural model; and John A. Dussinger, "Style and Intention in Johnson's Life of Savage," ELH, 37 (1970), 564-580, who interprets the work in terms of the mother-child relationship. Dussinger nonetheless views the biography as deterministic and as centered in *Savage's* character, with Johnson "observing an entire life as a timeless state of being . . . significant for depicting the individual's uniform 'character'" (p. 575).

virtue. Although this method of centering biography on aspects of character was quite arbitrary, it provided coherent and even credible explanations of individual life patterns.

As Pope wrote:

Search then the Ruling Passion: There alone,
The Wild are constant, and the Cunning known;
The Fool consistent, and the False sincere;
Priests, Princes, Women, no dissemblers here.⁴⁸

The defect of plotted biography was simply that the strength and coherence of its patterns left no room for alternate interpretations of the life. It exemplifies, above all, the "magistral" mode in factual literature, which Bacon had distinguished as being "a kind of contract of error between the deliverer and the receiver; for he that delivereth knowledge desireth to deliver it in such form as may be best believed, and not as may be best examined; and he that receiveth knowledge desireth rather present satisfaction than expectant inquiry."⁴⁹ Savage, as presented by Johnson, is unquestionably a real person. The life conveys a sense of truth, or "actuality," to use Nicolson's word.⁵⁰ And yet the order of events and some of the very facts given by

⁴⁸ Alexander Pope, Epistle I of the Moral Essays, lines 174-177.

⁴⁹ Francis Bacon, Advancement of Learning, ed. A. Pollard, pp. 307-308.

⁵⁰ In discussing the quality of truth in Johnson's biographies Nicolson dwelt upon analysis and portrayal of character, not upon factual accuracy. See English Biography, pp. 79-86.

Johnson are historically untrue. Frank Brady states that Savage "can be classified as a fictional work masquerading as fact, with an unreliable narrator who thinks he is reliable."⁵¹ However Savage is still considered biography, notable for its psychological vitality.

When biography becomes more closely related to fiction than to history questions arise as to the proper functions and limits of the genre, the intentions of the author, and his responsibility to his readers. In short, what sort of truth should biography convey? J. I. M. Stewart observes, with reference to Lytton Strachey's Eminent Victorians: "Is this irresponsibility to be defended in an enquirer into and interpreter of historical personages? There seem to be two views on the matter. 'Even when they are wrong, they seem alive,' says Mr. [E. M.] Forster, rejoicing in Strachey's creations."⁵² Bertrand Russell, cited further in Stewart's article, upholds the argument for factual accuracy. With specific regard to Ayre and Johnson, one may question whether they intended to write historically accurate lives, or whether they were "inspired by a creative, and therefore

⁵¹ Frank Brady, "The Strategies of Biography and Some Eighteenth-Century Examples," Literary Theory and Structure: Essays in Honor of William K. Wimsatt, ed. Frank Brady, John Palmer, and Martin Price (New Haven, 1973), p. 252.

⁵² J. I. M. Stewart, "Biography," The Craft of Letters in England: A Symposium, ed. John Lehmann (London, 1956), p. 10. This article reviews several modern critical approaches to biography and includes a useful analysis of Nicolson's theories as advanced in English Biography.

fictional, impulse to select only those events and experiences . . . that go to build up an integrated pattern."⁵³

Stauffer developed the thesis that the line between biography and novelistic fiction became blurred in the mid-eighteenth century;⁵⁴ although Ayre and Johnson surely distinguished these genres, the coherence and order of fictional plots may have impressed them and influenced the development of their biographical works.

These innovative biographies published between 1740 and 1745 exerted some influence on the form of later works. Middleton's Cicero, translated into French in 1743, became the model for de Sade's magnificent Memoires sur la vie de . . . Petrarch.⁵⁵ In turn, de Sade's work evidently suggested to William Mason that a biography of Thomas Gray could be composed almost entirely of letters. Although Mason did not directly acknowledge indebtedness to de Sade, he did praise Petrarch in his life of Gray and he further quoted Gray's own appreciation of the work: "it is not well written, but very curious, and laid together from his own letters , and the original writings of the fourteenth century; so that

⁵³ Northrop Frye, The Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton, 1957), p. 307. Frye remarked this tendency in the formation of autobiographies.

⁵⁴ Stauffer, Eighteenth Century, Ch. 2.

⁵⁵ J. F. P. A. de Sade, Mémoires sur la Vie de François Petrarch, tirés de ses oeuvres et des auteurs contemporains, 3 vols. (Amsterdam, 1764-67). De Sade mentioned his debt to Middleton in vol. I, xcviij.

he takes in much of the history of those obscure times, and the characters of many remarkable persons."⁵⁶ Mason's Gray lacked the historical and social range of de Sade's work, but a reviewer for The Gentleman's Magazine readily recognized that Mason had adopted "the method pursued in The Life of Petrarch."⁵⁷ Certainly Mason's announcement that "Mr. Gray will become his own biographer,"⁵⁸ echoes de Sade's remark, "j'ai cru devoir laisser à Petrarch le soin de se faire conoitte lui-même."⁵⁹ And when Mason points to a particular merit of his technique, "that it makes the reader so well acquainted with the man himself as to render it totally unnecessary to conclude the whole with his character,"⁶⁰ he reflects de Sade's comments on the superfluity of a character section in Petrarch.⁶¹ Mason's Gray might have been long-since forgotten, as Nicolson suggests, had Boswell not

⁵⁶ Thomas Gray, from a letter dated March 5, 1766, to Dr. Warton, in The Poems of Mr. Gray, to which are prefixed Memoirs, ed. William Mason (York, 1775), p. 231.

⁵⁷ The Gentleman's Magazine, XLV (June, 1775), 285. The reviewer's comments indicate familiarity not with de Sade's original work, but with The Life of Petrarch collected from "Memoires pour la vie . . ." compiled and translated by Susannah Dobson (London, 1775). The latter work is an abridged translation of the former, and was sufficiently popular to achieve a fifth edition by 1803.

⁵⁸ Gray, p. 5.

⁵⁹ Petrarch, I, xcviij.

⁶⁰ Gray, p. 400.

⁶¹ Petrarch, III, 801.

credited it as the model for the form of his Johnson.⁶² Although Boswell's dominantly anecdotal technique belies any great debt to the methods of Mason or, ultimately, of de Sade and Middleton, the idea of developing a biographical form through which the subject could make himself known to the reader (thus obviating the need for a descriptive character section) links Boswell to those earlier biographers.⁶³

A general indirect influence of Middleton's methods is evidenced by the continued appearance of lesser biographies composed chiefly of letters. Thomas Warton's Bathurst,⁶⁴ Goldsmith's Parnell,⁶⁵ and an anonymous life of Chesterfield⁶⁶ were notable exponents of this mode which appeared before Mason made the letters-biography his own. After 1775, when Mason's Gray was enthusiastically received by critics and the reading public, biographies built upon the subject's

⁶² Nicolson, English Biography, p. 79. The distinct merit of Mason's biography has been better appreciated by Mark Longaker, "The Methods of William Mason," English Biography, pp. 297 ff.; and by Stauffer, who observed that Mason had "a sense of form and organization that is rare in English biography," in Eighteenth Century, p. 378.

⁶³ Both Mason and Boswell did supply character sections, despite their statements concerning the superfluity thereof.

⁶⁴ Thomas Warton, The Life and Literary Remains of Ralph Bathurst (London, 1761).

⁶⁵ Oliver Goldsmith, The Life of Thomas Parnell, D.D. (London, 1770).

⁶⁶ Anon., The Life of the Late Earl of Chesterfield, or the Man of the World, including . . . the Substance of the System of Education delivered in a Series of Letters to His Son (London, 1774).

correspondence reflected Mason's particular techniques.⁶⁷

Ayre's Pope became something of a formal model for later lives written by Cibber, Dilworth, Robert, and Ruffhead;⁶⁸ but it was not the original plot scheme or the use of subsidiary lives which these writers imitated. Instead, as W. L. MacDonald shows, "All four biographers follow Ayre's method of eking out the rather meagre details of the poet's life with a critical survey of his works."⁶⁹ Goldsmith's Nash has been seen as imitative of Johnson's Savage, notably in showing "respect for truth."⁷⁰ In terms of construction, Goldsmith's digressive, rambling work did not resemble Savage. With regard to factual truth, Goldsmith was certainly more deliberate a fictionalist than was Johnson.⁷¹ The

⁶⁷ Concerning the reception and subsequent imitation of Mason's Gray see John W. Draper, William Mason: A Study in Eighteenth-Century Culture (New York, 1924), pp. 264 ff.

⁶⁸ Theophilus Cibber, "Alexander Pope," The Lives of the Poets (London, 1753), V, 219-252; W. H. Dilworth, Life of Alexander Pope, Esq. (London, 1759); T. Robert, "Life of Pope," prefixed to An Essay on Man, translated into Prose (London, 1761); and Owen Ruffhead, The Life of Alexander Pope (London, 1769).

⁶⁹ W. L. MacDonald, Pope and His Critics: A Study in Eighteenth-Century Personalities (London, 1951), p. 251. MacDonald states that Dilworth's life leans heavily on Ayre's work, and that Robert plagiarized Dilworth.

⁷⁰ Stauffer, Eighteenth Century, p. 382.

⁷¹ Frank Brady (see n. 51 above) and Clarence Tracy (Savage, p. 44, n. 39) suggest that Johnson's inaccuracies were unintentional errors. Goldsmith, however, reshaped anecdotes which he had used in non-biographical works and presented them as episodes in Nash's life. (See p. 82, n. 47 above.)

influence of Savage, as perceived in Nash or other works, probably lies in the techniques through which a strong semblance of truth or reality is conveyed to the reader. Since these techniques appear to be related to the growth of novelistic realism in biography at mid-century, they will be considered in the next chapter.

In short, this period of high accomplishment in the development of new forms and techniques for life-writing did not bear a rich harvest. Biographers writing in the third quarter of the century seem to have been affected by the conflicts which Robert Spector observes in literary criticism at that time: "a dissatisfaction with the old standards; reluctance to accept the new; and an attempt to work aesthetic changes into the traditional pattern."⁷²

⁷² Robert D. Spector, English Literary Periodicals and the Climate of Opinion during the Seven Years War (Hague, 1966), p. 261.

V. Rules, Reaction, and Derivative Biographical Forms after 1750

In 1747 Oldys prefaced the Biographia Britannica with an essay deploring the fact that so many lives had been "digested rather according to the whim and fancy of the writer than in obedience to the laws which reason, and the practice of the best authors have established, in reference to this kind of writing."¹ In the course of the preceding hundred years biographers had indeed experimented with and developed the formal possibilities of the genre because they recognized no fixed laws, rules, or formulas to which they should submit. The idea that there existed one correct method of composing biography and that deviations from that method were censurable was certain to have a limiting effect of writers' innovative approaches to biography. The reactionary trend toward topical patterns and didactic methods which began at mid-century may be attributed to a general, though uneasy, acceptance of the notion of rules governing the genre.

While Oldys' remarks signalled a new critical approach to biography, the literary reviews which appeared in the following decade were more important in establishing the guide-lines for biography. In the very first issue of the Monthly Review anonymous critics stressed the didactic

¹ William Oldys, Biographia Britannica, I, viii.

benefits of biography, the propriety of a narrow focus on the individual subject, and the importance of a concluding character summary.² These criteria, together with approval of strict topical patterns, served as the basis for many articles of biographical criticism in the Monthly Review in the following years, and when the Critical Review and the Literary Magazine or Universal Review began publication in 1756, their strictures on biography were equally reactionary.³ Owen Ruffhead's review of Jortin's Erasmus, although longer than the average, may stand as fairly typical of such criticism. Ruffhead opened his article with a severely phrased view of the genre, asserting: "As the business of biographical writing, however, consists principally in the art of compiling, the seeming facility of the employment has induced many laborious drones to commence biographers who have collected materials without discernment, put them together without order, and commented upon them without

² Specifically, the review of a life of Bampfylde-Moore Carew recommended the work because it showed the folly of giving money to beggars; and a review of the Life, Family and Character of Charles Seymour deplored the author's inclusion of memoirs of the Seymour family and selected for quotation only the "summary of the Duke's character" (Monthly Review, I [1749], 452-457). The authors of these reviews have not been identified by Benjamin C. Nangle, The Monthly Review. First Series 1749-1789: Indexes of Contributors and Articles (Oxford, 1934).

³ See Robert D. Spector, English Literary Periodicals (Hague, 1966), pp. 244, 317; and Walter Graham, English Literary Periodicals (New York, 1930), p. 195.

judgment."⁴ Having thus emphasized the necessity of clearly ordered composition and didactic commentary, Ruffhead proceeded to outline the biography under consideration. In conclusion, to display Jortin's style and to typify the work, he quoted in full Jortin's character summary and physical description of Erasmus, pointing out that the material should have been arranged in a more definite topical form ("division of one character after another").

It is difficult to imagine why such criticism affected contemporary biographers, since it appeared in a period marked by widespread distrust of the validity of compositional rules governing other genres.⁵ Perhaps writers felt that the emergence of rules gave the genre more dignity than it had possessed as an ill-defined sub-category of history; probably they hoped to get a favorable review in one of the magazines which dominated the field of criticism at that time. The recognition of rules is immediately evidenced by Mallet's Bolingbroke⁶ and Orrery's Swift,⁷ published in 1752. Both works were divided to form a series of letters on distinct life-areas or accomplishments of the subject,

⁴ Owen Ruffhead, rev. of Life of Erasmus, by J. Jortin, Monthly Review, XIX (October, 1758), 385-399.

⁵ See E. N. Hooker, "The Discussion of Taste from 1750 to 1770 and the New Trends in Literary Criticism," PMLA, XLIX (1934), 577-592.

⁶ David Mallet, Life of Bolingbroke (London, 1752).

⁷ Orrery, John Boyle, Earl of Cork and, Remarks on the Life and Writings of Dr. Jonathan Swift (London, 1752).

with Mallet's having a built-in didactic purpose: the letters were ostensibly directed to a young nobleman in need of ethical instruction. Both were interspersed with references to compositional rules. Mallet began by remarking that the "first thing to be considered when we speak of a man of quality, is his Family,"⁸ and concluded by advising his reader that a character sketch of Bolingbroke should be placed after the account of his death.⁹ Orrery similarly wrote: "I have already mentioned to you the exact place, and date of Dr. Swift's nativity, but the rules of biography make it necessary to give you some account of his family."¹⁰ He introduced Stella into his narrative at the time when Swift met her, but pointed out that he knew, by the "strict rules of biography," any account of her should have been reserved for a section on Swift's "marriage."¹¹ Orrery further injected a long survey of Swift's writings, comprising seventeen out of the twenty-four letters, between his account of Swift's life and that of his decline and death.

Since Orrery himself was a very conservative literary critic for The World, his reversion to a Spratian form of

⁸ Bolingbroke, p. 3.

⁹ Bolingbroke, p. 345.

¹⁰ Swift, p. 8.

¹¹ Swift, P. 22.

biography is not too surprising.¹² But Johnson too began to imitate what Oldys had called "the practice of the best authors." As previously mentioned, his Roscommon (1748) was cast in Baylean form. His obituary life of Edward Cave in 1754 took on a balanced topical pattern, with even the character section tidily organized into paragraphs on Cave's personal appearance and on his dominant intellectual, moral, and social qualities.¹³ This was the "division of one character after another" -- the pattern approved by critics in this period.

As none of the creative vigor shown in Savage appeared in Johnson's mid-century biographies, so none of Joseph Spence's interest in anecdotal and conversational social history carried over into his biographical writing at that time. The Life, Character, and Poems of Mr. Blacklock¹⁴ was arranged, as indicated in the title, in the tripartite literary biography pattern, with the bulk of the work devoted to an appraisal of the poet's moral character. This aspect of the character Spence derived entirely from interpretive readings of Blacklock's poems, a biographic fallacy which Spector

¹² Orrery's conservatism as a critic is mentioned by R. D. Spector, English Literary Periodicals, p. 250.

¹³ Samuel Johnson, "An Account of the Life of the Late Mr. Edward Cave," Gentleman's Magazine, XXIV (Feb. 1754), 53-58.

¹⁴ Joseph Spence, An Account of the Life, Character, and Poems of Mr. Blacklock (London, 1754).

states was fairly common at the time in articles in the Monthly Review.¹⁵ In his section on Blacklock's poems, Spence discussed the works according to genres -- psalms, satires, pastorals, odes -- in the topical critical mode which Sprat had established in his Cowley. Spence's second biography had a novel purpose, being an advertisement for a charity fund for an indigent author, Robert Hill. But in point of form it was decidedly reactionary: A Parallel: in the manner of Plutarch.¹⁶ The Plutarchian cast of Johnson's biographies has been often remarked upon, but Spence was the first writer in many decades, perhaps in over a century, to actually write parallel lives, concluded by a comparison, and motivated by ethical considerations.¹⁷

Heavily moralized biographies proliferated in this period. Swift emerged as a prime subject for weighty, exemplary works. Although Orrery had advanced a few moral reflections on Swift's life, such content had been a minor element in his work. But later biographers went further.

¹⁵ Spector illustrates his point by citing James Ralph's remarks on Swift in Monthly Review, XVIII (March, 1758), 258; and Owen Ruffhead's on Sterne in Monthly Review, XXIII (1760). See English Literary Periodicals, p. 343.

¹⁶ Joseph Spence, A Parallel . . . between a most celebrated Man of Florence, and one, scarce ever heard of, in England, 2nd ed. (London, 1759).

¹⁷ Johnson's Plutarchian quality was noted by C. L. Carlson, The First Magazine, p. 133; by John Butt, Biography in the Hands of Walton, Johnson, and Boswell, and no doubt by many others. The last biography developed in parallel prior to Spence's may have been Henry Wotton's Parallel between Essex and Buckingham (London, 1641).

Patrick Delaney, in his Observations on the Life and Writings of Swift (1754), presented his subject as "a sad monument and a melancholy, mortifying memento to the vanity of the pride in parts"; and John Hawkesworth, in a preface-life to The Works of Swift (1755), developed his material so that "to the wise it may teach humility, to the simple, content."¹⁸ The ethical freight of Mallet's and Spence's works, mentioned above, was directed toward specific ends. That of Nash, by Goldsmith, was aimed at all sorts of imprudent behavior which might wreck the reputations, prospects, or finances of persons entering society.

While didacticism and stilted formalism ruled biography at mid-century, an incompatible trend toward realism gained strength. Realism had been emergent in drama, fiction, and memoirs since the late seventeenth century, and many scholars have concluded that biographers learned the techniques, or adopted the mode of realism from these other genres.¹⁹ If Auerbach's listing of the major constituents of literary realism is taken as a standard, it appears that in some respects biography was actually ahead of the other

¹⁸ The material on Delaney and Hawkesworth is taken from Wayne Warnke, "Samuel Johnson on Swift: the Life of Swift and Johnson's Predecessors in Swiftian Biography," Journal of British Studies, VII (1968), 56-64.

¹⁹ See Stauffer, Eighteenth Century, pp. 19 ff.; Longaker, English Biography, Chapters II and III; Nicolson, English Biography, p. 76; and John C. Major, The Role of Personal Memoirs in English Biography and Novel, p. 95.

genres in developing this mode, although the full range of constituents did not appear in major lives until the mid-eighteenth century. Specifically, Auerbach's analysis of realism excluded all moralistic literature, but required: a) subjects drawn from the middle and lower strata of society; b) serious treatment of everyday life; c) embedding of persons in an historically credible milieu; and d) a fluid historical background.²⁰

With regard to the selection of subjects from the middle and lower ranks of society, biographers had made progress since 1605, when Bacon had first suggested that more life-histories of such persons be written. The custom of prefixing lives to the collected writings of successful authors, regardless of their social rank, had resulted in biographies of scores of middle-class men. A rudimentary interest in drawing up histories of English poetry and drama had led Langbaine, Winstanley, and Jacobs to compose brief lives of actors and writers so minor that they would never have become the subjects of full-scale biographies. Criminal lives, which had traditionally been hawked at executions, had at last been discovered by collectors and publishers.²¹ Alexander

²⁰ Erich Auerbach, Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature, trans. W. R. Trask (Princeton: Princeton Paperback edition, 1965), pp. 491-492. Auerbach nevertheless considered Fielding's Tom Jones representative of realism.

²¹ For traditions of criminal lives, see William R. Irwin, The Making of Jonathan Wild: A Study in the Literary Method of Henry Fielding (New York, 1941), pp. 80 ff.

Smith's collection, the History of the Lives of the Most Noted Highwaymen, Footpads, Housebreakers . . ., appeared in 1714, to be followed by Arthur L. Hayward's successful Lives of the Most Remarkable Criminals . . . executed for Murder in 1735.

With regard to the criterion of serious treatment of everyday life, "descent into minute circumstances, and trivial passages of life"²² had been recognized as part of the biographer's task long before the rise of realism in other branches of literature. Renaissance writers such as Cavendish and Paule had included quantities of mundane detail in their works, considering diet, routines, dress, and domestic habits significant aspects of their subjects' lives.²³ Walton had dealt at length with the emotional and financial complications in Donne's marriage. Later Evelyn, projecting his biography of Mrs. Godolphin as a "saint's life," had developed the work chiefly on the lady's regimen: how she had organized her holy days with respect to diet, clothing, hours of prayer, etc., in contrast to the routines and duties of her average days. The respect for circumstances and events of everyday life evident in such works may have continued into the eighteenth century. As an element in biography,

²² Dryden, Plutarch, I, 56.

²³ In the field of fiction, one Elizabethan work did embody the elements of realism, i.e., Thomas Deloney's The Most Pleasant and Delectable History of John Winchcombe, otherwise called Jack of Newbury (London, 1597).

however, mundane and domestic detail all but disappeared during the decades when it began to emerge as an important part of fiction and drama, roughly from 1700 to 1730.²⁴

The third and fourth of Auerbach's criteria, concerning the credible and active background or milieu, were not often met in biographies before 1730. Yet even where the first two constituents of realism occurred they did not necessarily signal an approach to that mode of literature. As Ian Watt pointed out, the long-term critical association of middle-class or lowlife subjects with realism often ignores the fact that the method and form of presenting the subject is more pertinent than any particular social stratum.²⁵ And in the same way depiction of commonplace events or everyday life may become symbolic or remote from credible experience. While Auerbach states that realism requires a presentation of mundane life "in terms of its human and social problems, or even of its tragic complications,"²⁶ biographers had usually presented it in terms of moral dignity or rectitude.

The shift toward methods and forms of realism can be seen after 1730 in Crusius' and Oldys' development of the

²⁴ James L. Clifford attributes the dearth of realistic detail in that period to prevalent notions of propriety, in "How Much Should a Biographer Tell? Some Eighteenth-Century Views," Essays in Eighteenth-Century Biography, ed. P. B. Daghlion (Bloomington, 1968), pp. 67-95.

²⁵ Ian Watt, "Realism and the Novel Form," from The Rise of the Novel (Berkeley, 1960); reference here is to the reprint in Approaches to the Novel, ed. R. Scholes (San Francisco, 1961), p. 57.

²⁶ Mimesis, p. 342.

historical and situational background in biographies, and in Birch's and Oldys' objective handling of materials which showed some of the less creditable behavior of their subjects. The complex components of realism came together in Middleton's, North's, and Ayre's work after 1740; but more notable than any in this development was Johnson's Savage. There, in a distinct and particular world of London and Bristol, the continuous process of community life is discernible as a tangential background to Savage's own course. Governmental power is changing hands, other poets are prospering, while in the foreground is Savage, petulantly alienating his benefactors with complaints about the way in which they supply him with clothes, money, or lodging; fussing over his proof sheets; fantasizing about high parentage, a blissful country retreat, or an ultimate literary triumph -- none of which the real world can give him. Johnson's factual inaccuracy does not affect the realism of the work, nor does his moral commentary, despite the critical concept that didacticism and realism are incompatible. George Chalmers remarked of pseudo-biography (with regard to Defoe's works in that genre), "by matchless art it may be made more instructive than a real life."²⁷ However, the example of Savage shows that only by matchless art can a real life be made both

²⁷ George Chalmers, The Life of Daniel Defoe (London, 1790), p. 58.

deliberately instructive and convincingly real.²⁸

The mid-century reversion to topical forms, didacticism, and a sense of what was proper material as well as proper methods in biography was clearly inimical to the development of realism. Strict topical form required the biographer to relegate all domestic and financial information to the final section of his work. Historical milieu had no place in the topical pattern, and the subject's accomplishments, ethics, appearance, friends, etc., were not presented as part of his "life." Nevertheless, the tendency toward inclusion of realistic detail and setting remained strong. Often evidence of rules-conscious form and the methods of realism appeared in the same work or collection, with uneven results. The overwhelming historical digressions Mallet wove into his life of Bacon destroyed the neat proportions of the traditional biographical pattern and, conversely, his intrusive didacticism obscured the realistic and poignant details in his Bolingbroke. Orrery, gifted with the "impartial eye of curiosity,"²⁹ brought out

²⁸ Johnson himself suggested in Rambler No. 60 (Oct. 13, 1750) that a truthful biography could enlarge its readers' understanding of psychology or ethics. By the time he wrote Idler No. 84 (Nov. 24, 1759), however, he considered autobiography a more likely source of truth. This change in Johnson's viewpoint is evaluated by A. J. Tillinghast, "The Moral and Philosophical Basis of Johnson's and Boswell's Idea of Biography," Johnsonian Studies, ed. M. Wahbi (Cairo, 1962), pp. 115-132.

²⁹ John Churton Collins, Jonathan Swift: A Biographical and Critical Study (London, 1893), p. 2.

many of Swift's odd habits and attitudes in anecdotes, a technique reminiscent of the original methods of Suetonius. Despite his persistent mention of biographical rules, he broke them as often as he mentioned them, even opening his work with several paragraphs on Swift's character before proceeding to nativity and parentage.³⁰ In his fourth letter, concerning Swift in politics, Orrery sketched the factional disputes of that period and showed Swift's role in a dual perspective -- as it had appeared to Swift, and as it had been perceived by Queen Anne's political advisors: "while he imagined himself a subtil diver, who dexterously shot down into the profoundest regions of politics, he was suffered only to sound the shallows nearest the shore."³¹ In short, Orrery's taste for detail, narrative, and well-developed situational background led him to write a biography too much inclined toward realism for the strict limits of topical form. He ruefully remarked in one of the biographical letters, "You must have observed, my dear son, that I could not submit to be confined within the narrow limits of biographical memoirs."³²

In several mid-century collections the stilted, narrow

³⁰ In this initial character sketch Orrery seems bent on establishing a ruling passion motif, emphasizing that Swift's "perpetual views were directed toward power" (p. 5); but he did not pursue the theme in his work.

³¹ Swift, p. 38.

³² Swift, p. 338.

patterns of biography and the more fluid, intimate modes are juxtaposed. George Ballard's Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain³³ is composed in a flat, obituary style for the most part. The exceptions are several Reformation lives evidently developed on materials taken from Foxe's Acts and Monuments. In these the immediacy of personal tragedies, of small families destroyed by religious persecution, is conveyed through domestic scenes, direct speech, and carefully detailed trial scenes, all supplied with "effective touches of sentiment and humor."³⁴ As these biographies stand out in Ballard's collection because of their vitality and realism, so does the life of Samuel Boyse in Cibber's Lives of the Poets.³⁵ The miserably indigent poet who hoped to achieve a genteel air by carrying a small dog under his arm is more fully realized in this collection than are such important literary figures as Gay or Defoe, whose biographies were composed with systematic formality. In the Gentleman's Magazine, which had since its inception in 1733 carried informative and didactic biographies, a gradual acceptance of

³³ George Ballard, Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain (Oxford, 1752).

³⁴ William Haller, Foxe's Book of Martyrs and the Elect Nation (London, 1963), p. 126. Haller here refers to Foxe's techniques, but the remark applies equally well to Ballard's lives based on Foxe's.

³⁵ Theophilus Cibber, "Samuel Boyse," Lives of the Poets, V, 160-176. The form of Boyse's life was particularly praised by Walter Raleigh, Six Essays on Johnson (Oxford, 1910), p. 119.

the narrative and realistic forms occurred after 1750.³⁶ A serialization of Orrery's Swift was undertaken, but not completed by the magazine in 1751. Five years later, however, volume 28 of the Gentleman's Magazine offered a large number of biographies composed in sharply contrasting modes. A life of Villiers, serialized through seven issues, displayed a strong narrative development enlivened by pertinent snatches of conversation and graphic scenes -- in particular, a climactic murder scene.³⁷ Beside this could be read a short biography of General William Blakeney, evenly divided between a section outlining the high points of the General's career and one outlining the laudable aspects of his character and appearance.³⁸ A rigidly topical account of the life and writings of Linnaeus³⁹ stood in contrast to criminal biographies. The latter were cast as suspense stories, free of the topical form and ultimate moralizing bent traditional in criminal lives, and they dealt not with the professional

³⁶ See C. Lennart Carlson, The First Magazine, p. 133. Biographical sketches, which had been appearing in magazines since 1700, increased in quantity and importance as magazine contents after 1746, according to Walter Graham, English Literary Periodicals, p. 195.

³⁷ Anon., "Account of the Life of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham," Gentleman's Magazine, XXVIII (1756), 3-6, 54-55, 104-107, 186-189, 234-237, 273-277, 325-330.

³⁸ Anon., "Some Account of the Life of General William Blakeney," Gentleman's Magazine, XXVIII (1756), 390-392.

³⁹ Anon., "The Life and Most Material Writings of Professor Linnaeus," Gentleman's Magazine, XXVIII (1756), 415-417, 463-464.

lower-class criminal, but with middle-class persons who had run afoul of the law.⁴⁰

A tendency toward realism is inherent in Goldsmith's treatment of the low-born Nash in his petty "kingdom" of Bath; but the conflict between rules and realism after 1760 was most pronounced in Murphy's Fielding.⁴¹ The conventional pattern of biography can be discerned in Murphy's initial attention to Fielding's parentage and birth, and in his concluding paragraphs of physical description and character summary. Murphy showed his awareness of the supposed propriety of limiting the biographical focus to admirable public accomplishments of the subject by announcing that the author (himself) would not "insult [Fielding's] memory with unnecessary detail of his distresses, and the actions which resulted from them . . . for it is not the entire history of the man, but the memoirs of an author, which he proposes to offer to the public."⁴² In the biographical portions of his work, however, Murphy brought out the stories of Fielding's romances and financial problems, and tried to sustain an account of his legal career in parallel to his literary career. One striking anecdote depicted Fielding backstage on

⁴⁰ For examples, "Alex Thompson, executed . . . after being declared a Bankrupt," and "William Cannicott," Gentleman's Magazine, XXVIII (1756), 118-119 and 409-412, respectively.

⁴¹ Arthur Murphy, An Essay on the Life and Genius of Henry Fielding, Esq. (London, 1762).

⁴² Murphy, pp. 6-7.

the opening night of his play The Wedding Day, drinking great quantities of champagne while sneering at the intelligence of both the audience and cast, "cocking his eye at the actor, while streams of tobacco trickled down from the corner of his mouth."⁴³ This Hogarthian scene, together with the overall picture of Fielding's complex and difficult life, belied Murphy's stated biographical intentions.

In the area of literary criticism, Murphy lost control of the scale and proportion required by the limited, formal life that he had proposed to write. Here was no well-defined topical section comprising an outline of Fielding's major works in several genres and an appraisal of his literary merits. Instead, Murphy interspersed the biography with long digressive arguments concerning the essential scope of Fielding's genius as measured against that of Homer or Marivaux. In the course of one such digression Murphy unapologetically remarked, "It may be observed by the reader, that in pursuing the foregoing train of reflections, sight has been lost of Henry Fielding; but it was never intended, in this little tract, to observe the rules of strict biography."⁴⁴

Joseph Warton's Essay on Pope (1756)⁴⁵ was Murphy's

⁴³ Murphy, p. 26.

⁴⁴ Murphy, p. 21.

⁴⁵ Joseph Warton, An Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope, Vol. I (London, 1756); Vol. II (London, 1782). A valuable study of this work is William D. MacClintock's Joseph Warton's "Essay on Pope"; A History of the Five Editions (Chapel Hill, 1933).

acknowledged model for the critical portions of Fielding. That essay contained some biographical anecdotes borrowed from Spence's collections, but it was not presented as a life history. Instead, as Johnson described it in his review for the Literary Magazine, the essay was "a very curious and entertaining miscellany of critical remarks and literary history."⁴⁶ Warton deplored the establishment of rules of composition in any branch of literature⁴⁷ and asserted that such critical criteria had proven debilitating to genius in the course of history. His own system for estimating the quality and merit of a writer's genius was to categorize his work in one of four types, i.e., sublime, moral and ethical, wit and taste, or mere verse, and then to measure the force of the writer's genius against that of others in the same category, regardless of when they had written. Yet to some extent Warton made allowances for the effect on a poet of the climate, country, and age in which he had lived,⁴⁸ following the critical method recently advanced by Thomas Warton's Observations on the "Faery Queene"

⁴⁶ Samuel Johnson, rev. of Joseph Warton's "Essay on Pope," Literary Magazine or Universal Review, I (1756), 85.

⁴⁷ Joseph Warton, Essay on Pope, I, 208. The Critical Review took particular note of Warton's views on rules, which Johnson ignored in his Literary Magazine review. Despite the conservative bias of the Critical Review, Warton's work was praised for "taste and learning, animated with many strokes of manly criticism" (Critical Review, I [1756], 226-240).

⁴⁸ J. Warton, Essay on Pope, I, 5, and throughout.

of Spenser (1754). The complicated critical scheme of the Essay on Pope was ill-suited to biography, being necessarily discursive and far-ranging. In choosing to imitate Warton, Murphy paradoxically abandoned the biographical form which his introductory paragraphs had seemed to promise in favor of a critical form which his work could not encompass. So in total Murphy's Fielding became a curious mixture of a conventional biographical pattern distorted by realistic chronology and anecdotes, and a disproportionately extensive critical essay.⁴⁹

The influence of Warton's Essay on Pope extended further, in the field of biography,⁵⁰ to the detriment of Owen Ruffhead's Pope.⁵¹ Wilbert L. MacDonald remarks that Ruffhead "chose to submerge the much needed biography in a superfluous critical essay on the works and genius of Pope."⁵² But this critical essay, a point-by-point rebuttal of Warton's arguments, actually had been written by William

⁴⁹ In his Essay on the Life and Genius of Samuel Johnson (1792), Murphy worked out a "regular way of tracing an author from one work to another" (p. 54), i.e., a chronological scheme alternating "life" and "writings" sections.

⁵⁰ In respect to criticism of Pope's poetry, the influence of Warton's essay was still felt in 1825, when the Reverend William Bowles wrote his Final Appeal to the Literary Public relative to Pope. See J. J. Van Rennes, Byron, Bowles, and the Pope Controversy (Amsterdam, 1927).

⁵¹ Owen Ruffhead, Life of Alexander Pope (London, 1769).

⁵² Wilbert L. MacDonald, Pope and His Critics, p. 260.

Warburton.⁵³ Angered by Warton's classification of Pope, Warburton virtually took command of Ruffhead's biographical project. Accordingly, in the finished work there were few materials directly pertinent to Pope's life -- scattered anecdotes and letters. Ruffhead chose to make a virtue of this defect, writing: "The life of a studious man can consist of little else than a character of himself and of his writings . . . intimately blended, that they serve to illustrate each other."⁵⁴

Clearly the concept of a methodically defined genre was not strong enough to prevail. If biographers were not drawn to realistic detail and chronology or to anecdotal depiction of the subject, they might stray into essays which shifted their works away from the primary subject. Instead of using biography as a means of illustrating moral or psychological truths, they might use it as the vehicle for illuminating individual eccentricities, for expanding critical controversies, or for any number of other purposes. Biography, throughout earlier centuries, had not been recognized as an independent genre, although most writers had shaped lives according to the pattern descended from the

⁵³ Robert M. Ryley, from a study of manuscripts, identified the portions of this work written by Warburton and Ruffhead, respectively. His findings are detailed in "Warburton, Warton, and Ruffhead's Life of Pope," Papers on Language and Literature, IV (1968), 51-62.

⁵⁴ Ruffhead, p. 6.

Twelve Caesars. And while the growth of biography in the eighteenth century had served to distinguish it from other species of historical literature, the very variety of new forms which had accompanied that growth prevented consensus as to the compositional requirements of the genre. By 1760 critics' and biographers' efforts toward fixing the form of the genre were on the wane and their influence was to be seen most commonly, thereafter, in the standardized topicality of magazine biographies.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ See for examples The British Magazine and Review, I (1782) and The Literary Magazine and British Review, I (1788). These publications emphasized biography as an "instructive part of literature" (as announced in the preface to Vol. I of The Literary Magazine). Lives often appeared as the lead articles, and occupied a larger part of these magazines than they had in earlier publications; but they had a mechanical form and minimal vitality.

VI. Variations of Established Forms

As the movement toward establishing compositional rules slackened, it appeared that interest in developing new biographical forms had diminished as well. The experimental vigor which had characterized the field prior to 1750 was not to be generally revived. Some writers pretended, or demonstrated, indifference toward the whole matter of construction. "To throw these memoirs into some kind of order, I have divided them into six parts or sections," was Maty's prefatory description of the scheme of his Chesterfield, a work so sensibly organized as to belie the author's whimsicality.¹ Walpole's life of Vertue, in contrast, was presented formally enough as the preface to the third volume of Anecdotes of Painting, a work based on Vertue's research.² But it was so ill-composed as to suggest that Walpole cared nothing about its effect. Opening in the manner of a funeral sermon, with Vertue proposed as an example of the merits of industry, the life shifted into a de casibus pattern which necessarily implied that industriousness was of little value.

Most biographers during this period applied their

¹ M. Maty, Miscellaneous Works of the Late . . . Chesterfield, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (London, 1777), I, 13.

² Horace Walpole, "Life of Vertue," prefixed to Vol. III of Anecdotes of Painting in England, ed. H. Walpole (Strawberry Hill, 1763).

talents to refining or strengthening forms which had been introduced earlier. Biography which utilized a considerable amount of correspondence shifted away from the method which Middleton had introduced in Cicero. Where he had woven letters into his text as reflections upon or announcements of action, writers now began to use blocks of correspondence to replace a narrative of actions. Instead of telling about Ralph Bathurst's duties, projects, and difficulties as Dean of Wells, Thomas Warton supplied over fifty pages of letters ("without reserve or selection") to display "the most material occurrences in Dr. Bathurst's prudent and vigorous administration of this office."³ Thus Bathurst's correspondence served as the story of his mature years and as the illustration of his character simultaneously. The anonymous author of Chesterfield, or the Man of the World (1774) used his subject's speeches to depict the man in his public career, and a series of letters from Chesterfield to his son to reveal social philosophy. The Monthly Review scorned this work for being a "large bundle" of speeches and letters, "tied together with little threads of narrative, the whole of which would scarce make a three-penny pamphlet."⁴ But when Mason's Gray was published in the following year, all

³ Thomas Warton, The Life and Literary Remains of Ralph Bathurst (London, 1761), p. 94.

⁴ Anon., rev. of The Life of the Late Earl of Chesterfield, or the Man of the World, Monthly Review, LI (Sept. 1774), 242.

critics acclaimed the biography despite the relatively small proportion of narrative in the work. Owing to Mason's perceptive selection and arrangement of materials, the new development of letters-biography form gained general acceptance.

Lives in which the author assumed a major role by writing in the first person reappeared after a lapse of almost half a century. Dryden had popularized the sort of biography dominated by the perceptible personality or persona of an author who conversationally addressed the readers as "you," invited their attention to points of critical or biographical interest, discussed his difficulties in composing a life, and advanced his opinions, often digressively, on the subject's character, accomplishments, or milieu. After 1720, however, biographers adopted a relatively impersonal style. They limited their remarks on formal technique or theory to prefatory essays. In the main body of their works, which necessarily reflected their judgment as to the significant aspects of their subjects' lives and characters, they remained indistinct. Even Middleton and Johnson, who interspersed biographies with reflective commentaries, did not dramatize their role of narrator to the point where the reader might have a sense of intimacy with the narrator and react to him as if he were a distinct character. They do emerge from Cicero and Savage as "companions and guides" in the manner of Dryden or Walter Pope or, in the field of

contemporary fiction, Fielding.⁵

Ayre and Orrery had made a partial return to the earlier narrative mode by occasionally inviting the reader to observe the processes of their compositions, a device which Booth identifies as effective in "contributing to our sense of traveling with a trustworthy companion, an author who is sincerely battling to do justice to his materials."⁶ But the fully distinct narrator-personality reappeared first in Walpole's Anecdotes of Painting. Throughout this work "we never forget the presence of our charming and opinionated cicerone."⁷ The English painters and engravers are less memorable than is the author.

Boswell advanced this mode in his Memoirs of Paoli.⁸ Instead of establishing himself as a dramatized narrator distinct from the story he is telling, Boswell here becomes, in Brady's words, "the most important other character in his

⁵ The distinction between commentators and dramatized narrators (the latter serving as "companions and guides") is analyzed at length by Wayne C. Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago, 1961), pp. 149-165.

⁶ Wayne C. Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction, p. 214.

⁷ Lawrence Lipking, The Ordering of the Arts, p. 132. Lipking suggests that Walpole's interest in this work was not to advance the history of English painters and engravers, but rather to enhance his own social and professional reputation.

⁸ James Boswell, The Journal of a Tour to Corsica and Memoirs of Pascal Paoli (1768); in Boswell on the Grand Tour: Italy, Corsica, and France. 1765-1766, ed. Frank Brady and Frederick A. Pottle (New York, 1955), pp. 141-205.

subject's biography."⁹ His role is not that of the author-companion-guide, but that of the young writer venturing to collect materials for a biography of a highly distinguished contemporary. He reports his sensations of awe, concluding that "the contemplation of such a character really existing was of more service to me than all I had been able to draw from books."¹⁰ He boasts of his techniques: "Ever mindful of the wisdom of the Rambler, I have accustomed myself to mark the small peculiarities of character."¹¹ And he describes Paoli's appearance, behavior, and ideas as he immediately perceived them in the course of his visit to Corsica.

This ingenuous, on-the-scene narrator gives Paoli the effect of having been written spontaneously and without calculation, quite obscuring the fact that the real author, Boswell, carefully composed the work as a propoganda piece. "The main purpose of the Tour was to evoke powerfully certain emotions concerning Paoli and the Corsicans," and its success in this respect, as Pottle shows, derived in part from the readers' conviction that the naive narrator must be telling the whole, unvarnished truth.¹²

⁹Frank Brady, "The Strategies of Biography," Literary Theory and Structure, ed. Frank Brady et al., p. 257.

¹⁰ Boswell, Paoli, p. 178.

¹¹ Boswell, Paoli, p. 180.

¹² Frederick A. Pottle, James Boswell: The Earlier Years. 1740-1769 (New York, 1966), p. 362.

In The Lives of the Poets, Johnson himself comes to the fore. No longer the shadowy eminence who commented upon and moralized the Life of Savage, he emerges as the dominant mind and character in most of these lives, while the poets are diminished to the role of objects upon which Johnson's mind operates. Concerning this aspect of the work, John Wain writes: "If Johnson had used The Lives of the Poets as a repository of critical judgements and a means of expressing his political and historical opinions, he would already have given abundantly. But he did more. He made the collection a vehicle for personal reminiscence. In one sense, the work is Johnson's autobiography."¹³ Thus without affecting an intimate relationship with his readers or dramatizing himself as narrator, Johnson became the major figure in his work, developing a biographical mode which was closer to being a philosophical or psychological essay than a traditional literary life.¹⁴

In terms of overt structure, The Lives of the Poets offered little that was new. Major poets were accorded the long-established tripartite biography, while the lives of lesser writers were presented in chronological order. If stripped of Johnson's reflections, the lives or life-sections

¹³ John Wain, Samuel Johnson: A Biography (New York, 1975), p. 349.

¹⁴ Lawrence Lipking suggests that Johnson's perpetual commentary in The Lives of the Poets is a version of Baylean form, despite the lack of reference to sources. See The Ordering of the Arts, p. 82.

were generally straightforward accounts of the subjects' educations and careers enlivened by an occasional anecdote. The patterns of character sections varied from the extensive topical scheme employed in Pope's biography to desultory observations, from several sources, on the character of Gray. The construction of these character sections, particularly that in Pope, has been praised by Hilles.¹⁵ But the topical progression from description of the outer man to analysis of the inner man had been long established and is even traceable to the patterns used by Suetonius. In discussing literary achievements, Johnson tended "to look away from the literary work to the author, to his mind and his endowments," as Hagstrum states.¹⁶ But this tendency in itself did not constitute a formal innovation. In fact, Boyce has shown that Johnson's analysis of Pope's work regularly followed the patterns of criticism applied to Pope by earlier biographers and critics.¹⁷ It is the proportionate quantity and weight of Johnson's reflections that differentiate the form of The Lives of the Poets from that of traditional literary biographies.

Throughout this collection Johnson developed several

¹⁵ F. W. Hilles, "The Making of the Life of Pope," New Light on Dr. Johnson, ed. F. W. Hilles (New Haven, 1959), pp. 257-284.

¹⁶ Jean H. Hagstrum, Samuel Johnson's Literary Criticism (1952; rpt. Chicago: Phoenix Books, 1967), p. 41.

¹⁷ Benjamin Boyce, "Samuel Johnson's Criticism of Pope in the Life of Pope," RES, n.s., V (Jan. 1954), 37-46.

types of thematic structure. Battersby observes that the Life of Addison is built on the theme of the writer's contrasting qualities, with careful emphasis and juxtaposition of particulars which would oppose Addison's pride to his obsequiousness, his bullying to his timidity, etc.¹⁸ The life of Gay is developed as a somewhat comic illustration of the vagaries of luck. Johnson described Gay's successful works as a "lucky trifle" or a "lucky piece"; he remarked, in reference to one of Gay's literary failures, that "Fortune has always been inconstant."¹⁹ He stated that Gay had gone to school under a Mr. Luck, when in fact, as recorded in the Biographia Britannica, the schoolmaster's name had been William Raynor.²⁰ The major and minor incidents which he related consistently illustrated strokes of luck. For example, he reported not only the major loss which Gay suffered in the South Sea speculation, but also the fact that two rural lovers had been killed by lightning in a neighborhood where Gay was visiting.²¹

The latter anecdote, as presented by Johnson, had no

¹⁸ James L. Battersby, "Patterns of Significant Action in the Life of Addison," Genre, II (March, 1969), 28-42.

¹⁹ Quotations are from "Gay," The Lives of the English Poets, ed. G. B. Hill, II, 271, 276.

²⁰ See The Lives of the English Poets, II, 267, . 3.

²¹ This anecdote in its full form illustrated Gay's sensibilities and friendships since he had related the incident, with much sentimental detail, in a letter to Fenton, and had enlisted Pope's aid in composing an epitaph for the dead lovers. See Biographia Britannica, IV, 2184, n. L.

biographical relevance to Gay. No doubt Tracy had in mind several instances of equally irrelevant stories when he remarked that Johnson scattered anecdotes through these lives just to fill up space.²² Fussell, however, identifies an overall thematic pattern in Johnson's shaping of these materials, a pattern which might rationalize the seeming lack of pertinence in his use of anecdotes and his overemphasis of minor incidents. Fussell perceives that "running like a sardonic Leitmotif through The Lives of the Poets is the theme of the self-swindle of humanity by its pathetic propensity to hope."²³ He further shows that the theme is sustained throughout the collection by persistent emphasis on episodes which illustrate ironic reversals. Seen in this light, The Lives of the Poets is formally reminiscent of the Mirror for Magistrates in being a collection of biographies developed to illustrate a single theme; yet it seems unlikely that Johnson deliberately projected this form which could be simply a reflection of his cast of thought when compiling the lives.²⁴

Historical biography in this period began to take in not only major political figures and the authors of classical

²² Clarence R. Tracy, "Johnson and the Art of Anecdote," University of Toronto Quarterly, XV (1945), 90.

²³ Paul Fussell, The Rhetorical World of Augustan Humanism, p. 52.

²⁴ Fussell further observes that "it is in Johnson that we find the humanist cast of mind realizing itself most expressively in the motif of ironic reversal" (p. 279).

epics, but also persons from the theatrical world. The lives of most dramatists and actors had previously been limited to brief notices in dictionaries or collections designed to preserve the history of the stage. Biographies of outstanding playwrights, Shakespeare, Jonson, and Dryden, had been composed in the manner of literary preface-lives; but comparably extensive lives of actors were rare, and such few as were written had been printed as appendages to histories of the stage. Thus Gildon had attached his Life of Mr. Thomas Betterton (1710) to a long essay on the English stage and Oldys' Life of Anne Oldfield (1741) had been printed as a supplement to Betterton's History of the English Stage.²⁶ In short, theatrical biography had been tied traditionally to stage history; yet no comprehensive form had been developed to combine the two.

In 1767 Edward Capell proposed a life of Shakespeare in which the techniques of historical criticism would be usefully applied to stage biography. His projected biography "would rise quickly into a volume; especially with the

²⁶ Major works which juxtaposed stage history and biography were Gerald Langbaine, An Account of the English Dramatic Poets (London, 1691); Charles Gildon, Lives and Characters of the English Dramatic Poets (London, 1698); Edward Phillips, Theatrum Poetarum (London, 1694); Giles Jacobs, Poetical Register (London, 1723); Thomas Betterton, History of the English Stage (London, 1741); William Chetwood, The British Theater (London, 1752); Theatrical Records or an Account of English Dramatic Authors (London, 1756); David E. Baker and Isaac Reed, Biographia Dramatica (London, 1764).

addition of a brief history of our Drama, from its origin down to the Poet's death: even the stage he appear'd upon, its form, dressings, actors should be enquired into, as every one of those circumstances had some considerable effect upon what he composed for it."²⁷ The novelty of this suggestion lay not in the idea of a history of English drama developed to enlarge the bulk of a biography, but in the idea of studying the relationship between the sixteenth-century theatrical milieu and the dramas then written. Although Capell did not try to compose a biography along these lines, his remarks were "prophetic of the path investigation would follow."²⁸ Within a decade Edmond Malone had undertaken the research which would culminate in his historical biography of Shakespeare.²⁹ Scott's Dryden, the most polished and thorough study of this sort, was published after the turn of the century, beyond the range of the present survey.³⁰ Within the period under discussion, however,

²⁷ Edward Capell, The Works of Shakespeare (London, 1767), I, 73.

²⁸ S. Schoenbaum, Shakespeare's Lives (Oxford, 1970), p. 143. Schoenbaum referred specifically to Shakespearean biography, but the observation is applicable to theatrical biography in general.

²⁹ Edmond Malone's Attempt to Ascertain the Order in which the Plays Attributed to Shakespeare Were Written (London, 1778) was a step in the research for his Shakespeare (London, 1790).

³⁰ Sir Walter Scott, Life of John Dryden (Edinburgh, 1808).

Davies' Garrick³¹ represents a major attempt at presenting the life of an actor in the fluid context of theatrical history. Davies worked out a chronological scheme of tracing Garrick's career from role to role, bringing in sketches of producers, playwrights, critics, actors, and the theater-going public. Important productions were described in detail, from the costuming down to the division of profits. Davies did not devise a satisfactory method for maintaining the continuity of his work while relating the activities of a whole generation of persons connected with the theater, and he often fell back on Ayre's technique of inserting subsidiary lives of important characters. Yet on the whole the work reflects an interest in experimenting with, and advancing the form of theatrical biography.

So a number of biographers continued to adapt and combine established patterns, increasing the range and flexibility of biographical form. But the great innovative energy so apparent in this field prior to the middle of the eighteenth century seems to have been exhausted during the later decades. Interest in biography continued to be lively, but a period in the formal growth of the genre had come to an end.

³¹ Thomas Davies, Memoirs of the Life of David Garrick (London, 1780).

Conclusion

In conclusion, English biographical form developed out of the traditions of centuries of Latin biography, reaching back to the methods of Suetonius. In a shorter view, English writers first began to take professional interest in biography after the Restoration. Finding classical and contemporary patterns unsuited to their needs, they gradually invented and developed methods for presenting lives in a chronological form, for clarifying reference works, and enriching the lives of authors. About 1740, in a flourish of creative energy, Middleton, Birch, Johnson, and Ayre demonstrated techniques which presented the biographical subject as if in the process of living in the world of his time -- thinking, acting, reacting. Following this peak in the growth and variation of form, writers, in general, seemed to lose interest in discovering or experimenting with new methods. Some tried to force new and rich materials into established, but inadequate, patterns. But most biographers selected, among the variety of precedents which by then existed, techniques or patterns which suited their purposes and subjects.

Bibliography

Part I: Biographies

- Anon. History of the Lives of the Most Remarkable Criminals Who Have Been Condemned and Executed . . . (1735), ed. Arthur L. Hayward. London, 1927.
- . The Life and Death of Gamaliel Ratsey, a Famous Thief of England (1605). Shakespeare Association Facsimiles No. 10. Oxford, 1935.
- . The Life of the Late Earl of Chesterfield, or the Man of the World, including His Lordship's Principal Speeches in Parliament . . . and the Substance of the System of Education delivered in a Series of Letters to His Son. 2nd ed. London, 1775.
- . Memoirs of the Life of the Right Honorable Joseph Addison, Esq. London, 1719.
- . Theatrical Records, or an Account of English Dramatic Authors. London, 1756.
- . "Some Account of Alex Thompson, who was executed . . . after being declared a Bankrupt," Gentleman's Magazine, XXVIII (March, 1756), 118-119.
- . "Account of the Life of General William Blakeney," Gentleman's Magazine, XXVIII (Aug. 1756), 390-392.
- . "The Life and Most Material Writings of Professor Linnaeus," Gentleman's Magazine, XXVIII (Sept., Oct. 1756), 415-417, 463-464.
- . "Account of the Life of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham," Gentleman's Magazine, XXVIII (Jan.-July, 1756), 3-6, 54-55, 104-107, 186-189, 234-237, 273-277, 325-330.
- . A True Relation of the Life and Death of . . . William Bedell, ed. T. Wharton Jones. Westminster, 1872.
- Aubrey, John. Aubrey's Brief Lives, ed. O. L. Dick. Ann Arbor, 1962.
- Ayre, William. Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Alexander Pope. 2 vols. London, 1745.

- Baker, David E. and Isaac Reed. Biographica Dramatica, or a Companion to the Playhouse containing Historical and Critical Memoirs. 2 vols. London, 1764-82.
- Ballard, George. Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain Who Have Been Celebrated for Their Writing. Oxford, 1752.
- Bernard, John P., Thomas Birch, John Lockman, et al. A General Dictionary Historical and Critical. 10 vols. London, 1734-41.
- Betterton, Thomas. The History of the English Stage . . . including the Lives, Characters and Amours of the Most Eminent Actors and Actresses. London, 1741.
- Birch, Thomas. An Historical and Critical Account of the Life and Writings of Mr. John Milton. 2nd ed. London, 1743.
- . "The Life of the Hon. Robert Boyle," The Works of the Honorable Robert Boyle. London, 1744. I, i-ccxviii.
- . Heads of Illustrious Persons of Great Britain engraven by Houbraken and Vertue. 2 vols. London, 1747.
- . Life of Raleigh. Originally prefixed to Miscellaneous Pieces . . . by Sir Walter Raleigh. London, 1751. Reprinted in The Works of Sir Walter Raleigh, Kt., now first collected. Oxford, 1829. I, 570-648.
- . "Life of Spenser," The Faerie Queene by Edmund Spenser with . . . A New Life of the Author. London, 1751. I, i-xxxvii.
- . Memoirs of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth from the year 1581 till her Death. 2 vols. London, 1754.
- Boccaccio, Giovanni. "Vita Dante." The Earliest Lives of Dante translated from the Italian of Giovanni Boccaccio and Lionardo Bruni Aretino, trans. James R. Smith. New York, 1901.
- Boswell, James. "The Journal of a Tour to Corsica and Memoirs of Pascal Paoli" (1768). Boswell on the Grand Tour: Italy, Corsica, and France, 1765-1766, ed. Frank Brady and Frederick A. Pottle. New York, 1955. pp. 141-205.
- . Life of Johnson, ed. G. B. Hill, rev. L. F. Powell. 6 vols. Oxford, 1934-64.

Budgell, Eustace. Memoirs of the Lives and Characters of the Illustrious Boyles. London, 1737.

Burnet, Gilbert. The Life and Death of John, Earl of Rochester (1680). In Lives, Characters, and an Address to Posterity by Gilbert Burnet, ed. John Jebb. London, 1863.

-----, The Life and Death of Sir Matthew Hale, Knight (1682). In Lives, Characters . . . by Gilbert Burnet, ed. John Jebb. London, 1863.

-----, The Life of William Bedell, Bishop of Kilmore in Ireland. London, 1685.

-----, "Funeral Speech on Robert Boyle, Jan. 7, 1691-92." Appended to Memoirs of the Lives and Characters of the Illustrious Boyles, by Eustace Budgell. London, 1737.

-----, Essay on the Memory of the Late Queen. London, 1695.

-----, History of My Own Time (1723-34). Reissued as Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time. 6 vols. Oxford, 1833.

Campbell, John. Lives of the Admirals and Other Eminent British Seamen. 3 vols. London, 1742-44.

-----, "Life of Thomas Hobbes," prefixed to The Moral and Political Works of Thomas Hobbes. London, 1750.

Campbell, Robert. The Life of the Most Illustrious Prince John, Duke of Argyle and Greenwich. London, 1747.

Capgrave, John. Lives of St. Augustine and St. Gilbert of Sempringham, ed. J. J. Munro. EETS No. 40. London, 1910.

Cavendish, George. The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey (1641), ed. R. S. Sylvester. EETS No. 243. Oxford, 1959.

Chalmers, George. The Life of Daniel Defoe. 1790; rpt. New York: Garland, 1970.

Chetwood, William R. The British Theater. London, 1752.

-----, Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Ben Jonson, Esq. Dublin, 1756; rpt. New York: Garland, 1970.

- Cibber, Colley. The Character and Conduct of Cicero, Considered, from the History of his Life by the Reverend Dr. Middleton. London, 1747.
- Cibber, Theophilus. The Lives of the Poets of Great Britain and Ireland. 5 vols. London, 1753; rpt. Hildesheim: Anglistica and Americana, 1968.
- Crusius, Lewis. The Lives of the Roman Poets. 2 vols. London, 1726.
- Davies, Thomas. Memoirs of the Life of David Garrick. London, 1780.
- Dilworth, W. H. Life of Alexander Pope, Esq. London, 1759.
- Dobson, Susannah. The Life of Petrarch collected from "Mémoires pour la vie de Petrarch." 2 vols. London, 1775.
- Dryden, John. "The Life of Plutarch," prefixed to Plutarch's Lives translated from the Greek by Several Hands. London, 1683.
- Einhard. "Life of Charlemagne." Early Lives of Charlemagne by Egenhard and the Monk of St. Gall, ed. and trans. A. J. Grant. New York, 1966.
- Evelyn, John. The Life of Mrs. Godolphin, ed. H. Simpson. Oxford, 1939.
- Fenton, Elijah. "The Life of John Milton," prefixed to "Paradise Lost" . . . the Author John Milton. London, 1725.
- , "Life of Waller," prefixed to Poetical Works of Edmund Waller. London, 1729.
- Fiddes, Richard. Life of Cardinal Wolsey. London, 1724.
- Foxe, John. The Actes and Monuments (1563), ed. G. Townsend. London, 1849.
- Fuller, Thomas. The History of the Worthies of England. London, 1662.
- Giffard, Martha. The Life and Character of Sir William Temple, ed. from 1690 ms. by G. C. Moore Smith. In The Early Essays and Romances of Sir William Temple, Bt., with the Life and Character by his Sister, Lady Giffard. Oxford, 1930.

- Gildon, Charles. The Life of Mr. Thomas Betterton, the Late Eminent Tragedian. London, 1710.
- Goldsmith, Oliver. The Life of Richard Nash, Esq. London, 1762.
- . "The Life of Henry St. John, Lord Viscount Bolingbroke," prefixed to Bolingbroke's Dissertation on Parties. London, 1770.
- . The Life of Thomas Parnell, D.D. London, 1770.
- Granger, James. A Biographical History of England, adapted to a Methodical Catalogue of Engraved British Heads. London, 1769.
- Harpsfield, Nicholas. The Life and Death of Sir Thomas More, ed. E. V. Hitchcock. EETS No. 186. London, 1932.
- Jacobs, Giles. Historical Account of . . . Our Most Considerable English Poets. London, 1720.
- . The Poetical Register. London, 1723.
- Johnson, Samuel. "The Life of Father Paul Sarpi," Gentleman's Magazine, VII (Nov. 1738), 581-583.
- . "Life of Admiral Blake," Gentleman's Magazine, X (June, 1740), 301-307.
- . An Account of the Life of Mr. Richard Savage. London, 1744. The edition cited in the text is Life of Savage, ed. Clarence Tracy. Oxford, 1971.
- . "The Life of the Earl of Roscommon." Gentleman's Magazine, XVIII (May, 1748), 214-217.
- . "An Account of the Life of the Late Mr. Edward Cave." Gentleman's Magazine, XXIV (Feb. 1754), 53-58.
- . Lives of the English Poets, ed. George Birkbeck Hill. Oxford, 1905.
- Langbaine, Gerard. An Account of the English Dramatic Poets. London, 1691. Revised and enlarged by Charles Gildon, London, 1698.
- Lansdowne, George Granville, Lord. Life of William Wycherley. London, 1718.
- Mackenzie, George. Lives and Characters of the Most Eminent Writers of the Scots Nation. 3 vols. 1708-21; rpt. New York: Garland, 1971.

Mallet, David. "The Life of Francis Bacon, Lord High Chancellor of England," prefixed to The Works of Francis Bacon. London, 1750.

----- Memoirs of . . . Bolingbroke. London, 1752.

Mason, William. "Life of Gray," prefixed to The Poems of Mr. Gray, ed. William Mason. York, 1775.

Maty, M. "Life of Chesterfield," prefixed to Miscellaneous Works of the Late . . . Earl of Chesterfield, ed. M. Maty. 2nd ed. London, 1777.

Middleton, Conyers. The History of the Life of Marcus Tullius Cicero. 3 vols. London, 1741.

Murphy, Arthur. "An Essay on the Life and Genius of Henry Fielding, Esq.," prefixed to The Works of Henry Fielding. 1762; rpt. in The Lives of Henry Fielding and Samuel Johnson. Gainesville: Scholars Facsimiles and Reprints, 1968.

North, Roger. The Life of the Right Honorable Francis North, Baron of Guilford. London, 1742.

----- The Life of the Hon. Sir Dudley North, Kt. . . . and of the Honorable and Reverend Dr. John North. London, 1744.

Oldys, William. "The Life of Sir Walter Raleigh," prefixed to Raleigh's History of the World (1736). Rpt. in The Works of Sir Walter Raleigh, Kt., now first collected. Oxford, 1829. I, 1-586.

----- Memoirs of Anne Oldfield. London, 1741. This work is bound with Thomas Betterton, History of the English Stage. London, 1741.

----- ed. Biographia Britannica, or the Lives of the Most Eminent Persons who have flourished in Great Britain. 6 vols. London, 1747-66.

Orrery, John Boyle, Earl of Cork and. Remarks on the Life and Writings of Dr. Jonathan Swift. London, 1752.

Pack, Major Richardson. "Some Memoirs of William Wycherley, Esq.," prefixed to Posthumous Works of . . . Wycherley, ed. Lewis Theobald. London, 1728.

Paule, George. The Life of the Most Reverend and Religious Prelate John Whitgift, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury. London, 1612.

- Phillips, Edward. "Life of John Milton," prefixed to Letters of State, written by John Milton. London, 1694. In Early Lives of Milton, ed. H. Darbishire. London, 1932.
- , Theatrum Poetarum Anglicanorum. London, 1694.
- Pope, Walter. The Life of Seth, Lord Bishop of Salisbury. London, 1697. Luttrell Society reprint No. 21. Oxford, 1961.
- Richardson, Jonathan (Sr.). Explanatory Notes and Remarks on Milton's "Paradise Lost" with a Life of the Author. London, 1734. In Early Lives of Milton, ed. H. Darbishire. London, 1932.
- Robert, T. "Life of Pope," prefixed to An Essay on Man translated into Prose. London, 1761.
- Roper, William. The Lyfe of Sir Thomas More, Knighte, ed. E. V. Hitchcock. EETS No. 197. London, 1935.
- Rowe, Nicholas. "Some Account of the Life, etc. of Mr. William Shakespeare" (1709). In Eighteenth-Century Essays on Shakespeare, ed. David Nichol Smith. New York, 1962.
- Ruffhead, Owen. The Life of Alexander Pope, Esq., compiled from Original Manuscripts, with a critical essay on his Writings and Genius. London, 1769.
- de Sade, J. F. P. A. Mémoires sur la vie de François Petrarck, tirés de ses oeuvres et des auteurs contemporains. 3 vols. Amsterdam, 1764-67.
- Scott, Walter. The Life of John Dryden. Vol. I of The Works of John Dryden, ed. Walter Scott. Edinburgh, 1808.
- Spence, Joseph. An Account of the Life, Character and Poems of Mr. Blacklock. London, 1754.
- , A Parallel: in the manner of Plutarch, between a most celebrated Man of Florence, and one, scarce ever heard of, in England. 2nd ed. London, 1759.
- , Observations, Anecdotes, and Characters of Books and Men collected from Conversation, ed. James M. Osborn. Oxford, 1966.
- Sprat, Thomas. Life of Cowley. London, 1668.

Stackhouse, Thomas. Memoirs of the Life and Conduct of Dr. Atterbury. London, 1723.

Stapleton, Thomas. The Life and Illustrious Martyrdom of Sir Thomas More (1588), trans. P. E. Hallett, ed. E. E. Reynolds. New York, 1966.

Strachey, Lytton. "The Life, Illness, and Death of Dr. John North." Portraits in Miniature. 1931; rpt. New York: Norton, 1962.

Strype, John. Memorials of . . . Thomas Cranmer (1694). New edition. Oxford, 1821.

----- The Life and Acts of . . . John Aylmer (1701). New edition. Oxford, 1821.

----- The Life of the Learned Sir John Cheke (1705).

----- The History of the Life and Acts of . . . Edmund Grindal (1710). New edition. Oxford, 1821.

----- The Life and Acts of Matthew Parker (1711). New edition. Oxford, 1821.

----- The Life and Acts of the Most Reverend Father in God, John Whitgift, D. D. (1718). New edition. Oxford, 1821.

Suetonius. The Lives of the Twelve Caesars by G. Suetonius Tranquillus, to which are added his Lives of the Grammarians, Rhetoricians, and Poets, trans. Alex Thomson. London, 1855.

Theobald, Lewis. The Life and Character of Marcus Portius Cato Uticensis. London, 1713.

Tickell, Thomas. "Life of Addison," prefixed to The Works of the Right Honorable Joseph Addison. London, 1721.

Toland, John. "Life of John Milton," prefixed to The Complete Collection of the Historical, Political, and Miscellaneous Works of John Milton. Amsterdam, 1698. In Early Lives of Milton, ed. H. Darbishire. London, 1932.

----- The Life of James Harrington (1699). Subsequently prefixed to "The Oceana" and other works of James Harrington, ed. Thomas Birch. London, 1737.

Upton, John. "Life of Spenser," prefixed to Spenser's Faerie Queene: A New Edition with a Glossary, ed. John Upton. London, 1758.

Voltaire, Francois Marie Arouet. History of Charles XII.
Rouen, 1731.

Walpole, Horace. Anecdotes of Painting in England with some Account of the Principal Artists . . . collected by the late Mr. George Vertue and now digested and published from his original Mss. Strawberry Hill, 1762-63.

Walton, Isaak. The Lives of Dr. John Donne, Sir Henry Wotton, Mr. Richard Hooker, Mr. George Herbert, Etc. London, 1670.

Warton, Thomas. The Life and Literary Remains of Ralph Bathurst, M. D., Dean of Wells. London, 1761.

Winstanley, William. The Lives of the Most Famous English Poets. London, 1687; rpt. Gainsville: Scholars Facsimiles and Reprints, 1963.

Part II. Secondary Materials

Addison, Joseph. Freeholder No. 35 (Friday, April 20, 1716).

Alderson, William L. and Henderson, Arnold C. Chaucer and Augustan Scholarship. University of California English Studies No. 35. Berkeley, 1970.

Altick, Richard D. Lives and Letters: A History of Literary Biography in England and America. New York, 1965.

Anderson, J. G. C. "Introduction," De Vita Agricola by Tacitus, ed. H. Furneaux. Oxford, 1922.

Anon. (pseudo-Cicero). Ad D. Herennium: de Ratione Dicendi, trans. Harry Caplan. London, 1964.

----- Rev. of The Life Family, and Character of Charles Seymour. Monthly Review, I (Oct. 1749), 452.

----- Rev. of An Apology for the Life of Bampfylde-Moore Carew. Monthly Review, I (Oct, 1749), 457.

----- Rev. of The Life of the Late Earl of Chesterfield, or The Man of the World. Monthly Review, LI (Sept. 1774), 42.

----- Rev. of Joseph Warton's Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope. Critical Review, I (1756), 226-240.

- , Rev. of David Hume's History of England, Vol. II. Critical Review, II (Dec. 1756), 386.
- , Rev. of William Mason's Life of Gray. Gentleman's Magazine, XLV (June, 1775), 285.
- Audra, Emile. L'Influence française dans l'oeuvre de Pope. Paris, 1931.
- Auerbach, Erich. Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature, trans. W. R. Trask. Princeton, 1965.
- Bacon, Francis. "Of the Advancement of Learning" (1605). The Essays, ed. A. W. Pollard. London, 1906.
- Baker, Herschel. The Image of Man: A Study of the Idea of Human Dignity in Classical Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance. New York, 1961.
- Baldwin, Charles Sears. Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic to 1400, Interpreted from Representative Works. New York, 1928.
- , Renaissance Literary Theory and Practice: Classicism in the Rhetoric and Poetic of Italy, France, and England: 1400-1600, ed. Donald Lemen Clark. New York, 1939.
- Bates, Blanchard W. Literary Portraiture in the Historical Narratives of the French Renaissance. New York, 1945.
- Battersby, James L. "Patterns of Significant Action in the Life of Addison." Genre, II (March, 1969), 28-42.
- Berry, E. I. "History and Rhetoric in Bacon's Henry VII." Seventeenth-Century Prose, ed. S. E. Fish. New York, 1971, pp. 281-308.
- Bevilacqua, Vincent. "Philosophical Influences in the Development of English Rhetorical Theory, 1748-1783." Proceedings of the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society (Literary and Historical Section), XII (1968), 191-215.
- Bietenholz, Peter G. History and Biography in the Work of Erasmus of Rotterdam. Geneva, 1966.
- Blackwell, Thomas. An Enquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer. London, 1735.
- Blundevill, Thomas. The True Order and Method of Wryting and Reading Histories. London, 1574.

- Bodin, Jean. Method for the Easy Comprehension of History, trans. B. Reynolds. New York, 1966.
- Bolingbroke, Henry St. John, Viscount. Letters on the Study and Use of History. London, 1752.
- Booth, Wayne C. The Rhetoric of Fiction. Chicago, 1961.
- Bowen, Catherine Drinker. Biography: The Craft and the Calling. Boston, 1965.
- Boyce, Benjamin. "Samuel Johnson's Criticism of Pope in the Life of Pope." RES, V (1954), 37-46.
- , "Johnson's Life of Savage and Its Literary Background." SP, LIII (1956), 576-598.
- , The Theophrastan Character in England to 1642. Cambridge, Mass., 1947.
- Brady, Frank. "The Strategies of Biography and Some Eighteenth-Century Examples." Literary Theory and Structure: Essays in Honor of William K. Wimsatt, ed. Frank Brady, John Palmer, and Martin Price. New Haven, 1973.
- Braudy, Leo. Narrative Form in History and Fiction. Princeton, 1970.
- Burke, Peter. The Renaissance Sense of the Past. New York, 1970.
- Burckhardt, Jacob. The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy, trans. S. G. C. Middlemore. 2 vols. New York, 1958.
- Bury, J. B. The Idea of Progress: An Inquiry into Its Growth and Origin. 1920; rpt. New York: Dover, 1955.
- Bush, Douglas. "History and Biography." English Literature in the Earlier Seventeenth Century: 1600-1660. Oxford, 1945. Pp. 220-246.
- Butt, John. Biography in the Hands of Walton, Johnson, and Boswell. Los Angeles, 1966.
- Capell, Edward. Preface to Vol. I, The Works of Shakespeare, ed. Edward Capell. London, 1767.
- Carlson, C. Lennart. The First Magazine: A History of "The Gentleman's Magazine". Providence, 1938.
- Carver, George. Alms for Oblivion: Books, Men, and Biography. Milwaukee, 1946.

Chambers, R. W. On the Continuity of English Prose from Alfred to More and His School. London, 1932.

----- . Thomas More. Ann Arbor, 1958.

Chase, Eugene P. "Recent English Political Biographies." Journal of Modern History, III (1931), 614-626.

Clark, A. Curtis. "Cicero." Encyclopaedia Britannica, V (1955), 697.

Clifford, James L. "Roger North and the Art of Biography." Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Literature: Essays in Honor of Alan Dugald McKillop, ed. C. Camden. Chicago, 1963. Pp. 275-285.

----- . "How Much Should a Biographer Tell? Some Eighteenth-Century Views." Essays in Eighteenth-Century Biography, ed. P. B. Daghljan. Bloomington, 1968. Pp. 67-95.

Collingwood, R. G. The Idea of History. Oxford, 1946.

Collins, John Churton. Jonathan Swift: A Biographical and Critical Study. London, 1893.

Courtines, Leo P. Bayle's Relations with England and the English. New York, 1938.

Crane, Ronald S. "English Neoclassical Criticism: An Outline Sketch." Critics and Criticism, Ancient and Modern, ed. R. S. Crane. Chicago, 1952. Pp. 372-380.

Dawson, Benjamin. Rev. of Ferdinando Warner's Memoirs of the Life of Sir Thomas More. Monthly Review, VII (July, 1752), 25.

Day, Robert Adams. Told in Letters: Epistolary Fiction before Richardson. Ann Arbor, 1966.

Defarri, Roy J. "Early Christain Biographies," Introduction to Vol. 15, The Fathers of the Church: A New Translation. New York, 1952.

Dilthey, Wilhelm. Pattern and Meaning in History: Thoughts on History and Society, trans. and ed. H. P. Rickman. New York, 1962.

Dorey, T. "Agricola and Germania." Tacitus, ed. T. Dorey. London, 1969. Pp. 1-18.

Douglas, David. English Scholars: 1660-1730. London, 1939.

- Draper, John W. William Mason: A Study in Eighteenth-Century Culture. New York, 1924.
- Dunn, Waldo H. English Biography. London, 1916.
- Dussinger, John A. "Style and Intention in Johnson's Life of Savage." ELH, 37 (1970), 564-580.
- Edel, Leon. Literary Biography: The Alexander Lectures 1955-1956. Toronto, 1957.
- Evans, E. C. "Roman Descriptions of Personal Appearance." Harvard Studies in Classical Philology, XLIV (1935), 43-85.
- Farnham, William. "The Mirror for Magistrates and Elizabethan Tragedy." JEGP, XXV (1926), 72-78.
- Feder, Lillian. "John Dryden's Use of Classical Rhetoric." Essential Articles for the Study of John Dryden, ed. H. T. Swedenberg, Jr. Hamden, 1966. Pp. 493-518.
- Foerster, Donald M. Homer in English Criticism: The Historical Approach in the Eighteenth Century. New Haven, 1947.
- Frye, Northrop. Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays. Princeton, 1957.
- Fussell, Paul. The Rhetorical World of Augustan Humanism: Ethics and Imagery from Swift to Burke. Oxford, 1965.
- Fussner, F. Smith. The Historical Revolution: English Historical Writing and Thought, 1580-1640. London, 1962.
- Garraty, John. The Nature of Biography. New York, 1957.
- Gerould, Gordon Hall. Saints' Legends. Cambridge, Mass., 1916.
- Gibbon, Edward. The Autobiography of Edward Gibbon, as originally edited by Lord Sheffield, with an introduction by J. B. Bury. London, 1907.
- Golden, Morris. "Another Manufactured Anecdote in the Life of Richard Nash." N&Q, CCII (1957), 120-121.
- Gooch, G. P. Courts and Cabinets. New York, 1946.
- Good, Walter. Studies in the Milton Tradition. Evanston, 1913.
- Gosse, Edmund. "The Custom of Biography." Anglo-Saxon Review, VIII (1901), 200.

- ". "Two Pioneers of Romanticism: Joseph and Thomas Warton." Proceedings of the British Academy, 1915-16, VII (1919), 145-163.
- Graham, Walter. English Literary Periodicals. New York, 1930.
- Hagstrum, Jean H. Samuel Johnson's Literary Criticism. Minneapolis, 1952; rpt. Chicago: Phoenix Books, 1967.
- Hale, J. R., ed. The Evolution of British Historiography from Bacon to Namier. London, 1967.
- Haller, William. Foxe's "Book of Martyrs" and the Elect Nation. London, 1963.
- Harlan, Earl. Elijah Fenton: 1638-1730. Philadelphia, 1937.
- Hill, Peter M. Two Augustan Booksellers: John Dunton and Edmund Curll. University of Kansas Publications, Library Series No. 3. Lawrence, 1958.
- Hilles, F. W. "The Making of the Life of Pope." New Light on Dr. Johnson, ed. F. W. Hilles. New Haven, 1959. Pp. 257-284.
- Hooker, E. N. "The Discussion of Taste from 1750 to 1770 and the New Trends in Literary Criticism." PMLA, XLIX (1934), 577-592.
- Hope, Richard. The Book of Diogenes Laertius: Its Spirit and Method. New York, 1930.
- Hume, David. "On the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences" (1742). Essential Works of David Hume, ed. R. Cohen. New York, 1965. Pp. 421-441.
- Huntley, Frank L., ed. Two Funeral Sermons (1635). Augustan Reprint Society No. 62. Los Angeles, 1956.
- Irwin, William R. The Making of Jonathan Wild: A Study in the Literary Method of Henry Fielding. New York, 1941.
- James, Robert R. "The Strange Art of Political Biography." Essays by Divers Hands, IV (1966), 124-141.
- Jenkinson, Edna. "Nepos: An Introduction to Latin Biography." Latin Biography, ed. T. Dorey. London, 1967. Pp. 1-15.

Johnson, Samuel. Rambler No. 60 (September 13, 1750). In Essays from the Rambler, Adventurer and Idler, ed. W. J. Bate. New Haven, 1968.

----- . Idler No. 84 (Nov. 24, 1759). In Essays from the Rambler, Adventurer and Idler, ed. W. J. Bate. New Haven, 1968.

----- . Rev. of Joseph Warton's Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope. Literary Magazine or Universal Review, I (1756), 85.

Jones, Richard Foster. "Science and English Prose Style in the Third Quarter of the Seventeenth Century." The Seventeenth Century: Studies in the History of English Thought from Bacon to Pope by Richard Foster Jones and Others Writing in His Honor. Stanford, 1951. Pp. 75-110.

----- . Ancients and Moderns: A Study of the Rise of the Scientific Movement in Seventeenth-Century England. 2nd. ed. Berkeley, 1961.

Judson, Alexander C. "The Eighteenth-Century Lives of Edmund Spenser." Huntington Library Quarterly, XVI (1953), 161-181.

Kaufman, Paul. "Heralds of Original Genius." Essays in Memory of Barret Wendell, ed. Paul Kaufman. Cambridge, Mass., 1926. Pp. 189-217.

Keast, William R. "Johnson and 'Cibber's' Lives of the Poets, 1753." Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Literature: Essays in Honor of Alan Dugald McKillop, ed. C. Camden. Chicago, 1963. Pp. 89-102.

Kendall, Paul M. The Art of Biography. New York, 1965.

Korshin, Paul J. "Johnson and the Earl of Orrery." Eighteenth-Century Studies in Honor of Donald F. Hyde, ed. W. H. Bond. New York, 1970. Pp. 29-43.

----- . "Ana-Books and Intellectual Biography in the Eighteenth Century." Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture, ed. H. E. Pagliaro. Proceedings of the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, III. Cleveland, 1973. Pp. 191-204.

Kracauer, Siegfried. "Time and History." History and Theory, Beiheft 6 (1966), 65-78.

Kurz, Benjamin P. "From St. Anthony to St. Guthlac: A Study in Biography." University of California Publications in Modern Philology, XII (1926), 103-146.

- Lipking, Lawrence. The Ordering of the Arts in the Eighteenth Century. Princeton, 1970.
- Longaker, Mark. English Biography in the Eighteenth Century. Philadelphia, 1931.
- McAdam, E. L. (Jr.). "Johnson's Lives of Sarpi, Blake, and Drake." PMLA, LVIII (1943), 466-476.
- MacClintock, William D. Joseph Warton's "Essay on Pope": A History of the Five Editions. Chapel Hill, 1933.
- MacDonald, Hugh. "The Law and Defamatory Biographies in the Seventeenth Century." RES, XX (1944), 177-198.
- MacDonald, Wilbert L. Pope and His Critics: A Study in Eighteenth-Century Personalities. London, 1951.
- MacLean, Kenneth. John Locke and English Literature of the Eighteenth Century. New Haven, 1936.
- Major, John C. The Role of Personal Memoirs in English Biography and Novel. Philadelphia, 1935.
- Marburg, Clara. Sir William Temple: A Seventeenth-Century "Libertin." New Haven, 1932.
- Millard, P. T. "The Chronology of Roger North's Main Works." RES, XXIV (Aug. 1973), 233-294.
- Misener, Geneva. "Iconistic Portraits." Classical Philology, XIX (1924), 97-123.
- Momigliano, Arnaldo. "Ancient History and the Antiquarian." Studies in Historiography. New York, 1966. Pp. 1-39. Reprinted from Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, XII (1950), 285-315.
- , "Gibbon's Contribution to Historical Method." Studies in Historiography. New York, 1966. Pp. 40-55. Reprinted from Historia, II (1954), 450-463.
- , "An Unsolved Problem of Historical Forgery: The 'Scriptores Historiae Augustae.'" Studies in Historiography. New York, 1966. Pp. 112-126. Reprinted from Acta Congressus Madvigiani, Proceedings of the Second International Congress of Classical Studies, 1954, I (1958), 199-211.

- Montesquieu, Charles Louis de Secondat, Baron de La Brède et de. "Some Reflections on The Persian Letters" (1754). The Persian Letters: A New Translation, trans. and ed. J. Robert Loy. New York, 1961. Pp. 39-40.
- Mullett, C. F. Biography as History: Men and Movements in Europe Since 1500. Baltimore, 1963.
- Murphy, James J. Rhetoric in the Middle Ages: A History of Rhetorical Theory from St. Augustine to the Renaissance. Berkeley, 1974.
- Nangle, Benjamin Christie. The Monthly Review, First Series, 1749-1789: Indexes of Contributors and Articles. Oxford, 1934.
- Nicolson, Harold. The Development of English Biography. New York, 1928.
- Novarr, David. The Making of Walton's "Lives." Ithaca, 1958.
- Osborn, James M. "Thomas Birch and the General Dictionary, 1734-1741." MP, XXXVI (1938), 25-46.
- , John Dryden: Some Biographical Facts and Problems. New York, 1940.
- Pascal, Roy. Design and Truth in Autobiography. Cambridge, Mass., 1960.
- Piper, William B. "Moll Flanders as a Structure of Topics." Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900, IX (1969), 489-503.
- Popkin, Richard H., trans. and ed. Historical and Critical Dictionary, by Pierre Bayle. New York, 1965.
- Pottle, Frederick A. James Boswell: The Earlier Years, 1740-1769. New York, 1966.
- Price, Martin. To the Palace of Wisdom: Studies in Order and Energy from Dryden to Blake. Garden City, 1964.
- Rader, Ralph W. "Literary Form in Factual Narrative: The Example of Boswell's Johnson." Essays in Eighteenth-Century Biography, ed. P. B. Daghlän. Bloomington, 1968. Pp. 3-42.
- Raleigh, Walter. "Early Lives of the Poets." Six Essays on Johnson. Oxford, 1910. Pp. 98-127.

- Rand, Edward K. "On the History of the De Vita Caesarum of Suetonius in the Early Middle Ages." Harvard Studies in Classical Philology, XXVIII (1926), 1-48.
- Rose, William. Rev. of William Gilpin's Life of Bernard Gilpin. Monthly Review, VII (July, 1752), 25.
- , Rev. of Thomas Birch's Life of the Most Reverend Dr. John Tillotson. Monthly Review, VII (Nov. 1752), 322.
- Rothstein, Eric. "The Framework of Shamela." ELH, XXXV (1968), 381-402.
- Ruhe, E. L. "Pope's Hand in Thomas Birch's Account of Gay." RES, V (1954), 171-174.
- Ryley, Robert M. "Warburton, Warton, and Ruffhead's Life of Pope." Papers on Language and Literature, IV (1968), 51-62.
- Schoenbaum, S. Shakespeare's Lives. Oxford, 1970.
- Seddon, John. Rev. of A New and General Biographical Dictionary. Monthly Review, XXVIII (Jan. 1763), 35.
- Sherbo, Arthur. "A Manufactured Anecdote in Goldsmith's Life of Richard Nash." MLN, LXX (1955), 20-21.
- Sherburn, George. The Early Career of Alexander Pope, 1688-1727. Oxford, 1934.
- Singer, Godfrey F. The Epistolary Novel: Its Origin, Development, Decline, and Residuary Influence. New York, 1963.
- Smith, David Nichol, ed. Characters from the Histories and Memoirs of the Seventeenth Century. Oxford, 1920.
- , ed. Eighteenth-Century Essays on Shakespeare. New York, 1962.
- Spector, Robert D. English Literary Periodicals and the Climate of Opinion during the Seven Years War. The Hague, 1966.
- Stauffer, Donald A. English Biography before 1700. Cambridge, Mass., 1930.
- , The Art of Biography in the Eighteenth Century. Princeton, 1941.

- , "A Parasitic Form of Biography." MLN, LV (1940), 289-292.
- Stephen, Leslie. "The Historical Argument." History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century (1876). 2 vols. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1962. I, 213-230.
- Stewart, J. I. M. "Biography." The Craft of Letters in England: A Symposium, ed. John Lehmann. London, 1956. Pp. 6-25.
- Straus, Ralph. The Unspeakable Curll. London, 1927.
- Stuart, Duane R. Epochs of Greek and Roman Biography. Berkeley, 1928.
- Sutherland, James. "Some Aspects of Eighteenth-Century Prose." Essays on the Eighteenth Century presented to David Nichol Smith. Oxford, 1945. Pp. 94-110.
- , "Biography." English Literature of the Late Seventeenth Century. Oxford, 1969. P. 245-270.
- Syme, Ronald. Emperors and Biography: Studies in the "Historia Augusta". Oxford, 1971.
- Temple, Sir William. "On Ancient and Modern Learning" and "On Poetry." Sir William Temple's Essays, ed. J. E. Spingarn. Oxford, 1909.
- Thomson, J. A. K. Classical Influences on English Prose. London, 1956.
- Tillinghast, A. J. "The Moral and Philosophical Basis of Johnson's and Boswell's Idea of Biography." Johnsonian Studies, ed. M. Wahba. Cairo, 1962. Pp. 115-132.
- Tillyard, E. M. The Elizabethan World Picture: A Study of the Idea of Order. 1943; rpt. New York: Vintage-Knopf, 1959.
- Townsend, G. B. "Suetonius and His Influence." Latin Biography, ed. T. Dorey. London, 1967. Pp. 79-113.
- Tracy, Clarence R. "Johnson and the Art of Anecdote." University of Toronto Quarterly, XV (1945), 86-93.
- Ussher, R. G., ed. The Characters of Theophrastus. New York, 1960.
- Vesterman, William. "Johnson and the Life of Savage." ELH, 36 (1969), 659-678.

- Wain, John. Samuel Johnson: A Biography. New York, 1975.
- Warnke, Wayne. "Samuel Johnson on Swift: The Life of Swift and Johnson's Predecessors in Swiftian Biography." Journal of British Studies, VII (1958), 56-64.
- Warton, Joseph. An Essay on The Genius and Writings of Pope. Vol. I. London, 1756.
- Watt, Ian. "Realism and the Novel Form." Approaches to the Novel: Materials for a Poetic, ed. R. Scholes. San Francisco, 1961. Pp. 55-57. Reprinted from Ian Watt, The Rise of the Novel. Berkeley, 1960.
- Wellek, René. The Rise of English Literary History. Chapel Hill, 1941.
- Whalley, Peter. An Essay on the Manner of Writing History (1746). Augustan Reprint Society No. 80. Los Angeles, 1960.
- Willey, Basil. The Seventeenth-Century Background. London, 1940.
- Williams, Harold. "Swift's Early Biographers." Pope and His Contemporaries: Essays presented to George Sherburn, ed. J. L. Clifford and Louis Landa. Oxford, 1949. Pp. 114-129.
- Wright, Austin. "The Veracity of Spence's Anecdotes." PMLA, LXII (1947), 123-129.
- Wright, Lawrence S. "Eighteenth-Century Replies to Pope's Eloisa." SP, XXXI (1934), 519-533.
- Wylie, Laura J. "The English Essay: A Study in Literary Development." Social Studies in English Literature. Boston, 1916. Pp. 1-74.