



The Works Of Alexander Pope Esq.

In Nine Volumes Complete. With His Last Corrections, Additions, And
Improvements; As they were delivered to the Editor a little before his
Death

Containing The First of his Letters

Pope, Alexander

London, 1751

Preface Of the Publisher of the Surreptitious Edition, 1735.

Nutzungsbedingungen

[urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-56122](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-56122)

P R E F A C E

Of the Publisher of the Surreptitious
Edition, 1735.

WE presume we want no apology to the reader for this publication, but some may be thought needful to Mr. Pope: however he cannot think our offence so great as theirs, who first separately published what we have here but collected in a better form and order. As for the letters we have procured to be added, they serve but to complete, explain, and sometimes set in a true light, those others, which it was not in the writer's, or our power to recall.

This collection hath been owing to several cabinets: some drawn from thence by accidents, and others (even of those to ladies) voluntarily given. It is to one of that sex we are beholden for the whole correspondence with H. C. esq. which letters being lent her by that gentleman, she took the liberty to print; as appears by the following,

VOL. VII.

a

which

which we shall give at length, both as it is something curious, and as it may serve for an apology for ourselves.

TO HENRY CROMWELL, Esq.

June 27, 1727.

AFTER so long a silence as the many and great oppressions I have sighed under have occasioned, one is at a loss how to begin a letter to so kind a friend as yourself. But as it was always my resolution, if I must sink, to do it as decently (that is, as silently) as I could; so when I found myself plunged into unforeseen, and unavoidable ruin, I retreated from the world, and in a manner buried myself in a dismal place, where I knew none, and none knew me. In this dull unthinking way, I have protracted a lingring death (for life it cannot be called) ever since you saw me, sequestered from company, deprived of my books, and nothing left to converse with, but the letters of my dead or absent friends; among which latter I always placed yours, and Mr. Pope's in the first rank. I lent some of them indeed to an ingenious person, who was so delighted with the specimen, that he importuned me for a sight of the rest, which having obtained,

tained, he conveyed them to the press, I must not say altogether with my consent, nor wholly without it. I thought them too good to be lost in oblivion, and had no cause to apprehend the disobliging of any. The public, viz. all persons of taste and judgment, would be pleased with so agreeable an amusement; Mr. Cromwell could not be angry, since it was but justice to his merit, to publish the solemn and private professions of love, gratitude, and veneration, made him by so celebrated an author; and sincerely Mr. Pope ought not to resent the publication, since the early pregnancy of his genius was no dishonour to his character. And yet had either of you been asked, common modesty would have obliged you to refuse, what you would not be displeased with, if done without your knowledge. And besides, to end all dispute, you had been pleased to make me a free gift of them, to do what I pleased with them; and every one knows, that the person to whom a letter is addressed, has the same right to dispose of it, as he has of goods purchased with his money. I doubt not but your generosity and honour will do me the right, of owning by a line that I came honestly by them. I flatter myself, in a few months I shall again be visible to the world; and whenever thro' good providence that turn shall happen,

I shall joyfully acquaint you with it, there being none more truly your obliged servant, than, Sir,

Your faithful, and

most humble Servant,

E. THOMAS.

P. S. A Letter, Sir, directed to Mrs. Thomas, to be left at my house, will be safely transmitted to her, by,

Yours, &c.

E. CURLL.

To Mr. Pope.

Epfom, July 6, 1727.

WHEN these letters were first printed, I wondered how Curll could come by them, and could not but laugh at the pompous title ; since whatever you wrote to me was humour, and familiar raillery. As soon as I came from Epfom, I heard you had been to see me, and I writ you a short letter from Will's, that I longed to see you. Mr. D——s, about that time charged me with giving them to a mistress, which I positively denied : not in the least, at that time, thinking of it ; but some time after, finding in the News papers Letters from

from Lady Packington, Lady Chudleigh, and Mr. Norris to the same Sappho or E. T. I began to fear that I was guilty. I have never seen these Letters of Curll's, nor would go to his shop about them; I have not seen this Sappho alias E. T. these seven years.—Her writing, *That I gave her 'em, to do what I would with 'em*, is straining the point too far. I thought not of it, nor do I think she did then; but severe necessity which catches hold of a twig, has produced all this; which has lain hid, and forgot, by me so many years. Curll sent me a letter last week, desiring a positive answer about this matter, but finding I would give him none, he went to E. T. and writ a postscript in her long romantick letter, to direct my answer to his house; but they not expecting an answer, sent a young man to me, whose name, it seems, is Pattison. I told him I should not write any thing, but I believed it might be so as she writ in her letter. I am extremely concerned that my former indiscretion in putting them into the hands of this *Pretieuse*, should have given you so much disturbance; for the last thing I should do would be to disoblige you, for whom I have ever preserved the greatest esteem, and shall ever be, Sir,

Your faithful Friend, and

most humble Servant,

HENRY CROMWELL.

TO MR. POPE.

August 1, 1727.

TH^{O'} I writ my long narrative from Ep-
som 'till I was tired, yet was I not fa-
tisfied; lest any doubt should rest upon your
mind. I could not make protestations of my
innocence of a grievous crime; but I was im-
patient till I came to town, that I might send
you those Letters, as a clear evidence that I was
a perfect stranger to all their proceeding.
Should I have protested against it, after the
printing, it might have been taken for an at-
tempt to decry his purchase; and as the little
exception you have taken has served him to
play his game upon us for these two years, a
new incident from me might enable him to
play it on for two more.—The great value she
expresses for all you write, and her passion for
having them, I believe, was what prevailed
upon me to let her keep them. By the inter-
val of twelve years at least, from her possession
to the time of printing them, 'tis manifest, that
I had not the least ground to apprehend such
a design: but as people in great straits, bring
forth their hoards of old gold and most valued
jewels;

jewels ; so Sappho had recourse to her hid treasure of Letters, and played off not only your's to me, but all those to herself (as the lady's last stake) into the press. — As for me, I hope, when you shall coolly consider the many thousand instances of our being deluded by the females, since that great Original of Adam by Eve, you will have a more favourable thought of the undefigning error of

Your Faithful Friend,

and humble Servant,

HENRY CROMWELL.

Now should our apology for this publication be as ill received, as the lady's seems to have been by the gentlemen concerned ; we shall at least have Her Comfort, of being thanked by the rest of the world. Nor has Mr. P. himself any great cause to think it much offence to his modesty, or reflection on his judgment ; when we take care to inform the public, that there are few Letters of his in this collection, which were not written under twenty years of age : on the other hand, we doubt not the reader will be much

viii P R E F A C E to the, &c.

more surprized to find, at that early period, so much variety of style, affecting sentiment, and justness of criticism, in pieces which must have been writ in haste, very few perhaps ever reviewed, and none intended for the eye of the public.



A C A-