

Windsor-Forest

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
GEORGE LORD LANSDOWN

*Non injussa cano: Te nostræ, Vare, Myricæ
Te Nemus omne canet; nec Phoebæ gratior ulla est
Quam sibi quæ Vari præscripsit pagina nomen.*

VIRGIL

1 Thy forests, *Windsor!* and thy green retreats,

Based on text in *The Works of Alexander Pope* (1736). Pope's own notes are enclosed in quotation marks and have his name appended to them in square brackets. Other notes are supplied (or adapted) from various modern editions and studies, with attributions as follows, but without surrounding quotation marks:

Brown = Laura Brown. *Alexander Pope*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1985.

Butt = *The Poems of Alexander Pope*. Ed. John Butt. New Haven: Yale UP, 1963.

Fairer & Gerrard = *Eighteenth-Century Poetry: An Annotated Anthology*. Ed. David Fairer and Christine Gerrard. 2nd edn. Oxford: Blackwell, 2004.

Price = *The Selected Poetry of Pope*. Ed. Martin Price. New York: New American Library, 1970.

Rogers = *The Oxford Authors: Alexander Pope*. Ed. Pat Rogers. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1993.

Rogers 2004 = Pat Rogers. *The Symbolic Design of "Windsor-Forest"*. Newark: U of Delaware P, 2004.

Sherman = *The Longman Anthology of British Literature*. Gen. ed. David Damrosch. Vol. 1C: *The Restoration and the 18th Century*. Ed. Stuart Sherman. 2nd edn. New York: Longman, 2003.

Williams = *Poetry and Prose of Alexander Pope*. Ed. Aubrey Williams. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1969.

Headnote "This Poem was written at two different times: the first part of it which relates to the country, in the year 1704, at the same time with the *Pastorals*: the latter part was not added till the year 1713, in which it was publish'd" [Pope].

The genre of the poem is a mixture of various elements—pastoral, georgic, panegyric—in a form that is perhaps closest to other 17th- and 18th-century English poems that are generally described as topographical or loco-descriptive poems. For some discussion of this genre, in relation to a major instance of the kind, Sir John Denham's *Cooper's Hill* (1642), see note to line 263.

First published in 1713, when Pope received £32. 5s. from Bernard Lintot for the poem. The full composition history is extremely involved, and Pope's note [above] obscures as much as it clarifies. The work certainly existed in one shape or form by 1707, and most of the second section (beginning at line 288) probably dates from 1712. But revision had started earlier and seemingly went on up to the time of publication. Even after this there were significant alterations
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introduced in the *Works* of 1717, the *Works* of 1736, and in the posthumous *Works* of 1751 (edited by William Warburton). A holograph version of the poem, which has been written out with great care, survives from 1712. It has a number of important divergences from the printed text: see R. M. Schmitz, *Windsor Forest, 1712, a Study of the Washington University Holograph*. Washington University Studies, no.21. St. Louis, 1952. [Rogers]

Pope (1688-1744) was 16 years old in 1704; he had grown up at Binfield, in Windsor Forest, about ten miles from the town of Windsor [Rogers]. The poem takes the royal preserve of Windsor Forest as its subject and was published on 7 March 1713, just before the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht on 11 April [Williams], which formally concluded British involvement in the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-14), begun in 1701 under William III (William of Orange). Engineered by the Tory ministry after ten years of war—the peace preliminaries had been signed in 1711, after which Britain had withdrawn from the fighting—the peace was nonetheless resented by many Whig supporters of the “permanent war” ethos and its terms were criticized as not achieving enough for Britain, despite the gain of Gibraltar, Minorca, and the Asiento (the contract to supply slaves to the Spanish colonies in America), and despite France being obliged “to accept its loss of Acadia, Newfoundland, and the Hudson’s Bay territory” [Rogers 2004: 194]. After the accession of George I (in 1714) and the formation of a Whig ministry, leading members of the current Tory ministry—Robert Harley, earl of Oxford, Henry St John, viscount Bolingbroke, and the Duke of Ormonde—were impeached (in 1715).

George Granville, baron Lansdowne, (1667-1735) was a statesman and poet, as well as an early patron of Pope. He was one of the twelve men elevated to the peerage at the end of 1711 to create a Tory majority in the House of Lords. He was Secretary for War under Queen Anne from 1710 and, in 1713, he was appointed Treasurer to the Household—but with the accession of George I, he fell from favor. He was confined to the Tower of London from 1715 to 1717 under suspicion of Jacobite sympathies, and spent most of his life abroad after his release [I. R. F. Gordon. *A Preface to Pope*. 2nd edn. London: Longman, 1993. 258]. Pope may have originally intended to dedicate the poem to his mentor Sir William Trumbull [see line 256], but transferred the honor to Lord Lansdowne [Rogers].

The Latin epigraph, underlining Pope’s dedication of the poem to Granville, is from Virgil’s *Eclogues*, VI, 9-12: “I do not sing unbidden; of thee, Varus, our tamarisks and our groves all shall sing: no page is more pleasing to Phoebus than that which is prefixed with the name of Varus” [Williams]; another translation, “My song is no self-appointed task; all the grove of our tamarisk shrubs shall sing of you, Varus, nor is any page more agreeable to Apollo than that which is heralded by the name of Varus”; the tamarisk was sacred to Apollo [Rogers]; and a third, “I do not sing without purpose: our tamarisks, Varus, every grove will sing of you; nor is any page more pleasing to Apollo than one that begins with the name of Varus”; Varus was a prominent military figure [Sherman]; “Varus” is probably P. Alfenus Varus, a notable jurist and patron of letters [Fairer & Gerrard].

Line 2 monarch’s] Windsor Castle, located about 20 miles west of London, was constructed on the site where King Arthur supposedly sat with his Knights of the Round Table and where

(continued...)

3 Invite my lays. Be present, sylvan maids!
 4 Unlock your springs, and open all your shades.
 5 *Granville* commands: your aid O Muses bring!
 6 What Muse for *Granville* can refuse to sing?
 7 The groves of *Eden*, vanish'd now so long,
 8 Live in description, and look green in song:
 9 *These*, were my breast inspir'd with equal flame,
 10 Like them in beauty, should be like in fame.
 11 Here hills and vales, the woodland and the plain,
 12 Here earth and water, seem to strive again;
 13 Not Chaos like together crush'd and bruis'd,
 14 But as the world, harmoniously confus'd:
 15 Where order in variety we see,
 16 And where, tho' all things differ, all agree.
 17 Here waving groves a checquer'd scene display,
 18 And part admit, and part exclude the day;
 19 As some coy nymph her lover's warm address

(...continued)

William the Conqueror had built his castle. It has served as a royal residence, a burial place for many of England's monarchs, and as the meeting place of the Knights of the Garter. [Williams]

Lines 3-4 “Originally thus,

—*Chaste Goddess of the woods,*
Nymphs of the vales, and Naiads of the floods,
Lead me thro' arching bow'rs, and glimm'ring glades
Unlock your springs—.” [Pope]

Line 3 *sylvan maids*] Dryads and naiads, spirits of the trees and water. [Sherman]

Lines 7-10 Alluding to the “Eden” re-created in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, book IV. [Butt; Price]

Line 14 *harmoniously confused*] Traditionally taken as an echo of Ovid's *discors concordia* (*Metamorphoses*, I, 433) [Price] or, more proximately, from John Denham's *Cooper's Hill* (1642/55): “Here Nature, whether more intent to please / Us or her self, with strange varieties, / . . . / Wisely she knew, the harmony of things, / As well as that of sounds, from discords springs” (197-98, 203-04). More recently, it has been argued, that it is an allusion to the newly fashionable notion in landscape design of “irregular beauty,” inspired by the Chinese aesthetic concept of “sharawadgi” (as popularized by Sir William Temple's “Upon the Gardens of Epicurus; or, of Gardening” [1685]) (in contrast to the geometrical formalism of neoclassical European gardens) (see Yu Liu. “The Importance of the Chinese Connection: The Origin of the English Garden.” *Eighteenth-Century Life* 27.3 [2003]: 89-90).

20 Nor quite indulges, nor can quite repress.
21 There, interspers'd in lawns and opening glades,
22 Thin trees arise that shun each other's shades.
23 Here in full light the russet plains extend;
24 There wrapt in clouds the blueish hills ascend.
25 Ev'n the wild heath displays her purple dyes,
26 And 'midst the desert fruitful fields arise,
27 That crown'd with tufted trees and springing corn,
28 Like verdant isles the sable waste adorn.
29 Let *India* boast her plants, nor envy we
30 The weeping amber or the balmy tree,
31 While by our oaks the precious loads are born,
32 And realms commanded which those trees adorn.

Line 20 Nor . . . nor] Neither . . . nor. [Sherman]

Line 21 lawns] An open space between woods; a glade. [Butt]

Line 23 russet] Of a reddish-brown color. [Butt]

Line 25 purple dyes] Heather's purple blooms cover open moorland in late summer. [Sherman]

Lines 25-28 [Originally thus,]

*“Why should I sing our better suns or air,
Whose vital draughts prevent the leach's care,
While thro' fresh fields th'enliv'ning odours breathe,
Or spread with vernal blooms the purple heath.”* [Pope]

Line 26 desert] ‘Formerly applied . . . to any wild or uninhabited region, including forest’ (OED). [Rogers]; cf. “waste” (line 28) [Price]. The sentiment here is echoed in John Trenchard, *Cato's Letters*, no. 64 (3 Feb. 1721): “[Trade] will turn Deserts into fruitful Fields, Villages into great Cities, Cottages into Palaces” [Brown 32-33].

Line 27 tufted trees] A “small group of trees or bushes; clump” (OED) [Butt]. Pope borrows the phrase from Milton's *L'Allegro* (1632) [Sherman].

Line 27 corn] Wheat. [Williams]

Line 30 weeping amber . . . balmy tree] Cf. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, IV, 248: “Groves whose rich Trees wept odorous Gums and Balm.” [Price]

Line 31 oaks] Alluding to the (mercantile and navy) ships built of English oak which “bore” valuable spices to England [Butt]—and which allowed Britain, so Pope imagines, to “command” the realms “adorned” by the trees supplying amber and balm.

33 Not proud *Olympus* yields a nobler sight,
34 Tho' Gods assembled grace his tow'ring height,
35 Than what more humble mountains offer here,
36 Where, in their blessings, all those Gods appear.
37 See *Pan* with flocks, with fruits *Pomona* crown'd,
38 Here blushing *Flora* paints th' enamel'd ground,
39 Here *Ceres*' gifts in waving prospect stand,
40 And nodding tempt the joyful reaper's hand;
41 Rich Industry sits smiling on the plains,
42 And peace and plenty tell, a STUART reigns.
43 Not thus the land appear'd in ages past,
44 A dreary desart and a gloomy waste,

Line 33 Olympus] The Greek mountain where the gods dwelled. [Price]

Line 38 enamel'd ground] A technical phrase, referring to the process “of entirely covering metals with enamel, to form a ground for painting in vitrifiable colours . . .” The *ground* is in painting the “main surface or first coating of colour, serving as a support for other colours or a background for designs . . .” [Butt]. The phrase opens up a strand of imagery connected with heraldic and emblematic art [Rogers].

Lines 37-39 Pan . . . Pomona . . . / . . . Flora . . . / . . . Ceres] Pan was the Greek god of shepherds, flocks and pastures; Pomona was the Roman goddess of fruit trees; Flora was the Roman goddess of flowers; Ceres was the Roman goddess of grains and vegetation. [Williams; Fairer & Gerrard]

Line 39 Ceres' gifts] Grain crops. [Sherman]

Line 42 STUART] Queen Anne (r. 1702-14), last of the Stuart rulers of England: the 1701 Act of Settlement stipulated that, after Anne, the succession to the throne would go to Electress Sophia of Hanover and her heirs (the future George I of England).

Line 43-84 This portion of the poem re-creates the traditional view of the tyrannies exercised by the Norman kings, especially as they were illustrated in the formation of the New Forest as a royal hunting ground by William I. The fact that so many members of the Conqueror's family met their death in the New Forest led commentators into the mythical view that these deaths were examples of divine vengeance, taken because of the wickedness [and oppression of the “native” English population] involved in the creation of the royal preserve. This is an essential element in Pope's vision [Butt]. In lines 47-52, the metaphor of hunting expands to all predatory use of power; tyranny and the hunt are equated with social disorder, in contrast to the “peace and plenty” of a just reign [which, for Pope, is identified with the Stuarts] [Price]. By association, the critique of the invading Norman kings (especially William I and William II, called William Rufus) is extended to the recent Dutch “invader” William of Orange (William III, r. 1688-1702) [Rogers] and the tyrannies exercised in the New Forest are “transferred imaginatively” from there to “the region of Windsor” [Rogers 2004: 219].

45 To savage beasts and savage laws a prey,
46 And kings more furious and severe than they;
47 Who claim'd the skies, dispeopled air and floods,
48 The lonely lords of empty wilds and woods:
49 Cities laid waste, they storm'd the dens and caves,
50 (For wiser brutes were backward to be slaves.)
51 What could be free, when lawless beasts obey'd,
52 And ev'n the elements a Tyrant sway'd?
53 In vain kind seasons swell'd the teeming grain,
54 Soft show'rs distill'd, and suns grew warm in vain;
55 The swain with tears his frustrate labour yields,
56 And famish'd dies amidst his ripen'd fields.
57 What wonder then, a beast or subject slain
58 Were equal crimes in a despotick reign?
59 Both doom'd alike, for sportive Tyrants bled,
60 But that the subject starv'd, the beast was fed.

Line 45 savage laws] “The Forest Laws” [Pope]. With the Norman Conquest, the forest laws and the forest courts of Normandy were introduced into England, and they resulted in a rapid and violent extension of “forest” land—that is, land outside (*foris*) the common law and subject to a special law, whose object was the preservation of the king’s hunting. The word “forest” was thus a legal and not a geographical term [Butt]. These laws prescribed harsh punishments, such as blinding, for poachers. They were among the list of grievances which led to Magna Carta [Fairer & Gerrard].

Line 46 kings] The Norman kings. [Williams]

Line 47 dispeopled] Depopulated. [Sherman]

Line 50 backward] Unwilling. [Sherman]

Line 52 elements] The places inhabited by the wild creatures [Williams]. Through controlling the animals, they effectively controlled their “elements” [Sherman].

Line 55 yields] His crops are ravaged by the protected royal game. [Fairer & Gerrard] [Cf. the next note]

Line 56 famish'd dies] Because the produce is being cultivated for the game animals, not for humans. [Sherman] [Cf. the previous note]

*Lines 57-58 “No wonder savages or subjects slain—
But subjects starv'd while savages were fed.*

It was originally thus, but the word Savages is not so properly apply'd to beasts as to men; which occasion'd the alteration” [Pope].

61 Proud *Nimrod* first the bloody chace began,
62 A mighty hunter, and his prey was man:
63 Our haughty *Norman* boasts that barb'rous name,
64 And makes his trembling slaves the royal game.
65 The fields are ravish'd from th'industrious swains,
66 From men their cities, and from Gods their fanes:
67 The levell'd towns with weeds lie cover'd o'er;
68 The hollow winds thro' naked temples roar;
69 Round broken columns clasping ivy twin'd;
70 O'er heaps of ruin stalk'd the stately hind;
71 The fox obscene to gaping tombs retires,

Line 61 Nimrod] Described in Genesis 10:8-9 as “a mighty one in the earth” and a “mighty hunter before the lord,” Nimrod was the legendary founder of the kingdoms of Babylon and Assyria. Biblical commentary characterized him as a despot and Milton, in *Paradise Lost*, XII, 24-47, likewise characterizes him as the first tyrant and hunter of men. [Price; Sherman; Fairer & Gerrard]

Line 63 Norman] William the Conqueror. [Price]

Line 65 “Alluding to the destruction made in the New Forest, and the tyrannies exercis'd there by William I” [Pope]. The New Forest, in the very south of England (in Hampshire), was created by destroying the existing towns, farms, and churches. [Price; Williams]

Line 66 fanes] Temples, or churches [Williams]. William I destroyed many villages and churches in creating the New Forest. He was sharply criticized for demolishing God’s houses to make dens for wild beasts [Sherman]. Pat Rogers suggests, however, that: Pope’s imagination has leapt forward from the Norman yoke to the destruction of abbeys during the Reformation [Rogers]. [See also note to line 72, below]

Lines 65-66 “Translated from

Templa adimit divis, fora civibus, arva colonis.

by an old monkish writer, I forget who.” [Pope] The ‘monkish writer’ is quoted in William Camden’s *Britannia*, which had been translated and re-edited in 1695: it was one of the key books of the age and served as Pope’s source for much of his information about the forest laws of the Normans. [Rogers]

Lines 67-72 Recalls God’s curse on Babylon, Isaiah, 13:19-22 (see, esp., verses 21-22: “But wilde beastes of the desert shall lye there, and their houses shalbe full of dolefull creatures, and owles shall dwell there, and Satyres shall daunce there. / And the wilde beastes of the llands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces”). [Fairer & Gerrard]

Line 70 hind] Female deer. [Sherman]

Line 71 obscene] Loathsome [Williams]; filthy, foul, disgusting [Rogers].

72 And savage howlings fill the sacred quires.
73 Aw'd by his Nobles, by his Commons curst,
74 Th'Oppressor rul'd tyrannic where he *durst*,
75 Stretch'd o'er the Poor and Church his iron rod,
76 And serv'd alike his Vassals and his God.
77 Whom ev'n the *Saxon* spar'd, and bloody *Dane*,
78 The wanton victims of his *sport* remain.
79 But see, the man who spacious regions gave
80 A waste for beasts, himself deny'd a grave!
81 Stretch'd on the lawn, his second hope survey,
82 At once the chaser, and at once the prey:
83 Lo *Rufus*, tugging at the deadly dart,
84 Bleeds in the forest, like a wounded hart.

Line 72 quires] The chancel or choirs stalls, often screened off from the rest of the church [Fairer & Gerrard]; Pope deliberately uses archaic spelling. His description of “quires,” “broken columns,” and “temples” also suggests grander buildings than the parish churches of this time, calling to mind the destruction of the abbeys during the Reformation [Sherman].

Line 72 “[Originally,] *And wolves with howling fill, &c.* The Author thought this an error, wolves not being common in England at the time of the Conqueror.” [Pope]

Line 73 Commons] Commoners. [Sherman]

Line 76 Vassals] Feudal subjects. [Fairer & Gerrard]

Line 77 Saxon . . . Dane] Earlier invaders of Britain. [Williams]

Line 78 his sport] (1) Hunting (2) Scornful whim. [Price]

Lines 79-80 William I’s burial was delayed for a time, because the site selected at Caen was claimed by another and had to be bought anew by William’s son. [Price; Williams]

Line 81 second hope] “Richard, second son of William the Conqueror.” [Pope] He was killed by a stag while hunting in the New Forest. [Williams; Rogers]

Line 83 Rufus] William Rufus, third son and successor to William I, accidentally killed by an arrow while hunting in the New Forest [Williams]. Pope recalls in this passage the death of William III in 1702, hastened if not caused by a hunting accident. The resonance creates a parallel between the oppressive “Dutch” influence in the era of William III (i.e., people ascendant during William’s reign, notably Dutch courtiers, City magnates, and Whig war-lords) and the depredations of the Norman invaders [Rogers].

Line 84 hart] Male deer. [Sherman]

85 Succeeding Monarchs heard the subjects cries,
 86 Nor saw displeas'd the peaceful cottage rise.
 87 Then gath'ring flocks on unknown mountains fed,
 88 O'er sandy wilds were yellow harvests spread,
 89 The forests wonder'd at th'unusual grain,
 90 And secret transport touch'd the conscious swain.
 91 Fair *Liberty*, *Britannia's* Goddess, rears
 92 Her chearful head, and leads the golden years.
 93 Ye vig'rous swains! while youth ferments your blood,
 94 And purer spirits swell the sprightly flood,
 95 Now range the hills, the thickest woods beset,
 96 Wind the shrill horn, or spread the waving net.
 97 When milder autumn summer's heat succeeds,

Line 85 Succeeding Monarchs] An unspecific allusion to the monarchs—the houses of Plantagenet, Lancaster, York, Tudor, Stuart—between the present era of Queen Anne referenced at the start of the poem (lines 1-42) and the Norman era decried in the second section of the poem (lines 43-84).

Line 87 on unknown mountains] Mountains hitherto unknown to the flocks, now for the first time permitted to feed there. [Butt]

Line 90 conscious] I.e., knowing, well-aware [Williams]; responsive [Price]. Joy moves the peasant, well aware of what he has gained; this is a fairly new use of this sense of “conscious” [Sherman]. It may mean rather ‘observing, witnessing,’ or possibly ‘embarrassed by his joy’ [Rogers].

Lines 91-92 [Originally, thus]

“*Oh may no more a foreign master's rage
 With wrongs yet legal, curse a future age!
 Still spread, fair Liberty! thy heav'nly wings,
 Breath plenty on the fields, and fragrance on the springs.*” [Pope]

Pope’s revision here responds to the changing historical context of the poem: in 1704-13 (when the poem was originally composed), “a foreign master’s rage” glances at the Normans and at William of Orange, but with the Hanoverian Succession in 1714, the phrase would acquire a different currency in relation to the new “foreign” kings of Britain: Pope’s revision heads off or softens applications of the poem to the Hanoverian context.

Line 94 purer spirits] The allusion is to the animal spirits which were supposed to move in the blood and animate the body. [Butt; Williams]

Line 96 Wind] Blow. [Williams]

Lines 97-158 Adapting the seasonal movement of pastoral, Pope rehearses the outdoor life of
 (continued...)

98 And in the new-shorn field the partridge feeds,
99 Before his lord the ready spaniel bounds,
100 Panting with hope, he tries the furrow'd grounds;
101 But when the tainted gales the game betray,
102 Couch'd close he lies, and meditates the prey:
103 Secure they trust th'unfaithful field, beset,
104 Till hov'ring o'er 'em sweeps the swelling net.
105 Thus (if small things we may with great compare)
106 When *Albion* sends her eager sons to war,
107 Some thoughtless Town, with ease and plenty blest,

(...continued)

hunting and fishing carried on by British “swains” through the autumn (lines 97-124), winter (lines 125-134), spring (lines 135-146), and summer (lines 147-158).

The life of the forest expresses Pope’s vision of a complex postlapsarian world order, in which mankind’s violent and warlike energies may be harnessed and redirected [e.g., into the relatively benign activities of hunting and fishing], though never eradicated. . . . Thus the hunting scenes, unlike those of many conventional eighteenth-century georgics, are memorable less for the robust joys of the chase than for the poignant brevity of hunted lives. [Fairer & Gerrard]

Lines 97-100 [Originally, thus]

*“When yellow autumn summer's heat succeeds,
And into wine the purple harvest bleeds,
The partridge feeding in the new-shorn fields
Both morning sports and ev'ning pleasures yields.*

Perhaps the author thought it not allowable to describe the season by a circumstance not proper to our climate, the vintage.” [Pope]

Line 101 tainted gales] Breezes imbued with the scent of an animal [Butt; Fairer & Gerrard].

‘Tainted gales’ is one of several phrases Pope borrowed, perhaps with malicious enjoyment, from Joseph Addison’s *The Campaign* (1705), a celebration of the duke of Marlborough, the leader of the English forces and hero of the Whig war party [Rogers]—though Pope’s poem, too, celebrates English military successes (as in lines 106-10).

Line 102 Couch'd close] Crouching close to the ground. [Sherman]

Line 102 meditates] Fixes his attention upon, observes with interest or intentness. [Butt]

Line 103 they] The partridges. [Price]

Line 104 net] Once the partridges had been “set” or “pointed” by the dog, a net was spread or cast over them. [Williams]

Line 106 Albion] An old name for England. [Williams]

Lines 106-10 Perhaps inspired by the capture of Gibraltar in 1704. [Butt]

108 Near, and more near, the closing lines invest;
 109 Sudden they seize th'amaz'd, defenceless prize,
 110 And high in air *Britannia's* standard flies.
 111 See! from the brake the whirring pheasant springs,
 112 And mounts exulting on triumphant wings:
 113 Short is his joy; he feels the fiery wound,
 114 Flutters in blood, and panting beats the ground.
 115 Ah! what avail his glossy, varying dyes,
 116 His purple crest, and scarlet-circled eyes,
 117 The vivid green his shining plumes unfold,
 118 His painted wings, and breast that flames with gold?
 119 Nor yet, when moist *Arcturus* clouds the sky,
 120 The woods and fields their pleasing toils deny.
 121 To plains with well-breath'd beagles we repair,
 122 And trace the mazes of the circling hare:
 123 (Beasts, urg'd by us, their fellow-beasts pursue,
 124 And learn of man each other to undo.)
 125 With slaught'ring guns th'unweary'd fowler roves,
 126 When frosts have whiten'd all the naked groves;
 127 Where doves in flocks the leafless trees o'ershade,
 128 And lonely woodcocks haunt the wat'ry glade.
 129 He lifts the tube, and levels with his eye;
 130 Strait a short thunder breaks the frozen sky:
 131 Off', as in airy rings they skim the heath,
 132 The clam'rous plovers feel the leaden death:

Line 108 lines] Of siege. [Price]

Line 108 invest] Surround. [Sherman]

Line 111 brake] Thicket. [Price]

Line 119 moist Arcturus] According to the ancients, the weather was stormy for a few days when Arcturus (one of the stars in the Great Bear constellation) rose with the sun, which took place in September. [Butt; Sherman]

Lines 119-20 [Originally, thus]

“When hoary winter cloaths the year in white,
 The woods and fields to pleasing toils invite.” [Pope]

Line 129 [Originally] “The fowler lifts his level'd tube on high.” [Pope]

Line 130 strait] Immediately. [Sherman]

Line 132 plovers] Short-billed wading birds who swoop and dive over hearthland. [Fairer & (continued...)]

133 Of't, as the mounting larks their notes prepare,
 134 They fall, and leave their little lives in air.
 135 In genial spring, beneath the quiv'ring shade,
 136 Where cooling vapours breathe along the mead,
 137 The patient fisher takes his silent stand,
 138 Intent, his angle trembling in his hand;
 139 With looks unmov'd, he hopes the scaly breed,
 140 And eyes the dancing cork, and bending reed.
 141 Our plenteous streams a various race supply,
 142 The bright-ey'd perch with fins of *Tyrian* dye,
 143 The silver eel, in shining volumes roll'd,
 144 The yellow carp, in scales bedrop'd with gold,
 145 Swift trouts, diversify'd with crimson stains,
 146 And pykes, the tyrants of the watry plains.
 147 Now *Cancer* glows with *Phoebus'* fiery car;
 148 The youth rush eager to the sylvan war,
 149 Swarm o'er the lawns, the forest walks surround,

(...continued)

Gerrard]

Line 135 genial] Pleasantly warm (OED, sense 3), but also including sense 1, 'generative.'
[Rogers]

Line 139 hopes] Anticipates. [Fairer & Gerrard]

Line 142 Tyrian dye] Crimson or purple [Price], as in the dye anciently made in Tyre (capital of Phoenicia) [Rogers].

Line 143 volumes] Coils, folds, convolutions, especially of a serpent. [Butt]

Line 147 Cancer . . . Phoebus' fiery car] The zodiacal sign for the season that begins with the summer solstice, around June 22nd, when the sun ("Phoebus' fiery car") is at its height. [Price]

Lines 147-149 [Originally, thus]

"But when bright from the twins invites
 Our active genius to more free delights,
 With springing day we range the lawns around." [Pope]

The sun (Phoebus's car) is in the constellation of the Twins (Gemini) from about May 21 to June 22. It enters the constellation of the Crab (Cancer) at the summer solstice, June 22. [Butt]

150 Rouze the fleet hart, and chear the opening hound.
 151 Th'impatient courser pants in ev'ry vein,
 152 And pawing, seems to beat the distant plain;
 153 Hills, vales, and floods appear already cross'd,
 154 And e'er he starts, a thousand steps are lost.
 155 See! the bold youth strain up the threat'ning steep,
 156 Rush thro' the thickets, down the valleys sweep,
 157 Hang o'er their coursers heads with eager speed,
 158 And earth rolls back beneath the flying steed.
 159 Let old *Arcadia* boast her ample plain,
 160 Th'immortal huntress, and her virgin-train;
 161 Nor envy, *Windsor*! since thy shades have seen
 162 As bright a Goddess, and as chaste a Queen;
 163 Whose care, like hers, protects the sylvan reign,
 164 The Earth's fair light, and Empress of the main.
 165 Here, as old bards have sung, *Diana* stray'd,

Line 150 Rouze] A technical hunting term: “to rouse a hart, is to raise him from his harbour.”
[Butt]

Line 150 opening] Giving tongue; baying, when in pursuit of a scent. [Butt; Price; Rogers]

Line 151 courser] A swift horse. [Fairer & Gerrard]

Line 159 Arcadia] The area of Greece mythologized and celebrated in pastoral poetry as an ideal landscape. [Price; Fairer & Gerrard]

Line 160 immortal huntress] Allusion to Diana (Artemis), goddess of the hunt and the moon, and celebrated for her chastity. [Williams; Price]

Line 162 a Queen] An allusion to Queen Anne, who was a keen hunter, following the chase in a chariot she drove herself [Fairer & Gerrard]; perhaps Queen Elizabeth I also [Williams]. Queen Anne is compared both to the “immortal Huntress” Diana, goddess of chastity, and to Anne’s illustrious forebear, the “virgin queen” Elizabeth I [Sherman].

Line 164 Empress of the main] Like Diana, the moon goddess, who governed the tides, Britannia (or Anne) ruled the seas. [Sherman]

Lines 165-66 [Originally, thus]

“Yet here, 'tis sung, of old *Diana* stray'd:
 And *Cynthus*’ top forsook for *Windsor* shade.
 Here was she seen o'er sunny heaths to rove,
 Seek the clear spring, or haunt the pathless grove.” [Pope]

Cynthus is the mountain on the island of Delos where Diana was born. [Price]

Most modern editions of *Windsor-Forest*, based on the text of 1751, include the
(continued...)

166 Bath'd in the springs, or sought the cooling shade;
167 Here arm'd with silver bows, in early dawn,
168 Her buskin'd Virgins trac'd the dewy lawn.
169 Above the rest a rural nymph was fam'd,
170 Thy offspring, *Thames!* the fair *Lodona* nam'd;
171 (*Lodona's* fate, in long oblivion cast,
172 The Muse shall sing, and what she sings shall last.)
173 Scarce could the Goddess from her nymph be known,
174 But by the crescent and the golden zone.
175 She scorn'd the praise of beauty, and the care,
176 A belt her waist, a fillet binds her hair,
177 A painted quiver on her shoulder sounds,
178 And with her dart the flying deer she wounds.
179 It chanc'd, as eager of the chace, the maid
180 Beyond the forest's verdant limits stray'd,
181 *Pan* saw and lov'd, and burning with desire
182 Pursu'd her flight, her flight increas'd his fire.
183 Not half so swift the trembling doves can fly,

(...continued)

following four lines in place of lines 165-66 here (thus the line numbering differs by two through the rest of the poem):

*Here too, 'tis sung, of old Diana strayed,
And Cynthia's top forsook for Windsor shade;
Here was she seen o'er airy wastes to rove,
Seek the clear spring, or haunt the pathless grove.*

Lines 165-216 A mythopoeic account of the origin of the Loddon River, a tributary of the Thames, cast as an Ovidian metamorphosis: Pope imagines a scenario in which Lodona, daughter of the Thames and one of Diana's huntress nymphs, happens to stray beyond the limits of Windsor Forest and becomes herself the object of Pan's desires. She flees from the god and escapes his amorous clutches only by her body dissolving and being transformed into the stream that now bears her name.

Line 168 buskin'd Virgins] The nymphs who joined Diana in the hunt, wearing high-laced sandals. [Price]

Line 168 trac'd] I.e., trod or traversed. [Butt]

Line 174 crescent . . . golden zone] The crescent moon, emblem of Diana, and a "golden" girdle or belt. [Butt]

Line 176 fillet] A headband or ribbon. [Rogers]

Line 181 Pan] As god of shepherds, often imagined as a goat-like satyr. [Price]

184 When the fierce eagle cleaves the liquid sky;
185 Not half so swiftly the fierce eagle moves,
186 When thro' the clouds he drives the trembling doves;
187 As from the God she flew with furious pace,
188 Or as the God, more furious, urg'd the chace.
189 Now fainting, sinking, pale, the nymph appears;
190 Now close behind, his sounding steps she hears;
191 And now his shadow reach'd her as she run,
192 His shadow lengthen'd by the setting sun;
193 And now his shorter breath, with sultry air,
194 Pants on her neck, and fans her parting hair.
195 In vain on father *Thames* she call'd for aid,
196 Nor could *Diana* help her injur'd maid.
197 Faint, breathless, thus she pray'd, nor pray'd in vain;
198 "Ah *Cynthia*! ah---tho' banish'd from thy train,
199 "Let me, O let me, to the shades repair,
200 "My native shades---there weep, and murmur there.
201 She said, and melting as in tears she lay,
202 In a soft, silver stream dissolv'd away.
203 The silver stream her virgin coldness keeps,
204 For ever murmurs, and for ever weeps;
205 Still bears the name the hapless virgin bore,
206 And bathes the forest where she rang'd before.
207 In her chaste current oft' the Goddess laves,
208 And with celestial tears augments the waves.
209 Oft' in her glass the musing shepherd spies
210 The headlong mountains and the downward skies,
211 The watry landskip of the pendant woods,

Line 184 liquid sky] Latin *liquidus*, i.e. clear, transparent. [Butt]

Line 198 Cynthia] Diana, so named for Mount Cynthus. [Price]

Line 205 Still bears the name] "The river *Loddon*." [Pope] The *Loddon* flows into the *Thames* not far from Pope's boyhood home at *Binfield*. [Rogers]

Line 207 laves] Bathes. [Sherman]

Line 209 glass] Mirror. [Price]

Lines 209-14 "These six lines were added after the first writing of the poem." [Pope]

Line 211 pendant] Hanging: the woods both hang over the stream and, in the stream's reflection, appear to stand upside down. [Sherman]

212 And absent trees that tremble in the floods;
 213 In the clear azure gleam the flocks are seen,
 214 And floating forests paint the waves with green.
 215 Thro' the fair scene rowl slow the ling'ring streams,
 216 Then foaming pour along, and rush into the *Thames*.
 217 Thou too, great father of the *British* floods!
 218 With joyful pride survey'st our lofty woods;
 219 Where tow'ring oaks their spreading honours rear,
 220 And future navies on thy shores appear.
 221 Not *Neptune's* self from all his streams receives
 222 A wealthier tribute, than to thine he gives.
 223 No seas so rich, so gay no banks appear,
 224 No lake so gentle, and no spring so clear.
 225 Not fabled *Po* more swells the poet's lays,
 226 While thro' the skies his shining current strays,
 227 Than thine, which visits *Windsor's* fam'd abodes,
 228 To grace the mansion of our earthly Gods:
 229 Nor all his stars a brighter lustre show,
 230 Than the fair nymphs that grace thy side below:
 231 Here *Jove* himself, subdu'd by beauty still,
 232 Might change *Olympus* for a nobler hill.

Line 212 absent trees] Illusory [Sherman]—i.e., trees seen in their reflection in the river, rather than in their actuality.

Line 217 Thou too, great father] The Thames. [Price]

Line 217 floods] Rivers. [Price]

Line 219 spreading honours] Adornments, that is leaves [Rogers]; foliage. [Price]

Line 221 Neptune] Roman god of the sea, here characterized as receiving the tribute of the rivers and, in turn, facilitating long-distance trade.

Line 225 fabled Po] Virgil (*Georgics* I 482, IV 372), Ovid (*Metamorphoses* II 372), and Claudian (*Panegyricus* to the sixth consulship of Honorius, in 404 A.D., line 146) gave to the Italian river Po the name of Eridanus, a constellation of the southern hemisphere which has the form of a winding river (and was named after a river in Greek mythology) [Butt; Sherman; Rogers 2004: 186]; hence, here, the Po is pictured meandering “thro’ the skies” (line 226) and lustrous with “all his stars” (line 229).

Line 227 thine] The current of the Thames, as it flows by the royal castle. [Price]

Line 231 Jove] Jupiter, king of the gods. [Fairer & Gerrard]

233 Happy the man whom this bright Court approves,
234 His Sov'reign favours, and his Country loves:
235 Happy next him, who to these shades retires,
236 Whom Nature charms, and whom the Muse inspires;
237 Whom humbler joys of home-felt quiet please,
238 Successive study, exercise, and ease.
239 He gathers health from herbs the forest yields,
240 And of their fragrant physic spoils the fields:
241 With chymic art exalts the min'ral pow'rs,
242 And draws the aromatic souls of flow'rs:
243 Now marks the course of rolling orbs on high;
244 O'er figur'd worlds now travels with his eye:
245 Of ancient writ unlocks the learned store,
246 Consults the dead, and lives past ages o'er:
247 Or wand'ring thoughtful in the silent wood,
248 Attends the duties of the wise and good,

Line 233 Happy the man whom] I.e., Granville.

Lines 233-38 [Originally, thus]

*“Happy the man who to the shades retires,
But doubly happy, if the Muse inspires!
Blest whom the sweets of home-felt quiet please;
But far more blest, who study joins with ease.” [Pope]*

Line 235 who] I.e., Pope himself.

Line 240 physic] Medicines. [Sherman]

Line 240 spoils] Despoils. [Sherman]

Line 241 chymic art] The skills of the chemist. [Sherman]

Line 241 exalts] In alchemy and early chemistry: raises (a substance or its qualities) to a higher “degree,” intensifies, renders more powerful. [Butt]

Line 242 draws] Inhales, or perhaps extracts by suction or distillation. [Butt]

Line 244 figur'd worlds] Perhaps the Zodiac, or a globe of the world. To figure is to portray or represent [Butt]. The Zodiac (rather than a globe) is more in keeping with the hermetic cast of the passage [Rogers]; a “figure” is “the general term in older astrology for what we now call a horoscope. It is a celestial map, showing the circle of the sky, representing the full 360 degrees of the earth’s orbit, and divided into twelve arcs,” on which the planets were positioned as needed [Rogers 2004: 214].

Line 245 writ] Writings. [Price]

249 T'observe a mean, be to himself a friend,
250 To follow nature, and regard his end;
251 Or looks on heav'n with more than mortal eyes,
252 Bids his free soul expatiate in the skies,
253 Amid her kindred stars familiar roam,
254 Survey the region, and confess her home!
255 Such was the life great *Scipio* once admir'd,
256 Thus *Atticus*, and *Trumbal* thus retir'd.
257 Ye sacred Nine! that all my soul possess,
258 Whose raptures fire me, and whose visions bless,
259 Bear me, oh bear me to sequester'd scenes,
260 The bow'ry mazes, and surrounding greens;
261 To *Thames's* banks which fragrant breezes fill,
262 Or where ye Muses sport on *Cooper's* hill.

Line 249 mean] The golden mean, or temperate life. [Price]

Line 252 expatiate] Wander at will. [Price]

Line 253 kindred stars] The soul was anciently believed to be of the same substance as the stars. [Williams]

Line 255 Scipio] After his victory in 202 BCE over Hannibal in the second Punic War, Scipio Africanus the elder (ca. 265? or 236?-ca. 183 BCE) declined political distinctions offered him. When, many years later, his enemies brought him to trial on charges of misconduct, he reminded the Romans of his past services, set the laws at defiance, and retired to his country seat at Liternum in Campania. He never returned to Rome, but passed his life cultivating his estate. [Butt; Rogers]

Line 256 Atticus] Titus Pomponius (109-32 BCE), the friend and correspondent of Cicero, refused to sue for public honor or to become engaged in political controversy. Instead he withdrew from Rome to Athens in 85 BCE and devoted himself to a life of study. He was called Atticus because of his long residence in Athens (in the region of Attica) [Butt]. During the Civil Wars he maintained strict neutrality [Fairer & Gerrard].

Line 256 Trumbal] “Sir William Trumball [or Trumbull (1639-1716)], was born in Windsor Forest, to which he retreated after he had resign'd [in 1698] the post of Secretary of State to King William III.” [Pope's note to *Spring*, lines 7-10]. Sir William befriended the young Pope and served as a kind of tutor to him [Williams]. Trumbull supported Dryden's translation of Virgil and instigated Pope's translation of Homer [Rogers]. Pope may originally have intended to dedicate this poem, as he did one of his *Pastorals*, to Trumbull [see headnote, on Lansdowne].

Line 257 sacred Nine] The Nine Muses, daughters of Mnemosyne (goddess of memory) and Zeus, each of whom presided over a different art or science. [Sherman]

263 (On *Cooper's* hill eternal wreaths shall grow,
264 While lasts the mountain, or while *Thames* shall flow)
265 I seem thro' consecrated walks to rove,
266 I hear soft music die along the grove;
267 Led by the sound, I roam from shade to shade,
268 By god-like Poets venerable made:
269 Here his first lays majestic *Denham* sung;
270 There the last numbers flow'd from *Cowley's* tongue.
271 O early lost! what tears the river shed,
272 When the sad pomp along his banks was led?

Line 263 On Cooper's hill eternal wreaths shall grow] *Cooper's Hill*, a mount alongside the Thames near Egham, about five miles from Windsor, was celebrated in Sir John Denham's *Cooper's Hill* (1642), a famous mid-seventeenth-century poem of the same general kind as *Windsor-Forest* [Williams; Rogers]—i.e., a “topographical” or “loco-descriptive” poem, combining historical, political, and moral reflection with description of a local landscape. Pope's comment on “the distinguishing excellence” of Denham's poem best explains Pope's own imaginative procedure in *Windsor-Forest*: “the descriptions of places, and images raised by the poet, are still [i.e., continually] tending to some hint, or leading to some reflection, upon moral life or political institution” (*Iliad* 16.466n.) [Sherman]. Samuel Johnson likewise describes a loco-descriptive poem, in his *Life of Denham*, as one in which “some particular landscape [is] poetically described, with the addition of such embellishments as may be supplied by historical retrospection, or incidental meditation” [quoted in Rogers 2004: 217].

Line 264 mountain] *Cooper's Hill*. [Butt]

Line 269 first lays . . . majestic Denham] Before the opening of the Civil War in 1642, Sir John Denham (1615-69) had written *The Destruction of Troy* (a translation of *Aeneid* II), the first draft of *Cooper's Hill*, and *The Sophy*. His house in Egham, near Windsor, was confiscated by the Parliamentary forces in 1643 [Butt]. Denham is praised as “majestic” for his success in writing in the style of “heroic verse” (iambic pentameter couplets).

Line 270 last numbers . . . Cowley] “Mr. *Cowley* died at *Chertsey*, on the borders of the Forest, and was from thence convey'd to *Westminster*.” [Pope]

Line 271 O early lost] Abraham Cowley died in 1667, at the age of 49. His body was floated down the river from Chertsey to London, before his funeral at Westminster Abbey. [Butt; Rogers]

273 His drooping swans on ev'ry note expire,
 274 And on his willows hung each Muse's lyre.
 275 Since fate relentless stop'd their heav'nly voice,
 276 No more the forests ring, or groves rejoice;
 277 Who now shall charm the shades, where *Cowley* strung
 278 His living harp, and lofty *Denham* sung?
 279 But hark! the groves rejoice, the forest rings!
 280 Are these reviv'd? or is it *Granville* sings?
 281 'Tis yours, my Lord, to bless our soft retreats,
 282 And call the Muses to their ancient seats;
 283 To paint anew the flow'ry sylvan scenes,
 284 To crown the forests with immortal greens,
 285 Make *Windsor*-hills in lofty numbers rise,
 286 And lift her turrets nearer to the skies;
 287 To sing those honours you deserve to wear,
 288 And add new lustre to her silver *star*.

Line 273-74 [Originally, thus]

“What sighs, what murmurs fill'd the vocal shore!

His tuneful swans were heard to sing no more.” [Pope]

Line 273 drooping swans . . . expire] Swans were fabled to sing at their own death. [Williams]

Line 274 willows] Emblems of sorrow [Sherman]. Cf. Psalm 137:2: “On the willows there / we hung up our harps” [Williams].

Line 274 each Muse's lyre] *Cowley* attempted many poetical genres. In his epitaph in Westminster Abbey, he is called *Anglorum Pindarus, Flaccus, Maro*. [Butt]

Line 280 Granville] The dedicatee of the poem. See headnote, regarding George Granville, baron Lansdowne.

Line 285 lofty numbers] Exalted or heroic verse. [Price]

Lines 287-88 those honours . . . / . . . silver star] The “honours” and the “star” are those of the prestigious Order of the Garter, instituted at Windsor Castle by Edward III in 1349. It was to provide a meeting-place for the Order that Edward reconstructed Windsor Castle. [Butt] *Granville* was never admitted to the Order. [Williams]

Line 288 “All the lines that follow, till within eight of the conclusion, were not added to the poem till the year 1710. What immediately followed this, and made the Conclusion, were these,

My humble Muse in unambitious strains

Paints the green forests and the flow'ry plains;

Where I obscurely pass my careless days,

(continued...)

289 Here noble *Surrey* felt the sacred rage,
290 *Surrey*, the *Granville* of a former age:
291 Matchless his pen, victorious was his lance,
292 Bold in the lists, and graceful in the dance:
293 In the same shades the *Cupids* tun'd his lyre,
294 To the same notes, of love, and soft desire:
295 Fair *Geraldine*, bright object of his vow,
296 Then fill'd the groves, as heav'nly *Myra* now.
297 Oh would'st thou sing what Heroes *Windsor* bore,
298 What Kings first breath'd upon her winding shore,
299 Or raise old warriors, whose ador'd remains
300 In weeping vaults her hallow'd earth contains!

(...continued)

*Pleas'd in the silent shade with empty praise,
Enough for me that to the list'ning swains
First in these fields I sung the sylvan strains.*" [Pope]

The composition history of the poem was actually more complex than this note suggests: see headnote.

Line 289 Surrey] "Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, one of the first refiners of the English poetry; who flourish'd in the time of Henry the VIIIth." [Pope] Surrey (ca. 1517-47) is mentioned specifically because of love poems supposed to have been written while he was imprisoned in Windsor Castle in 1537 [Rogers].

Line 292 lists] The spaces where jousting tournaments were held. [Fairer & Gerrard]

Line 295 Geraldine] Lady Elizabeth Fitzgerald (1528?-89), youngest daughter of the Earl of Kildare. Surrey's love poems were long supposed to have been addressed to her. [Butt]

Line 296 Myra] The name Granville bestowed in his poetic songs on his female addressee (taken to be, first, Mary of Modena and, later, Frances Brudenal, Countess of Newburgh, when the latter became his mistress). [Butt; Sherman]

Lines 297-300 Edward III (1312) and Henry VI (1421) were born at Windsor. Edward IV, Henry VIII, and Charles I were buried there. [Butt]

Line 298 winding shore] Perhaps Pope knew the etymological meaning of the word *Windsor* as given in Camden's *Britannia* (1695), p. 151: "Next, the Thames goes to *Windsor*, call'd in Saxon Windesoure, Windlesora, and also Windlesofra, from the *winding banks*, ofre in that language signifying a *bank* or *shore*." [Butt]

Line 300 weeping vaults] Because of the seepage of water through the walls; similar natural phenomena explain the conceits in lines 305 and 311. [Sherman]

301 With *Edward's* acts adorn the shining page,
302 Stretch his long triumphs down thro' ev'ry age,
303 Draw Monarchs chain'd, and *Cressi's* glorious field,
304 The lillies blazing on the regal shield:
305 Then, from her roofs when *Verrio's* colours fall,
306 And leave inanimate the naked wall,
307 Still in thy song should vanquish'd *France* appear,
308 And bleed for ever under *Britain's* spear.
309 Let softer strains ill-fated *Henry* mourn,
310 And palms eternal flourish round his urn.
311 Here o'er the martyr-King the marble weeps,

Line 301 Edward] “Edward III. born here [in 1312].” [Pope] He remodeled the castle and founded the Order of the Garter [see note to lines 287-88] [Rogers].

Line 303 Monarchs chain'd] An allusion to David II, King of Scotland, taken prisoner at the battle of Neville's Cross in 1346 and released in 1357; and to Jean le Bon, King of France, whom the Black Prince defeated and captured at Poitiers in 1356. [Butt]

Line 303 Cressi's glorious field] The battle of Crécy in 1346 in which Edward III defeated the French, one of the major English victories in the Hundred Years War. [Rogers]

Line 304 The lilies blazing on the regal shield] On January 26, 1340, Edward III assumed the title of king of France, and quartered the lilies of France with the leopards of England [Butt]. Another link in the chain of heraldic imagery and allusion [Rogers].

Line 305 Verrio's colours] The Italian artist Antonio Verrio (1639-1707) was employed by Charles II [Rogers] and had represented in St. George's Hall at Windsor the triumphal procession in which King John of France, after his surrender in 1356, was led captive by Edward the Black Prince, son of Edward III. The ceilings he painted had begun to deteriorate [Butt; Sherman]. For Defoe's comment on some of his work, see his *Tour through Great Britain* (1724-26), letter iv [Rogers].

Line 309 Henry] “Henry VI.” [Pope]. See next note also.

Lines 309-16 Allusion to events during the Wars of the Roses: Edward, duke of York, proclaimed himself king under the title of Edward IV in 1461. Henry VI was a fugitive in the North until he was taken prisoner in 1465. From October, 1470, to April, 1471, Henry was restored to the throne, and Edward took flight. Henry's allies were defeated at Barnet, April 14, 1471, and Henry was probably murdered on May 21. His body was transferred from its grave in Chertsey Abbey to Windsor in 1484. He was buried in St. George's Chapel, not far from Edward IV, who had been buried there in 1483. The *palms eternal* (line 310) are not those of victory, but of martyrdom. [Butt]

312 And fast beside him, once-fear'd *Edward* sleeps:
313 Whom not th'extended *Albion* could contain,
314 From old *Belerium* to the northern main,
315 The grave unites; where ev'n the Great find rest,
316 And blended lie th'oppressor and th'opprest!
317 Make sacred *Charles's* tomb for ever known,
318 (Obscure the place, and un-inscrib'd the stone)
319 Oh fact accurst! what tears has *Albion* shed,
320 Heav'ns, what new wounds! and how her old have bled?
321 She saw her sons with purple deaths expire,
322 Her sacred domes involv'd in rolling fire,
323 A dreadful series of intestine wars,
324 Inglorious triumphs, and dishonest scars.

Line 312 Edward] “Edward IV.” [Pope]

Line 314 old Belerium] *Belerium* (or *Bolerium*) *promontorium* was the Latin name for Land’s End in Cornwall, the south-westernmost point in England [Butt; Sherman]. There seems to be a distant echo of Milton, *Lycidas*, lines 159-60 (“Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied, / Sleep’st by the fable of Bellerus old”) [Rogers].

Line 317 sacred Charles’s tomb] Charles I, executed by the Puritans in 1649—and consequently considered by many to be a Christian and political martyr—was buried in St. George’s Chapel at Windsor, in the same tomb as Henry VIII, without any service [Butt; Rogers; Sherman]. His tomb remained unidentified until 1813 [Sherman].

Line 319 fact] Crime [Rogers]. Deed [Sherman].

Lines 321-24 Pope alludes to the Great Plague (1665) (“purple deaths”), the Great Fire (1666) (“rolling fire”), and the civil strife (“intestine wars”) of James II’s reign (beginning with the Monmouth Rebellion of 1685 and ending with the Revolution of 1688) as evil effects of Charles I’s execution [Butt; Fairer & Gerrard]. These disasters are imputed to the martyrdom of Charles I (more clearly so in the manuscript version) and point to a possible Jacobite interpretation of seventeenth-century history [Rogers].

Line 322 domes] Stately buildings, mansions. [Butt]

Line 323 intestine wars] Civil wars—i.e., the civil wars during the reigns of Charles I, Cromwell (in Ireland), James II, and William III (in Ireland). [Sherman]

Line 324 dishonest] Shameful [Butt]; dishonorable [Rogers].

325 At length great *ANNA* said---"Let Discord cease!"
 326 She said, the World obey'd, and all was *Peace*!
 327 In that blest moment, from his oozy bed
 328 Old father *Thames* advanc'd his rev'rend head.
 329 His tresses drop'd with dews, and o'er the stream
 330 His shining horns diffus'd a golden gleam:
 331 Grav'd on his urn, appear'd the Moon that guides
 332 His swelling waters, and alternate tydes;
 333 The figur'd streams in waves of silver roll'd,
 334 And on their banks *Augusta* rose in gold.

Line 325 ANNA] Queen Anne. [Sherman]

Line 325 cease] An allusion to the forthcoming Treaty of Utrecht (see headnote), couched in the form of an imitation of Genesis 1:3. [Rogers]

Lines 327-52 There are many literary antecedents for this masque-like scene but the closest in many ways is an anonymous Latin poem, *De connubio*, which had been translated in Camden's *Britannia* (1695 edn.) [Rogers]; another important analogue is Claudian's panegyric to the sixth consulship of Honorius, in 404 A.D. [Rogers 2004: 186-87]. *Oozy bed* is one of Pope's sly borrowings from Addison's *Campaign* (1705). [Rogers]

Line 328 Old father Thames] Pope's personification of the River Thames is modelled on Virgil's description of Father Tiber (*Aeneid*, 8:33-34) and Spenser's account of the Thames and its tributaries in *Faerie Queene*, IV.xi.25-29 [Fairer & Gerrard]. This and the preceding line also borrow verbally directly from Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis* (1667): "Old Father *Thames* rais'd up his reverend head, / But fear'd the fate of *Simeois* would return: / Deep in his Ooze he sought his sedgy bed. / And shrunk his waters back into his Urn" (lines 925-28).

Lines 328-29 "Between Verse 328 and 329 originally stood these lines,

*From shore to shore exulting shouts he heard,
 O'er all his banks a lambent light appear'd,
 With sparkling flames heav'ns glowing concave shone,
 Fictitious stars, and glories not her own.
 He saw, and gently rose above the stream;
 His shining horns diffus'd a golden gleam:
 With pearl and gold his tow'ry front was drest,
 The tributes of the distant East and West."* [Pope]

Line 330 shining horns] The River-gods were often given the head or horns of a bull, indicative of their roaring or winding, of their strength or of their influence on agriculture. [Butt]

Line 333 figur'd] Shaped into a figure, represented by figures. [Butt]

Line 334 Augusta] The name given to London by the Romans in the fourth century; it was
 (continued...)

335 Around his throne the sea-born brothers stood,
336 Who swell with tributary urns his flood:
337 First the fam'd authors of his ancient name,
338 The winding *Isis* and the fruitful *Tame*:
339 The *Kennet* swift, for silver eels renown'd;
340 The *Loddon* slow, with verdant alders crown'd;
341 *Cole*, whose clear streams his flow'ry islands lave;
342 And chalky *Wey*, that rolls a milky wave:
343 The blue, transparent *Vandalis* appears;
344 The gulphy *Lee* his sedgy tresses rears;
345 And sullen *Mole*, that hides his diving flood;

(...continued)

recently used by Dryden and other poets to evoke imperial power. [Fairer & Gerrard]

Line 334 in gold] A reference to Dryden's description of London's rebuilding after the Great Fire (in brick and white Portland stone) in *Annus Mirabilis* (1667), to which work the rest of this poem is indebted. [Sherman]

Line 335 sea-born brothers] The legend was that all rivers were born of Oceanus and Tethys. [Butt]

Line 337 his ancient name] "Tamesis" (so called by Julius Caesar). [Fairer & Gerrard]

Lines 337-46 Pope's catalogue of rivers resembles closely that found in Ausonius, *Mosella*, 349-74. The lines are also indebted to Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, IV xi; to Milton, *At a Vacation Exercise*; and to Drayton, *Poly-Olbion*, Song XVII. [Butt]

Line 338 Isis . . . Thame] The marriage of the Thame and Isis to produce the infant Thames was a common poetic topos; see the poem in *Britannia* (mentioned in note to lines 327-52) [Rogers]. Camden's theory that the Latin name "Tamesis" derived from its parent rivers (Thame and Isis) is wrong [Fairer & Gerrard].

Line 341 Cole] The Colne, which flows south through the district west of London. [Rogers]

Line 343 Vandalis] The Wandle, which flows northward through what is now south London. [Rogers]

Line 344 gulphy] Eddying. [Rogers]

Line 345 diving flood] For the apparent disappearance of the River Mole underground, near Dorking in Surrey, and its resurfacing at Leatherhead in Surrey, see Defoe's *Tour through Great Britain* (1724-26), letter ii. [Rogers; Fairer & Gerrard]

346 And silent *Darent*, stain'd with *Danish* blood.
 347 High in the midst, upon his urn reclin'd,
 348 (His sea-green mantle waving with the wind)
 349 The God appear'd: he turn'd his azure eyes
 350 Where *Windsor*-domes and pompous turrets rise;
 351 Then bow'd and spoke; the winds forget to roar,
 352 And the hush'd waves glide softly to the shore.
 353 Hail, sacred *Peace*! hail long-expected days,
 354 That *Thames*'s glory to the stars shall raise!
 355 Tho' *Tyber*'s streams immortal *Rome* behold,
 356 Tho' foaming *Hermus* swells with tydes of gold,
 357 From heav'n itself tho' sev'n-fold *Nilus* flows,
 358 And harvests on a hundred realms bestows;
 359 These now no more shall be the Muse's themes,
 360 Lost in my fame, as in the sea their streams.
 361 Let *Volga*'s banks with iron squadrons shine,
 362 And groves of lances glitter on the *Rhine*,
 363 Let barb'rous *Ganges* arm a servile train;

Line 346 Danish blood] Probably alluding to Edward Ironside's defeat of the Danes at the battle of Otford (1016), which is mentioned by Camden in connection with the Darent. [Rogers; Fairer & Gerrard]

Line 353 long-expected days] The preliminaries to the Treaty of Utrecht had been signed in London in October, 1711. [Butt]

Lines 355-60 Cf. Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis* (1667): "The wealthy *Tagus*, and the wealthier *Rhine*, / The glory of their Towns no more shall boast: / And *Sein*, That would with *Belgian* Rivers joyn, / Shall find her lustre stain'd, and Traffick lost" (lines 1193-96). [Rogers 2004: 204]

Line 356 Hermus] A river in Lydia (Asia Minor) with sands, according to legend, covered in gold. [Rogers]

Line 357 sev'n-fold Nilus] The Nile with its seven mouths (for which reason, Ovid called it *septemfluus*) [Sherman]; its source was still unknown. [Rogers]

Line 361 Volga's banks with iron squadrons shine] Referring to the course of the war between Charles XII of Sweden against Peter the Great of Russia; Charles had invaded Muscovy but had suffered defeat at Poltava (Pultowa) in 1709 [Rogers]—the battle did not take place near the Volga [Sherman]. "Iron squadrons" are cavalry [Sherman].

Line 363 Ganges arm a servile train] An allusion to the wars waged by the Mogul Emperor Aurengzeb (d. 1707) against the rising Maratha powers [Butt; followed by Rogers; Sherman; Fairer & Gerrard]. The reference might also be to the succession conflicts after the death, in
 (continued...)

364 Be mine the blessings of a peaceful reign.
365 No more my sons shall dye with *British* blood
366 Red *Iber's* sands, or *Ister's* foaming flood;
367 Safe on my shore each unmolested swain
368 Shall tend the flocks, or reap the bearded grain;
369 The shady empire shall retain no trace
370 Of war or blood, but in the sylvan chace;
371 The trumpet sleep, while chearful horns are blown,
372 And arms employ'd on birds and beasts alone.
373 Behold! th'ascending *Villa's* on my side,
374 Project long shadows o'er the crystal tyde.
375 Behold! *Augusta's* glitt'ring spires increase,
376 And temples rise, the beauteous works of Peace.
377 I see, I see where two fair cities bend
378 Their ample bow, a new *White-hall* ascend!

(...continued)

1712, of Bahadur Shah, son and heir of Aurengzeb.

Lines 365-66 Pope refers to various campaigns fought during the War of the Spanish Succession, on the Ebro (*Iber*) in Spain (where the British were successful at Saragossa in 1710) and along the Danube (*Ister*) (scene of Britain's greatest recent victory, at Blenheim in 1704) [Rogers; Fairer & Gerrard]. Pope's backhanded reference to these victories ("No more my Sons shall dye with British blood") reflects his hostility to Marlborough and an uneasiness at the glory of his victories [Butt].

Line 373 ascending Villa's] Many new private country homes were being built along the Thames up from London at this time. [Sherman]

Lines 375-76 Cf. Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis* (1667): "More great then humane, now and more *August*, / New deifi'd she from her fires dost rise: / Her widening streets on new foundations trust, / And opening, into larger parts she flies" (lines 1177-80). [Rogers 2004: 204]

Line 376 temples rise] "The fifty new churches." [Pope] Queen Anne had promoted the building of fifty new churches in London, to meet the requirements of a growing London, but in the end no more than twelve were built. [Rogers; Sherman]

Line 377 two fair cities] London and Westminster, still distinct cities at this time, situated on a sweeping bend in the Thames. [Rogers; Sherman]

Line 378 new White-hall] Most of the historic Whitehall Palace, except for the Banqueting Hall designed by Inigo Jones, had been burnt down in the fires of 1691 and 1697/98 [Butt; Sherman; Rogers]. There were several plans for restoration, never implemented. [Rogers]

379 There mighty nations shall enquire their doom,
380 The world's great Oracle in times to come;
381 There Kings shall sue, and suppliant States be seen
382 Once more to bend before a *British* QUEEN.
383 Thy trees, fair *Windsor*! now shall leave their woods,

Line 379 doom] Fate or destiny. [Sherman]

Lines 379-82 Cf. Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis* (1667): "Now, like a Maiden Queen, she will behold, / From her high Turrets, hourly Suitors come: / The East with Incense, and the West with Gold, / Will stand, like Suppliants, to receive her doom" (lines 1185-88). Note the echo of "East" and "West" in Dryden with the lines suppressed by Pope between verses 328 and 329 (see note above). [Rogers 2004: 204-5]

Lines 379-420 Pervasively drawing on Isaiah 60, which forecasts Zion's future glory: see Maynard Mack, *Collected in Himself* (1983), 21-23. [Butt; Rogers; Sherman]

Line 382 once more] The allusion is to those occasions, in 1575 and 1585, when the sovereignty of the United Provinces was offered to Queen Elizabeth and her aid was solicited in the struggles of the Dutch against Philip of Spain [Butt]. Pope's phrasing indulges, however, a patriotic fantasy of English might during the reign of Elizabeth.

Lines 383-87 "Ver. 383, &c. were originally thus;
Now shall our fleets the bloody Cross display
To the rich regions of the rising day,
Or those green isles, where headlong Titan steeps
His hissing axle in th' Atlantic deeps.
Tempt icy seas, &c." [Pope]

Lines 383-84 The trees of Windsor Forest, turned into ships, will carry British power and commerce all over the world [Butt]. Cf. Thomas Tickell's description of the Thames, where "a vast navy hides his ample bed, / A floating forest" (*The Royal Progress*, 1714); note also the "floating forests" in line 214 of Pope's poem [Brown 29]. Cf. Edward Young's *Imperium Pelagi* (1729): "Trade barbarous Lands can polish fair; / Make *Earth* well worth the wise Man's Care; / Call forth her Forests, charm them into Fleets" [Brown 38].

Lines 383-410 Pope recasts the traditional view of Britain (as exemplified in Virgil's first *Eclogue*) as a world set apart from the rest, a world on the frontiers and margins of the Roman view of the globe: Pope repositions Britain and the British in a metropolitan role, "at the center of a freshly ordained pattern of harmonious existence" [Rogers 2004: 194]. This gesture echoes that in Denham's *Cooper's Hill* (1642), which celebrates the Thames in these lines: "Nor are his Blessings to his banks confin'd, / But free, and common, as the Sea or Wind; / When he to boast, or to dispense his stores / Full of the tributes of his grateful shores, / Visits the world, and in his flying towers / Brings home to us, and makes both *Indies* ours; / Finds wealth where 'tis, bestows
(continued...)

384 And half thy forests rush into my floods,
385 Bear *Britain's* thunder, and her Cross display,
386 To the bright regions of the rising day;
387 Tempt icy seas, where scarce the waters roll,
388 Where clearer flames glow round the frozen Pole;
389 Or under southern skies exalt their sails,
390 Led by new stars, and borne by spicy gales!
391 For me the balm shall bleed, and amber flow,
392 The coral redden, and the ruby glow,
393 The pearly shell its lucid globe infold,
394 And *Phoebus* warm the ripening ore to gold.
395 The time shall come, when free as seas or wind
396 Unbounded *Thames* shall flow for all mankind,

(...continued)

it where it wants / Cities in deserts, woods in Cities plants. / So that to us no thing, no place is strange, / While his fair bosom is the worlds exchange” (lines 179-88) [Brown 35-36].

Line 385 her Cross] The red cross of St. George, which, with the cross of St. Andrew, made the new Union flag of Great Britain; Pope may also allude to recent British missionary work overseas [Sherman]. A possible Rosicrucian strand of allusion surfaces here. [Rogers]

Line 387 Tempt] Risk or attempt. [Rogers]

Line 389 exalt] Raise. [Sherman]

Line 391 balm] Tree sap, often having soothing or healing properties. [Sherman]

Lines 391-94 Cf. Dryden’s *Annus Mirabilis* (1667): “For them alone the heav’ns had kindly heat; / In eastern quarries ripening precious dew: / For them the Idumaeen balm did sweat, / And in hot Ceylon spicy forests grew” (lines 9-12). [Rogers 2004: 205]

Line 394 gold] The sun (“Phoebus”) was thought to ripen precious metals in the earth. [Rogers]

Lines 395-98 Cf. Dryden’s *Annus Mirabilis* (1667): “Instructed ships shall sail to quick Commerce; / By which remotest Regions are alli’d: / Which makes one City of the Universe, / Where some may gain, and all may be suppli’d” (lines 649-52); compare, also, the more aggressive vision towards the close of Dryden’s *Astrea Redux* (1660): “Abroad your Empire shall no Limits know, / But like the Sea in boundless Circles flow. / Your much lov’d Fleet shall with a wide Command / Besiege the petty Monarchs of the Land: / And as Old Time his Off-spring swallow’d down / Our Ocean in its depths all Seas shall drown. / Their wealthy Trade from Pyrates Rapine free / Our Merchants shall no more Advent’ers be . . .” (lines 298-305). [Rogers 2004: 205-6]

Line 396 “A wish that London may be made a free port.” [Pope] Many merchants proposed that
(continued...)

397 Whole nations enter with each swelling tyde,
398 And seas but join the regions they divide;
399 Earth's distant ends our glory shall behold,
400 And the new world launch forth to seek the old.
401 Then ships of uncouth form shall stem the tyde,
402 And feather'd people croud my wealthy side,
403 And naked youths and painted chiefs admire
404 Our speech, our colour, and our strange attire!
405 Oh stretch thy reign, fair *Peace!* from shore to shore,
406 'Till Conquest cease, and slav'ry be no more;
407 'Till the freed *Indians* in their native groves
408 Reap their own fruits, and woo their sable loves,
409 *Peru* once more a race of Kings behold,
410 And other *Mexico's* be roof'd with gold.

(...continued)

customs duties be abolished to make Britain more open to international trade [Sherman]. Cf. the name given by Addison to the representative of moneyed interests, "Sir Andrew Freeport" (*Spectator*, 2 March 1711) [Butt]. Bolingbroke attempted to "introduce a measure of free trade with France in sections 8 and 9 of the commercial treaty annexed to the Utrecht settlement," but the measure was "defeated in parliament in June 1713" [Rogers 2004: 255n.46].

Lines 402-3 feather'd people . . . / . . . painted chiefs] Recalling a famous recent event, when four Iroquois chiefs visited London in 1710. [Rogers]

Line 405 Peace] The vision of universal peace enunciated here and through this whole section of the poem (353-420) echoes the vision offered in Pope's *Messiah* (1712) of "a world free from war, with an obvious recollection of Isaiah, chapter 2": "Nor Fields with gleaming Steel be cover'd over, / The Brazen Trumpets kindle Rage no more; / But useless Lances into Scythes shall bend, / And the broad Faulchion in a Plow-share end" (lines 59-62) [Rogers 2004: 208]. Pope's poem seeks to blend a vision of British dominion and glory with that of universal peace and harmony, a tension to which one might relate "the complicated evocation and displacement of violence typical of *Windsor-Forest*" [Brown 30].

Line 407 freed Indians] South American natives, liberated from the dominion of Spain. [Rogers]

Line 409 race of Kings] The Incas. [Rogers]

Line 410 Cf. Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis* (1667): "Rich as the Town which gave the *Indies* name / With Silver pav'd, and all divine with Gold" (lines 1171-72). Pope's poem, like Dryden's, is "full of exotic imagery drawn from tropical clines, luxury trading, and oriental opulence" [Rogers 2004: 206].

411 Exil'd by thee from earth to deepest hell,
412 In brazen bonds shall barb'rous *Discord* dwell:
413 Gigantic *Pride*, pale *Terror*, gloomy *Care*,
414 And mad *Ambition*, shall attend her there:
415 There purple *Vengeance* bath'd in gore retires,
416 Her weapons blunted, and extinct her fires:
417 There hateful *Envy* her own snakes shall feel,
418 And *Persecution* mourn her broken wheel:
419 There *Faction* roar, *Rebellion* bite her chain,
420 And gasping *Furies* thirst for blood in vain.
421 Here cease thy flight, nor with unhallow'd lays
422 Touch the fair fame of *Albion's* golden days:
423 The thoughts of Gods let *Granville's* verse recite,
424 And bring the scenes of opening fate to light.
425 My humble Muse, in unambitious strains,
426 Paints the green forests and the flow'ry plains,
427 Where Peace descending bids her olives spring,
428 And scatters blessings from her dove-like wing.
429 Ev'n I more sweetly pass my careless days,
430 Pleas'd in the silent shade with empty praise;
431 Enough for me, that to the list'ning swains
432 First in these fields I sung the sylvan strains.

Lines 411-20 Modelled on two descriptions in Virgil which allude to Augustus's recent victories: *Georgics*, 3:37-39, and *Aeneid*, 1:293-96. [Fairer & Gerrard]

Line 418 wheel] The wheel of torture [Butt; Rogers; Sherman]. The wheel of fortune [Fairer & Gerrard].

Line 420 Furies] In Greek myth, the pitiless female spirits of vengeance. [Fairer & Gerrard]

Line 423 Gods] Granville's poems celebrated the god-like qualities of James II. [Fairer & Gerrard]

Line 432 sylvan strains] Just as Virgil had concluded his *Georgics* with a recollection of the opening of the *Eclogues*, so Pope echoes the first line of his own *Pastorals* ("First in these fields I try the sylvan strain"). [Rogers]