

Gale Primary Sources

Start at the source.

# 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Century Nichols Newspapers Collection

## Notable Titles



Various images from the Nichols Collection

**The *17th and 18th Century Nichols Newspapers Collection* includes some of the most notable publications from the period, many of which were highly innovative and influential in the development of printing and publishing history.**

**Covering news from within the UK and beyond, including pioneering views and formats, ranging from conservative to provocative, this archive brings to light the genesis and evolution of many elements of newspapers we still recognise to this day.**

# The Athenian Mercury

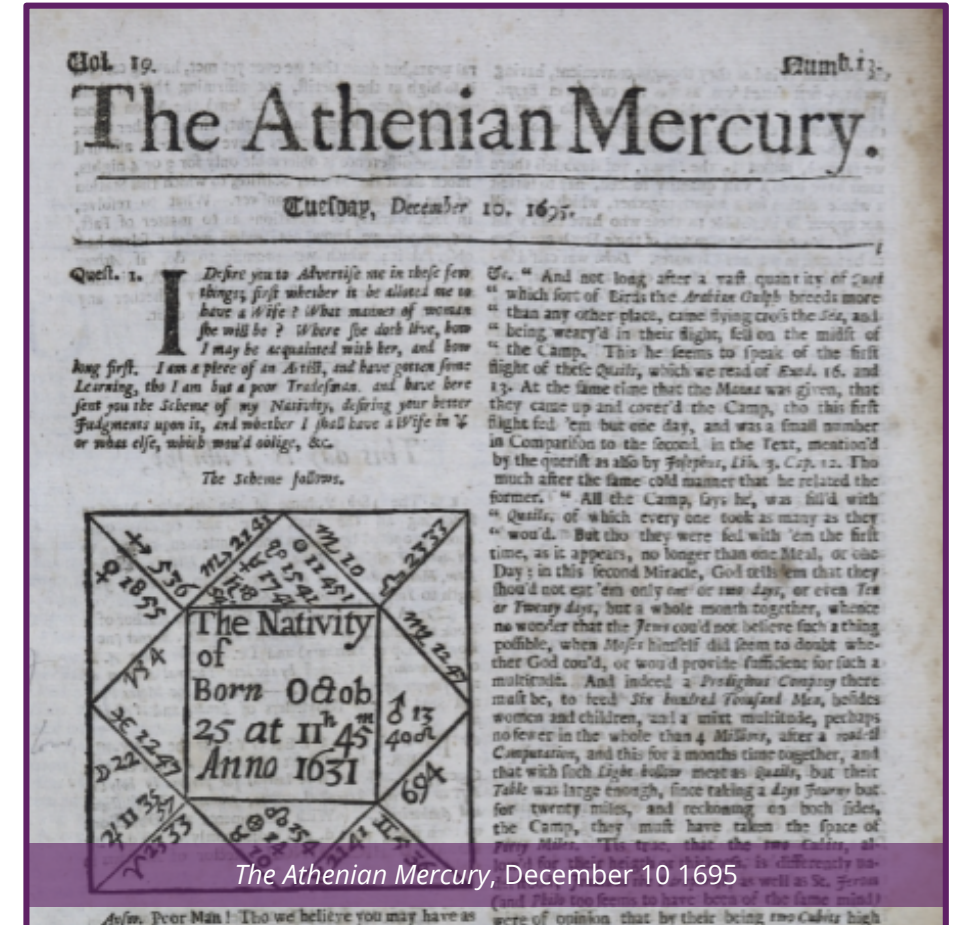


Various images from the Nichols Collection

# The Athenian Mercury

*The Athenian Mercury* was a twice-weekly periodical published by The Athenian Society, believed to have introduced the advice column format. John Dunton (1659-1733) served as the Editor-in-Chief, with the content written alongside other members of The Athenian Society.

The periodical provided a space where reader's queries were answered, with questions accepted from both men and women.



# The Athenian Mercury

Aimed at both male and female readers, it covered a range of topics from science to sex. Dunton claimed the content was plagiarised by The *Lacedemonian Mercury* (also in this archive), prompting Dunton to use advertising to encourage readers to resubmit their questions for amended answers.

According to Dunton, notable figures submitted questions to the periodical, including Jonathan Swift. The 'question and answer' format was later adopted by Daniel Defoe in some of his projects, and is still common to this day as the root of 'agony aunt' columns in many contemporary publications.



The Athenian Mercury, May 24 1697

# The Ladies Mercury

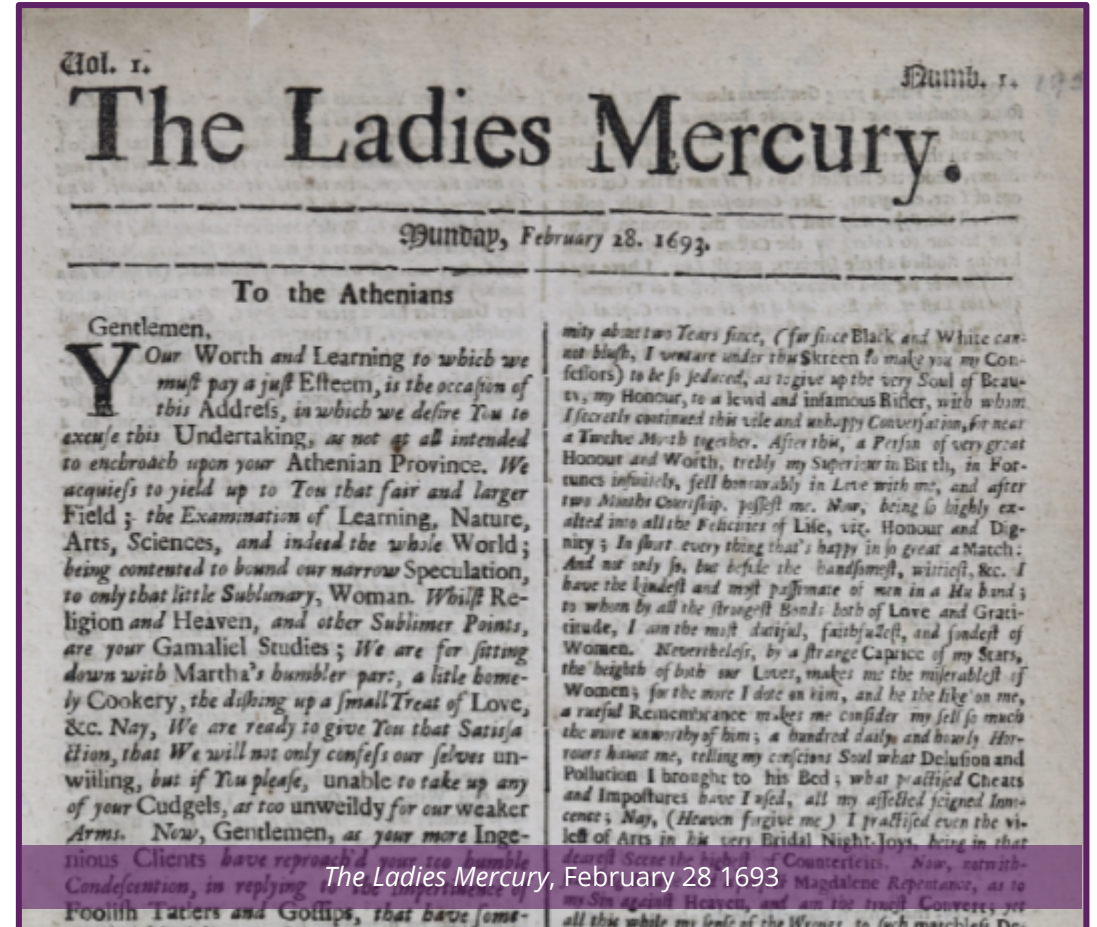


Various images from the Nichols Collection

# The Ladies Mercury

*The Ladies Mercury* was the first periodical designed for a female audience, and ran for four weeks during 1693. It provided an important moment in publishing history, opening the door to future publications aimed at entirely female audiences.

*The Ladies Mercury* inspired many subsequent publications for female-only audiences, including *The Female Tatler*, also contained in this archive.



# The Ladies Mercury

A single sheet publication, *The Ladies Mercury* was a response to the success of female-oriented topics in *The Athenian Mercury*, which were so popular that the first Tuesday edition of each month had been dedicated to responses to women's questions.

riage, consists not in the high Veins of the Bride, nor can the Title of a Father fence against the Justice of that Curse you mention, notwithstanding the humility of that low Birth, which his own prouder Greatness is pleas'd so highly to be disgusted at. Besides, if he rightly considers, she is not that dishonour to his Family, for what her original Birth wanted, her present Marriage has given her. As your Bride she is honourable, though perhaps, as her Fathers Daughter, she was not so; and 'twould be a peice of wisdom, as well as justice, in your Father, in this case, to look before him, and not behind him

Quest. 2d. I am a man of Honour, and not a twelve-months since I married a young woman, to whom I was the most faithful and fondest of Husbands; but as neither Truth nor Endearments are any obligations to Lust and Shame. I had not been married half a year before I took her in the very act of Adultery. Now, (as I suppose you will grant me) being neither oblig'd as a Gentleman or a Christian to take Infamy and Pollution into my Embraces, and to lay open my Constitution, not able to live without a woman, I at present keep a Mistress, a Companion so dear to me, that with all my soul I could marry her; but as the highest Favour the strait-laced Drs. Commons will give me is a Divorce only a mensa & coto, from my first hard bargain, that performance is above my power. Now my Question to you Gentlemen is this, How far I am sinful in this last conversation, and whether Adultery or not, together with your opinion of our present Law, that in cases of Adultery will no farther untie the Marriage-Knot than by a separation only from Bed and Board?

Ans. Truly Sir, we think your case one of the hardest in the World, for in the first place, it seems a weak piece of justice, that a woman for so unpardonable a guilt as Adultery should only be divorced from her Husband's Bed and Board, the only happiness which is left her, besides a licence to riot and revel in the full luxury of her Sin, which possibly, under the

wearlock it self for Adultery, in our Opinion 'tis a very hard Case under all the above mentioned and infinitely more other Inconveniences, that Christ should grant that Dispensation, which a Christian Government and Christian Law condemns and denies us.

Quest. 3. What's your Opinion of the Athenians undertaking of a LADIES DICTIONARY, to Contain Answers (Alphabetically digested) to all the most nice and Curious Questions concerning Love, Marriage, the Behaviour, Dress, and Humours of the Female Sex, whether Virgins, Wives, Widows, &c. designed for a Directory to the Ladies and Bachelors upon all Occasions, the work to be compleat and publish'd about the 20th, of April next.

Ans. To do Justice to so high a Design, we must acknowledge it as great a Project as finding the North-East passage, and truly much as Practicable. Only we cannot but observe that the Athenians must either strain a point of Honour, and prevaricate with their late Promise of assigning at least one Mercury in the Week to answer the Ladies Questions, which now belike they intend to Postpone, and hang by upon their file for a Letter Lammastatisfaction, about the 20th of April next; or otherwise if the Ladies Questions continue answering, this Dictionary is to be only a Grand Olee of the Crambe repetita, the mustred Reliques of what the Ladies and the whole Town have already been feasted and Gorged withall. Or if they have already by them those yet unanswered Female Questions which shall Compile this Voluminous Work, they have then been a little disingenuous to the Fair Sex, in so long and so uncomplaisant a silence to so many numerous Interrogatories, contrary to their often repeated assurances of speedy satisfaction to all Questions whatever. Besides it seems highly unintelligible to our Humbler Learning and shallower Depth, how Questions and Answers Alphabetical Digestion. For suppose a fair Aggrieved, states a long Case, possibly of more than half a hundred lines. (For that Sex is not forcing

*The Ladies Mercury*, March 10 1693



# The Tatler



Various images from the Nichols Collection

# The Tatler

*The Tatler* was founded by Sir Richard Steele and Joseph Addison, and ran for two years between 1709 and 1711. A tri-weekly publication, it introduced a new approach to journalism, stepping away from traditional reportage and focusing on essays dedicated to news and gossip circulating in the growing coffeehouses of London.

The majority of the content is believed to have been written by Steele, who adopted the persona of Isaac Bickerstaff, believed to be the first known usage of an authorial persona. Although all articles are credited to Bickerstaff, they were in fact written by Steele or Addison, with some contributions from Jonathan Swift.



# The Tatler

Both Whig politicians, Steele and Addison placed Whiggish views and opinions throughout their writings. When *The Tatler* came under Tory attack, it was shut down. Steele and Addison subsequently founded *The Spectator* in 1711 and *The Guardian* in 1713.

*The Tatler* was a highly influential publication, creating an approach that would be continued by many notable titles in subsequent years, including Samuel Johnson's *Rambler*.

ell Prices.

**A**T the Dial, up one Pair of Stairs, against Young Man's Coffee-house, Charing-Cross, Morning-Gowns for Men and Women, of all Sorts of rich Brocaded Silks, Japan'd Satins, and striped Thread Satins, and great Variety of other rich Silks, Stuffs, and Callico Gowns, being a fresh Parcel of choicè Goods taken in Execution, and to be sold at very low Rates, the Prices being set on each Gown. There is Variety of quilted and Canvas Petticoats.

**A**LL Persons who for themselves or Friends, having red and grey Hairs, would have them dy'd or turn'd black, or dark-brown Colour, will find entire Satisfaction, as a great many have already, in the Use of a clear Water found out by Mr. Michon, and is to be sold at the said Mr. Michon's, Goldsmith, at the Crown and Pearl in Gracison-street; at P. Varenne's, a Bookseller, at Seneca's Head near Somerset-house in the Strand; at the Rainbow Coffee-house beyond the Royal-Exchange in Cornhil; at Hen. Ribotteau's at the Crown over-against Exeter-Exchange in the Strand; and by A. Bell at the Crois-Keys and Hole in Cornhil.

**C**Hocolate, made of the best Nurs, at 3 s. a Pound; the best with Sugar, at 2 s. a Pound; a good Sort of all but at 2 s. 6 d. with Sugar 1 s. 8 d. to the Buyer of 3 Pounds a Quarter gratis. The best Coffee at 5 s. 4 d. a Pound; to the Buyer of 3 Pounds 1 s. allowed. Boney Tea 16, 20, 24 s. and the very finest at 28 s. a Pound; fine Green Tea at 14 s. good at 10 s. a Pound. For more Particulars see the List. Sold by Laur. Green at the Two Green Posts in Dean-street, near Fetter-lane.

*The Tatler, January 11-13 1710*

# The Female Tatler

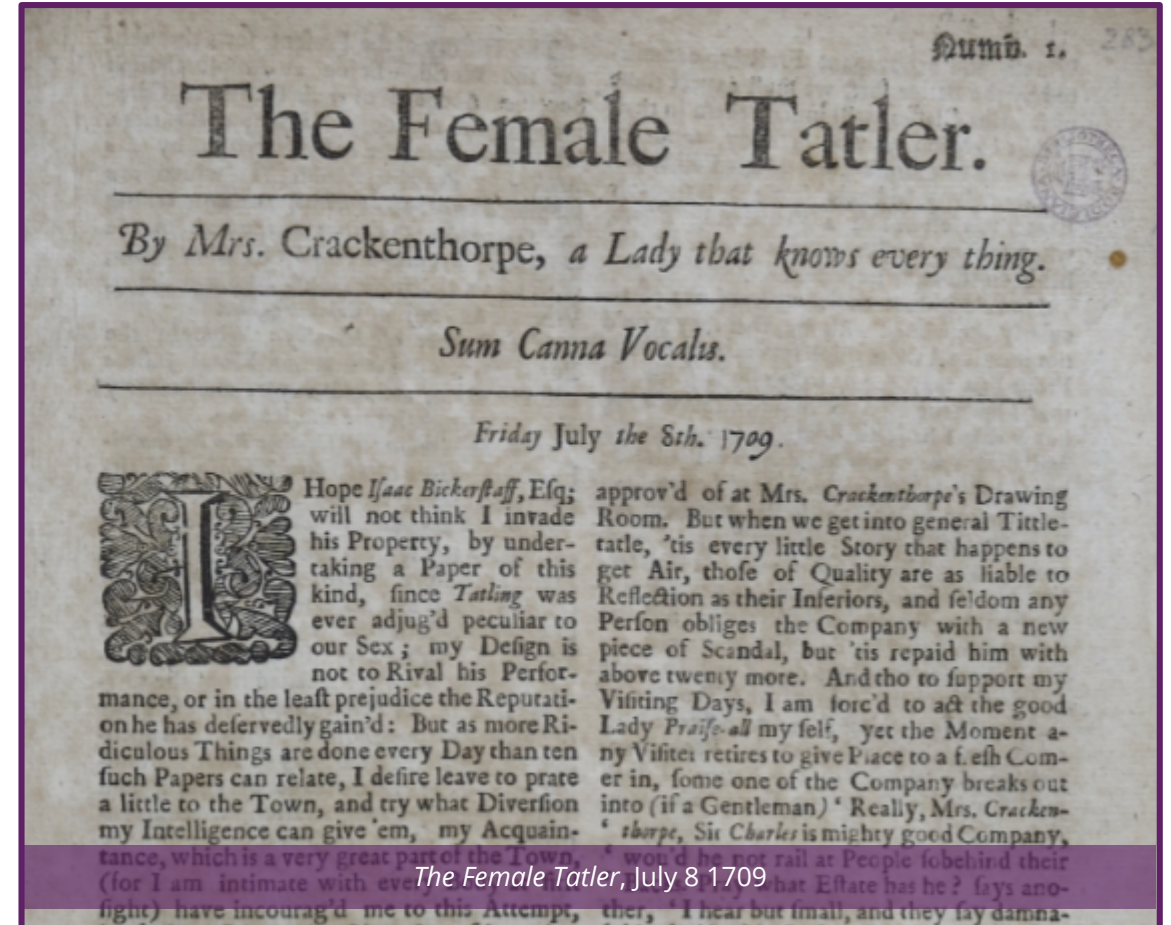


Various images from the Nichols Collection

# The Female Tatler

The authorship of *The Female Tatler* is a mystery, as like *The Tatler* it was published under a pseudonym. Writing under the name 'Mrs. Crackenthorpe', the identity of the writer (or writers) has yet to be definitively established.

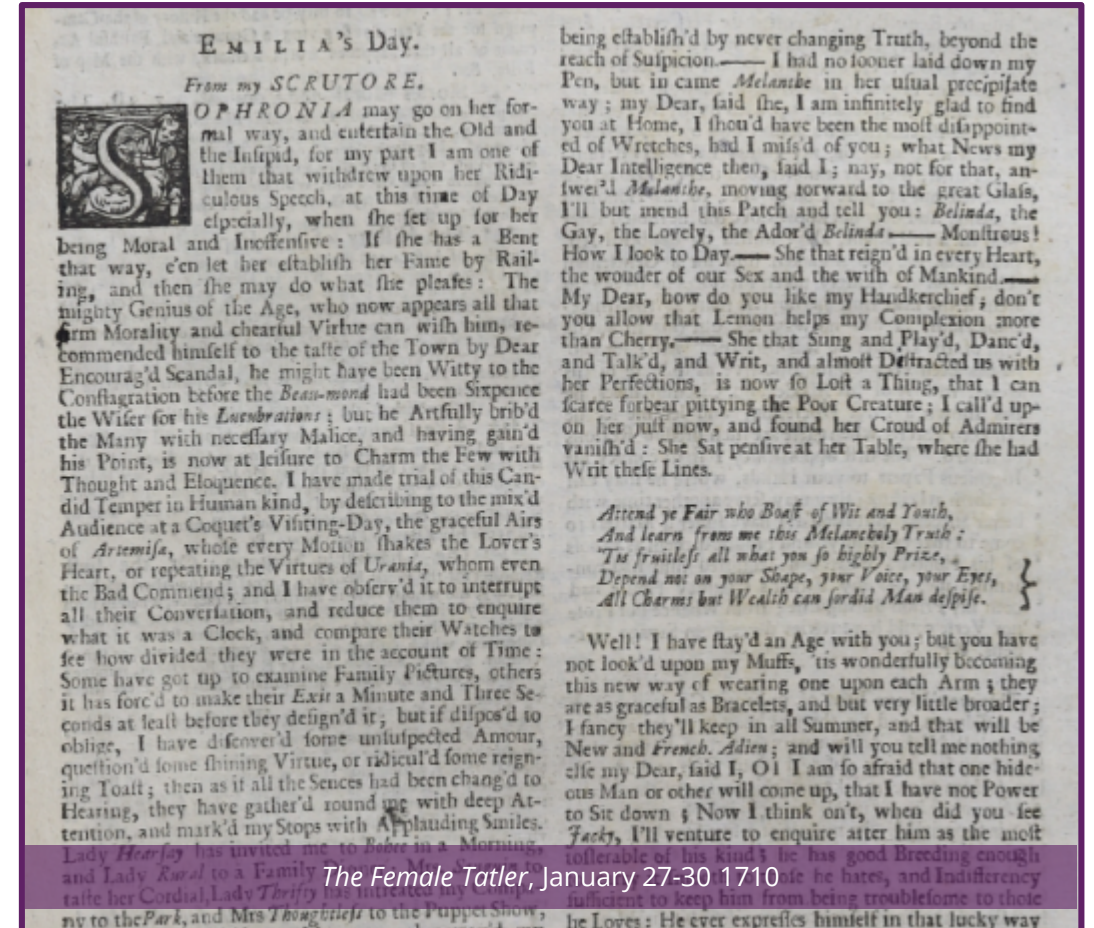
It was highly innovative in its discussion of women and women's issues, and it was ahead of its time in its attitudes. It covered issues such as women's education, appearance and social etiquette, and was open in its critique of women being denied the benefits of progress by their male counterparts.



# The Female Tatler

*The Female Tatler* began in July 1709, but in August (from issue 19) the publication split into two rival papers following a dispute between the author and printer. For two months, two papers claiming to be “By Mrs. Crackenthorpe, a Lady that knows every thing” competed for female readership under the same title, *The Female Tatler*.

In October 1709, the paper printed by the original printer (Benjamin Bragge) ceased publication, while the splinter paper (printed by Abigail Baldwin) continued publishing until March 1710. Both are present in the collection.



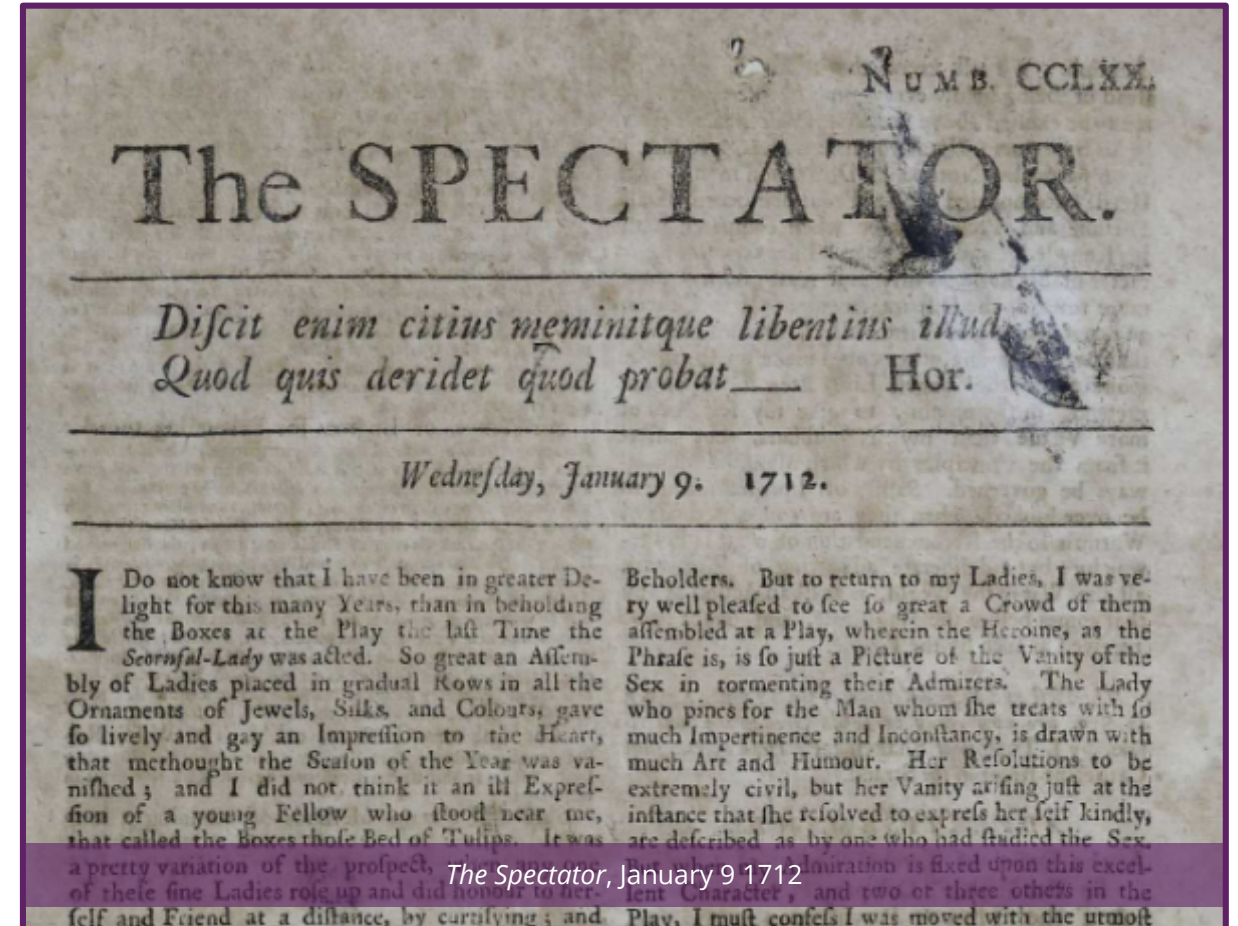
# The Spectator



Various images from the Nichols Collection

# The Spectator

After liquidating *The Tatler*, Sir Richard Steele and James Addison formed *The Spectator*, which aimed to bring the topics of discussion typically confined to academia and scholarly enterprise into the public sphere, making them the focus of polite conversation among the leisure classes outside of their traditional formal settings.





# The Spectator

The paper ran through over 550 issues between 1711 and 1712, and could be read through a private subscription, or at one of the growing number of coffeehouses that subscribed and provided the paper to patrons.

Much like *The Tatler*, reader's correspondence played an important role in the paper, alongside its adoption of a fictional mode of presentation, whereby author's ideals were presented through the 'Spectator Club', a group of fictitious characters from a range of backgrounds. Some notable figures contributed to the paper, including Ambrose Philips and Alexander Pope.

After closing its initial run in 1712, Addison briefly revived *The Spectator* (without the involvement of Steele) in 1714, for another 80 numbers.

# International News

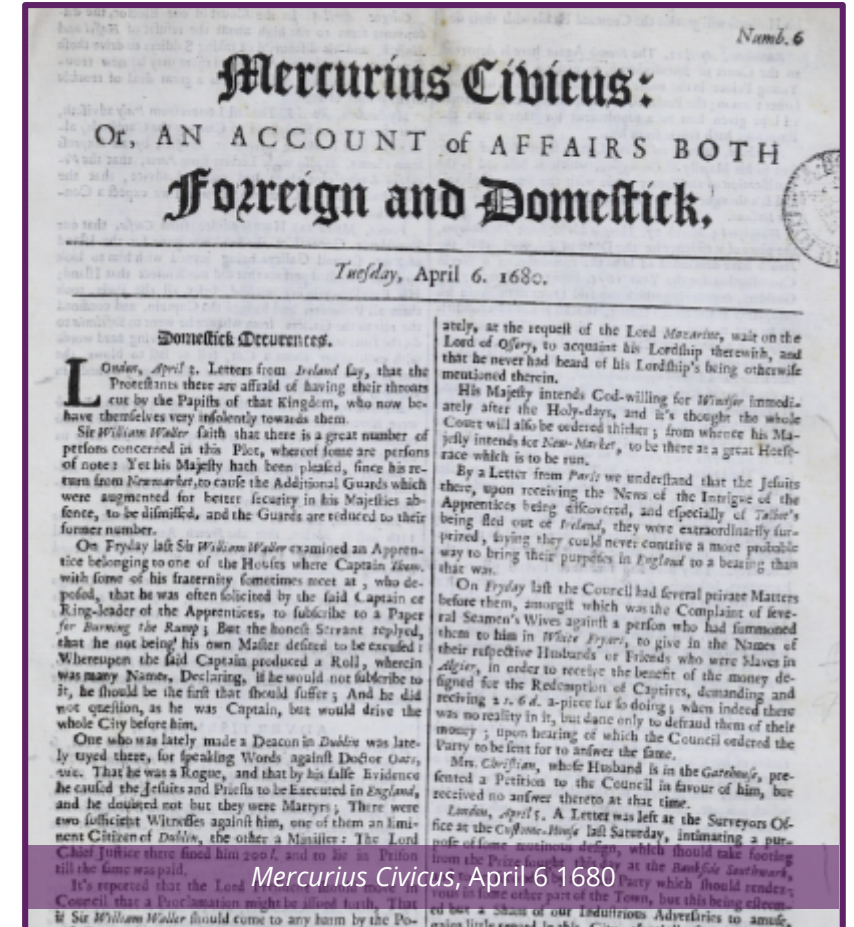


Various images from the Nichols Collection

# International News

John Nichols' collection included many publications relating news from outside of the United Kingdom. Some of the publications relating international news are:

- *The Haerlem Courant, Truly Rendred into English*
- *The Impartial Protestant Mercury, Or Occurrences Foreign and Domestick*
- *The Loyal Impartial Mercury, or News both Forreign and Domestick*
- *Mercurius Civicus or, an Account of Affairs both Forreign and Domestick*
- *The True Protestant Mercury, or Occurrences Foreign and Domestick*
- *The Weekly Pacquet of Advice from Germany, or the History of the Reformation of Religion There*



To find out more about the archive, including the history of the collection and an interview with the product manager, visit

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