



The Life of Samuel Johnson (Penguin Classics)

James Boswell

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The most celebrated English biography is a group portrait in which extraordinary man paints the picture of a dozen more

At the centre of a brilliant circle which included Burke, Reynolds, Garrick, Fanny Burney and even George III, Boswell captures the powerful, troubled and witty figure of Samuel Johnson, who towers above them all. Yet this is also an intimate picture of domestic life, which mingles the greatest talkers of a talkative age with the hero's humbler friends in a picture which is, before all things, humane.

As a young man about London, James Boswell was obsessed by literature, and, on a fateful day in 1763, he attached himself with unswerving tenacity to the dominant literary figure of his age—the splendidly rotund, articulate, and humane Dr Samuel Johnson. What followed was the most famous of friendships between writers and the basis for the remarkable documentation contained in Boswell's *Life of Samuel Johnson*, the greatest and most compelling of all biographies.

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