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# London The Biography Peter Ackroyd

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*London The Biography*  
Peter Ackroyd

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## GIANNA JOURNEY

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*A Novel* Ardent Media  
 From the foremost contemporary chronicler of London's history, a suspenseful novel that ingeniously draws on Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* to recreate the city's 14th century religious and political intrigues. London, 1399. Sister Clarice, a nun born below Clerkenwell convent, is predicting the death of King Richard II and the demise of the Church. Her visions can be dismissed as madness, until she accurately foretells a series of terrorist explosions. What is the role of the apocalyptic Predestined Men? And the clandestine Dominus? And what powers, ultimately, will prevail? In Peter Ackroyd's deft and suprising narrative, *The Miller*, the Prioress, the Wife of Bath and

other characters from *Canterbury Tales* pursue these mysteries through a pungently vivid medieval London.

*Queer City* Macmillan

First paperback edition, 1992; second printing [revised], 2006. Original French publication, 1989.

**English Music** Anchor

The first book in Peter Ackroyd's history of England series, which has since been followed up with two more installments, *Tudors* and *Rebellion*. In *Foundation*, the chronicler of London and of its river, the Thames, takes us from the primeval forests of England's prehistory to the death, in 1509, of the first Tudor king, Henry VII. He guides us from the building of Stonehenge to the founding of the two great glories of medieval England: common law and the cathedrals. He shows us glimpses of the country's most distant past--a Neolithic stirrup found in a grave, a

Roman fort, a Saxon tomb, a medieval manor house--and describes in rich prose the successive waves of invaders who made England English, despite being themselves Roman, Viking, Saxon, or Norman French. With his extraordinary skill for evoking time and place and his acute eye for the telling detail, Ackroyd recounts the story of warring kings, of civil strife, and foreign wars. But he also gives us a vivid sense of how England's early people lived: the homes they built, the clothes they wore, the food they ate, even the jokes they told. All are brought vividly to life in this history of England through the narrative mastery of one of Britain's finest writers.

*Iran's Islamic Republic* Hamish Hamilton  
 Gothic, mysterious, theatrical, fatally flawed, and dazzling, the life of Edgar Allan Poe, one of America's greatest and most versatile writers, is the ideal subject

for Peter Ackroyd. Poe wrote lyrical poetry and macabre psychological melodramas; invented the first fictional detective; and produced pioneering works of science fiction and fantasy. His innovative style, images, and themes had a tremendous impact on European romanticism, symbolism, and surrealism, and continue to influence writers today. In this essential addition to his canon of acclaimed biographies, Peter Ackroyd explores Poe's literary accomplishments and legacy against the background of his erratic, dramatic, and sometimes sordid life. Ackroyd chronicles Poe's difficult childhood, his bumpy academic and military careers, and his complex relationships with women, including his marriage to his thirteen-year-old cousin. He describes Poe's much-written-about problems with gambling and alcohol with sympathy and insight, showing their connections to Poe's childhood and the trials, as well as the triumphs, of his adult life. Ackroyd's thoughtful, perceptive examinations of some of Poe's most famous works shed new light on these classics and on the troubled and brilliant genius who created them.

**The City on the Thames** Anchor

The excavation of an astronomically aligned neolithic grave in Dorset unexpectedly affects the lives of an archaeologist, astronomer, and an entertainer

Nan A. Talese

London A Biography Anchor

**Foundation** Dalkey Archive Press

By the former editor of the London Times, a vivid, evocative, and deeply knowledgeable history of this unique world capital. London: a settlement founded by the Romans, occupied by the Saxons, conquered by the Danes, and ruled by the Normans. This transformative place became a medieval maze of alleys and courtyards, later to be checkered with grand estates of Georgian splendor. It swelled with industry and became the center of the largest empire in history. And having risen from the rubble of the Blitz, it is now one of the greatest cities in the world. From the prehistoric occupants of the Thames Valley to the preoccupied commuters of today, Simon Jenkins brings together the key events, individuals and trends in London's history to create a matchless portrait of the capital. He masterfully explains the battles that determined how London was conceived and built—and especially the perennial conflict between money and power. Based in part on his experiences of and involvement in the events that shaped the post-war city, and with his trademark color

and authority, Simon Jenkins shows above all how London has taken shape over more than two thousand years. Fascinating for locals and visitors alike, this is narrative history at its finest, from the most ardent protector of British heritage.

**London** Anchor

A NEW YORK TIMES NOTABLE BOOK Here are two thousand years of London's history and folklore, its chroniclers and criminals and plain citizens, its food and drink and countless pleasures. Blackfriar's and Charing Cross, Paddington and Bedlam. Westminster Abbey and St. Martin in the Fields. Cockneys and vagrants. Immigrants, peasants, and punks. The Plague, the Great Fire, the Blitz. London at all times of day and night, and in all kinds of weather. In well-chosen anecdotes, keen observations, and the words of hundreds of its citizens and visitors, Ackroyd reveals the ingenuity and grit and vitality of London. Through a unique thematic tour of the physical city and its inimitable soul, the city comes alive.

**Gay London from the Romans to the Present Day** Random House

A history of the development of London as a European epicenter of queer life. In *Queer City*, the acclaimed Peter Ackroyd looks at London in a whole new way—through the complete history and experiences of its gay and lesbian population. In Roman Londinium, the city was dotted with lupanaria ("wolf dens" or public pleasure houses), fornicae (brothels), and thermiae (hot baths). Then came the Emperor Constantine, with his bishops, monks, and missionaries. And so began an endless loop of alternating permissiveness and censure. Ackroyd takes us right into the hidden history of the city; from the notorious Normans to the frenzy of executions for sodomy in the early nineteenth century. He journeys through the coffee bars of sixties Soho to Gay Liberation, disco music, and the horror of AIDS. Ackroyd reveals the hidden story of London, with its diversity, thrills, and energy, as well as its terrors, dangers, and risks, and in doing so, explains the origins of all English-speaking gay culture. Praise for *Queer City* "Spanning centuries, the book is a fantastically researched project that is obviously close to the author's heart.... An exciting look at London's queer history and a tribute to the "various human worlds maintained in [the city's] diversity despite persecution, condemnation, and affliction." —Kirkus Reviews "[Ackroyd's] work is highly anecdotal and near encyclopedic . . . the book is fascinating in its careful exposition of the singularities—and commonalities—of gay life, both male and

female. Ultimately it is, as he concludes, a celebration as well as a history," —Booklist "A witty history-cum-tribute to gay London, from the Roman "wolf dens" through Oscar Wilde and Gay Pride marches to the present day,"

—ShelfAwareness

**Albion** Random House

When Peter Ackroyd, one of Britain's undisputed literary masters, writes a new novel, it is a literary event. With his last novel, *The Trial of Elizabeth Cree*, "as gripping and ingenious a murder mystery as you could hope to come across," in the words of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, he reached a whole new level of critical and popular success. Now, with his trademark blending of historical fact and fictive fancy, Ackroyd has placed the towering poet of *Paradise Lost* in the new Eden that is colonial America. John Milton, aging, blind, fleeing the restoration of English monarchy and all the vain trappings that go with it ("misrule" in his estimation), comes to New England, where he is adopted by a community of fellow puritans as their leader. With his enormous powers of intellect, his command of language, and the awe the townspeople hold him in, Milton takes on absolute power. Insisting on strict and merciless application of puritan justice, he soon becomes, in his attempt at regaining paradise, as much a tyrant as the despots from whom he and his comrades have sought refuge, more brutal than the "savage" native Americans. As always, Ackroyd has crafted a thoroughly enjoyable novel that entertains while raising provocative questions--this time about America's founding myths. With a resurgence of interest in the puritans (in the movie adaptations of *The Scarlet Letter* and the forthcoming *The Crucible*), Milton in America is particularly relevant. It is also entirely absorbing--in short, vintage Ackroyd.

*The Great Fire of London* Columbia University Press

In this perfect companion to *London: The Biography*, Peter Ackroyd once again delves into the hidden byways of history, describing the river's endless allure in a journey overflowing with characters, incidents, and wry observations. *Thames: The Biography* meanders gloriously, rather like the river itself. In short, lively chapters Ackroyd writes about connections between the Thames and such historical figures as Julius Caesar and Henry VIII, and offers memorable portraits of the ordinary men and women who depend upon the river for their livelihoods. The Thames as a source of artistic inspiration comes brilliantly to life as Ackroyd invokes Chaucer,

Shakespeare, Turner, Shelley, and other writers, poets, and painters who have been enchanted by its many moods and colors.

**A Biography** Random House

A TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT BEST BOOK OF THE YEAR Drawing on an exceptional combination of skills as literary biographer, novelist, and chronicler of London history, Peter Ackroyd surely re-creates the world that shaped Shakespeare--and brings the playwright himself into unusually vivid focus. With characteristic narrative panache, Ackroyd immerses us in sixteenth-century Stratford and the rural landscape--the industry, the animals, even the flowers--that would appear in Shakespeare's plays. He takes us through Shakespeare's London neighborhood and the fertile, competitive theater world where he worked as actor and writer. He shows us Shakespeare as a businessman, and as a constant reviser of his writing. In joining these intimate details with profound intuitions about the playwright and his work, Ackroyd has produced an altogether engaging masterpiece.

**The Plato Papers** Anchor

From the author of *Chatterton and Shakespeare: A Biography* comes a gripping novel set in London that re-imagines an infamous 19th-century Shakespeare forgery. Charles and Mary Lamb, who will in time achieve lasting fame as the authors of *Tales from Shakespeare for Children*, are still living at home, caring for their dotty and maddening parents. Reading Shakespeare is the siblings' favorite reprieve, and they are delighted when an ambitious young bookseller comes into their lives claiming to possess a 'lost' Shakespearean play. Soon all of London is eagerly anticipating opening night of a star-studded production of the play not knowing that they have all been duped by charlatan and a fraud.

**A History of London** LondonA Biography Peter Ackroyd's *The Life of Thomas More* is a masterful reconstruction of the life and imagination of one of the most remarkable figures of history. Thomas More (1478-1535) was a renowned statesman; the author of a political fantasy that gave a name to a literary genre and a worldview (*Utopia*); and, most famously, a Catholic martyr and saint. Born into the professional classes, Thomas More applied his formidable intellect and well-placed connections to become the most powerful man in England, second only to the king. As much a work of history as a biography,

*The Life of Thomas More* gives an unmatched portrait of the everyday, religious, and intellectual life of the early sixteenth century. In Ackroyd's hands, this renowned "man for all seasons" emerges in the fullness of his complex humanity; we see the unexpected side of his character--such as his preference for bawdy humor--as well as his indisputable moral courage.

**Revolution** McGraw-Hill

He was the very first icon of the silver screen, and is one of the most recognisable faces in Hollywood, even a hundred years on from his first film. But what of the man behind the moustache? The director holding the camera as well as acting in front of it? Peter Ackroyd's new biography turns the spotlight on Chaplin's life as well as his work, from his humble theatrical beginnings in music halls to winning an honorary Academy Award. Everything is here, from the glamour of his golden age to the murky scandals of the 1940s and eventual exile to Switzerland.

**A Novel** GRIN Verlag

In *The Fall of Troy*, acclaimed novelist and historian Peter Ackroyd creates a fascinating narrative that follows an archaeologist's obsession with finding the ruins of Troy, depicting the blurred line between truth and deception. Obermann, an acclaimed German scholar, fervently believes that his discovery of the ancient ruins of Troy will prove that the heroes of the *Iliad*, a work he has cherished all his life, actually existed. But Sophia, Obermann's young Greek wife, has her suspicions about his motivations -- suspicions that only increase when she finds a cache of artifacts that her husband has hidden, and when a more skeptical archaeologist dies from a mysterious fever. With exquisite detail, Ackroyd again demonstrates his ability to evoke time and place, creating a brilliantly told story of heroes and scoundrels, human aspirations and follies, and the temptation to shape the truth to fit a passionately held belief.

**First Light** Nan A. Talese

Peter Ackroyd, one of Britain's most acclaimed writers, brings the age of the Tudors to vivid life in this monumental book in his *The History of England* series, charting the course of English history from Henry VIII's cataclysmic break with Rome to the epic rule of Elizabeth I. Rich in detail and atmosphere, Peter Ackroyd's *Tudors* is the story of Henry VIII's relentless pursuit of both the perfect wife and the perfect heir; of how the brief reign of the teenage king, Edward VI, gave way to the violent reimposition of Catholicism and the stench

of bonfires under "Bloody Mary." It tells, too, of the long reign of Elizabeth I, which, though marked by civil strife, plots against the queen and even an invasion force, finally brought stability. Above all, however, it is the story of the English Reformation and the making of the Anglican Church. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, England was still largely feudal and looked to Rome for direction; at its end, it was a country where good governance was the duty of the state, not the church, and where men and women began to look to themselves for answers rather than to those who ruled them.

**Poe** Random House UK Limited

William Blake was a poet, painter, engraver and visionary. The author traces Blake's life through his childhood, apprenticeship and studies, to his full maturity when he produced his masterpieces. We see Blake in the context of his period, caught up in the Gordon riots, tried for sedition, remaining true to his own vision of the world. This biography reveals the true affinities between Blake's art and his poetry.

**The Dark Side of a Great City** Anchor

Based upon an examination of original sources, this is a biography in which the figure of Charles Dickens and the moving spirit of his age are combined. The author also wrote "The Last Testament of Oscar Wilde", "Hawksmoor", "Chatterton", "T.S.Eliot" and "First Light".

**London** Nan A. Talese

From the imagination of one of the most brilliant writers of our time and bestselling author of *The Life of Thomas More*, a novel that playfully imagines how the "modern" era might appear to a thinker seventeen centuries hence. At the turn of the 18th century, London's greatest orator, Plato, is known for his lectures on the long, tumultuous history of his now tranquil city. Plato focuses on the obscure and confusing era that began in A.D. 1500, the Age of Mouldwarp. His subjects include Sigmund Freud's comic masterpiece "Jokes and Their Relation to the Subconscious," and Charles D.'s greatest novel, "The Origin of Species." He explores the rituals of Mouldwarp, and the later cult of webs and nets that enslaved the population. By the end of his lecture series, however, Plato has been drawn closer to the subject of his fascination than he could ever have anticipated. At once funny and erudite, *The Plato Papers* is a smart and entertaining look at how the future is imagined, the present absorbed, and the past misrepresented.