

John Langhorne (1735-1779)

Description

John Langhorne was born March 1735 in Kirby Stephen parish in the county of Westmoreland, England. By age thirteen, he distinguished himself as a Greek scholar. At eighteen, he began writing poetry in Ripon. "Studley Park" is known as his first poem. He contributed poetry to *Grand Magazine* and *Universal Magazine*. His translation of Bion's *Death of Adonis* in 1759 established him as a Greek scholar.

In 1760, Langhorne pursued a bachelor of divinity at Clarehall, Cambridge. It was during this period he published *The Tears of Music. A Poem, to the Memory of Mr. Handel*. In 1765, he produced an edition of poems by William Collins. Langhorne wrote a tribute to James Thomson in 1763, "The Child of Nature, Gentle Thomson". He received an honorary doctorate of divinity from Edinburgh University in 1766. Langhorne was a well-known translator of Plutarch.

Langhorne's other major works include "Solyman and Almena," an oriental tale and "The Country Justice" which was admired by William Wordsworth for bringing poetry to the common people. He published translations of John Milton's Italian poems. Langhorne's last poem "Owen of Carron" was published in 1778.

He married Ann Cracroft in 1767 who died in childbirth in 1768. His second wife died in childbirth in 1776. John Langhorne died in 1779.

The Tears of Music was first published in 1760 in London for Ralph Griffiths. The poem is also located in a collection of Langhorne's work, *The Poetical Works of John Langhorne*, published in London in 1766. It was reprinted with minor revisions in 1787 in London.

Works Consulted

Dictionary of Literary Biography. Vol. 109, Eighteenth-Century British Poets. Ed. John Sitter. London: Gale Research Inc. 1991. Print.

Oxford Concise Companion to English Literature. Ed. Dinah Birch, Katy Hooper. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. Print.