

George Eliot (1819-1880): Life and Context

Em. Prof. Heidi Thomson

Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington

U3A Waikanae – 29 June 2026



Portrait by Samuel Laurence (c. 1860)

<https://www.georgeeliotarchive.org/>

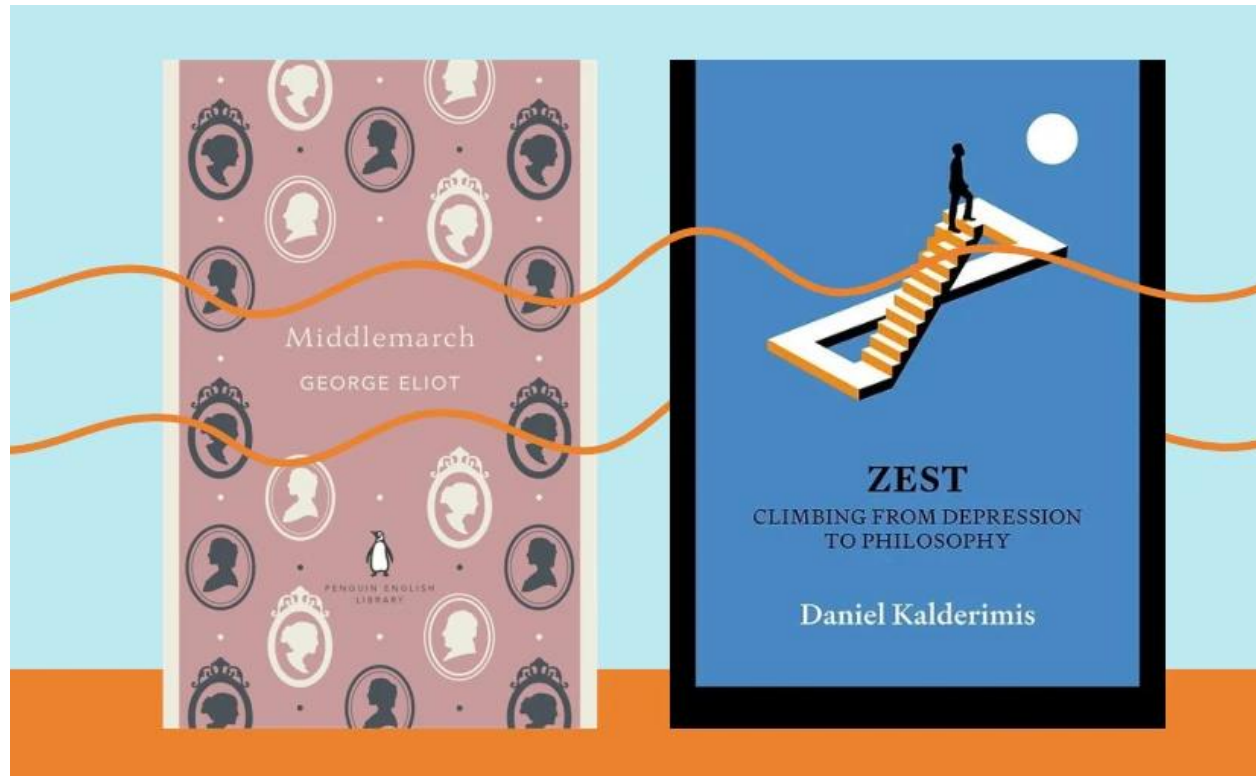


ZEST

CLIMBING FROM DEPRESSION
TO PHILOSOPHY

Daniel Kalderimis

George Eliot and Daniel Kalderimis and Me: on the healing power of *Middlemarch*



The Spinoff, April 26, 2025

<https://thespinoff.co.nz/books/26-04-2025/george-eliot-and-daniel-kalderimis-and-me-on-the-healing-power-of-middlemarch>

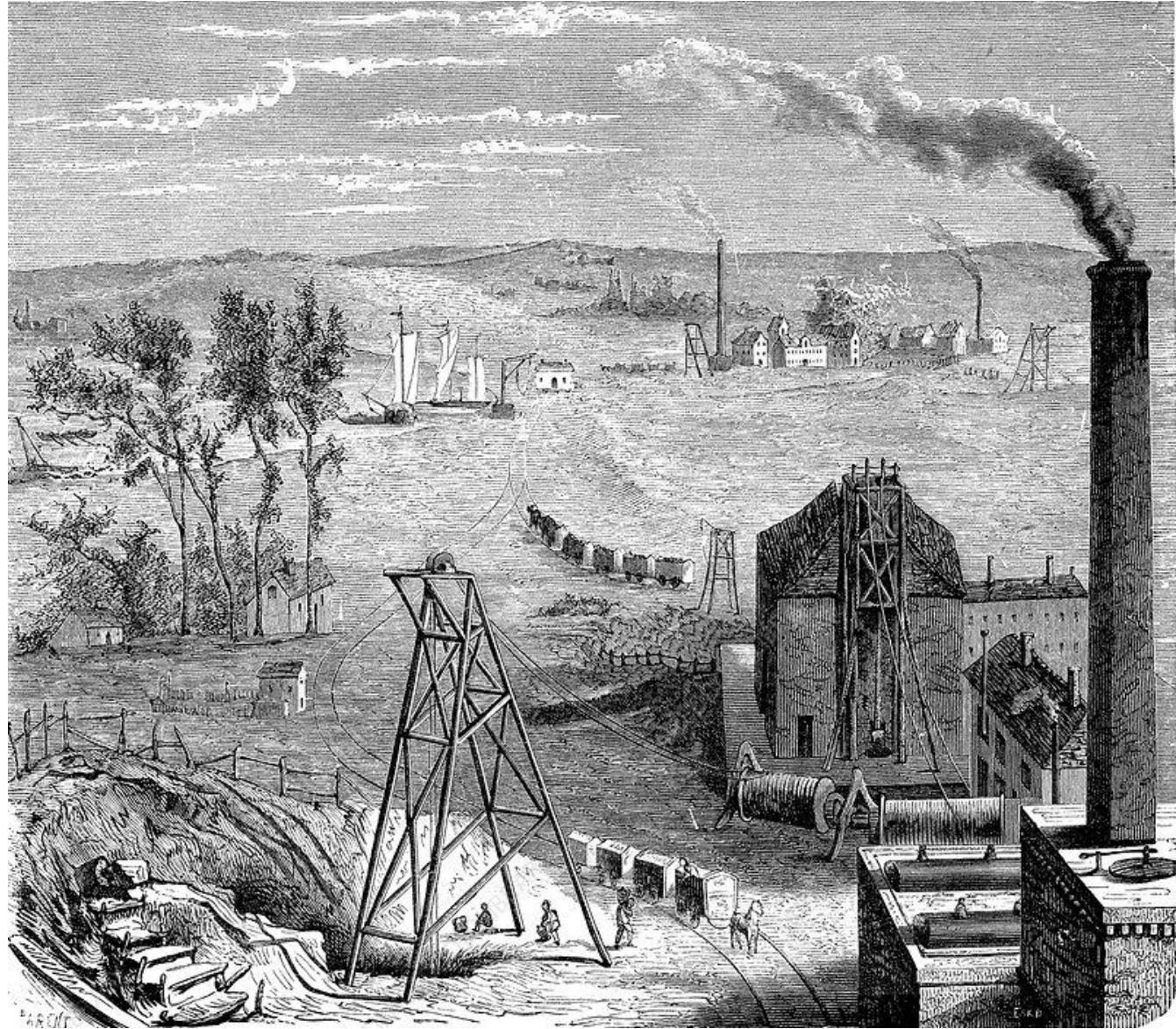
. . . the growing good of the world is partly dependent on unhistoric acts; and that things are not so ill with you and me as they might have been, is half owing to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life, and rest in unvisited tombs. (*MM* 889)













Coventry
1841-1849





AGOSTINI.



Leben Jesu,

kritisch bearbeitet

von
David Friedrich Strauss,

Dr. der Theol. und Explicitor am evangelisch-theologischen
Seminar zu Tübingen.

Spiegel 1878, 13 1/2

Erster Band.

Das Wesen

des

Christenthums

von

Ludwig Feuerbach.

ROSEMARY ASHTON

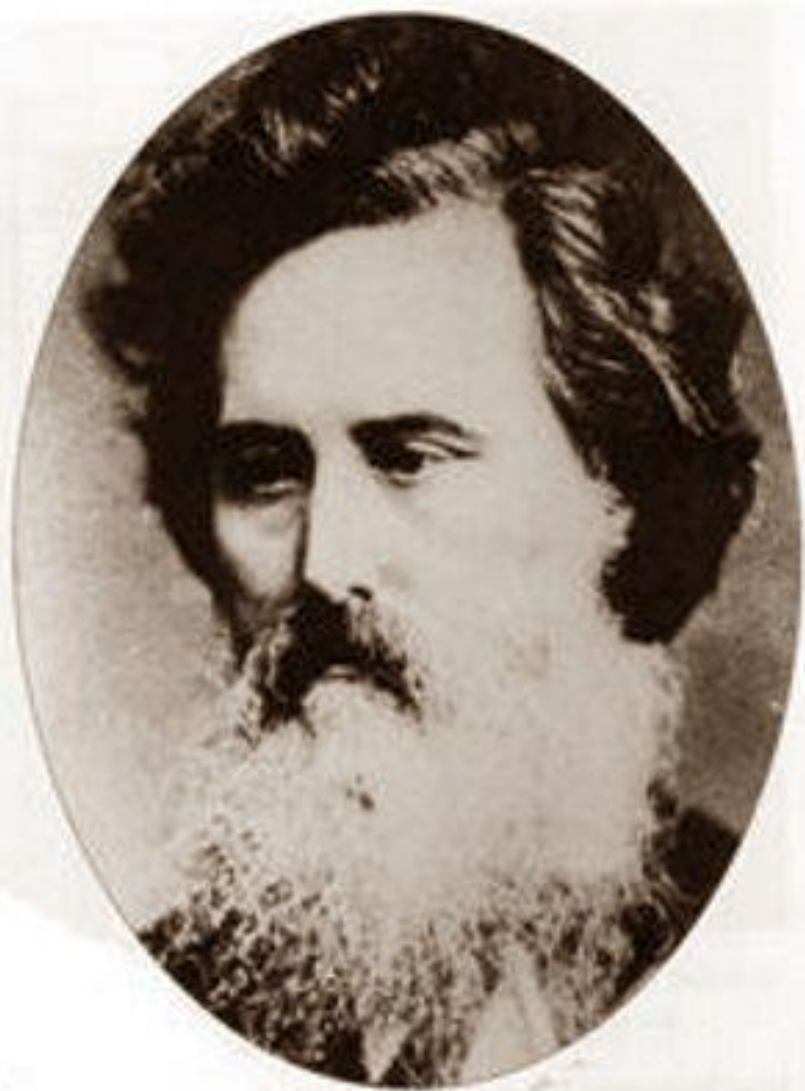


142
STRAND

A Radical Address in
Victorian London

'Rivetingly entertaining'
A.N. Wilson, Books of the Year, *Observer*





THE
WESTMINSTER REVIEW.

VOLUME I.

JANUARY—APRIL, 1824.

SECOND EDITION.



PUBLISHED BY
BALDWIN, CRADOCK, AND JOY.

LONDON.

1824.



There is no private life which has not been determined by a wider public life.

(Felix Holt, 1.3)

Robert Evans (1773-1849)

William Wordsworth (1770-1850)

Wars with France (1793-1815)

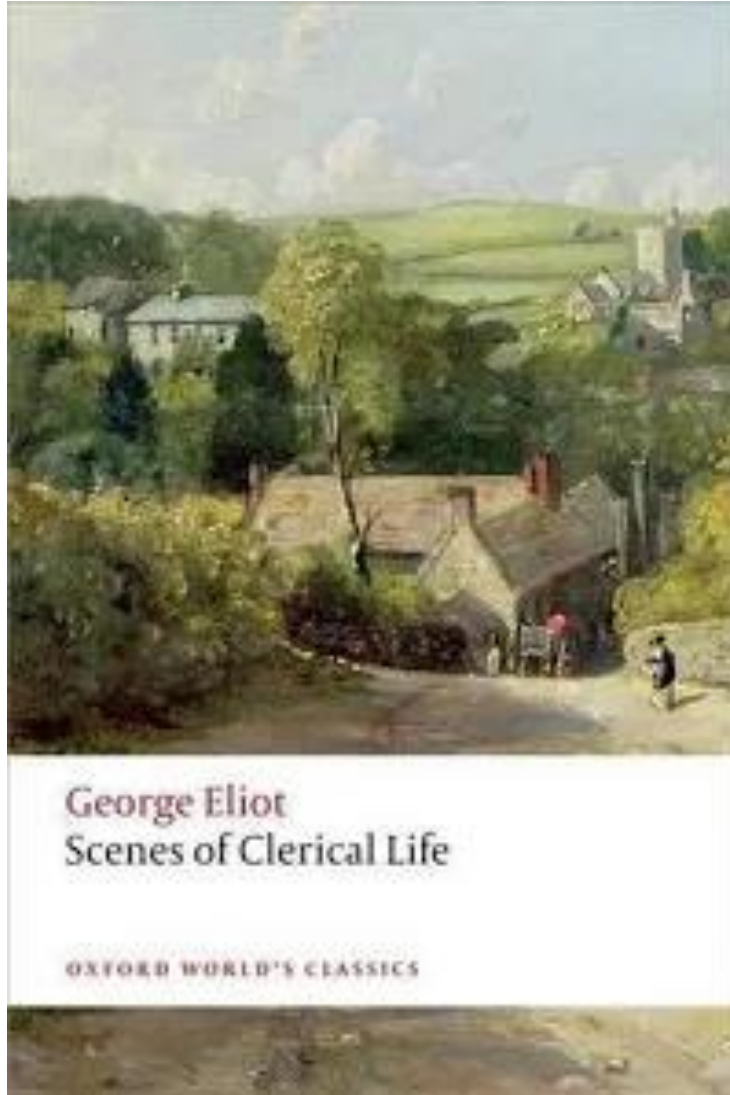
Lyrical Ballads (1798)

Reform Act of 1832

Reform Act of 1867

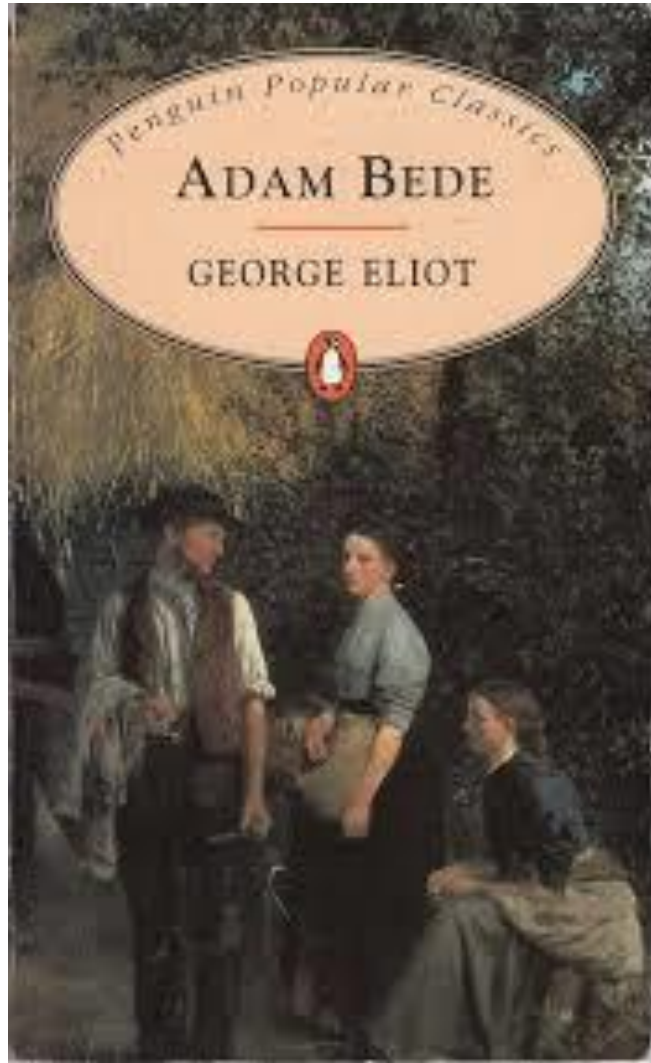
From *Adam Bede*:

Family likeness has often a great sadness in it. Nature, that great tragic dramatist, knits us together by bone and muscle, and divides us by the subtler web of our brains; blends yearning and repulsion; and ties us by our heartstrings to the beings that jar us at every moment.



1856-1858

Adam Bede
(1859)





Religion

1534: Henry VIII

1673: Test Act

Anglican Church (High Church, Broad Church, Low Church)

Dissent: Methodism, Baptism, Unitarians, Quakers

Catholics, Presbyterians, Jews

VESTIGES
OF THE
NATURAL HISTORY OF CREATION

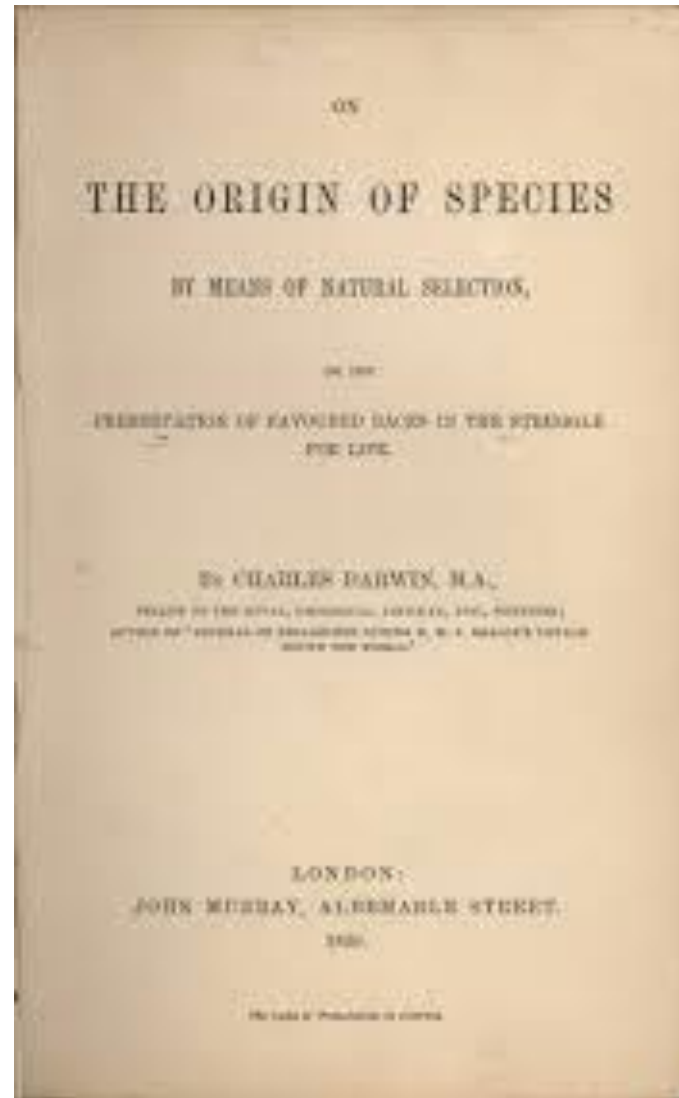
BY
ROBERT CHAMBERS, LL.D.
AUTHOR OF "SCOTCH AND ENGLISH TRADITIONS OF BRITAIN," ETC.

Third Edition

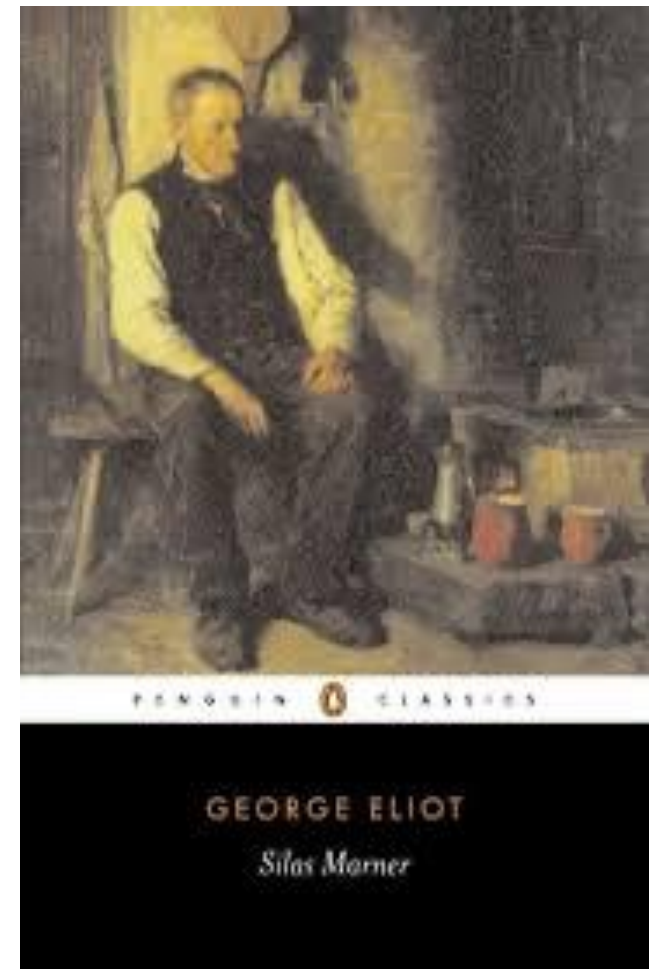
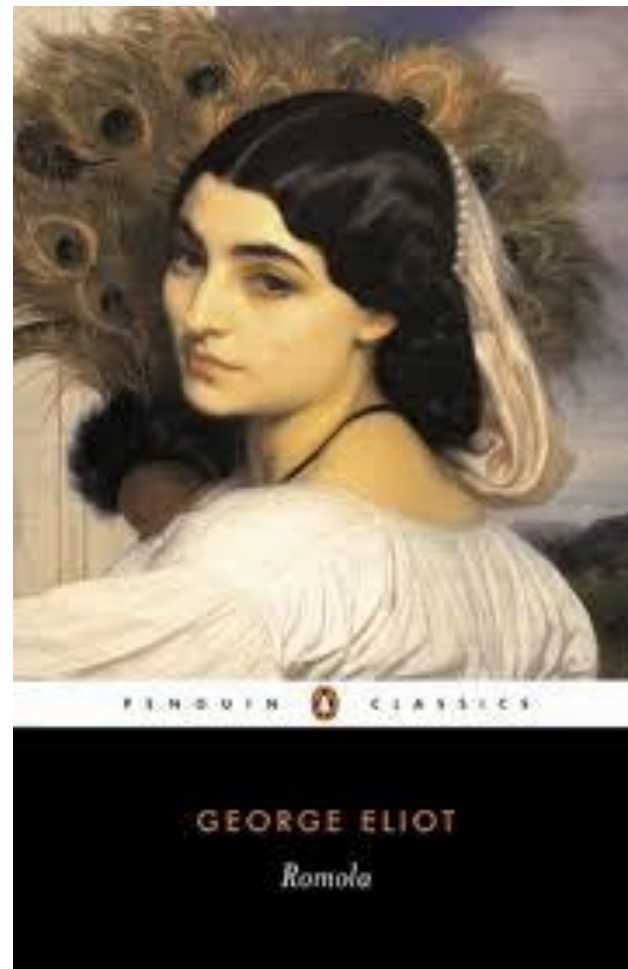
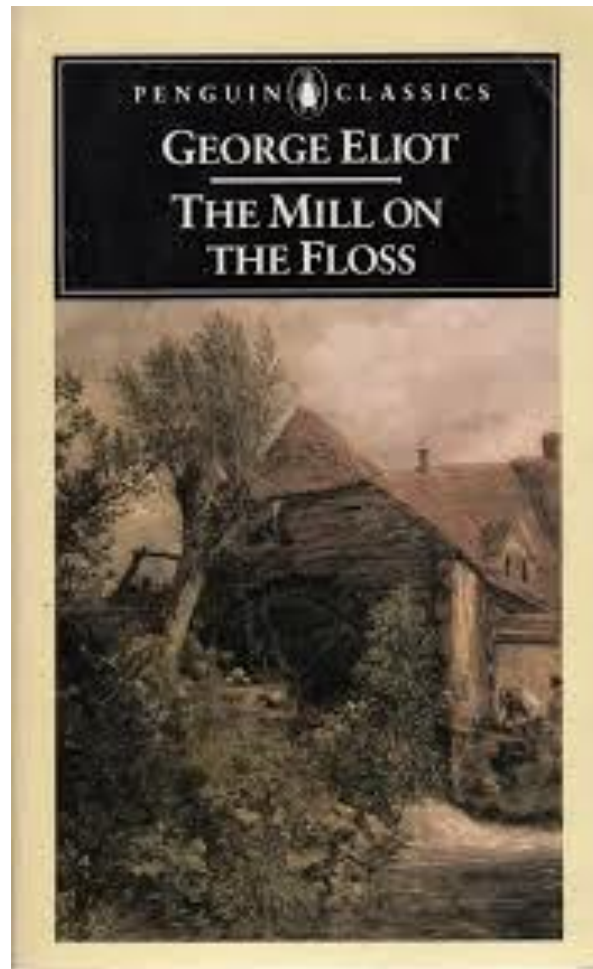
WITH
AN INTRODUCTION
RELATIVE TO THE EXTENSION OF THE WORD

BY
ALEXANDER IRVING
AUTHOR OF "HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION OF A. N. SCOTLAND," ETC.

W. & R. CHAMBERS
LONDON AND EDINBURGH
1884



Science



The Priory, Regent's Park



The Priory, Regent's Park, London, W.1, designed by Sir John Lubbock, 1852-53.



Felix Holt (1866)

1832: first Reform Bill

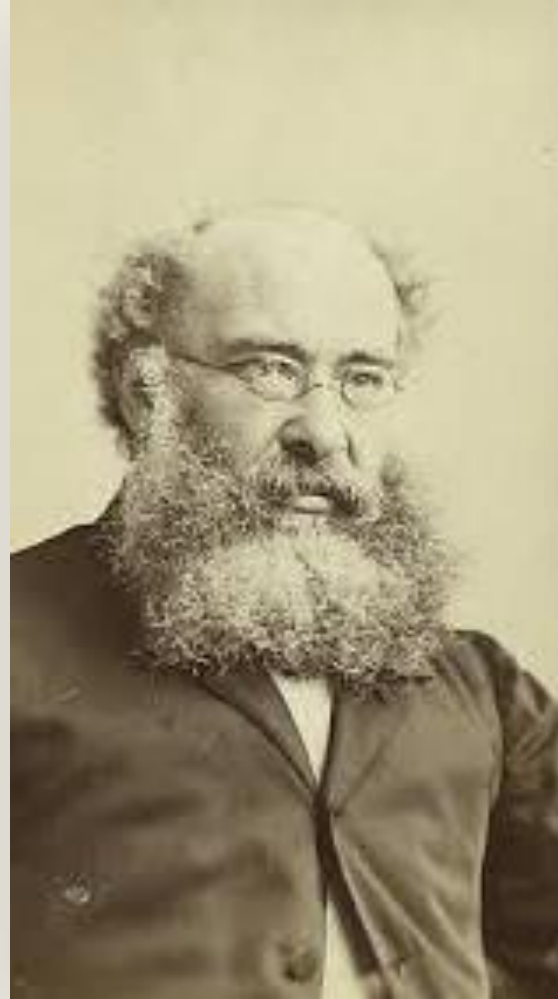
Women: Hetty Sorrel and Dinah Morris; Maggie and Tom; Gwendolyn Harleth and Grandcourt; Dorothea and Casaubon



Walter Scott (1771-1832); Jane Austen (1775-1917); William Wordsworth (1770-1850)



Elizabeth Gaskell (1810-1865); Anthony Trollope (1815-1882); William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-1863); Charles Dickens (1812-1870)



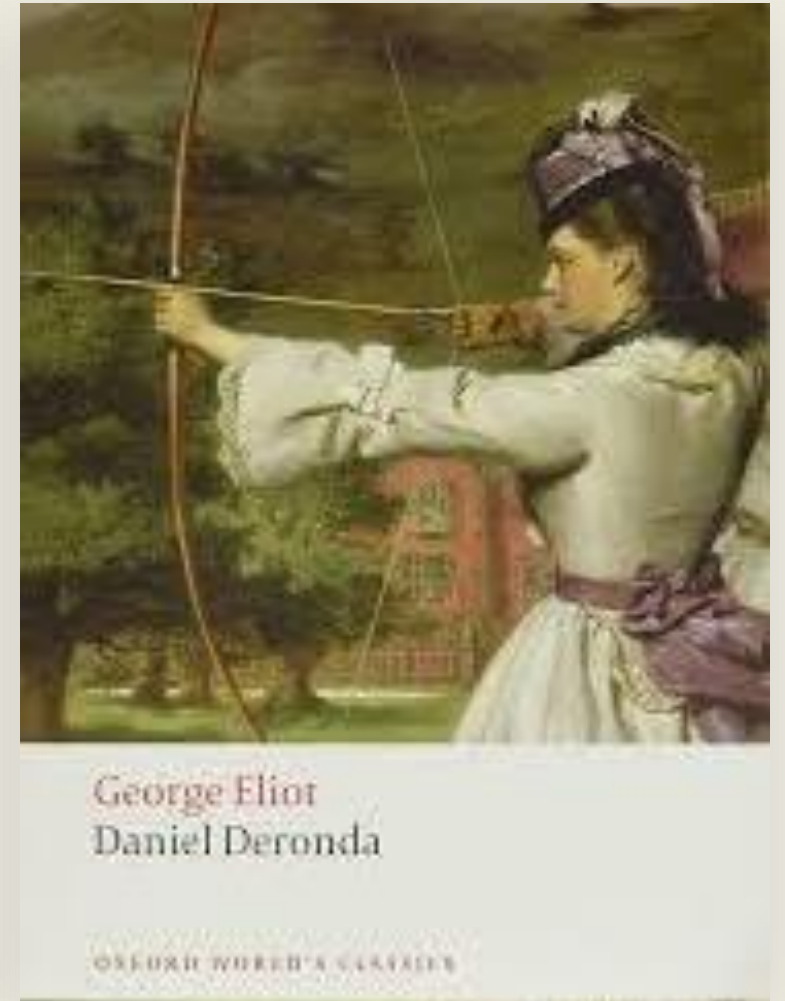
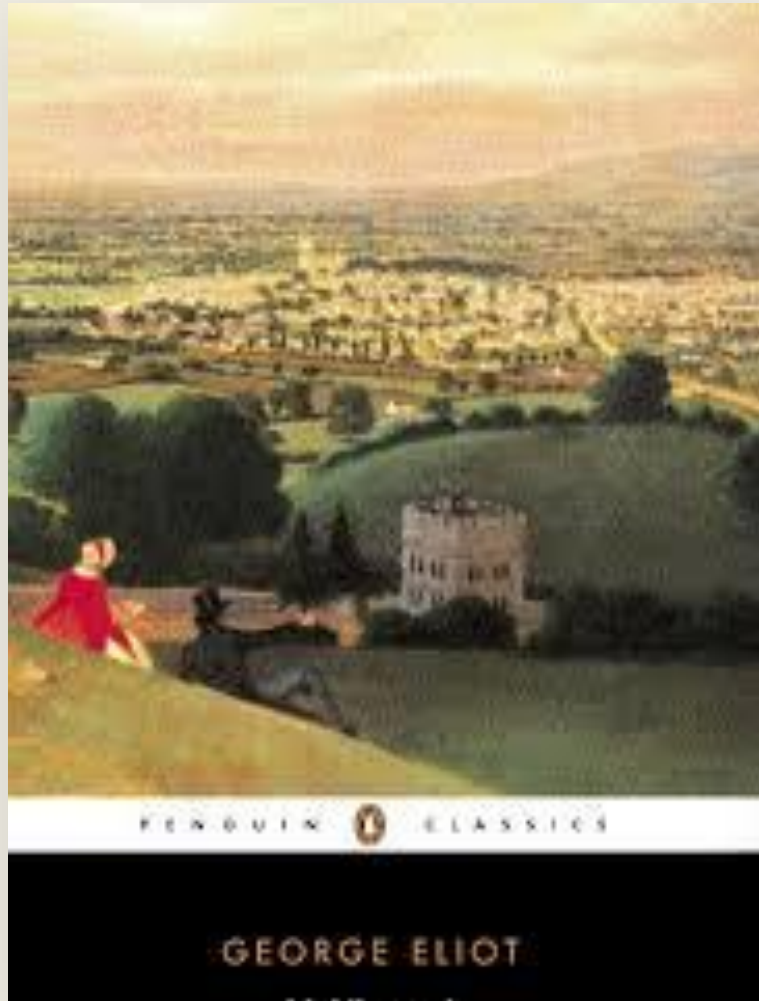
Henry James
(1843-1916)



PENGUIN CLASSICS

HENRY JAMES
The Portrait of a Lady

Middlemarch (1869-1874) and *Daniel Deronda* (1874-1876)





The Heights at Witley – Cheyne Walk in Chelsea



John Cross – George Eliot's grave in Highgate Cemetery