

Political Verse in Late Georgian Britain: Poems Referring to William Pitt the Younger (1759–1806)

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During a forty-year period between 1782 and the 1820s more than fifty authors can be identified as having written verses about, or containing specific references to, William Pitt the Younger, Prime Minister of Great Britain 1783–1801 and 1804–6: there are also at least thirty anonymous or pseudonymous poems about or referring to him. These poems range from lines of doggerel on hand-written bills pasted on to walls, corresponding to the manuscript *pasquinate* of sixteenth-century Rome, to formal odes published in slim (and sometimes not so slim) volumes of verse that the authors hoped would earn them undying literary fame; from songs sung at large public dinners to poems circulated in manuscript amongst a select audience but not published till long after the author's death. Two hundred years later it seems inappropriate to insist too much on the distinction between the various categories, as in most cases the author's original conception of his intentions can only be guessed at, and the details of publication usually have little connection with the quality or political interest of the composition in question. The following check-list is offered as a kind of introduction to the subject of political poetry in this period.

Though Pitt was remarkable for the length of his tenure of office and for his youth when first appointed – he became Prime Minister at the age of twenty-four and only Sir Robert Walpole held office for a longer period – it is not our intention to suggest that he was in any way a unique phenomenon in the history of political versifying. In fact, though his premiership coincided with a marked increase – perhaps even a doubling¹ – of the amount of verse being published in Britain, it is probable that political verse as such was in relative decline during his lifetime.

Political verse in a variety of forms, including songs, popular jingles and perhaps more formal compositions for recitation before an audience of confidential friends, had probably become a familiar feature of urban life in all parts of the Mediterranean world by the middle of the first millennium before Christ: it was certainly established in Rome during the final century of the Republic.² Thereafter the history of political verse seems inseparable from the history of literacy. A small number of political poems in Middle English survive from the thirteenth century; there are more in the fourteenth century, but Rossell Hope Robbins, in his introduction to his collection *Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth Centuries*, claimed that 'All the shorter historical and political poems in Middle English number not more than 250 items'.³ No doubt there were more than have survived: vernacular verse played a significant role in lower-class opinion during the Peasants' Revolt of 1381,⁴ and *The Vision concerning Piers Plowman*, one of the most important achievements of medieval literature, is after all essentially a political work. More numerous than the

¹ Analysis of the Eighteenth Century Short Title Catalogue (ESTC) shows an annual average of 143 books with the words 'Poem' or 'Poems' in the title published 1785–9 and an annual average of 194 published 1795–9: and the rate of increase seems to have accelerated after 1800.

² See Giovanni Cupaiuolo, *Tra poesie e politica: le pasquinate nell'antica Roma* (Naples, 1993).

³ Rossell Hope Robbins, *Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth Centuries* (New York, 1959), p. vii.

⁴ R. B. Dobson (ed.), *The Peasants' Revolt of 1381* (London, 1983), pp. 379–84.

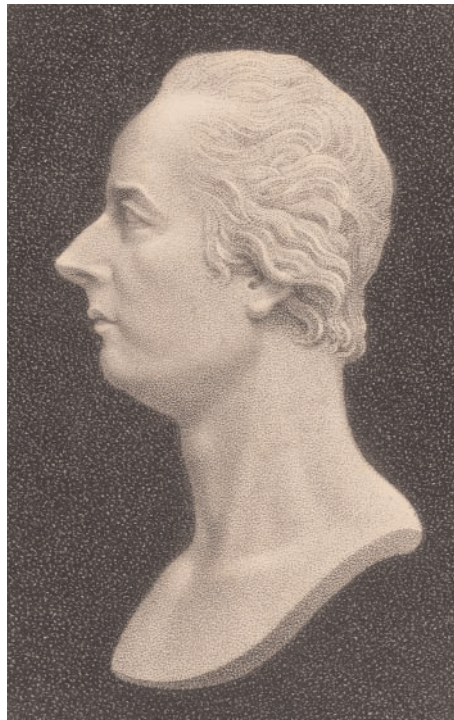


Fig. 1. William Pitt the Younger, after Hoppner. *Select Parliamentary Speeches of W. Pitt* (Paris, 1829), frontispiece. BL 1489.n.43.

surviving pieces in the English vernacular however were political poems in Latin, possibly indicating a target audience amongst an educated – and perhaps a mainly clerical – elite.⁵ The invention of printing, in that it facilitated the circulation of all kinds of writing, led within a generation to an increase in the visibility of political verse in Germany;⁶ in Italy the coming of printing may have coincided with, rather than caused, a growing enthusiasm for political verse, and assisted its preservation for posterity; the face to face nature of the political life of the Renaissance city states meant that poems could be circulated effectively enough in manuscript or *viva voce*, yet if any such verses circulated in Rome in the first four decades of the fourteenth century none survive, whereas no fewer than 735 political verse lampoons, mostly originally posted up as hand-written bills, survive from the years 1509–66.⁷ In Tudor England the vigilance of the government in monitoring the output of a relatively small number of presses meant that, so long as the government was able to insist on its view that its affairs were not a suitable topic for public discussion, political verse did not have the prominence it attained in other parts of Europe. The appearance in 1588 of pamphlets attacking the bishops, by an author using the pseudonym Martin Marprelate, provoked a systematic hunt which tracked down the press but not the writer: one man suspected of involvement in the printing and circulation of the pamphlets died in prison and another was executed. The Stuarts were able at first to maintain the system of control they had inherited from the Tudors, but the situation changed dramatically with the Civil

⁵ Thomas Wright (ed.), *Political Poems and Songs relating to English History, composed during the period from the Accession of EDW III to that of RIC. III*, 2 vols (London, 1859–61), vol. i, p. x.

⁶ Hermann Meuche (ed.), *Flugblätter der Reformation und des Bauernkrieges: 50 Blätter aus der Sammlung des Schlossmuseums Gotha* (Leipzig, 1976).

⁷ These 735 squibs are printed in Valerio Marucci, Antonio Marzo and Angelo Romano (eds), *Pasquinate romane del Cinquecento*, 2 vols (Rome, 1983). Maria dell'Arco, *Pasquino e le pasquinate* (Milan, 1957) prints *pasquinate* from the time of Nicholas V (Pope 1447–55) to that of Pius IX (Pope 1846–78).

War in the 1640s. The Thomason Tracts in the British Library include, besides a vast mass of prose writings issued during the Civil War and Commonwealth, over 600 political poems from a period slightly shorter than William Pitt's public career.⁸ With the Restoration of Charles II some measure of control was restored, but only till the late 1670s. The Exclusion Crisis of 1679-81 may indeed have seen the high water mark of political versifying in Britain: the editors of a seven-volume collection of *Poems on Affairs of State ... 1660-1714* published by Yale University Press claimed to have identified 'some 3,000' items from compilations printed at the time and 'as many more from manuscripts', and they gave more space to the first half of their period than to the second.⁹ The editors, like the editors of successive printings of a collection entitled *Poems on Affairs of State* issued during the reigns of William III and Queen Anne, chose however to concentrate on quality rather than comprehensiveness. Indeed the literary and political importance of some of these publications can hardly be overstated. John Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel* made a substantial impact at the time – five London and two Dublin editions from November 1681 to December 1682 plus two separate translations into Latin and four would-be 'answers' – and has ever since been acknowledged as *in literary terms* the outstanding contribution to the genre of political verse.¹⁰ Thomas Wharton's song 'Lilli Burlero' of 1687 enjoyed a tremendous vogue from late 1689 onward; Bishop Burnet recalled, 'The whole army and at last the people, both in city and country, were singing it perpetually', and Wharton himself claimed that it 'sung a deluded prince out of three kingdoms'. The catchy tune written for it by Henry Purcell may still be heard in Belfast today.¹¹ The vast bulk of the poetical outpourings that accompanied the overthrow of James II has of course been much less durable. The versifying continued, in perhaps reduced but still formidable volume, into the reign of Queen Anne. Robert D. Horn has identified over 400 panegyrics, satires etc. relating to the Duke of Marlborough – mainly English verse though a few in European languages or in prose – from the time of the Battle of Blenheim in 1704 till the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713.¹²

The British Library Catalogue lists over forty songs and verses relating to Sir Robert Walpole (Prime Minister 1721-42) and numerous other items will be found in volumes of verse and other publications that do not refer to Walpole on their title page; given the smaller production of books compared to later in the century and the possibility that a smaller proportion of the books published has survived, it seems likely that Walpole featured in verse relatively more frequently than Pitt but that in terms of volume political versifying had already passed its peak. Nevertheless one can observe what one might call a domestication of verse in everyday life during the course of the eighteenth century. At some stage – *probably* after 1700 – it became the custom for working men who provided certain kinds of services to distribute verses at the New Year as a mode of soliciting gratuities: a collection in the British Library (pressmark 1875.d.8) includes examples from newsmen (the oldest dated example is from 1757) and lamplighters (the oldest from Norwich, 1765).

⁸ G. K. Fortescue et al. (eds), *Catalogue of the Pamphlets, Books, Newspapers, and Manuscripts relating to the Civil War, the Commonwealth, and Restoration, Collected by George Thomason, 1640-1661*, 2 vols (London, 1908) vol. ii, pp. 679-90. For political verse in France during the same period see Hubert Carrier, *La Presse et la Fronde (1648-1653): Les Mazarinades*, 2 vols (Geneva, 1989-91), vol. ii, pp. 110, 131, 160-8, 179-80, 221, 236-8, and cf. examples reproduced in vol. i, pp. 222, 411; vol. ii, pp. 231, 251.

⁹ George de F. Lord et al. (eds), *Poems on Affairs of State: Augustan Satirical Verse, 1660-1714*, vol. i, p. vii; cf. vol. i, p. xxxiii where it is stated that most of the *printed* texts date from 1689 or after. The first *A Collection of Poems on Affairs of State* appeared in 1680 and was in at least its sixth edition by 1716.

¹⁰ James and Helen Kinsley (eds), *Dryden: the Critical Heritage* (London, 1971) pp. 6, 131-5.

¹¹ Galbraith M. Crump, introduction to 'Lilli Burlero', in Lord et al., *Poems on Affairs of State*, vol. iv, pp. 309-10.

¹² Robert D. Horn, *Marlborough: a Survey: Panegyrics, Satires and Biographical Writings, 1688-1788* (Folkestone, 1975) lists 582 items, of which nos 35 to 460 appeared between the arrival in London of news of Marlborough's victory at Blenheim and the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht.

A sheet of verses printed for distribution by the parish beadles of St. Giles, Camberwell, Peckham and Dulwich on New Year's Day 1822 claims, after the printer's name, 'First printed in 1735' (1875.d.8.(28)). Although – or because – most seats were uncontested in parliamentary elections, electioneering when it occurred was generally a carnival occasion: examples of electioneering verses are in the listing below. Some individuals felt encouraged to adopt the techniques of public controversy in their private quarrels: in 1815 a Margate attorney was awarded £10 damages against the twenty-year-old daughter of the proprietor of the White Hart Hotel at Margate because the young lady had circulated two caricatures of him and three insulting poems:

To exalt him to some higher sphere,
His friend the arch fiend is most zealous
By heav'ns it plain doth appear,
He soon will be raised – to the gallows.¹³

Verse epitaphs on funeral monuments had begun to be fashionable before 1700, but the filling up of city-centre churchyards with tombs bearing verse inscriptions was essentially an eighteenth-century development.¹⁴ It is indeed the lapidary nature of verse, the notion that because it rhymes it will have a kind of finality, be more worth remembering, and be more likely to be quoted and passed on, that provides the best explanation for the adoption of verse as a political vehicle. The connection between political verse and graveyard epitaphs is suggested by the autographs of the men hanged after the Cato Street Conspiracy in 1820; the condemned men obligingly provided these mementos when requested by John Adolphus, despite the fact that as their defence counsel he had just failed to secure their acquittal: apart from Richard Tidd, who could only manage 'I Ham a very Bad Hand at Righting', three of the four conspirators wrote brief political poems.¹⁵ The degree of interest such verses might inspire is indicated by the fact that Sylvester Douglas, M.P., Chief Secretary of Ireland, not only made his own copy of a seditious song 74 lines long by Robert Thomas Crossfield which was amongst treasonable papers laid before the Privy Council in 1795 but also noted, 'Mr. Pitt thought the song so good I saw him copy it the day it was produced at the Council'.¹⁶

The appeal of political verse diminished during the course of the nineteenth century, perhaps more because of changes in public taste than because of any substantive increase in the amount of factual detail and complex argumentation expected in political discourse. Examples of electioneering verse survive from the 1880s: we know of none from any later period.¹⁷ Nevertheless political rhyming had not gone entirely out of fashion by the mid-twentieth century: Clement Attlee amused his retirement with political verse, including a

¹³ *Substance of a Report in an Action between John Boys, Attorney, and Miss Mary Edmunds, both of Margate: for Three Alleged Poetical Libels and Two Caricature Drawings ... 18th of July, 1815* (London, 1815), p. 24.

¹⁴ See A. D. Harvey, 'Baluster-Cornered Box Tombs', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, lxii (1999), pp. 287–95, at pp. 291–3.

¹⁵ Emily Henderson (ed.), *Recollections of the Public Career and Private Life of the late John Adolphus* (London, 1871), p. 113.

¹⁶ Francis Bickley (ed.), *The Diaries of Sylvester Douglas (Lord Glenbervie)*, 2 vols (London, 1928), vol. i, p. 45, 1 January 1795.

¹⁷ Electioneering verses from Birmingham, 1887, may be found in BL, 11601.f.36(2). Political versifying seems to have remained in fashion longer in Italy: see [P. Romano], *Pasquino e la satira in Roma* (Rome, 1932) which has examples from the 1930s, and Luigi Abate (ed.), *Pasquino antifascista* (Rome, 1944) which has examples dating from 1943.

limerick he sent to his brother in 1956:

Few thought he was even a starter
There were many who thought themselves smarter
But he ended PM
CH and OM
An earl and a knight of the garter.¹⁸

And as this introduction is being prepared, rude rhymes about George W. Bush are reported to be circulating, in a variety of languages, on the Internet.

Most, if not quite all, the items listed below are in the genre of *occasional* verse, that is, verse written for particular occasions rather than out of any larger poetic ambition. The poems referring to Pitt by Burns and Coleridge are emphatically not amongst their best: those by Coleridge indeed remind one of how uneven a poet he was, or rather, of how mistaken he usually was regarding the true nature of his poetic genius. Perhaps only one of the items below can be regarded as possessing intrinsic literary or poetic value, and that is *The Rolliad*. The verse, and the satirical force, of *The Rolliad* deserve comparison with that of Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel*: yet the cumulative impact of the more than one thousand lines of Dryden's sustained *tour de force* places *Absalom and Achitophel* on a higher level than the short verse 'extracts' that interrupt the prose disquisitions which constitute the bulk of *The Rolliad's* text.

Satire is one of perhaps three possible modes of political verse, the other two being panegyric and epic. In this period Wordsworth and, more programmatically but less successfully, Shelley came near to writing political epic, with a vision of the human tragedy involved in the grand sweep of public events, but of course there are no specific references to Pitt in either *The Excursion* or *The Prelude*, or in *The Revolt of Islam*. A large number of the contemporaries of Wordsworth and Shelley failed artistically in attempts to write epic, but those in this period who saw an epic dimension in Pitt's leadership of the nation during the French Revolutionary War and the first part of the Napoleonic War confined themselves to panegyric: and though Dryden (again) and Andrew Marvell had shown a century before Pitt's birth that panegyric might be real poetry, not one of Pitt's contemporaries seems to have had any real talent for it. One panegyric on Pitt stands out on account of the contemporary impact it made: George Canning's song 'The Pilot that Weathered the Storm', first performed at Pitt's birthday dinner at Merchant Taylors' Hall on 28 May 1802, was greatly admired and even imitated during the early nineteenth century, contributed in some degree to the undermining of public confidence in Henry Addington's ministry during Pitt's period out of office, and played a key role in shaping the contours of Pitt's reputation in the years following his death. As for the satires, other than *The Rolliad* and its companion pieces, most of them are very poor, and the number that depend on parody for their effect reminds one that it is often the sheer easiness with which some poems can be parodied that is the chief reason for doing so.

The Rolliad and 'The Pilot that Weathered the Storm' were very well known in their own day: others of the poems listed below were barely noticed when they first appeared and were soon forgotten. They belong less to the annals of literature, or the annals of political life, than to the symptomology of history. One notices for example that though women were by and large excluded from political life in this period, they were beginning to assert themselves in other social spheres, and half a dozen of the poets listed below were women. Many of the others, were they to be judged only by their verses, might appear to have been the merest Grub Street hacks but on examination turn out to have been rather more than that. John Wolcot ('Peter Pindar') did indeed make a respectable income from scurrilous verse: but he was an Aberdeen University M.D. and a priest of the Church of England, and had been both

¹⁸ Kenneth Harris, *Attlee* (London, 1982), p. 545, and see also p. 557.

a practising physician and a benificed clergyman in Jamaica before he took to his pen.¹⁹ James Sayers – also sometimes spelt Sayer – made such an impact as a caricaturist in the early days of Pitt’s career that the latter, delighted with Sayers’s cartoons of Charles James Fox, appointed him Marshal of the Court of Exchequer: Sayers’s attacks on the Whigs after Pitt’s death were perhaps, at least in part, repayment of a debt of gratitude. Eaton Stannard Barrett, an Irishman by birth, entered the Middle Temple but was never called to the bar: presumably he had private means. John Taylor, a relentless scribbler on a variety of topics, including the stage, had been editor of *The Morning Post*, and from 1813 to 1825 was the proprietor of *The Courier*, a leading Tory newspaper: but as a young man he had been the King’s oculist.²⁰

The content of the poems listed below is also worth consideration. To his critics Pitt was a politician who corrupted public life in the 1780s, stage-managed the persecution of reformers (whose views he had earlier pretended to share) while waging war on liberty abroad in the 1790s, and betrayed his political allies as the price of office in the 1800s. To his admirers he was a patriot who achieved miracles of public finance in the 1780s, saved his country from subversion in the 1790s and defended it against an imperialist adventurer in the 1800s. It is not however necessary to wade through quantities of turgid verse to discover this; there are even greater quantities of turgid prose from Pitt’s lifetime that tell the same story. There are however two features of Pitt’s career that are emphasized in the poetry more than elsewhere: his parentage and his lack of interest in, shall we say, parenting. Though briefly engaged to the Hon. Emily Eden, Pitt never married and though as a young man reported on occasion to be very drunk, even in the House of Commons, was believed never to have had sex with a woman.²¹ A curious German pamphlet, purporting to be a translation of a non-existent English original, *W. Pitts geheime Lebensgeschichte ... aus dem Englischen des Hugh Greigh* (Hamburg, 1801: British Library pressmark 10817.bb.28(1)) depicted Pitt as a cynical seducer, but the authors of *The Rolliad* and *Political Miscellanies* and John Wolcot were more beguiled by the notion of the youthful minister as a primly self-righteous virgin. It seems not to have done him any harm. Again, the fact that he had a brother who was an earl and a general in the army (and also for a period, somewhat bizarrely, First Lord of the Admiralty) provoked very little interest, whereas the fact that he was the son of the great Earl of Chatham, William Pitt the Elder, ‘the Great Commoner’, was something contemporary poets often alluded to. From their very nature, and from the different type of motives with which they were written, prose writings relating to Pitt gave nothing like the same emphasis to the Chatham connection.²² School and university students have long had to accustom themselves to the idea that there were two William Pitts, and that it was necessary to distinguish between the two, just as Americans have had to accustom themselves to having two presidents named John Adams, and latterly two George Bushes. The poems listed below show more clearly than any other source that the illustrious parentage of the younger Pitt was not merely a curiosity in his own day, but also a potent part of his myth. Those with whom he had most contact, in Westminster and Whitehall, would have found the fact that the first Earl of Chatham was William Pitt’s father

¹⁹ See H. J. Jackson, ‘England’s Populist Pindars’, *eBLJ*, 2002, Article 4 <<http://www.bl.uk/collections/eblj/2002/article4.html>>.

²⁰ The British Library has a copy of Taylor’s poem *The Caledonian Comet* (London, 1810) with the title page inscribed, ‘Alexander Chalmers from his old friend the author’: someone – Chalmers? – has added ‘by John Taylor Esqr. Oculist’ (pressmark 1466.h.41). As far as is known, however, Taylor had by 1810 long since ceased practising as an oculist. See also John Barrell, ‘The Reptile Oculist’, *London Review of Books*, vol. xxvi, no. 7 (1 April 2004), pp. 19–25.

²¹ A. D. Harvey, *Sex in Georgian England: Attitudes and Prejudices from the 1720s to the 1820s* (London, 2001), p. 151, and pp. 193–4 n. 48.

²² Pitt’s parentage is however mentioned in Coleridge’s prose sketch of Pitt in the *Morning Post* (19 March 1800) – but of course Coleridge was also one of the poets who referred to the first Earl of Chatham in his verses about Pitt – see his ‘Pitt’ sonnet of 1794, listed below.

not especially remarkable; they too had fathers, many of whom had achieved prominence in public life; but for outsiders, for whom politics was an increasingly watchable spectator sport, the elder Pitt was not only a great war leader, hailed as architect of the conquest of Canada and of Bengal, but also a parliamentary politician of heroic stature who had dominated the Cabinet as much by his support outside Parliament as by his eloquence in the House of Commons. It may even be that the myths of the father and the son nourished one another: apart from the fact that they were both tall and thin and haughty-looking they resembled each other very little either in their temperaments and talents or in their careers, but the superficial continuity of their presence in public life had an irresistible attraction for the artisans of political cliché.

We hope however that the following listing will appear something more than a contribution to the history of political cliché. Today, in the era of mass politics, the only thing most people write down with regards to their political views is a periodic cross on a ballot paper; all their responses to and perceptions of public events exist in an unrecorded realm that will be lost to future historians. In the past most people did not even have the chance to register the counterpart of a cross.²³ Versifiers were amongst those who volunteered to step forward to record their views: most of them were from outside the circle of parliamentarians and journalists whose job it was to get their opinions into the newspapers. The phenomenon of political verse has a long and largely obscure history but the listing below demonstrates at least one thing: as late as the nineteenth century political verse was a key part of political discourse, and thus, part of politics itself.

Ackland, Thomas Gilbank:

‘On the Death of the Right Honourable William Pitt’, in *Miscellaneous Poems* (London: G. Wilkie and J. Robinson, 1812), pp. 152-6.

Hark! ‘tis the bell of death! the solemn swell
Slowly it beats, fate’s awful news to tell;
Whilst Echo, welcome to each hostile shore,
Conveys the sound, that PITT exists no more! (pp. 152-3)

Unrivalled talents joined to vig’rous sense,
Unshaken courage, manly eloquence,
All in one inauspicious hour are gone;
With PITT they sleep beneath the cold grave-stone. (p. 153)

Uncaught by Pleasure’s or by Flatt’ry’s lure,
Sound ‘midst Disease, amidst corruption pure,
And ‘mongst a Nation’s coffers proudly poor!
Blest Shade, farewell! great CHATHAM’s true-born Son,
Thy short, but glorious, race of Life is run! (p. 155)

²³ Previous to the introduction of the secret ballot in 1872, voting in elections consisted of stepping up on to a stage in front of a crowd and announcing one’s name and choice of candidate (or candidates) to the returning officer’s clerk.

Anna:

'Lines on the Anniversary of the Birth-day of the Right Honourable William Pitt', in *The Pitt Club: the Commemoration of the Anniversary of Mr. Pitt's Birth-day at the City of London Tavern on Saturday the 27th of May, 1815* [London, 1815], p. 1.

O Pitt! so noble, and so justly true,
Whom Honor nurs'd, and thought the tribute due [...]

The heading of the poem refers to the author as a 'A Young Lady', and the name 'Anna' appears at the end.

Archilochus, Jun. (pseud.):

'Ode to Mr. Pitt.', in *The Volunteer Laureate: or Fall of Peter Pindar, containing odes to Lord Howe, Mr. Pitt and the swinish multitude* (London: Mott and Lyon, 1796), pp. 14-18.

Unhappy Britain! Still your prospects fade,
For Chatham's son, alas must be a shade!
(No more the Senate with his rhetoric cheer,
And go where Richelieu, Bute and Mazarine are)
Who shall be found in that tremendous hour, (p. 16)

Baldpate, Grizzle (pseud.):

The Poll Tax, An Ode (London: for the author, 1795), p. 8.

But Heav'n forbend from such Resistance now,
All Tax-Collectors, who are *MODEST* grown,
And MISTER P-TT, not fond of *THINGS* below,
Feels most attach'd to what regards the *CROWN*.
Therefore from P-TT, ye *FAIR*, ye've naught to dread;
This Tax on you he'll govern by the *HEAD*!

On p. 11 Pitt is 'Great Chatham's Son!', on p. 18 merely 'Billy, Billy!'.

Barrett, Eaton Stannard:

The Second Titan War against Heaven; or The Talents Buried Under Portland-Isle (London: H. Colburn, 1807), pp. 16-17.

The worst on't was, P--- would not quit his seat,
And to dismount him was no easy feat;
Like Sisyphus 's stones theirs would recoil,
And stinging shame alone reward their toil.
Yet they would on, and right or wrong condemn,
To give P---'s ministry a *requiem* :
And though they would not form a *coalition*
With H-e T-'s jacobins, yet mad ambition
Made them side-friends, they seem'd to be but *one* ;-
Both cried :- '*Old England's Constitution gone!*'

H-e T- is the reformer John Horne Tooke, who was in fact neither a Jacobin nor a faction leader.

Beckford, William (under the pseudonym Jacquetta Agneta Mariana Jenks):

'Ode, Panegyric and Lyrical' (addressed ironically to Pitt) in *Azemias: a Descriptive and Sentimental Novel Interspersed With Pieces of Poetry*, 2 vols (London: Sampson Low, 1797), vol. ii, pp. 12-17.

Each one of 23 stanzas ends with 'Mister Pitt' – occasionally varied with 'Glorious Pitt!', 'Heaven-born Pitt' etc – e.g.

Two thirds of that nation starving,
Now of meat ne'er taste a bit;
For his friends he still is carving,
This great statesman – Mister Pitt.

In another of Beckford's pseudonymous satirical novels, *Modern Novel Writing, or the Elegant Enthusiast etc.* by 'Lady Harriet Marlow', 2 vols (London: G. G. and J. Robinson, 1796), vol. ii, pp. 123-4, he describes a ludicrous interview his protagonist had with Pitt and his ministerial underlings.

Bolland, William:

The Campaign: and Britannia in the Year One Thousand Eight Hundred. A Poem, In Two Cantos (London: for the author, 1800).

Then chaunt my muse by Britain's glory smit
The various blessings she derives from P-tt [...] (p. 28)

Chatham's wise son, bids war's dire carnage cease [...] (p. 30)

See Prettyman, his darling pupil meet,
And lawn'd and mitred, kneel to kiss his feet. (p. 31)

George Pretyman [sic] had been Pitt's tutor and later secretary, and in 1787 was appointed Bishop of Lincoln. William Bolland, three times winner of the Seatonian Prize for sacred verse at Cambridge, eventually became a judge.

According to a note signed 'W. Bolland' in British Library 1164.f.24, 'These poems were never publicly sold. They were given to the Author's Friends'.

Boscawen, William:

'Monody, To the Memory of the Right Hon. William Pitt', in *Poetical Register and Repository of Fugitive Poetry for 1806/ 7* (London: F. C. and J. Rivington, 1811), pp. 484-93.

What statesman then, what patriot dared withstand
Firm on the breach, the bold rapacious band?
'Twas thou immortal Pitt! – the task was thine,
With steadfast zeal, with eloquence divine,
Serene, undaunted in the sacred cause,
To guard thy sovereign's rights, thy country's laws,
Till pitying Heaven the patriot king restored,
And 'joyfull nations hail'd their rightful Lord.'
(p. 487, referring to the Regency Crisis of 1788)

Brass, Billy (pseud.):

A Political Hudibrastic (London: M. Smith, 1795), p. 8.

He long has trick'd, like signs of cits,
With 'Billy Brass, LATE William Pitt's'
And means to cheat us by a name,
Out of our money, health, and fame.

Burns, Robert:

1. 'Epistle to James Smith' (c. 1785), stanza 23.

A garter give to Willie Pit; [sic]
Gie wealth to some be-ledger'd cit,
In cent, per cent;
But give me real sterling wit,
And I'm content.

2. 'A Dream' (1786), stanza 7.

I'm no mistrusting Willie Pitt,
When taxes he enlarges,
(And Will's a true guid fallow's get,
A name not envy spairges)
That he intends to pay your debt,
An lessen a' your charges [...]

These two poems were included in Burns's first volume, *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (Kilmarnock: John Wilson, 1786). *Spairge* means 'bespatter'.

3. 'Elegy on the Year 1788' (1 January 1789).

The tulyie's teugh 'tween Pitt and Fox,
And our guidwife's wee birdie cocks.

Sent to *The Edinburgh Courant*: *tulyie* (in some editions *toolzie*) means 'tussle'.

4. 'Election Ballad' (1790), stanza 25.

Thou Pitt, shalt rue this overthrow,
And Thurlow growl tis curse of woe,
And Melville melt in wailing!
Now Fox and Sheridan rejoice [...]

5. 'Inscribed to the Right Hon. C. J. Fox', stanza 7.

Will you leave your justings, your jars, and your quarrels,
Contending with Billy for proud-nodding laurels? [...]
In vain with squire Billy for laurels you struggle:
He'll have them by fair trade – if not, he will smuggle [...]

6. 'On Mr Pitt's Hair-Powder Tax' (1795).

Pray Billy Pitt explain thy rigs,
This new poll-tax of thine!
'I mean to mark the Guinea pigs
'From other common swine.'

Byron, George Gordon, 6th Baron: *Don Juan*

This poem, which satirizes practically everything, has in standard editions a single allusion to Pitt:

[...] Pitt too had his pride,
And as a high-soul'd minister of state is
Renown'd for ruining Great Britain gratis.
(Canto IX – first published 1823 – stanza 8, lines 6-8)

The 17-volume edition of Byron's works published by John Murray (London, 1832-3), has a variant reading of the last two lines of Canto III, stanza 14:

Display'd much more of verve, perhaps of wit,
Than any of the parodies of Pitt.

See Truman Guy Steffan (ed.), *Byron's Don Juan*, 4 vols (Austin, 1957), vol. ii, p. 283.

Don Juan in Search of a Wife, an imitation of Byron's poem published in the mid-1830s, more than ten years after Byron's death, contains a stanza which the author of *Don Juan* might well have been pleased with:

Pitt tax'd our light – alas, we have not much,
I mean in London, least of all the city –
He tax'd the rich, I do not care for such,
And then he tax'd the poor too, more's the pity;
He tax'd the country and he tax'd the town,
But spar'd the church, and never tax'd the Crown.
(p. 50 - stanza 94)

Canning, George:

1. Untitled 134-line poem addressed to Pitt, dated 27 January 1804, urging the former Prime Minister to come out of retirement to lead his country once again: Pitt had been living at Walmer Castle, on the Kent coast, and had been busying himself with rural pursuits and with drilling the Cinque Port Volunteers. A fair copy in Canning's handwriting is in the Granville papers in The National Archives PRO 30/29/8/3/128, ff. 296-9; an earlier, virtually unpunctuated 137-line version, together with a fair copy in another hand of the later version, dated 30 January 1802, may be found at PRO 30/29/7/3/22 and 23, ff. 141-8. Another autograph copy is in the Canning papers, Harewood MSS, 30: West Yorkshire Archives Service, Leeds. The later version begins:

If Britain's weal can win thy heart awhile
From either Drill, the Furrow, or the File; –

The poem is mainly a satirical attack on the ministry of Henry Addington but towards the end Canning again addresses Pitt:

Enough. In Truth's, in Friendship's sacred names,
Accept the Verse, which Indignation frames; –
Accept, O Pitt! – But if the powerless strain
With Truth's clear voice, and Friendship's, and plead in vain;
If still, to oppose less prompt than to endure,
Thy sufferance sanction ills, thy act might cure;
– Then what remains [...]

2. 'The Pilot that Weathered the Storm', song first performed at a public dinner celebrating Pitt's 43rd birthday, held at Merchant Taylors' Hall, London, 28 May 1802; the last verse ran:

And oh! if again the rude whirlwind should rise,
The dawns of peace should fresh darkness deform,
The regrets of the good and the fears of the wise
Shall turn to the Pilot that weathered the Storm.

A copy in Canning's writing, sent to J. H. Frere, is in British Library Add. MS. 38833, f. 114. A pamphleteer signing himself 'Plutarch' borrowed Canning's title in a political tract published in 1812, *The Pilot that Weather'd the Storm. An attempt to record the political principles, sentiments, and motives of the Right Hon. W. Pitt.*

3. Untitled rhyme:

Pitt is to Addington
As London is to Paddington

Sedulously circulated by Canning's friends c. 1801–3, quoted in Lord Rosebery, *Pitt* (London, 1891), p. 230.

[Carey, David]: (under pseudonym **Chrononhotonthologos**):

Ins and Outs; or, The State of Parties. A Satirical Poem (London: J. Blacklock, 1807), p. 2.

But why so sad Britannia's fate deplore,
Though *Pitt*, though *Fox* and *Nelson* are no more

Chapman, William:

The Parriad, Addressed to the Editor of Bellendene upon his elegant but illiberal preface [i.e. Samuel Parr's preface to his edition of Bellendene's *De Statu libri tres.*] (London: S. Gosnell, 1788).

Should in the crowd *o deina's* praise be heard,
Who dar'd be wise before he had a beard;
Tho' young, declin'd not pow'r (destructive choice)
Fix'd only by the King's and people's choice. (p. 15, lines 103–6)

How canst thou, lost to candor as to shame
In F** praise vices, in P*** virtues blame?
'Gainst fact and reason boldly thus decide;
Action in one extol, in one deride, (pp. 19–20, lines 175–8)

Samuel Parr, ‘the Whig Dr Johnson’, had denounced Pitt in the preface to his 1787 edition of G. Bellendene’s *De Statu libri tres*: see also *A Free Translation of the Preface to Bellendene Containing Animated Strictures on the Great Political Characters of the Present Time* (1788).

Clemenceau, ?:

‘Eloge du Premier Ministre de Sa M. Britannique au Tribut de Reconnoissance des François Refugiés en Angleterre’; printed with his *Le Vengeur des Rois: poème en six chants* (London: A. Dulau, 1801), pp. 229–40.

Tu sauveras ton Roi, Pitt, et les Rois du monde,
Par ton zèle constant, la sublime raison,
De leurs vils ennemis écrasant l’hydre
Comme Hercule écrasa le terrible lion. (p. 231, stanza VII)

Chantez, O nations, chantez ce grande genie,
Ce ministre immortel, honneur de l’univers.
Chante, Albion, ce lui qui te donne la vie
De tous tes habitans reunis les concerts, (p. 239, stanza XXXI)

Clubbe, William:

‘Ode, To Mr. Pitt’ in *The Omnium, containing the journal of a late three days tour into France ... and other miscellaneous pieces in prose and verse* (Ipswich: George Jermyn, 1798), pp. 139–40.

‘Tis *Wine* inspires the world with wit,
The village town and city;
Want money as you will, my *Pitt*,
To tax *it* is a pity.

Coleridge, Samuel Taylor:

1. ‘On Imitation’, written about 1791, first published in 1834 edition of Coleridge’s *Poetical Works*: eight lines concluding

Tho’ few like Fox can speak – like Pitt can think –
Yet all like all like Fox can game – like Pitt can drink.

2. ‘Pitt’ – sonnet, first published in the *Morning Chronicle* (23 Dec. 1794), no. 6 of a series of eleven sonnets on ‘eminent contemporaries’.

Yon dark Scowler view,
Who with proud words of dear-lov’d Freedom came –
More blasting than the mildew from the South!
And kiss’d his country with Iscariot mouth
(Ah! foul apostate from his father’s fame!)

3. ‘Parliamentary Oscillators’, first published in the *Cambridge Intelligencer* (6 Jan. 1798), lines 9–12.

Yet flatter you I cannot, that your wit
Is much improved by this long loyal dozing;
And I admire, no more than Mr. Pitt,
Your jumps and starts of patriotic prosing –

4. 'Recantation: illustrated in the story of the Mad Ox', first published in *The Morning Post* (30 July 1798).

And so my Muse perforce drew bit;
And in he rush'd and panted!
'Well, have you heard?' No, not a whit
'What ha'nt you heard' Come, out with it!
'That Tierney votes for Mr PITT,
And Sheridan's *recanted* !' (lines 121-6)

During the secession of Charles James Fox from the House of Commons George Tierney was Pitt's most vocal critic in Parliament, and his intemperate remarks had led to a well-publicized duel with Pitt, on Putney Heath, on 27 May 1798.

5. 'A character' – first published in 1834 edition of *Poetical Works*

To his own conscience only hearty,
'Twas but by chance he serv'd the party; –
The self-same things had said and writ,
Had Pitt been Fox and Fox been Pitt [...] (lines 52-5)

A sneer at William Hazlitt.

6. 'The Taste of the Time' – epigrams, first published in *The Athenaeum*, no. 3976 (9 Jan. 1904), p. 53b.

A Garrick we have had in little Betty –
And now we're told we have a Pitt in Petty!
All must allow, since thus it is decreed,
He is a very *Petty* Pitt indeed!

7. 'On Pitt and Fox' – epigram first published in *The Athenaeum*, no. 3976 (9 Jan. 1904), p. 53b.

Britannia's boast, her glory and her pride,
Pitt in his Country's service lived and died:
At length resolv'd, like Pitt had done, to do,
For once to serve his country, Fox died too.

Though these two epigrams are known only from a commonplace book belonging to John Taylor Coleridge, the poet's nephew, dating from 1812 onward, their content suggests a date of 1806, the first perhaps in the early spring of that year, the second in the autumn. Pitt had been both First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer. On his death his cousin Lord Grenville took over the former post and the Chancellorship of the Exchequer was assigned to Lord Henry Petty, who was aged only twenty-five and was, after Pitt, the youngest man ever to hold Cabinet office in Britain. A year previously William Henry Betty, 'the Young Roscius', had had a triumph on the London stage, as Hamlet and in other roles, at the age of thirteen. As for Charles James Fox, Pitt's great opponent, he took over the Secretaryship of State for the Foreign Department, after more than twenty-two years in opposition, but died on 13 September 1806. Coleridge wrote an unflattering character sketch of Pitt for *The Morning Post* (19 March 1800) (also printed in *The Courier* of the same date).

Colton, Rev. Charles Caleb:

Hypocrisy: a Satire in Three Books. Book the First (Tiverton: T. Smith, 1812), p. 92.

Ye tutored Pitt, to bellow, promise, prate
Reform or Ruin to vociferate [...]
While hackneyed, hoary sycophants applaud
Their *Chief*, – a beardless *Veteran in Fraud*

Cf. footnotes pp. 92-3 and pp. 165-6.

Cooksey, Richard:

‘To Captain **** on his proposing to leave Worcester, to spend the Christmas Holidays at Stowe’ in *Miscellaneous Poems* (London: Cadell and Davies, 1796), pp. 29-31.

Pitt is referred to as:

Him who so firm at Britain’s rudder stands,
Now crying forfeits, who erst gave commands.
Perhaps the lofty man contemns such stuff,
And solemn, tries his hand at blindman’s buff.

Stowe was the country seat of Pitt’s cousin the Marquis of Buckingham: whether Pitt ever played Christmas games there is not recorded.

Cumberland, Richard:

1. *Memoirs* (London: Lackington, Allen and Co., 1806.), supplement, pp. 13-14.

I would not pass myself upon the reader as a man, who had been in the favour of Mr. Pitt, or as if I were making a display of my gratitude; when in fact I have no [...] motive to admire him, save what his great endowments and the compulsive power of his superior genius absolutely extorted from me. A brass statue is the highest honour Athenians decreed to a mortal, Pitt deserves it and thus I have written a few lines:

[...] In the last gasp of thine expiring breath
The pray’r yet quiver’d on the lips of death:
Hear this, ye Britons, and to God be true,
For know that dying pray’r was breath’d for you.

2. ‘Epitaph on Pitt’, *Annual Register* (1806), pp. 1057-8.

To thee, great orator, whose early mind
Broke forth with splendour, that amaz’d mankind

Dealtry, Rev. Robert:

‘Monody on the Death of the Right Hon. William Pitt’, recorded in Robert Watt, *Bibliotheca Britannica; or A General Index of British and Foreign Literature* (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable, 1824).

Dutton, Thomas:

The Literary Census: A Satirical Poem With Notes (London: by the author, 1798).

Alike for modest brass and wit renown'd,
Dundas teach (*t*) grammar, and Horne Tooke, confound,
Pitt (*u*) of the past all *memory* efface,
And vaunt himself the FRIEND OF THE HUMAN RACE! (p. 53)

Pitt's peaceful soul inflames with 'borrowed (*p*) fire'
Lest, haply, Pitt's own fury should expire! (p. 70)

This 'answer' to Mathias's *Pursuits of Literature* consists mainly of chaotically arranged footnotes: both the passages cited have footnotes appended, and Pitt also appears in other footnotes e.g. p. 22 (*h*) and p. 25*.

[Francis, Ann]:

'An Ode on his Majesty's Illness' in *Miscellaneous Poems by a Lady of Norwich* (Norwich: for the author, 1790), pp. 91-4, at p. 93.

And PITT, thou great champion of truth!
In wisdom and politics – sage
Who temper'st the ardour of youth –
With the thought and precision of age:
Whose manners, all pure, and refined,
Disdain the vain trappings of art;
Whose cause – is the cause of mankind, –
'Whose words – the excess of the heart,' –

Freeth, John:

1. 'The Coach Driver or, Billy's not too young', in *The Political Songster or, a Touch of the Times on Various Subjects, and adapted to common tunes*, 6th edn (Birmingham: Thomas Pearson, 1790), pp. 187-9.

The arduous task his son befel,
A YOUTH who like a SAGE,
Holds tight the reins ... and drives as well,
As those of twice his age. (8th stanza)

Drive on *Old Boy* thy skill is known,
Still whirl the WHEELS along,
Till OPPOSITION fairly own,
That BILLY's not too young. (13th stanza)

Perhaps an answer to the song 'Billy's Too Young To Drive Us' by Captain Morris (see below), which would date it to the mid-1780s.

2. 'The Dog Tax', *ibid.*, pp. 202-3; the final stanza runs:

But BILLS of EXCHANGE — so allure him — how strange!
He'll scarce ruin his mind upon Dogs,
For BILLY PITT, TRADE — the STATE PACK-HORSE was made
Whose back he continually flogs.

Obviously these songs were not included in the first edition of Freeth's *The Political Songster*, which came out in 1771. The second, third, fourth and fifth editions seem untraceable; copies of the sixth, of 1790, are by no means rare. There was also a much shorter edition of 1798, and an edition of 1794 entitled *The Annual Political Songster*, a copy of which is in the Bodleian. 'The Coach Driver' is also printed in John Freeth, *A Touch on the Times, being a Collection of New Songs to New Tunes: including some few that have appeared in former editions* (Birmingham: for the author, 1803), pp. 39-41.

Harral, Thomas:

The Apotheosis of Pitt; or the Crowning of the Statue: a Masque (Bury St. Edmunds: by the author, 1822), p. 7.

IMMORTAL PITT! had FATE's decree
Allowed a longer race to thee,
How hadst thou gloried in the hour
That marked the climax of thy power!
A power, that crushed thy country's foes;
A power, that gained the world repose!
Thy councils kept the land from shame;
Thy councils held her free from blame;
Thy councils laid the mighty scheme,
Which forms the glad historian's theme;

Harvey, Jane:

'The Hours, a poem', in *Poems on Various Subjects* (Newcastle Upon Tyne: D. Akenhead and Sons, 1797), pp. 17-24, at p. 22.

Oh PITT! to whom Britannia looks for aid,
Whose counsel guides her, and whose virtue shields,
Still raise thy voice against this horrid trade,
Till error's mist to bright conviction yields.

Hayley, William:

Untitled manuscript verses sent to William Pitt in June 1793 with a letter urging government assistance for the poet William Cowper, British Library, Add. MS. 39168, f. 78.

Some Maladies, dear Pitt, are Gifts divine;
Not ills, but Antidotes: — and such be Thine!
Behold a pacquet, that with friendly stealth,
Has watch'd to seize a moment of thy Health:
Watch'd but in vain: — thy health is Britains Treasure:
And They, who love her, scarce can wish Thee Leisure:
Yet Friends (no selfish supplicants to Power!)
May ask one moment from thy sickly Hour [...]

but according to Add MS. 38887, f. 91, Pitt did not reply.

Hughes, Thomas Smart:

Ode graeca numismate annuo dignata et in curia cantabrigiensi recitata A.D. 1807: In obitum Gulielmi Pitt. Greek Ode recited in the Senate House, Cambridge University on the death of Pitt.

I - Spy - I (pseud.):

The Melviad; or the Birth, Parentage, Education, and Achievements of A Grete Mon, 3rd edn (London: Robinson and Co., 1805), p. 16.

One thing of Hal I must relate:
He was a soaky fellow;
At W-mbl-don was ne'er sedate,
With BILLY P — oft mellow.

'Twas there they settled politics,
And thought upon the Budget
If P — was sad — 'poh! fiddlesticks!
Said HAL — 'why tempus fudg-it.'

Henry Dundas, later 1st Viscount Melville, was especially close to Pitt in the first years of his ministry. Their heavy drinking at Dundas's house at Wimbledon was notorious, as was Dundas's inadequate education, evinced by an inability to pronounce Latin correctly.

[Ireland, Samuel William Henry]:

All the Blocks! or, An Antidote to 'All the Talents.' A Satirical Poem. In Three Dialogues. By Flagellum (London: Mathews and Leigh, 1807), p. 44.

Let them but call to mind Pitt's dissolution:
When, vulture like, the pretty Cinque-ports eyeing,
He [Lord Hawkesbury] nabb'd the spirit of poor Billy flying,
Sneak'd to the back stairs, and, in suppliant voice,
Pray'd to become the next in k-ngly choice.
The boon once gain'd, all feeling he renounc'd;
Spread wide his talons, on the game then pounced:
Which for a Ch-th-m should have been secure —
In blood to P-tt allied, and just as poor.

Lord Hawkesbury, afterwards second Earl of Liverpool, prime minister 1812-27, was much criticized for accepting the sinecure Lord Wardenship of the Cinque Ports which had been held by Pitt previous to his death — but not as criticized as Samuel William Henry Ireland was for trying to pass off a play he had written as a lost masterpiece by Shakespeare. The Ch-th-m referred to in this instance is Pitt's older brother, John, second Earl of Chatham.

Lake, J. W.:

'Song', in *Pitt Club: the Triennial Commemoration of the Anniversary of Mr. Pitt's Birth, at Merchant Taylor's Hall, London, Wednesday the 28th of May, 1817* [London, 1817], p. 33.

O'er the rock of our isle rose a star sweetly beaming,
Illuming with glory, and glowing with fame;
'Twas THY genius, O PITT! with its counsels redeeming,
And blessings still hallow the patriot's name.

Lake afterwards wrote a life of Lord Bryon and the memoir of Canning prefacing the 1825 edition of the latter's poetical works.

Le Mesurier, Thomas:

'Sonnet to Mr. Pitt', in *Poems Chiefly Sonnets* (Oxford: J. Cooke, and Hanwell and Parker, 1799), p. ix.

Firm in the Gap by lawless Havock made
Stood to resist his rage, the sorrowing Nine
Had turn'd indignant from a World oppress'd,
And Beauty's self had seen her Glories fade,
Quench'd the pure Flame she lights at Virtue's Shrine.

Lewes, John Lee:

'A Tribute to the Memory of the Right Honourable William Pitt', in *Poems* (Liverpool: James Smith, 1811), pp. 169-71.

Bold and unmoved at England's helm thou sat,
The Pride, the hope, the safeguard of the state;
Though faction pauses to applaud thy name,
Withholds the meed memory well may claim,
Yet future times shall PITT's pure views confess,
His honoured name shall unborn Britons bless;
When history's page, framed by impartial hands,
Unfolds its truth, and each foul faction brands;
Then will a period, glorious as his own,
Stand in the annals of the world alone.

John Lee Lewes was the father of George Eliot's consort George Henry Lewes.

Mason, William:

Ode to the Honourable William Pitt (London: J. Dodsley, 1782), p. 6.

Thy glory, Son of CHATHAM! fires his breast,
And, proud to celebrate thy vernal fame,
Hark, from his lyre the strain ascends,
Which but to Freedom's fav'rite friends
That lyre disdains to sound.

Mathias, Thomas James:

1. *Equestrian Epistle in Verse to the Rt. Hon. The Earl of Jersey, Master of the Horse to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, Occasioned by the Publication of the Correspondence between the Earl and Countess of Jersey and the Rev. Dr. Randolph etc.* (London: J. Parsons, 1796), pp. 28-9.

Sometimes I mark where Lansdowne tells his tale,
As once Umbritius in th' Egerian vale, [...]
Eyes the Laertian realms, and *barren rock*,
Where foil'd by Pitt, he sunk beneath the shock [...]

In 1782 Pitt was briefly Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Cabinet of the Earl of Shelburne, later Marquis of Lansdowne; but he did not offer a job to Shelburne when he himself became premier. Umbritius is a personage addressed by Juvenal in the *Saturae*.

2. *The Pursuits of Literature: a Satirical Poem: in Dialogue* (London: T. Becket; part i, 1794, as *The Pursuits of Literature, or What You Will: a Satirical Poem*; parts ii and iii, 1796; part iv, 1797; all four parts together 1798).

Think in debates the spirit may be seen,
In Thurlow, just, in Wedderburne, serene;
In Grenville, firmness; majesty, in Pitt;
And in Dundas, the courage to submit. (Part ii, p. 5, lines 34-6)

Mere spleen to Pitt; he's liberal, but by stealth. (Part ii, p. 17, line 93)
Their doctrines round a careless land are blown;
They blast the cottage, and would sap the throne.
What? are my words too warm? — I love my King,
My Country, and my God! the sounds shall ring
Ceaseless, till PITT (with all his host awake)
IN OUR GREAT CAUSE a nation's inquest take. (Part iii, p. 21, lines 125-30)

Lost in Dundas the Caledonian twang
Though Pitt, and port, and property he sang. (Part iii, p. 29, lines 161-2)

I cannot, will not, stoop with boys to rise,
And seize on Pitt, like Canning, by surprise. (Part iv, p. 49, lines 351-2)

Quotations are from the *third* editions of the first three parts and the *second* edition of part iv, copies of which are bound together with a manuscript index and a couple of Mathias's other poems (see below) in a volume in the possession of the British Library, pressmark 683.f.28. *The Pursuits of Literature* was valued chiefly for its learned and discursive footnotes: the second passage quoted above, for example, has a footnote regarding Pitt's personal character that takes up the best part of two pages. About half of the seventeen references to Pitt in the manuscript index relate to the notes.

3. *The Imperial Epistle from Kien Long, Emperor of China, to George the Third, King of Great Britain, &c. &c. &c. in the year 1794* (London: R. White [?1795]).

Oh, that my longing eye PITT's form might greet,
Triumphant borne through Pekin's crowded street [...] (p. 7, lines 69-70)

While thus they pass, my Mandarins should bend,
And to my throne PITT's palanquin attend; [...] (p. 26, lines 259-60)

For PITT the portals of the south expand,
And on my marble HE alone should stand [...] (p. 27, lines 271-2)

Ah me! too fondly does my fancy dream:
PITT hears not; and would slight the imperial theme. (p. 29, lines 283-4)

Much interest was aroused, in September 1794, by the return of Lord Macartney from an embassy to Chi'en-lung (pinyin Qian-Long), Emperor of China 1735-96.

4. *The Political Dramatist. In November, 1795: A Poem* (London: J. Parsons [?1796]).

His friends from idle terrors to release,
Pitt cast faint gleams of visionary peace; (p. 5)

Lo! PITT prepares the adamantine chain
To curb fell Anarchy, and all her train [...] (p. 18)

The good alone are free! PITT's virtue springs
To shield the peasant, and the throne of kings.
Why must I crouch before the illustrious Youth?
Why hail the guardian of the law and truth? (p. 19)

The 'Political Dramatist' was playwright-politician Richard Brinsley Sheridan, to whom the words in the quotation from p. 17 are attributed. A second edition of 1796 had the title *The Political Dramatist of the House of Commons, in 1795*.

Mathias also published a prose tract, *An Address to the Right Hon. William Pitt ... on some parts of his Administration, occasioned by his proposal of the Triple Assessment Tax in the House of Commons in November 1797*. All his publications were anonymous. British Library Add. MS. 22976 comprises a collection of letters, most of them addressed care of his publisher, to 'the author of the Pursuits of Literature'. Many of these letters were answered — anonymously — by Mathias, cf. a letter from William Cobbett, 12 March 1799 (Add. MS. 22976, f. 212) thanking him for a copy of a translation of the classical quotations in *The Pursuits of Literature* 'with your obliging note in the blank page'.

M., J. [J. Maxwell]:

Issachar the Strong Ass Over-Burdened; Or the Groans of Britannia from the Pitt [Paisley? 1795].

But I am thrown into a Pitt of mire,
From whence no hope is left me to aspire. (p. 4.)

Behold another tax from me is torn!
And when pale death doth me of life bereave,
Ere I can be laid in a peaceful grave,
Another tax must my oppressors have. (p. 5)

Maurice, Rev. Thomas:

Elegy on the late Right Honourable William Pitt (London: C. and W. Galabin, 1806); also in *Maurice's Richmond Hill; a Descriptive and Historical Poem* (London: for the author, 1807).

'Midst Virtue's, Britain's, Freedom's mingled sighs
Immortal PITT ascends his native skies [...] (p. 2)

Enlighten'd STATESMAN! whose expanded soul
Pervaded Europe to the frozen pole; —
Her empires in thy mighty balance weigh'd,
And propped the sinking with thy pow'rful aid;
Whose towering, bold and comprehensive view
Grasp'd all LOCKE thought and letter'd BACON knew;
What daring pencil, what unbounded verse,
Shall the proud story of thy fame rehearse? (pp. 3-4)

If ever MERIT claim'd a gorgeous shrine,
Where science, talents, might their pow'rs combine,
Thine, SON OF CHATHAM, is that lofty claim,
In whom concentr'd burn'd their two-fold flame.
Sublime EXAMPLE to a thoughtless age,
Firm mid contending faction's fiercest rage!
Like Abdiel, faithful mid' the faithless found,
And poor — though countless millions blaz'd around! (p. 5)

Maurice also refers to Pitt in connection with Charles James Fox, *Richmond Hill*, p. 137:

The mighty soul of PITT from earth retires,
For ever quench'd his daring Rival's fires!

Maurice also published *The Crisis of Britain: a poem addressed to the Right Hon. William Pitt* (London: for the author, 1798) but other than on the title page there is no reference to Pitt except in the advertisement and a footnote in the 1803 edition.

M-R-Y:

Pitti-Clout and Dun-Cuddy, a Political Eclogue, Wherein is Expressed in Courtly Lays, the Inviolable Attachment and Constant Loves of the Treasury Shepherds, and their resolution to Sacrifice Everything that Opposes the possession of their respective Sweethearts Polly Power and Sally Plunder (London: Citizen Lee [?1795]).

In Holwood's groves where the gay gardiner, SPRING,
Threw his loose greens about on every thing:
Two maudlin Shepards, very dull and flat,
(This was nam'd PITTI-CLOUT, DUN-CUDDY that,)
Plodding along with slow and heavy pace,
Care, and stale drunkenness, in either face [...]

Holwood was Pitt's country retreat four miles south-west of Bromley in Kent, where he was said to retire for prolonged drinking bouts with Henry Dundas. The latter in 1795 was Secretary of State for War and the Colonies. M-R-Y may be intended to indicate the Della Cruscan poet Robert Merry, though it is not likely that he was the real author.

Moore, Jane Elizabeth:

'On the Avidity of MR. PITT', in *Miscellaneous Poems, on Various Subjects* (Dublin: for the author, 1796), pp. 120-1.

Hail! to thy heart sincere in Britain's cause,
Long mayst thou, long sustain her pristine laws [...] (p.121)

Morehead, Robert:

'War Song: Written when Bonaparte Set Out on his Prussian Campaign, and Lord Lauderdale Returned Home from Paris, in the Year 1806', in *Poetical Epistles; and Specimens of Poetical Translation* (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable, 1813), pp. 81-4.

Nelson's name, itself a volume,
Scares thy coward fleets no more:
Pitt has fallen – his country's column!
Fox's patriot day is o'er! (p. 83)

Morris, Captain Thomas:

Song: 'Billy's Too Young to Drive Us', 1784, in Thomas Wright, *Caricature History of the Georges: or, Annals of the House of Hanover, compiled from the Squibs, Broad-sides, Window Pictures, Lampons, and Pictorial Caricatures of the Time* (London, [1868]), pp. 396-7.

They say that his judgement is mellow and pure
And his principles virtue's own type, sir;
I believe from my soul he's the son of a [whore]
And his judgment more rotten than ripe, sir [...]

Captain Morris, as he was known, made a successful career as a singer of his own songs at public dinners, etc. He later became exaggeratedly pro-government. There are other allusions to Pitt in items cited by Wright, on pp. 409, 413, 492. Morris also wrote a song titled 'Billy Pitt and the Farmer'.

Orme, J. B.:

The Muses Tribute, a monody to the memory of that most illustrious of statesmen, the Rt. Hon. William Pitt, Late Chancellor of His Majesty's Exchequer (London: for the author, 1806), pp. 4-5.

For thee, O Pitt! Britannia long shall mourn,
And transatlantics venerate thine urn.
Thou pure descendent of the Chatham race,
Who grand achievement time shall ne'er deface;

Polypus (pseud.):

All the Talents; a Satirical Poem, in Three Dialogues (London: John Joseph Stockdale, 1807).

With two sole blessings Pitt perform'd his part;
A GODLIKE GENIUS WITH AN HONEST HEART (p. 29)

Yet will I praise him, at his latest breath,
When firm, serene, a patriot even in death,
Not for himself the parting hero sigh'd,
But on his COUNTRY fondly call'd — and died.
O then how tears stole down each honest face!
O then how Faction, shouting, rush'd to place! (p. 31)

The British Library Catalogue and *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* assign this poem to Eaton Stannard Barrett but he was also having marginally superior material on the same theme published by H. Colburn at this juncture: see above. The poem has also been attributed to William Combe though Harlan W. Hamilton, *Doctor Syntax: a Silhouette of William Combe, Esq. (1742-1823)* (Kent, Ohio, 1969) does not include it in his listing of Combe's works on pp. 303-34. At least twenty editions of this poem were published.

Richardson, Joseph; Tickell, Richard; Laurence, French; Anstruther, Sir John; Fitzpatrick, Richard; Ellis, George; Townshend, Lord John; and others:

1. *Criticisms of the Rolliad* (London: J. Ridgeway, 1784).

This is a spoof, purporting to be a critique of an epic poem about the family of the newly created Lord Rolle, interspersed with quotations from the poem itself. Originally of 43 pages, in later editions it grew to 186 pages. (Quotations below are from the 22nd edition, London: James Ridgway, 1812.) There are numerous references to Pitt including:

Pert without fire, without experience sage,
Young, with more art than SHELBURNE glean'd from age,
Too proud from pilfer'd greatness to descend,
Too humble not to call DUNDAS his friend,
In solemn dignity and sullen state,
This new Octavius rises to debate!
Mild and more mild he sees each placid row
Of country Gentlemen with rapture glow;
Apprentice Peers and deputy Nabobs!
No Rum Contractors think his speech too long,
While words, like treacle, trickle from his tongue! (p. 7)

Above the rest, majestically great,
Behold the infant Atlas of the state,
The matchless miracle of modern days,
In whom Britannia to the world displays
A sight to make surrounding nations stare:
A kingdom trusted to a school-boy's care. (p. 27)

Shall CHATHAM's offspring basely beg support,
Now from the India, now St. James's court;
With pow'r admiring senates to bewitch,
Now kiss a Monarch's — now a Merchant's breech [...] (p. 29)

The British Library possesses a copy (shelfmark 1509/249) of the 22nd edition of 1812, entitled *The Rolliad, in Two Parts; Probationary Odes for the Laureateship, and Political Eclogues and Miscellanies*, which has annotations (either by Richard Laurence, afterwards Archbishop of Cashel, or copied from an earlier edition annotated by French Laurence, his brother) identifying the author of the first passage as George Ellis and the author of the second and third passages as Colonel, later General, Hon. Richard Fitzpatrick, M.P. for Tavistock.

2. *Probationary Odes for the Laureateship* (London: J. Ridgway, 1785).

These purport to be odes written by various candidates (both likely and unlikely) for the Poet Laureateship left vacant by the death of William Whitehead. Some refer to Pitt by name, e.g. no. XI (attributed to Michael Angelo Taylor, M.P.), stanza V:

But lo! where Pitt appears to move
Some new resolve of hard digestion!
Wake then, my Muse, thy gentler notes of love,
And in persuasive numbers, 'put the Question'.

3. *Political Miscellanies ... By the authors of the Rolliad and Probationary Odes* (London: J. Ridgway, 1787).

These miscellanies, in verse and in prose, include eleven 'EPIGRAMS / On the IMMACULATE BOY' of which the two following may stand as examples:

'Tis true, indeed, we oft abuse him,
Because he bends to no man;
But Slander's self dares not to accuse him
Of stiffness to a woman.

Puer loquitur
Though big with mathematic pride,
By me this axiom is denied;
I can't conceive, upon my soul,
My parts are equal to the whole

From 1795 onwards what had originally been three separate publications were generally reprinted as a single volume.

Rickman, Thomas Clio:

Elegy, written at the Bank after the manner of GRAY (London: Clio Rickman, 1806), p. 2.

No more the day shall call it into sight;
No more the well-stuff'd purse make pocket big;
Banish'd, thank PITT! the weighty evil quite,
And hardly now is seen a Guinea-Pig.

Off have we seen him, bless him! forward bring
The clear, immortal writings of our PAINE;
And meaning odium round his head fling,
Make all men read him, and secur'd his fame:

The reference is of course to Thomas Paine, author of *The Rights of Man*.

Savory, Martha:

'Lines on the Death of the Right Hon. William Pitt' in *Life's Vicissitudes; or, Winter's Tears: original poems* (London: for the author, 1809), pp. 16-19.

This poem begins:

Can Britain's sons find further cause to mourn?
Since Nelson rests entomb'd, Pitt's corse awaits the urn!

and concludes:

But much I fear, even from indulgent Heav'n,
A statesman great as Pitt will never more be giv'n.

Sayers, James:

1. *Elijah's Mantle* (London: John Joseph Stockdale, 1807), stanza 10:

PITT's Chequer robe 'tis thine to wear:
Take of his Mantle too a share,
'Twill aid thy ways and means;
And should Fat Jack, and his Cabal,
Cry 'rob us the Exchequer, Hall!
'Twill charm away the friends.

A compilation entitled *The Works of Peter Pindar, Esq.* (London: Jones & Co., 1824) has an appendix, *Satires, Songs, and Odes, on Various Subjects, by the Right Hon. George Canning, M.P.* which states that 'This and the following [i.e. 'Elijah's Mantle' and 'All the Talents, & c'] are generally understood to be the productions of Mr. Canning, but having come to the publishers through a different channel than the others in this collection, they are not inclined to absolutely vouch for their authenticity'. In fact there is no doubt of Sayers's authorship. 'Elijah's Mantle' was described as 'A tribute to the manes of Mr. Pitt, absolutely unequalled in the English Language' in Ben Block, *Flagellum Flagellated: a Satirical Poem* (London: John Joseph Stockdale, 1807), p. iii, note b.

2. 'All & Talents, & c', in *All the Talents' Garland; or, A Few Rockets Let Off at a Celebrated Ministry* (London: John Joseph Stockdale, 1807), pp. 26-7.

Here lies in the tomb that we hollow'd for PITT,
Consistence of GRENVILLE, of TEMPLE the wit
Of SIDMOUTH the firmness; the temper of GREY,
And Treasurer SHERIDAN's promise to pay. (p. 26)

Sidmouth and Grey were in Lord Grenville's Cabinet 1806-7; Sheridan was Treasurer of the Navy, Temple, Lord Grenville's nephew, was Vice-President of the Board of Trade and joint Paymaster General.

Scott, Walter:

‘Song: for the Anniversary Meeting of the Pitt Club of Scotland’ (1814).

O, dread was the time, and more dreadful the omen,
When the brave on Marengo lay slaughter’d in vain,
And beholding broad Europe bow’d down by her foemen
Pitt closed in his anguish the map of her reign! [...].

Though anxious and timeless his life was expended
In toils for our country preserved by his care,
Though he died ere one ray o’er the nations ascended,
To light the long darkness of doubt and despair [...].

Nor forget his grey head, who, all dark in affliction,
Is deaf to the tale of our victories won,
And to sounds the most dear to paternal affection,
The shout of his people applauding his Son [...].

First printed in *Songs Sung at the Anniversary Dinner of the Pitt Club of Scotland, May 28 1814* (Edinburgh: printed by James Ballantyne, 1814), pp. 5-6. According to William Ruff, ‘A Bibliography of the Poetical Works of Sir Walter Scott, 1796-1832’, *Edinburgh Bibliographical Society Transactions*, vol. i, part 2 (1936-7), p. 178, the poem beginning ‘Though right be oft put down by strength’ on pp. 13-14 of the same collection is also by Scott, though it is not included in popular editions of his poetical works.

Ironically, in view of the new standard of verisimilitude and factual accuracy in historical fiction which Scott established in *Waverley; or ‘Tis Sixty Years Since* (also 1814) and his later novels, he made a sad hash in the song quoted above of the history of events in his own lifetime. Pitt uttered the words ‘Roll up that map: it will not be wanted these ten years’ in response to Napoleon’s victory at Austerlitz, shortly before his death, not in response to Napoleon’s victory at Marengo in 1800, and it was scarcely apt to claim Pitt ‘died ere one ray o’er the nations ascended’ since the destruction of the Franco-Spanish fleet, and the establishment of British naval supremacy for the next 136 years, had occurred only three months before his death.

Sewell, Mary (Mrs G. Sewell):

‘On the Death of the Right Honorable William Pitt’, in *Poems and Essays*, 3 vols (Chertsey: R. Wetton, 1805-9), vol. iii, pp. 75-6.

When history bold, impartial and sublime,
Rises majestic from the wreck of time [...]
Then may she say, that PITT with honour clear
Toil’d for his country with a zeal sincere!
If some few shades of error might be seen
Which clouds on earth, ev’n wisdom’s light serene [...]
Yet all must own that loyalty possess’d
A fearless place in PITT’s undaunted breast;
And eloquence, with all its stores combin’d,
Grac’d the rich powers of his capacious mind.

S., F. C.:

‘Patriotism: Tributary Stanzas to the memory of the Right Honorable William Pitt’, in *Albion’s Harp: or Lays of a British Minstrel* (London: S. McDowall, 1813), pp. 18-19.

O Thou! whose virtues swell the trump of Fame,
Who proudly bore immortal CHATHAM’s name;
Illustrious PITT! — Britannia’s matchless son!
Who, phoenix-like, amid her senate shone [...].
The ling’ning conflict o’er — life’s banners furl’d,
Join’d thy lov’d PARENT in another world!

Signed F.C.S.

Smith, Horace:

‘Pitt’s Bon-Mot’, in *Poetical Works*, 2 vols (London: Henry Colburn, 1846), vol. ii, pp. 167-9.

Written perhaps in the 1820s, but no details known of first publication, if prior to 1846: but undoubtedly shown around in manuscript.

[...] yet as a statesman,
Or as a financier, his fame
May be compared to his own sinking fund,
Which, if not quite extinct, is moribund. (p. 167)

The *bon-mot* in question relates to the rules of the Royal Dover Volunteers, drawn up in 1803 at the time of the threatened invasion by the French: these included the usual clause exempting militia and volunteer units from service overseas:

‘Not to serve out of England’ — ‘Yes’, said Pitt
‘Except in case of an invasion’. (p. 169)

Stewart, Rev. Charles Edward:

1. ‘A Doggerel Ode humbly inscribed to the Revolution Society’, in *A Collection of Trifles in Verse* (Sudbury: J. Burkitt, 1797), p. 63.

Prudence in the the shape of Pitt
Condescends to teach him wit [...]
‘Good Earl S——, have a care,’
‘Tis as well your head to wear.’

Earl Stanhope (whose first wife was Pitt’s sister and his second Pitt’s cousin) was the most extreme of the reform-minded peers of the 1790s: the Revolution Society, of which he had been the chairman, was however merely a body set up to commemorate the Glorious Revolution of 1688.

2. *The Argument (in Verse) of the Foxiad; a Historical Poem, in ten books* (Sudbury: J. Burkitt, 1803), p. 15.

But PITT whose firm allegiance never swerv’d
The Constitution and the King preserv’d

Published anonymously, *The Foxiad* is a feeble imitation of, and belated answer to, *The Rolliad* by Joseph Richardson and his friends.

3. *Charles Small-Clothes: a National Ode* (Sudbury: J. Burkitt, 1808).

p. 5 (referring to William Windham):

With Pitt, Grey, Sidmouth, all he goes
Attacks, like Quixote, friends and foes.

p. 6 (referring to Lord Erskine, formerly the most successful lawyer at the Bar, and Lord Chancellor 1806-7):

Head of the Law, by Pitt confused.

Small-clothes were the contemporary term for under-drawers, or underwear. This poem too was published anonymously.

4. 'Pitt', in *Last Trifles in Verse* (Sudbury: J. Burkitt, 1812), pp. 1-2. The poem begins:

O Thou, in every form of danger tried,
The nation's ornament, support, and pride.

Swift, Edmund Lewes Lenthal:

'Pitt', in *The Pitt Club: The Triennial Commemoration of the Anniversary of Mr. Pitt's Birth, at Merchant Taylor's Hall, London, Wednesday the 28th of May, 1817* [London, 1817], p. 35.

Not thus the honoured sage of the Albion died,
CHATHAM's great son, her glory and her guide,
Amid the storm that shook her perilled state,
While prosperous Crime assumed the power of Fate,
He fell: — and Albion's safety trembled there,
In life his labour, and in death his prayer.

Edmund Lewes Lenthal Swift published a translation of the 10th and 13th Satires of Juvenal in 1818.

Taylor, John:

1. 'On the Right Hon. William Pitt', in *Poems On Several Occasions* (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable, 1811), p. 25.

DEMOSTHENES with freedom's patriot glow,
Hurl'd his dread thunders on a foreign foe;
TULLY, with purer grace, and equal zeal,
His piercing eloquence made traitors feel.
PITT their best pow'rs and noblest deeds combines,
And high o'er both in native honour shines;
He bounded anarchy's tremendous course,
And saved mankind from its o'erwhelming force.

2. 'On Hearing That Youth Was Alledged [sic] Against Earl Percy as a Candidate for a Seat in Parliament', *ibid.*, p. 37.

Thus PITT was censur'd, who began
His brilliant course a ripen'd man,
While yet in early days;
Thus Envy strove to damp the fire
That glow'd within his lofty sire,
And blight his spreading bays [...]

3. 'Written Under a Portrait of the Right Hon. William Pitt', *ibid.*, p. 49.

Ah! could the Artist who so well design'd
The mortal form of Britain's firmest friend,
Portray with equal skill his noble mind [...]

4. 'Ode: On The Celebration Of The Birthday Of The Late Right Hon. William Pitt' — May 28, 1808. — Recited at Merchant Taylor's Hall, by Edmund Quin. Esq.', *ibid.*, pp. 60-1.

5. 'Ode: On The Same Occasion. May 28th, 1809. — Printed and distributed by the PITT CLUB, at the anniversary dinner', *ibid.*, pp. 61-2. *Poems on Several Occasions* was dedicated by Taylor to the Right Hon. Charles Long M.P. specifically on the grounds of the poems 'intended to do honour to the memory of your illustrious friend Mr. PITT'.

6. 'Ode: on the Same Occasion. May 28, 1810. Printed and distributed by the Pitt Club at the Anniversary Dinner' in *Poems on Various Subjects*, 2 vols (London: Payne and Foss, 1827), vol. i, pp. 217-18.

Yes — still in Britain shall be found,
To hail that epoch's annual round
When Heaven sent PITT on earth,
In union firm, a patriot host,
With grateful favour proud to boast
Their homage to his worth. (p. 217)

7. 'Ode: on the Same Occasion. May 28, 1811', *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 218-20.

8. 'Ode: on the Same Occasion, May 28, 1812, commemorated at the London Tavern, June 16', *ibid.*, vol i, pp. 221-2.

Heav'n gave us PITT to guard the sacred dome,
And keep from force and fraud fair FREEDOM's home [...] (p. 221)

A note explains that 'The Commemoration was postponed on account of the recent and melancholy death of Mr. PERCEVAL', i.e. the assassination of the Prime Minister Spencer Perceval on 11 May 1812.

9. 'Ode: on the Same Occasion, May 28, 1813', *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 222-3.

10. 'Address, to the Pitt Clubs of the British Empire, from the Shade of the Right Hon. W. Pitt, on his Birth-Day, 1814', *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 223-4.

11. 'Song, on the Anniversary of the Birth-Day of the Late Right Hon. William Pitt, May 27, 1815. Sung by Mr. Broadhurst, at the City of London Tavern [Tune — 'Rule Britannia']', *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 225-6.

When Nature, urg'd by Heav'n's command,
A patriot true to Britain gave [...]

This song is also printed in *The Pitt Club: the Commemoration of the Anniversary of Mr. Pitt's Birth-day at the City of London Tavern, on Saturday the 27th of May, 1815* [London, 1815], p. 21.

12. 'Ode: on the Same Occasion. May 28, 1816', in *Poems on Various Subjects*. vol. i, pp. 226-7.

13. 'Ode: on the Same Occasion. May 28, 1817', *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 227-8. Also printed in *The Pitt Club: the Triennial Commemoration of the Anniversary of Mr. Pitt's Birth, at Merchant Taylor's Hall, London, Wednesday the 28th of May, 1817* [London, 1817], p. 37.

14. 'Ode: on the Same Occasion. May 28, 1818', in *Poems on Various Subjects*, vol. i, p. 228.

15. 'Address from "The Sun" To the shade of William Pitt, on his Birth-day, May 28, 1819', *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 229-30.

16-20. 'Ode: on the Same Occasion' annually 1820-1825, *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 230-6.

21. Elegiac Tribute: on the Same Occasion, May 28, 1825, *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 236-7.

22. 'Ode: on the Same Occasion. May 28, 1826', *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 237-8.

The odes for 1808 and 1809, printed in *Poems on Several Occasions* (1811) as noted above, are reprinted in *Poems on Various Subjects*, vol. i, pp. 215-17. The British Library has programmes for London Pitt Club dinners only for 1815 and 1817. Presumably John Taylor's contributions in other years appeared in programmes that have not survived. The 1817 programme, pp. 43-56, gives details of Pitt Club Dinners at Edinburgh, Exeter, Manchester, Bolton, Blackburn, Warrington, Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Newcastle under Lyme ('The North Staffordshire Pitt Club'), Leicester, Doncaster, Halifax, Leeds, Scarborough, Caernarvon ('The Menai Pitt Club'), Norwich, Reading, Taunton, Newcastle upon Tyne, North Shields, Liverpool, Hereford, Bristol, Derby, York and Lancaster. Presumably there were also Pitt Clubs, and dinners, at places like Bath and Portsmouth.

23. 'To [John Soane, Esq.] on his Cenotaph to the Memory of the Late Right Hon. William Pitt', *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 285-6.

Think not the world thou canst outwit,
No — it perceives thy scheme, friend SOANE,
Since honours here design'd for PITT
Are shrewdly blended with thy own. (p. 285)

The cenotaph, forming the entrance of the Office for the Redemption of the National Debt at the Bank of England, was completed in 1823.

Thelwall, John:

John Gilpin's Ghost; or, the Warning Voice of King Chanticleer: an Historical Ballad (London: for the author, 1795).

'Who knows, but when this feat is told,
'Great Pitt may deign to smile;
'And with a little sinecure
Reward my faithful toil'. (p. 7)

See also p. 4. This satire on the persecution of Thelwall's brother-in-law, to whom Thelwall (a leading reformer) had sent some books, takes the form of a parody of William Cowper's well-known humorous ballad 'The Diverting History of John Gilpin', which had been first published in 1785.

Thorn, Romaine Joseph:

'Billy Pitt, and Harry Dundas: a ballad', in *The Rhyme Bag, or, Poetical Depot* (Cork: for the author, 1817), pp. 133-41.

Now, if his heart felt poignant smart
At thought how human blood, sir,
By his fell pride, had like a tide
Throughout all EUROPE flow'd, sir [...].
I cannot tell, I swear, sir! (p. 134, from stanzas 3 and 4)

The ballad is sub-headed 'A Ballad, showing how Billy Pitt, and Harry Dundas, were frightened at the Apparition of Johnny Bull', and a prefatory note states, 'This Ballad was published in Bristol shortly after the unfortunate Expedition to Holland', i.e. in 1799.

Twisting, Tim:

The Pittiad; or Poetico-Political History of William the Second, in five cantos (London, 1785).
Not seen: the only known copy is in the library of the University of Illinois, Urbana.

Townshend, Lord John:

Satirical song, sung by Townshend at a dinner party, imitating Addington's voice, August 1803. One of the refrains went:

Pitt he wants to domineer me,
Grenvilles fleer and flout;
Windham, he would piecemeal tear me,
But I won't go out.

Lord Grenville and William Windham, who had been in Pitt's Cabinet in the 1790s, were vocal critics of Henry Addington, who succeeded Pitt as Prime Minister in 1801: Lord Grenville was backed by his two older brothers. The song is quoted in a letter from the Countess of Bessborough to Lord Granville Leveson Gower, in Castalia Countess Granville (ed.), *Lord Granville Leveson Gower: Private Correspondence*, 2 vols (London: John Murray, 1916), vol. i, p. 429.

White, Henry:

‘CORNWALLIS, NELSON, and PITT: the Contrast’, in *Poetical Effusions, Written, Chiefly Extempore, between the Age of Sixteen and Nineteen* (London: for the author, 1808), p. 18.

[...] nor soldiers, nor a peasant’s tears,
Nor grief, nor sorrow, at his grave appears:
But what of that? Both friends and foes may say,
He had these honor’d tributes in his day:
Most true! — for, to his profit and his pride,
He made all nations weep before he died!

Wolcot, John [‘Peter Pindar’]:

The five-volume edition of *The Works of Peter Pindar* (London: J. Walker, 1812) has half a page devoted to Pitt in its index (vol. v, p. 466). This compilation is the most convenient source for the text of Wolcot’s poems, which appeared in innumerable editions. The citations below are of the more striking references to Pitt: for the others, see the index to the 1812 edition. In a note appended to ‘Tempora Mutantur’, published with *Pitt and his Statue* in 1802, Wolcot wrote ‘When Pitt is the subject, I scarcely know when to remit the lash, he is such a feast for satire’ (*Works*, vol. iv, p. 527).

1. ‘A Poetical Epistle to a falling Minister’ (1789) (*Works*, vol. ii, p. 105–14).

In vain for thee of beauty blooms the rose;
In vain the swelling bosom spreads its snows:
A Joseph thou, against the sex to strive;
Dead to those charms that keep the World alive. (p. 109)

Speak, hath thy heart, with mad ambition fired,
Like Cromwell’s, hot for power, to Thrones aspired?
Then may that young old traiterous [sic] bosom feel
The rapid vengeance of some virtuous steel [...] (p. 112)

2. ‘More Money, or Odes of Instruction to Mr. Pitt’ (1792) (*Works*, vol. ii, pp. 489–536).

3. ‘Hair Powder: a Plaintive Epistle to Mr. Pitt’ (1796) (*Works*, vol. iii, pp. 287–306).

Lo, the poor Girl whom carrot-colour shocks,
Pines pennyless, and blushes for her Locks! [...]
At thee she flings her curses, Pitt, and cries:
At thee she darts the Lightning of her Eyes;
And thinks that Love ne’er warm’d him who could vex,
With wanton strokes of cruelty, the Sex. (p. 288)

An extreme shortage of wheat in 1795 led to a tax being imposed on hair powder, which was essentially flour: this led to natural hair, of natural colour, coming back into fashion after nearly one and a half centuries.

4. 'Liberty's Last Squeak, containing ... an Ode to an Informer, An Ode to Jurymen, and Crumbs of Comfort from the Grand Informer' (1795) (*Works*, vol. iii, pp. 415-35).

Farewell, O my Pen and my Tongue!
To part with such friends I am loth;
But Pitt, in majorities strong,
Voweth horrible vengeance on both. (p. 417)

This collection of verses refers to the repressive measures against sympathizers with the French Revolution.

5. 'Out at Last, or the Fallen Minister' (1801) (*Works*, vol. iii, pp. 485-506).

6. 'Odes to Ins and Outs' (1801) (*Works*, vol. iv, pp. 341-78).

No Farmer with a greater glee
Beholds a dying Fox, than we
Mark'd the last struggles of poor Billy Pitt,
On every visage see a smile!
Joy triumphs through the echoing isle.
Upon his name Posterity will spit. (Ode II, p. 347)

7. 'The Middlesex Election' (1802) (*Works*, vol. iv, pp. 429-95).

8. 'Pitt and his Statue' (1802) (*Works*, vol. iv, pp. 497-528).

As for his knowlege in finance,
Not far his Majesty need dance
Before he found one of a happier wit:
In this good Nation may be seen,
And felt, state-razors full as keen
For shaving us, as Master Billy Pitt.
Pitts are as plentiful as crabs;
Or shall we say, Saint Giles's drabs? (pp. 507-8)

St Giles's, the area to the north-west of Covent Garden, was notorious for poverty, vice and squalor.

Anon.: 'A Prophecy' c. 1783, manuscript copy in British Library, Add. Ms. 37683, f. 84. Another copy, f. 85, is headed 'The Riddle Ultimatum'. 22 lines ending:

When Devonshire deserts the Public Cause,
And Worcester writes against the feudal laws,
When Rose has parts and does not over rate 'em,
Pitt shall explain the Riddle, Ultimatum.

Anon.: No title, copy in large lettering, as if intended to be fixed to a wall, in British Library, Add. Ms. 37683, f. 104.

BRITON! if Pow'r delight thee, be a KNAVE
This Hour a CATO, and the next a SLAVE
Like me by ev'ry Breath affected turn;
Laugh with the Laughers, with the Mourners, mourn;
Now bid to LIBERTY thine Altars rise
Now make the tutelary saint, Excise;
Thus shalt thou tread the path pursued by PITT,
And show, if not thy Honesty, thy Wit.

Anon.: *The Christmas Tale, a Poetical Address and Remonstrance to the Young Ministry* (London: R. Faulder, 1784), pp. 8-9, and p. 11, where Pitt is apostrophized thus:

Illustrious P-tt! thou first of British boys!
A wond'rous youth — and wond'rous are thy joys!
Sceptres thy playthings are, and seals thy toys, etc [...]

Anon.: *Regular Ode; addressed to the Honourable William Pitt* (London: J. Robson, 1784).

No selfish mercenary aim
Sullies the whiteness of thy fame,
Chaste as the mountain snow [...].
How, conscious rectitude his guide,
He stemm'd Corruption's rapid tide,
Some nobler muse shall tell: [...] (p. 9)

Our rock, our guardian Angel thou
To Thee for Freedom's votaries bow [...]
Britannia's hope and pride.
O sent by pitying Heaven to save!
Conduct her o'er the dangerous wave,
And at the helm preside [...] (p. 10)

Anon.: *The Minister's A—* (London: S.W. Fores, 1784): broadsheet.

To accomodate all, were not horses enough,
Of humility P—t gave a wonderful proof;
For seeing a donkey at feed on the grass,
Then England's Prime Minister mounted on a A—
Mounted on a A—, &c (stanza IV)

With budget and taxes, the people half mad,
For a kick at the Minister sure would be glad;
Yet his friends for his honor would cry out alas!
How can you for shame kick the minister's A—
Minister's A—, &c (stanza VIII)

Anon.: *The Extraordinary and Facetious History of the Immaculate Boy, Who, John Gilpinlike, ran a greater Risk than he intended, and came home last* (London: J. Marshall, 1785): broadsheet.

Young Billy was a Statesman bold,
Of credit and renown:
Of Grocers one by name was he
In famous London Town.

Anon.: *An Epistle from the Reverend William M—n, to the Right Hon. William Pitt, Chancellor of the Exchequer; petitioning for the vacant Laureateship* [London: 1785]. Five and a half pages of couplets, NOT by the poet William Mason, beginning:

Son of that awful Peer, whom BRITAIN plac'd
To reign proud Master of the Subject Waste,
Hear, son of CHATHAM (if perchance thine Ears
Drink other Homage than of new-made Peers) [...]

Anon.: *The Minister Impregnable. One Canto* (Dublin: P. Byrne, 1790). This poem deals with the Regency crisis and its aftermath; Pitt 'thou shallow Babe of State' (p. 10) features throughout, but see esp. p. 24:

Thenceforth the Minister grew bold,
Nor ev'n by THURLOW was controul'd [...].
Hurried the short-liv'd session thro',
So that no good the House could do;
Enjoy'd his power, nor lik'd it worse
To feel a heavy-growing purse;
Smil'd at all senatorial style;
Sought neither friend, nor wench, nor wife;
Forsook his former plan pacific;
Grew warlike, bloody and terrific [...]

Anon.: c. 1797, quoted in John W. Derry, *Pitt* (London, 1962), pp. 110–11.

Of Augustus and Rome
The poets still warble,
How he found it of brick
And left it of marble.

So of Pitt and of England
Men may say without vapour,
That he found it of gold,
And left of paper!

Anon.: *The Dispute of Mr. P-tt, and Mr. Tiern-y* [1798] [British Library copy, 1505/155(7), has part missing]. A broadsheet dealing with Pitt's duel with George Tierney, a Whig M.P.

Into the air then P-tt his pistol bang'd,
For if he fir'd he knew he must be hang'd.
His penetration saw the people's mind,
Was to have him hang'd, and all his kind, —

Anon.: Song: *Billy Pitt and the Union* (Dublin: 1798, no publisher given): broadsheet.

Come neighbours attend, while I tell you a story,
Of a cunning young blade whom they call Billy Pitt,
Who, gulling John Bull of his cash and his glory,
On a notable scheme to repair them has hit.

Anon.: Song, 8 March 1800, City of Durham election 1800, in *A Collection of Papers Consisting of the Prose Addresses, &c, all the Favourite Songs, and Satirical Poems, published during the Contest for the Election of a Member to serve in Parliament for the City of Durham, in March 1800* (Durham: L. Pennington, 1800).

While Russell supports Pitt, and Pits support him
No fear need our bosoms invade:
For no harm can ne'er happen from malice or whim,
If prosperous is our coal trade. (p. 13)

Tommy, Tommy, it is sinful
To support a Jacobin full
Of hatred to Pitt and taxation [...] (pp. 39 -14 March 1800)

The Pittite candidate was Matthew Russell (afterwards M.P. for Saltash). *Pits* signifies coal pits, or coal mines, already a significant feature of the economy in Co. Durham.

Anon.: *The Sun* [evening newspaper]

1. 15 October 1800, p. 3c.

'Speech on a late Anniversary', i.e. tenth anniversary of the Westminster election of 1790, in which John Horne Tooke was a candidate: this pretends to be his speech.

There's one thing I'm sorry I'm forced to admit
Because it redounds to the honour of PITT,
He has prov'd our resources are various and great,
And in spite of the War, can still prop the state

2. 18 October 1800, p. 3c.

'Another Speech on a Late Anniversary'. The pretended speaker this time is the Hon. Thomas Erskine, barrister and opposition leader — Lord Chancellor 1806-7 — who had defended Tooke in the 1794 Treason trial.

But nothing shall make me in silence submit,
Though I writhe under tortures inflicted by PITT.

3. 31 October 1800, p. 3c, from a poem headed 'Reply' about Thomas James Mathias.

For much we doubt, if all his wit
Can match the services of PITT.

Anon.: *The Oracle, and the Daily Advertiser* [daily newspaper]

1. 6 February 1801, p. 3a, 'The Puzzle'.

'Tis true, though PITT has got the gout,
He still can talk, and stir about,
But who the deuce can get him out?

2. 12 February 1801, p. 2d, 'The Change!'

Hubbuboo! by Saint PATRICK, you talk very strange,
About PITT going out, and a marvellous change;
But cease botheration, and don't make a bawl,
For the change, do you see, is no change at all:
The Pittite's [sic] sti [sic] in, and the Foxite still gapes
With a hungry look at the Treasury Grapes.
PADDY WHACK

3. 22 December 1802, p. 3a.

Who calls for WILLIAM PITT to fill
The place he held not long ago,
By us is understood
To be a patriot good;
But he's a better patriot still
Who calls for WILLIAM PITT — and Co.

Anon.: *Elegy on the Death of the Right Honorable Charles James Fox* (Bedford: J. Barnes, 1806).

The author, having called Fox 'The "ARDENT CHATHAM" of the present age', continues:

Yet think not, that the Verse, with envy fraught,
Would rob a CHATHAM's Son of birth-right due;
Curs'd be the tongue — accurs'd be the thought,
That slanders sainted PITT — a BRITON TRUE! (p. 9)

What! shall the Muse who now, with pious hand,
Would weave a garland for her Fox's bier;
Cold and unfeeling o'er the fresh grave stand,
Nor shed for PITT the tributary tear? (p. 10)

Boisterous and loud the storm, and black the scene,
When virtuous Pitt resign'd his anxious breath;
Nor kindly sun-shine lent a ray serene,
To sooth his sufferings on the bed of Death (p. 11)

Anon.: *Gr-Ile Agonistes: A Dramatic Poem* (London: J. Hatchard, 1807), p. 11.

[...] vile jacobins have made me stray
Wide from the useful paths which once I trod,
Content to second virtuous Pitt, and plod.

Pitt's plodding cousin Lord Grenville was, as Foreign Secretary 1791–1801, Pitt's principal coadjutor in the war against revolutionary France.

Anon.: *The Feast in Galilee. In humble imitation of Elijah's Mantle* (London: Edmund Lloyd, 1807), an expanded version of a text originally published in *The Pilot*, 'a respectable Evening Paper'. This political skit contains three references to Pitt:

'Thus — "all the talents" — all the wit,
School'd in th'academy of PITT [...]' (p. 14, stanza 15)

[Canning] Thou proudest protegee [sic] of PITT,
Call'd Statesman, Orator, or Wit (p. 18, stanza 20)

A PORTLAND statue for the seat!
PITT's mantle round it thrown.
The Courtiers, panting to their head,
Exclaim, 'Oh! Lord, thou gav'st us bread,
'We give to thee a stone' (p. 21, stanza 26)

Anon.: *Melville's Mantle: being a parody on the poem entitled 'Elijah's Mantle'* (London: J. Budd, 1807), p. 21.

When Pitt's demise reliev'd the land
From thy new friends, that hackneyed band [...]

Anon.: 'Pitt's Illustrious Name. A Glee', in *The Pitt Club: the Commemoration of the Anniversary of Mr. Pitt's Birth-Day at the City of London Tavern on Saturday the 27th of May, 1815* [London: 1815], p. 15.

If free from every foreign thrall
If happy, prosperous, blest with all
That freedom's sons can claim,
Then, ever, on this honour's day
Let Britain heartfelt homage pay
To PITT's illustrious name

In *The Pitt Club: the Triennial Commemoration of the Anniversary of Mr. Pitt's Birth, at Merchant Taylor's Hall, London, Wednesday the 28th of May, 1817* [London, 1817], p. 22, the same text is given as a 'Glee and Chorus' but a note explains that it was given anonymously to the Pitt Club as an Ode in 1810.

Anon.: Song: 'The Memory of Mr. Pitt' in *The Pitt Club: the Commemoration of the Anniversary of Mr. Pitt's Birth-Day at the City of London Tavern, on Saturday the 27th of May, 1815* [London, 1815], p. 30.

Yes, Pitt! if no longer the light of thy form
Leads England's proud back through the cloud and the storm [...]

Anon.: untitled 'Duet and Chorus', in *The Pitt Club: the Triennial Commemoration of the Anniversary of Mr. Pitt's Birth, at Merchant Taylor's Hall, London, Wednesday the 28th of May, 1817* [London, 1817], p. 21.

The wreath thus presented by Wisdom was wove,
When PITT against Treason and Anarchy strove [...]

Anon.: *A Poetical Epistle to the Right Honourable George Canning, by a student at Lincoln's Inn* (London: R. P. Moore, 1825), p. 11.

There, nursed by the mighty Pitt, whose name endeared
To his own realm, by foreign nations feared,
Charmed thy young days, and, by its magic power,
Drew forth thy latent wit in that bright hour;
Each mourned that parent, whose departed worth,
So late a sunbeam, glittered on this earth [...]

Anon.: Song: 'Pitt the Friend of our Land', in *Anniversary Meeting of the Leeds Pitt Club May 28, 1827* (Leeds: Robinson and Hernaman, 1827), p. 20. Only the title of the song is given, though the speeches at the meeting are given in full.

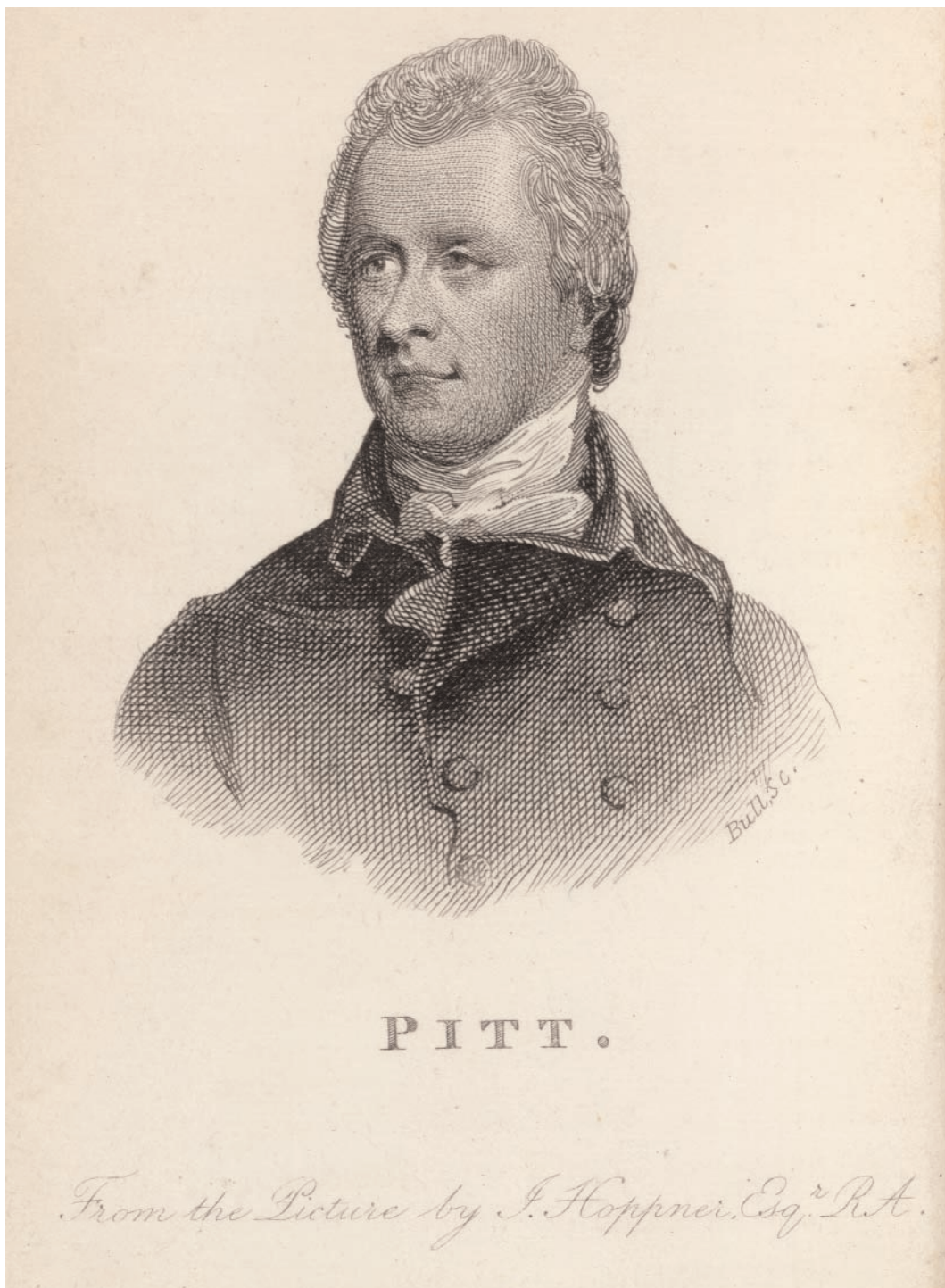


Fig. 2. Pitt. Sketches of the Right Honourable William Pitt, and Right Honourable Charles James Fox (London, c. 1807), frontispiece. BL 1565/177.

William Pitt was born 28 May 1759 in Hayes, Kent, England, United Kingdom to William Pitt, 1st Earl of Chatham (1708-1778) and Hester Grenville, 1st Baroness Chatham (1720-1803) and died 23 January 1806 in London, England, United Kingdom of unspecified causes. Ancestors are from the United Kingdom. William Pitt the Younger (28 May 1759 – 23 January 1806) was a British politician of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. He became the youngest Prime Minister in 1783 at the age of 24. He left office in "Political Verse in Late Georgian Britain: Poems Referring to William Pitt the Younger (1759-1806)."™ Electronic British Library Journal (2004), p. 5. 226. A memoir to Canning published in the *Whitby Magazine* (October 1827) claimed that the verse, despite its ephemeral nature, had "become, in a great measure, national [â€] the song is so universally admired"™.10. Figure 1. The Spiritual Form of Pitt Guiding Behemoth, William Blake (c. 1805), Tempera and gold on canvas, 740 Å— 627, Photo © Tate, CC-BY-NC-ND 3.0, N01110. 10 "Biographical memoir of the late Right Honourable George Canning"™ in *The Whi*