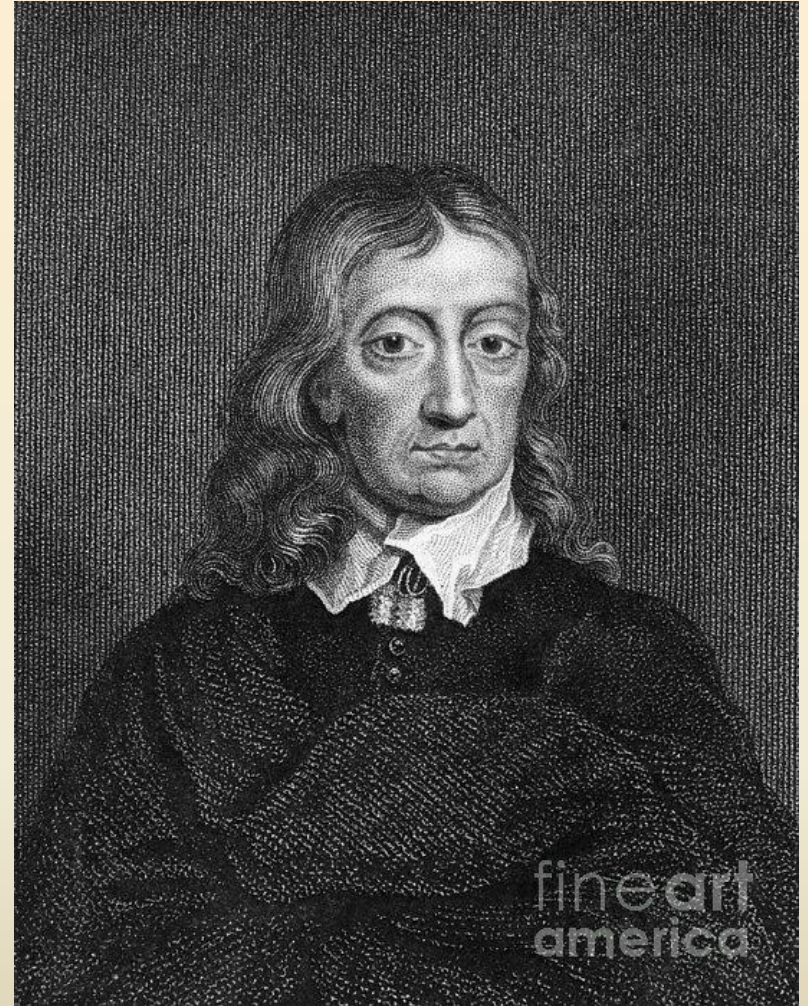


John Milton



John Milton was born in London on December 9, 1608, into a middle-class family. He was educated at St. Paul's School, then at Christ's College, Cambridge, where he began to write poetry in Latin, Italian, and English, and prepared to enter the clergy.



After university spent the next six years in his father's country home in Buckinghamshire following a rigorous course of independent study to prepare for a career as a poet.

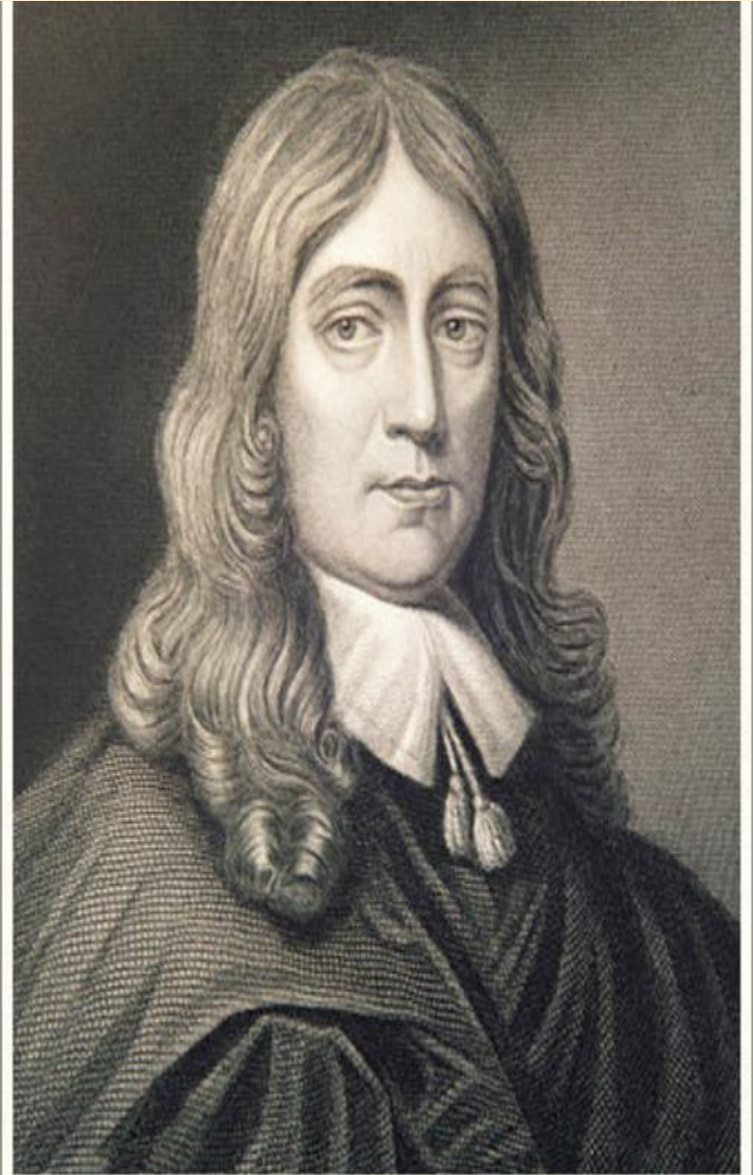


His extensive reading included both classical and modern works of religion, science, philosophy, history, politics, and literature. In addition, Milton was proficient in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, Spanish, and Italian, and obtained a familiarity with Old English and Dutch as well.

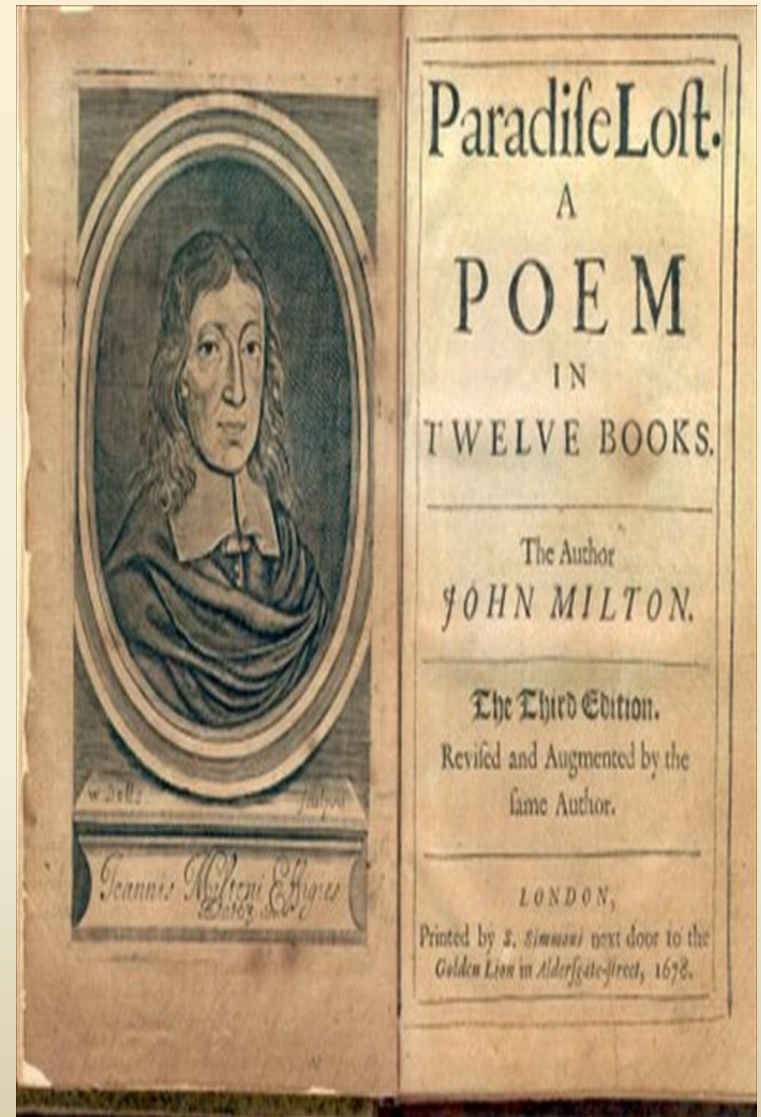


During his period of private study, Milton composed a number of poems, including "*On the Morning of Christ's Nativity*," "*On Shakespeare*," "*L'Allegro*," "*Il Penseroso*," and the pastoral elegy "*Lycidas*." In May of 1638, Milton began a 13-month tour of France and Italy, during which he met many important intellectuals and influential people, including the astronomer **Galileo**, who appears in Milton's tract against censorship, "*Areopagitica*."

After the Restoration of Charles II to the throne in 1660, Milton was arrested as a defender of the Commonwealth, fined, and soon released. He lived the rest of his life in seclusion in the country, completing the blank-verse epic poem *Paradise Lost* in 1667, Milton oversaw the printing of a second edition of *Paradise Lost* in 1674, which included an explanation of “why the poem rhymes not,” clarifying his use of blank verse,



Paradise Lost, which chronicles Satan's temptation of Adam and Eve and their expulsion from Eden, is widely regarded as his masterpiece and one of the greatest epic poems in world literature. The epic has had wide-reaching effect, inspiring other long poems, such as Alexander Pope's *The Rape of the Lock*, William Wordsworth's *The Prelude* and John Keats's *Endymion*, as well as Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein*,



Poetry

Lycidas (1638)

Poems (1645)

Paradise Lost (1667)

Paradise Regained (1671)

Samson Agonistes (1671)

Drama

Arcades (1632)

Comus (1634)

Non-Fiction

Of Reformation Touching Church Discipline in England (1641)

The Reason of Church Government Urged Against Prelaty (1642)

The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce (1643)

Areopagitica (1644)

Of Education (1644)

The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates (1649)

A Treatise of Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Causes (1659)