

although the reader can find her under the listings for midwives and nurses. References in the index refer to folios within each individual account, not pages in the publication, and the individual account is cited by the last number of the old archival number. This makes citations in future research easier, but necessitates flipping back and forth if one does not remember the catalogue number of each account. I do wish Powell had discussed how she chose to organize the accounts. They are neither chronologically nor by archival number, although the five chamber accounts are sequential and chronological. I also wish the press had included modern dates in the page headings. Lacking them, the reader must go to the summary at the beginning of each account, to learn what folios cover what years. While unwieldy in many ways, patience will reward those interested in the wealth of economic and social details provided by these wonderful records.

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Pat Rogers. *Defoe's Tour and Early Modern Britain: Panorama of the Nation*

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The three-volume *Tour thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain* (1724–26) was first attributed to its author in a fairly muted manner on the title page of its seventh edition (1769), which presented it as “Originally begun by the celebrated Daniel De Foe, continued by the late Mr. Richardson.” It thus acknowledged Samuel Richardson’s role in expanding the book in editions after Defoe’s death (it was in four volumes by this point), making it seem like Defoe had initiated a project that only came to fruition after his demise. Posthumous attributions of works to Defoe have come under scrutiny of late owing to the robotic extension of Furbank and Owens’ principles for Defoe attribution to works assigned to him in the later eighteenth century. Distracting question marks have thus been placed next to Defoe’s authorship of works first associated with him in the 1770s, such as *Moll Flanders* (1722) and *Roxana* (1724). But not, so far at least, the *Tour*.

The absence of doubt may be because, as Pat Rogers states in this important new study, the *Tour* is “the work ... in which Defoe is most truly himself, and in some respects most effectively a writer for our times” (210). This is Defoe the polymath, improver, and harbinger of modernity on the eve of the Industrial Revolution that is often asserted with respect to the *Tour* but which has never previously been demonstrated with such specificity and rigor. Rogers’ study situates the *Tour* as “one of the most important books written about the nation in the eighteenth century” and “the most capacious panorama of the age” (1, 2). In his authoritative, wide-ranging, and insightful attention to the work and its milieu, Rogers shows that Defoe’s *Tour* describes “a country in the process of rapid and mainly beneficent change,” establishes that “no other source presents early modern Britain in such fullness

and detail,” and therefore does suitable justice to the formal dexterity and historical importance of the work (39, 210).

Accounting for the *Tour*'s extensive coverage of Britain and depth of understanding of ongoing historical changes, Rogers points us again and again to the author's qualifications for his task. This is not just Defoe's experience of traveling around the island but his literary skill in creating “embodied form” by “enact[ing] the rigours of day-to-day travel” in the style and structure of his book (54–55, 110). It is not just that Defoe applies his commercial ideas to a succession of localities but that there emerges from their combination a “controlling vision,” aesthetic as much as socioeconomic, derived from “a sense of the economic, geographic and cultural interdependence of the various parts of the country” (229). And the *Tour* is not just a work “commendably up to the minute on a range of topics” but one that is admirably “prescient,” wherein “observations bizarrely appear more accurate if we project them forward a few decades” (37, 228, 29). “Unmistakably, Defoe had a closer knowledge of Britain in its depth and breadth than most other commentators,” Rogers surmises with perhaps unnecessary qualification; he was “the right author in the right place at the right time” (7, 124).

Defoe's Tour and Early Modern Britain has several intersecting aims. They include the demonstration that “if we want a single guide to Britain at the start of the eighteenth century, this is the place to start” (8): that is, the *Tour* is unprecedented and unmatched in its coverage and perspicience. Also, Rogers shows that twentieth- and twenty-first-century historians' uses of the *Tour* confirm it as “a central text for the study of early modern Britain,” though their magpielike raids on it for specific details do inadequate justice to its “overall ideological shape” (113, 129). More than the sum of its parts (a succession of circuits), the *Tour* is “one of the first guide-books in English with an enduring literary interest” because it “actualises the experience of travel” to a greater extent than existing travelogues and because it has an epic scope through which Defoe “seeks to portray the greatness of the newly united Britain as a grand adventure, fit for panegyric treatment” (47, 36, 84).

Furthermore, Rogers shows that “Defoe's overall effort to present Britain in an affirmative light” came against the backdrop of two potential derailments—the 1715 Jacobite Uprising and 1720 South Sea Bubble—that he skillfully negotiates through “a sense of wonder at the fortunate preservation of the nation” and a plangent treatment of the recent past (167, 137). In this account, Defoe's vision of Britain was based on his sensitivity to local difference, “creating through speech patterns a sense of the nation in all its regional variety” by indulging and celebrating local folklore, dialects, and customs (178). And through his attention to the *Tour*'s account of an evolving turnpike system, Rogers explicates Defoe's idea “that better transport was the key not just to improvements in trade, but also to the creation of a more united kingdom” (36–37). Finally, Rogers aims to show that another work, the mammoth *Atlas Maritimus & Commercialis* (1728), which has been associated with Defoe but with doubts about his contribution, recycles parts of the *Tour* in ways that confirm beyond reasonable doubt “Defoe's involvement in the compilation of the British section of *AMC*, as well as the later segment on British trade” (268).

All in all, *Defoe's Tour and Early Modern Britain* is a necessary book, one that sets an important primary source in its appropriate biographical, social, and literary contexts. It caps Rogers' many contributions to a fuller assessment and appreciation of the *Tour* starting with his 1971 abridged edition for Penguin, continuing through his 1994 study, *The Text of Great Britain: Theme and Design in Defoe's Tour*, and extended in more recent articles and notes. It is fitting to apply to Pat Rogers, in his treatment of Defoe and his milieu, the accolade Rogers applies to the author of the *Tour*, such as when he calls Defoe “an observer of consummate gifts and unrivalled qualifications” (231).