

The King and the Miller of Mansfield



well read
informed communications

This education Pack developed by Kate Dawson at Well Read in consultation with local heritage groups and schools. Particular thanks to Denis Hill, Heritage Consultant for his help providing historic background.

at Mill Waters heritage site

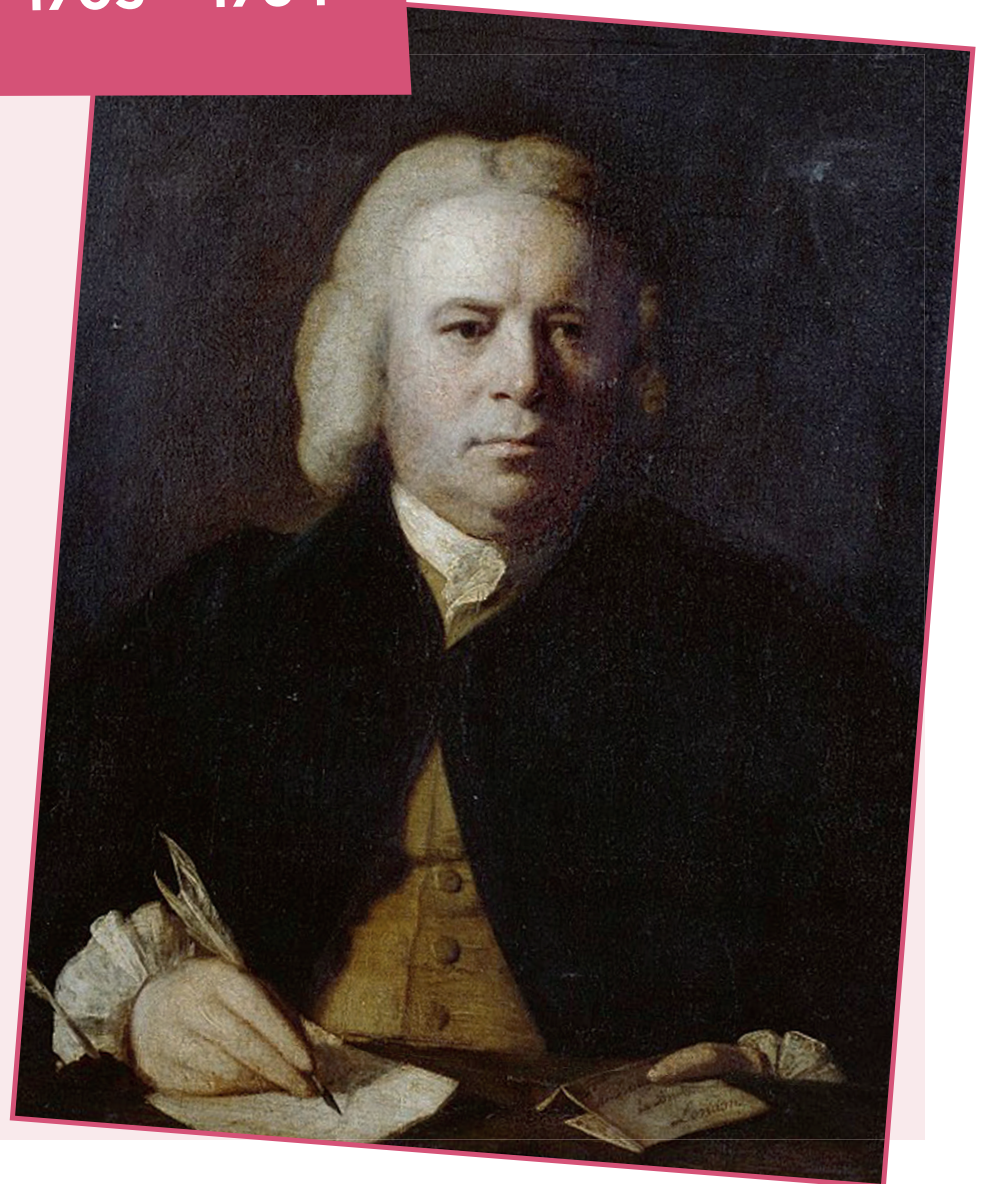
Robert Dodsley 1703 - 1764

Robert grew up in the Mansfield area and started out as an apprentice to a stockinger (knitting socks).

He ran away to London and became a footman.

He started making money writing poems and plays and with the proceeds became a bookseller.

Robert went on to become a successful publisher and playwright.



Georgian theatre

The 18th century was the great age of theatre.

By the end of the 1700s there were seven big theatres in London including Drury Lane which held 3,000 people.

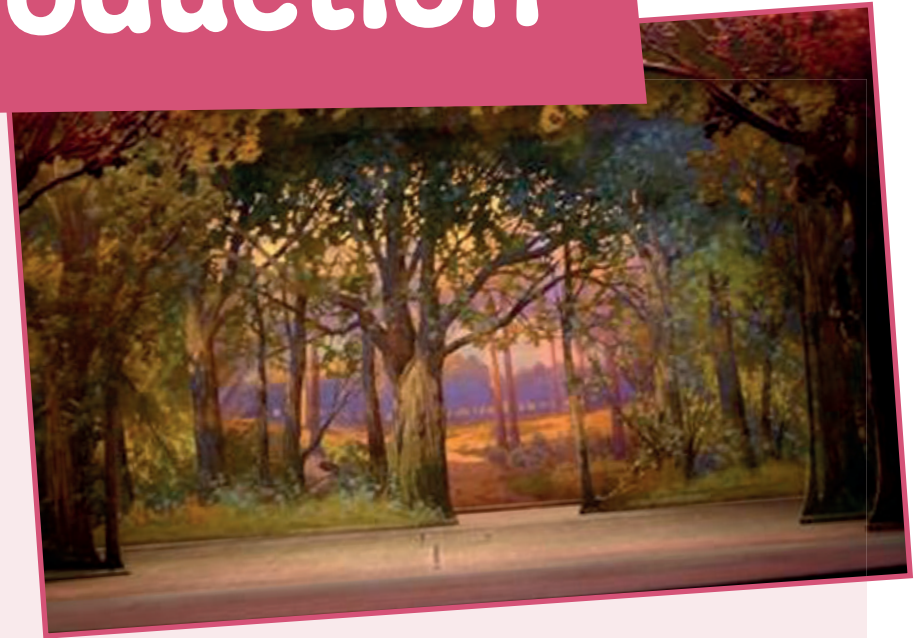


Stage sets and production

Scenery was painted on flat pieces of wood (flats) which could quickly be moved around to create new scenes. Fabric was also hung above the stage (the drop) and above the flats (the borders).

Lights were used to create the effect of moonlight and flames.

Scrim was a type of gauze across the stage which also added to the atmosphere.



The age of reason



The Industrial Revolution changed society. People moved to the cities and the towns to work in the factories like the mills and ironworks.

But people were also having new ideas about how society needed to change. The poor people were fed up with the wealthy having all the power, fuelled by the French Revolution which ended with the King being killed and a new government taking over.



The right of everybody to have freedom and their own property are key themes in *The King and the Miller of Mansfield*.

The King and the Miller of Mansfield

The King and the Miller of Mansfield is said to be based on a legend.

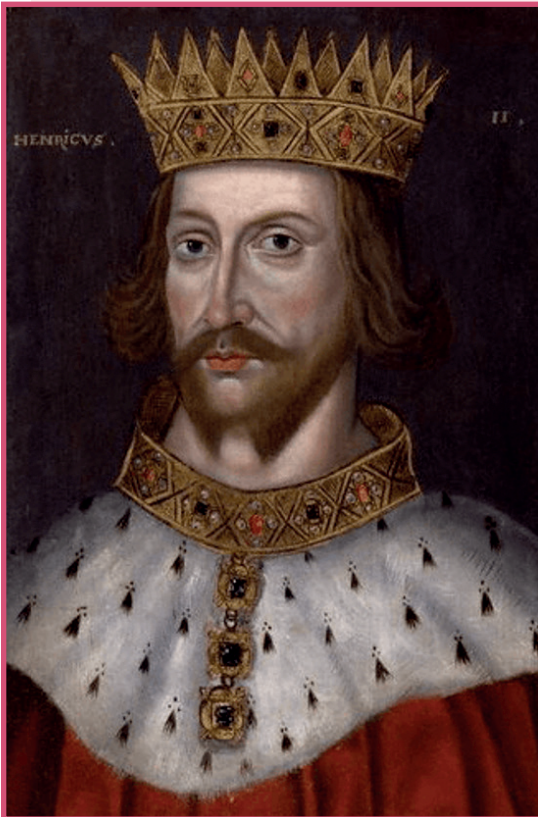
It starts with the Miller of Mansfield, John Cockle, coming across the King who has become lost whilst out hunting in Sherwood Forest.

The King pretends he is one of his own courtiers. The Miller gives the King lodgings for the night.

When the King's courtiers are reunited with him, the King reveals his true identity and gives the Miller a Knighthood for his hospitality.



King Henry and the royal court



King Henry was King between 1154 and 1189.

The Royal Court was the King's household, and also home to his advisors who would travel with him everywhere.

The King also held Court – he would make judgements on disputes, especially between lords and barons, the powerful people in society.

The King's Court included a jester. King Henry's jester was Roland the Farter, a flautist, who played “one jump, one whistle, and one fart” for the Court each Christmas.



The tradition of hunting



King Henry loved hunting. At the time there were around 70 royal forests in the country. You had to have permission from the King to hunt there.

Hunting was a popular sport for the nobility as it provided good training for going to war, requiring skill and courage.

Deer, wild boar, foxes, rabbits, otters and game birds were hunted.

