

DANIEL DEFOE.
HIS LIFE AND WORK.
“ROBINSON CRUSOE”

He went bankrupt several times. He was always deep in debt. The only branch of business in which he proved successful was journalism and literature.



Daniel Defoe was the founder of the early bourgeois realistic novel and the father of English periodicals.

“The Review which he founded in 1704 and conducted until 1713, is regarded as the first English newspaper.

It paved the way to the magazines “The Tatler “ and “The Spectator”.



When Defoe was twenty-three, he started writing pamphlets on questions of the hour.



When the Protestant King William III was placed on the throne(1689), Defoe started writing pamphlets praising his policy. Due to the fact that William III was supported by the Whig party, he was continually attacked by the Tories.

During the reign of Queen Anne (1702 -1714), persecution of the Dissenters began again, as in the reign of James II.



Defoe wrote a pamphlet in defence of the Dissenters, in which he attacked the Tories and the established Church. The author was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment.

In 1719, Daniel Defoe tried his hand at another kind of literature – fiction, and wrote the novel which brought him world-wide fame – “The Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe”.

After the book had been published Defoe became famous and rich and was able to pay his creditors in full.

Now he wrote for four public magazines and received a regular sum of money from the government.

Besides “Robinson Crusoe”, Daniel Defoe wrote some more novels which were popular during his lifetime, but we do not hear much about them now.

They are:

“The Life of Captain Singleton”,

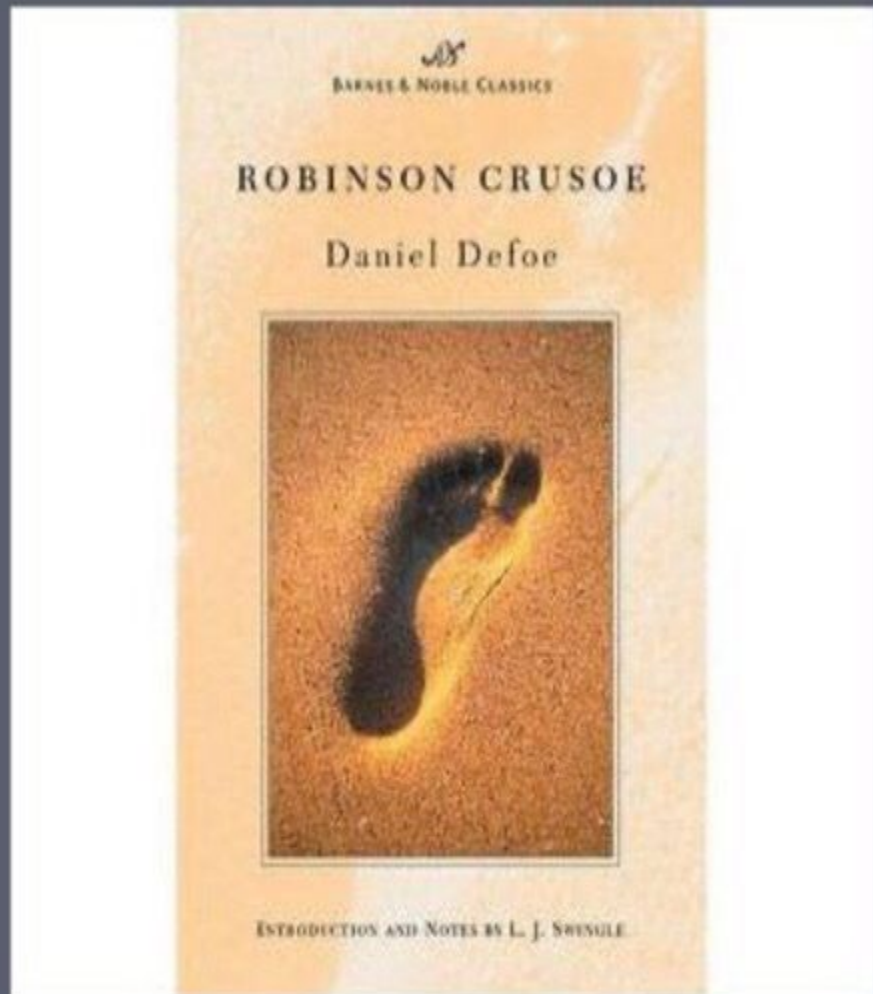
“The Fortunes and Misfortunes of Moll Flanders”,

“The History of Colonel Jack,”

“A History of Lady Roxana”.

In 1729, while at work on the book “The Complete English Gentleman”, Defoe fell ill and in two years’ time he died.

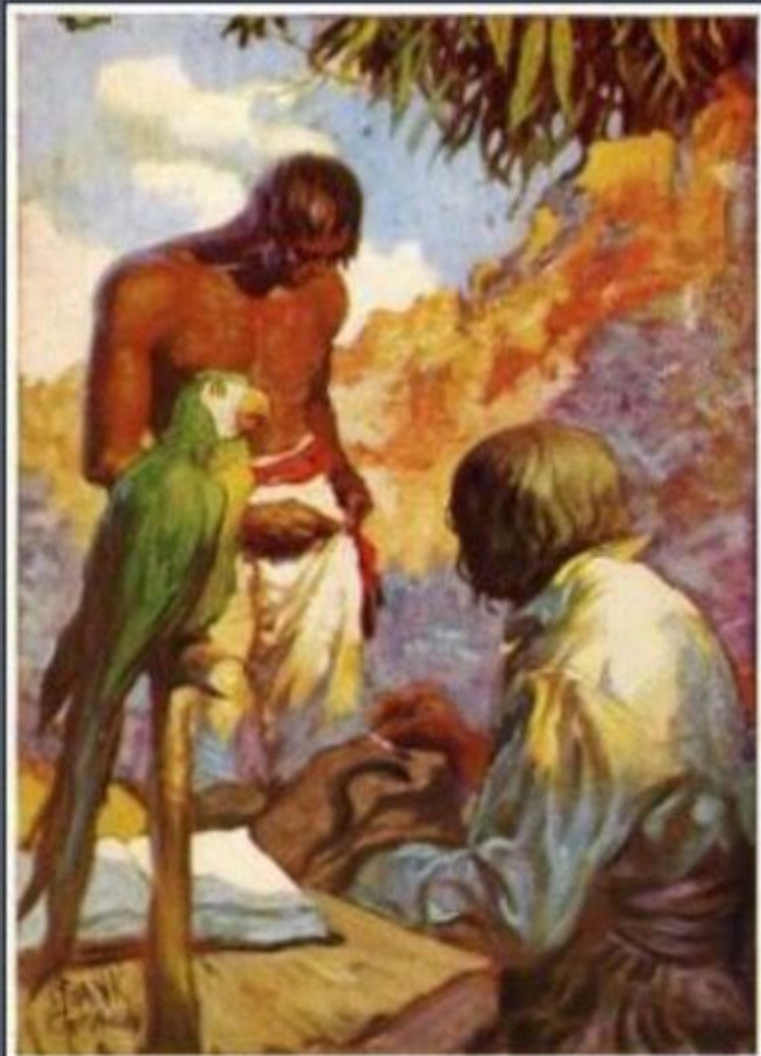
“Robinson Crusoe”



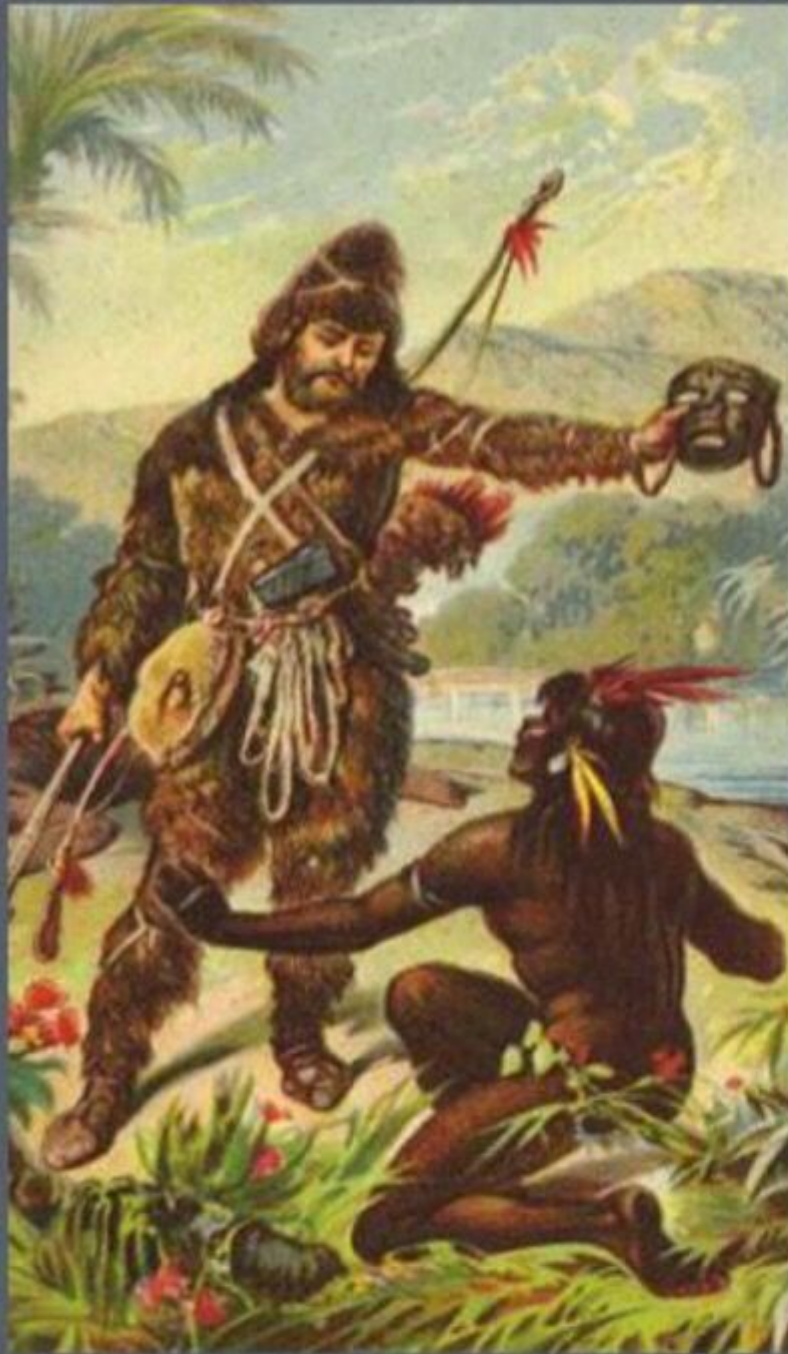
Books about voyages and new discoveries were extremely popular in the first quarter of the 18th century. A true story that was described in one of the magazines, attracted Defoe's attention. It was about Alexander Selkirk, a Scottish sailor, who had quarreled with his captain and was put ashore on a desert island near South America where he lived alone for 4 years and 4 months.

In 1709 he was picked up by a passing vessel.

Daniel Defoe made his hero, Robinson Crusoe, spend 26 years on a desert island.



At the beginning of the story the hero is an inexperienced youth, who develops into a strong-willed man, able to withstand all the hardships. Robinson Crusoe's most characteristic trait is his optimism. He is an enthusiastic worker and always hopes for the best.



Robinson Crusoe is very practical. The beauty of the island has no appeal to him, he regards the island as his personal property. He is proud to be master of it. He believes in God and in the hand of Providence. In desperate moments he turns to God for help.

The other central character is Friday. He is intelligent, generous and skilful. He is portrayed as a kind-hearted man.

