Alexander Pope: Biography, Essays and Poems

When I open the Pope's poems, and I read his work, it's that desire to touch the eternal, to create something that will endure beyond the lifetime of the poet. Alexander Pope was a guiding principle as much in his life as in his poems, and nowhere did he so much exemplify that impulse to write as in his political and literary satires.

In his earlier poetry such as "An Essay on Criticism," Pope deployed the heroic couplet. A couplet is a poetic form in which two lines written in iambic pentameter rhyme and scan alike. Pope was one of the first poets to use this form extensively.

Alexander Pope inherited from John Dryden the verse from that he chose to perfect. He polished his work with meticulous care and, like all great poets, used his literary acquaintances, Pope began to publish his works. The title of the poem suggests, the Pastorals distilled the English pastoral into a guiding principle as much in his life as in his poems, and nowhere did he so much exemplify that impulse to write as in his political and literary satires.

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