

Visit Bentham in person

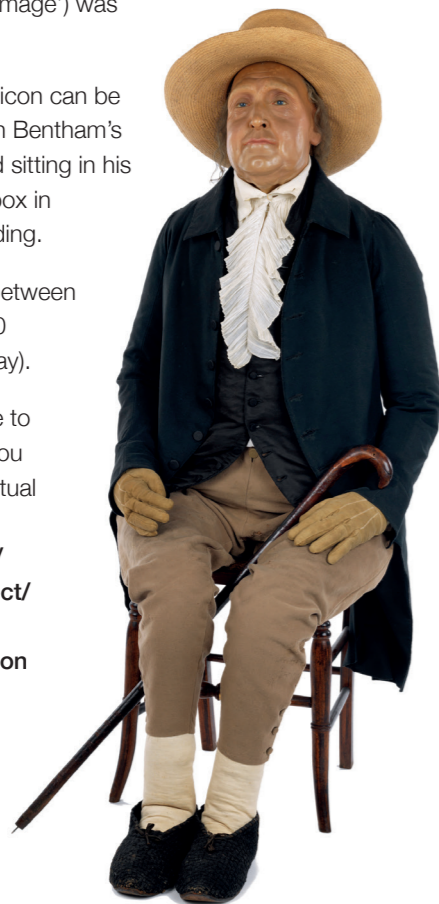
Bentham willed his body to medical science, and requested that his body be preserved and displayed. His corpse was dissected by his friend Dr Thomas Southwood Smith. In 1850, after eighteen years of staying at Dr Smith's house, Bentham's auto-icon ('self-image') was gifted to UCL.

Today, the auto-icon can be found dressed in Bentham's own clothes and sitting in his own chair, in a box in UCL's main building.

You can visit it between 07.30 and 18.00 (Monday to Friday).

If you are unable to come to UCL, you can view the 'virtual auto-icon' at:

www.ucl.ac.uk/Bentham-Project/who/autoicon/Virtual_Auto_Icon



Bentham's auto-icon.
Image courtesy UCL Digital Media.



TRANSCRIBE BENTHAM NEEDS YOU

ucl.ac.uk/transcribe-bentham

Transcribe Bentham is brought to you by:

UCL Bentham Project
www.ucl.ac.uk/bentham-project



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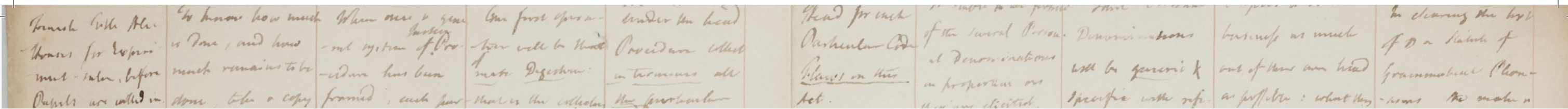
UCL FACULTY OF LAWS
BENTHAM PROJECT



**“Many hands make light work.
Many hands together make merry work.”**

Your opportunity to explore the unpublished manuscripts of Jeremy Bentham





Why Transcribe Bentham?

As the philosopher and reformer Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832) wrote in 1793, ‘many hands together make merry work’. In this spirit, we invite you to take part in the award-winning Transcribe Bentham initiative, which affords a unique opportunity to join a community of volunteers in exploring and transcribing a collection of unparalleled historical and philosophical importance: the unpublished manuscripts of Jeremy Bentham.

Your work will support cutting-edge scholarship, as your transcripts will form the basis of future volumes of the *Collected Works of Jeremy Bentham* by UCL’s Bentham Project, for which you will be fully credited.

Your transcripts will also be stored in UCL’s digital library, creating an important electronic resource for students, scholars, and the general public, and ensuring the long-term digital preservation of this priceless collection. You could be the first person to read a manuscript since Bentham wrote it, and make new discoveries which could change perceptions of Bentham’s life and thought.

Digitisation of the Bentham collection is progressing rapidly and thousands of images of Bentham’s writings on various subjects are available on our website. Volunteers have now transcribed over 16,000 of these manuscript pages. In the course of their efforts, they have found a recollection of Bentham’s childhood, details of the plans for his ‘panopticon’ prison and his writings on the process of transporting convicts to Australia as a form of punishment.

Why not join in, and see what else there is to uncover?

READ

Transcribe Bentham is now participating in the Recognition and Enrichment of Archival Documents (READ) project, an EU-funded collaboration led by the University of Innsbruck. The project is focused on making archival material more accessible through the development of handwritten text recognition and other technologies. Researchers are currently training computers to recognise Bentham’s handwriting. We hope that this new technology will make it easier for our volunteers to read and transcribe Bentham’s papers. For more information, please visit: <http://read.transkribus.eu/>

Who was Jeremy Bentham?

Bentham was the founder of the modern doctrine of utilitarianism, and is a hugely influential figure in the fields of legal philosophy and representative democracy. He devised a theory of punishment which emphasised proportionality of punishment and reformation of the offender, his *Nonsense upon Stilts* is an important critique of the doctrine of natural rights, and he was the first philosopher to advance a defence of sexual liberty.

Bentham is most famous for his proposed ‘panopticon’ prison, but wrote on topics as varied as religion, jury reform, colonialism, political economy, and education. His manuscripts are divided into two main collections: UCL holds some 60,000 manuscript folios (c. 30 million words), and the British Library has about 12,500 folios (c. 6 millions words).



Jeremy Bentham, 1823.
James Thomson after William Derby, Bentham MS 173, f.35.
UCL Library Special Collections.

Taking part

You do not require any specialist knowledge, training, technical expertise, or prior approval from us: you just need some enthusiasm, the desire to be challenged, and perhaps a little patience! We provide instructions on how to get started, and offer online support and feedback to support you in your work.

To create a volunteer account and begin transcribing, please visit the Transcription Desk: www.transcribe-bentham.da.ulcc.ac.uk/td/Transcribe_Bentham

Contact us

Tel: **+44 (0)20 3108 8480** (administrator)

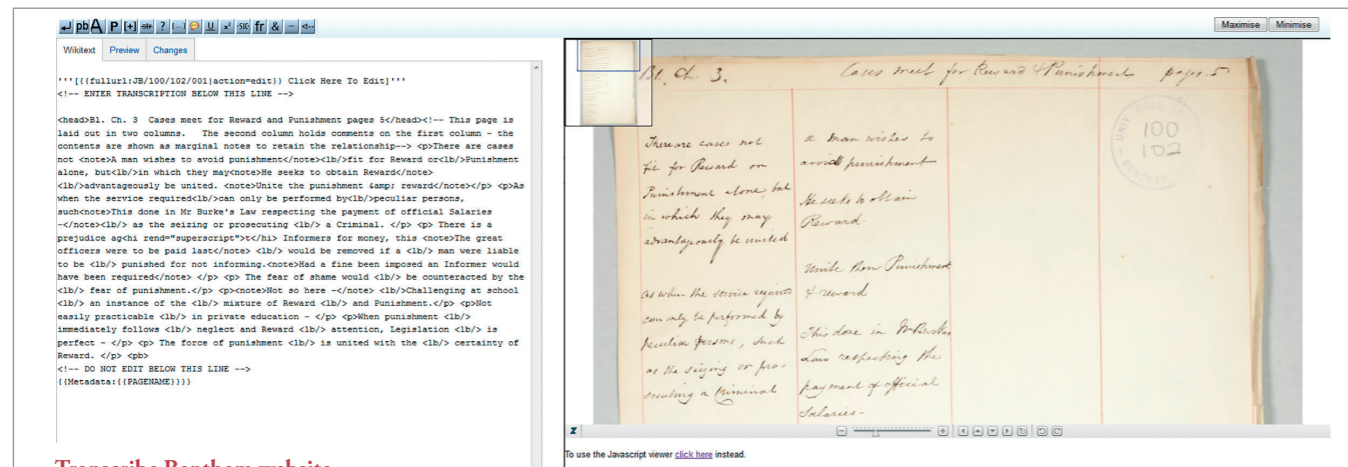
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