

Happy Birthday, Frances Wright!

Post by “Paquin” of September 12, 2021 at 4:25 AM

There is a long tradition of authors posing as editors of found manuscripts. Robinson Crusoe was originally published with Robinson Crusoe given as the author so original readers thought they were reading a real account.

The pleasure/fun of Wright posing as someone who has received the found manuscript is the conceit of veracity, plus there is the added layer consisting of the reactions of the authorities to the Italian scholar i.e. that this text contains ideas that have frequently been seen as seditious.

To add to the interesting list of precocious young scholars provided by JJElbert, I would also suggest the young Elizabeth Tudor who would become Queen Elizabeth I. She was translating into Latin, French and Italian at the age of 12. She also translated from Greek. Here was a pre-teen able to read Lucretius and Epicurus in the original.