

# Bulwer Lytton

Part 9 : Encyclopedia of Ancient and Forbidden Secrets...Lytton Bulwer...Magi...Magic(black&white)...The Mathers(S.L.MacGregor & Moina)+++

Lytton, Bulwer: Author (1803 - 1873). According to his baptismal certificate, the full name of this once famous author was Edward George Earle Lytton Bulwer - Lytton, and in signing some of his early writings he used all these names with occasional variations in their order, an act which was regarded by many people as springing from pride and pompousness, and which elicited the withering satire of Thackeray in *Punch*. Lytton was born at London in 1803, and his father was a Norfolk squire, Bulwer of Heydon Hall (associated with the English occultist and adventurer John Heydon); while his mother was Elizabeth Barbara Lytton, a lady who claimed kinship with Constantine Waredwyr the semi - mythical hero who led the Britons or Welsh against the Angles in the fourth century.

As a child the future novelist was delicate, but he learnt to read at a surprisingly early age, and began to write verses before he was ten years old. Going first to a small private school at Fulham, he soon passed on to another one at Rottingdean; and here he continued to manifest literary tastes, Byron and Scott being his chief idols at this time. So clever was the boy thought, indeed, that his relations decided it would be a mistake to send him to a public school; and accordingly he was placed with a tutor at Ealing, under whose care he progressed rapidly with his studies. Thereafter he proceeded to Cambridge, where he took his degree easily, and won many academic laurels, while on leaving the University he travelled for a while in Scotland and in France, and then bought a commission in the army. He sold it soon afterwards, however, while in 1827 he was married, and now he began to devote himself seriously to writing, his first publications of note being the novels of Falkland, Pelham and Eugene Aram. These won an instant success, and placed considerable wealth in the author's hands, the result being that in 1831 he entered parliament as liberal member for St. Ives, Huntingdonshire; and during the next ten years he was an active politician yet found time to produce a host of stories, for instance *The Last Days of Pompeii* and *Ernest Maltravers*, *Zanoni* and *The Last of the Barons*. These were followed shortly by *The Caxtons*, and simultaneously Lytton achieved some fame as a dramatist, perhaps his best play being *The Lady of Lyons*; while in 1851 he was instrumental in founding a scheme for pensioning authors, in 1862 he increased his reputation greatly by his novel entitled *A Strange Story*, and four years later his services to literature and politics were rewarded by a peerage. He now began to work at yet another story, *Kenelm Chillingly*, but his health was beginning to fail, and he died in 1873 at Torquay.

The works cited above constitute but a fragment of Lytton's voluminous achievement. Besides further novels too numerous to mention, he issued several volumes of verses notably *Ismael* and *The New Union*, while he did translations from German, Spanish and Italian, he produced a history of Athens, he contributed to endless periodicals, and was at one time editor of *The New Monthly Magazine*. But albeit so busy throughout the whole of his career, and while winning - vast fame and opulence, Lytton's life was not really a happy one, various causes conducing to make it otherwise. Long before meeting his wife he fell in love with a young girl who died prematurely, and this loss seems to have left an indelible sear on his heart, while his marriage was anything but a successful one, the pair being divorced comparatively soon after their union. Now as a mere child Lytton had evinced a predilection for mysticism, while he had surprised his mother once by asking her whether she was - not sometimes overcome by the sense of her own identity " (almost exactly the same question was put to his nurse in boyhood by another mystic, William Bell Scott); Lytton sedulously developed his leaning towards the occult, and it is everywhere manifest in his literary output. It transpires, for example, in his poem *The Tale of a Dreamer*, and again in *Kenelm Chillingly*, while in *A Strange Story* he tries to give a scientific colouring to old - fashioned [magic](#). [from

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