



The **BYSTANDER**

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THE BYSTANDER, 1903-1940

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Discover the attitudes and interests of Britain's wealthy citizens...

Established in 1903 by George Holt Thomas (the son of illustrator and social reformer William Luson Thomas, founder of *The Graphic*), *The Bystander* merged with its sister title, *The Tatler*, in 1940. It thus became known as *The Tatler and Bystander*. Much like its successor, *The Bystander* appealed to a conservative, affluent readership. It sought to reflect everyday life amongst Britain's social elite.



The Bystander joined a series of titles belonging to *The Illustrated London News (ILN)*.

Within its pages one could find the latest gossip on the aristocracy, advice on antiques, and reports on the fishing and hunting seasons. It also provided a platform for influential writers and artists. It published short stories by celebrated authors such as Daphne du Maurier and Hector Hugh Munro — better known by his pseudonym “Saki” — as well as contributions from cartoonist Bruce Bairnsfather (notably his “Old Bill” series). *The Bystander* yields exciting material for those working in the fields of literary studies, the history of art, and social history.



This collection contains over 136,000 images from almost 2,000 issues of *The Bystander*.

Playful as much of its content tended to be, *The Bystander* nevertheless reflected the racism and social discrimination that pervaded British society during the heyday of the Empire.

Its pages are a rich resource for students and researchers wishing to explore the themes of colonialism, ethnicity, and race within modern history.

“*The Bystander* shall not be glanced through and then thrown away, but read as well”.

- *The Bystander*, 9 December 1903.

Sources include: *Illustrated London News*

... at a time of profound social, cultural, and political change

The BYSTANDER



Despite its typically jovial, satirical tone, *The Bystander* remained supportive of the British establishment and its imperial ethos. It perpetuated racist and xenophobic stereotypes and even made light of the institution of slavery.



Whilst *The Bystander* kept its readership abreast of current affairs, it often prioritised light-hearted content, aiming simply to entertain.



Like many other *ILN*-owned titles, *The Bystander* featured contributions from prominent figures within Britain's arts and literary scenes.

Over 4 million records covering 1000 years of world history: from politics & warfare, to slavery & revolution.



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