

## The occurrences of common life: Samuel Johnson, Practical Science and Industry in the Midlands

**Image:** 18th Century Birmingham trade token (n.d.). H Biggs halfpenny with a bust of Dr Samuel Johnson and three lions rampant. Though the artistic quality of the image is poor, the token displays Johnson's importance and connects him with the economic and technological activity of the Midlands which he described, supported and celebrated in his writings.

### Summary

This study evaluates Johnson's positive attitude to science. It provides evidence of his enquiring intellect through quotations from his letters, diaries, the *Dictionary* and his essays. Johnson was exceptionally fond of London, but not enough recognition has been given to his bond with the Midlands. Extracts from Johnson's recorded travels in the region throw light on his desire to learn through observation and personal experience and his keen interest in practical science and industry.