



Secret Bankside: Walks in the Outlaw Borough

John Constable

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On the south bank of the Thames, outside the jurisdiction of the ancient City of London, Bankside has long been known as a hotbed of creativity, dissent and loose living. With its brothels and bear-pits, its prisons and its pubs, the area has inspired the nation's greatest writers - Chaucer, Shakespeare, Dickens, Keats and Blake - and been home to its most famous theatres - the Globe, The Rose, The Old Vic and the National. These same south London streets have given sanctuary to immigrants and refugees, to tradesmen, craftsmen and Thames Watermen, to the workhouse poor and the criminal underclass.

Writer, performer and local historian John Constable is well known for his walks around this fascinating area. The eight walks collected here are among his most popular. Packed with social history and local lore, they are witty, insightful and hugely entertaining. Each walk is easy to follow, accompanied by maps and clear directions, and illustrated with period prints and contemporary photographs. Together, they tell the extraordinary and, until recently, largely forgotten story of London's anarchic, irrepressible 'Outlaw Borough'.

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