

**THE FREETHINKER
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(page 455)

**In Bull Lane.
B. 1737; D. 1809.**

**Author of "Common Sense,"
"Rights of Man," and "The Age of Reason,"
A Founder of American
Independence with Pen and Sword**

**Lived in this House
As Exciseman and Tobacconist
1768—1774**

—Inscription on a house in Bull Lane Lewes

Here in the heart of the Sussex hills,
Green young Summer hath stayed to sing
The chalky pits and the shallow rills,
And the footprints left by the feet of Spring.
In Lewes town there is Summer again,
As under the eaves in old Bull Lane
We linger to dream of one Thomas Paine.

Out on the hills dance the nymphs with Pan,
Fresh from the woods and the brisk, bright streams;
But here in Lewes the Rights of Man
Were born in a brave Exciseman's dreams.
And see, here is Summer! Here Summer hath lain,
Waiting and waiting and to live again,
As she lived in a brave Exciseman's brain.

Oh here in Lewes who would have wist,
As he strolled for his shag in the years of yore
To the vigorous young Tobacconist,
That far away, on a strange new shore,
Where Washington strove, and the English ran,
That a Freethinker and a Republican,
One Paine, would herald the Rights of Man?

One Paine, one born in Thetford knew
That the world, not England, would blare his fame;
So Albion, Gaul, and Columbia drew
A lighted torch from his lambent flame:
For he served his land, and his land was the world;
And wherever Freedom, with banner uncurled,
Strides through the earth, Paine that banner unfurled.

Pure was his brain from craft and creed,
His hope was centred alone in Man;
As pure was his life from graft and greed,
A Freethinker and a Republican!
Joy for the Man! And the rest may go—
With God above and the Devil below,
With the Church of Christ, with last year's snow.

The streams are stirred by Summer's breath,
The hills are green over Lewes town!
Here dwelt one fearing nor life nor death,
For he hated the Cross as he hated the Crown.
In Lewes town there is Summer again;
Under the shadows in old Bull Lane,
We stay to wonder at one called Paine.

Victor B. Neuburg.