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978-0-521-18882-1 - Politics, Religion and Popularity in Early Stuart Britain: Essays in Honour of Conrad Russell

Edited by Thomas Cogswell, Richard Cust and Peter Lake

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## POLITICS, RELIGION AND POPULARITY IN EARLY STUART BRITAIN

Revisionism has had a far-reaching impact upon the history of politics and religion in early Stuart Britain. The essays collected here set out to assess this impact and develop further some of the central themes highlighted in the work of the historian Conrad Russell.

The subject matter ranges from high-political narrative to the study of rumour, gossip and print culture. The essays are organised around a series of related questions. What was the impact of 'the British Problem' on the politics of James I's accession and his project for union? How did the 'functional breakdown' in royal finance affect the working of the English state? What was the place of a parliament, and how did its proceedings influence contemporary political culture? How did the legacy of religious division bequeathed by the English Reformation harden into ideological differences during the 1630s and 1640s? And what was the role played by fear of popularity in contemporary political thought and action? The essays identify some of the most fruitful directions for future research in the field, as well as making an important contribution to the ongoing debate about the causes of the English Civil War.

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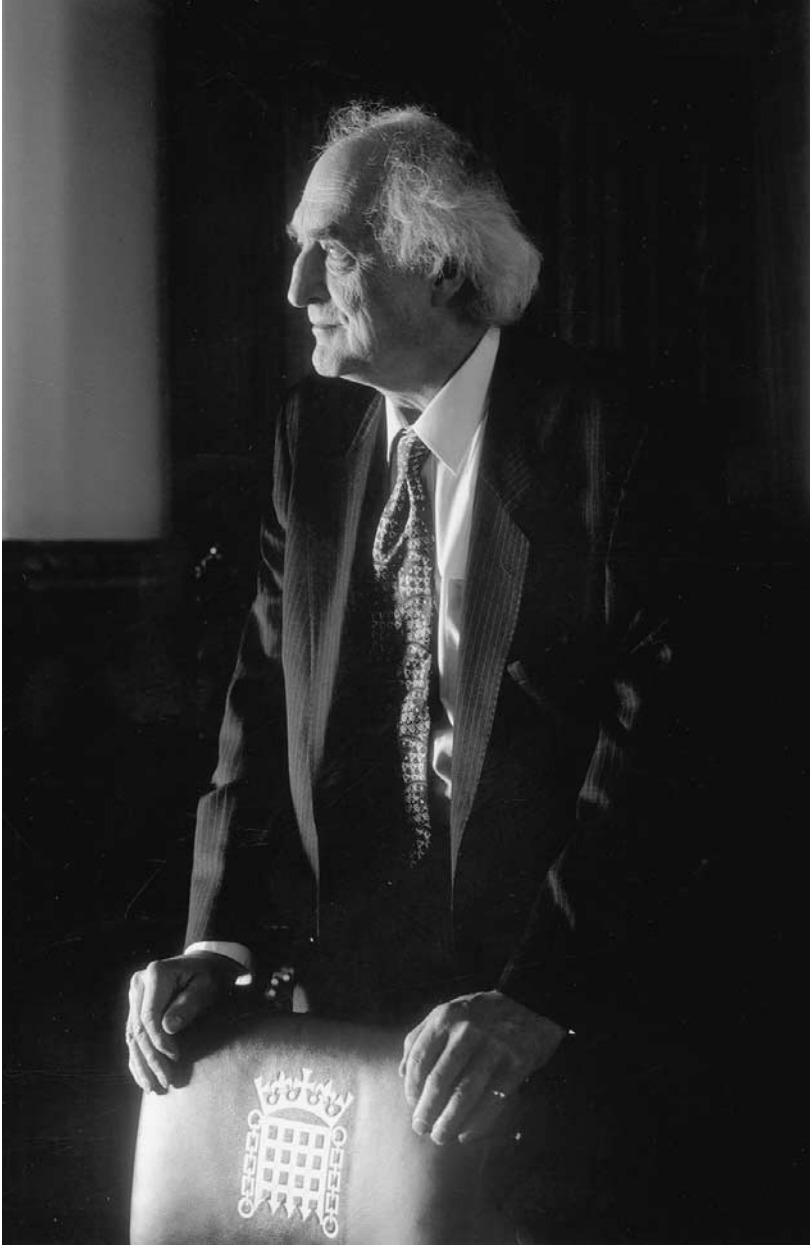
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Conrad Russell (the Earl Russell). (Photograph by kind permission of Derry Moore.)

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## *Preface*

This book is a tribute to the Earl Russell and his work as a historian. We are very conscious that Conrad is a man of many parts – Liberal Democrat spokesman in the House of Lords and one of the most effective advocates of liberal values in modern public life, as well as Professor of History at King’s College, London – and we cannot do justice to all of these. But, as he reaches his sixty-fifth birthday, we wanted to celebrate his contribution to the study of early Stuart history.

The essays have been commissioned from a cross-section of his many friends on both sides of the Atlantic. Two of us were taught by him as undergraduates at London University and were fortunate enough to be members of the inaugural class of the special subject which he ran with Nicholas Tyacke on ‘Parliament and Society in England, 1603–1629’. This was a memorable experience. Even as naive undergraduates we realised that something dramatic was happening to the field, especially on one occasion when the paper giver failed to materialise and Conrad gave a first outing to what became ‘Parliamentary history in perspective, 1604–1629’. Eight of us were supervised by him as research students, benefiting from his sense of excitement about the subject and his powers of motivation. He had a wonderful ability to make us feel that there were big questions out there and the work we were doing at the time might just provide the key to unlocking one of them. All of us have been participants in the Monday evening Tudor and Stuart seminar at the Institute of Historical Research. He and Nicholas Tyacke joined Joel Hustfield in running this in 1975 and he has been associated with it ever since. For many of us the seminar has played a formative role in our development as historians. It helped to teach us that history is great fun, with Conrad’s memorable impersonations (which somehow always seem to sound like his rendition of Sir Edward Coke) a constant reminder of this. It has repeatedly demonstrated the value of archival research, the way in which large issues can hinge on that crucial reference

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uncovered by painstaking investigation. Above all, it has taught us that the study of history is essentially a collective and co-operative enterprise, something to be shared between friends. Conrad's generosity in passing on references and commenting on the work of others is legendary; but, perhaps, even more of an inspiration has been his insistence that as much work goes on in the pub afterwards as during the seminar itself. The present volume, and much other recent writing on the period, is testimony to this.

It is well known that not all the contributors to this volume necessarily 'agree' with Conrad in his interpretation of the period. But we do all share a common appreciation of the magnitude of his contribution, of the scope, ambition and achievement of the intellectual project on which he has been engaged and which he has in different ways shared with us. We are also immensely grateful for the spirit of generosity and open-mindedness that he has always brought to his work. He has the priceless knack of being able to welcome disagreement and stimulate genuinely uninhibited debate. We know that even where we take issue with him, his work is an unerring guide to where the really important issues and questions are. Working through his arguments and discussing the points of difference has proved, and is still proving, an incredibly fruitful way to advance our understanding. We all appreciate his achievement as an intellectual presence and his stature as a scholar; we all owe him a personal debt of gratitude and we have contributed to the volume to acknowledge that fact.

Finally we would like to thank Elizabeth Russell. She has supported this collection from the start and has contributed to it in all sorts of ways. She has been a generous friend to all of us over the years and, in spite of her over-modest valuation of her own powers as a historian, she too has helped us to understand what the important questions are and how we might tackle them.

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<i>APC</i>	<i>Acts of the Privy Council</i>
<i>BIHR</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research</i>
BL	British Library
Bod. Lib.	Bodleian Library
<i>CJ</i>	<i>Commons Journals</i>
<i>CSPD</i>	<i>Calendar of State Papers Domestic</i>
<i>CSPSp</i>	<i>Calendar of State Papers Spanish</i>
<i>CSPV</i>	<i>Calendar of State Papers Venetian</i>
CUL	Cambridge University Library
<i>DNB</i>	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>
<i>EcHR</i>	<i>Economic History Review</i>
<i>ESTC</i>	<i>English Short Title Catalogue</i>
<i>EHR</i>	<i>English Historical Review</i>
<i>GEC</i>	<i>The Complete Peerage</i>
HEHL	Henry E. Huntington Library
<i>Hist</i>	<i>History</i>
<i>HJ</i>	<i>Historical Journal</i>
<i>HLQ</i>	<i>Huntington Library Quarterly</i>
HLRO	House of Lord Record Office
HMC	Historical Manuscripts Commission
<i>HR</i>	<i>Historical Research</i>
<i>JBS</i>	<i>Journal of British Studies</i>
<i>JEH</i>	<i>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</i>
<i>LJ</i>	<i>Lords Journals</i>
NLS	National Library of Scotland
NLW	National Library of Wales
<i>N&amp;Q</i>	<i>Notes and Queries</i>
<i>PBA</i>	<i>Proceedings of the British Academy</i>
<i>PH</i>	<i>Parliamentary History</i>

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*List of abbreviations*

<i>P&amp;P</i>	<i>Past and Present</i>
PRO	Public Record Office
<i>SC</i>	<i>The Seventeenth Century</i>
<i>SR</i>	<i>Statutes of the Realm</i> (1810–1828)
<i>ST</i>	<i>State Trials</i> (1816)
<i>STC</i>	<i>Short Title Catalogue of Early English Books 1475–1640</i>
<i>TRHS</i>	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</i>
<i>VCH</i>	<i>Victoria County History</i>
WCA	Westminster City Archive

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