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0521241960 - The Teaching of English: From the Sixteenth Century to 1870

Ian Michael

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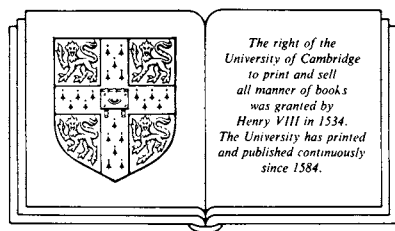
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The teaching of English

FROM THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY TO 1870

Ian Michael

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INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION



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PREFACE

This book is an enquiry into the early history of the teaching of English, to English speakers, in Britain, with some reference to America. Its intention and limitations are stated in the first chapter.

It is a pleasure to express particular gratitude to the trustees of the Leverhulme Foundation for their assistance through the award of an Emeritus Fellowship.

Anyone whose work touches on the history of the English language owes a debt to Dr R.C. Alston. It is not too much to say that his industry and persistence in producing *A Bibliography of the English language* and the facsimile editions of early texts over the imprint of the Scolar Press have opened up important areas of study, the very possibility of which had scarcely been glimpsed before.

I am much indebted also to the staff of many public and university libraries for their tolerance in responding to enquiries of unavoidable but timetaking vagueness, and to many antiquarian booksellers, from whose catalogues I have acquired more information than they have received orders from me.

I am especially grateful to Professor L.C. Knights and to Mrs Knights for their constant support and to Dr A.K. Pugh and to Dr. Edwina Burness, who also have read part of the book in draft. I have received valuable help and advice from Vivian Salmon, Joyce Broomhall, Dr E. Jennifer Monaghan, Dr T. O’Raifearteagh, John P. Marmion and Kenneth Coram.

It would be interesting to study the ways in which authors express in public the gratitude they owe to their spouses. The attempt to express it is an honourable convention, and my debt and my gratitude are too great for me to wish to break it. But the purpose of the convention is not altogether clear. My wife does not need to read a preface in order to know how I feel, and the reader receives no useful information unless he knows us both – in which case he does not need it. Some authors conceal their feelings within an abbreviated Latin dedication of uncertain meaning and direction, but it is best, I think, to admit the inherent selfishness of all books of this kind (a selfishness that words alone cannot make good) and to say thank-you in a single English word.

IAN MICHAEL

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