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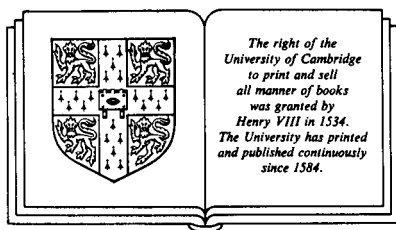
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ANDREW MARVELL

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For Miriam, Jessica, Thomasin, Victoria

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Preface

An author who undertakes the task of introducing the work of Andrew Marvell to new readers faces several problems. Not only do individual poems contain the usual complexities of metaphor and argument associated with the conceited style of the earlier seventeenth century, but their essentially allusive nature demands a wide range of information about both literary and historical contexts. It is the purpose of this book to supply such information not merely as background to the poetry and prose, but as a vital element in the detailed explication of each poem or group of poems – as part of the fabric of the texts themselves. To that end, the introductory chapter on Marvell's career and personality provides no more than a brief sketch of the times in which he lived, to be filled out in later chapters in relation to specific works. Since the volume is designed for the use of sixth-form students and undergraduates, attention has been concentrated on the lyric poetry and *Upon Appleton House*, but for the sake of completeness the final chapter includes a more selective account of Marvell's activities as political panegyrist and satirist in verse and prose.

Anyone writing about Marvell inevitably incurs innumerable debts to the body of distinguished scholarship and criticism that has been generated by his literary and political achievements. In the absence of footnotes, the Select bibliography must serve as a general acknowledgement of the many discoveries and insights that have been silently appropriated in the pages that follow. Among more personal debts of gratitude, I owe most of all to the supervisor of my apprentice-work on seventeenth-century poetry as a post-graduate student, Elsie Duncan-Jones, whose expert scrutiny of much of the typescript saved me from a number of errors and whose generosity made available to me unpublished material. I am also grateful to my colleagues Tony Davies and H. Neville Davies, who found time during a busy academic year to read the entire first draft and whose valuable suggestions have greatly improved the finished version. Thanks are also due to Valerie Edden and Sue Roberts for helpful comments on early portions of the text, and to Terence Moore and Pauline Leng of Cambridge University Press for their courtesy and care at later stages of its preparation for the press. Whatever shortcomings remain are, of course, no one's responsibility but my own. Finally, I take this opportunity to record

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PREFACE

my gratitude for the unquantifiable contribution that my wife and daughters made to the writing of this book simply by being there.

*Birmingham,
August 1984*

R.W.

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Note on texts

Quotations from Marvell's poems are generally taken from Elizabeth Story Donno's Penguin edition of 1972. In the following instances, however, I have preferred the readings of H. M. Margoliouth's Oxford edition: 'Clorinda and Damon', line 2, omit the semi-colon after 'too late'; 'To His Coy Mistress', line 44, 'gates' rather than 'grates'; 'The Second Chorus from Seneca's Tragedy *Thyestes*', line 2, 'Tottering favour's pinnacle' rather than 'Giddy favour's slippery hill', and line 11, 'Country man' rather than 'countryman'. I have made the necessary modernization of 'born' to 'borne' in line 53 of 'An Horatian Ode', and have adopted Thomas Cooke's 1726 emendation of the 1681 Folio's 'plum' to 'plume' in line 34 of 'Upon the Hill and Grove at Bilbrough' in preference to the 'plump' found in most modern editions. With minor modifications to spelling, the 'Statue' poems, omitted from the Penguin edition, are quoted from Volume One and the Letters from Volume Two of Margoliouth's edition, *The Rehearsal Transpros'd* from D. I. B. Smith's Oxford edition, and Marvell's other prose works from Volume Four of Grosart's 'Fuller Worthies' Library' edition of 1875. Passages from Latin poets are quoted from the following Penguin Classics volumes: *Virgil: The Pastoral Poems*, translated by E. V. Rieu, *The Odes of Horace*, translated by James Michie, and *The Metamorphoses of Ovid*, translated by Mary M. Innes.

Footnotes have been avoided, and page references to editions of Marvell's prose and to secondary materials are included in the text. Details of all editions, books, and articles cited can be found in the Select bibliography.