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978-0-521-33710-6 - Revolution and Rebellion: State and Society in England in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

J. C. D. Clark

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## REVOLUTION AND REBELLION

*State and society in England in  
the seventeenth and eighteenth  
centuries*

This iconoclastic and satirical book provides a radical reconstruction of the recent historiography of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It creates an alliance between those revisionist historians who have rewritten the received account of the origins of the English Civil War and those historians who have been rethinking the Hanoverian era: *Revolution and Rebellion* is thus a companion volume to the author's *English Society 1688–1832*. This book counters the Marxist interpretation of the 1640s as the 'English Revolution' by deploying our new understanding of the non-revolutionary nature of the world after 1660: it challenges the appropriateness of 'revolution' as a description of events like those of 1688, 1715, 1745, the American Revolution, the Industrial Revolution or the Reform Bill, drawing attention instead to the idea of 'rebellion'. This is the first book so to link English history in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: it will be required reading for students and teachers of both eras.

JONATHAN CLARK is a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford.

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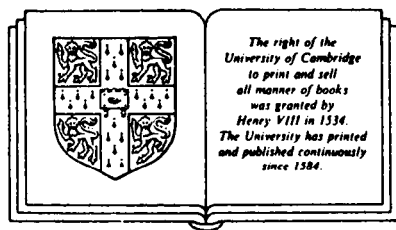
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ABBREVIATIONS

<i>BIHR</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research</i>
<i>BJECS</i>	<i>British Journal for Eighteenth Century Studies</i>
<i>CHJ</i>	<i>Cambridge Historical Journal</i>
<i>EC</i>	<i>The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation</i>
<i>ECS</i>	<i>Eighteenth Century Studies</i>
<i>EHR</i>	<i>English Historical Review</i>
<i>HJ</i>	<i>Historical Journal</i>
<i>JBS</i>	<i>Journal of British Studies</i>
<i>JEH</i>	<i>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</i>
<i>JHI</i>	<i>Journal of the History of Ideas</i>
<i>JMH</i>	<i>Journal of Modern History</i>
<i>P&amp;P</i>	<i>Past and Present</i>
<i>SCH</i>	<i>Studies in Church History</i>
<i>THES</i>	<i>The Times Higher Education Supplement</i>
<i>TLS</i>	<i>The Times Literary Supplement</i>
<i>TRHS</i>	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 5th series</i>
<i>WMQ</i>	<i>William and Mary Quarterly</i>

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## PREFACE

It will soon become obvious to readers of this book that the debates with which it deals are being described by a participant. I should say therefore that, while I am most grateful to those of my colleagues with whom I have discussed these issues, the views expressed are my personal ones: they are not an authorised statement of the tenets of any school or group. Partly these reflections arise out of self-criticism, in an attempt to improve on some early work on the politics of 1714–60, and to atone for its deficiencies. Partly they are an attempt to give order to a series of confused historical arguments, and so to suggest ways in which those arguments might develop in the future. To encapsulate the views of one's colleagues in a few lines may sometimes be a legitimate aim, but it is intensely difficult to accomplish. At all times my intention is to provide not a substitute for the originals, but an inducement which will provoke the reader to consult for himself the works of those historians whom I discuss. Much can be learned even (or perhaps especially) from those books with which we most disagree: it is only fair that I should record a general indebtedness to those authors who so figure here.

With these appropriate caveats, I can record with gratitude the advice and encouragement of those of my colleagues who read this essay in draft form: Robert Ashton, Jeremy Black, Ian R. Christie, Eveline Cruickshanks, Sir Geoffrey Elton, J. P. Ferris, Anthony Fletcher, J. P. Kenyon, Peter Laslett, Wallace T. MacCaffrey, John Morrill, J. G. A. Pocock, Conrad Russell, Quentin Skinner, John Walsh, Austin Woolrych. To have written a book with which such a diverse group of scholars could all agree was beyond my ambitions: they will, I hope, accept this intervention as a contribution to a living debate rather than as an inscription on the gravestone of a dead one.

The debate is sometimes lively to the point of acrimony. Students approaching these areas for the first time often have difficulty in appreciating what all the fuss is about: why seemingly technical historical

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*Preface*

arguments over division lists or Jacobite ideology, county government or patronage networks, generated such heat among scholars. This study places those debates in a wider context and emphasises the important issues which were, and are, at stake. Students should bear in mind, too, that this is not a book to be consulted a chapter at a time. Its aim is to give a general view of the shape of the subject, and of the relation of different themes to each other. It should be read as a unity.

It is with particular pleasure that I can dedicate this book to the Warden and Fellows of All Souls College – ‘For one day in thy courts : is better than a thousand.’

*February 1986*