

HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY



ESSAYS IN HONOUR
OF DEREK BEALES

EDITED BY

T. C. W. BLANNING

University of Cambridge

DAVID CANNADINE

Columbia University, New York



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK
40 West 20th Street, New York NY 10011-4211, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain
Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa
<http://www.cambridge.org>

© Cambridge University Press 1996

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without
the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 1996
First paperback edition 2002

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data
History and biography: essays in honour of Derek Beales /
edited by T. C. W. Blanning and David Cannadine.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0 521 47330 6

1. Beales, Derek Edward Dawson. 2. History, Modern.
3. Statesmen – Biography. 4. Kings and rulers – Biography.
I. Beales, Derek Edward Dawson. II. Blanning, T. C. W.
III. Cannadine, David, 1950–.

D223.H57 1996

909.08–dc20 95-36123 CIP

ISBN 0 521 47330 6 hardback
ISBN 0 521 89317 8 paperback

CONTENTS



<i>Notes on contributors</i>	<i>page</i> ix
Introduction: Derek Beales as historian and biographer T. C. W. BLANNING AND DAVID CANNADINE	I
1 Baron Bartenstein on Count Haugwitz's 'new System' of government P. G. M. DICKSON	5
2 The rise of the first minister in eighteenth-century Europe H. M. SCOTT	21
3 An old but new biography of Leopold II T. C. W. BLANNING	53
4 John Marsh's <i>History of My Private Life 1752–1828</i> JOHN BREWER	72
5 The gallows and Mr Peel BOYD HILTON	88
6 Széchenyi and Austria R. J. W. EVANS	113
7 Past and future in the later career of Lord John Russell J. P. PARRY	142
8 Documentary falsification and Italian biography DENIS MACK SMITH	173
9 Kaiser Wilhelm II and the British monarchy DAVID CANNADINE	188

10	The historical Keynes and the history of Keynesianism PETER CLARKE	203
11	Bastianini and the weakening of the Fascist will to fight the Second World War OWEN CHADWICK	227
12	The New Deal without FDR: what biographies of Roosevelt cannot tell us TONY BADGER	243
	History and biography: an inaugural lecture DEREK BEALES	266
	Derek Beales: a chronological list of publications	284
	<i>Index</i>	294

Introduction

DEREK BEALES AS HISTORIAN AND BIOGRAPHER



T. C. W. BLANNING AND DAVID CANNADINE

THIS collection of essays, by friends, colleagues and former students, is presented to Derek Beales to mark and to celebrate his sixty-fifth birthday. It is at least doubly appropriate that it should be called *History and Biography*. For not only was this the title of his inaugural lecture as Professor of Modern History at Cambridge University, which is reprinted here: it also describes his range and defines his accomplishments as a scholar. Few historians today trouble themselves with large-scale, full-dress biographies. Even fewer biographers write anything that is recognisable as serious history. Derek Beales, by contrast, may justly claim to be both a distinguished historian and a gifted biographer. He has written national history, international history, political history, constitutional history, ecclesiastical history and cultural history. For four years, he taught a Special Subject on Gladstone's First Ministry in Part Two of the Cambridge Historical Tripos. And he is still engaged on his major work: a magisterial biography of the Emperor Joseph II. As all his writing makes plain, Derek Beales is fascinated by the interplay between men and events, individuals and circumstance. He is sceptical of impersonal and structural history, and he has never favoured debunking or mocking biography. And he is as much an historiographer as he is an historian. Not for nothing was the alternative title for his inaugural lecture 'Historians as Great Men, and Great Men as Historians'.

As Derek Beales would be the first to remind us, there are formative influences on historians no less than on statesmen or monarchs. In his own case, he is the distinguished upholder of a great Cambridge tradition of scholars who range across countries and centuries with an ease and an authority which defies the conventional boundaries and vigorously defended specialisms of modern professional academic history. For G. M. Trevelyan, J. H. Clapham, Herbert Butterfield, M. M. Postan, Owen Chadwick and David Thompson (the latter, also of Sidney Sussex College, an especially influential mentor), it was perfectly natural to write about both England and

Continental Europe, and it never seems to have occurred to Derek Beales that he should not follow the same path. He has always been the least parochial of historians: too fascinated by his own country's past to give himself exclusively to Italy and Austria; too much immersed in the languages and culture of the Continent to be completely happy within the insular constraints of British history. All this was made precociously plain in his first book, *England and Italy, 1859-1860*, where the coyness of the chronology was belied by the richness of the research and the significance of the subject. For not only did this book bring alive the close nineteenth-century links between Englishmen and Italians: it also made major contributions to our understanding of mid-Victorian British politics, and to a crucial episode in the Italian Risorgimento.

Ever since this first book, Derek Beales has moved back and forth across the English Channel with an ease and a frequency which long antedates today's subterranean train-travellers. As an historian of Britain, there is one more influence which must be recalled, that of Dr George Kitson Clark of Trinity College, whose research seminar on Victorian England was a mecca for all graduate students working in the field during the 1950s, 1960s and early 1970s. As befitted the life-long admirer of Peel, Kitson Clark's chief interests were political, constitutional and ecclesiastical, and the same may be said of much of Derek Beales's work, although in his case they are devoid of any trace of Kitson's instinctive Toryism. Much of his most influential writing in this area has appeared in pamphlets, scholarly articles or review essays: his accounts of the party system in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries; his comparison of Peel and Russell as penal reformers at the Home Office; his meticulous and suggestive dissections of the Gladstone diaries; his robust reassertion of the importance of the Great Reform Act; and most recently, as if bringing this side of his work full circle, his study of Garibaldi's reception in England. Together these pieces constitute a formidable (and often iconoclastic) contribution to our understanding of nineteenth-century Britain, and as such, they both anticipate and develop the broader interpretation advanced in his widely read and long-lasting general survey, *From Castlereagh to Gladstone, 1815-85*.

But this was scarcely one half of Derek Beales's mature output. In the early 1970s, the *embarras de richesses* created by the plethora of historians of nineteenth-century Britain in Cambridge encouraged him to turn back to Continental Europe in a more single-minded and systematic way. It was characteristic of his versatility that he should have moved away from his earlier interest in Risorgimento Italy both chronologically and geographically. He now redirected his focus across the Alps into the Habsburg Monarchy and backwards in time to the eighteenth century. A highly successful Part II Special Subject on Joseph II and Belgium, which attracted many gifted undergraduates, provided the ideal forum for this reorientation.

Its first fruits proved to be one of the most important articles on the history of the Habsburg Monarchy to have been published in recent years. In 'The False Joseph II', which appeared in *The Historical Journal* in 1975, Derek Beales showed that many of the most celebrated – and frequently cited – observations attributed to the Emperor were forgeries. How many times, one wonders, has the resounding proclamation 'I have made philosophy the legislator of my empire' been quoted by historians content to repeat the errors of their predecessors? The worst culprit was also the author of the most widely used biography of Joseph available in the English language, namely Saul Padover, whose study of *The Revolutionary Emperor* had been reprinted as recently as 1967. By showing that no fewer than a quarter of Padover's numerous quotations had been drawn from tainted sources, Derek Beales discredited the whole work.

He himself then filled the vacuum he had created by publishing the first volume of his own biography of Joseph in 1987. As reviewers were quick to recognise, this is the best study in any language, setting new standards of accuracy and objectivity in a field hitherto obstructed by ignorance and prejudice. Rejecting all sources of dubious provenance, he discovered a Joseph who was less 'enlightened', less appealing but very much more credible than earlier distortions. As he also brought to his task two other vital qualities of the biographer – a capacity for getting inside the mind of his subject and an ability to convey his discoveries with clarity, cogency and wit – he also created one of the great biographies of modern historical scholarship. To say that volume two, which will take the story from Joseph's accession as sole ruler in 1780 to his death in 1790, is eagerly awaited by historians of eighteenth-century Europe is very much an understatement.

The interval between the publication of the two volumes has been due to a determination not to hurry a project designed to be durable and an equally laudable refusal to be hurried into premature action by the dismal new world of mindless productivity demanded by our paymasters. It has also been due to Derek Beales's unflagging appetite for new interests. Yet another Part II Special Subject, this time on 'The philosophies and the monarchs', has intensified a long-standing interest in the Enlightenment. His own deep knowledge of and affection for the music of the period has also borne fruit, in the shape of a highly regarded lecture on 'Mozart and the Habsburgs', which has now been published and will cause much fluttering in musicological dovecots. The Birkbeck lectures given to large and appreciative audiences in Cambridge in the autumn of 1993 revealed his continuing ability to ask awkward questions and to find surprising answers, on this occasion about the fall and rise of monasteries in Europe in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In short, as release from what has always been a heavy burden of teaching and administration beckons, there is every sign that his

retirement will be unusually productive and satisfying, even by the cheering standards of historians. His friends, colleagues and former pupils welcome this opportunity to register their affection, respect and gratitude, together with their best wishes for the future.