

## The Experience of Revolution in Stuart Britain and Ireland

This volume ranges widely across the social, religious and political history of revolution in seventeenth-century Britain and Ireland, from contemporary responses to the outbreak of war to the critique of the post-regicidal regimes; from Royalist counsels to Lilburne's politics; and across the three Stuart kingdoms. However, all the essays engage with a central issue – the ways in which individuals experienced the crises of mid-seventeenth-century Britain and Ireland and what that tells us about the nature of the Revolution as a whole. Responding in particular to three influential lines of interpretation – local, religious and British – the contributors, all leading specialists in the field, demonstrate that to comprehend the causes, trajectory and consequences of the Revolution we must understand it as a human and dynamic experience, as a process. This volume reveals how an understanding of these personal experiences can provide the basis on which to build up larger frameworks of interpretation.

MICHAEL J. BRADDICK is Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, University of Sheffield. His previous publications include *State Formation in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2000) and *God's Fury, England's Fire: A New History of the English Civil Wars* (2009).

DAVID L. SMITH is Fellow, Director of Studies in History, and Graduate Tutor, at Selwyn College, Cambridge. His previous publications include *Parliaments and Politics during the Cromwellian Protectorate* (as co-author, Cambridge, 2007), and *Royalists and Royalism during the Interregnum* (as co-editor, 2010).

Cambridge University Press & Assessment  
978-0-521-86896-9 — The Experience of Revolution in Stuart Britain and Ireland  
Edited by Michael J. Braddick , David L. Smith  
Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

---



This photograph of John Morrill is reproduced  
by kind permission of Ariel Hessayon

Cambridge University Press & Assessment

978-0-521-86896-9 — The Experience of Revolution in Stuart Britain and Ireland

Edited by Michael J. Braddick, David L. Smith

Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

# The Experience of Revolution in Stuart Britain and Ireland

*Essays for John Morrill*

---

*Edited by*

Michael J. Braddick and David L. Smith



CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press & Assessment  
 978-0-521-86896-9 — The Experience of Revolution in Stuart Britain and Ireland  
 Edited by Michael J. Braddick, David L. Smith  
 Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)



**CAMBRIDGE**  
 UNIVERSITY PRESS

Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom  
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA  
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
 314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India  
 103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment, a department of the University of Cambridge.

We share the University's mission to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9780521868969](http://www.cambridge.org/9780521868969)

© Cambridge University Press & Assessment 2011

This publication 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 & Assessment.

First published 2011

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication data*

The experience of revolution in Stuart Britain and Ireland / [edited by]  
 Michael J. Braddick and David L. Smith.  
 p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-521-86896-9 (hardback)

1. Great Britain – History – Civil War, 1642–1649. 2. Great Britain – History – Commonwealth and Protectorate, 1649–1660. 3. Great Britain – History – Charles I, 1625–1649. 4. Great Britain – History, Military – 1603–1714. 5. Religion and state – England – History – 17th century. 6. Scotland – History – 17th century. 7. Ireland – History – 17th century. I. Braddick, M. J. (Michael J.), 1962– II. Smith, David L. (David Lawrence), 1963–  
 DA405.E97 2011

941.06 – dc22 2010052616

ISBN 978-0-521-86896-9 Hardback

Cambridge University Press & Assessment has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Contents

<i>Notes on contributors</i>	<i>page</i> vii
<i>Preface</i>	xi
<i>List of abbreviations</i>	xiv
<i>JSM: a tribute to a friend</i>	xvii
MARK A. KISHLANSKY	
 Introduction: John Morrill and the experience of revolution	 1
MICHAEL J. BRADDICK AND DAVID L. SMITH	
1 The Scottish–English–Romish Book: the character of the Scottish Prayer Book of 1637	14
JOONG-LAK KIM	
2 Popery in perfection? The experience of Catholicism: Henrietta Maria between private practice and public discourse	33
DAGMAR FREIST	
3 Sir Benjamin Rudyerd and England’s ‘wars of religion’	52
DAVID L. SMITH	
4 Rhetoric and reality: images of Parliament as Great Council	74
JAMES S. HART, JR	
5 Cathedrals and the British Revolution	96
IAN ATHERTON	
6 History, liberty, reformation and the cause: Parliamentarian military and ideological escalation in 1643	117
MICHAEL J. BRADDICK	
	v

vi	Contents	
7	Sacrilege and compromise: court divines and the king's conscience, 1642–1649	135
	ANTHONY MILTON	
8	Law, liberty, and the English Civil War: John Lilburne's prison experience, the Levellers and freedom	154
	D. ALAN ORR	
9	On shaky ground: Quakers, Puritans, possession and high spirits	172
	TOM WEBSTER	
10	James Harrington's prescription for healing and settling	190
	JONATHAN SCOTT	
11	'The Great Trappaner of England': Thomas Violet, Jews and crypto-Jews during the English Revolution and at the Restoration	210
	ARIEL HESSAYON	
12	The Cromwellian legacy of William Penn	231
	MARY K. GEITER	
13	Irish bishops, their biographers and the experience of revolution, 1656–1686	253
	JOHN McCafferty	
14	Religion and civil society: the place of the English Revolution in the development of political thought	270
	GLENN BURGESS	
	<i>Bibliography of the major writings of John Morrill, 1967–2009</i>	291
	Compiled by DAVID L. SMITH	
	<i>Index</i>	299

## Notes on contributors

---

IAN ATHERTON is Senior Lecturer in History at Keele University. He has written extensively on cathedrals, including the co-edited *Norwich Cathedral: Church, City and Diocese, 1096–1996* (1996), and work on Ely cathedral, and diocese, between the Reformation and Restoration. He also works on early Stuart politics and religion, and on the Civil War, and has co-edited an edition of Sir William Brereton's 1646 letter book for the Staffordshire Record Society (2007).

MICHAEL J. BRADDICK is Professor of History and Pro-Vice-Chancellor for the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at the University of Sheffield. He is the author of several books on early modern social and political history, including *State Formation in Early Modern England, c. 1550–1700* (Cambridge, 2000). He is also co-editor, with John Walter, of *Negotiating Power: Order, Hierarchy and Subordination in Early Modern England and Ireland* (Cambridge, 2001) and, with David Armitage, of *The British Atlantic World* (2nd edn, 2009). His most recent publications are *God's Fury, England's Fire: A New History of the English Civil Wars* (2008), and, as editor, *The Politics of Gesture: Historical Perspectives* (2009).

GLENN BURGESS is Professor of Early Modern History and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) at the University of Hull. His major publications include *The Politics of the Ancient Constitution: An Introduction to English Political Thought 1603–1642* (1992); *Absolute Monarchy and the Stuart Constitution* (1996); *British Political Thought 1500–1660: The Politics of the Post-Reformation* (2009); and, as editor, *The New British History: Founding a Modern State 1603–1715* (1999); *English Radicalism, 1550–1850* (Cambridge, 2007); and *European Political Thought 1450–1700* (2007). He is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and served on the Society's council from 2005 to 2009.

## viii Notes on contributors

DAGMAR FREIST is Professor of Early Modern History at the University of Oldenburg. She is the author of *Governed by Opinion: Politics, Religion and the Dynamics of Communication in London, c. 1637–1645* (1998). Her most recent book is *Absolutismus: Kontroversen um die Geschichte* (2008). She has co-edited a number of books, among them *Staatsbildung als kultureller Prozess: Strukturwandel und Legitimation von Herrschaft in der Frühen Neuzeit* (2005) and *Living with Religious Diversity in Early Modern Europe* (2009). Her research and publications focus on political culture and the public sphere in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England and Germany, religious diversity in early modern England and Germany, and networks, economic and social interaction and cultural transfer in early modern northern Europe. She is co-founder of NESICT ([www.nesict.eu](http://www.nesict.eu)).

MARY K. GEITER works for L-3 Communications Corporation, providing educational support services to US government agencies. Prior to joining L-3, she taught at the College of Ripon and York St John, University of Maryland, European Division, and Bloomsburg University and Immaculata University in Pennsylvania. Her publications include *William Penn* (2000) and, with W. A. Speck, *Colonial America from Jamestown to Yorktown* (2002) and *A Dictionary of British America 1584–1783* (2007). Currently she is working on a full biography of William Penn. She is also researching the Atlantic connections of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

JAMES S. HART, JR, is Professor of History at the University of Oklahoma. He is the author of *The Rule of Law 1603–1660: Crown, Courts and Judges* (2003) and *Justice upon Petition: The House of Lords and the Reformation of Justice, 1621–1675* (1991), as well as a variety of articles. He recently contributed a chapter (with co-author Richard Ross) entitled ‘The Ancient Constitution in the Old World and the New’ to Francis J. Bremer and Lynn Botelho, eds., *The Worlds of John Winthrop: Essays on England and New England, 1588–1649* (2006).

ARIEL HESSAYON is a lecturer in the Department of History at Goldsmiths, University of London. He is the author of ‘Gold Tried in the Fire’: *The Prophet Theaurau John Tany and the English Revolution* (2007), as well as the co-editor of collections of essays, *Scripture and Scholarship in Early Modern England* (2006) and *Reappraising Radicalism in Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth-Century Britain, Ireland and Continental Europe* (2010). His current research is primarily focused on the reception of the writings of the German mystic Jacob Boehme,



Gerrard Winstanley and the Diggers, and Jews and crypto-Jews in early modern England.

JOONG-LAK KIM is an associate professor in the Department of History Education, Kyungpook National University, Daegu, South Korea. Most of his publications are in Korean, except for 'Firing in unison? The Scottish Canons of 1636 and the English Canons of 1640', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society* (1998).

MARK A. KISHLANSKY is the Frank B. Baird Professor of English and European History at Harvard University and the author of *A Monarchy Transformed*, volume 6 of the Penguin History of Britain. He has written extensively on the reign of Charles I and the English Revolution.

JOHN McCAFFERTY is Senior Lecturer in the School of History and Archives at University College Dublin. He is Director of the Mícheál Ó Cléirigh Institute for the study of Irish history and civilization, a partnership between UCD and the order of Friars Minor in Ireland. He is joint editor (with Edel Bhreathnach and Joseph MacMahon) of *The Irish Franciscans, 1534–1990* (2009) and (with James Kelly and Charles Ivar McGrath) of *People, Politics and Power: Essays in Irish History 1660–1850* (2009). He is author of *John Bramhall and the Reconstruction of the Church of Ireland 1633–1641* (Cambridge, 2007). He is a member of the Irish Manuscripts Commission.

ANTHONY MILTON is Professor of Early Modern History at the University of Sheffield. His publications include *Catholic and Reformed* (Cambridge, 1995), *The British Delegation and the Synod of Dort* (2005) and *Laudian and Royalist Polemic in Seventeenth-Century England: The Career and Writings of Peter Heylyn* (2007), as well as articles on religious politics, censorship, political thought and the public sphere in early Stuart England. He is currently working on a monograph provisionally entitled 'England's second reformation: the battle for the Church of England 1636–66', for which he was awarded a Leverhulme Trust Major Research Fellowship. *The Genesis of the Canons of Dort*, co-edited with Donald Sinnema, is also forthcoming.

D. ALAN ORR holds a continuing appointment in Intellectual History at the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) in Baltimore, Maryland. He is the author of *Treason and the State: Law, Politics, and Ideology in the English Civil War* (Cambridge, 2002). His work has also appeared in a number of journals including the *Journal of British Studies*, *History*, the *Canadian Journal of History*, *Albion* and *The Sixteenth-Century Journal*. His current research focuses on the contested

## x Notes on contributors

constitutional relationship between England and Ireland in the first half of the seventeenth century, and the role of republican ideas in England and Ireland during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

JONATHAN SCOTT is Professor of History at the University of Auckland. His books include *England's Troubles: Seventeenth-Century English Political Instability in European Context* (Cambridge, 2000) and *Commonwealth Principles: Republican Writing of the English Revolution* (Cambridge, 2004). He has a study of the relationship of geography to early modern British political identities forthcoming from Cambridge University Press.

DAVID L. SMITH is Fellow and Director of Studies in History at Selwyn College, Cambridge. His books include *Constitutional Royalism and the Search for Settlement, c. 1640–1649* (Cambridge, 1994), *A History of the Modern British Isles, 1603–1707: The Double Crown* (1998), *The Stuart Parliaments, 1603–1689* (1999), and, with Patrick Little, *Parliaments and Politics during the Cromwellian Protectorate* (Cambridge, 2007). He has also co-edited several collections of essays, including most recently, with Jason McElligott, *Royalists and Royalism during the English Civil Wars* (Cambridge, 2007) and *Royalists and Royalism during the Interregnum* (2010).

TOM WEBSTER is a lecturer in British History at the University of Edinburgh. His previous works have included a monograph entitled *Godly Clergy in Early Stuart England* (Cambridge, 1997), editing and introducing the *Diary of Samuel Rogers* (2004), and editing and contributing to *Puritans and Puritanism in England and America: A Comprehensive Encyclopedia* (2006). In addition he has produced a series of articles, both general and particular, on Puritan spirituality, demonic possession, religion in early Stuart Britain and the philosophy of history. He is currently completing a monograph on demonic possession and the spirituality of divine union, which ties in with his epistemological interests.

## Preface

---

This book is a tribute to John Morrill by a number of his former students, published to coincide with John's sixty-fifth birthday, an appropriate moment to celebrate his extraordinary achievements as a teacher and scholar.

It is very difficult to capture the career and influence of such an eminent and influential figure, but a crucial feature of John's contribution is that it has been made not simply through his own writing but across a much broader front, particularly through his teaching and wider advocacy for both his field and his profession. This volume is edited by two of his former students, and all the contributions are written by his students engaging with central themes in his work; that is, we hope, a fitting way to mark this distinctive contribution.

John's teaching has always moved in step with his research interests. His advanced courses engaged successively with the study of English government, the British problem, the life and reputation of Oliver Cromwell and latterly with the Irish rebellion of 1641, while his outline courses followed a similar trajectory, also taking in his thesis about the religious roots of seventeenth-century political conflict. Always the concern with personalities came through, sometimes explicitly, as in a 1995 course on 'Stuart politics and personalities: eight case studies'. The overview of John's published work offered in the introduction therefore summarizes an oeuvre that has unfolded in symbiosis with the teaching that means so much to him.

Just as John has always sought to communicate the subject as widely as possible, not least in his tireless work for the Royal Historical Society, the Historical Association and the Cromwell Association, so much of his writing seeks to make the fruits of his research available to the general reader and the student. This is most apparent in his works of synthesis, such as his chapter for the *Oxford Illustrated History of Britain* (1984) – reprinted in 2000 as *Stuart Britain: A Very Short Introduction* – or *The Oxford Illustrated History of Tudor and Stuart Britain* (1996). John has often consciously written for a student readership, as in the book on Charles I

which he co-authored with Christopher Daniels in 1988. Indeed, he was first attracted to the idea of writing *The Revolt of the Provinces*, a book which has exercised a huge influence on research in this field, because he ‘wanted to write a book that would be read first and foremost by students, while being research-rooted’.

Just as importantly for our current purposes, John has exercised a significant influence on the field through his postgraduate teaching: he has in fact supervised well over one hundred graduate students. Those taught by him have all responded to his own passion for history, as well as his exacting and rigorous scholarly standards. In this case, however, his teaching has not directly mirrored his research agenda; indeed, the diversity of his graduate students, in terms of personality, interests or methodology, is possibly the greatest tribute to his success. John has never sought to impose his own interests on his students, much less form any kind of ‘school’, but rather to guide each student to develop their own understanding of the past, to make sense of it in their own particular way, and to find their own scholarly voice. It is in that sense that his postgraduate teaching has marched in close step with his approach to the past.

We could not, of course, include contributions from all of John’s students. To narrow it down, we identified those who fulfilled each of the following criteria: that John had been the sole supervisor of their Cambridge Ph.D.; that after the Ph.D. they had published at least one monograph; and that they hold, or have held, a permanent position in a university history department. All those who met these requirements were invited to contribute, and this volume is the result. The resulting essays, like John’s own work, range widely across the period, from Smith’s examination of Sir Benjamin Rudyard to Scott’s reinterpretation of Harrington; across the political spectrum from Milton’s sensitive reading of Royalist counsel to Orr’s insights into the political thinking of John Lilburne; and across the three kingdoms, with Kim’s analysis of the Scottish Prayer Book, McCafferty’s study of the memorialization of dead Irish bishops and Braddick’s analysis of the relationship between mobilization and political argument at the outbreak of war in England. But they all engage with a central theme – the way in which individuals experienced the momentous events of mid-seventeenth-century Britain – a theme which engages with John’s own work and in particular with his preoccupation with reconstructing the lived experience of individual people.

John’s concern for the people of the past is mirrored by his concern for those of the present. We have all benefited from John’s friendship and loyalty as well as from his selfless devotion to the pursuit of history and the immense generosity with which he shares his learning and ideas.

Cambridge University Press & Assessment

978-0-521-86896-9 — The Experience of Revolution in Stuart Britain and Ireland

Edited by Michael J. Braddick, David L. Smith

Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

---

Preface

xiii

We are therefore delighted to include a personal tribute from one of John's closest friends within the historical profession, Mark Kishlansky of Harvard University, which brings to life the manifold contributions to the profession of this deeply humane man. This book is dedicated to John, with gratitude, affection and admiration.

MICHAEL J. BRADDICK

DAVID L. SMITH

## Abbreviations

---

<i>A&amp;O</i>	C. H. Firth and R. S. Rait, eds., <i>Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642–60</i> , 3 vols. (1911)
<i>AHR</i>	<i>American Historical Review</i>
BL	British Library
Bodl.	Bodleian Library, Oxford
<i>Cj</i>	<i>Journals of the House of Commons</i>
Clarendon	W. Dunn Macray, ed., <i>The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England by Edward, Earl of Clarendon</i> (6 vols., Oxford, 1969 edn)
<i>CSPD</i>	<i>Calendar of State Papers, Domestic series</i>
EEBO	Early English Books Online ( <a href="http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home">http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home</a> )
<i>ECHR</i>	<i>Economic History Review</i>
<i>EHR</i>	<i>English Historical Review</i>
ESTC	English Short Title Catalogue ( <a href="http://estc.bl.uk/">http://estc.bl.uk/</a> )
Gardiner	S. R. Gardiner, <i>History of the Great Civil War</i> (4 vols., Moreton-in-Marsh, 1991 edn)
Gardiner, <i>CD</i>	S. R. Gardiner, ed., <i>The Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution 1625–1660</i> (3rd edn, Oxford, 1906)
HEH	Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino
<i>Hj</i>	<i>Historical Journal</i>
HMC	Historical Manuscripts Commission
<i>HR</i>	<i>Historical Research</i>
<i>HLQ</i>	<i>Huntington Library Quarterly</i>
<i>JBS</i>	<i>Journal of British Studies</i>
<i>Lj</i>	<i>Journals of the House of Lords</i>
ODNB	H. C. G. Matthews and B. Harrison, eds., <i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> (61 vols., Oxford, 2004) (available online at <a href="http://www.oxforddnb.com/">http://www.oxforddnb.com/</a> )
<i>PP</i>	<i>Past and Present</i>

Cambridge University Press & Assessment  
978-0-521-86896-9 — The Experience of Revolution in Stuart Britain and Ireland  
Edited by Michael J. Braddick , David L. Smith  
Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

---

List of abbreviations xv

TNA	The National Archives
TRHS	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</i>
TT	Thomason Tracts

Throughout this book, place of publication of printed works is London unless otherwise stated.

## JSM

## A tribute to a friend

---

*Mark A. Kishlansky*

## I

I first met John Morrill in February 1974. David Underdown had arranged lunch with Christopher Hill and we arrived on the Oxford train an hour before the appointed time. Underdown led me over Worcester bridge and on to Broad Street. But instead of turning into Balliol he took me through an almost unseen gate that led to the warren of buildings that comprised Trinity College. We entered one of them; he knocked at a door, and upon a muffled response opened it. Behind billows of pipe smoke sat John Morrill at work on a thick stack of papers. When he saw David his face lit up with a smile of almost preternatural warmth, his eyes revealing genuine pleasure at Underdown's unexpected arrival. I crossed the threshold hesitantly since I still had no idea as to the purpose of our detour. In his usual laconic way Underdown simply said, 'you two should know each other', and pronounced our names, Morrill's resonating immediately in my historiographical memory, mine as yet meaningless to him. John regretted, as he would habitually in future years, that he was pressed for time, but immediately made us welcome. After an exchange of pleasantries with Underdown he turned his attention to me and asked what I was working on. I delivered a hundred-word synopsis of my doctoral research (which, further pared, made its way into a footnote in *The Revolt of the Provinces* the next year). John asked a question or two, looked at his watch and put on his gown to go off to teach. But as he was ushering us out he said to me, 'You must come back and visit again. We have much to talk about.'

Such perfunctory invitations occur hundreds of times in one's life – 'come see me in Vienna'; 'if you are ever in Portland' – and almost never are they taken up. For some inexplicable reason I felt a sincerity in his casual remark and the next time I was in Oxford I found my way to his Trinity rooms where this time the electric smile and warm welcome were for me. As he predicted, we had much to talk about, though the pressure of John's impossibly overbooked schedule always



xviii Mark A. Kishlansky

hurried along these early conversations. But the intellectual engagement and conviviality were never feigned and I left each encounter eager for the next.

I returned to America to write my thesis while John braved a job market that had suddenly collapsed. He had not originally aspired to an academic career; indeed, his initial goal was to become a prison governor, an ambition wryly recalled by his daughters during what they described as their periods of incarceration. But an early encounter with R. N. Dore turned his talents and energies to history. A British historian entering the profession in the early 1970s had few opportunities and could not rely on talent alone. Many of John's contemporaries had either bolted for America or were attempting to. The British market was still regulated through the iron hand of patronage, and here John was disadvantaged. He had studied with J. P. Cooper, a man of immense learning but few students. At Oxford Christopher Hill and Hugh Trevor-Roper brokered power; at Cambridge Jack Plumb and Geoffrey Elton did it. All were masters of the game. They moved their students around the academic checkerboard, kinging the favourites and sacrificing the others.

John's anxiety, expressed in his first letters to me, was genuine and clear-eyed. He thought he was unlikely to survive this four-fronted war. But then he caught a break. Trevor-Roper had already placed both of his newly minted students when a job opened late in the hiring season at Stirling University in Scotland. Not content to have taken that year's two plum positions he sought someone to back for the third. This turned out to be John (Cooper had been Trevor-Roper's steadfast ally in the gentry controversy, in which Trevor-Roper's thesis of the declining 'mere' gentry was supported by Cooper's extensive research). Thus was launched the academic career of John Morrill, albeit at a fledgling university in a different university system. The following year fortune smiled again in the same manner. An opening occurred at Oxford and Trevor-Roper secured it for one of his protégés, who in turn vacated a teaching fellowship at Selwyn College, Cambridge. This post had its obvious attractions, but it came without tenure. In those days a college teaching fellowship was either associated with an anticipated vacancy for a university lectureship or ran for a fixed term. Not only was the Selwyn position unattached to any foreseeable opening, but also John would be second in seniority if any unexpectedly arose. So the decision to move his family from the security of Scotland to the uncertainty of Cambridge in 1975 was a spin of the roulette wheel. Sure enough, his number came up. The young scholar senior to him moved to America and shortly afterward an unexpected departure suddenly created a vacancy for a university lectureship. His nearly half-century at Cambridge had begun.

If the beginning of his career can be attributed in part to chance, its prospering was the product of ambition and a willingness to take risks. These qualities constantly marked his scholarship and his professional accomplishments. He may seem an example of Cromwell's dictum – 'no one rises so high as he who knows not whither he is going' – but like the Lord Protector, whom he so admires, he has an iron rod of determination that keeps him on course as the winds blow.

The story of John and the lobster may illustrate the point. John loves lobsters. Over the decades we have used lobster dinners to celebrate whatever triumphs have come our way and I frequently entice him to visit Boston with news of the year's bounteous catch and low prices. Lobsters in Britain were a rare indulgence and John could seemingly remember every occasion on which he had been served one. I learned that we shared this culinary passion when John told me a story about his days as a research fellow at Trinity College. It was this occasion that provided me with the parable for his career.

We were idly swapping anecdotes about awkward situations that we had experienced when suddenly the conversation turned deadly earnest. 'I remember the most traumatic social situation I have ever encountered', he began. 'To this day, I feel badly about what I did.' I suppose this is why seats have edges, and my piqued interest overcame his reluctance to tell the tale. 'I was the second most junior member of college, below the salt as we say. When dining we sat in strict order of seniority and I always sat but one from the end. This occasion was my first college gaudy, a celebration in which the senior members treat themselves to the fine wines in the cellars and the best meal the college cook can provide. Everyone appears in evening dress, there are all manner of formal and informal toasts, and the general conviviality of a fellowship is shared. I looked forward to it for weeks, especially after I discovered that my favourite food, lobster, was on the menu. Not only did I have to endure the good-natured grouching of my wife, excluded in those days from all college activities as a woman, but her more pointed observations on the fit and quality of my shabby dinner jacket. Still, nothing could dull the anticipated pleasure of feasting on lobster and it only grew as the scouts heaved laden silver platters along the high table inviting each member to select their own. But when it came to me the salver arrived with a dilemma. Only one lobster remained and beyond me sat the junior-most fellow. My choices were plain: either decline the offering on some weak excuse – I could hardly deny my love of shellfish for the scouts never forgot and I would be perpetually deprived of all subsequent shrimp, oysters, and crabs – or I could place the lonely lobster on the gleaming china and make it someone else's problem. I understood the options instantly, but

xx Mark A. Kishlansky

I couldn't choose. I sat there for what seemed like an eternity paralysed between my pleasure and his. Finally, I reached up and filled my plate.<sup>1</sup>

For me the story illuminated both John's remarkable career and his even more remarkable personality. In his hesitation, his obvious empathy for the plight of the junior fellow, was displayed all the compassion that has made him such a trusted member of the profession and that draws students and colleagues to him for advice, solace, and encouragement. But in the end he had his lobster as well. The hesitancy and desire were in equal measure John Morrill. He has always attained his goals and achieved his ambitions, either through instinct or shrewd calculation. But they never again came at the expense of the junior fellow.

## II

In the 1970s, British academic careers proceeded very much according to the old ways. It was still the case that hardly any lecturers ever rose above that rank and the monetary incentives to do so were meagre. Professors were administrators and few in number. Initial appointment brought tenure and entitled its holder equally to all available perquisites. At Oxford and Cambridge there was a venerable tradition of college teaching that commanded respect on its own terms, and the faculties were still a mix of older members without doctoral degrees and newer hires with them. Research and writing was an avocation rather than a requirement and it was undertaken as its own reward. John took to it immediately. His early study with Dore had introduced him to the joys of local history, particularly that of the county of Cheshire.

Local history had been a mainstay of British historical writing, but by the 1970s it was being undertaken with a great scholarly seriousness and purpose. The light and heat of the gentry controversy still illuminated the historiographical landscape, but its intellectual pyrotechnics were beginning to burn out. Historians turned away from large-scale generalizations concerning aristocrats in crisis and rising or declining gentry to local case studies where they could be tested. By the time John began his dissertation research the enterprise of county history was thriving and bringing with it a localist interpretive perspective, typified by the aphorism that when Englishmen said their 'country' they meant their county. John's work on Cheshire combined both perspectives. His major figures were

<sup>1</sup> If John were telling the story he would want to add two facts unknown to him at the moment of choice: that someone ahead of him had taken two and that the cook had held at least one back in the kitchen. The junior fellow was not ultimately deprived by John's choice.

gentry who aligned their interests in their quest for social and political power within their community. Blood relationships, geographical propinquity and competition for official favour: these were the gears that turned the larger political wheels. Though he was sensitive to questions of economic and social status within the cohorts that he studied, he was even more attuned to the non-quantifiable determinants of their behaviour, to religion and ideology. In homage to Dore, he wrote compelling military history; in homage to Cooper he studied rent rolls and land transactions. But his attention to ideas and beliefs was his own original contribution.

*Cheshire 1630–1660* earned accolades for its painstaking research and mastery of complex social and political interactions, yet it was one of several similar studies each of which reluctantly concluded that it was particularity rather than commonality that defined a given county's history. Aristocratic rivalry in Somerset, administrative organization in Sussex, partible inheritance in Kent, all were believed to be differently determinative. What was needed was a more synthetic study, one that would be true to both the particular and the common and would render the local experience of early modern England significant. This was the achievement of *Revolt of the Provinces*, John's most influential book. It became standard reading for generations of undergraduates, the definitive statement of the localist perspective. Shifting focus from Westminster to the counties uncovered critical elements of Civil War experience that had been all but ignored. Neutrals, who existed in such profusion in the counties and who wished for nothing so much as peace, now found their voice and *Revolt of the Provinces* provided impetus for subsequent studies of groups like the Clubmen. The war may have dominated life at the centre, but it came mostly as an unwelcome interruption to ordinary activities in the localities. The refusal of trained bands to cross county boundaries and the efforts of local gentlemen to create and enforce neutrality pacts were as much a feature of the Civil Wars from this perspective as were the creation of Parliamentary and Royalist armies.

A similar interest in the recovery of traditionalism, consensus and survival in the religious sphere drew John to the study of Anglicanism. His work reconstructed the experiences of outlawed Anglicans, a history long buried beneath the mountain of works on revolutionary Puritanism. *Revolt of the Provinces* displayed John's unique combination of skills. It presented a bold interpretation – so bold that it became caricatured and necessitated a title change to *Revolt in the Provinces* – it displayed fresh evidence drawn from archival research, it revealed considerable synthetic power and, above all, it was at the very cutting edge of its subject. The bibliography included a long list of as yet unpublished doctoral research and the footnotes reported the results of conversations with young scholars,

xxii Mark A. Kishlansky

like myself, whose work was at an even earlier stage. Moreover, *Revolt of the Provinces* was written to be accessible to students. For all of the novelty of its argument and originality of its material it never sacrificed lucidity for detail. Its ostensible aim was to initiate undergraduates into a new area of Civil War studies, give them a thesis to test, and provide them with excerpts from sources to do so. But it was in fact much more than this. Though the book followed the format of its series, it achieved success on a far greater scale.

Because John never published another monograph comparable to his Cheshire book it is easy to overlook his life-long engagement with archival materials. For years family holidays were scheduled around whatever exotic locations were convenient to record offices he had not visited. The beauties of Somerset were reduced to a small radius around Taunton; a picnic at Delapré Abbey was the occasion for a working session with the Montague papers. Even trips into Wales, in partially reliable motor cars provided by his brother-in-law, had a multiple purpose. The results of these forays found their way into numerous articles on subjects as diverse as the northern gentry and the Church of England. His wife, Frances, and their growing brood of daughters patiently endured the quest for churchwarden accounts and vestry minute books. None of them ever caught the history bug but their support created a stable centre for John's life away from scholarship and the university. Frances ran the home like a Fortune 500 company, albeit one whose finances were always precarious. Activities were not so much planned as they were choreographed. I remember once watching the family's mesmerizing breakfast routine. Boxes, jars and containers appeared all at once from multiple cupboards without a word being spoken. Bowls and plates were dealt on to the table seemingly as they were being filled, while the eldest Morrill daughter dressed the youngest and the two middle girls prepared lunches all to the steady tick of Frances's internal stopwatch. Four young children were up, dressed, fed, inspected and out the door within the compass of twenty minutes. John's job (and mine as well on this occasion) was to keep absolutely out of the way for fear that one of us elephants would trample a ballerina. The girls presented their own joys and challenges, each one a personality so distinct as to cause wonder whether nature and nurture are the only possible categories of formative influence. They seemed to have no inkling of their father's growing fame and stature. Frances, in particular, knew how to keep an ego at a proper level of inflation. She once accompanied John to a public school history day where he and two other dons sang the praises of their subject. Frances's silence in the car on the way home prompted John to beg for a compliment. 'I came top, didn't I?' he ventured. 'You came second,' was the piquant reply. 'First prize

wasn't given.' Living as a lone male within a household of five women was not the least of John's lifetime achievements.

The results of his archival vacations appeared in the comet spray of important articles that followed John's initial scholarly efforts. His Cheshire interests led to deeply researched studies of Sir William Davenport and Sir William Brereton and to forays into Chester diocesan history. In two seminal pieces he offered a rereading of church history during the Interregnum. In 'The Church in England 1642–9' he explored the survival of Anglicanism during the dark years of civil war and argued that conventional religion continued to exert a strong hold on the English populace. In 'The religious context of the English Civil War', perhaps his most influential piece, he provocatively construed the Civil Wars as 'England's wars of religion', and pushed back against the secularity that was still historiographically dominant. This was a profound interpretive redirection with lasting consequences. It placed English (and later British) experience clearly within the compass of European developments, inviting continental historians to explore the British dimension of the Thirty Years War and inviting British historians to contemplate comparative history. It enriched both fields. It also reframed the dispute between revisionists and post-revisionists over the role of ideology in the English Revolution. Religion itself was a form of ideology and exploring it as the underlying motive of participants uncovered a wider and more diverse set of causes for political events. Nor was John's war of religion limited to the Puritan avant-garde. He had already uncovered the durability of Anglican belief and practice and soon he began to contemplate varieties of Catholicism that were another part of Britain's theological composition.

The turn toward religion was another example of John's sensitivity to the direction in which his field was moving. While producing his own original scholarship he was already publishing surveys of the work of others. His *Seventeenth-Century Britain* was much more than an annotated bibliography, and it required him to keep abreast of the latest work in all aspects of the field. The guide to local sources that he co-edited with G. E. Aylmer also demanded intimate familiarity with scholarly trends. During these years he was frequently called upon to write review essays that allowed him to deploy his massive historiographical erudition while prodding the field in directions he wished it to go. There can be no better example of this knack for agenda setting than his multiple interventions in what came to be called the British problem. John did not invent this subject but no one did more to promote it. Alone among the so-called 'new British historians' he conducted serious research on the history of all three Stuart kingdoms. He was the first to explore the problems of

Ireland as separate from, but implicated in, those of Britain, and he formatively encouraged a generation of young Irish historians to explore their country's history in the context of its relations with England and Scotland.<sup>2</sup> He was now renaming the revolutionary period the 'wars of the three kingdoms' or 'the British civil wars' and arguing not only for a comparative perspective but also for an integrative one. He was instrumental in organizing three-kingdom conferences, symposia and essay collections (two of which, *The Scottish National Covenant in its British Context* and *The British Problem 1534–1707*, he edited). His contributions to the new British history were both substantive and definitional and while his enthusiasm for the subject was genuine he never went overboard in thinking that it would provide the silver bullet in explaining the mid-century crisis.

Indeed, as the presses poured forth new histories oriented around this British perspective, John was drawn back to a figure who was one of the touchstones of his lifelong passion for Civil War history. And while there was surely a British dimension to this subject – the consequences of his actions in Scotland and especially Ireland would reverberate down the centuries – there was also no more quintessentially English figure than Oliver Cromwell. Throughout his career, John has had a fascination with Cromwell. He published an early essay in *Cromwelliana* and one of his first edited collections was a landmark volume on *Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution*. His contribution to the study of Cromwell came on many fronts. He published on the Army Revolt in 1647, the Putney Debates of that same year, and on Cromwell's unexpected conversion to supporting regicide in 1648–9. Most of all, he wrote sympathetically about Cromwell's religion and on how everything he did was controlled by his relation with the Almighty. The discoveries he made about the Lord Protector's early life and career, his activities as a government tax collector, his almost fulfilled intention to emigrate to America in the early 1630s, his participation in prophesying circles added freshness to a subject that was once thought exhausted. His life in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* is one of the gems of that collaborative venture and has been published as a stand-alone volume. He served as president of the Cromwell Association for a decade, and late in his career became general editor and participated in the project to re-edit Cromwell's letters and speeches according to modern standards.

<sup>2</sup> For his many services to Irish historical studies – including stints as external examiner to both undergraduate and graduate programs, membership on Irish University appointment panels, and as an advisor to the Irish Higher Education Authority – he was elected a member of the Royal Irish Academy in 2010.



John's versatility as an historian is apparent in any summary of his publications. He is equally at home in political and religious history and has made seminal contributions to both. His debunking of the myth of 'King Pym' by the seemingly simple device of comparing the many speeches published in his name to the many fewer that he is actually recorded as giving was inspired. His *ODNB* articles included lives of a Roman Catholic martyr and a Puritan iconoclast; of Charles I and Oliver Cromwell. His debate with David Underdown over the ecology of Civil War allegiance displayed his own mastery of local sources and his wariness about the limits of their explanatory power. His forays into Scotland and Ireland evinced a willingness to master new subjects and open new frontiers.

But an assessment of John's scholarly contributions cannot end with a description of his monographs, or of his surveys written for a popular and student audience (though the *Oxford Illustrated History of Tudor and Stuart Britain* has been a triumph), or even with his many seminal articles. Impressive as these achievements are, his greatest contribution to the vitality of his field lies in his editing and collaborating, where he was not only able to make his own contributions but also to stimulate others to write and publish on important, cutting-edge topics. He was the founding and guiding editor of the Cambridge Studies in Early Modern British History, which has produced more than eighty monographs over the past quarter century, including the first books of many of the most distinguished young historians in the field's recent generations. He has edited or co-edited thirteen collections of essays, including festschrifts, conference proceedings and volumes on new subfields of research. In all of these he has encouraged the work of young historians above all. None of his volumes were trophy collections for the wellknown and well-established. Additionally, he has himself contributed thirty-eight essays to collections edited by others, and there are no signs that he is slowing down. John has served continuously for thirty years as a member of the editorial board and for ten as editor of the *Historical Journal*, one of the leading venues for research on British and European history. While John Morrill's own scholarship places him in the first rank of his generation, as a facilitator of the work of others he stands alone.

### III

Simon Schama once told me a story about an experience he had when researching in the private Rothschild archives. It seemed so apropos of John. After a preliminary exchange of letters, he arrived at the chateau and was greeted by the baron's personal archivist. He was shown into a



richly furnished library, with glass-fronted cases filled from floor to ceiling with beautifully bound volumes. The heavy curtains were drawn, the air was still, and the room was silent. Schama would sit at one end of a long table meticulously studying the relevant documents while his chaperone sat silently at the opposite end, his gaze fixed on space. This routine was repeated day after day until Schama neared the conclusion of his research. Then one morning the heavy oak door that separated the library from the massive vestibule opened and an elderly man, immaculately turned out and with the kind of self-possession that could only have been bred over generations, entered. The archivist, as if he had been sentinel against this very occurrence, leapt to his feet. Schama, slower on the uptake, turned back to his document, but something almost magnetic brought his work to a halt and he too stood. Slowly, the man crossed the carpeted floor to Schama's end of the polished table. He introduced himself as the Baron de Rothschild, politely inquired into the nature of Schama's study, and made small talk for a few minutes. He then turned his mesmerizing gaze directly upon the historian and asked: 'Professor Schama, do you know the motto of this family?' Fortunately, this detail had escaped Simon's notice and he obliged his host with the mystification the moment so obviously required. 'No, I do not,' Schama admitted. 'Service,' Rothschild intoned deeply. Then, glancing down to the other end of the table, he added, 'and we get it!'

If early modern British history received its service in the late twentieth century, it was in large part the result of the labours of John Morrill. Perhaps John really did have the soul of a prison governor, for there was no onerous task that he would not willingly take up for the sake of scholarship or collegiality. Beyond his own writing and editorial duties he came to be in charge of a host of collaborative projects that succeeded one another with uncanny regularity. Geoffrey Elton, a model of tireless commitment to advancing historical study, deftly offloaded on to John the responsibility for compiling the early modern section of the annual bibliography of British and Irish history. This Herculean project required tracking all current books produced by the many publishers that then existed; surveying the contents of all the serials that filled the periodicals room of the University Library; and, most valuably, cataloguing the contents of the annual output of the innumerable local record societies whose volumes were rarities in libraries outside the United Kingdom. In the days before computers, all this required manual labour of the most pitiless kind. Entries were handwritten, typed and printed all in separate stages with arduous proofreading at each phase. John went on to become the founding editor of the Royal Historical Society's bibliography. When personal computers became available, John instantly exploited them and

when CD-ROM was developed he transferred the accumulated bibliographic records of generations onto an easily portable and fully searchable medium. He had a technical savvy atypical of his generation and was one of the few Cambridge historians who could give even a partially intelligible explanation of Boolean connectors. The bibliography of British and Irish History on CD-ROM was an invaluable research tool for years until it was supplanted by an online version.

If the *Annual Bibliography* required scholarly compilation on a massive scale, John's editorial role on the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* involved coaxing hundreds of other historians to write the lives of more than 6,000 seventeenth-century historical figures. John was the perfect choice to head up the early modern section of the *ODNB* and to serve on the editorial board of such a global collaborative effort. Again, his enthusiasm for the project was irresistible. Here was a once-in-a-century opportunity to honour those who had made significant contributions to Britain's past and it was John's task not only to co-ordinate the work of section editors and individual authors but also to decide which figures, neglected by the Victorian *Dictionary of National Biography*, should be introduced. The original *DNB* was to be updated but not discarded. The first requirement was a machine-readable version of the original volumes that would be consulted by authors but also linked to the digital version of the new *Dictionary*. Scanning was still error-prone when the project started. The editors needed a more reliable method. The solution they hit on was ingenious. Sets of the original volumes of the *DNB* were shipped to different regions of China where women unable to read English transcribed them onto computers. Then a software program compared the massive files. The likelihood that two typists would make the same errors was acceptably small to make the solution both effective and affordable.

How John found the time to concentrate on these decisions remains mysterious, for at the same time he was editing and writing at his usual frenetic pace and was assuming administrative roles both at Cambridge and nationally.

Loyalty is perhaps John's bedrock value: loyalty to family, to church, to friends, and to institutions. At Cambridge he held nearly every office of his college (except chaplain) and served as Vice-Master for a decade. His term as college librarian was typical, as he threw himself into book acquisition so fervently that he became expert in Asian history. He took great pride in his college, whose intellectual stature and financial stability improved steadily during his tenure there. For twenty years he has been a syndic of the Cambridge University Press and, for a number of those, a member of its all-important finance committee. In 2001 he began a term

xxviii Mark A. Kishlansky

as Deputy Director of the Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (CRASSH), responsible for developing university-wide programmes and raising and disbursing funds in support of research. He would have been a natural director of the Centre, but found that he could not generate enthusiasm for other disciplines that would match his love of history. He confessed to me that his mind wandered during presentations of even the most distinguished luminaries of other fields, something that never happened to him when attending the modest early modern history seminar that he had helped to found decades earlier. There the work of the greenest novice riveted his attention.

In the Cambridge History Faculty John rotated through a succession of offices, including secretary. He participated in curriculum reforms and chaired the Part I Examinations Board – an office of some peril (he once recalled a marking dispute that left an earlier chairman bloodied). He also sat on innumerable appointment committees. Appointments were his *métier*, and I cannot recall a conversation with him over thirty years that did not include discussions of the British and American job market. True, we both constantly have had students to place and swapped useful information about anticipated vacancies and people on the move. But John has grown into the kind of patron that had so fortuitously launched his own career. When a junior position opened at Brown, he submitted references for no fewer than seven contenders for the post. There were some years when his Ph.D.s were stacked like planes landing at Heathrow in a storm and, not unlike an air traffic controller, he inevitably brought each one in safely.

John relishes faculty meetings as if they were Premier League fixtures. He loves the subtleties of academic politics and he studies the preferences and interests of his colleagues as if he were betting on the pools. He once won a wager on the proposition that Elton would speak first on every item of the agenda, though he had to give odds. He has an almost superstitious belief in veiled intentions, and delights in decoding the concealed meaning in seemingly innocent events. He once had to interview a senior member of the faculty with whom he had lukewarm relations. ‘He asked me to come at two o’clock,’ he complained to me. ‘Do you know what that means?’ I was completely mystified. Two o’clock: low biorhythms? A late nooner? What could two o’clock possibly mean? John explained, ‘It is absolutely the only time of day that he wouldn’t have to offer any kind of refreshment. He would see me, but I wasn’t welcome.’ He would never attend a committee meeting without a multi-pronged strategy. His after-battle reports were an education in itself. He was master of the game and played it with a subtlety unknown to me.

By the middle of his career, John was making his mark well beyond East Anglia. He became a presiding presence in those national institutions that keep both historical study and the pursuit of knowledge alive and thriving. In the Royal Historical Society he became a member of council and then vice-president. His chief interest was in the society's publication efforts. He strongly supported the subvention that kept the *Studies in History* monograph series alive, and used his connections among publishers to stabilize its finances. *Studies in History* primarily published the work of young historians, a service increasingly eschewed by university presses. John not only kept the series afloat but also ensured its quality by directing worthy scholarship its way. He persuaded the society to take control and financial responsibility for the bibliography on which he had laboured for so long. Once online it quickly became the essential site for bibliographical information on all areas of British and Irish history.

John has received many honours, but none pleased him as much as his eventual election to the British Academy. From the outside this may have looked like a foregone conclusion, but John never considered it as such and there were some bumps and bruises along the way. The politics of the early modern section of the Academy's history group delight him even more than do those of Cambridge, though to my voyeuristic disappointment he treats them as if they were the *arcana* of the papal curia. Now and then he asks my views on the accomplishments of one or another historian, to gauge 'international opinion' as he calls it. Otherwise he keeps secret deliberations secret, though I can tell he is occasionally bursting to rehearse some remarkable development. John quickly became devoted to the Academy and accepted time-consuming membership on various committees. During one rather hectic year he served on both the Academy's grants committee and the Arts and Humanities Council Research Board. Together he sorted through hundreds of grant proposals and developed an encyclopaedic knowledge of what was being done throughout the field. Eventually he was elected vice-president of the Academy. When I asked him about the duties of the vice-president he responded with only a touch of sarcasm that while the president waved the flag of British academia in Paris and Rome, the vice-president did the same in Aberystwyth and Hull. He had a reverence for the Academy and its members and is especially honoured when asked to write obituaries of its members. His piece on John Kenyon was a remarkable labour of love, though he hardly knew the man in life. He had to negotiate the sensibilities of a skittish widow and colleagues who developed sudden memory lapses. Not only did he reread Kenyon's considerable corpus, but also gained access to his correspondence. There John found a

xxx Mark A. Kishlansky

kindred spirit in dozens of mischievous letters of recommendation, each of which required careful decoding. The one that delighted him most was ambiguously profound: the recommended candidate would fit into the department 'like a weevil into a ship's biscuit'.

I have experienced John's loyalty on many occasions, when he stood godfather to my son or performed the funeral service for my wife. But the occasion when it was most tested was when I submitted an essay to the *Historical Journal* during his editorship. The essay bluntly challenged the veracity of the work of another writer in the field who happened to hold a junior position at Cambridge. Since that work had been published in the *Historical Journal* it was only appropriate that the exposé appear there as well. The situation was awkward all around but John was predictably scrupulous in handling my submission, sending the essay to senior scholars in the field for vetting (to this day I don't know who they were). Their responses were less than pleased. The reviewers didn't like me or the exercise I had undertaken, but they believed it merited publication. Each fastidiously inspected numerous claims that I had made and pronounced them valid. On this basis John then set out to test my essay as well. He accepted the article, but asked that I either fortify or delete a number of charges that he found unpersuasive. He also informed me that the amended essay would then be submitted to the original author for response.

Once that happened, all hell broke loose. John was pressured from every direction with a single message: kill Kishlansky's essay. Unfounded rumours circulated that I was acting as his cat's-paw, or that he had penned the piece himself, or, more damaging, that he had abused his editorial responsibility. Though my target held only a position as a College fellow, in these fantasies he became rival to John himself, initiating unpleasant speculation as to his motives in printing so critical a piece. In a closed society like Cambridge these accusations reverberated unbearably. Finally, a senior member of the field sent him a menacing missive. He claimed to have examined over thirty of the points in dispute and found that I was wrong on every one of them. He warned John that if he published the essay the reputation of the *Historical Journal* would be damaged beyond repair and that John's own career would be ruined. These were not idle threats and this was the moment that a weaker man might have backed away. John had nothing to gain and much to lose. If he asked that I withdraw the essay questions about his judgement would be stifled and speculation about his motives ended. If, instead, he went forward he risked permanent rupture with distinguished colleagues and a controversy which, one way or the other, would imperil the reputation of the journal. For the next two days John did nothing but check these

thirty-odd points, spending long hours in the University Library weighing three accounts of a scattered set of sources. Reassured of his original judgement he sent a reply conciliatory in tone but scathing in analysis. The essay was published and years of bitterness ensued.

#### IV

For several years in the early 1990s John and I spent a week together at a National Endowment of the Humanities summer institute. The institute was designed to rejuvenate the research interests of participants who held positions in American teaching colleges. They were to be introduced to the latest historiographical trends and the newest historical methods, while being afforded time to work on their own scholarship. John led a week's worth of sessions on the Civil War and invited me, as a visiting fireman, to conduct one on the New Model Army. But our real purpose was to spend time together away from the pressure of families and of our increasingly busy professional lives. The institute was held in a small southern Californian town, the kind of which it is observed 'it gets late early there'. Seminar leaders and participants had the choice of two family-style restaurants and one bar and sooner or later we would find ourselves all together talking about our historical interests and professional experiences. Once each year in this company either John or I would innocently ask the other a question that we had discussed on many occasions: 'If for the rest of your life you had to choose between only teaching or only producing scholarship which would you choose?' Before either of us provided an answer we turned the question on the seminar participants, most of them young historians in the early years of their career and all of them facing a life of college teaching. Their answers were usually predictable. Those already estranged from their positions or ambitious for a place at a prestigious university chose research and writing. Those who seemed happiest and treated the institute more as a social than an intellectual occasion plumped for a life in the classroom. When our turns finally came we both made the same choice. We held positions that allowed us to balance research and teaching and we had access to the best resources and the brightest students. For us this was purely hypothetical. But we were sure that if only allowed one of the two activities we would both choose teaching.

Our shared teaching experiences never extended to undergraduate education. The English and American systems were just too different for any of the innovations in which we were each involved to be of use to the other. To this day I have only a partial understanding of what reading history at Cambridge entails and find talk of *tripos* (which in defiance of

xxxii Mark A. Kishlansky

mathematical law appears to consist of Part I and Part II), special subjects and firsts unintelligible. The seriousness with which British marking and examining is undertaken is beyond my experience, as is the communal responsibility that is taken for every aspect of undergraduate education. On the other hand, my lectures at Harvard are not optional for the students in my classes and they are expected to be highly polished performances. The fact that American students are compelled to study across the disciplines means that they are analytically sophisticated, even if empirically naïve. They require a special kind of teaching that has no analogue in Britain.

Where John and I did connect as teachers, however, was in graduate training. From the beginning of our careers we were involved with training Ph.D. students in our common field. Here we had lots to share, even if the structure of our respective programmes was different. John was always looking for innovation in his teaching. Once, when I invited him to the University of Chicago, I asked him to come and talk to my seminar about his career. For the benefit of my students I interviewed him about how he had become an historian, led him through his years as a teacher and scholar, and then asked him to reveal those requirements of the profession that he found most difficult. My purpose was to personalize someone whom my students only knew through his writings. After our interview, I went around the table and had each student pose their own questions. The occasion contained a hilarious incident that John has always threatened to repeat when it came my turn to speak to his pupils. The only time I could assemble all of my students was at lunch, which they were instructed to bring with them. Most brought sandwiches or yoghurt and fruit. But seated right next to John, elbow to elbow, was a student of more exotic tastes. He arrived with a can of sardines, fastidiously rolled it open, and released into our confined space an aroma so pungent as to be almost palpable. Never before had I seen an actual stiff upper lip. John resisted all temptation to comment though he could not resist some arch sidelong glances as one pilchard after another was devoured and, with a final slurp, the packing oil was drained down. I repeated this exercise – without the sardines – each year with another historian (unhappily John's openness and honesty was not often imitated) and John soon initiated it at Cambridge. It was especially valuable for our female students to hear the professional stories of female historians and we would often share the identity of successful visitors.

John's role as a graduate supervisor was enhanced by constant practice. Unlike many of his Cambridge contemporaries he never cherry-picks his students. He has been open to all comers in the field and increasingly to those from outside England. He welcomes Scots, Irish, Canadians,



Americans, Antipodeans, Asians and Europeans with genuine pleasure and has kept a thriving graduate community orbiting around him. On some days he would book as many as eight supervisions and as he fell further and further behind schedule – before e-mail no fifteen-minute period could pass without his phone ringing – they would gather on his staircase and hold impromptu discussions of their work. Though he had no interest in forming a school, his graduate students naturally took their cue from his current interests. His path from subject to subject can be plotted in an archaeology of the dissertations he directed: politics, religion, the British problem and Cromwell. But he also encouraged many who went in their own direction. His enthusiasm for the work of his students was always genuine and he was able to find a nugget of value in each one. When I came to his Cambridge he would assemble throngs of them and make sure that each had the chance to tell me about their research. Some I already knew of, others I would meet again in later years when they would recall the strawberry and champagne party or the time they sat cross-legged on his floor when I was there. To date he has directed over one hundred doctoral theses, a record, no doubt, if records of such things were kept.

John has not only been adviser to his own students. Every one of my doctoral candidates has been sent to meet him to discuss their work and they always come away enlightened. Beyond his own immense knowledge of the field, he inevitably knows exactly whom each student must meet, and this has been an invaluable service to each of them. They became integrated into the community of scholars at Cambridge or in London through the entrée of John's recommendation, and this usually resulted in learning about work or sources that were previously unknown to them. For some of my students he acted as surrogate advisor, bringing them to Cambridge to deliver papers at his seminar, reading their chapters, and ultimately publishing their books. And what has been true for my students is true for those of others. The parade of visitors up the tower staircase at Selwyn is seemingly inexhaustible and one never knew who would arrive to sit at the master's feet.

## V

From a distance, ours seems an unlikely friendship: a Manchester lad and a kid from New York. Two cultures separated by a not so common language. Indeed there is much we do not share. He is devout, I am profane (in the technical sense). For him it is classical music, for me it is classic rock. He is cool-tempered, I am volatile; he catches his flies with honey, I kill mine with vinegar. I am cynical. But there are points of



xxxiv Mark A. Kishlansky

contact as well and they matter more. *Mutatis mutandis* we share the same passion for sport, he for Manchester United, I for the New York Yankees. He once told me that during a cup final involving Man U he had to enter a lay-by on the road because he was screaming so violently at his radio that other drivers were becoming alarmed. I conduct similar invective-laden conversations with my television set, in violation of my father's admonition to 'never argue with inanimate objects'. We both knew what Tolstoy meant about happy families and we both had uxorious marriages cut short within a year of each other by cancer. The dignity he maintained through his ordeal became the blueprint for my own. We had our common intellectual and professional interests, and as the years passed a stock of common experiences that could be recounted and savoured.

Above all we've enjoyed each other's company and there was never a meeting and hardly a phone call where one or both of us did not dissolve into laughter. We share the same sense of humour despite having grown up in entirely different comedic traditions. Jokes we save to tell each other are always uproariously funny and when John gets going his bellowing effusions can only be described as guffaws, completely unrestrained deep belly laughs. These once got me banned from meetings of the Liberty Fund when, learning that *A Fish Called Wanda* was showing on television, we decided to play hooky from the open bar that capped the day's sessions in preference for one of our favourite movies. The antics of Kevin Kline and John Cleese soon had us literally rolling on the floor and one of John's great paroxysms of hilarity alerted the rest of our group – sombrelly drinking themselves into stupors – to our absence. The next morning I was officially reprimanded for 'corrupting' him. When John subsequently learned of this he laughed even harder and for the period of my banishment he would delight in informing me of his most recent Liberty Fund invitations. My revenge came cruelly. One night in his family room one of my wry remarks so set him off that he tipped an entire cup of coffee on to the not-so-stain-resistant sofa. Hurrying for a solvent and cloth, an exasperated Frances observed 'you two are just like schoolboys', echoing my own wife's assessment that we were just like teenagers.

John has always had the knack of making and keeping friends. They come from all parts of his life, representing his different eras and broad interests. In the small world of British academia it is only natural that he would have professional friends from as long ago as his schooldays, but he has maintained connection with many others who have no attachment to professional history. They parade to Cambridge unceasingly. Over the years many of his students have passed from one category to the other and he loves visiting them *in situ*. His Christmas card list must rival those

Cambridge University Press & Assessment

978-0-521-86896-9 — The Experience of Revolution in Stuart Britain and Ireland

Edited by Michael J. Braddick , David L. Smith

Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

---

JSM: a tribute to a friend

xxxv

of political leaders, except his are always handwritten and personally addressed. He takes pleasure in introducing his friends one to another and delights when one of these connections endures. Nothing makes him prouder than their accomplishments and he is always bathing in reflected glory. Indeed, unlike Gore Vidal, every time a friend succeeds, he grows a little. To those who know him best, John Morrill is a veritable giant.