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978-1-108-00226-4 - The University of Cambridge in the Eighteenth Century

Denys Arthur Winstanley

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The University of Cambridge in the Eighteenth Century

In this 1922 book, the first of four on the history of Cambridge in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, D.A. Winstanley, a Fellow of Trinity College and leading historiographer, explored the close ties between the academic and political worlds in the mid-eighteenth century. The book focuses on the role and achievements of the Duke of Newcastle, a Whig politician, as Chancellor of the University during the period 1748 to 1768. It makes extensive use of primary sources including the Duke's own records, which provide valuable documentation not only about his own activities but also about wider issues. Winstanley gives a detailed account of the inner working structures of the university and the colleges, introduces some of the most significant Cambridge personalities, and assesses the Duke's contribution to the university's development. His book remains of lasting interest to historians of education and the university.

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THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
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PLATE I



THOMAS PELHAM-HOLLES
FIRST DUKE OF NEWCASTLE

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The University of Cambridge in the Eighteenth Century

BY

D. A. WINSTANLEY, M.A.

FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE



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PREFACE

IT is sometimes assumed that the University of Cambridge in the eighteenth century led an isolated existence, remote from the stream of the national life; and that its numerous deficiencies were due to its immunity from external interference and its freedom to wallow in its sin. This generalisation is however more sweeping than accurate; and is certainly quite untrue of that part of the century when the Duke of Newcastle was Chancellor of the university. The following narrative, which can be briefly described as an account of Newcastle's activities as Chancellor, attempts to show that, at least as long as the Duke was a power in Cambridge, the connection between the academic and political worlds, instead of being non-existent, was in reality much too close and intimate to be salutary, and that the university was very far from being left to itself. The abuses were many, but they were not exclusively of home manufacture, and the politicians must shoulder their portion of the blame.

Use has been made of the Newcastle, Hardwicke, and Cole manuscripts in the British Museum; and in defence of the rather numerous extracts from these papers, it can be pleaded that events are generally most vividly described by those who have taken part in them. It is obvious that such a method does not make for brevity, but possibly the loss of conciseness may be compensated for by increase of interest.

I am glad to have this opportunity of expressing my great gratitude to my friends, Sir Geoffrey Butler, Fellow of Corpus Christi College, and Mr A. F. Scholfield, Librarian of Trinity College, for very much needed assistance most generously given; and for the

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sake of the few who may have read an appendix to an earlier work I should mention that a more careful and complete study of the manuscript authorities has shown me that my previous account of the contest between Lord Hardwicke and Lord Sandwich for the High Stewardship of the university was unfortunately not free from serious inaccuracies. It is to be hoped that the description given in the following pages of that fierce struggle more closely approximates to the truth.

D. A. W.

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