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Early Victorian Cambridge

Denys Arthur Winstanley (1877–1947), was a Fellow of Trinity College from 1906 until his death. His work included four important books on the history of the University of Cambridge between 1750 and 1882. This volume describes the many reforms to the educational system made during the early Victorian period: changes in college and university statutes, reform of the examinations, the foundation of Downing College and of Regius Professorships. Adopting an episodic rather than chronological approach, he is able to tease out specific controversies of the period such as a contested change of Mastership in Trinity, or the struggle for power in the Fitzwilliam Museum Syndicate. The extensive historical research in this book means that it holds its value today as a reliable source of information for historians of education in the early nineteenth century.

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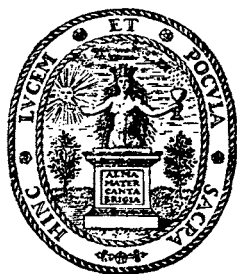
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EARLY VICTORIAN CAMBRIDGE

By
D. A. WINSTANLEY



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CONTENTS

Preface *page xi*

Chapter I. THE FOUNDATION OF DOWNING COLLEGE

Possible consequences of the foundation of Downing. Sir George Downing's will. Legal proceedings. The royal charter. The Downing Professorships. The Statutes. Downing's ill fortunes. *pages 1-7*

Chapter II. A COLLEGE ELECTION

Death of William Elliston. Difficulty of finding a suitable Master. The appeal to former Fellows. The appearance of Wollaston as a candidate. The disregard of the Trinity claim. George Butler's change of plan. The election of Wollaston. The appeal to the Visitor. The Visitor's judgment. The election of a new Master. *pages 8-17*

Chapter III. UNDERGRADUATES IN BONDS

The evangelical party at Cambridge. The British and Foreign Bible Society. Proposal to found an auxiliary branch at Cambridge. Undergraduates discouraged from undertaking the enterprise. Their submission. Church opposition. The foundation of an auxiliary branch. James Wood as Vice-Chancellor suppresses the Union Society. His unconciliatory attitude. Distinguished character of the Society. Christopher Wordsworth allows the Society to reassemble. *pages 18-28*

Chapter IV. THE ATTACK ON HEADS OF HOUSES

The powers of the Heads under the Elizabethan statutes. The success of E. D. Clarke as Professor of Mineralogy. The question of continuing the professorship after his death. J. S. Henslow as a candidate for it. The Grace of 15 May 1822 and the claim of the Heads to nominate the candidates for the professorship. Opposition to the claim in the University. Attempts to maintain peace. The election of Henslow. The legal proceedings. The controversy between Sedgwick and Dr French. Henslow appointed Professor of Botany. The Determination of Sir John Richardson. The Statutes Revision

Cambridge University Press
 978-1-108-00228-8 - Early Victorian Cambridge
 Denys Arthur Winstanley
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

vi

CONTENTS

Syndicate's recommendation for a Council of the Senate approved by the Royal Commissioners. The recommendation incorporated in the 1855 Bill for Statutory Commission. Objections of the ex-Royal Commissioners to the Bill. The amendments of the Bill fail to satisfy them. Agitation in the University. The Bill withdrawn. Controversy between Whewell and Sedgwick. *pages 29–57*

Chapter V. CHRISTOPHER WORDSWORTH

Appointment of Wordsworth as Master of Trinity. Disapproves of University lodging-houses. Urges the college to build a new court. His difficulties with the Seniority. The laying of the foundation stone of the King's Court. Wordsworth's attempt to establish an Honours examination in classics and theology frustrated. Establishment of the Previous Examination. Reforms in the ordinary degree examination. The institution of the Classical Tripos. Wordsworth's unpopularity in the college. His treatment of Connop Thirlwall. The agitation among the Fellows. Wordsworth's resignation of the mastership. The appointment of Whewell as his successor. *pages 58–82*

Chapter VI. THE RELIGIOUS TESTS

The Anglican monopoly of the University. The Dissenters petition against the Tests. Beverley's letter to the Duke of Gloucester. The Senate and the Tests. The appeal to Parliament. Debates in Parliament. Opinion in the University. G. W. Wood's Bill rejected by House of Lords. Lord Radnor's Bill for a University Commission. Sedgwick's change of mind about a Commission. *pages 83–96*

Chapter VII. CHANCELLORS AND HIGH STEWARDS

The interest of the University in national affairs. Chancellors and High Stewards chosen for their political opinions and importance. The Cambridge Whigs persuade Lord Lyttelton to stand for High Stewardship. His defects as a candidate. Lord Lyndhurst also stands. The excitement caused by the contest. Victory of Lord Lyndhurst. Prince Albert and the offer of the Chancellorship. His conditional acceptance. Lord Powis agrees to stand. Prince Albert's attitude misunderstood by his supporters in the University. The misconception corrected. The canvass. The election of the Prince. His installation at Buckingham Palace. *pages 97–121*

CONTENTS

vii

Chapter VIII. TOWN AND GOWN

The memorial of grievances against the University presented by the Town to the Royal Commissioners. The oaths of the Mayor and Bailiffs. The Magna Congregatio. Ale-house and wine licences. Interference with the trade of the Town. Prohibition of theatrical and other entertainments. The supervision of weights and measures. The proclamation of the markets and the fairs. The Court of the Chancellor. The apportionment of the land tax and local rates. The reply of the University to the Town memorial. The recommendations of the Royal Commissioners. Negotiations between University and Town. The failure of the negotiations. Sir John Patteson's award. The award incorporated in Act of Parliament. pages 122–138

Chapter IX. TROUBLE AT THE FITZWILLIAM

Whewell's dictatorial temperament. Becomes Vice-Chancellor in November 1855. Rehanges the pictures in the Fitzwilliam Museum. The Master of Downing protests on discovering what he has done. Whewell refuses to admit to wrong-doing. Various members of the syndicate resign. Difficulty in replacing them. Dr Geldart's letter. The new Fitzwilliam Syndicate. pages 139–147

Chapter X. INTERNAL REFORM

Criticism of the Universities. Its justification. The degree courses improved. Establishment of the Voluntary Theological Examination. Resumption of lecturing by Professors. Attendance at professorial lectures. The weaknesses of the professorial system. Need of more museums and lecture-rooms. Lord Radnor and the Universities. Minor reforms in college statutes. The revision of the statutes of Trinity College (1844). The committee for revising the University statutes. Prince Albert and reform. Honours examinations in natural and moral sciences. Appointment of the Statutes Revision Syndicate. Modification of Classical Tripos regulations. Failure to provide a University entrance examination. The appointment of a Royal Commission. The opposition in the University to a Commission. The intervention of Prince Albert. pages 148–233

Chapter XI. THE ROYAL COMMISSION

The reception of the Commissioners by the University. King's College surrenders the privilege of its Scholars. Meetings of the Statutes Revision

Syndicate. Its failure to agree about the Caput. Publication of its first report. The reforms recommended in the report. Defects in the report. Issue of a second report, recommending the institution of a Council of the Senate. The submission of the reports to the Senate delayed. The publication of the report of the Commissioners. The reforms recommended. The University and the report. The issue of a third report by the Statutes Revision Syndicate. Studies Syndicate and the Lecture-rooms and Museums Syndicate appointed.

pages 234–269

Chapter XII. BETWEEN THE TWO COMMISSIONS

The reports of the Statutes Revision Syndicate voted on in the Senate. Lord John Russell threatens the Universities (April 1853). The report of the Lecture-rooms and Museums Syndicate. Lord Palmerston's letter to Prince Albert (December 1853). The reply of the University and colleges to the letter. Reports of the Studies Syndicate. The reports in the Senate. The 1855 Bill for a Statutory Commission. The Bill withdrawn. The 1856 Bill for a Statutory Commission.

pages 270–288

Chapter XIII. STATUTE XLI AND THE THREE REGIUS PROFESSORSHIPS

Foundation of the Regius Professorships of Divinity, Hebrew and Greek. Statute XLI of the Marian draft statutes and the Elizabethan statutes of Trinity College. The lacuna in Statute XLI. The rectory of Somersham annexed to Divinity Professorship. Modification of Statute XLI by Charles II's letter. The election of Dr Kaye to Divinity Professorship (1816). Legal opinions on Dr Kaye's eligibility. Dispute concerning Monk's retention of Greek Professorship after proceeding to D.D. degree. Legal opinions. The eligibility of Christopher Wordsworth for the Divinity Professorship (1827). Legal opinions on the question whether an elector can be a candidate. Legal opinions on the question whether Statute XLI is a University or college statute. The effect of the revision of Trinity College statutes (1844) on Statute XLI. The election of W. H. Thompson to Regius Professorship of Greek. Edleston appeals to the Visitor to deprive Thompson of his fellowship. The Visitor's judgment. Thompson becomes a titular fellow. The 1856 Bill for Statutory Commission and the three Regius Professorships.

pages 289–313

CONTENTS

ix

Chapter XIV. THE STATUTORY COMMISSION AND THE UNIVERSITY

The disappearance of the Caput. The election of the first Council of the Senate. The Statutes of the University revised by Council. The Council, the Commissioners and the Senate. Revision of University Trusts and Endowments. Trinity College and the draft statute for the three Regius Professorships. The Commissioners deal with the Council alone. The conciliatory attitude of the Commissioners. Some features of the new statutes.
pages 314–338

Chapter XV. THE STATUTORY COMMISSIONERS AND TRINITY COLLEGE

The colleges and the Commissioners. Trinity College and the Commissioners. The Westminster Scholars and the three Regius Professorships. The Governing Body appoints a committee to report on statute revision. The report of the committee. Discussions in the Governing Body during Michaelmas term, 1857. Failure of the reform party in Governing Body. The revised draft statutes sent to the Commissioners. Their consideration postponed by the Commissioners. Anger in Trinity. Draft statutes sent by the Commissioners (May 1858). Hostile reception of them. The meeting of the Governing Bodies. Meeting between a Trinity deputation and the Commissioners. The letter of the twenty-two Fellows to the Commissioners. Revised draft statutes sent by the Commissioners (February 1859). Discussed by Governing Body. The revised draft sent under seal (April 1859). Protests of the college against some of the statutes. The final settlement.
pages 339–372

Chapter XVI. CAMBRIDGE AS IT WAS

The duties of a Vice-Chancellor. Dealings of Proctors with colleges and undergraduates. The Proctors and Dr Bateson. The case of *Kempe v. Latimer Neville*. The Registry and the Registry. The rivalry between Trinity and St John's. The smaller colleges. Dinner in Hall. Compulsory attendance at chapel. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Undergraduates. Sermons in chapel. University sermons. The Family dining club. The installation of Lord Camden as Chancellor. Life and manners of the Fellows. Smoking in the Trinity Combination Rooms. College Tutors. Private

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-00228-8 - Early Victorian Cambridge
Denys Arthur Winstanley
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

x

CONTENTS

tutors. Noblemen, Fellow Commoners, Pensioners and Sizars. Ignorance of undergraduates. Disorderly behaviour of undergraduates. The Parliamentary election of February 1856. Undergraduate freedom restricted.
pages 373–423

Appendices

- | | |
|---|---------|
| A. Fellowships of Trinity College | 424–428 |
| B. The Trinity Seniority | 429–433 |
| C. Sir Isaac Newton's rooms | 434–435 |
| D. The statue of Isaac Barrow in Trinity Chapel | 436–439 |

Index 441–460

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-00228-8 - Early Victorian Cambridge
Denys Arthur Winstanley
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

P R E F A C E

I have attempted in the following pages to give an account of the University of Cambridge during the first sixty years of the nineteenth century, when it underwent reform both from within and without; and though there are objections to the episodic treatment I have adopted, it seemed better suited to the subject than the more orthodox chronological method, which would either have necessitated wearisome repetition or imposed an intolerable strain on the memory of the reader. Nevertheless, I may be thought to have taxed the memory and, what is worse, the patience of the reader by describing in such detail the many changes made in the curriculum and educational system of the University; but, as many of these changes had consequences reaching to the Cambridge of our own day, they could hardly be dismissed in a cursory fashion.

I have been permitted to use the papers of the Prince Consort in the Royal archives at Windsor, and beg leave to record my humble thanks to His Majesty the King for this privilege. The Prince was Chancellor of the University during a very critical period of its history; and his correspondence with Vice-Chancellors and Heads of Houses reveals his interest in the affairs of Cambridge and the wisdom of the advice he gave. I also wish to express my gratitude to Mr Geoffrey Lloyd, M.P., the Secretary for Mines, who, when he was Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Home Affairs, most kindly placed at my disposal the Letter Books of the Statutory Commissioners and other Home Office papers, and by this assistance very much lightened my task. I am also indebted to Mr Wilfred Bowring, who kindly allowed me to see a diary kept by F. H. Bowring, who was elected to a fellowship of Trinity in 1844.

Use has also been made of the collection of University Papers in the University Library and, by the kindness of the Misses Allen, of the diary of Joseph Romilly, which is also in the University Library. The collection of University Papers has only recently been catalogued, and without the skilled assistance of Mr Filby I should not have been able to thread my way through what was until lately a chaotic mass of material. Romilly's diary was used to a certain extent by the late Mr J. W. Clark for the life of Adam Sedgwick, which he wrote in

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Denys Arthur Winstanley
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

xii

PREFACE

collaboration with the late Professor Hughes, but, as is evident from my frequent references to it, I do not share Mr Clark's opinion that the "diary has a personal, rather than a public interest", as Romilly "does not say much about what was going on in the University". The Whewell Papers in Trinity College Library are also very valuable. Mrs Stair Douglas only very partially used them when writing Whewell's life, rightly leaving aside much which was without biographical interest, though of great importance in connection with the history of the University. I am also much indebted to the Council of my College for having granted me access to the Whewell Papers and the College muniments; and to the Council of the Senate for permission to use the documents in the Registry, particularly the Council minutes.

There is certainly no lack of material for a history of the University in the nineteenth century, and the many defects of this volume are due to the workman and not to his tools.

D. A. W.

February 1940