

DEAN TUCKER AND EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY  
ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL THOUGHT

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George Shelton



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*To my Mother and Father*

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# Preface

It is not difficult to understand why Dean Tucker has not been the subject of a biography. Not only was his life relatively uneventful, but, for those who were curious, R. L. Schuyler provided a convenient biographical sketch in the Introduction to his 1931 selection of Tucker's works. In recent years, however, a substantial number of his publications have been reprinted, and a full length study of his life and work may be useful.

I have chosen to discuss his writings more or less in order of appearance, relating them to his personal life when enough is known about it, and to his times where appropriate. Because he is best known as a controversialist, there has been a tendency to give his thought less weight than it might have received if he had been more dispassionate and more systematic. For this reason, I have examined his ideas at some length where they appear to warrant it. I have also quoted liberally from his incidental comments on a variety of subjects, because through them he offers us a kind of window on his age. Since his career as an author spanned almost half of the eighteenth century and since much of what occurred during that period is reflected in what he wrote, we get a generous sampling of the social as well as the intellectual history of his times.

I should like to extend my thanks to the University of Victoria for its generous study leave policy, and both the Canada Council and the University for financial assistance. Along the way I received assistance from librarians, archivists and private citizens too numerous to mention. It was much appreciated. Finally, I wish to express my gratitude to June Belton for secretarial help beyond the call of duty, and to my wife, Mary, for her patience and encouragement over the years.

GEORGE SHELTON

# **Note on Page References in the Text**

Where a work by Tucker is referred to repeatedly, page references are given in the text. Where there are several successive quotes from the same page or pages, the reference is given following the last in the series and should not be taken as referring to that quote only or to those that follow it. Casual references to works by Tucker and all other references are covered by the Notes section, in which, also, the initial reference to any of the works cited will be found.