

RESTORATION HISTORIANS  
AND THE ENGLISH CIVIL WAR

ROYCE MACGILLIVRAY

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*by*

ROYCE MACGILLIVRAY



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*To  
My Mother  
And to the Memory of  
My Father*

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## ABBREVIATIONS

- Aubrey, *BL* John Aubrey, "Brief Lives," chiefly of *Contemporaries, set down by John Aubrey, between the Years 1669 & 1696*, ed. Andrew Clark. 2 vols. Oxford, 1898.
- Baxter, *RB* Richard Baxter, *Reliquiae Baxterianae: or, Mr. Richard Baxter's Narrative of The most Memorable Passages of His Life and Times*, ed. Matthew Sylvester. London, 1696.
- BM British Museum.
- Burnet, *OTA* Gilbert Burnet, *Burnet's History of My Own Time: . . . Part I: the Reign of Charles the Second*, ed. Osmond Airy. 2 vols. Oxford, 1897-1900.
- Burnet, *OTR* Gilbert Burnet, *Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time*, ed. M. J. R[outh], 2nd ed. 6 vols. Oxford, 1833.  
Airy's edition of the *Own Time* extends only to the death of Charles II; for later events, Routh's edition must be used.
- Clarendon, *HR* Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England Begun in the Year 1641*, ed. W. Dunn Macray. 6 vols. Oxford, 1888.
- Clarendon, *L* Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, *The Life of Edward Earl of Clarendon, . . . in Which Is Included, a Continuation of His History of the Grand Rebellion. Written by Himself*. 2 vols. Oxford, 1857.
- Clar. S. P.* *State Papers Collected by Edward, Earl of Clarendon*, ed. Richard Scrope and Thomas Monkhouse. 3 vols. Oxford, 1767-1786.
- DNB* *Dictionary of National Biography*
- Dugdale, *SV* [Sir William Dugdale], *A Short View of the Late Troubles in England*. Oxford, 1681.

- EHR* *The English Historical Review*
- Gardiner, *HE* S. R. Gardiner, *History of England from the Accession of James I. to the Outbreak of the Civil War 1603-1642*. 10 vols. London, 1883-1884.
- Hackett, *SR* John Hackett, *Scrinia Reserata: a Memorial Offer'd to the Great Deservings of John Williams, D.D. . . . Containing a Series of the Most Remarkable Occurrences and Transactions of his Life, in Relation both to Church and State*. [London], in the Savoy, 1693.
- HLQ* *The Huntington Library Quarterly*
- HMC Historical Manuscripts Commission
- Nelson, *IC* John Nelson, *An Impartial Collection of the Great Affairs of State*. 2 vols. London, 1682-1683.
- N & Q* *Notes and Queries*
- OPH* *The Parliamentary or Constitutional History of England; From the earliest Times, to the Restoration of King Charles II*, 2nd ed. 24 vols. London, 1761-1763. Commonly known as *Old Parliamentary History*.
- Rushworth, *HC* John Rushworth, *Historical Collections*. 7 vols. London, 1659-1701. All references are to the set shelfmarked 2072 f. in the Reading Room of the British Museum.
- Warwick, *M* Sir Philip Warwick, *Memoires Of the reigne of King Charles I. With a Continuation to the Happy Restauration of King Charles II*. London, 1701.
- Wood, *AO* Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses*, in Anthony à Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses. An Exact History of All the Writers and Bishops Who Have Had Their Education in the University of Oxford. To Which Are Added the Fasti, or Annals of the Said University*, ed. Philip Bliss. 4 vols. London, 1813-1820.
- Wood, *F* Wood, *Fasti*, in the same.

## PREFACE

This is a study of the histories of the English Civil War or some aspects of it written in England or by Englishmen and Englishwomen or published in England up to 1702, the year of the publication of the first volume of Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*. By the terms of this definition, Clarendon is himself, of course, one of the historians studied. Clarendon's *History* is so formidable an achievement that all historians writing about the war before its publication have an air of prematureness. Nevertheless, as I hope the following pages will show, they produced a body of writing which may still be read with interest and profit and which anticipated many of the ideas and attitudes of Clarendon's *History*. I will even go so far as to say that many readers who have only a limited interest or no interest in the Civil War are likely to find many of these historians interesting, should their works come to their attention, for their treatment of the problems of man in society, for their psychological acuteness, and for their style. But while I intend to show their merits, my main concern will be to show how the Civil War appeared to historians, including Clarendon, who wrote within one or two generations after it, that is to say, at a time when it remained part of the experience of people still alive.

A word is necessary on terminology. Whenever no misunderstanding seemed likely to result from my doing so, I have used the words "English Civil War," "Civil War," and "war" to refer not only to the actual fighting in England but to the whole connected series of political upheavals and revolutionary developments in the British Isles from 1637 to 1660, that is, from the breaking out of the Scottish revolt to the Restoration of Charles II. This usage has obvious defects, but there seems to be none better. "Puritan Revolution" and "Rebellion" are politically loaded in a way that makes them difficult to use in a context where some neutral term is necessary, and the former, in the sense in which it is usually understood, is so anachronistic with respect to seventeenth-century thought



that I do not see how it could be used at all in interpreting the thought of most of these early historians. "Revolution" is less troublesome than "Puritan Revolution" and "Rebellion," but I do not think that this term either could be used repeatedly, as a convenient term for this purpose must be, without incurring objections similar in kind if not in degree. I hope that my use of "Civil War" and so forth in this sense produces no difficulty for readers. Wherever there was danger of misunderstanding occurring, wherever my meaning in using these words was not sufficiently clear from the context, I have, I hope, discovered the difficulty in manuscript and rephrased my thoughts in words less open to ambiguity.

While I have included a general survey of the Civil War historiography of the period, with discussion of trends and patterns and notice of even some of the very minor historians, I have concentrated upon the more important historians whose names appear in the headings and sub-headings of the chapters.

A word is necessary on the problem of what is a "history" of the Civil War. Besides histories in the more ordinary and unquestioned sense of the term, I include as "histories" biographies and autobiographies, memoirs, historical essays, printed collections of documents, the relevant sections of histories of England, Europe, or the world, narratives or "relations," and replies made to other writers' histories. I do, however, exclude verse, religious treatises including sermons, political treatises, merely polemical pamphlets, and works of a belletristic nature. In dealing with writings so extremely varied I have not found it possible to follow a mathematically exact rule of what is a history and what is not, but it was usually evident enough for practical purposes in any particular case whether the work was a "history" or not. By "historian" I mean anyone who wrote a "history" in the sense indicated above without trying to limit the term to those who most deserve it – to professionals such as Dugdale or amateurs of undoubted achievement such as Baxter.

In the following study I exclude as part of my defined subject matter Scottish, Irish, continental, and other non-English historians unless, like Burnet, they wrote Civil War histories in England or had them published there within the period indicated. I do, however, occasionally refer to continental historians when they cast light on the works of their English brethren or are relevant to some strain in English thought.

In my research and writing I have incurred many debts of gratitude. My obligations to Professor W. K. Jordan of Harvard, under whom this study was begun, go back many years. His unfailing kindness, courtesy, and helpfulness in dealing with his students set a high standard for all

university teachers. I am grateful to the staff of the Widener and Houghton Libraries at Harvard, the British Museum, the Institute of Historical Research at the University of London, the Bodleian, the City of Nottingham Museum and Art Gallery, the City of Nottingham Public Libraries, and the University of Waterloo Library, Waterloo, Ontario. The Marquess of Bath, the Marquess of Bute, and the Corporation of Nottingham have very kindly allowed me to read manuscripts they own. For financial assistance I am grateful to the Canada Council, to the University of Waterloo, and to the American Philosophical Society, which gave me a grant from the Penrose fund.

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