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0521021898 - History, Society and the Churches: Essays in Honour of Owen Chadwick

Edited by Derek Beales and Geoffrey Best

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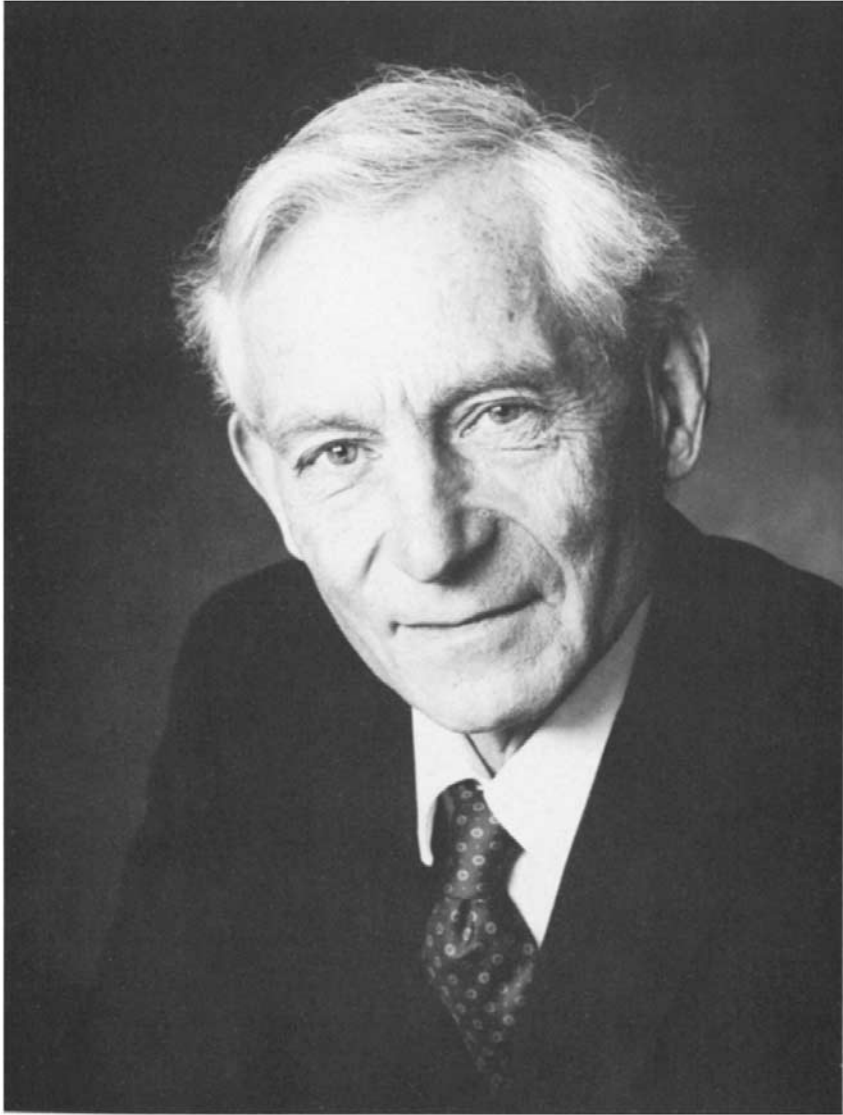
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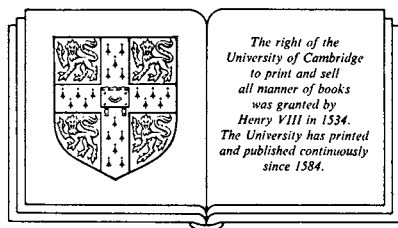
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Essays in honour of
OWEN CHADWICK

Edited by
DEREK BEALES
and
GEOFFREY BEST



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Contributors

Professor Derek Beales is *Professor of Modern History, University of Cambridge, and a Fellow of Sidney Sussex College.*

Professor Geoffrey Best is *Honorary Professor of History and Sometime Dean of the School of European Studies, University of Sussex.*

Dr T. C. W. Blanning is *Lecturer in History, University of Cambridge, and a Fellow of Sidney Sussex College.*

Professor C. N. L. Brooke is *Dixie Professor of Ecclesiastical History, University of Cambridge, and a Fellow of Gonville and Caius College.*

The Rev. Professor Henry Chadwick is *Regius Professor Emeritus of Divinity, University of Cambridge, and a Fellow of Magdalene College.*

Professor Giles Constable is *Professor of History, Harvard University, and Sometime Director of Dumbarton Oaks.*

Dr Eamon Duffy is *Lecturer in Divinity, University of Cambridge, and Fellow and Tutor of Magdalene College.*

Professor G. R. Elton is *Regius Professor of Modern History, University of Cambridge, and a Fellow of Clare College.*

Dr Boyd Hilton is *Fellow, Tutor and Lecturer in History, Trinity College, Cambridge.*

The Rev. Professor John McManners is *Regius Professor Emeritus of Ecclesiastical History, University of Oxford, and a Fellow of All Souls College.*

Dr John Morrill is *Lecturer in History, University of Cambridge, and a Fellow of Selwyn College.*

The Rev. Dr E. R. Norman is *Lecturer in History, University of Cambridge, and Dean of Peterhouse.*

Professor Keith Robbins is *Professor of Modern History, University of Glasgow.*

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Contributors

The Rev. Professor Gordon Rupp is *Dixie Professor Emeritus of Ecclesiastical History, University of Cambridge, and an Honorary Fellow of Emmanuel College.*

Dr Jonathan Steinberg is *Lecturer in History, University of Cambridge, and Fellow and Tutor of Trinity Hall.*

Dr Blair Worden is *Lecturer in Modern History, University of Oxford, and Fellow and Tutor of St Edmund Hall.*

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Preface

The production of this volume was demanded by the fame and stature of the historian to whom it is presented; its character was determined by the nature of his unique contribution to British historical studies. Holder successively of Cambridge's chairs of ecclesiastical and (by implication) general modern history – author, lecturer and teacher equally of what could certainly be called religious history and what could not be called anything but history *tout court* – a clergyman–professor of a kind once common in Cambridge but now very rare – he has become distinguished for the ease with which he crosses compartmental boundaries and confounds conventional distinctions.

The range of his writings is unusually wide, their diversity extraordinary. Yet unity is there too in the characteristic which has given its theme to this collection. Here is a historian who has vindicated more than any other in Britain today the principle that the history of religion and the churches is a normal and proper part of history in general, and is indeed indispensable to much of it. Here, therefore, are essays by a group of professional colleagues which in varying degrees and from a variety of points of view (not all, for example, would call themselves Christian or religious) exemplify that principle and give the whole, we believe, a coherence not often found in studies ranging, as do those of Owen Chadwick himself, from the first Christian centuries to the years of his own lifetime.

The editors in conclusion gladly admit debts of gratitude to the many colleagues who have in one way or another assisted this enterprise; among them, inevitably, some who would have liked to contribute to it themselves but for whom, in a work of limited size and definite character, no room could be found. Thanks are equally due to the Cambridge University Press and its staff, and in particular to William Davies.