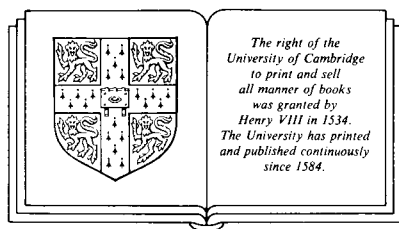


The Revolution of 1688–1689

Changing perspectives

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Introduction

Changing the perspectives on the Revolution of 1688–89 has been a long time in coming. For almost three hundred years, the so-called Whig view of the Glorious Revolution prevailed, virtually unchallenged. Historians, with but few exceptions, were content to perceive the context, political process, leadership, ideology, and consequences of the Revolution in much the same terms that Lord Macaulay laid out in his famous *History of England*, first published in the mid-nineteenth century.¹ Over the past twenty years, however, scholars have begun to revise that view by posing new questions and offering different interpretations. Recently this revived interest gained momentum because of celebrations of the tercentenary of the Revolution in Great Britain, the Netherlands, and the United States. For complex reasons associated with late twentieth-century politics, religion, and scholarship, those celebrations took different forms in the three countries, but whatever the proportion of ambivalence and enthusiasm in them, the public and scholarly attention focused on the Revolution was greater than at any time in its history.² Symposia and conferences – along with printed tee shirts and other memorabilia – abounded, the result being a harvest of publications which left no doubt that the old Whig consensus was in disarray.

The essays in this volume, themselves (with two exceptions) the fruit of an international celebratory conference held in Washington, D.C., in April 1989, offer novel and interdisciplinary interpretations of the Revolution of 1688–89 and the late Stuart and early Hanoverian world from both an international and an English domestic perspective. The goal animating the conference was – as it is of this collection – to broaden the context in which the Revolution is usually placed and to integrate multiple disciplines in doing so. Written by a distinguished group of scholars in British, Dutch, and colonial American history, and in British political and religious history and theory, literature, law, and women's history, the essays do not, of course, attempt to cover every issue – notably absent, for example, is systematic attention to Jacobitism, the subject of two recently published collections of papers³ – but the present essays do variously ask fresh questions of traditional issues, deal with little explored topics, and employ some newly recovered or hitherto neglected

¹ Lord Macaulay, *History of England from the Accession of James II*, ed. C. H. Firth (6 vols., Oxford University Press, 1913–15).

² Lois G. Schwoerer, "Celebrating the Glorious Revolution, 1689–1989," *Albion* 20 (1990), 1–19.

³ Eveline Cruickshanks (ed.), *By Force or By Default? The Revolution of 1688–89* (Edinburgh, John Donald, 1989); and Eveline Cruickshanks and Jeremy Black (eds.), *The Jacobite Challenge* (Edinburgh, John Donald, 1988).

material. They will contribute, it is hoped, towards the larger project of shaping a fuller and more accurate understanding of the Revolution of 1688–89.

The historiography of the Revolution of 1688–89, a subject in its own right not yet written,⁴ forms an important part of the context within which the authors of these essays approached the subject. By the time they gathered in 1989, many new initiatives had already been taken that disputed the long-held conventional wisdom about the Revolution. Several features of that traditional view originated with historians who preceded Macaulay. The first history of the Revolution appeared within nine months of the revolutionary settlement⁵ and was followed over the next hundred years by histories which were almost all “Court–Whig” in political orientation. Offering a political narrative of events in terms favorable to the victors, these early histories described the Revolution as “happy,” “mighty,” and “one of the greatest,” and expressed awe that through the workings of Providence the nation’s laws, liberties, and Protestant religion should have been rescued by a selfless Prince of Orange at the cost of so little violence.⁶ Only a few historians, such as the Tory sympathizer James Ralph and the radical Catherine Macaulay, ventured to impugn the motivation and methods of Dutch William and his English supporters, Ralph asserting that “self-interest” explained the actions of both, and Macaulay censuring the English leaders for their moral turpitude, personal selfishness, and corruption of Parliament.⁷

Despite some adverse criticism, by the middle of the eighteenth century the events of 1688–89 were known as the “Glorious Revolution,” and the epithet, with all its eulogistic connotations, was firmly embedded in the national consciousness. The first description of the events of 1688–89 as “The Glorious Revolution” seems to be a question of consuming interest to students, historians, and laymen alike. Before the term disappears entirely from the historical lexicon, a brief account may satisfy the curious. The word “glorious,” meaning “entitled to renown,” “splendid,” and “magnificent,” was much favored in 1688 and 1689 as a descriptive term for William and his undertaking. Its users intended to heap praise on the Revolution because the

⁴ Articles on late Stuart scholarship have not reviewed the literature of the Revolution of 1688–89. See Stephen B. Baxter, “The Later Stuarts 1660–1714,” in Richard Schlatter (ed.), *Recent Views on British History* (New Brunswick, N.J., Rutgers University Press, 1984), pp. 141–66; Stephen B. Baxter, “Recent Writings on William III,” *JMH* 38 (1966), 256–66; Richard R. Johnson, “Politics Redefined: an Assessment of the Late Stuart Period of English History, 1660–1714,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series, 35 (1978) 691–732.

⁵ *The History Of the Late Revolution in England, With the Causes & Means By which it was Accomplish’d. Together With the Settlement thereof under their most Serene Majesties King William and Queen Mary, by the Lords and Commons Assembled in this present Parliament* (London, 1689). Advertised in the *London Gazette*, November 14–18, 1689, no. 2506.

⁶ *The History Of the Late Revolution in England*, p. 274; Abel Boyer, *The History Of King William The Third*. In three parts. (London, 1702–3), part II, p. 359; Boyer’s comment is used verbatim by John Banks, *The History of the Life and Reign of William III. King of England, Prince of Orange, and Hereditary Stadtholder of the United Provinces* (London, 1744), p. 256. Also Laurence Eachard, *The History of England. From the First Entrance of Julius Caesar and the Romans, To the Conclusion of the Reign of King James the Second, And the Establishment of King William and Queen Mary Upon the Throne, in the year 1688* (3 vols., London, 1707–18), III, p. 956.

⁷ James Ralph, *The History of England during the Reigns of King William, Queene Anne and King George I, with an introductory review of the reigns of the Royal Brothers, Charles and James, in which are to be found the seeds of the Revolution* (2 vols., London, 1744–46), I, pp. 997, 999, 1003, 1023–24, 1078. Catherine Macaulay, *Observations on a Pamphlet, entitled, Thoughts on the Cause of the present Discontents* (London, 1770), pp. 10–11.

settlement was achieved without significant bloodshed, represented the will of the people, and secured the nation's laws, religion, and liberties, which had been threatened by an absolutist Catholic monarch.⁸

The word "revolution," quite separately from the word "glorious," was also applied in 1688–89 to the revolutionary events. It carried more than one meaning, but not the modern one of a total overturning of social and economic structures as well as the political order.⁹ Used in the sense derived from contemporary astronomy, which referred to the movement of heavenly bodies in a circle or ellipse as a "revolution," the word implied that the events had accomplished a return to past conditions rather than the creation of new ones. For example, John Locke described King William III as "our Great Restorer." The term also might convey the idea of upheaval and disruption. One tract writer, reaching for a laugh, made a joke about a fellow who, sensing that the world, as he put it, was being "turned upside down," asked to be buried face down, so that he would soon be the only person lying properly in his grave.¹⁰ Less frequently, the word "revolution" also meant that a new irreversible political order had been achieved.¹¹

To link these two words – "revolution" and "glorious" – was an act of propaganda that aimed to convey approval and approbation of what had happened in 1688–89. People who used the epithet revealed how myopic and narrow was their perspective, for obviously "Glorious Revolution" could apply only to England, not to Scotland or Ireland. Interestingly, it was not a historian who first described the events of 1688–89 as a "Glorious Revolution." The first person to do so (if the surviving record is accurate) was a Whig radical, John Hampden, Jr., in the fall of 1689 in testimony before a committee of the House of Lords. When that term appeared again it was in 1706 in sermons by Bishop Gilbert Burnet (a friend and confidant of King William and Queen Mary) and nonconformist preachers.¹² The first *historian* to conjoin the two words was Walter Harris, whose history was published in 1749.¹³ For generations – right up to the late twentieth century – the term

⁸ For example, Boyer, *History of King William The Third*, part II, p. 321; Dalrymple, *Memoirs*, II, Appendix, part II, p. A 2; *The History of the most Illustrious William, Prince of Orange* (London, 1688), p. A 2; and a sermon preached by Reverend John Tillotson, January 31, 1688/89: *A Sermon Preached at Lincolns-Inn Chappel, on the 31st of January, 1688. Being the Day Appointed for A Publick Thanksgiving To Almighty God For having made His Highness the Prince of Orange The Glorious Instrument of the Great Deliverance of This Kingdom from Popery & Arbitrary Power* (London, 1689), p. 29.

⁹ For comments on the concept of revolution in seventeenth-century England, mostly at the time of the Civil War, see Perez Zagorin, *The Court and the Country* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), pp. 9–18 and studies noted there.

¹⁰ *A Dialogue between Two Friends, a Jacobite and a Williamite, occasion'd by the Late Revolution of Affairs, and the Oath of Allegiance* (n.p., n.d., [1689]), p. 1.

¹¹ For example, BL, Add. Ms. 41,816, fol. 167, Daniel Petit to Earl of Middleton, September 7, 1688; HEHL, Hastings Mss., HA 7, Sir Edward Abney to Earl of Huntingdon, December 18, 1688; Sir James Montgomery, *Great Britain's Just Complaint*, in Sir Walter Scott (ed.), *A Collection of Scarce and Valuable Tracts, on the most Interesting And Entertaining Subjects: but chiefly such as relate to the History And Constitution of These Kingdoms. Selected From An Infinite Number In Print and Manuscript, In The Royal, Cotton, Sion, And Other Public, As Well As Private, Libraries; Particularly That Of The Late Lord Somers*, 13 vols. (2d edn. London, 1809–15), x, pp. 429–30.

¹² Eveline Cruickshanks (ed.), *By Force or By Default?* opposite frontispiece. And James R. Hertzler, "Who Dubbed It 'The Glorious Revolution?'" *Albion* 19 (1987), 579–85.

¹³ Walter Harris, *The History of the Life and Reign of William-Henry, Prince of Nassau and Orange, Stadtholder of the United Provinces, King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, etc.* (Dublin, 1749), Dedication.

remained the popular choice, although, as we shall see, historians prominently associated with the “old Whig” view disavowed it. Although it has now fallen into disfavor, especially in Great Britain,¹⁴ and is used in the United States as a gambit to attract undergraduates (this writer suspects from her own experience), the epithet “Glorious Revolution” remains the most famous and most distinctive of the several descriptive terms that have been attached to the Revolution.

It was not until the late eighteenth century that the question of the character of the Revolution – was it conservative or radical? – became an issue. The matter was opened initially not by historians but by political commentators who used the centenary of the Revolution as a centerpiece of their discussion of the *French* Revolution and its applicability to British politics. On the one hand, the radical Dissenting minister, Dr. Richard Price, and his friends in the newly reconstituted Revolutionary Society, celebrated the one hundredth birthday of the Revolution of 1688–89 with the intent of appealing to its memory in support of reform measures in British society. In his well-known sermon, *A DISCOURSE On The Love Of Our Country*, delivered on November 4, 1788, William of Orange’s birthday and the Society’s annual meeting date, Price described the Glorious Revolution as led by Whigs and as exemplifying principles dear to him, whatever their actual relevance to the Revolution. Among the principles he cherished were that all civil and political power is derived from the people and that abuse of power justifies a people in resisting a king and selecting another monarch. According to Price, the Revolution accomplished substantial change and, even more importantly, laid the foundations for reform to come.¹⁵ On the other hand, Edmund Burke, in his famous *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, printed in 1789 in response to Price, emphatically denied every major point the latter had made, especially that of the people’s right to resist. Describing the Declaration of Rights (the document that embodied the settlement of the Revolution) as “most wise, sober, and considerate,” and referring to it as a “statute” (which at law it was not), Burke maintained that the settlement reinforced the principle of direct hereditary succession – except for a slight deviation. Arguing in terms that marked him as a believer in the idea of the ancient constitution (a myth of enormous ideological importance created in the early seventeenth century and definitively studied by J. G. A. Pocock),¹⁶ Burke maintained that the settlement had restored the nation’s ancient “indisputable laws and liberties,” which he described as an “entailed inheritance, descended from the

¹⁴ Only recently is this true. Up to 1983 it was British scholars, not American, who kept the term alive by using it in the titles of books. See, for example, Maurice Ashley, *The Glorious Revolution of 1688* (New York, Scribner, 1967); John Childs, *The Army, James II and the Glorious Revolution* (Manchester University Press, 1980); Geoffrey Holmes (ed.), *Britain After the Glorious Revolution 1689–1714* (London, Macmillan, St. Martin’s Press, 1969); and John Miller, *The Glorious Revolution*, Seminar Studies in History, ed. Roger Lockyer (London and New York, Longman, 1983).

¹⁵ *A DISCOURSE On The Love Of Our Country. Delivered on Nov. 4, 1789, At The Meeting-House In The Old Jewry, To The SOCIETY For Commemorating The REVOLUTION In Great Britain* (London, 1790), pp. 29–30.

¹⁶ J. G. A. Pocock, *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law: a Study of English Historical Thought in the Seventeenth Century, A Reissue with a Retrospect* (Cambridge University Press, 1987).

nation's forefathers." In no way did the Revolution change the prerogatives of the crown or the rights of the people; in no way did it justify further change. As Burke put it, the Revolution of 1688–89 was "revolution not made but prevented."¹⁷ In an essay in this volume, J. G. A. Pocock has teased out the meaning of another of Burke's arresting remarks – that the Revolution was a just and necessary civil war – in ways that show that the comment exemplified Burke's basic perception of the Revolution.

Tom Paine, the radical, agreed with Burke that 1688–89 accomplished nothing of importance. He described the Bill of Rights (the statutory form of the Declaration of Rights) as the "bill of wrongs and insults," declared that the settlement was the work of a class-ridden Parliament, and maintained that the government it confirmed was for "courtiers, placemen, pensioners, borough-holders, and the leaders of the parties . . . It is a bad Constitution for at least ninety-nine parts of the nation out of a hundred."¹⁸ However different their reasons, the concurrence of Burke and Paine in the late eighteenth century is much like the conservative historian J. C. D. Clark and the socialist politician Tony Benn agreeing on the Glorious Revolution in the late twentieth century, as they did in a radio broadcast commemorating the tercentenary.

The view that the Revolution of 1688–89 accomplished no significant change but only restored some rights long embedded in the nation's ancient constitution deeply influenced subsequent historians. Although not based on a thorough historical investigation – neither Burke's nor Paine's work was a history but a powerful polemic in a partisan exchange – this interpretation conformed with the prevailing conservatism, and historians, while differing in detail, followed it. Most important among them was Lord Macaulay, who more than anyone else determined how historians and the educated public understood the Revolution up to the middle of the twentieth century. Confining his attention largely to England and to constitutional and political issues, Macaulay painted the Revolution's leaders in black-and-white terms. Portraying King James II as a villain, the friend of Roman Catholicism, political absolutism, and French and papal power, and the enemy of Protestants, he depicted Prince William of Orange as a hero, a selfless champion of Protestantism, parliamentary government, and political freedoms, a "Deliverer" who, accepting the invitation of the nation's "Immortal Seven" (themselves selfless in their concerns), came to England only to rescue the nation's religion, laws, and liberties. Reluctantly accepting the crown, the prince agreed to the Declaration of Rights as a condition of his being made king and thereby entered into a contract with the people to uphold their rights. Macaulay characterized the Declaration of Rights as "equal in authority to any statute" and concluded that it imposed legal restrictions on the king. In language

¹⁷ Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, ed. J. G. A. Pocock (Indianapolis and Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 14, 15, 16, 20, 27, 28, and 29.

¹⁸ Quoted in E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York and London, Pantheon Books, 1964), pp. 87, 92.

much the same as Burke's, Macaulay went on to say that, although "revolutionary," the Declaration of Rights did not change the law: "Not a single flower of the crown was touched. Not a single new right was given to the people. The whole English law, substantive and adjective, was . . . almost exactly the same after the Revolution as before it." Exuding a sense of confidence and belief in "progress" characteristic of mid-nineteenth-century Britain, Macaulay also ascribed great significance to the long-term significance of the Revolution, declaring that it held "the germ . . . of every good law" that followed and laid the foundation for what he regarded as Britain's democratic government.¹⁹ For all his admiration of the Revolution, Macaulay specifically rejected the word "Glorious," selecting instead the word "preserving" as best embodying the event's nature.²⁰

Macaulay's grand-nephew, George Macaulay Trevelyan, perpetuated this perspective in his *The English Revolution 1688–89*, published in London in 1938 to commemorate the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the event. As he saw it, the Declaration of Rights was "an agreed contract . . . between Crown and people," a "condition" which William had to accept to win the crown. Although it limited royal authority, the document contained no new law.²¹ Like Macaulay, Trevelyan also declined to eulogize the event as "glorious," saying that the word "sensible" was more apt.²² Other historians interested in political and religious ideas contributed further important points to the conventional view. One was that the doctrines of divine-right monarchy and passive obedience were destroyed by the Revolution, and another that John Locke's *Two Treatises of Government*, printed in 1689, and suggesting that a dissolution of the government had occurred and justifying all that was done in terms of contract theory, exemplified the principles that had animated the revolutionary leaders.²³

There, in brief, the "old Whig" view stood until the 1970s. Why did it take historians so long to reevaluate the traditional story and interpretation of the Revolution? One reason is surely the dead weight of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century histories which were so well researched and engagingly written that they seem to have intimidated scholars. Successive generations of historians, full of admiration for their predecessors (especially Macaulay), apparently felt that there was nothing more to be said. Then, for the months of the revolution itself, the sources are scattered and fragmentary, a situation that discouraged researchers, even as it showed the reality of upheaval. A further reason for the downplaying of the Revolution of 1688–89 was the enormous amount of attention paid over the past thirty years to the earlier

¹⁹ Macaulay, *History of England*, III, pp. 1297, 1306–11.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 131. In 1828 Macaulay wrote that the Revolution "was not, what it has often been called, a glorious revolution." See Lord Macaulay, *Critical and Historical Essays*, ed. Israel Gollancz (London, 1900), I, p. 211: a review of Henry Hallam's *The Constitutional History of England, from the Accession of Henry VII to the Death of George II*, which appeared in the *Edinburgh Review*, September 1828.

²¹ George Macaulay Trevelyan, *The English Revolution 1688–89* (New York, Henry Holt, 1939), pp. 161–63.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 1.

²³ J. C. D. Clark, *English Society 1688–1832: Ideology, Social Structure and Political Practice during the Ancien Régime* (Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 119–21.

Civil War. Scholars too well known and too numerous to name have implied or asserted that the real changes in English politics and society were achieved between 1640 and 1660, and that what happened in the second half of the century, which, of course, they did not study systematically, was nothing more than a kind of postscript. The result was that the Civil War took on the role of *the* English Revolution of the seventeenth century. Finally, there was no hope of change until scholars asked different questions and sought answers to them by a fresh look at existing sources and a renewed effort (which, in the event, met with some success) to uncover new material.²⁴ When that happened after World War II, when effort was made to add social, intellectual, and cultural matters to traditional political, religious, and constitutional ones, changing perspectives began to emerge.

In the 1950s a spark of renewed interest in the Revolution was ignited when an American historian, Lucile Pinkham, undertook to refocus the perspective on the Prince of Orange and to argue that he was no deliverer but a calculating conqueror who had engaged in a long-term conspiracy with self-interested Englishmen to seize the English crown for the purpose of gaining men and money for his war (largely a personal vendetta, Pinkham thought) against Louis XIV.²⁵ The result was a “respectable” revolution (Pinkham’s epithet), which simply exchanged one king for another. Pinkham’s work met with rebuff and her untimely death removed its most obvious defender, but she deserves credit for leading the way in systematically questioning received wisdom. After a pause, further heightening of interest in the late Stuart period and the Revolution occurred in the late 1960s²⁶ and gained steady momentum throughout the next two decades.

Over the past twenty years scholars, who may for convenience’s sake be called “revisionists” (although they worked independently and formed no school), have rejected all but one tenet of “old Whig” history. Others, who may be called “neo-Whigs” (again for convenience’s sake), but who themselves were in the process of revising the conventional view, have dissented from some revisionist conclusions. Among the issues that have undergone reassessment is the character of the two protagonists. In 1966 Stephen B. Baxter rescued Prince William of Orange from Pinkham’s debunking and restored him to a hero’s status, but he did so on grounds somewhat different from those of traditional scholarship. Placing the prince in an international setting, he portrayed him as a leader in the struggle for European liberty and toleration. Denying that William had engaged in a long-term conspiracy with English dissidents, Baxter argued that the prince’s interest was principally

²⁴ For example, David Lewis Jones (ed.), *A Parliamentary History of the Glorious Revolution* (London, HMSO, 1988), reprints all the known sources of the Convention, including those recently recovered. Also Robert Beddard (ed.), *A Kingdom without a King: the Journal of the Provisional Government in the Revolution of 1688* (Oxford, Phaidon, 1988).

²⁵ Lucile Pinkham, *William III and the Respectable Revolution. The Part Played by William of Orange in the Revolution of 1688* (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1954).

²⁶ One of the most important was Geoffrey Holmes (ed.), *Britain after the Glorious Revolution, 1689–1714* (London, Macmillan; New York, St. Martin’s Press, 1969).

dynastic, a concern to preserve his wife's and his own claim to the English crown. Baxter's portrait, erected on wide-ranging research in continental as well as English archives, and covering the reign from a political and diplomatic perspective, continues today to enjoy wide acceptance. It has prepared the way for the still unexplored question of William's psychological make-up and his willingness to take rash political and military gambles, and also for the topic of the culture of his court and reign which is opened by essays in this present volume.²⁷

No comprehensive scholarly biography of James II has appeared since 1948, when F. C. Turner published his measured, but ultimately negative, verdict.²⁸ Thirty years later, from a study that focused on James's kingship, John Miller concluded that the king was genuinely devoted to the principle of religious toleration and insisted that he had no grand scheme for imposing absolutism in politics or religion.²⁹ Rejecting this rehabilitation of James II, William Speck maintained in his book, *Reluctant Revolutionaries*, that the King *did* harbor absolutist ambitions. Speck dismissed as "ultimately unconvincing" that all James wanted was toleration for his Catholic subjects.³⁰ A definitive study of James II from the perspective of his character, personality, political and religious principles and intentions remains to be written. When it is, a significant feature will surely be the nature of James's court and the relationship between the king, his ministers, and his Catholic friends and advisors.

The character of the Revolution is another matter in dispute. For such scholars as Jennifer Carter, J. C. D. Clark, H. T. Dickinson, J. R. Jones, J. P. Kenyon, Howard Nenner, and Gerald Straka, the constitutional results of the Revolution itself lack major importance.³¹ In their view, conservative Tory and Whig elites collaborated to achieve minimal change in government – a change in the king – and deliberately avoided a change in the kingship. Accepting in this one instance an "old Whig" interpretation, revisionists regard the Declaration of Rights, which Robert J. Frankle showed in 1974 was a truncated version of an earlier more reformist draft, as nothing more than a reaffirmation of ancient rights.³² The most extreme rejection of the Declaration of Rights came from Clark, a specialist in eighteenth-century British

²⁷ Stephen B. Baxter, *William III* (London, Longman, Green, 1966).

²⁸ F. C. Turner, *James II* (New York and London, Macmillan, 1948).

²⁹ John Miller, *James II. A Study in Kingship* (London, Wayland, 1977; reprinted Methuen, 1989).

³⁰ W. A. Speck, *Reluctant Revolutionaries: Englishmen and the Revolution of 1688* (Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 125.

³¹ Jennifer Carter, "The Revolution and the Constitution," in Holmes (ed.), *Britain after the Glorious Revolution*, pp. 39–58; Clark, *English Society*; J. C. D. Clark, *Revolution and Rebellion: State and Society in England in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Cambridge University Press, 1986); H. T. Dickinson, "The Eighteenth-Century Debate on the Sovereignty of Parliament," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th series, 26 (1976), 189–210; H. T. Dickinson, *Liberty and Property: Political Ideology in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977); J. R. Jones, *The Revolution of 1688 in England* (London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1972); J. P. Kenyon, *Revolution Principles: the Politics of Party 1689–1720* (Cambridge University Press, 1977); Howard Nenner, "Constitutional Uncertainty and the Declaration of Rights," in Barbara C. Malament (ed.), *After the Reformation: Essays in Honor of J. H. Hexter* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1980), pp. 291–308; G. M. Straka, *Anglican Reaction to the Revolution of 1688* (Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1962); G. M. Straka, "The Final Phase of Divine Right Theory in England, 1688–1702," *EHR* 77 (1962), 638–58.

³² Robert J. Frankle, "The Formulation of the Declaration of Rights," *HJ* 17 (1974), 265–79.

history, who invited some scholar to do for the Declaration of Rights what Sir Geoffrey Elton tried to do for the Apology of 1604: namely, strip it of all importance.³³ Confusion, hesitation, and theoretical conservatism, Nenner held, accompanied the crafting of the revolutionary settlement. Revisionists downplayed the role of radical ideas and disparaged the evidence of their presence. Instead, in sharp contrast to “old Whig” scholarship, Kenyon and Clark, for example, stressed the *survival* of the principles of divine right, hereditary monarchy, and passive resistance throughout society. Virtually untouched by the Revolution, the Church of England, the Anglican aristocracy, and the monarchy continued to dominate society until 1829–32, even as conservative ideas continued to enjoy a strong if discreet following. As Clayton Roberts and Jennifer Carter argued earlier, so John Brewer elaborated in his recent book, *Sinews of Power*, war and war finance, not the Revolution, account for whatever change took place in English politics and society.³⁴

Other historians, however, were unable to accept all the points in this analysis. For “neo-Whigs” Corinne Weston and Janelle Greenberg and Lois G. Schworer, the Declaration of Rights and its statutory formulation the Bill of Rights did more than simply confirm ancient rights.³⁵ For Weston and Greenberg, stripping the king of the right to suspend and dispense with the law was a radical step that changed fundamentally the most important prerogative power the king possessed.

Schworer’s study of the constitution history of each right claimed by the document showed that eight rights were not “undisputed” and “ancient.” In her view, the decisions on the claims were not forced by legal logic, but involved political and ideological choices. In his recent book, Speck has accepted this reading. The Declaration of Rights, however, was not, as “old Whigs” thought, a condition that William had to accept to win the throne. Nor did it bear the force of law. Yet the document was treated in some ways, Schworer demonstrated, as if it were a law, and some contemporaries thought that it was. The Bill of Rights, however, despite the name – “Bill” – by which it is known, is a statute of the realm, and, of course, carries the force of law. On the basis of her study of the “rights” committees in the Convention, of evidence showing that some Tories attempted to sabotage the passage of the Declaration of Rights, and that Whigs, not Tories, managed the passage of the Bill of Rights, Schworer also dissented from the notion that the Tories were largely responsible for the Declaration of Rights. Tories and Whigs compromised on the settlement, with the principal leadership coming from Whigs.

³³ Clark, *Revolution and Rebellion*, p. 84.

³⁴ Carter, “The Revolution and the Constitution.” Clayton Roberts, “The Constitutional Significance of the Financial Settlement of 1690,” *HJ* 20 (1977), 59–76. Also Angus McInnes, “When was the English Revolution?” *History* 67 (1982), 377–92. John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money and the English State, 1688–1783* (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1989).

³⁵ C. C. Weston and J. R. Greenberg, *Subjects and Sovereigns* (Cambridge University Press, 1981); and Lois G. Schworer, *The Declaration of Rights, 1689* (Baltimore and London, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981).