Thomas Fuller: Historian

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THOMAS FULLER: HISTORIAN

by

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THOMAS FULLER
from the painting by Isaac Fuller
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INTRODUCTION

Thomas Fuller's reputation as an historian and literary figure reached its zenith with the publication of his *Worthies* in 1662, a year after his death, and at that time he was one of England's most popular writers. Subsequent generations of Englishmen did not treat Fuller as kindly as did his contemporaries. In the eighteenth century he was regarded as something of a literary buffoon\(^1\) and his works remained in relative obscurity. It remained the task of the Romantic Movement of the nineteenth century to exhume and again bring Fuller before the public eye.

The English Romantics shifted the focus of art from the "impersonal aspects of the life of the mind" to the problem of what was "most proper and particular in each individual."\(^2\) Their emphasis on sensibility and imagination predisposed them to prefer Fuller's century rather than the eighteenth.\(^3\) This was particularly true

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of Coleridge who, regarding Fuller's period as the "Great Age" of literature, was among the writers of the romantic period who attempted to reawaken an interest in the writers of the "Great Age." Coleridge's criticism and comments on seventeenth century literature eventually led him to consider the works of Fuller. In fact, Coleridge became one of Fuller's most ardent readers. Fuller was, in the eyes of Coleridge, "A great intellectual potter, whose clay was wit, whose wheel was sound good sense, with learning, and charity for the moulding hands." Charles Lamb, who was introduced to Fuller by Coleridge, thought Fuller a "dear, fine, silly old angel." "Above all," Lamb wrote, "his Fuller's way of telling a story, for is eager liveliness, and the perpetual running commentary of the narration is perhaps unequaled."

These two literary figures not only focused attention upon Fuller, but they also contributed to a growing general opinion that Fuller was a "quaint" writer. In its original sense, "Quaint" carried the connotation of "wise or ingeneous," but by the nineteenth century it came to

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{4}Ibid., Intro., p. xxi.
\item \textsuperscript{5}Ibid., p. 233.
\item \textsuperscript{6}Ibid., Preface, p. x.
\item \textsuperscript{7}Charles Lamb, Specimens From The Writings of Fuller, from The Complete Works and Letters of Charles Lamb (New York: Modern Library), p. 267.
\end{itemize}
mean "a quality of old-fashioned prettiness." The latter epithet was applied to Fuller throughout the nineteenth century. Some editions of parts of his works in that century carried the titles: Quaint Counsels (1892), Quaint Thoughts (1898), and Quaint Nuggets (1909). This tendency prompted Geoffrey Keynes to comment: "Fuller may one day emerge as the wise and witty commentator on men and affairs that he actually was. It is the richness of his wit and of his language that makes his work the ready prey of amateurs of 'quaintness,' and perhaps obscures the fact that the 'nuggets,' quarried with such fatal ease, are embedded in a mass of good English prose such as was produced by few writers even of the prolific century in which Fuller lived."

The renewed interest in Fuller created by the Romantic Movement lasted throughout the nineteenth century. Many of his books went through reprintings. The Holy State and the Profane State alone went through seven reprintings from 1831 to 1893. But this enthusiasm did not carry into the twentieth century. Attention given Fuller in this century has at best been sporadic, although two

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9Ibid.

10Ibid.

11Ibid., pp. 101-102.
biographies appeared with a reprinting of his *Worthies* in the 1950's.

The literary merits of Fuller's works rank him as one of the great stylists of his period. His ability in this regard has assured him a literary fame that has long eclipsed his accomplishments as a historian. Fuller's merits as a historian have not been considered by those interested in reviving his literary works. Historians, on the other hand, have generally ignored Fuller and have considered him more in the literary tradition of the seventeenth century rather than a historian. No doubt the appellation of "quaint" did not help Fuller's reputation as a historian nor draw attention to his ability as a scholar. Despite this lack of recognition Fuller's contribution to sound scholarship, in general, and historiography, in particular, were significant. James Westfall Thompson's comment that Fuller's *Church History* was "one of the best historical works of the century" gives a hint to the reader as to Fuller's merit as a historian.
CHAPTER I

BIOGRAPHY

Thomas Fuller, ecclesiastic and historian, was born in June, 1608 at the Rectory of St. Peter's of Aldwincle, Northamptonshire.

Fuller came from a family of eminent divines. His father, educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, was rector of St. Peter's at Aldwincle. His two uncles, Dr. Townson and Dr. Davenant, both godfathers at his baptism, served successively as bishops of Salisbury. Dr. Davenant was also president of Queen's College, Cambridge. Little wonder that Fuller was from boyhood intended for the church. His family, devoted to the clerical profession, were unlike the family Fuller later wrote about who "begrutch their pregnant children to God's service, reserving straight timber to be beams in other buildings, and condemning crooked pieces for the temple." ¹

Fuller seemed to recall nothing unpleasant about his childhood in Northamptonshire. It was a pleasant environment. He spent much of his time with adults. Since his father moved in distinguished social and academic circles, it was not unusual for neighboring divines,

¹From Fuller's Abel Redevivus as quoted by William Addison, Worthy Dr. Fuller (London: J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1951), p. 10.
including his uncles, to be guests at the rectory. Topics ranging from the court to the university were discussed at the table and in the study. "When the bishop and his father were discoursing," Aubrey wrote of young Thomas, "he would be by and hearken, and now and then putt in, and sometimes beyond expectation, or his years."^2 "He was a boy of pregnant wit."^3 During these years Fuller gained much insight into the inner workings of the church. The conversations and discussions exposed him to many anecdotes which he later incorporated in his writings.

Fuller's formal education began in a local school administered by Arthur Smith. He did not fare well at the hands of Smith and later complained in his *Worthies* that he was often beat for the sake of William Lily, the author of a popular Latin textbook. After four years in Smith's school, Fuller came under the tutelage of his father. "In a little while such proficiency was visibly seen in him," an anonymous biographer wrote, "that it was a question whether he owed more to his father for his birth or education."^4

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^3Ibid., p. 257.

During this period Fuller spent hours poring over Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, one of the most popular histories of this period, and he retained a high opinion of Foxe the rest of his life. "As to the particular subject of our English martyrs," he later wrote, "Mr. Foxe hath done everything, leaving posterity nothing to work upon."\(^5\)

Fuller had his appetite for history whetted at an early age, and he followed the maxim he set down later in life, when speaking of history: "they must spring early who would sprout high in that knowledge."\(^6\)

In his early years Fuller was greatly influenced by the commanding presence of his father, a scholarly and devoted cleric, and his uncles Dr. Davenant and Dr. Townson. "But let others unrelated unto him write his character," Fuller wrote of Dr. Davenant, "whose pen cannot be suspected of flattery, which he when living did hate, and dead did not need."\(^7\) Dr. Townson, chaplain to Charles I and Dean of Westminster, had the task of attending Raleigh on the scaffold.\(^8\)

\(^6\)Addison, p. 6.
\(^7\)Fuller, *Worthies*, p. 371.
\(^8\)Ibid., p. 133. Fuller heard the story of Raleigh's last hours direct from his uncle. No doubt Fuller's great admiration for Raleigh stems from his uncle, from whom he very likely heard the story of Raleigh spreading "his new plush cloak on the ground whereon the queen trod gently."
At an early age Fuller became steeped in Anglican thought and tradition and as he matured his mind jelled into the mold suggested by his environment.

Fuller entered Queen's College, Cambridge, in 1621. During this era the curriculum of the colleges of Cambridge, whether founded in medieval times or more recently, were dominated by theology. At the same time, owing to improved and new methods of scholarship, new branches of knowledge received their due. Classical humanists and grammarians had perfected methods of enquiry and research, and the recovery of classical literature had brought about discoveries in ancient life and institutions. In England, the scholarship of Foxe, Selden, Speed, and Camden had rediscovered much of England and her past. But at Cambridge, as well as Oxford, the scholarly aim in all areas was overshadowed by the study of theology.

At the time of his entrance at Queen's, Fuller's uncle, John Davenant, who held the esteemed Lady Margaret professorship of divinity, resided as master of Queen's College. Fuller, an impressionable boy of thirteen, lived with his uncle, who had just been nominated to the bishopric of Salisbury, until his uncle departed to fill his new position at the end of the year. During this time, Fuller came under the direct influence of Davenant.

Fuller's strong convictions and feelings toward moderation and tolerance probably stem from this
association with his uncle, who advocated the cause of moderation, just before the civil war, at a time when extremism was in the ascendancy. In *An Exhortation To The Restoring Of Brotherly Communion Betwixt The Protestant Churches*, Davenant urged Englishmen to exercise tolerance toward each other. The only essential to salvation, he claimed, was the Apostles' Creed. No church could require more than the simple essentials of Christianity. He attributed the cause of dissension to divines who changed "... the scripture to their opinion, than their opinions to the scripture, and by head and shoulders drag the fundamental articles of Christian faith, to the supporting of their doctrines not fundamental." Jordan praised the work as follows:

*The Exhortation* exhibits a mind and temper of rare balance, of sensitive charity, and of noble tolerance. It demonstrates, as do so many works in this revolutionary era, that the peculiar integrity of mind which the moderate man possesses is not of necessity destroyed when the desperate counsels of extremism hold the reins of politics within their grasp. Davenant accepts and extends the tolerant solution to the religious crisis in England.

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9 Jordan attributes the *Exhortation* to Davenant and he claims the most recent research on the problem supports this claim, as well as the D.N.B.


Fuller's later views closely paralleled those of his uncle. After his uncle left Cambridge, Fuller came under the care and tutelage of his cousin Edward Davenant, a fellow at Queen's. The latter, according to his friend Aubrey, was a man of vast learning, especially in mathematics. Aubrey himself "heard Sir Christopher Wren say that he does believe he was (Edward Davenant) the best mathematician in the world about thirty or thirty five plus years ago." But, more important, from Davenant, young Fuller learned the secret of memorization and eventually even surpassed his tutor. "He had an excellent way of improving his children's memories," Aubrey wrote of Davenant, "he would make one of them read a chapter or etc., and then they were (sur le champ) to repeate what they remembered."13

Fuller's memory became legendary in his own time. The author of a booklet entitled The Help to Discourse, published in 1669, alluded to Fuller's excellence in this matter.

In former times Seneca, who writes of himself that he was able to recite two thousand words after they were once read unto him; and of late days we find Mr. Fuller to be therein most exquisite, who is reported that he would walk any street in London, and by the strength of his memory tell how many and what signs they were hanging in that street, from the one end to the

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12 Aubrey, p. 200.
13 Ibid., pp. 202-203.
Pepys likewise commented on Fuller’s memory in his diary entry of July 14, 1667: "... Fuller, by all accounts, really was exceptional, being able to repeat five hundred strange words after hearing them twice, and a sermon if he read or heard it, and its reputed that Fuller could repeat all signs forward or backward between Ludgate and Charing Cross."15 This phenomenal memory later served him well when, during the Civil War, he had no access to a library.

The curriculum at Cambridge consisted of the seven liberal arts: arithmetic, geometry, music, astronomy, rhetoric, grammar and logic. Unlike Milton, who detested this type of curriculum, Fuller enjoyed it, and later in life wrote in glowing terms of the liberal arts. Yet, he also spoke favorably about modern subjects which were studied but not officially accepted at the time.

Fuller looked at the different parts of education as communicating "strength and lustre each to other." He recommended the study of grammar as the instrument of all

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14From *The New Help to Discourse* as quoted by Addison, pp. 20-21.

learning. Greek and Latin should precede all other studies because "on the credit of the former above, he may trade in discourse over all Christendom; but the Greek, though not so generally spoken, is known with no less profit and more pleasure. Ethics makes a man's soul mannerly and wise, and Logic is the armoury of reason, furnished with all offensive and defensive weapons. . . . Physics is the great hall of Nature, and Metaphysics, the closet thereof. . . . Rhetoric gives a speech colour, as Logic doth favour."

"Poetry is music in words" and music is "poetry in sound." Mathematics should be used as "ballast for the soul." Astrology "(which hath the least judgement in it) . . . hath been whipped out of all learned corporations." History is important because without it "a man's soul is purblind." One should also be "acquainted with Cosmography, treating of the world in whole joints; with Chorography, shredding it into countries; and with Topography, mincing it into particular places."\(^{16}\)

During the 1620's attempts were made to introduce modern subjects into the universities. Foremost among these additions was history. History, according to one authority, became "an issue in the universities where it played a role similar to that of sociology today--popular with most undergraduates and some fellows, suspected by

the established authorities." Indicative of this tendency to modernize the curriculum was the founding of a chair of civil history by Lord Brooke, in 1627, while Fuller studied at Cambridge. No doubt Fuller's enthusiasm for history originated and developed within this academic environment.

While at Cambridge, Fuller read the writings of Bacon. He was impressed by Bacon's inductive reasoning because later he put "metaphysics in the closet of the great hall of physics." His acceptance of "the new reasoning" was also demonstrated by his skeptical attitude toward anything outside the observable order of nature, an attitude evident in his later writings.

During these years Fuller also came into contact with these ancient historians who were popular with the students and fellows of Cambridge. The Renaissance treatises on education all advocated the reading of ancient historians, especially Herodotus, Thucydides and Plutarch. The last named historian, in particular, was read by most of the university students. Very likely


18 Fuller, The Holy State; "The General Artist."

Fuller first read the *Parallel Lives*, the archetype of the type of biography which he later mastered, while a student at Cambridge.

After receiving his B.A. degree in 1624, Fuller was recommended by Davenant to a fellowship at Queen's. Upon learning that he did not receive the appointment, Fuller entered Sydney Sussex, where he obtained his M.A. degree in 1628. Dr. Samuel Ward, the master of Sydney Sussex, was a close family friend of the Davenants, Townsons and Fullers. Fuller had great respect for Ward, a moderate who later suffered with the ascendancy of one extreme and then the other, and the two men shared much in common. "He was counted a puritan and then later 'popish,'" Fuller wrote, "and yet, being always the same was a true protestant at all times."20 Fuller's friendship with Ward brought him into the circle of influence of a well known moderate. He also gained many of the intimate details that were to later appear in his *History of Cambridge*, from his long conversations with Ward.

The religious conflicts at Cambridge centered upon the three most popular tutors: William Chappell, Dr. Power and Joseph Mede. Fuller wrote of Chappell: "he was remarkable for the strictness of his conversation."21

20*Fuller, Worthies*, p. 160.
Because of this and his precision, his pupils were called Puritans. Fuller called him one of the best teachers "in our memory." The students of Dr. Power, called Poweritans, were noted for their laxity. Joseph Mede's pupils were called Medians, because of their teacher's moderate position between the two extremes. Mede, one of Fuller's intimate friends at Cambridge, was a recognized moderate. According to one scholar, he "held the pope to be antichrist; with the high churchmen, he admitted that the Roman church taught the fundamentals of the faith." 22 The Cambridge Platonists regarded Mede as their spiritual leader and the eighteenth century proponents of a broad, tolerant church looked back to Mede's philosophy of tolerance and moderation. Fuller himself relied on Mede, a well-known scholar, for help in writing his history of the Crusades. Fuller called him "my oracle in doubts of this nature." In the areas of scholarship, tolerance and moderation young Fuller was greatly influenced by Mede.

After the Restoration, Cambridge and Oxford became the center for antiquarian studies. Influential antiquarians taught at both universities. Men such as Francis Junius, George Hicks and Edward Thwaites were influential at Oxford, and their contemporaries at Cambridge were men like Thomas Gale and John Smith. The

elivered to the press the results of antiquarian research, including medieval chronicles, dictionaries, and other research aids. No doubt Fuller first came into contact with the rapidly expanding antiquarian studies while at Cambridge and very likely he was influenced by the methodology of these antiquarians.

While at Sydney Sussex, Fuller tried his hand at verse. In 1631, he had published his first work, David's Heinous Sin, Hearty Repentance, Heavy Punishment. On the king's return from Scotland, in 1633, a collection of poems were written and published to mark the occasion. Fuller also appeared as a poet in this collection. These experiences which demanded exercise of imagination and use of poetical imagery, no doubt contributed to his narrative power and influenced his prose style.

In 1630, just after entering Sydney-Sussex, Fuller received his first appointment to the pulpit. He was presented, by the Master and Fellows of Corpus Christi, to the curacy of St. Bennett's, in Cambridge. St. Bennett's, a university church, was an important pulpit for a young man of twenty-two to occupy.

Fuller's fame as a preacher spread rapidly. His church was, according to one commentator, "... thronged with such distant congregations, that those of his own cure were in a manner excommunicated from their own church, if they came not early enough to fill it, ... he
had an audience without, and another within the pale, the windows and sextonry were so crowded as if bees had swarmed to his melifluous discourse." However, his sermons did not enthrall everyone. Diarist Pepys, after listening to a Fuller sermon, thought it a "poor dry sermon" and commented that "I am afeard my former high esteem of his preaching was more out of opinion than judgement." This represents a minority view, however, for Fuller's sermons generally received praise.

In the course of his full life Fuller occupied pulpits in diverse parish churches. Some of the more important were: 1630-33, Perpetual curate of St. Bennett's Church, Cambridge; 1643, Curate of the Savoy Chapel, London. Chaplain to Sir Ralph Hopton, November, 1646. Chaplain to the Earl of Carlisle, 1658-61, Rector of Cranford, Middlesex and Chaplain to George Berkeley, afterwards Earl of Berkeley, 1661. Chaplain in extraordinary to the King, 1661.

Fuller belonged to the school of the Caroline divines which believed in a middle-of-the-road state church. This school of thought generally tried to steer


25Addison, pp. xix-xxi.
the Church back to the Primitive Church before it was corrupted by Rome. And they attempted to steer the Church away from those Puritan magnifications of certain doctrines they thought foreign to the Primitive Church. Fuller also supported the hierarchical structure of the episcopacy with the king at the apex of the pyramid. "He claimeth to be supreme Head on earth over the Church in his Dominions," he wrote, "which his power over all persons and causes ecclesiastical... is given him by God." 26

During the Laudian era, Fuller was considered a moderate by his contemporaries, partially because of his denunciation of the intolerance of this period. Fuller's plea for moderation in dealing with "Schismatics," in general, and the recipients of Star Chamber justice, in particular, earned for him a reputation for moderation. The intolerance manifested by the Star Chamber censure of Prynne, Bastwick and Burton 27 caused Fuller to write in his Church History:

Most moderate men thought the censure too sharp, too base, and ignoble, for gentlemen of their ingenious vocation. Besides, though it be


27 Bastwick and Burton had their ears cut off, were fined 5,000 pounds and were to be perpetually imprisoned. Prynne suffered all this plus having the letters S. L. branded in both cheeks (S. L. meaning seditious libeller).
easy to in the notion, it is hard in the action, to fix shame on the professors... it might have become the bishops to mediate for a mitigation thereof. Let canvass be rough and rugged, lawn ought to be soft and smooth; meekness, mildness, and mercy being more proper for men of the episcopal function.  

Fuller recognized a need for some reform in the church. He presented his views on reform, on a Parliament ordered fast day, in July of 1643, in a sermon entitled "Reformation." He made his position very clear:

Freely confessing the "deformation" of the Church by Popery, ... the reforming of Henry VIII, and Edward VI was but partial and imperfect. But the doctrines established by Elizabeth and her successors, as embodied in the Thirty-nine Articles, if declared, explained and asserted from false glasses, have all gold, no dust or dross in them. There may be some faults in our church in matters of practice and ceremonies. These were rather in the Church than of the Church, and not chargeable on the public account, but on private men's scores, who are old enough; let them answer for themselves. Religion is in some places threadbare; may it have a new nap: in more it is spotted; may it be well mended.

Through Reformation we, and all good men, do desire with a strong affections, though not perhaps with so loud a noise... The highest clamour, does not always argue the greatest earnestness.

The supreme power alone had a lawful calling to reform the Church, to which end private men could pray that those in power be inspired to bring about such a reformation.

Things should be let alone which are well-ordered already. Yet there is a generation of Anabaptists, in number few; ... people too turbulent to obey and too tyrannical to command. If

28 Thomas Fuller, The Church History of Britain: From the Birth of Jesus Christ Until the Year MDCXLVIII, ed. J. S. Brewer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1845), Book XI, p. 386.
it should come into their hands to reform, Lord, what work would they make! Very facile, but very foul, is that mistake in the vulgar translation, Luke XV. 8. Instead of she swept the house, tis rendered she overturned the house. Such sweeping we must expect from such spirits, which under pretence to cleanse our Church, would destroy it. The best is, they are so far from sitting at the helm that I hope they shall ever be kept under hatches.

The discretion of the Reformer would appear in the manner of reformation, as well as in the matter of it, and would be accomplished with reverence to the ancient fathers, and to the memories of the first reformers.

There is a grand difference between the founding of a new Church and the reforming of an old; and a perfect reformation of any Church in this world may be desired, but not hoped for.29

Fuller carried this idea to its conclusion in a sermon delivered five years later in St. Brides when he urged his congregation to: "... let us leave off all by-names of parties, interest and factions, and return to our best, largest and ancientest name of Christians: best, because no doubt imposed, if not by the command, by the consent of God himself, and therefore good reason it should always continue as our honourable denomination."30

Fuller's well known moderation had definable limits, however, for the boundary of his moderation on the left was heretic, and on the right the Catholic. He described a heretic as one who maintained a fundamental error:


30Ibid., p. 499.
... every scratch in the hand is not a stab to the heart; nor doth every false opinion make a heretic. However the mildest authors allow that the magistrate may inflict capital punishment on heretics, in cases of
1. Sedition against the state wherein he lives.
2. Blasphemy against God, and those points of religion which are awful to be believed.31

Fuller's absolute rejection of Catholicism reflected the general anti-Catholic feelings of the moderate episcopacy. He justified his attitude in this sermon given in 1640:

Yea, all their service of God is not only made sweet, but luscious to the palate of flesh; and they plainly shew by their baits what fish they angle to catch; namely, rather to get men's senses than their souls, and their eyes their judgements. Not that I am displeased with neatness, or plead for nastiness in God's service. But we would not have Religion so bedaubed with lace, that one cannot see the cloth; and Ceremonies which should adorn, obscure the substance of the Sacraments, and God's worship. And let us labour to be men in Christianity, and not only like little children to go to Schools, to looke on the gilt and gaudy Babies of our Bookes, and to be allured to God's service by the outward pomp and splendor of it. But let us love Religion, not for her clothes, but for her face; . . . 32

Fuller, in a less serious vein, told this story about the Jesuits:

About this time (1618), a boy dwelling at Bilston in Staffordshire, William Perry by name, not full fifteen years of age, but above forty in cunning, was practised on by some Jesuits

32 Fuller, Church History, Vol. III, p. 268.
(repairing to the house of Mr. Gifford in that county,) to dissemble himself possessed. This done one design that the priests might have the credit to cast out that devil, (which never was in) so to grace their religion with the reputation of a miracle.

But now the best of the jest (or rather the worst of the earnest,) was, the boy, having gotten a habit of counterfeiting, leading a lazy life thereby, to his own ease and parent's profit, (to who he was more worth than the best plough-land in the shire) would not be un-deviled by all their efforts, so that the priests raised up a spirit which they could not allay. At last by the industry of Dr. Morton, bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, the juggling was laid open to the world by the boy's own confession and repentance; who, being bound an apprentice at the Bishop's cost.33

Fuller's political views formed an integral part of his religious opinions and vice versa. His Erastian view of the Church spilled over into his view of the state. His Royalist philosophy was tightly interwoven with his orthodox anglicanism. Philosophically, he was a moderate Royalist, but his moderation had placed him in an awkward position so that he remained in London, in 1642, when the Royalists were rallying around Charles at Oxford. Fuller's call for peace from his pulpit in London brought the Roundheads' wrath upon him because of his known Royalist sympathies. He was literally driven into the Royalist camp at Oxford.

Fuller stood for monarchy and possessed a rather high view of royal authority. He viewed the kingship not.

33ibid.
differently from James I:

The king is a mortal God. This world at the first had no other charter for its being, than Gods fiat: Kings have the same in the present these, "I have said ye are as a good man" (so was Henry the Third) than as a good King (so was Richard the Third) both which meeting together make a king complete. For he that is not a good man, or but a good man, can never be a good Sovereigne.

The sovereign "holds his crown immediately from the God in Heaven." The most high ruleth in the kingdoms of men, and giveth them to whosoever he will. Yea the character of loyalty to kings so deeply impressed in Subjects hearts shows that only Gods finger wrote it there.34

While contending that the monarch should be subject to the law, he also held that the king had the ultimate power to abrogate the law. Of this superficial limitation he wrote:

The king willingly orders his actions by the Laws of his realm. Indeed some maintain that Princes are too high to come under the roof of any Laws except they voluntarily of their goodnesse be pleased to bow themselves thereunto, and that it is Gordon, a gift and courtesy, in them to submit themselves to their Laws. But whatsoever the theories of absolute monarchy be, our King loves to be legall in all his practices, and thinks that his power is more safely lock'd up for him in his Laws then kept in his own will; because God alone makes things lawfull by willing them, whilst the most calmest Princes have sometimes gust of Passion, which meeting with an unlimited Authority in them may prove dangerous to them and theirs. Yea our King is so suspicious of an unbounded power in himself, that though the widenesse of his strides could make all hedge stiles, yet he will not go over, but where he may.35

34 Fuller, The Holy State, Book IV, pp. 349-350.
Fulcer's manifest loyalty to Charles I reflected these views. He made this clear in a sermon preached in Westminster Abbey on the anniversary of the accession of Charles:

We begin first with the King, as this day doth direct us, and truly he may be called so emphatically for his goodness. Look above him; to his God how he is pious! Look beneath to his subjects; how he is pitiful! Look about him; how he is constant to his wife, careful for his children! Look near him; how he is good to his servants! Look far from him; how he is just to foreign princes!

Oh no, it is not so, it is sure, it is certain we are awake, we do not dream; if anything be asleep it is our ingratitude, thanks to God and the King for his great favors.36

Although a dedicated Royalist, Fuller clearly saw the tragedy of the Civil War, of Englishmen killing Englishmen. He wrote:

Pious princes can take no delight in victories over their own subjects. For when they cast up their audits, they shall find themselves losers in their very gaining. Nor can they properly be said to have won the day, which at the best is but a twilight, being benighted with a mixture of much sorrow and sadness. For kings, being the parents of their country, must needs grieve at the destruction of their children.37

Fuller compared this thought to Charles and the Battle of Edgehill and commented:

For though (thanks be to God) divine providence did cover his head in the day of battle,

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36 Fuller, Collected Sermons, p. 253.
37 Ibid., p. 252.
as it was miraculously commanding the bullets, which flew about and respected no person, not to touch his anointed, yet notwithstanding his soul was shot through with grief to behold a field spread with his subjects corps, that scarce any passage but either through rivulets of blood, or over bridges of bodies. And had he gotten as great a victory as David got in the forest of Ephraim, yet surely he would have preferred Peace for before it.38

Peace remained the prime political concern of Fuller for the next seventeen years. He believed in the Royalist cause, but not blindly. He counted as his friends many Parliamentarians, the most conspicuous being the regicide, Sir John Danvers; however, he must have possessed some mental reservations, for neither Danvers nor other figures among parliamentarians, except divines, found a place in the Worthies. Yet, Fuller’s plea for peace did not find favor in either Royalist or Roundhead circles. Rather than point an incriminating finger at a single party he blamed national sins for the lack of peace. He supported his plea as follows:

Think not that the King’s army is like Sodon, not ten righteous men in it; and the other army like Zion, consisting all of Saints. No. There be drunkards on both sides, and swearers on both sides, and profane on both parties. I never knew nor heard of an army all of saints, since the army of martyrs, and those you know are dead first, for the last breath they sent forth proclaimed them to be martyrs. But it is not the sins of the army alone, but the sins of the whole kingdom which break off our hopes of peace; our nation is

38Ibid., p. 253.
generally sinful. The city complains of the ambitious courtiers; the courtiers complain of the pride and covetousness of citizens; the laity complain of the laziness and state meddling of the clergy; the clergy complain of the hard-dealing and sacrilege of the laity; the rich complain of the murmuring and ingratitude of the poor; the poor complain of the oppression and extortion of the rich. Thus everyone is more ready to throw dirt in another's face than to wash his own clean. And in all these, though malice may set the varnish sure truth doth lay the groundwork.39

Fuller has been criticized for retaining a pulpit through most of the Civil War. To accomplish this feat Fuller was obviously quite judicious in what he wrote and preached. Little wonder that he was labeled a time-server and an opportunist. Fuller justified his action: "I shall now withdraw myself, or at leastwise stand by, a silent spectator, whilst I make room for far my betters to come forth and speak in the present controversy of church government. Call it not cowardice, but count it caution in me."40

During the 1655 Royalist uprising in the West, Fuller had several anxious moments. When his brother-in-law, who took part in the affair, was beheaded for treason, Fuller was requested to appear before the famous Cromwellian board of "triars." Fuller "consulted John Howe, then domestic Chaplain to Cromwell. 'Sir,' he said, 'you

40 Fuller, Church History, Vol. III, p. 268.
may observe that I am a pretty corpulent man, and I am to
go through a passage that is very strait; I beg you would
be so good as to give me a shove, and help me through."

With Howe's help he managed to satisfy the board and clear
himself.

Throughout his adult life, Fuller wrote continuously and published a prodigious amount of material. This
material ranged from short poems to his multi-volume work
on church history. Many of his sermons were published as
essays.

Fuller admitted that his *Church History* was a
labor of love. It was started in 1641, and published in
1656. His other large work, *The Worthies*, which involved
the collection of material that covered his adult life
span, was not published until a year after his death.
His unflagging interest in history posed what he saw as a
threat when he wrote: "the historian, must not devour the
divine in me."

As a man, Fuller possessed a tolerance and fair
mindedness that was uncharacteristic of his age. Caroline
Divine, Erastian, Royalists and Preacher were all bound
together by his resolute moderation. This moderation--
the outstanding characteristic of the man--could not help
but influence Thomas Fuller the Historian.

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41 Fuller, *Worthies*, p. xiii.
CHAPTER II

SUBJECT MATTER AND AUDIENCE

Fuller wrote in a dynamic milieu conditioned by two major factors: the emergence of a middle class with catholic reading tastes and a revitalized interest in history. The demand for books, created by the new class, grew from a veritable trickle in the mid-sixteenth century to a torrent by the mid-seventeenth century. Simultaneously, the Renaissance and Reformation reawakened an interest in history. This was owing in part to the searching of the past by theologians and political protagonists to justify their position by appealing to precedent.

The emerging middle classes of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries looked upon education as the tool to success. As education spread among the middle class, a vast number of new readers appeared with each successive generation. These numbers grew so rapidly that, by the time of the Puritan Revolution, the written word constituted a very effective weapon. The contents of the books printed for middle class consumption reflected a wide taste in reading habits. During the time in which Fuller wrote, theology, history, guides to godly living, and romances headed the best seller lists. Most books, no matter what the contents, justified their existence by a pious and
moralistic introduction.

Books on theology enjoyed great popularity. Many readers preferred books that taught moral lessons and handbooks on how to live a good life rather than books dealing with the intricacies of religious doctrine. A sample of titles in this vein would contain: The Plaine Mans Path-Way to Heaven, Godly Private Prayers for Householders to Meditate Upon and to Say In Their Families, The True Watch and Rule of Life, and Supplications of Saints A Book of Prayers and Praises. Better know works, such as Foxe's Book of Martyrs which offered stories about religious heroes rather than profound discussions on doctrine, experienced an unequaled popularity.

Fuller responded to the demand for this type of reading by producing in 1642 The Holy State and The Profane State. The Holy State embodied Fuller's conception of the good life, while the Profane State described the types of persons that should be avoided. The work contained three literary forms: short biography, a brief description of a type of character, and the essay. All three of these forms proved popular with the majority of readers.

The first of the five books in The Holy State and The Profane State was devoted to life in the family and the ideal virtues of "the good wife" and "the good husband." The second book dealt with the ideals of conduct in
different occupations. The third book treated the social virtues, and included essays on contentment, moderation and jesting. The fourth included the social attributes desirable in public, and was a manual of polite behavior for the gentleman. Its topics ranged from serving and eating of meat, to horsemanship and how to treat inferiors. The last book points out the types of characters to be avoided. Included in this group are sketches of character types like prostitutes and thieves.

Fuller's moralizing essays and sketches of good and bad character types reflected the literary temper of the times. And the essays on the conduct of a gentleman demonstrated particularly his affinity for writing what the middle class wanted to read. The commercial class's ambitions made it eager for advancement and self improvement. Undoubtedly some of the most popular works during this period were those small handbooks for improvement which offered a quick way to acquire many of the social graces. The most popular work of this type was Peacham's courtesy book entitled The Compleat Gentleman. The fourth book of Fuller's, The Holy State and The Profane State, called "a courtesy book in little," singled out the qualities which should be cultivated by a gentleman. The popularity of this book, Fuller's most widely read work, can be attributed to the fact that it admirably suited the reading tastes of the public.
Ful|ler also satis|fied the wants of the reading pub|lic through the publication of his sermons. During the first half of the seventeenth century, it was common prac|tice for divines to publish their sermons. Through this medium many clergy presented their views on the religious conflicts that characterized this period. Fuller pub|lished twenty-five separate sermons and one collection in the course of his life. These too added to his popularity.

Generally the contents of Fuller's works, both literary and historical, were written to satisfy the reading public. He was one of the first to make a living by writing. Here, with his usual candor, Fuller admits that he wrote to make money: "It was a proper question which plain-dealing Jacob pertinently propounded to Laban his father-in-law: 'and now when shall I provide for mine house also?' Hitherto no stationer hath lost by me; here|after it will be high time for me to save for myself."^1

It is not unusual for the contents of literature to reflect the reading habits of the reading public. But for Fuller the problem was different. The content of this historian's work was generally determined by his reading audience. Fuller wrote in the popular dimension of history and not exclusively for scholars. As a result the contents of his works contain materials that popularize

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^1 Fuller, *Worthies*, p. 2.
and could have been left out had he not been writing to
tickle the fancy of the public.

Fuller popularized his historical treatment by extensive use of the anecdote. He wanted his readers to "arise" from his works with more "piety and learning" and at least "with more pleasure." He knew that the average reader demonstrated little enthusiasm for the intricate details of history that delight scholars. To make history lively and interesting to the common reader "I have purposely interlaced," he stated, "(not as a meat, but as a condiment) many delightful stories." An example of the "condiment" of which he spoke was included in his short biography of Thomas Ruthall. Fuller relates:

It happened King Henry employed him, as a politic person, to draw up a breviate of the state of the land, which he did, and got it fairly transcribed. But it fell out that instead thereof, deceived with the likeness of the cover and binding, presented the king with a book containing an inventory of his own estate, amounting to an invidious and almost incredible sum of one hundred thousand pounds. Wolsey, glad of this mistake, told the king he now knew where a mass of money was, in case he needed it. This broke Ruthall's heart and death on this unexpected occasion surprised him.

Fuller listed the achievements of the man and all pertinent biographical data. But it was a short amusing story that brought life into the biography and amused the reader.

\[^2\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 2.}\]
\[^3\text{Ibid.}\]
Fuller was severely criticized for his use of the anecdote because his detractors did not understand the dimension in which he was writing. Bishop Nicolson wrote of Fuller's *Church History*: "The book was so interlaced with pun and quibble that it looks as if the man had designed to ridicule the annals of our church into fable and romance."[4] "Fuller defiled his writing," Bishop Kennet wrote, "with puns and tales."[5] In the next century Bishop Warburton thought that there were only two church historians of note, Usher and "Fuller the jester." Peter Heylin, the church historian and a contemporary of Fuller's, was the most bitter critic of Fuller's works. He had nothing but contempt for Fuller's "merry tales" and "scraps of trencher-jests."

Izaak Walton, however, fully perceived the intent of Fuller's use of the anecdote. In speaking with Fuller about his *Church History* he said, "I think that it should be acceptable to all tempers, because there are shades in it for the warm, and sunshine for those of a cold constitution. With youthful readers, the facetious parts will be profitable to make the serious the more palatable, while reverend old readers will fancy themselves in a flower garden, or one full of evergreens."[6] The popularity

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of Fuller's works attested to the fact he indeed made history more palatable. His critics did not understand or approve of this dimension of history in which he wrote.

Most of Fuller's critics were offended by his lack of dignity. They thought that the dignity of a subject should be reflected in the contents of an author's work. They thought it incongruous for an historian, when writing about such a lofty subject as the church, to include anecdotes as part of the contents. But Fuller, known for his common sense, saw the utility of the anecdote as being more important than paying homage to the dignity of history.

The far reaching effects of the Reformation also influenced the contents of Fuller's writings. Before the Reformation theological disputes generally dealt with obtuse metaphysics. But the questioning of doctrine on the grounds that it was not sanctioned by the authority of tradition accompanied the Reformation. This resulted in an appeal to the past. The Protestants eagerly sought documentary evidence proving the untenability of the Catholic position; Catholic historians, on the other hand, hastened to defend the historicity of the church's doctrines and traditions.

The studies marshalled by both protagonists placed history in the center of the controversy. This condition
persisted throughout the last half of the sixteenth century and into Fuller's half of the seventeenth century.

In England the use of history to defend religious positions took another dimension. From the time of the Reformation to the Civil War, history was used with increasing frequency to fortify the Anglican position against those who would reform the established church. The appeal to precedent became of imminent concern during the reign of Charles I when the very existence of the episcopal system was threatened. To counteract this threat the Anglican divines needed an authoritative church history to help buttress arguments and disarm critics. The conditions were ripe for a church history to be widely accepted. In this context Fuller began work on his Church History in 1641. Because of the war and the immense size of his completed work, he did not finish his history until 1656. Fuller's Church History proved to be one of the greatest of his works. The contents of his Church History not only attempted to satisfy an apparent need, but it also contained a History of Cambridge and Waltham Abbey as well. "My Church-History beginneth (for point of time) indeterminately," wrote Fuller, "before the birth of Christ, (lapping in, or folding over, part of Paganism). Determinately, my History begins Anno Domini 37: which is
but four years after Christ's passion."⁷ He ended his work with the death of Charles I—a bold termination date indeed! Fuller's friends, with good cause, tried to persuade him to conclude with the death of Elizabeth rather than include the troubles of the early Stuarts and the Civil Wars.

At the close of Elizabeth's reign, Sir John Hayward had come under condemnation for his Life of Henry IV. Sir Francis Hubert was forbidden to print his Historie of Edward the Second. And from 1599 all English histories had to be authorized by a Privy Councillor. Many historians were forced to remove those parts of their histories which might be construed or misconstrued by contemporary persons. Both Sir Edward Coke and Sir Robert Cotton, to illustrate, suffered for writing things about the past which were objectionable to Charles. The danger of writing about sensitive and controversial matters had not diminished when Fuller's Church History was published during Cromwell's Protectorate. Fuller knew full well the risk of writing about contemporary events. "And now I perceive I must tread tenderly," he recorded, "because I go out, as before, on men's graves, but am ready to touch the quick of some yet alive. I know how dangerous it is to follow truth

⁷ Thomas Fuller, The History of Cambridge, and of Waltham Abbey, with the Appeal of Injured Innocence (London: Thomas Tegg, 1840), Appeal of Injured Innocence, Part I.
too near the heels; yet better it is that the teeth of
an historian be struck out of his head for writing the
Truth, than that they remain still and rot in his jaws,
by feeding too much on the sweetmeats of flattery. He
restated his concern when he confessed, "I did not attemper
my History to the palate of the government; so as to
sweeten it with any falsehood; but I made it palatable
thus far forth, as not to give wilful disgust to those in
present power and procure danger to myself, by using any
over-salt, tart or bitter expression, better forborne
than inserted, without any prejudice to truth."9

Fuller's history of the church was written in a
very readable style. As usual, he included some asides
"to refresh my wearied self and reader." His most severe
critic, Dr. Peter Heylin, objected to these asides, in
general, and to some legends in particular. Fuller
responded with a defense of his approach:

I confess, I have instanced (taking ten
perchance out of ten thousand) in the grossest
of them, (that is the fairest monster which is
most deformed,) partly to show what a spirit of
delusion acted in that age, partly to raise our
gratitude to God, seeing such lying vanities
are now ridiculous even to children.10

The most vehement criticism of the Church History

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8Fuller, Church History, Book IX, section viii.
9 Fuller, Appeal of Injured Innocence, answer to
Heylin's introduction.
10 Ibid., Part I.
centered around Fuller's moderation. Heylin and South, Laudians of high church persuasion, believed that Fuller was more Puritan than Anglican. Heylin went so far as to say "... The Puritan party, whom he acts for in all this work, will by no means grant it."\(^{11}\) The contrast between Heylin's unbending Laudian viewpoint and Fuller's moderation came to the surface when Heylin objected to Fuller's treatment of John Wyclif. "The wheat of Wickliffe," Heylin wrote, "was so foul, so full of chaff, and intermingled with so many and such dangerous tares, that to expose it to view were to mar the market." To this contention Fuller replied:

As for the doctrine which Wickliffe did maintain, we have some, but want an exact list of them; and I believe it is past the power of any author alive to present it entire, defecated from the calumniations of his adversaries; and therefore impossibilities are not to be expected from me. Yet I am not such an admirer of Wickliffe, but that I believe he did defend some gross errors; and it had been no wonder if it were but had been a miracle if it had not been so considering the frailty of flesh, darkness of the age he lived in, and difficulty of the subject he undertook.\(^{12}\)

Heylin also contended that Fuller did not give due attention to questions of doctrine, e.g., where the communion table should be placed. Fuller wrote of these objections:

\(^{11}\)Ibid., Reply #110. 
\(^{12}\)Ibid., Reply #83.
The doctor hath clearly, briefly, and truly stated the controversy, whose pen was formerly conversant therein; and, by his own acknowledgment, both sides had much to say for themselves.

Only I wonder, that though the question... should be made by him of so high importance; that either no condenscension could be made on either side, or such condenscension (if made) must prove ineffectual as to an accommodation. Is there no balm in Gilead? Hath not the Spirit of God endowed his servants with such discretion, but they may compromise a difference of greater moment?13

The Church History was an immediate success upon its publication, despite the above criticisms, for it proved to be both readable and of sound scholarship. Pepys claimed that he fell to reading Fuller's Church History and didn't put it down till midnight.14 Yet, the work came under heavy fire from those who expected a history that would be an Anglican bulwark and those who resented Fuller's sacrilege against the dignity of history.

Fuller also wrote some short politically oriented books that had some reverberation in the political environment of the period. The first, Andronicus, or The Unfortunate Politician, centered around Andronicus Comnenu, a Twelfth Century Byzantium emperor. Fuller had used a short biographical sketch of Andronicus in his The Holy and The Profane State as a character type of a tyrant.

13Ibid., Part III.

14Pepys, 7th of Dec., 1660.
The new Andronicus appeared in 1646 in the form of a small book. It featured the type of person who could come to power if the king were overthrown.

Later, after the advent of the Commonwealth and Cromwell, the Royalists looked upon this book as a remarkable prediction of what came to pass. They pinpointed such phrases as "Treason is so ugly in herself, that everyone that sees it will cast stones at it, which makes her seldom appear but with a borrowed face, for the good of the Commonwealth; but especially when ambition hath caught hold on pretended religion, how fast will it climb." The tyrant Andronicus won many "by his cunning behaviour, for he could speak both eloquently and religiously. He would ordinarily talk Scripture-language--often foully misapplied--as if his memory were a concordance of the whole Bible, but especially of St. Paul's Epistles which he had by heart." The Cavaliers thought it significant that Andronicus gained his support from the "many turbulent spirits" from the city who profited from a change. The book was later translated into Dutch and published in Holland in 1659. It proved a favorite with the exiled Royalists.

Andronicus could have caused trouble for Fuller, but evidently Cromwell saw the danger in taking action

\[15\text{From Andronicus, or The Unfortunate Politician as quoted by Addison, p. 146.}\]
against Fuller and associating himself with the tyrant Andronicus. The book proved popular with the Royalists from its publication until the Restoration and contributed to Fuller's popularity during the Restoration.

In 1660, Fuller published anonymously *An Alarm To The Counties Of England And Wales*. It quickly went through three printings; the third edition included the author's name. The purpose of this pamphlet, as stated in the introduction, "was to rouse the people of England to demand the immediate election of a free Parliament." A suggestion in this vein was unexpected from an avowed Royalist, but the ever practical moderation of Fuller looked upon a free Parliament as a way to solve the problems creating "increasing miseries" in the country. The men needed for the Parliament, he declared, would be men of estates who would be "tender in taxing others," as they would be in taxing themselves. Above all, the men of the new Parliament should be "men of moderation, a quality not opposed to diligence, but regulating their activity." These men would solve the problems of decreased trading, increased taxation, and the tyrannical rule of a handful of wealthy men. The structure of the Parliament amounted to a redistribution of votes so the knights of the shires would be equal with the burgesses. Because "that what pertaineth to all," he declared, "should be handled by all is a truth so clear and strong,
that they must offer a rape to their own reason that deny it.\textsuperscript{16}

This timely pamphlet appeared a few days before General Monk's letter of the 11th of February, which recognized the same need. This pamphlet also added to Fuller's popularity, which was reaching a high point by 1660.

The contents of Fuller's works which drew the greatest praise and for which he was usually honored were his short biographies. The short biography appeared in seven of his works and occupied the entire contents of his Worthies. This preoccupation with biography was in accordance with the popular demand for this literary and historical form. From the last half of the 16th Century the number of biographies increased in number and importance. The utility-minded reading public found moral and political lessons in these biographical works. Proper moralizations were made from books like Foxe's Martyrs, and from the lives of traitors and heroes of the state.

English biography had received an impetus for growth from both the Renaissance and the Reformation. Both of these movements were reflected in Fuller's writings. The focusing of attention on the individual during the Renaissance created a demand for biography. The styles and writings of the ancient biographers like

\textsuperscript{16}\textit{From An Alarm To The Counties Of England And Wales}, as quoted by Addison, pp. 248-249.
Plutarch were emulated and admired in England. In one year, 1603, four works dealing with Plutarch were published. Plutarch's emulators included Herrick, Taylor, Browne, Milton, Dryden, Addison and Bolingbroke, to mention but a few.  

The contents and style of Fuller's biographical works closely paralleled Plutarch's. T. G. Tucker could well have been writing of Fuller when he observed: "Plutarch had a sense of moral broadmindedness and a shrewd sense for popularizing and the knack of relieving the sermon by means of anecdote, quotation, or interesting item of information at the point where the discourse threatens to become tedious." Of equal importance was the development of ecclesiastical biography. The crude printing of the legends of saints in the last half of the sixteenth century changed into a new type of ecclesiastical biography during the first half of the seventeenth century. The new biography represented an original attempt to portray the character of a man whose piety was exceptional. Fuller occupied a dominant place in the development of biography. His Worthies was considered the first gathering in a single volume of biographies in


English that falls within the modern idea of biography. His short biographical sketches did much to establish a consciousness of biography as a distinct branch of literature.¹⁹ But it must be borne in mind that Fuller's concept of biography was quite traditional. He considered biography as the stuff of history. Like Foxe, the martyrrologist, he thought of biography as primarily history rather than literature. Foxe had intended his Acts and Monuments to be church history, but almost half of his work consisted of stories about the Marian Martyrs. These stories were mostly short biographies. Clarendon, too, though biography was an integral part of the content of history. In fact, he went one step further and declared that an historian must be able to present "a lively representation of persons."

The popularity of the short biography increased with the popularity of the printed funeral sermon. This form of short biography, beginning in the sixteenth century, proved very popular with the reading public of Fuller's day. The popularity of these short printed works seemed to assure the success of a large collection of short biographies, as those the Worthies contained.

Classical and ecclesiastical biographers, contemporary historians, and printed sermons all influenced the

form and contents of Fuller's biographies. But his personal insights into a character and his ability to convey this to the reader gave his works a readability that still endures. He achieved this by relating a short story that afforded clear insights into the character of the person under consideration. Note the human interest in this account of Thomas Curson:

Thomas Curson, born in All Hallows, Lombard Street, armourer, dwelt without Bishopsgate. It happened that a stage-player borrowed a rusty musket, which had lain long ledger in his shop. Now, though his part was comical, he therewith acted an unexpected tragedy, killing one of the standers-by, the gun casually going off on the stage, which he suspected not to be charged.

Oh the difference of diverse men in the tenderness of their consciences! Some are scarce touched with a wound, whilst others are wounded with a touch therein. This poor armourer was highly afflicted therewith, though done against his will, yea without his knowledge, in his absence, by another, out of mere chance. Hereupon he resolved to give all his estate to pious uses. No sooner had he gotten a round sum, but presently he posted with it in his apron to the court of aldermen, and was in pain till by their direction he had settled it for the relief of poor in his own and other parishes; and disposed of some hundreds of pounds accordingly, as I am credibly informed by the then churchwardens of the said parish. Thus, as he conceived himself casually (though at great distance) to have occasioned the death of one, he was the immediate and direct cause of giving a comfortable living to many. He died Anno Domini 16--.20

A rather conspicuous characteristic of Fuller's *Worthies* was his habit of omitting those Englishmen he

20 Fuller, *Worthies*, p. 369.
deemed worldly. Sir John Danvers and others who served in Parliament at the time of the execution of Charles were excluded from his book. This was a serious omission for the usually moderate Fuller. But generally his moderation and good humor dominate his biographies.

The scope of Fuller's historical vision was unusually wide for his day. He concerned himself with topography, manufacturing, crops, architecture, and "modern battles." He was not original in recognizing the importance of a wide view of history. Camden, in his *History of Britain*, also included material on topography and crops. But Fuller, the historian, had the insight to recognize their importance. In 1651 he published *Pisgah-Sight of Palestine*, a description of the topographical features of the holyland and an historical narration. The *Worthies* also contained a topographical description of each county. Fuller thought that everyone should have an acquaintance with topography. He spoke of England as a house with Camden and Speed describing the rooms, and it was his intention "to describe the furniture of these rooms."

In Fuller's time the content of most printed matter was highly moralizing in nature. Fuller's works reflected this tendency. But his moralizations in the form of aphorisms reflected his originality. Some of his aphorisms have been taken as proverbs. "The fox thrives best when he is most cursed," he wrote, and again "better ride
alone than have a thief's company: it is a needless work for a blackamoor to besoot his own face."²¹

The contents of Fuller's works reflect considerable breadth of interest. Most assuredly, Fuller cultivated the taste of the reading public, but he did not forsake the obligations of scholarship for popularity. His works were all highly readable, because of his conscious effort to include interesting material, and the contents of his writings were both literary and historical. The Holy and The Profane State stood on one extreme while his Church History stood on the other. The unusual blend of a writer and historian was not wasted because of the prolific production of the author.

²¹ Fuller, Worthies, intro., p. xviii.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY AND STYLE

The seventeenth century marked a watershed in historiography. The rejection of scholasticism and its replacement by empiricism was part of a new scientific ideal that created new attitudes in political thought, theology, literature, and philosophy, as well as history. The application of the new empirical mode of thinking gave rise to a radically different methodology in history. The new empiricism produced criticism of sources and historical skepticism, both of which we usually associate with modern methodology.

Fuller's generation not only inherited the benefits of empiricism, but also received the legacy of the antiquarians. The antiquarian movement established the importance of documentation. The antiquarians' basic assumption about method was a simple correspondence theory and involved the relating of all material to documents to determine their validity. The weakness of the antiquarian methodology was the lack of critical analysis. The antiquarians' methodology resulted in the collection of information and a distaste for interpretation. Generally they did not scrutinize documents to determine their
validity. They failed to determine whether information from a document was an isolated fact or on a higher level of generality; they were not concerned with the general context the documented fact might relate to. These weaknesses in methodology lingered on well into the seventeenth century. But the antiquarians' emphasis on documentation established a firm foundation for the historians of Fuller's generation to build upon.

F. Smith Fussner, who charted the change from the precedent-minded antiquarians of the 1580's to the historical-minded historians of Fuller's period, has characterized this period as the Historical Revolution. Most of the historians of this period were not conscious of this revolution in historical methods and did not concern themselves by writing and arguing about it to any extent.

Fuller used historical skepticism as one of his basic tools in methodology. An empirical approach to his evidence created a general attitude of skepticism toward his sources. This skepticism was evident in a crucial part of his history of the church. Peter Heylin, the Laudian church historian, attacked Fuller for his skepticism regarding the founding of the English Church. Fuller doubted the tales about the coming of Christianity to England. Heylin charged: "In fine, our author either is

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unwilling to have the gospel as soon preached here as in
other places, or else we must have preachers for it from
he knows not whence." Fuller replied:

I have plucked nothing down, but what would
have fallen of itself, and there by perchance
hurt others, (I means, misinform them) as
grounded on a foundered foundation. In place
whereof, I have erected, if not so fair, a
more firm fabric, acknowledging that apostoli-
cal men at first found the gospel here; though
to use my words, "the British church hath for-
gotten her infancy and who were her first god-
fathers"; adding hereto, that "as God concealed
the body of Moses to prevent idolatory, (Deut.
XXXIV. 6,) so to cut off from posterity all
occasion of superstition, he suffered the memori-
es of our primitive planters to be buried in
obscurity!"

This is enough to satisfy an ingenuous per-
son, who preferreth a modest truth before adven-
turous assertions, having in them much of false-
hood and more of uncertainty.²

Heylin also took exception to Fuller's discounting of the
vision of Peter appearing to Edward the Confessor. Fuller
answered:

To this vision pretended of Peter, we
appose the certain words of St. Paul: "Neither
give heed to fables, I Tim. IV. l." Nay,
rather, what a pity was it that his apparition
of St. Peter was not made unto his name-sake
Peter, (meaning Peter Heylin) and then all had
been authentic indeed.³

The historical revolution created a situation
whereby the persistence of the old methodology and the
insistence of the new coexisted side by side. Generally

² Fuller, Appeal of Injured Innocence, Book I,
Reply #13.

³ Ibid., Part I, Reply #7.
Fuller exercised a mature skepticism in dealing with his sources, but he still made some flagrant mistakes in accepting some sources at face value. Most embarrassing was his dating the founding of Cambridge in the seventh century. He later attempted to explain his errors when he was defending the works of John Foxe. He wrote:

And it is impossible for any author of a voluminous book consisting of several persons and circumstances (reader, in pleading for master Foxe, I plead for myself) to have such ubiquitory intelligence, as to apply the same infallibility to every particular.  

Fuller's historical skepticism led him to deny or cast doubt on monkish miracles and most supernatural phenomena. Yet, the meshing of the old and new attitudes led him in some instances to accept and record some "wonders." He observed that horse-hairs, "lying nine days in water turn to snakes." Beliefs like this were not unusual in an age in which Raleigh described the devil as "a black magician, a teacher of sorcery, poisoning, and witchcraft." But the occasional digressions of Fuller were overshadowed by his critical approach to his sources.

Fuller's mild and moderate attitude could turn to vehemence when faced with an historian who blindly used a

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1 Fuller, Worthies, p. 31.
5 Fuller, The Holy State, Book II, Ch. 6, p. 71.
6 Füssner, p. 205.
source without question. He could not accept Richard Broughton's church history without a bitter comment:

But in plain truth, there is little milk, no cream, and almost all whey therein, being farced with legendary stuff, taken from authors, some of condemned, most of suspected credit. If by the Levitical law "a bastard should not enter into the congregation of the Lord (understand it, to bear office therein) to the tenth generation," it is a pity that adulterated authors, being an illegitimate offspring, should be admitted to bear rule in church history.\(^7\)

The dependence of an historian upon sources was important to Fuller. He considered the problem in this light:

Historians who write of things done at a distance, many miles from their dwellings, and more years before their births, must either feign them in their own brains, or fetch them from other credible authors. I say credible, such as carry worth and weight with them, substantial persons, subsidy-men (as I may say) in Truth's book; otherwise, for some pamphlets, and all pasquils, I behold them as so many "knights of the post," even of no reputation.

Now, for the more credit of what is written, and better assurance of the reader, it is very expedient that the author alleged be fully and fairly quoted in the margin, with the time, book, chapter, leaf, page, and column sometimes, (seldom descending so low as the line,) where the thing quoted is expressed; and, this done, the author is free from fault which citeth it,—though he may be faulty who is cited, if delivering a falsehood.

Indeed, if one becomes bound as surety for another, he engageth himself to make good the debt in default of the principal. But if he only be bail for his appearance, and accordingly produceth his person in public court, he ought to be discharged without further trouble.

\(^7\)Fuller, **Worthies**, p. 248.
Semblably, if one not only cites, but com-
mends, the words of an author, then he under-
takes for him, adopts his words to be his own, 
becomes his pledge; and, consequently, is bound 
to justify and maintain the truth of what he 
hath quoted. But if he barely allegeth his 
words, without any closing with them in his 
judgment, he is only bound for that author's 
appearance: --understand me, to justify that 
such words are exactly extant in manner and form 
in the place alleged, easy to be found by any 
who will follow the marginal direction.°

Many seventeenth century historians still employed 
the classical tradition of inventing speeches for histori-
cal characters. Lord Herbert of Cherbury, Camden, and 
Bacon, for example, followed this practice which dated back 
to Thucydides. Fuller considered the problem in his his-
tory of Cambridge, and rejected such tampering. Henry VI 
had allegedly made a speech at Cambridge. Fuller doubted 
the authenticity of the speech as it appeared in two pre-
vious histories of Cambridge. He gave the speech the sub-
title, "The speech avouched by no historian, a memorable 
tradition and a necessary conclusion." He added this note:

This made me consider with myself what 
authentical authors had attested the kings words 
aforesaid finding it first printed by Brian 
Twyne, Oxford antiquary and afterwards 
Dr. Heylin, a member of that university, but 
neither relating to any author by quotation, 
in their editions which I have seen, which in 
a matter of such moment might justly have been 
expected.°

8 Fuller, Appeal of Injured Innocence, Part I, 
7th general answer.

9 Fuller, The History of Cambridge, p. 117.
In the introduction to his *Worthies*, Fuller laid down some general rules pertaining to the use of sources. He was fully aware of the distinction between primary and secondary sources. He began by declaring:

The plain English saying hath very much of downright truth therein: "I tell you my tale, and my tale-master," which is essential to the begetting of credit to any relation. Indeed when one writeth with St. John (waiving his infallible inspiration) "that which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled," such clogging a book with authors were superfluous, which now is necessary in him that writeth what was done at distance, *far from*, in time long before him.

First, to assert and vindicate the writer. When Adam complained that he was naked, God demanded of him, "Who told thee that thou wast naked?" Intimating this much, that if he could not produce the person who first so informed him, he might justly be suspected (as indeed he was) the author as well as utterer of that sad truth. Our Saviour said to Pilate, "Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell thee?" And all things reported are reducible to this dichotomy: 1. The Fountain of Invention; 2. The Channel of Relation. If one ignorantly buyeth stolen cattle, and hath them fairly vouched unto him, and publicly in an open fair payeth toll for them, he cannot be damned thereby; the case I conceive of him who writeth a falsehood, and chargeth his margin with the author thereof.

Secondly, to edify and inform the reader: *frustra creditur, quod sine agnitione originis creditur* (it is vainly believed, which is believed without the knowledge of the original thereof). Yea, properly it is no rational belief, but an easy, lazy, supine credulity.

Such as designingly conceal their authors, do it either out of guiltiness or envy. Guiltiness, when conscious to themselves that, if inspection be made of such quotations, they will be found defectively, redundantly or injuriously cited, distorted from their genuine intention.
Or else they do it out of envy. Tyrants commonly cut off the stairs by which they climb up unto their thrones (witness King Richard the Third beheading the duke of Buckingham) for fear that, if still they be left standing, others will get up the same way. Such the jealousy of some writers, that their readers would be as, if not more, knowing than themselves, might they be but directed to the original, which they purposely intercept.

Some, to avoid this rock of envy, run on as bad of ostentation; and in the end of their books, muster up an army of authors, though perchance they themselves have not seriously perused one regiment thereof, so that the goodness of their library, not greatness of their learning, may thence be concluded, that they have (if with the prophet's axe some were not borrowed) for I will not say have read, many books in their possession.

I have endeavoured to steer my course betwixt both these rocks, . . .10

In all of his writings, Fuller adhered to these general rules. Fuller was also aware of the integrity expected of the historian in regard to contextual unity. He wrote:

It is as easy as unjust for one to assault a naked sentence, as it stands by itself, disarmed of the assistance of the coherence before and after it. All sentences (except they be entire and independent) have a double strength in them, one inherent, the other relative, and the latter sometimes greater than the former; when what in a sentence is doubtful, is explained; difficult, expounded, defective, supplied; yea, seemingly false, rendered really true by the connexion.11

Fuller divided his sources into four categories: printed books, records in public offices, manuscripts in private collections, and interviews. He seemed more

10Fuller, Appeal of Injured Innocence, pp. 11-12.
11Ibid., Part I, 3rd general answer.
concerned with directing his readers to his sources of information than separating the sources into primary and secondary categories. Although his system of marshalling sources was unsophisticated, he succeeded in making their origin clear in the numerous footnotes that accompanied his historical works.

Fuller had access to most of the important depositories of primary material. He made frequent use of Sir Robert Cotton's collection—the most important collection of manuscripts in seventeenth century England. He personally transcribed many of the registers of Canterbury, and as later scholars found, with commendable accuracy.\(^{12}\) He used the records of the Tower of London extensively and referred to them as "jewels" of great value. He had a low opinion of historians who ignored this valuable source. "He that may with as much ease go to the fountain and yet will drink of the dirty river," he wrote derisively, "deserveth no pity if choked."\(^{13}\) Fuller also had access to the Exchequer and used material researched there throughout his Worthies. He also used the Church Registers in several parishes. He even used the parliamentary records. "What I wrote concerning your accusation in the House of Commons," he wrote to John Cosin, "I

\(^{12}\)Addison, p. 182.

\(^{13}\)Fuller, *History of Cambridge*, pp. 54-56.
transcribed out of the manuscript journals of that House."\textsuperscript{14}

To gain access to much of his material required persistence and diligence. Fuller wrote of his problems:

\begin{quote}
My pains have been scattered all over the land by riding, writing, going, sending, chiding, begging, praying, and sometimes paying too, to procure manuscript materials.\textsuperscript{15}
\end{quote}

Fuller demonstrated his use of documents in particular when he wrote of his Church History:

\begin{quote}
All passages of Church-Concernment from the reign of Henry III until King Henry VI I got exactly written and attested out of the Records in the Tower. The most material transactions in all convocations since the Reformation till the time of Queen Elizabeth, (save that sometimes the Journals be very defective, which was no fault of mine,) I transcribed out of the Registrers of Canterbury.\textsuperscript{16}
\end{quote}

And again in his use of a catalogue of the sheriffs of England he wrote:

\begin{quote}
Although I had a catalogue of the sheriffs of England lent me by Master Highmare of the Pipe office, which I compared with another of that learned knight Sir Winkefield Bodenham, yet, being frequently at a loss, I was forced to repair to the originals in the exchequer.\textsuperscript{17}
\end{quote}

Fuller was very meticulous in his use of secondary sources. "May my candle go out in a stench when I confess not whence I have lighted it," he declared. The secondary sources he

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{14} Fuller, Appeal of Injured Innocence, Part III, Letter to Dr. John Cosin.
\textsuperscript{15} Addison, p. 182.
\textsuperscript{16} Fuller, Appeal of Injured Innocence, Part III, Letter to Dr. John Cosin.
\textsuperscript{17} Fuller, Worthies, p. 12.
\end{quote}
used were those generally used by his contemporaries: Camden's *Britannia*, Cains's *History of Canterbury*, Speed's *History of Cambridgeshire*, Stow's *Chronicle*, Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, and Bale's *Descriptio Brit. Octava*.

Fuller was fully aware of the relationship between authors and their reliance on one another. He traced the influence of John Boston, a thirteenth century compiler of a catalogue of ecclesiastical writers, through three subsequent authors: "John Leland," Fuller stated, "oweth as much to this John Boston, as John Bale doth to him and John Pits to them both."[18]

Fuller was convinced that history written from an eye-witness vantage point possessed the most value. "Sure I am," he wrote, "the most informative histories to posterity, and such as are most prized by the judicious, are such as were written by the eye-witness thereof--as Thucydides, the reporter of the Peloponnesian war."[19] Yet, the validity of an eye-witness was no better than his memory and his ability to see things in perspective. In this regard, one of the most valuable parts of Fuller's *Church History* was his account of the convocation of 1640. His remarkable memory gave him a great advantage over

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[19] Fuller, *Church History*, Book X, Section I.
others who were attending the convocation. Note-taking was prohibited in the assembly. Thus, Fuller's account of the convocation was written entirely from memory. Later, documented accounts attested to his accuracy. Fuller's value as an eye-witness enhanced his history of the church.

Fuller's techniques also included the personal interview. His interviews were limited to material mostly used in his *Worthies*. He attempted to interrogate the nearest relations of those whose lives he had written. For example, Fuller interviewed Pepys concerning his family, yet Pepys was troubled that no account of his family appeared in the *Worthies*. "Being much troubled," Pepys wrote, "that (though he had some discourse with me about my family and arms) he says nothing at all, nor mentions us either in Cambridge or Norfolk."^20

During the first five years of the Civil War Fuller moved constantly and had little or no access to his own books or a library. When he did write during this period, one biographer commented, his memory served him as a "maid-of-all-work." No doubt some of the information he collected for the *Worthies* during this period owes its existence to his phenomenal memory. Memory was an integral part of his methodology.

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^20Pepys, Feb. 10th, 1662.
Fuller's methods also included a conscious striving for objectivity. In his *Church History* he went to great lengths to present both sides of controversial questions within the Church. It was common for him to divide the page down the middle and present the pro and con on opposite sides. The argument appeared in this form:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&quot;Against the Liturgy&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;For the Liturgy&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;It being a compliant with the papists, in a great part of their service, doth not a little confirm them in their superstition and idolatry.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;It complieth with the papists in what they have retained of antiquity and not what they have super-added of idolatry; and therefore more probably may be a means of converting them to our religion, when they perceive us not possessed with a spirit of opposition unto them, in such things wherein they close with the primitive times.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&quot;Pro&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;Con&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| "Argument - The Papists of late were grown very peaceable, justly recovering the reputation of loyal subjects. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, scarce escaped a year without a treason from them; now they vied | "Answer - Papists were not more peaceable, but more politic, than formerly for private ends. Though their positions and principles were as pernicious as ever before; namely that 'princes excommunicated may be deposed: no

21 Fuller, *Church History*, Book XI, p. 482.
obedience with protestants themselves. Pity it was but they should be encouraged and their loyalty fixed forever, by granting them a toleration."\(^{22}\)

Fuller realized the problem of objectivity. Deeming few of his contemporaries objective, he observed:

What by general error is falsely told of the Jews, that they are always crook-backed, warped, and bowed to the right or to the left; so hard it will be to find a straight, upright, and unbiased historian.\(^{23}\)

Yet, Fuller recognized his own bias to some extent. He claimed that he wrote as "a cordial Protestant." He proclaimed in writing his church history: "I do freely declare myself, that I, in writing by book, am for the church of England."\(^{24}\) He recognized that every well-informed person possessed opinions and could not remain detached. But the historian was honor bound never to intrude his own views "to the prejudice of truth."\(^{25}\)

Fuller's application of the objectivity he proclaimed was admirably demonstrated in his observation of Frederick, the elector of the Palatinate. "Little hope

\(^{22}\)Ibid., Book X, pp. 314-315.

\(^{23}\)Fuller, Ephemeris Parliamentaria, as quoted by Addison, p. 230.

\(^{24}\)Fuller, Appeal of Injured Innocence, Part I, 7th general answer.

\(^{25}\)Addison, p. 187.
have I to content the reader in this king's life, who cannot satisfy myself; writers of that age are so passed with partiality." The bias of the Protestant and Roman historians, in regard to Frederick's life, reminded Fuller of a fable about a man who had two wives. The old wife plucked out the black hairs, the evidence of his youth, while his young wife plucked out his gray hairs, the evidence of his age. And between them they made him bald. He wrote:

So amongst our late writers, Protestants cutt off the authority from all papized writers of that age, and Romanists cast away the witness of all imperialized authors then living . . . betwixt them they draw all history of that time very slender, and make it almost quite nothing. We will not engage ourselves in their quarrels; but may safely believe that Frederick was neither saint nor devil, but man. 26 Fuller took exception to those historians who presented only flattering biographies. He resented "a modern author" who evened out the crooked back of Richard III, the prominent "gobber-tooth," and generally made of him a handsome person. He considered it a crime "to pervert peoples judgements" and to ignore the testimony of pertinent records. Yet, Fuller also realized the danger of impartiality. He thought that flavor was added to history by an historian's interpretation of the past. "But well fare that historian," he wrote, "who will go out of his

26Ibid., p. 85.
own way to direct his reader."^7

To Fuller the selection of material was a very important part of methodology. For an historian to determine what was important and relative to his subject had been a problem of historians of all ages. "No dragnet can be so comprehensive as to catch all fish and fry in the river": he noted, "I mean, no historian can descend to every particular."^8 To leave material out of a history was not a flaw in the history but depended upon the judgment of the historian as to its relative value.

The modernity of Fuller's methods was apparent in his attempt to place historical characters in their proper historical setting. He did not always succeed, but he was fully aware of the problem. In explaining why Wyclif defended some "gross errors" he wrote: "and it had been no wonder if it were, but had been a miracle if it had not been so, considering the frailty of flesh, darkness of the age he lived in, and difficulty of the subject he undertook."^9 The darkness of the age Wyclif lived in was part of the answer in understanding him.

Fuller knew first hand, as did most of his contemporaries, the difficulties posed by chronology. His biggest blunder was the dating of the founding of

^8Ibid.

^9Ibid., Reply #83.
Cambridge 600 years before the actual event. He thought chronology "a surly, churlish cur, which had bit many a man's fingers who had meddled therewith." But, with few exceptions, Fuller's chronological ordering of events was sound.

Fuller's tendency to popularize his works was also reflected in his methodology. His History of Cambridge, the first published in English, was the first history of Cambridge that could be read by laymen. Also the writing of his Church History in English gives a definite clue as to whom he expected to read his works. In this regard he was preceded in the sixteenth century by men such as Foxe. But unlike some of the crude popularizers of his day who were incapable of writing in anything but the vernacular, Fuller was a master of Latin and Greek. In a rather dubious story which illustrates the fame of Fuller's scholastic ability, Pepys related how Fuller "did lately to four eminently great scholars dictate togeather in Latin, upon subjects of their proposing, faster than they were able to write, till they were tired." Fuller used the vernacular out of choice, not necessity.

Fuller's literary fame was the result, in part,

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30 Fuller, Pisgah-Sight, Book III, p. 414.
31 Pepys, Jan. 22nd, 1660-61.
of his stylish light touch even though he usually dealt with serious subjects. His style has been considered almost as good as Shakespeare's by an enthusiastic Coleridge. His sallies have been described as keen as Bernard Shaw's by a no less enthusiastic scholar of the twentieth century. His style was unusually fluid and similar to conversation in many instances. He used good vigorous Anglo-Saxon words where his contemporaries would use a Latin phrase.

Fuller generally avoided the long classical sentence, unlike most writers of his period; in fact, most of his sentences were short and sharp. His paragraphs reflected this same tendency. His short sentences and paragraphs were written to please the convenience of his readers. In some cases he numbered his short paragraphs and concluded with a short summation in a short to-the-point phrase. But he was not jerky in his delivery and in many cases rose to a pure, unadorned and vivid English. His description of Richard Hooker was unsurpassed:

Mr. Hooker's voice was low, stature little, gesture none at all, standing stone-still in the pulpit, as if the posture of his body were the emblem of his mind, unmoving in his opinions. Where his eye was left fixed at the beginning, it was found fixed at the end of his sermon; in a word, the doctrine he delivered had nothing but itself to garnish it.... His style

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was long and pithy, driving on a whole flock of several clauses before he came to the close of a sentence.33

An example which appeals to many is this image: "Who hath sailed about the world of his own heart, sounded each creek, surveyed each corner, but that these still remains much terra incognita to himself?"

Fuller's literary accomplishments have overshadowed his scholarly approach to history and his acceptance of the new historical attitudes of his period. Yet, Fuller considered himself primarily an historian, and his methodological theories and practices made him one of the outstanding historians of the seventeenth century, and one of the first modern historians in England.

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33 Fuller, *Church History*, Book IX, Sec. VII.
CHAPTER IV

FULLER'S PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

Fuller's half of the seventeenth century marked the waning influence of scholasticism and the emergence of a revolutionary "new reasoning." The epistemology of the two rival schools historically divided into a conflict between rationalism and empiricism. Basically, it was a confronting of a rationalism that held ideas and concepts as independent of man's experience and that some truth could be known by reason alone, and an empiricism that held ideas and concepts as emanating from experience alone and that truth was established by its relationship to experience. The rationalism of the seventeenth century was chiefly metaphysical. Its concern was first cause and end, or the answer to the questions of where did we come from and where are we going. Scholasticism basically focused its interest on abstract speculation. Conversely, empiricism, rather than dealing with speculation, was concerned with the observation of nature. The empiricism of the seventeenth century ignored the metaphysically unanswerable questions of "whence" and "where to."

The ultimate replacing of scholasticism by the new "scientific reasoning" was the achievement, in great
measure, of a group of men who deemed scholasticism an obstacle to knowledge. The critics of scholasticism included Bacon, Descartes, Hobbes, Browne, Milton, Glanvill, and Boyle. These men preferred the physics of the observable world to the mysticism of the metaphysical. Yet philosophic movements, as all movements in history, have no clear definitive lines marking the beginning and the end. The demise of scholasticism and rise of empiricism must be viewed in this light. The two schools existed side by side in Fuller's day.

Fuller, like many men, did not feel it imperative that he make a choice between the "new reasoning" and scholastic metaphysics. In his usual moderate position, he refused to embrace either school unequivocally. In this period of transition, Fuller neither completely accepted nor rejected either school of thought; rather, he was primarily a transitional figure.

As an historian, Fuller recognized Bacon as being one of England's greatest historians. He used a Baconian methodology that reflected his acceptance of empiricism. On the other hand, he supported the tenets of the Anglican Church which was philosophically grounded in scholasticism. Fuller's dual role, as clergyman and historian, gave rise to a dualism in his philosophy of history.

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dualism enabled him to separate and keep apart the spiritual from the scientific. His dualism was Cartesian in this respect. The separation of the material from the spiritual allowed Fuller to apply a different epistemology to each sphere. In the realm of secondary causes he applied an historical empiricism that depended on observation of the experience of man. In an historical sense he did this by carefully evaluating documents from which he selected the facts representing the human experience. Fuller demonstrated his empiricism in the area of secondary causation when he put "metaphysics in the closet of the great hall of physics." Fuller rejected many miracles in his histories which historians had used in the past to explain secondary causation. He regarded them as being incompatible with empiricism. The miracles Fuller did record reflected his dualism. In one instance, for example, he wrote that an unusually large number of larks fed the population of Exeter when besieged by the parliamentary forces. Several probable natural causes were considered by Fuller to explain the presence of the larks:

1. Much shooting inland drove them to the "sea-side for their refuge."

2. "In cold winters they move to southern parts" - It was a cold winter.

3. There might have been seeds "lately sown . . . which invited them thither for their own repast."

"However, the cause of causes was Divine Providence,
thereby providing a feast for many poor people, who otherwise had been pinched for provision."² In this instance Fuller looked upon the probable cause of the event empirically, but the immediate or direct cause of the event caused Fuller to consider it a miracle. This was one of the few instances, Fuller believed, "when God thrifty of his miracles, was pleased now and then to drop one down from heaven."³ But generally he frowned upon historians who used providence to explain secondary causes without any explanation as to how God's will became manifest. He was in full accord with Descartes's maxim that "final causes, the purposes of God, are not to be considered sufficient reasons for physical occurrences."⁴ Fuller criticised the historian Matthew Paris for indulging "too much in monkish miracles and visions."⁵

Fuller generally used a Baconian model in determining the cause of an historical event. Bacon believed that all the secondary possibilities of causation should be examined and a conclusion induced from all secondary causation. Fuller made a wide sweep in considering

² Fuller, Worthies, p. 142.
³ From Fuller's Triple Reconciler, as quoted by Roberta Brinkley, p. 234.
⁵ Fuller, Worthies, p. 51.
secondary causation. He covered politics, religion, geography, and some economic influences. But Fuller, with his usual moderation, was not a blind disciple of empiricism. He described the "scientific way" as being that "which is beneath certainty, and above conjecture." He did not think the new reasoning infallible. In view of Fuller's sagacity and moderation, his reluctance in wholeheartedly accepting empiricism was not surprising.

Fuller's metaphysical approach to primary causation was epistemologically rationalistic. Fuller's rationalism, in the area of primary causation, ultimately depended upon revealed truth. Man's knowledge of the first cause had to rest on the testimony of faith. The application of empiricism had to remain "below the clouds." The best way to gain some knowledge of the unanswerables of metaphysics was by revelation. Revelation, to Fuller, was the revealed word of God contained in the scriptures. Fuller never seemed to doubt the validity of this revealed truth which reason could not substantiate nor demonstrate. But, on the other hand, he did not look at the unknown of religion as being "mysteries," but as simply being beyond man's understanding. Fuller thought that revealed truth should not contradict reason. His common sense and moderation on questions of doctrine reflected his reliance on a

6Ibid., p. 155.
reasonable solution to obtuse metaphysical problems. But Fuller distrusted complete reliance on "the dead reckoning of logic." He thought reason should be used as far as it would carry a person in seeking the first cause of history. But Fuller was sure there was an "essential, and increated truth of higher consequence than Historical truth, . . ." which ultimately depended on faith. To Fuller the Anglican Church offered a reasonable and authoritative way to find the first cause in history. It did not shock his rationalistic sensibilities and it demanded a faith in God that offered a buttress to Fuller's providential determinism.

With Augustinian conviction, Fuller looked upon the whole of creation as an exemplification of God's glory. His theistic view saw the presence and involvement of God in the historical process. To deny God's role, Fuller warned, marked the first step toward atheism. Those who eliminated the providential element in history, he contended, made God "a maimed Deity, without an eye of Providence or an arm of Power, and at most restraining him only to matters above the clouds." In this respect Fuller reflected the views of his period. Even Bacon saw the "dependence of causes and the works of Providence." It is easy to perceive, he wrote, "according to the

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7 Fuller, Appeal of Injured Innocence, Part I, p. 21.

8 Fuller, The Holy State, Book V, p. 6.
mythology of the poets, that the upper link of Nature's chain is fastened to Jupiter's throne." Fuller's views more closely parallel those of Raleigh. Without restriction Raleigh referred "all unto the will of God," and to "his hidden purposes" that "do not vary." Fuller saw the course of events as the handwriting of God. Fuller attributed the ultimate cause of all events to God because he wills them, and he wills them because all events, in ways not always understandable by man, further God's purposes. The role of the individual in Fuller's all-embracing providentialism denied the free will of the makers of history. He could write of Charles at Edgehill: "divine providence did cover his head in the day of battle, as it was miraculously commanding the bullets." To Fuller the study of history led to a better understanding of how God manipulated events and men.

Fuller's teleology reflected his Anglican orthodoxy. He thought man's existence and goal in this sphere was the glorification of his Deity. "Glory to God," he wrote, "ought to be the aim of all our actions." The purpose and end of man was the adulation of his creator.

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9 Willey, *De augment*, p. 34.
10 Fussner, p. 200.
12 Ibid., p. 142.
Thus Fuller adhered to the Augustinian view of history: of this there is little doubt.

Yet, the historical empiricism, evident in Fuller's methodology, was predicated upon doubt. For Fuller to initiate an inquiry, empirically, into secondary causation he relied upon a skeptical attitude. In this instance there was a close relation between the moderation of Fuller and his skepticism. His moderation stemmed from a refusal to believe that any school of thought or religion was the sole repository of truth. Fuller's skepticism was based on a Pyrrhonistic view that reality was unknowable to man. He believed man incapable of obtaining a perfect knowledge in this life:

The reason is because none know either perfectly or Equally, in this life. Not perfectly, . . . not equally; for though men understood imperfectly, upon the supposition of equal ingenuoueness to their Ingenuity (that is, that they would readily embrace what appears true unto them) all would be of the same judgement. But alas, as none sees clearly, so scarce any two see equally . . .

Fuller's application of skepticism to the understanding of secondary causes did not carry over into a consideration of a number of possible primary causes. His dualism allowed him to build a wall around his providential theory of causation. Beyond this wall Fuller allowed his skepticism to roam unchecked on a wide range of secondary and tertiary causes.

Fulcher accepted the idea of progress. He looked upon his times as being superior to those past. In particular, he thought of man's knowledge as increasing. Fulcher's views were similar to George Hakewill's. "I do not believe," Hakewill wrote, "that all Regions of the world, or all ages in the Region afford wits always alike: but this I thinkke, neither is it my opinion alone, but of Scaliger, Vives, Budaeus, Bodine, and other great Clearkes, that the wits of these later ages . . . may be as capable of deepe speculations; and produce as masculine, and lasting births, as any of the ancient times have done."\textsuperscript{14}

Fulcher thought that the men of the present were as capable as men of the past. Fulcher's idea of progress, like Hakewill's, came from a comparative method that involved induction from a number of instances.\textsuperscript{15} Fulcher could speak of a time two hundred years in the past as an age of delusion and that gratitude should be raised to God, "seeing such lying vanities are now ridiculous even to children."\textsuperscript{16} And in speaking of the age of Wyclif, Fulcher commented on the darkness of the age. In the field of historical inquiry Fulcher thought that "a more free genius acteth in

\textsuperscript{14}Hakewill, \textit{Apologetic}, "Epistle Dedicatory," as quoted by Fussner, p. 174.

\textsuperscript{15}Fussner, p. 174.

\textsuperscript{16}Fulcher, \textit{Appeal of Injured Innocence}, Part I.
modern than in ancient historians, ..." and that the methodology of the ancients "time in effect hath can-celled." Fuller's rejection of the decay of man and nature since the Fall was supported by his use of com-parative history.

The justification for the study of history created no problems for Fuller. He saw history as having a definite utilitarian purpose. Fuller held the same belief in this regard as the middle class to whom he usually directed his writings. Most middle class readers held, in the course of the last half of the sixteenth century and the first half of the seventeenth, the belief that history ranked second only to the scriptures in offering lessons on morality. History needed no apologist. Even the most narrow Puritan had no twinge of conscience when reading history. The lessons of history gave many good examples of vice and virtue that could be used to induce an individual to live a moral and worthy life. In history, Fuller wrote, there were "precedents of all sorts and sizes; of men famous for valour, wealth, wisdom, learning, religion, and bounty to the publick." Fuller thought

17Ibid.
19Fuller, Worthies, p. 1.
that all of these precedents could be used to advantage in the present. He thought man could learn from his past mistakes as well as his triumphs. History's utility was to Fuller the practical application of the experience of the past.

Fuller's contribution to the over-all development of historical philosophy was negligible. But his position as a transitional figure makes his views significant. His dualism reflected the dilemma of many of his contemporaries. His attempt to reconcile the new empiricism with his dependence on revelation, as a clergyman, caused him to adopt a dualistic view that was symbolic of an age characterized by two conflicting schools of thought.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The seventeenth century revolution in historiography ushered in the beginning of modern historical scholarship in England. Before this revolution the methods used by historians were generally medieval in concept and execution; after it, historical methodology, modern in most aspects, had acquired most of the tools and concepts utilized by historians today. The "new history" owed its revolutionary nature to its methodological structure which was similar to the methods employed by the "new science." Both relied on experience that could be factually verified. In history, the credibility of experience was verified by documentation. To the modern student of history acquainted with the intricacies and problems of historiography, the methodology of the historical revolution may appear simple and basic. But during Fuller's period, when history was commonly used as a tool for propaganda, historians rarely embraced all of the tenets of the "new history" and practiced the new ideals. Although Fuller was one of the few historians to apply the new methodology to his work, his contribution to the new methods has gone unrecognized.  

Only F. Smith Fussner has published a definitive work on historiography during the seventeenth century. The historians he selected to write about were those who he
As a moderate Anglican clergyman, a biographer and writer of popular literature, Fuller's place in history has been assured. But the effects of these facets of his life upon his historical works have not been measured. For example, Fuller was known as a proponent of moderation. W. K. Jordan, an historian interested in the development of religious toleration, was unstinting in his praise of Fuller's moderation. But the effect of this moderation upon Fuller's historical works has in the past gone unexplored. Yet, Fuller's moderate views were closely related to the great deal of historical objectivity he brought to bear on his historical works.

W. K. Jordan in his work The Development of Religious Toleration In England (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1940), Vol. 4, p. 373, made these laudatory remarks about Fuller's moderation: "Sympathetic in his temper, witty and salty in his conversation, high minded in his conduct, resolute in his charity, Fuller stood free of all party commitments and numbered amongst his friends men of all persuasions... His burly frame, his broad countenance beaming with good nature, betokened..."
As a writer of popular literature, Fuller was one of England's most widely read authors at the time of his death. Yet, his role as a popularizer of history was also of great importance. He made history interesting, appealing and enjoyable to read. His contribution in this regard also has gone unnoticed by students of the seventeenth century.

It is not unusual for figures in history to lie entombed in the silence of the past waiting for an inquiring historian to rediscover their fame and again expose it to the world. John Donne and Isaac Walton both suffered this fate. And thus it seems with Fuller's historical reputation. His reputation has suffered obscurity in dealing with the bridging of the gap between literature and history because of the misconception that he was primarily a literary figure, on one hand, and because his ability and talents as an historian have been overlooked on the other. Far from being Lamb's "silly old angel," Fuller was among the pioneers who used modern methods of historical inquiry in the seventeenth century.

a man with whom it was impossible to quarrel. Yet his good temper and his charitable disposition masked a mind of inflexible integrity, a mind that steadily declined to be deluded by sectarian persuasion or to lend itself as an instrument in the service of any intolerance whether Puritan or Royalist."
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