

Preface

This book began life under another title and with a different subject, but, as all authors know, books write themselves as they wish, and the names that appear on their title pages are only their secondary instruments. This is particularly the case with books of history, which are by their nature multivocal and transgenerational, a dialogue with the dead and a conversation with the living. In such a discourse, no word—even one as long as this is—can be the final one, but its best use is to further discussion. I hope this book will do so.

Many colleagues, institutions, and libraries have assisted me. I am grateful to the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation for the grant that enabled me to begin my initial research, to the University of Miami and Drexel University for sabbatical leaves that furthered it, and to Dean Donna Murasko of Drexel's College of Arts and Sciences for a timely subvention. Conrad Russell, John Morrill, and Peter Lake kindly permitted me to try out ideas in their seminars, as did Linda Levy Peck at the Folger Institute. These colleagues have all stimulated my own thinking, as subsequent pages will attest. Maija Jansson of the Yale Center for Parliamentary History provided help and encouragement over many years. Paul Seaver, my reader at Stanford, has long been a model of patient, insightful, and dedicated scholarship to me, and he applied those same qualities to the present work. It is certainly the better for it. I am indebted to the staffs of many libraries, including those of Miami and Drexel; the British Library; the Cambridge University Library; the University of Pennsylvania Libraries; the Folger Shakespeare Library; the Henry E. Huntington Library; the Washington University Library; and the Library of Bryn Mawr College. The staff of the Korman Computer Center at Drexel helped me through technical quandaries, as did Reid Addis, Amy

Gagas, Richard Greaves, and, especially, Kimon Rethis. Long ago, Jack Hexter taught me to think through every idea critically, especially my own. I hope I have remembered that counsel. A section of this book appeared in *Albion* 34 (2002): 371-390, as "King, Commons, and Commonweal in Holinshed's *Chronicles*." I thank its editor, Michael Moore, for that hospitality, and for many years of professional association and friendship.

Norris Pope, my editor at Stanford University Press, has been an unfailing supporter of this book. He has my thanks and gratitude, as does Janet Gardiner, who has saved it as far as humanly possible from error while indulging an American author's idea of the English language. The defects that remain are mine alone.

My son Kimon, my daughter-in-law Theresa Storm, and my granddaughter Athena Marie Rethis have cheered and inspired me in more ways than they can know. I will always owe a debt to Michele Franco Rethis. Barbara Radin and Robin Radin, too, have their place in these pages, as only friends can.

Lili Bitá, my companion and love, has been the dedicatee, and certainly the source, of almost everything I have ever written. It is with her generous permission that I substitute the two names at the head of this book for hers. Richard Greaves was my colleague, collaborator, and friend for nearly thirty years. He was the first reader of this book, and his characteristically thorough and penetrating comments have made it a far better one. That he devoted such time and care to it in the last months of his life was a more generous gift than any man can deserve, and certainly the most generous one I have ever received. With him I must thank his wife, Judith R. Greaves, who sustained him with her love and care, and who was a copartner in all of his, and our, work.

Philip Steven Rethis was my son. He was the bravest man I ever knew. I take courage from him every day, and bless his memory.

Robert Zaller
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