

A Modern Legal History of England and Wales 1750-1950

by A.H.Manchester, MA, LL.M

Senior Lecturer in Law,
University of Birmingham

London
Butterworths
1980

England London	Butterworth & Co (Publishers) Ltd 88 Kingsway, WC2B 6AB
Australia Sydney	Butterworths Pty Ltd 586 Pacific Highway, Chatswood, NSW 2067 Also at Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth
Canada Toronto	Butterworth & Co (Canada) Ltd 2265 Midland Avenue, Scarborough, M1P 4S1
New Zealand Wellington	Butterworths of New Zealand Ltd 77 - 85 Customhouse Quay
South Africa Durban	Butterworth & Co (South Africa) (Pty) Ltd 152 - 154 Gale Street
USA Boston	Butterworth (Publishers) Inc 10 Tower Office Park, Woburn, Mass. 01801

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ISBN Casebound	0 406 62263 9
Limp	0 406 62264 7

Reproduced from copy supplied
printed in Great Britain
by Billing and Sons Limited
Guildford, London, Oxford, Worcester

Preface

The period 1750 – 1950 was one of tremendous change in all spheres of the national life. In this book I have attempted both to describe those legal institutions and those areas of law which were of major significance and which experienced change during that period and also to comment upon them. In addition I have attempted to discuss the process of law reform. Of course no single volume can offer a really comprehensive treatment of the whole of the legal system and of the law. However, I do hope that my book captures the essence of that system and of its law: we can take considerable pride in both.

Although much of the book is based upon original work, I have written it as an introductory work for a general audience rather than for lawyers and law students alone.

The book is based upon a series of lectures which I first offered to students in my Faculty at the University of Birmingham in 1968. I am obliged to all those students who offered encouragement over the years. Long may our Brougham Club flourish! I am obliged also to those of my colleagues who were kind enough to comment upon draft chapters. In particular I am obliged to my friend and former colleague, Dr. Harry Smith, who read several chapters in draft and who offered me a number of valuable suggestions. Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Anne, and my children Anneliese, David and Graham for the tolerance which they showed during the long period when this History dominated my life.

Faculty of Law,
University of Birmingham

A.H. Manchester
September, 1979

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