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for 1987

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ROYAL MANDATES FOR DEGREES IN THE REIGN OF CHARLES II  
(1660–85): AN ASPECT OF THE CROWN'S INFLUENCE IN THE  
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

JOHN TWIGG

The price which the universities of Oxford and Cambridge paid for their growing importance in English national life (as educators of the clergy and the sons of the governing classes) in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was a higher level of royal interference in their internal affairs.<sup>1</sup> In particular, the crown intervened in many elections to masterships and fellowships; but this essay is concerned with royal mandates for degrees, which, although not so significant as those other forms of royal interference, do illustrate one aspect of the relationship between the crown and the university in the early modern period, and are of interest in the context of university history as a whole. The reign of Charles II, in which an exceptionally large number of such mandates was issued, is rich in evidence, and a particularly interesting period in which to study them.

A royal mandate (from the Latin *mandare*: to order) was a command from the crown to do its bidding in a specified way. Many mandates were issued to colleges in the Elizabethan and Stuart periods, commanding them to elect named individuals to masterships and fellowships; degree mandates were directed to the university, ordering it to confer degrees upon particular nominees. They were often intended to assist those who, although suitably

qualified academically, were unable for some reason to fulfill all of the statutory requirements for taking degrees, the mandates dispensing with these requirements on their behalf. They were also almost invariably responsive: that is to say, they were only issued upon receipt of petitions from individuals seeking degrees, or of requests from persons of influence who had been secured to speak for them. This was an established practice before Charles II's reign, and continued after his death. The right to issue such mandates was unquestionably an integral part of the crown's prerogative powers.

Charles returned to England from exile in May 1660 and the following months witnessed a large number of mandates for degrees at Cambridge. The political upheaval of the previous two decades – the Civil War and the English Revolution – had not left the university untouched, and so there was a great need to assist those who had been unable to take their higher degrees at the proper time because of the troubles. Charles also wished to reward university dons and graduates who had served the royalist cause during the years of revolution. The bulk of the degree mandates issued during the reign were in the first few years after the Restoration; subsequently, both the number of mandates and the fre-

1 M.H. Curtis, *Oxford and Cambridge in Transition, 1558–1642* (Oxford, 1959), and V. Morgan, 'Country, Court and Cambridge University, 1558–1640: A Study in the Evolution of a Political Culture' (University of East Anglia Ph.D., 1984), deal extensively with these two themes. For royal interference at Cambridge after 1660, see J. Gascoigne, "'The Holy Alliance': The Rise and Diffu-

sion of Newtonian Natural Philosophy and Latitudinarian Theology within Cambridge from the Restoration to the Accession of George III' (University of Cambridge Ph.D., 1980), chapter 1; and J.D. Twigg, 'The University of Cambridge and the English Revolution, 1625–1688' (University of Cambridge Ph.D., 1983), chapter VIII.

quency of their issue underwent a marked decline, which can be seen in the accompanying table.<sup>2</sup>

Year	Degrees								Total
	DD	LID	MD	BD	LIB	MB	MA	misc	
1660	107	9	11	11	1	-	2	-	141
1661	27	2	5	7	3	-	2	-	46
1662	8	2	3	3	1	1	6	2	26
1663	12	1	6	2	-	1	4	-	26
1664	4	3	3	1	2	-	2	-	15
1665	4	1	1	1	-	-	2	-	9
1666	4	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	8
1667	1	1	1	1	-	-	3	-	7
1668	7	1	2	2	-	-	7	-	19
1669	5	-	3	1	1	-	3	-	13
1670	7	1	6	-	-	-	3	-	17
1671	3	-	2	-	-	1	1	-	7
1672	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
1673	2	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	7
1674	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	-	3
1675	-	1	1	1	-	-	1	-	4
1676	3	-	3	1	-	-	2	-	9
1677	3	-	2	-	-	-	2	-	7
1678	2	-	2	-	-	1	1	-	6
1679	4	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	5
1680	-	-	3	-	-	-	1	-	4
1681	1	-	3	-	-	-	1	-	5
1682	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
1683	3	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	5
1684	1	1	1	-	1	-	1	-	5
total	208	25	59	33	9	4	56	2	396

Mandates for degrees in the University of Cambridge, 1660-84.

The first mandates were issued on 20 June 1660, when the vice-chancellor, William Dillingham of Emmanuel, was instructed to confer the degree of doctor of divinity upon

six men said to have been unable to take their degrees in the normal way and at the specified times. The six were obliged to demonstrate their academic worth by performing the requisite university acts and exercises for their doctorates, but because 'through the long interruption, which they have suffered from the late unhappy times, they may want some things required by Statute, to that Degree . . . we hereby dispense with all irregularities whatsoever which may be objected against this their proceeding'.<sup>3</sup> The wording used here followed a standard formula, and the mandate omitted to explain that for five of the six men the 'long interruption' was due to their expulsion from their college fellowships in the parliamentary purge of the university in 1644-5.<sup>4</sup> All six were to receive further rewards from the crown in the form of sponsored promotion within the university, the church, or both.<sup>5</sup> In all, 30 victims of the 1644-5 purge received degrees by mandate in 1660, and another 16 in the years 1661-70; nine of them were to become heads of houses in the university.<sup>6</sup> Seven more who had been ejected in the Rump Parliament's purge of 1650 for refusing to take the 'Engagement' (an oath of loyalty to the new republican constitution) also received degrees in this way.<sup>7</sup>

Degrees were awarded to former royalists in batches during the remainder of 1660. Because they were usually written in standard forms, mandates tended to be unspecific about any services which the intended recipients of the degrees had rendered to the crown; thus twelve men who had been

2 The table has been compiled from information contained in several sources: almost all of the mandates are recorded in Cambridge University Archives Lett 13; and Cambridge University Library Baker MSS, xxv.283-330. A very small number of extra mandates have been discovered in *Calendar of State Papers (Domestic Series)* (hereafter *CSPD*), ed. M.A.E. Green *et al.* (London, 1860-) (1660-1), 164, 307; (1661-2), 116, 170, 194; (1670), 336, 511; (1671), 462; and in J. and J.A. Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses* (Cambridge, 1922-7), (Ambrose Appleby, John Price, Edward Salmon, Thomas Weeden). The list does not include degrees issued during visits by dignitaries, or after the elections of chancellors. The figures given in the text below are calculated from these sources.

3 Lett 13, 3; Baker MS xxv.283 (John Aucher, Isaac Barrow, John Barwick, William Chamberlain, Peter Gunning, and Bernard Hale).

4 Hale was the exception. For the purge of 1644-5, see J.D. Twigg, 'The Parliamentary Visitation of the University of Cambridge, 1644-5', *The English Historical Review* xcvi, 1983, 513-28.

5 Their careers may be traced in J. and J.A. Venn, *Alumni*, and *The Dictionary of National Biography* (hereafter *DNB*).

6 The nine heads were Joseph Beaumont (Jesus, 1662; Peterhouse, 1663-99); Edmund Boldero (Jesus, 1663-79); Mark Frank (Pembroke, 1662-4); Peter Gunning (Corpus Christi, 1661; St John's, 1661-9); Bernard Hale (Peterhouse, 1660-3); John Howarth (Magdalene, 1664-8); Robert Mapletoft (Pembroke, 1664-7); Anthony Sparrow (Queens', 1662-7); William Wells (Queens', 1667-75).

7 Only two of them received their degrees in 1660; the rest were in 1661-9. Only one (William Sancroft, Emmanuel, 1662-5) became a head of house. For the 1650 purge, see Twigg, 'University of Cambridge', 138-147.

sequestered or ejected from their parish livings for their loyalty to the Church of England in the 1640s and 1650s received no mention of this in their mandates. Understatements were also common. However, a sufficiently large number of mandates were explicit enough to demonstrate the qualifications of loyalty and service which might be rewarded with a degree.

Apart from those who had been ejected from their fellowships, many of whom were said merely to have been 'hindered by the late distractions' from taking their degrees in the normal way, there were a further 17 men formally recognised as having suffered for the cause. Six, perhaps seven, had been ejected from parish livings in the 1640s; a further five, whilst having given no overt demonstrations of royalism before 1660, enjoyed royal favour thereafter in the form of these mandate degrees and subsequent promotions. The others included Lionel Gatford, a former fellow of Jesus and royalist pamphleteer who had been arrested in Cambridge and imprisoned in 1643 by order of the House of Commons, and, apparently, the historian Thomas Fuller, a royal chaplain.<sup>8</sup> Two of the seventeen are not known royalists – they are virtually anonymous, in fact – and the final name on the list, that of Ralph Widdrington, fellow of Christ's, is a surprising inclusion. Certainly he seems to have been a zealous royalist after 1660, although self-interest was always more than a secondary consideration in his allegiances. But although his mandate was issued in July 1660, before those for many others who had lost their fellowships for their royalism, his services to and sufferings for the crown before that date were non-existent. Indeed, there was a good case for branding him as politically undesirable: he had subscribed to the Engagement oath in 1650 without demur, and had even become the university's Public Orator in succession to Henry Molle of King's, who had been ejected for refusing the oath; he had also been chosen Regius Professor of Greek by the Cromwellian government in 1654. His brother Sir

Thomas Widdrington had been a notable parliamentarian in the 1640s and served on the Council of State during the republican 1650s. Ralph Widdrington's mandate must, in the absence of a better explanation, be put down simply to his enhanced capacity for self-advancement.<sup>9</sup>

Some further insight into the reasons behind awards of degrees by royal mandate is offered by the surviving petitions of those who sought them.<sup>10</sup> Like the letters mandate, these tended to employ standard forms of wording, and several are rich in understatement. Most petitioners referred to their having been obstructed by the troubles of the revolutionary years from taking their degrees at the proper time, or prevented from doing so by their loyalty, or feeling unable to take degrees with a clear conscience during the usurpation; this last form was commonly used by those who had been ejected from fellowships in 1644. Thomas Ansell, who had been put out of his fellowship at Jesus, did think it necessary to draw attention to this fact, but did not think it necessary to mention that he had been ejected from a parish living also; he had already received his B.D. degree by royal mandate under Charles I.<sup>11</sup> Four other victims of the 1644 purge referred to their ejection and sequestration in their petitions, and three petitioners claimed to have fought for Charles I in the Civil War, but a letter of recommendation written on behalf of Anthony Marshall, who had been ejected from Trinity in 1644, claimed merely that he had been prevented by illness from taking his degree at the right time.<sup>12</sup> Another ejected fellow of Trinity, Nathaniel Willis, did draw attention to his expulsion in his petition for a doctorate in divinity, but placed just as much emphasis on the fact that, having been restored to Trinity in 1660, he now found that many of his juniors among the fellowship – those elected during his exile – already had that degree: such affirmations of status and seniority were important in college and university life.<sup>13</sup>

8 For Gatford, see *ibid.*, 66–7; for Fuller, *DNB*. Their mandates are in Lett 13, 8, 11; Baker MS xxv.284–5.

9 For his career, see *DNB*; M.H. Nicolson, 'Christ's College and the Latitude Men', *Modern Philology*, 1929–30, 35–53. His mandate was issued on 20 July, Lett 13, 8.

10 There are 38 surviving petitions for degrees which were awarded in 1660, *CSPD* (1660–1), 148, 162–5, 251–2; (1661–2), 89, 631.

11 *ibid.* (1660–1), 188; J. and J.A. Venn, *Alumni*.

12 *CSPD* (1660–1), 179.

13 *ibid.* (1661–2), 631.

It is difficult to explain why the two surviving petitions from 1660 which failed to secure mandates were not better received. Thomas Cookeson claimed to have been ejected from Sidney Sussex for his royalism; there is no evidence of this, but he had been a student at that time, and the surviving sources concentrate almost exclusively on ejected fellows.<sup>14</sup> He claimed also to have served in the royalist army. This adds up to an impressive case on paper, and Cookeson had influential backers; he may have failed, therefore, because his claims were exaggerated.<sup>15</sup> The same may be suspected of the petition of Thomas Cock, who professed to be a student of medicine who had fought for the royalist cause until the battle of Worcester in 1651, after which, he claimed, he had been taken prisoner on suspicion of being the king.<sup>16</sup>

We do not know how claims were assessed, but petitioners usually sought testimonials from men of standing or influence to help their efforts. These testimonials generally attested to the petitioner's learning and personal qualities, or to his loyalty, or to the accuracy of the claims in his petition. Former royalist masters of colleges, who had lost their places in the Civil War, were prominent sponsors, for their voices carried considerable authority in this context, although they were not the only influential backers in evidence.

Because of the vast scale of the political disturbances during nearly two decades, within the university as elsewhere, the large number of degrees awarded by royal mandate during 1660 was to be expected: mandates were a genuinely valuable method of assisting those who were prevented from taking their degrees according to the regulations. The need for dispensations was shown most emphatically at the king's return, but was equally apparent throughout the period. Royal mandates were issued on behalf of those who had been sick at the proper time for taking their degree, or abroad, or driven away from Cambridge by outbreaks of disease, or in the service of important dignitaries, or unable

to afford the university's fees.<sup>17</sup> Physicians were often rewarded in this way: many of them had learnt their art from experience and practice rather than formal academic training. William Sermon received his M.D. in 1669 for having restored the first Duke of Albemarle to health after a dangerous illness; another physician was rewarded for 'makeing and composeing severall physicall Medicines, for the singular knowledge he had acquired in that science'; another received his degree for work in London during the great plague outbreak there in 1665, when he had given free treatment to many hundreds of 'the meaner sort'.<sup>18</sup>

Others received degrees to help them in their careers. A prebend of Worcester was felt to want encouragement in his future studies and service to the church; a preacher to the Turkey Company at Smyrna was encouraged likewise; a newly appointed headmaster needed an M.A. to take up his post; two newly elected heads of houses in Cambridge wanted doctorates in divinity for their new offices; in 1675 two men were released from the performance of academic exercises because they had speech defects.<sup>19</sup>

Awards in such cases were evidently desirable, but at an early stage, amidst the euphoria surrounding the Restoration, there was concern at the number and frequency of the mandates. In a letter of August 1660 the master of Corpus Christi, Richard Love, voiced his dissatisfaction at the high number of doctorates that had been awarded, although this did not prevent him from recommending another three men for degrees by mandate; and in December 1661 the vice-chancellor, Henry Ferne, a zealous royalist, was said to be opposed to many of the degrees being awarded, although, like Love, he was prepared to make recommendations of his own.<sup>20</sup> In 1663 Edward Rainbow, the master of Magdalene, observed that mandates were 'very ill resented by many in this university'.<sup>21</sup> The university had expressed its displeasure in the past about awards given to the unworthy,

14 Only one student is known to have been expelled in 1644–5, Twigg, 'Parliamentary Visitation', 522.

15 *CSPD* (1660–1), 164.

16 *ibid.*

17 *ibid.* (1663–4), 54, 182, 230; (1667–8), 430; (1670), 732–3; Lett 13, 59, 70, 74, 117, 124, 131.

18 *CSPD* (1666–7), 413; (1668–9), 224, 441; (1670), 78–9, 117; Lett 13, 128, 136, 139; Baker MS xxv.

292–3, 326.

19 *CSPD* (1668–9), 630; (1671), 330; (1671–2), 48; Lett 13, 137, 158, 159, 171, 174; Baker MS xxv.293, 295, 309–310, 313, 327.

20 *CSPD* (1660–1), 188; (1661–2), 199. For Ferne, see *DNB*.

21 Bodleian Library Tanner MSS, 157, f.13.

or given without due respect to the proper forms. In 1623 Joseph Mede, a fellow of Christ's, recorded that 'Mr Lucy, but newly admitted bachelor in divinity was this week created doctor, as *filius nobilis*, with such distaste of the regents that they hummed when he came in'.<sup>22</sup> In March 1632 there was a considerable outcry over the alleged purchase of mandates, and so great was the ill-feeling generated by the affair that it seems to have led shortly afterwards to the suicide of the vice-chancellor, Henry Butts of Corpus Christi.<sup>23</sup>

In such situations the vice-chancellor had to bear pressure from both the crown, which might easily take offence if its will were not done, and the body of the university, hostile to infringements of its academic freedoms; it was this which worried Henry Ferne in 1661.<sup>24</sup> It was important to the university that the requisite academic exercises were performed and that fees were paid. Insistence on the former meant that intellectual standards were upheld, and the fees were an important source of revenue. Of the 141 degrees awarded by mandate in 1660, we know of 24 for which academic acts and exercises were waived, and only six where specific cautions were given for their performance, but it is likely that the remainder had to perform the exercises. In August 1663 the university's Chancellor, the earl of Manchester, insisted that if the king granted the petition of John Butcher, formerly of King's, for an M.B. by royal mandate, it should be with the proviso that exercises were performed and fees paid, and the provision duly appeared in the mandate.<sup>25</sup>

The university's main concern was with mandates for doctorates or bachelor's degrees in specialist subjects, like John Butcher's, for these were professional qualifications. The degree of master of arts, on the other hand, was frequently given as a purely honorary award, and often granted in large numbers

when important dignitaries visited the university, both to the dignitaries themselves and to members of their retinues.

The first grand visit of this kind during the reign was by the king's illegitimate son, the fourteen-year-old Duke of Monmouth, in March 1663. In view of the university's wish to receive Monmouth 'with particular ceremonie and respect', a wish which must have been expressed on cue from prompters at court, Charles authorised it to confer M.A. degrees upon his son and "such other persons as he shall desire to recommend".<sup>26</sup> The young duke arrived in Cambridge on 16 March, when he and 34 other gentlemen received degrees.<sup>27</sup> The event was a great success; Pepys noted that the university had shown Monmouth 'all the honour possible – with a comedy at Trinity College and banquet – and made him Maister in arts there. All which they say the King took very well'.<sup>28</sup>

The next such visit was by the prince of Tuscany in 1669. This was a private visit, and a particularly lavish reception would have been inappropriate, but Charles insisted on the prince being given all the respect due to his rank, and the university was ordered to hold a public degree ceremony at which all in his train who wished to receive honorary degrees might do so; the vice-chancellor was also permitted to nominate others.<sup>29</sup> In fact, the prince was received almost like an English monarch, so eager was the university to oblige the king, and a handful of his retinue received doctorates in law; thirty M.A. degrees were then conferred upon fellow-commoners of the university.<sup>30</sup>

A similar procedure was observed the following year, when the prince of Orange was entertained at Cambridge. The king had written to the university reminding it that he wished the prince to be received with all the appropriate honours, including a public creation of degrees upon members of his entou-

22 J. Heywood & T. Wright (eds.), *Cambridge University Transactions during the Puritan Controversies of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (London, 1854), ii.315.

23 W.G. Searle, *The History of the Queens' College of St Margaret and St Bernard in the University of Cambridge. 1446–1662* (Cambridge, 1867–71), 469.

24 CSPD (1661–2), 199; his continued concern was shown in a letter to the chancellor of York in January 1662, *ibid.*, 248.

25. *ibid.* (1663–4), 230, 254; Lett 13, 74.

26 Lett 13, 219; Baker MS xxv.289.

27 Cambridge University Archives, Grace Book H, 293.

28 *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, ed. R. Latham and W. Matthews (London, 1971), 99.

29. CSPD (1668–9), 296, 304.

30 *The Diary of Samuel Newton*, ed. J.E. Foster (Cambridge, 1890), 43–45; C.H. Cooper, *Annals of Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1842–1908), iii.534; Grace Book @, 11.

rage, and upon as many others as the vice-chancellor and the heads of houses wished to allow; a large number of degrees of different kinds were awarded at this occasion.<sup>31</sup> When Charles himself visited the university in September 1681 some sixty degrees were awarded to those nominated by him, and to others approved by the vice-chancellor.<sup>32</sup> But the royal order preparing the university for the visit of the Moroccan ambassador in March 1682, whilst granting the vice-chancellor his customary liberty to approve men for degrees in order that the ambassador could 'see the Solemnities usuall in that Our University', insisted that the degrees awarded on this occasion 'be honorary onely, and not conferred upon persons that may make advantage of them to the prejudice of those who by their industry and studies there do or may arrive to such Degrees in order to be qualified by them'.<sup>33</sup> The clause must have been included in response to university disquiet.

The other principal occasion when degrees could be similarly awarded in large numbers was the admission of a new chancellor of the university. Curiously, there is no indication of any such award after the Duke of Buckingham's election in 1671, but his two successors, the dukes of Monmouth (1674–82) and Albemarle (1682–9) took full advantage of the opportunity, for mandate degrees were, as the crown had discovered, both easy and cheap to give as rewards. The king's instructions regarding Monmouth's admission to his office, like those for his visit eleven years earlier, revealed the duke's high standing in Charles' eyes, calling for the admission to be 'attended with more respect and ceremony then hath been usually shewn to other persons on alike occasion'. Thirty-nine M.A. degrees were awarded shortly after the new chancellor's installation, and another 52 a few days later.<sup>34</sup>

But by the time of the Duke of Albemarle's installation in 1682, the university was showing resistance even to awards such as these. Albemarle was elected on 6 April, but he did not write to the university about degrees until 26 June, when he noted that he had 'for the

University's satisfaction bin as sparing, as possibly the merits of the persons who made their applications to me, would bear, rejecting even to my own Chaplains, and reserving only such, as I am perswaded, I could not well refuse, or they doe prejudice to the Faculty they receive'. He was as good as his word, for only 15 degrees were conferred as a result of his letter, and he further promised to protect the university from so many degree creations in future.<sup>35</sup>

When the university did object to the awarding of degrees by mandate, as in these examples, the objections were prompted by anxiety about the damage which the crown's large-scale generosity might do to the reputation of the university's degrees in general. Awards to deserving individuals were more acceptable, but there were few safeguards against the issuing of mandates for the undeserving. The crown was swayed by the recommendations of influential sponsors, or would recommend somebody for a degree without knowing the full details of the case. Even in the case of mandates for elections to fellowships, the crown often failed to do its homework; usually, there were no objections or difficulties, but if any did arise, it was for the college or university authorities to complain, and the crown would then reconsider in the light of the new information it received. Such a rough and ready mode of proceeding was bound at times to lead to confusion and put strain on the crown's relationship with the colleges.<sup>36</sup>

In the case of mandates for degrees, the individuals involved were rarely so devoid of merit that the university was forced to take a stand, and the question was not so critical as it was with college fellowships, but on one occasion in 1668 it had little choice: the crown recommended Robert Tatnall for the degree of doctor of divinity, apparently on the recommendation of the Earl of Manchester, without realising that Tatnall was a nonconformist minister and therefore barred from the universities under legislation introduced earlier in Charles' reign.<sup>37</sup> The university reacted

31 Grace Book @, 47–9; Lett 13, 221; Baker MS xxv.302; *CSPD* (1670), 544–5.

32 Grace Book @, 215–6; Lett 13, 223.

33 Lett 13, 224.

34 Lett 13, 222; Grace Book @, 101–2.

35 Lett 13, 254; Baker MS xxx.350; Grace Book \$\$?B, 217. The university had conferred a large number of

degrees at the recent visits of the king and the Moroccan ambassador.

36 See Twigg, 'University of Cambridge', 201, 207–8.

37 Lett 13, 210; Baker MS xxv. 292; *CSPD* (1670), 731. For the expulsion of non-conformists early in the reign, see Twigg, 'University of Cambridge', chapter VIII; Gascoigne, 'Holy Alliance', chapter 1.

swiftly, and in a letter on 15 July 1668 the crown responded not only by withdrawing its support for Tatnall, but also by recognising and attempting to soothe the university's more general displeasure against profligate granting of mandates without adequate safeguards.

At the beginning of the reign, the royal letter observed, 'there were many persons of eminency as well for their learning and standing in our University . . . as their sufferings for us and with us in the common calamities of the time', whom the crown 'thought fit as a special mark of our royal favour to confer degrees upon . . . without obliging them to those exercises which the statutes of our said university do require'. Henceforth, though, it conceded that any possessor of a royal mandate for a degree was to swear his allegiance to the Church of England, as was required of all candidates for degrees, and to 'pay such customary fees and duties as other candidates for their respective degrees usually do, and also perform such acts and exercises as by the statutes of . . . our university are enjoined, or else put in real and sufficient caution for the same . . . any command, authority or dispensation hereafter granted to the contrary notwithstanding'.<sup>38</sup>

It was, on paper, a gracious concession, an illustration of the crown's care for university rights and privileges, and it was accompanied by another letter, from Sir William Morice, secretary of state, which noted the king's pleasure that the university had demonstrated its loyalty to the church in opposing Tatnall's degree, and echoed the royal promise to be more sparing with mandate awards in future.<sup>39</sup> Yet, as the table shows, a larger number of mandates than usual was issued between 1668 and 1670, and in March 1669 a mandate for Thomas Williams, a royal physician, exempted him from the payment of fees and the performance of academic exercises, stating specifically that the letter of July 1668 was to be overlooked on this occasion.<sup>40</sup>

The crown clearly attached little weight to

the July 1668 concessions, and this led to some friction later in its relationship with the university, which took the concessions very seriously. In 1675 Edmund Boldero, master of Jesus, himself a recipient of a degree by royal mandate in 1660, referred in a letter to the king's anger that the university had recently refused some mandates, but defended the university's position on the grounds that it had 'a gracious liberty to refuse whatever letters should pretend to dispense with exercises or cautions, and they refused the longer lest this might be an ill example hereafter'.<sup>41</sup>

In October 1679 the crown was annoyed that 'several disputes have . . . arisen in . . . our university about conferring honorary degrees without time or exercise upon baronets and knights who were members of our said university', and insisted on its right to confer these degrees on such persons of quality where no 'just exceptions' could be made to the individuals concerned. The university was ordered to 'cause these our letters to be registered upon your register as our pleasure in this particular'.<sup>42</sup> The university's opposition to any large-scale awarding of degrees at the Duke of Albemarle's election as chancellor in 1682 also gave offence to the crown.<sup>43</sup>

But as Gilbert Burnet noted, 'the king's letters were scarce ever refused in conferring degrees . . . the Morocco ambassador's secretary, who was a mahometan, had that degree given him'.<sup>44</sup> In most cases a compromise was possible and an accommodation arrived at. The differences between the crown and the university were slight; the usefulness of the mandates, and the purposes for which they were employed, were never called into question. Under Charles' successor, his brother James II, the degree mandate was to be employed for more sinister ends as part of a campaign to allow Roman Catholics into the university, and as such it was to be fiercely resisted, but then there were more fundamental principles at stake.<sup>45</sup>

38 Lett 13, 237; Baker MS xxv.297; printed in *Statuta Academiae Cantabrigiensis* (Cambridge, 1785), 295; and in Cooper, *Annals*, iii.529-30.

39 Lett 13, 255; Baker MS xxv.297; *CSPD* (1670), 731.

40 Lett 13, 128; *CSPD* (1668-9), 224.

41 *CSPD* (1675-6), 351.

42 There was statutory provision for this. Lett 13, 240; Baker MS xxv.315; *Statuta Academiae Cantabri-*

*giensis*, 307 (and see *ibid.*, 343; Cooper, *Annals*, iii.582-3.

43 Lett 13, 226.

44 That was an honorary degree, of course; G. Burnet, *History of My Own Time*, ed. O. Airy (Oxford, 1838), 444.

45 See Twigg, 'University of Cambridge', 211-12.



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