WILKES AND LIBERTY

A Social Study of
1763 to 1774

BY

GEORGE RUDÉ

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CONTENTS

Introduction  xiii
I  London Background  1
II  'Wilkes and Liberty!'  17
III  The 'Massacre' of St. George’s Fields  37
IV  Wilkes v. Luttrell  57
V  The Middlesex Electors  74
VI  Industrial Unrest  90
VII  The Petitions of 1769  105
VIII  The Petitioners of 1769  135
IX  The City of London  149
X  Wilkes and his Supporters  172
Epilogue  191

APPENDICES

I  Eyewitnesses' Accounts of the Attack on Edward Russell's House in Southwark on the Night of 10–11 May 1768.  199
II  The Marquess of Rockingham and the Middlesex Petition of 29 April 1769  200
III  Industrial Unrest 1768–69: persons arrested and convicted  203
IV  Industrial Unrest, 1768–69: journeymen weavers' letters to Peter Auber, weaver of Spital Square, August 1769  205
V  Middlesex Electors, 1768–69: voting and value of properties  206
CONTENTS

vi Middlesex Electors, 1768–69: voting record of M.P.'s and clergy 208

vii Petitions of 1769: signatures and signatories 211

viii London Livery Companies: membership, livery fines, support for Wilkes in 1768 212

ix Wilkes Supporters on the Court of Common Council, 1768–71 214

x City of London Aldermen, 1768–74 217

xi Persons suspected, arrested, and convicted in Wilkite disturbances in London, 1763–74 220

Bibliography and Abbreviations 224

Index 229
PREFACE

The present volume owes a great deal to the patience, forbearance and generous help afforded me over a number of years by archivists, librarians and assistants in the British Museum, the Public Record Office, the Guildhall Library, the Corporation of London, Middlesex and Surrey Record Offices, and a number of other libraries and archives in London, the Home Counties, the north and the west country. Among them, I am indebted, above all, to Miss E. D. Mercer, F.S.A., County Archivist of Middlesex, and to Dr. A. E. J. Hollaender, F.S.A., Archivist at the Guildhall Library; in fact, the researcher could not hope to find a more faithful friend and a wiser counsellor than I have found in Dr. Hollaender in the course of my various incursions into London’s eighteenth-century history in recent years.

Among other scholars whose advice I have sought, I should like to acknowledge a particular debt to Mr. Ian Christie of University College, London, and to Professor Thomas Copeland and Dr. John Woods for helping me to gain such easy and agreeable access to the Wentworth Woodhouse MSS. in the Sheffield Central Library. In this respect, my thanks are due to Earl Fitzwilliam and the Trustees of the Wentworth Woodhouse Settled Estates for allowing me to publish certain extracts from the Burke and Rockingham MSS. in that collection. I also wish to thank the Librarian of the University of Edinburgh Library for permission to refer to Dr. D. G. D. Isac’s unpublished Ph.D. thesis, ‘A Study of Popular Disturbance in Britain, 1714-1754’, in chapter 1, and the Editor of The English Historical Review for allowing me to reproduce in chapter v the substance of my article of October 1960, entitled ‘The Middlesex Electors of 1768-1769’.

Adelaide,
May 17th, 1961. G. R.
THE CROWD IN HISTORY

A Study of Popular Disturbances in France and England 1730–1848

GEORGE RUDÉ
CONTENTS

Illustrations and Maps, ix

Introduction. The Subject and Its Problems, 3

Part One. The Crowd in Action

One. The French Rural Riot of the Eighteenth Century, 19
Two. The English Country Riot of the Eighteenth Century, 38
Three. The City Riot of the Eighteenth Century, 47
Four. Labor Disputes in Eighteenth-Century England, 66
Five. Luddism, 79
Six. The French Revolution: (1) The Political Riot, 93
Seven. The French Revolution: (2) The Food Riot, 108
Eight. The French Revolution: (3) The Labor Dispute, 123
Nine. "Church and King" Riots, 135
Ten. "Captain Swing" and "Rebecca's Daughters", 149
Eleven. The French Revolution of 1848, 164
Twelve. Chartism, 179

Part Two. The Pre-industrial Crowd

Thirteen. Faces in the Crowd, 195
Fourteen. Motives and Beliefs, 214
Fifteen. The Pattern of Disturbance and the Behavior of Crowds, 237
Sixteen. The Success and Failure of the Crowd, 259

BIBLIOGRAPHY, 270
INDEX, 275
THE CROWD
IN THE FRENCH
REVOLUTION

BY
GEORGE RUDÉ

OXFORD
AT THE CLARENDON PRESS
PREFACE

This book is the outcome of frequent visits to Paris and to Parisian archives and libraries during the past nine years. I should like, therefore, to express my warmest appreciation to the archivists and staff of the Archives Nationales, Archives de la Préfecture de Police, the departmental archives of the Seine, Seine-et-Oise, and Seine-et-Marne, and of the Bibliothèque Nationale and Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris for their never-failing co-operation, sympathetic interest, good humour, and goodwill.

More particularly my thanks are due to my friends and collaborators, Richard Cobb and Albert Sobouin, who have always been lavish with ideas, advice, and information and generous in putting at my disposal the fruits of their own researches. Our collaboration has, indeed, been so close in recent years that it is difficult to determine precisely, in the present instance, where their particular contribution ends and my own begins. In a real sense, therefore, this book is an expression of collective, rather than of purely individual, enterprise. And by no means least has been the contribution made to it by Professor Georges Lefebvre, whose example, wise counsel, and friendly encouragement have placed me, as countless other students of the French Revolution, deeply in his debt.

I also wish to thank Professor Alfred Cobban for his help and guidance over a number of years, and Mr. Alun Davies for much helpful advice and for sharing with me the ungrateful task of proof-reading. And finally, my special gratitude is due to my wife, whose patience, understanding, and concern for my well-being have made the writing of this book a pleasure rather than a burden.

G. R.

15 June 1958
CONTENTS

PART I

Introduction

I. INTRODUCTION
II. PARIS ON THE EVE OF THE REVOLUTION

PART II

The Revolutionary Crowd in Action

III. PRELUDE TO REVOLUTION
IV. JULY 1789
V. THE MARCH TO VERSAILLES
VI. THE 'MASSACRE' OF THE CHAMP DE MARS
VII. THE FALL OF THE MONARCHY
VIII. THE TRIUMPH OF THE MOUNTAIN
IX. THERMIDOR
X. GERMINAL-PRAIRIAL
XI. VENDÉMIAIRE

PART III

The Anatomy of the Revolutionary Crowd

XII. THE COMPOSITION OF REVOLUTIONARY CROWDS, 1787–95
XIII. THE MOTIVES OF REVOLUTIONARY CROWDS
XIV. THE GENERATION OF REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITY
XV. THE 'REVOLUTIONARY CROWD' IN HISTORY
# CONTENTS

**APPENDIXES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendix</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Paris Sections of 1790–5</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>The Population of the Paris Sections in 1791–5</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Paris Sections and Insurgents of 1787–95</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>Paris Trades and Insurgents of 1787–95</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Parisian Insurgents and Rioters of 1775–95</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>The Revolutionary Calendar</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>Prices and Wages in Paris 1789–93</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**GLOSSARY**

253

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

258

**INDEX**

261

**MAP OF REVOLUTIONARY PARIS**

*at end*
REVOLUTIONARY
EUROPE
1783-1815

GEORGE RUĐE

COLLINS
ST JAMES'S PLACE
LONDON
# CONTENTS

**PART ONE: EUROPE ON THE EVE OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>The Social Pattern</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>Governments and the Conflicts within States</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii</td>
<td>The Conflicts between States</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PART TWO: THE FRENCH REVOLUTION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>iv</td>
<td>Why was there a Revolution in France?</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v</td>
<td>1789</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi</td>
<td>The Reconstruction of France</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vii</td>
<td>The Struggle for Power</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viii</td>
<td>Robespierre</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ix</td>
<td>The Bourgeois Republic</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PART THREE: REVOLUTIONARY EUROPE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>Europe and the French Revolution</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xi</td>
<td>Revolutionary War</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PART FOUR: THE NAPOLEONIC ERA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>xii</td>
<td>Napoleon and France</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xiii</td>
<td>The Napoleonic Empire</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xiv</td>
<td>The Fall of Napoleon</td>
<td>264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xv</td>
<td>Perspectives</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MAPS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maps</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FURTHER READING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Further Reading</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**GLOSSARY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Glossary</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**INDEX**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preface

This book attempts to present a picture of France and Europe before, during and immediately after the French Revolution. The literature in this field is immense and is rapidly becoming more so. During the past fifteen months, at least half-a-dozen major studies relating to the Revolution, in both its French and European contexts, have been published in France, the United States and England; and no doubt several more are on the stocks. Which is merely another way of saying that the Revolution remains an ever-open field of enquiry, and a short book like this can hope to do little more than present its many unsolved problems to wider groups of readers and whet their appetites for more discussion.

Of these problems, none has perhaps, in recent years, been so warmly debated as the significance of the French Revolution in its European (or world) context. How far was the revolution in Europe a projection of the French, and how far was it the product of its own internal development? It is a knotty question that allows of varying interpretations. It is one, however, that has been sharply posed only in the last ten years, and here, at least, the literature is still comparatively meagre. All the more credit is, therefore, due to Professor Palmer (late of Princeton) and Professor Godechot of Toulouse for opening up the question; and even those of us who cannot accept their view of a "Western" or "Atlantic" Revolution will applaud their pioneering efforts.

In writing a volume of this kind it is impossible to pay due regard to all who, in one form or another, have contributed to its making. Like many others working in this field, I should like to pick out for special mention the name of the late Georges Lefebvre, who has not only inspired all who have attempted to treat the Revolution "from below" but whose works include the best general comprehensive treatment of
both the French Revolution and Napoleon. To him, more than to any other, all recent studies on the Revolution, the Consulate and Empire and their repercussions across France's borders owe a debt. In addition, I wish to thank Mr. Richard Ollard of William Collins for his patience, good humour and vigilance in steering my manuscript towards the press; and Mr. William A. Cowan, Librarian of the Barr Smith Library, University of Adelaide, for consenting to read the proofs. Finally, my thanks are due to the University of Adelaide and, in particular, to my colleague, Professor Hugh Stretton, for making it possible for teaching historians to write books.

Adelaide,
1 October 1963

GEORGE RUDÉ