BOLINGBROKE

AND HIS TIMES

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Henry St. John, First Viscount Bolingbroke.

From a Mezzotint by White, after a painting by Murray.

(1714)

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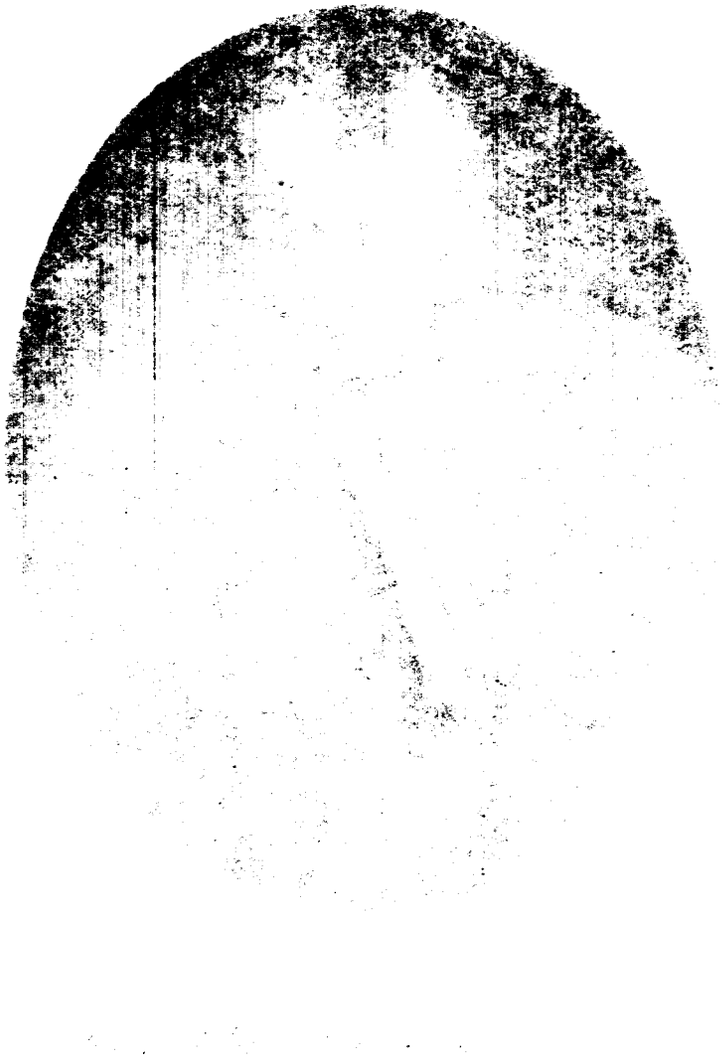

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AND HIS TIMES

BY

WALTER SICHEL
LATE EXHIBITIONER OF BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD

VIII - 2855

London
JAMES NISBET & CO., LIMITED
21 BERNERS STREET
1901

PERIOD I

THE REIGN OF QUEEN ANNE

"*And hew the block off and get out the man.*"—POPE, "Dunciad."

"*To Friendship and Liberty.*"—BOLINGBROKE'S TOAST.

"*For charity and justice are due to the dead as well as to the living.*"—BOLINGBROKE, PHILOSOPHICAL WORKS: Essay 4.

"*Whether the piece be of three or five acts, the part may be long: and he who sustains it through the whole, may be said to die in the fulness of years, whilst he who declines it sooner, may be said not to live out half his days.*"—BOLINGBROKE, "On the Spirit of Patriotism."

"*Ne virtutes sileantur.*"—TACITUS.

Printed by BALLANTYNE, HANSON & CO.
At the Ballantyne Press

MEMORIÆ

PARENTUM OPTIMORUM

CARISSIMÆ.

HAS EHEU! TARDAS

PRIMITIAS

FILIUS REVERENTER DEDICAT

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PREFACE

THE age of Anne and the commanding figure of Bolingbroke will always fascinate.

Without derogating from my predecessors, to some of whom I am indebted, I may say that the first has not been exhausted, nor the second as yet understood.

This is an attempt to present from original sources, and with the fresh materials recently to hand, some adequate portrait of a great genius and of the crowded background in which he moved.

Much is here exhibited for the first time. Among other matters, St. John's early days, his first wife's personality, his conduct preceding his flight, the interpretation and application of his many political works, the true state of parties, the full Guiscard episode, the plot of Eugene, the long labyrinth of the Utrecht negotiations, Bothmar's influence, the death-scene of Queen Anne, the parliamentary debates, and the real relations, political and social, of many prominent but unexplored figures.

Bolingbroke's life necessitates division. There are two persons and two periods.

This volume embraces his whole public career and the complete reign of Queen Anne. In another I hope to delineate Bolingbroke, out of place but not out of power, in a new world of leaders and events; and to show the debt of Burke and Gibbon, as well as of Pope and Voltaire, to his thoughts, words, and style.

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