

*An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times
and Other Writings*

THE THOMAS HOLLIS LIBRARY
David Womersley, General Editor

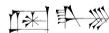


*An Estimate of the
Manners and Principles
of the Times
and Other Writings*

John Brown



Edited and with an Introduction
by David Womersley



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Introduction, editorial additions, and index

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THE THOMAS HOLLIS LIBRARY



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eighteenth century, or available only in very expensive and scarce editions. The highest standards of scholarship and production ensure that these classic texts can be as salutary and influential today as they were two hundred and fifty years ago.

David Womersley

INTRODUCTION



John Brown was born at Rothbury in Northumberland on the auspiciously Whiggish day of 5 November, 1715.¹ His father was a clergyman, initially in Northumberland but latterly at Wigton in Cumberland. Brown attended the local grammar school at Wigton before progressing to St. John's College, Cambridge as a sizar on 8 May 1732. He graduated from Cambridge in 1735 with high honors, and then followed his father into the Church of England, for a number of years quietly occupying minor clerical posts associated with the cathedral of Carlisle.

During the Jacobite rebellion of 1745 Brown saw action during the siege of Carlisle, where according to Kippis he behaved "with great intrepidity."² When the Jacobites had been defeated Brown preached two sermons in the cathedral explaining "the mutual connection between

1. For the fullest extant account of Brown's life, see Roberts, *Imaginative Feeling*, pp. 3–83. The article by Andrew Kippis in *Biographia Britannica* (1780), vol. II, pp. 653–74 nevertheless has enduring points of interest. James Crimmin's article in the *ODNB* adds useful detail. Both the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot in 1605 and the landing of William of Orange at Torbay in 1688 were commemorated on 5 November.

2. Kippis, p. 653. For Brown's own ebullient account of his duties and behavior during the siege of Carlisle by the Jacobite army, see his letter to William Gilpin of 5 January 1746 (Bodl. MS Eng. Misc. c. 389, fols. 85^{r-v}). Brown's conduct in this emergency would have appealed to Thomas Hollis: cf. Blackburne, *Memoirs*, vol. I, p. 6.

religious truth and civil freedom; and between superstition, tyranny, irreligion, and licentiousness.”³ These Whiggish disquisitions attracted the attention of the bishop of Carlisle, Richard Osbaldeston, who happened also to be a graduate of St. John’s, and who was himself a zealous Whig.⁴ Brown quickly received preferment, being appointed one of Osbaldeston’s chaplains and receiving from the Dean and Chapter of Carlisle the living of Morland, in Westmorland. Nevertheless, Brown’s personal faith may have been of a heterodox, Arian or Socinian, cast; he was censured by the Dean of Carlisle for omitting the Athanasian creed from a service.⁵

Brown’s ambitions were not confined to clerical advancement. In 1745 he had published a verse tribute to the recently deceased Alexander Pope, *An Essay on Satire: Occasion’d by the Death of Mr. Pope*. This effort had caught the attention of William Warburton, Pope’s friend and literary executor, who did not hesitate to pronounce it “a masterpiece.”⁶ So began an association which Thomas Hollis would identify as the tragic hinge of Brown’s existence.⁷ Warburton described the earliest stages of his self-appointed role as impresario to Brown’s literary career in a letter of 30 January 1750 to Richard Hurd:

Mr. Browne has fine parts: he has a genius for poetry, and has acquired a force of versification very uncommon. Poor Mr. Pope had a

3. Kippis, pp. 653–54. On 27 October 1746 he offered these to Robert Dodsley, the publisher, remarking that “I know it hath been objected to me, that I should publish Verses, rather than things that belong to my own Profession” (Bodl. MS Toynbee d. 19, fol. 16^f).

4. Richard Osbaldeston (1691–1764); clergyman in the Church of England: matr. St. John’s College, Cambridge, 2 June 1707; BA, 1711; MA, 1714; DD, 1726; chaplain to George I and later George II, 23 February 1725; bishop of Carlisle, 4 October 1747; bishop of London, 1762; d. 15 May 1764.

5. Kippis insists however that the “omission . . . did not proceed from any scruples upon the subject [and] was merely accidental” (Kippis, p. 654). For a different view, see Roberts, *Imaginative Feeling*, p. 25.

6. William Warburton (1698–1779), bishop of Gloucester; theological polemicist and man of letters. For his response to *An Essay on Satire*, see his letter to Brown of 24 December 1746 (Bodl. MS Eng. Misc. c. 390, fol. 398^f).

7. For Hollis’s view of Warburton’s role in Brown’s life, see Appendix A below, pp. 575–80. Once the rupture with Warburton had occurred, Brown would deny that he had ever been “submissive” to him (Brown, *Letter*, p. 5).

little before his death planned out an epic poem, which he began to be very intent upon. The subject was Brute. I gave this plan to Mr. Browne. He has wrote the first book, and in a surprising way, though an unfinished essay. I told him this was to be the work of years, and mature age, if ever it was done: that, in the mean time, he should think of something in prose that might be useful to his character in his own profession. I recommended to him a thing I once thought of myself. It had been recommended to me by Mr. Pope. An examination of all Lord Shaftesbury says against Religion. Mr. Pope told me, that, to his knowledge, the *Characteristics* had done more harm to Revealed Religion in England than all the works of Infidelity put together. Mr. Browne is now busy upon this work.⁸

An Essay on Satire had included criticism of the doctrine expressed in Shaftesbury's *Characteristicks*, that ridicule should be the test of truth.⁹ Encouraged and guided by Warburton's hints, Brown decided to amplify this criticism, and to reinforce it with two further essays: one attacking Shaftesbury's concept of virtue, and the other his stance towards Christianity. It seems that Warburton and Charles Yorke exerted a powerful influence over the form of the publication, as Warburton revealed to Richard Hurd in late December 1750:

Mr. Browne is printing his remarks on the *Characteristics*. It will be much better than you could conceive from the specimen you saw of it. Mr. Yorke and I advised him to give it a different form. We said, that if we were to answer a grave, formal, methodical work, we should choose to do it in the loose way of dialogue and raillery: as, on the other hand, if we wrote against a rambling *discourse of wit and humour*, the best way of exposing it would be by logical argumentation. The truth is (*inter nos*) his talents do not seem so much to lie towards fine

8. [Warburton], *Letters*, p. 36. On Pope's project of writing an epic poem on the subject of Brutus, the mythical founder of Britain, see Miriam Leranbaum, *Alexander Pope's "Opus Magnum," 1729–1744* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), pp. 155–74.

9. Brown, *Satire*, pp. 15–16. It had particularly caught the eye of Warburton: "The long note on Ridicule is admirable," he wrote to Brown on Christmas Eve 1746 (Bodl. MS Eng. Misc. c. 390, fol. 398^v).

and easy raillery, as to a vivacity, an elegance, and a correctness of observation in the reasoning way.¹⁰

However, it may be that Warburton influenced the content, as well as the mode, of these essays. The second, in which Brown deploys the concept of utility to challenge Shaftesbury's "moral sense" philosophy, may be informed by Warburton's wrestlings with Hume's moral philosophy, as well as by the work of the clergyman and moral philosopher John Gay, whom Brown could have met in Cambridge, and whose prefatory essay to his 1731 translation of William King's *An Essay on the Origin of Evil* is an important early statement of a utilitarian approach to morals.¹¹ In the third, when Brown chides Shaftesbury's freethinking treatment of Christianity it is easy to detect the omnivorous but undigested historical and textual scholarship of the author of *The Divine Legation of Moses*.

The *Essays on the Characteristics of the Earl of Shaftesbury* were published in 1751, and Kippis records that they received "a high degree of applause," while also calling into the field some adversaries who took issue with Brown and defended Shaftesbury.¹² The *Essays* had to wait until 1838, however, to receive their most precious accolade, from the hand of J. S. Mill in his essay on "Bentham": "We never saw an abler defense of the doctrine of utility than in a book written in refutation of Shaftesbury, and now little read—Brown's 'Essays on the Characteristics'; . . ." ¹³ Certainly Brown's arguments that "the great End of public Happiness" is the criterion of moral rectitude, that "whatever tends to the Good of all, is by the

10. [Warburton], *Letters*, p. 71. "Mr. Yorke" is probably Charles Yorke (1722–1770), lawyer and briefly lord chancellor; cf. [Warburton], *Letters*, p. 118. Charles was brother of Philip Yorke (1720–1790), later Lord Royston and second earl of Hardwicke, and Brown's patron at Great Horkesley; politician and writer. Note Brown's praise of their father, Philip Yorke (1690–1764), first earl of Hardwicke, in the *Estimate* (below, p. 210 and n. 90).

11. See, e.g., [Warburton], *Letters*, p. 14. John Gay (1699–1745); "Preliminary Dissertation Concerning the Fundamental Principle of Virtue or Morality," in William King, *An Essay on the Origin of Evil* (1731), pp. xi–xxxiii. Cf. Crimmins, *Utilitarianism*, p. 71.

12. Kippis, p. 655.

13. *Mill on Bentham and Coleridge*, introduction by F. R. Leavis (London: Chatto and Windus, 1950), p. 54.

consent of all, denominated *Virtue*,” and that consequently virtue can be defined as “the voluntary Production of the greatest public Happiness,” rather than as merely an affective impulse directed in the first instance towards only private and ineffable satisfactions, are the most intellectually powerful parts of the *Essays*.¹⁴

Encouraged by this success, Brown slipped away from Warburton’s supervision and went off hunting in another part of the literary wood. As early as 1744 he had confessed to William Gilpin that he nursed ambitions to become a “Tragick Poet,” ambitions he had pursued by beginning to compose a drama on the death of Socrates.¹⁵ Two months later he acknowledged that he had been discouraged by the difficulty of this particular subject, but nevertheless declared that he was “determined to try my Strength & Fortune in this dangerous Warfare” of writing for the stage.¹⁶ Emboldened by the reception of the *Essays*, in the mid-1750s Brown turned again to the theater. His tragedy *Barbarossa* was given its first performance at Drury Lane on 17 December 1754, with Garrick (to whom Brown had been recommended by Warburton)¹⁷ in the part of Achmet. The plot takes great freedoms with the actual life of the Barbary pirate, Khayr ad-Din or Redbeard (*d.* 1546), on which it is nominally based.¹⁸ As with *Athelstan*, the less successful tragedy very loosely located in Saxon history, which was premiered at Covent Garden a little over

14. Below, pp. 105, 107, and 115.

15. Brown to Gilpin, 20 August 1744 (Bodl. MS Eng. Misc. c. 389, fol. 70^{r-v}). For Brown’s enthusiastic account of the première of Hoadly’s *The Suspicious Husband* in 1747, see Bodl. MS Eng. Misc. c. 389, fol. 87^r.

16. Brown to Gilpin, 8 October 1744 (Bodl. MS Eng. Misc. c. 389, fol. 71^r).

17. Garrick, *Correspondence*, vol. I, p. 65. For Warburton’s warm feelings for Brown at the outset of their relationship, see *ibid.*, p. 77: “I love and esteem Dr. Brown: he vexed me; but I find he must be treated like a mistress as well as a friend

‘Be to his faults a little blind,’

and I make no doubt of his always approving himself a man of honour and virtue, and a warm and grateful friend.”

18. For Brown’s own account of the historical materials on which he drew for his tragedy, see his puffing “tease” ahead of the premiere, *An Account of Barbarossa* (London, 1755).

a year later on 27 February 1756, in these plays Brown drapes would-be Shakespearean language over a dramatic framework adopted from the heroic drama and tragedy of the previous century. The plots of *Barbarossa* and *Athelstan* are little more than a series of contrivances to bring about situations in which inward passion conflicts as poignantly as possible with outward duty. In *Barbarossa*, however, Brown manufactured an outcome in which erotic passion and public duty are eventually reconciled, or at least aligned. The rightful heir to the throne, Selim, survives Barbarossa's malice, and marries the usurper's daughter, Irene, with whom he has been from the first in love. The play ends on a note of providential reassurance:

Now let us thank th'eternal Pow'r: convinc'd,
That Heav'n but tries our Virtue by Affliction:
That oft the Cloud which wraps the present Hour,
Serves but to brighten all our future Days!¹⁹

But in *Athelstan* Brown experimented with a more complicated final chord. The heroine, Thyra, is unluckily killed by her long-lost father, Athelstan, who then himself expires over the corpse of his daughter, in an obvious *rifacimento* of the final scene of *King Lear*. The concluding lines of the play attempt to enforce the severe moral that such private calamities are only to be expected when men neglect their public duty, for in the play's opening scenes Athelstan has been a Saxon Coriolanus, and has aided an invading Danish army:

Yet may the Woes
Which Heav'n's avenging Hand hath heap'd upon thee
Recorded stand, a Monument of Justice!
That when in future Times a King shall reign,
Brave, good, and just, the Father of his People,
Th' abhorr'd Example may avert those Ills
Thy traitrous Arm hath wrought—That black Rebellion
May never rear her Standard; nor unsheath
Her guilty Sword, to aid the fell Invader!
That Faction's Sons in thee their Fate may read;

19. Brown, *Barbarossa*, p. 80.

That by the Father's Crime the Child shall bleed,
And private Woe to publick Guilt succeed.²⁰

A number of influences are detectable here, some biographical, others intellectual. Behind Brown's strictures on rebellion surely lie the events of 1745, where (as we have seen) he observed at first-hand the turmoil brought about when an invader is assisted by guilty swords. But the final insistence that private woe is the child of public guilt evokes and inverts the notorious and paradoxical thesis of Mandeville's *Fable of the Bees*: "Private Vices, Publick Benefits." Mandeville had been one of Brown's targets in *Essays on the Characteristics*, and in his next publication he would once more attempt to discredit Mandeville's mischievous suggestion that modern commercial societies construct passages between the private and public realms in ways that are far from straightforward.

This next publication was the extraordinary *succès fou* of Brown's career, *An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times*, first published in 1757. Its impact was well described by Kippis:

The reception which this work met with from the public was highly flattering to the vanity of the writer, seven editions of it having been printed in little more than a year. It was, indeed, almost universally read, and made an uncommon impression on the minds of great numbers of persons. To this, besides its own merit, it was, in part, indebted to its being well-timed. It came out when the minds of the people had been extremely depressed by some unprosperous events; and when, consequently, they were the more ready to listen to the melancholy, and, perhaps, too just representation that was given of the manners and principles of the nation.²¹

The unprosperous events to which Kippis alludes were the series of British military and naval reverses which marked the opening of the Seven Years' War, particularly the loss of Minorca to the French. In the words of Macaulay: "The Duke of Richelieu, an old fop who had passed his

20. Brown, *Athelstan*, p. 77.

21. Kippis, p. 656.

life from sixteen to sixty in seducing women for whom he cared not one straw, landed on that island, and succeeded in reducing it.”²² The result was public uproar at an insult to national dignity—uproar which it is entirely possible that Brown, whose emotions seem always to have lain close to the surface, sincerely shared. On 5 January 1746, in the aftermath of the Jacobite invasion of the previous year, he had expostulated to William Gilpin on the national shame of allowing a hostile army to penetrate as far south as Derby: “I am almost mad with Rage and Indignation when I consider the present State of our Country.”²³

In the “Prologue” to *Athelstan* of the previous year Brown had warned his countrymen of the peril of their position, placed as they were on the threshold of a global conflict with France:

*To warn the Sons of Freedom to be wise,
Lo, Britain's guardian Genius quits the Skies.
With Pity, Heav'n hath seen thro' many an Age,
The bold Invader lur'd by Faction's Rage;
Seen the dark Workings of Rebellion's Train,
While Patriots plann'd, and Heroes bled in vain.
Behold, your Country's faithless Foe, once more
With threatening Squadrons crown yon hostile Shore.
Behold Oppression's bloody Flag unfurl'd:
See Bolts prepar'd, to chain the Western World.
Rise, Britons, rise! to Heav'n and Virtue true:
Expiring Liberty looks up to You!
Pour on the common Foe your Rage combin'd,
And be the Friends of Freedom and Mankind!*²⁴

But this warning delivered from the stage had been unavailing. And so, in the midst of the tempest of reproach and despondency which was stirred up by early British setbacks in the war, Brown published his jeremiad on the causes of the miserable condition and parlous prospects of the British nation.

22. Macaulay, *Essays*, vol. II, p. 34.

23. Bodl. MS Eng. Misc. c. 389, fol. 85^v.

24. Brown, *Athelstan*, sig. A5^r.

Kippis gives an accurate summary of Brown's "chief design" in the *Estimate*, which was "to shew that a vain, luxurious, and selfish effeminacy, in the higher ranks of life, marked the character of the age; and to point out the effects and sources of this effeminacy."²⁵ It is a project with evident roots in the *Essays* of six years earlier, for in Section X of the second essay Brown had read the runes of modern British corruption in very much the language to which he would return in the *Estimate*:

. . . no People ever fell a Sacrifice to themselves, till lulled and infatuated by their own Passions. *Blind Security* is an essential Characteristic of a People devoted to Destruction. . . . One Age is *falsely* polite, *irreligious*, and *vile*; the next is sunk in *Servitude* and *Wretchedness*. . . . Here and there a happy Nation *emerges*; breathes for a while in the enlightened Region of KNOWLEDGE, RELIGION, VIRTUE, FREEDOM: Till in their appointed Time, IRRELIGION and LICENTIOUSNESS appear; *mine* the Foundations of the *Fabric*, and sink it in the general Abyss of IGNORANCE and OPPRESSION.²⁶

Where the *Estimate* moves beyond the *Essays*, however, is in the light it shines on Brown's intellectual life. The two thinkers to whom Brown pays most lavish tribute in the *Estimate* are Montesquieu and Machiavelli.²⁷ To both writers it is possible that Brown had been directed by Warburton, who nursed perhaps surprising enthusiasms for the authors

25. Kippis, p. 656. This would have chimed with the diagnosis of Thomas Hollis, who on 9 December 1757 following the unsuccessful British assault on Rochfort wrote to a friend:

It is no wonder if the British nation is hated in France; but it is of late only that we are despised thus. This opinion of us, however, is just; for what can be produced by us that is truly honourable and great, or even considerably successful, when all appearances of private or public virtue are hated, ridiculed, and crushed, and when SELFISM, sterile, exterminating SELFISM, has got possession every where, and reigns despotic over every rank and order.

(Blackburne, *Memoirs*, vol. I, p. 66; see also the letter of 7 May 1755 to L'Anglois quoted on p. 207.)

26. See below, pp. 157–58.

27. For Brown's comparison of "these two Authors [who] possess the highest Station in the political Scale," see volume II of the *Estimate* (below, p. 429).

of the *Esprit des Loix* and *Il Principe*.²⁸ Be that as it may, we can see that the content of Brown's critique of Hanoverian Britain has affinities with the republican ideology of Machiavelli's *Discorsi*. The *Estimate* decanted that political content into an essay where the focus on the "Manners and Principles of the Times" betrays a slightly elementary understanding of Montesquieu's concept of "esprit." Intellectually speaking, the result is more an amalgam than an alloy. Nevertheless, Brown's gloomy analysis hit the mood of the time, even if, in the tumult of praise by which the *Estimate* was at first surrounded, some voices were raised in criticism of the preening self-importance with which the author delivered his salutary medicines.²⁹ William Cowper, in his *Table Talk* (1782), tried to balance the transience of the *Estimate*'s popularity with an acknowledgement of the probability of its analysis:

A. Th' inestimable estimate of Brown,
 Rose like a paper-kite, and charm'd the town;
 But measures plann'd and executed well,
 Shifted the wind that rais'd it, and it fell.
 He trod the very self-same ground you tread,
 And victory refused all he said.

B. And yet his judgment was not fram'd amiss,
 Its error, if it err'd, was merely this—
 He thought the dying hour already come,
 And a complete recov'ry struck him dumb.

28. [Warburton], *Letters*, p. 83. Still more surprising, perhaps, is the fact that Montesquieu admired Warburton: see the transcription of Montesquieu's letter to Charles Yorke of 6 June 1763 ([Warburton], *Letters*, p. 507). Warburton had sent a parcel of his books to Montesquieu in 1754 (Warburton, *Works*, vol. VII, p. 554). For the limits of Warburton's admiration of Montesquieu, see Warburton, *Alliance*, p. 285, n. d. In *The Divine Legation of Moses* Warburton praised Machiavelli as, with Aristotle, one of the "two great masters in politics" (Warburton, *Works*, vol. I, p. 408).

29. Cf. "his merit as a writer is very considerable, and would be still more so, did not he himself appear so extremely conscious of it"; "a certain air of arrogance and superiority prevails through the whole" (Kippis, p. 657, n. E).

But that effeminacy, folly, lust,
 Enervate and enfeeble, and needs must,
 And that a nation shamefully debas'd,
 Will be despis'd and traml'd on at last,
 Unless sweet penitence her pow'rs renew,
 Is truth, if history itself be true.³⁰

Cowper's lines reveal how neatly the leading themes of Brown's analysis were matched to widely held assumptions of the time about how and why nations rose and declined.

Perhaps predictably, given that he had not himself supplied the hint for this particular publication, Warburton was dismissive of this latest effort by his sometime *protégé*. He had deplored Brown's theatrical adventures, sometimes referring to him with mocking condescension as the "maker of Athelstan."³¹ From Warburton's point of view the *Estimate* must have looked like another descent from the heights (such as they are) of polemical theology to the boggy morass of vulgar opinion-mongering. On 19 September 1757 he wrote to Hurd from Weymouth, where he had been joined by Brown:

Browne is here; I think rather perter than ordinary, but no wiser. You cannot imagine the tenderness they all have of his tender places: and with how unfeeling a hand I probe them.—It seems he said something to them of *another Estimate*. My wife told him, he must take care of carrying the joke too far. To me he has mentioned nothing of it, nor have I given him an opportunity.³²

30. Cowper, *Poems*, vol. I, pp. 251–52, ll. 384–99.

31. [Warburton], *Letters*, p. 244. "Browne has told me the *grand secret*; and I wish it had been a secret still to me, when it was none to every body else. I am grieved that either these *unrewarding times*, or his *love of poetry*, or his *love of money*, should have made him overlook the duty of a Clergyman in these times, and the dignity of a Clergyman in all times, to make connexions with Players" (*ibid.*, p. 182). A "*grand secret*," because Brown did not publicly acknowledge his authorship of either *Barbarossa* or *Athelstan*.

32. [Warburton], *Letters*, pp. 256–57. Note also the letter to Dodsley of 28 March 1758 from "C. H. H." which advises the publisher to dissuade Brown from "his second Volume" (Bodl. MS Toynbee d. 19, fol. 19^r).

But the stupendous sales of the *Estimate* had armored Brown against both the witticisms of Mrs. Warburton and the aloofness of her husband.³³ He went on to publish a second volume, and also an *Explanatory Defence* in which he engaged, to some modest extent, with his critics.

From his youth Brown's mind had given a warm welcome to fantasies of preferment. When the Duke of Cumberland had entered Carlisle on his way to harry the Jacobite rebels in their Highland glens, Brown had presented him with a plan of Carlisle during the siege. It had been graciously received, whereupon he wrote excitedly to William Gilpin confessing that "the Night after I dreamt I was in Lawn sleeves."³⁴ In the *Estimate* Brown had taken upon himself the role of "Preacher to the Nation," a role he seems to have coveted since at least 1746 when he had attempted to launch a political periodical modeled on Addison's *Freeholder*.³⁵ Furthermore, in the *Estimate* he had been careful to pay lavish compliments to those possible patrons whose stars were in the ascendant, particularly William Pitt, who was readily recognizable as the "GREAT MINISTER" upon whom in his final page Brown calls to save the nation.³⁶ What more did a man have to do to become a bishop? However, no overtures were made. As Kippis ruefully noted, "While Dr. Brown was thus distinguishing himself as a political writer, he seems to have gained no ground in the way of preferment."³⁷

The only tangible benefit to flow from the *Estimate* came when Brown's old patron, Bishop Osbaldeston, offered him the living of St. Nicholas,

33. Brown announced his eventual rupture with Warburton—"all friendship and correspondence are at an end"—in a letter to Garrick of 19 January 1766 (Garrick, *Correspondence*, vol. I, p. 220).

34. Letter to William Gilpin of 5 January 1746; Bodl. MS Eng. Misc. c. 389, fol. 85^v.

35. See Brown's defense of his assumption of this role in the *Explanatory Defence* and vol. II of the *Estimate* (below, pp. 353–55 and pp. 465–68). The periodical was to be called *The Protestant Freeholder* and it was intended to counter "the present Attempts" against the "civil and religious Constitution" of the country; see the description and specimen essay in the letter to William Gilpin of 2 October 1745 (Bodl. MS Eng. Misc. c. 389, fols. 80^r and 81^r–82^v).

36. Below, p. 344.

37. Kippis, p. 660.

Newcastle upon Tyne in 1760, which was apparently a modest improvement over his present living of Great Horkesley.³⁸ Brown hesitated before accepting, apparently trying to combine it with retaining his current living and its tithes *in absentia*. But eventually he moved north, and this initiated a busy and productive phase of his life, in which he seems to have mingled happily in the intellectual and musical circles of Newcastle. For a while he left questions of national politics alone. But he was unable entirely to forsake them.

Brown re-assumed the role of national preacher in 1765 with his *Thoughts on Civil Liberty, Licentiousness and Faction*. Much of the analytic substance of this pamphlet is compatible with—indeed, echoes—that of the *Estimate*. Once again Brown inveighs against effeminacy and luxury, once again he extols the “boy scout” virtues of the ancient republics, particularly Sparta.³⁹ But that surface continuity disguises an extraordinary change of underlying allegiance. As we have seen, the *Estimate* had concluded by implicitly praising Pitt as the only possible savior of the nation. In 1760 Brown had again allied himself with Pitt when he defended him against the criticisms of Lyttelton by publishing *An Additional Dialogue of the Dead* (1760). But the death of George II, the accession of George III, and the consequent rise of Bute in 1760 had altered the complexion of politics; and with Pitt’s move into opposition in 1761, the levers of patronage had been transferred to new hands. Brown responded to these changes with a whole-heartedness which does him little credit. For in a series of unmistakable references to the current political and social scene in the final pages of the *Thoughts* Brown associated himself with Bute,

38. For the resentment which Brown stirred up amongst his patrons over the move from his current living of Great Horkesley to that of St. Nicholas, see the correspondence preserved in BL Add. MSS 35606 and 35635. Philip Yorke’s rebuke, that Brown had employed expressions “very improper” to be used towards “one from whom you acknowledge you have received a great obligation,” is noteworthy (BL Add. MSS 35606, fol. 342^r); for in 1756 Yorke had presented Brown with the living of Great Horkesley, on the recommendation of Warburton. Noteworthy, too, is the extract of a letter said to have been written by his new parishioners, and transcribed by Brown himself, in which he is said to be “too much refined for us . . . a weak man . . . a proud Man” (BL Add. MSS 35606, fol. 331^r).

39. I owe the phrase “boy scout” to John Burrow.