

Making History: Edward Augustus Freeman and Victorian Cultural Politics (Proceedings of the British Academy)

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'History is past politics, politics is present history.' Thus observed Edward August Freeman, 19th-century historian and public intellectual. He was an idiosyncratic and imaginative thinker who saw past and present as interwoven and had a way of collapsing barriers of time - a gift for making the reader feel part of history, rather than merely its student.

Freeman's interests ranged widely beyond history, however, and this volume provides a biographical as well as intellectual survey of his activities. Thus chapters intersect with historical episodes such as Tractarianism, Liberal Anglicanism and the Gothic Revival, cutting across the divides that traditionally separate architectural, political, church and imperial history. New influences and nemeses emerge from this consideration of the 1830s to 1850s, providing context and added depth to the familiar view of the mature Freeman: to his historical writing as well as to the personal feuds (e.g. with Froude) for which he was equally known.

This book fills a gap in the intellectual history of Victorian Britain by providing the first comprehensive, scholarly account of one of its most articulate and outspoken public intellectuals. More broadly, too, Freeman provides a historical context for current debates on multi-culturalism, race and national identity.



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