

Constable [*formerly* Tunstall], Cuthbert

(c. 1680–1747)

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- <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/6102>
- Published in print: 23 September 2004
- Published online: 23 September 2004

Constable [*formerly* Tunstall], Cuthbert (c. 1680–1747), antiquary, was the second son of Francis Tunstall (1638–1713), landowner, of Wycliffe Hall and Scargill Castle, and Cecily Constable (c.1657–1712), daughter of John Constable, second Viscount Dunbar, of Burton Constable. A Catholic, he was educated in the English college at Douai in France, which he entered in 1700, and afterwards took the degree of MD in the University of Montpellier. In 1718 he inherited from his uncle William Constable, fourth and last Viscount Dunbar, the estate of Burton Constable, near Hull, in the East Riding of Yorkshire, on condition that he assume the name of Constable. On 20 June 1719 he married Amey Clifford (1705–1731), the fifth daughter of Hugh, second Baron Clifford of Chudleigh (1663–1730), and Anne Preston (d. 1734). In 1731 Amey died of smallpox when pregnant with their fifth child; she was buried at St Pancras in London. On 12 August 1735 he married Elizabeth Heneage (1709–1765), the daughter of George Heneage of Hainton in Lincolnshire, and from this marriage was born [Marmaduke Tunstall, formerly Constable](#), later a distinguished naturalist.

An accomplished scholar, Constable planned but did not complete a biography of the Catholic controversialist Abraham Woodhead (1609–1678). He did, however, compose the biographical account for his publication of Woodhead's *Ancient Church Government, Part 3*, in 1736. In addition, Constable, styled the 'Catholic Maecenas of his age' (Gillow, *Lit. biog. hist.*, 1.548), supported the scholarship of others. He provided Richard Challoner with the manuscript 'Suffering of the Catholics', by John Knaresborough, chaplain at Burton Constable, for the *Memoirs of Missionary Priests* (1741–2), and he contributed to the cost of publishing Charles Dodd's *Church History* (1737–42). He formed an extensive library at Burton Constable, enriched with valuable manuscripts, including the Woodhead manuscripts, obtained from Lisbon in 1728 from Francis Nicholson (1650–1731), a Catholic convert, formerly of University College, Oxford; Nicholson's biography of Woodhead; and his own correspondence with Nicholson and Thomas Hearne. Constable died at home at Burton Constable Hall on 14 March 1747; the cause of his death was not recorded. He was buried at Halsham on 20 March 1747. In 1802 his remains were deposited in the family mausoleum at Halsham.

Sources

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Archives

- BL, corresp., Sloane MS 4034, fol. 358
- Bodl. Oxf.
- Bodl. Oxf., corresp., MS Don. c.79
- Bodl. Oxf., MSS Rawl. K. (Hearne-Smith), letters 4, 27b, 27c
- U. Hull, Brynmor Jones L., Knaresborough MSS
- W. Yorks. AS, Leeds, Yorkshire Archaeological Society, corresp. and papers relating to Abraham Woodhead

Likenesses

- P. van Bleeck, oils, 1735 (with his second wife, Elizabeth Heneage), Burton Constable Hall, Burton Constable, Yorkshire

Wealth at Death

Burton Constable estate; seigniory of Holderness: HMC, *Principal family and estate collections*; Constable estate papers, esp. DDCC 130/211, 134/22; Borth. Inst., Beverley probate records