

or “high,” could evoke the character of the classic or of the modern, and this seems especially relevant to the period that produced both Milton and Rochester. Still, even with these omissions, Hammond’s book is a fine work of scholarship on Dryden, Marvell, Rochester and their contexts.

Wyman H. Herendeen. *William Camden. A Life in Context*. Woodbridge and Rochester: Boydell, 2007. xiii + 536pp. \$115.00. Review by JONATHAN WRIGHT, HARTLEPOOL, UNITED KINGDOM.

William Camden (1551-1623) will always be best remembered as the author of two extraordinarily important works: the *Britannia*, his genre-straddling study of the history, geography and cultural roots of Britain; and the *Annals of Elizabeth*, his painstaking, year-by-year account of the Virgin Queen’s reign. Wyman Herendeen certainly doesn’t want us to forget these achievements (indeed, an analysis of *Britannia* represents one of the most valuable parts of Herendeen’s book) but he would like us to remember that Camden’s life was about much more than the creation of a brace of scholarly masterpieces.

Camden, Herendeen laments, is often pushed to the margins. He usually serves as little more than “a gloss to narratives other than his own” (59). Camden was not a flamboyant person and he lived in an “understated and self-effacing” (14) fashion but, as a schoolmaster, a member of the College of Arms, and as a much-respected figure in the European republic of letters, his contribution was much greater than that of a dusty antiquarian. His role as under master (from 1575) and headmaster (from 1593) at Westminster School is perhaps the most neglected of all his non-literary accomplishments. It is easy to think of Camden reluctantly carrying out his daily pedagogical tasks while itching to get back to his study or to embark upon one of his historical fact-gathering tours around the country. This, Herendeen insists, is likely to be an inaccurate portrayal. Camden was a committed teacher who played a part in the education of many future luminaries, Robert Cotton and Ben Jonson included. Herendeen does a superb job of exploring the world of Elizabethan education which not only serves to put Camden in context but also reminds us that,

as a master at Westminster (located so close to the nation's leading political institutions), he was never far away from the crossroads of power, patronage and influence.

Ultimately, of course, any study of Camden is destined to return to the *Britannia*. Here, Herendeen is obliged to enter some choppy historiographical waters. Recent years have seen much scholarly debate about the evolution of historical writing in late-Tudor and early-Stuart England. There has been much talk of revolution, of a new commitment to the rigorous examination of source materials, and of breakthroughs in authorial self-fashioning. Herendeen does not wish to derail such discussions—indeed, he positions Camden as one of the most significant harbingers of change—but the best parts of his book (though there *are* moments when he fails to dodge glaring hermeneutic pitfalls) serve as a welcome rejoinder to some of the more exaggerated claims that are currently floating around the academy. Any overarching analysis is immediately damaged when we acknowledge that a) early modern history-writing was extremely chaotic, that b) neatly defined genres simply did not exist, and that c) historical practitioners were far more concerned with going about their scholarly business in idiosyncratic ways than in abiding by the parameters of present-day interpretative models. There is, of course, room for the big argument (else what is the point), but before we mount it there is perhaps more sense in pursuing detailed, nuts and bolts research into individual Tudor and Stuart scholars.

This is precisely what Herendeen does and his conclusions about Camden's motives and methodology ought to be read by any serious student of early modern historiography. Herendeen argues, against prevailing wisdom, that Camden should be seen as a profoundly theoretical historian. From its preface onwards, *Britannia* demonstrates “a carefully developed epistemology” (200). The book is no random assemblage of facts and speculations. Rather, it is a model of almost Baconian scepticism. Camden sought empirical evidence wherever he could find it and put it to good use, but he was always careful to insist that *Britannia* (a book that went through various editions during the 1580s, 1590s and beyond) was always a work in progress and that its conclusions were tentative. Furthermore, Herendeen argues that Camden developed a very specific authorial persona—one of

“rhetorical self-effacement” (200)—and that, through his embrace of the traces of material culture (whether coins or monumental inscriptions), he helped to break new ground. Even the structure of his book (one that routinely abandoned the traditional chronological framework of earlier chronicles) had hints of innovation embedded within its many pages.

Some of this is hard to gainsay. Camden’s scholarly radar, always tuned to demythologising, was impressive: he adopted an enviably interrogatory attitude when it came to sources. He also (like many of his contemporaries) played fast and loose, in a rather wonderful way, with historical forms. He did not desire the stable voice of a Rankean *wie es eigentlich gewesen* historian (which, after all, would have been hard, several centuries *avant la lettre*) and was much happier moving between antiquarianism, topography and poetic utterance. For all this, there is still a risk of crediting Camden with too much authorial intention. Those who have read Camden will know that chaos is sometimes just chaos, rather than artful playfulness. It is always good fun, but it does not always inspire thoughts of sophisticated theoretical intent (and why, after all, should it?). As for the notion of wily “rhetorical self-effacement”: well, maybe. Or perhaps Camden was just following a modish convention (oh humble me, and all that).

None of this is intended to dent Herendeen’s achievement. He proves beyond doubt that Camden’s *Britannia* was a profoundly influential text. He claims, convincingly, that it should be read alongside Sidney’s *Apologie for Poetrie* and Spenser’s *The Faerie Queene* whenever we try to anatomise the era’s attempt to strike “the proper chemical balance of mythopoeic and historical truth” (210). Camden and his peers were deeply puzzled by profoundly difficult issues: how to write history, how to encapsulate the fledgling notion of national identity, and how to do justice by all the competing Muses, of which Clio was only ever one. Camden, as Herendeen’s book amply demonstrates, was often in the thick of things.

Whether Camden conjured up lasting solutions and whether he was consistently obsessed with the challenge remain as open questions. Just occasionally, Herendeen forces Camden to play by modern interpretative rules—rules (since they are the brain-children of later scholars) which Camden would neither have countenanced nor un-

derstood—but, for the most part, Herendeen offers a sympathetic, well-researched account of this famous, but strangely understudied man. This, flaws and all, is one of the most important books ever written about William Camden. There will be worthwhile debate about how Herendeen positions Camden in the early modern English historiographical landscape and we should all be grateful that he has taken the trouble to reveal Camden the man: a far more interesting figure than most of us (or I, at least) ever imagined.

Sheila McIntyre and Len Travers, eds. *The Correspondence of John Cotton Junior*. Boston: The Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 2009. 656 pp. \$49.50. Review by WILLIAM SCHEIK, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS, AUSTIN.

In his diary entry for 3 May 1664, Increase Mather did not mince words when recording the disconcerting verdict of First Church of Boston against John Cotton, Jr. He straightforwardly recorded that the Church had voted to excommunicate Cotton, Jr., for lascivious behavior involving three women and also for lying about his involvement. Nearly two weeks before this diary entry, Cotton, Jr. had visited Mather's home to privately discuss his situation. How much Cotton, Jr., admitted to his stepbrother is unknown, but Mather's agitated reaction to what he was told might be gauged from the illegibility of his scrawled two-line journal comment concerning that meeting.

Mather was on the spot. During his lifetime, family honor, blood allegiance and lineage politics ran deep. However, when he met with Cotton, Jr., in 1664, Mather was scheduled to be ordained in a matter of weeks. At that point, as throughout his later life, Mather was particularly keen on safeguarding the status of his personal legacy from the first generation of New England divines.

It is not surprising, then, that the twenty-four year old Mather, with ambitions of his own at stake, was thoroughly stymied by young Cotton's behavior. "Troubled about J. C.," he confessed in his diary, "being very desirous to testify more fully for him, & yet afraid to doe it, because I could not say (*sana conscientia*) that his carriage & demeanore had bin all along suitable to his condition" (Michael G. Hall, *The Last American Puritan* [1988], 64).