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REVIEW ARTICLES

LIFE-WRITING IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND

Women, madness and sin in early modern England: the autobiographical writings of Dionys Fitzherbert. Edited by Katharine Hodgkin. Farnham: Ashgate, 2010. Pp. x+290. ISBN 9780754630180. £65.00.

Protestant autobiography in the seventeenth-century anglophone world. By Kathleen Lynch. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. Pp. xii+321. ISBN 9780199643936. £55.00.

Autobiography in early modern England. By Adam Smyth. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. Pp. x+222. ISBN 9780521761727. £55.00.

The chronicles of John Cannon, excise officer and writing master. Part 1 1684–1733 (Somerset, Oxfordshire, Berkshire) and *Part 2 1734–1743 (Somerset).* Edited by John Money. 2 volumes. Oxford: Oxford University Press for the British Academy, 2010. Pp. cl+1–239 and 12 pages of plates; xxx+241–674 and 12 pages of plates. ISBN 9780197264546 and 9780197264553. £60.00, £70.00.

The flourishing of autobiographical writing is one of the most striking features of early modern England. An extraordinary number of such texts survive, written by women as well as men and by people of humble status as well as others more privileged; from them, we gain crucial insights into the mindsets and self-understanding of people of the period and their wish to memorialize themselves either for their family and friends or for posterity. Perhaps the classic 'type' of the genre comprises the works of spiritual self-examination associated with the heightened religiosity of post-Reformation Protestantism, as dealt with in such studies as Owen Watkins's *The puritan experience* of 1972.[1] But, though many authors were preoccupied almost exclusively by their relationship with God, others combined this with an equal sense of their place in their social and political milieu. Thus, Joseph Lister of Bradford opened his autobiography by explaining how 'I propose to keep an account of some of the most remarkable passages of Providence towards myself, and some of the chief public occurrences that happened within my observation during the course of my life.'[2] It is often the way in which introspection was thus tempered by a sense of the significance of an individual's relationship with his or her rapidly

[1] Owen C. Watkins, *The puritan experience* (London, 1972).

[2] Thomas Wright, ed., *The autobiography of Joseph Lister* (London, 1842), p. 3. For a pioneering account of many such writers, see Paul Delany, *British autobiography in the seventeenth century* (London, 1969). The extensive literature that has since appeared is itemized and discussed in various of the books reviewed here: see Hodgkin, *Women, madness and sin*, esp.

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changing milieu that makes such writers' attempts at self-description and self-definition so fascinating. Matters have recently been complicated by claims that a truly modern sense of 'self' did not emerge until the very end of the eighteenth century.[3] Yet such arguments should not be allowed to deflect attention from the important insights available from people's writings about themselves over the previous two and half centuries. In fact, scholarly monographs devoted to autobiographical works of the seventeenth and earlier eighteenth centuries continue to proliferate, as do editions of them, and this review essay considers two such monographs and two such editions. These invite novel conclusions about the diverse ways in which people reflected on their lives, while the physical form in which such life-writings were presented can be significant in itself, as seen especially in the case of the eighteenth-century Somerset excise officer and writing master, John Cannon, with whom this essay will conclude.

In terms of our understanding of the motives to autobiography, an illuminating example is provided by the edition of the writings of Dionys Fitzherbert recently produced by Katharine Hodgkin. To this, she has given the title, *Women, madness and sin in early modern England*, which well encapsulates the themes with which it deals, as is explained in a lengthy and fully researched introduction. In fact, this is a major scholarly work in its own right, which not only introduces the work's author and the predominant topics that it covers, but also, by way of background, recapitulates many of the themes of Hodgkin's monograph, *Madness in seventeenth-century autobiography* (2007), in which Dionys Fitzherbert played a prominent role along with such later authors as Hannah Allen and George Trosse.[4] Fitzherbert was a member of an Oxfordshire gentry family, who was born about 1580 and died single and childless in the early 1640s. Virtually her sole claim to fame is the record that she left of her spiritual life and sufferings, and Hodgkin convincingly argues that the composition of this had a polemical purpose, namely to challenge those who saw its author as suffering from mental disorder. Instead, Fitzherbert sought to explain the afflictions that she suffered as a trial of the kind that God sent to test his servants, from which others might learn. Hence, at every stage of the narrative, she was at pains to assert the spiritual dimension of her experiences and to downplay the purely physical, and she also prefixed to it a letter from a divine, Dr Edward Chetwynd, in which he commented on her case and confirmed her status as one of the elect. Even more striking is the fact that, since the author hoped that others might benefit from reading an account of her tribulations

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pp. 35–6; Lynch, *Protestant autobiography*, Introduction; Smyth, *Autobiography*, pp. 7–8 and passim.

[3] See Michael Mascuch, *Origins of the individualist self: autobiography and self-identity in England, 1591–1791* (Cambridge, 1997); Dror Wahrman, *The making of the modern self: identity and culture in eighteenth-century England* (New Haven, CT, and London, 2004).

[4] Katharine Hodgkin, *Madness in seventeenth-century autobiography* (Basingstoke, 2007).

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and how she overcame them, she had two fair copies of the manuscript made, which were deposited in major libraries, the Bodleian and the Library of Sion College, thus showing an unusual solicitude for the preservation of her work.

In the course of preparing these versions for wider consumption, Fitzherbert made various changes to her text, which are painstakingly analysed by the editor, illustrating how these, too, had the effect of shifting the emphasis away from madness towards spiritual suffering, offering a 'public' image of the author as a person of solid piety, albeit in the course of doing so reducing the vividness and individuality of the original text. The more significant of such changes are therefore signalled in the edition, which also offers a careful description of the various surviving manuscripts, including the extra material that Fitzherbert sent to the custodians of the 'public' versions of her work to be added to them – notably an account of a celestial vision which appeared several years after the transactions dealt with in the autobiography proper, illustrated by a striking image which is reproduced in Hodgkin's edition.

In presenting the text, the editor has adopted an intriguing procedure, echoing that occasionally used by previous editors of early modern manuscripts.[5] On the left-hand side of each opening she presents an unmodernized transcript of the text, retaining its original lineation, while facing this on the right-hand page is a modernized version, replete with paragraph breaks and annotations. This is obviously rather space-consuming, and the publishers, Ashgate, are to be congratulated on allowing so many pages to be devoted to an experiment of this kind. As to how successful it is, opinions will differ. My suspicion is that most readers will tend to use the modernized version, only occasionally glancing at the unmodernized one, and that in fact a single text, achieving more of a compromise between the two, might have been constructed without doing great harm to the original.[6] However, the editor seems to have a different view of the mutual relationship between the two versions since, in her introduction, she quotes the unmodernized text rather than the modernized one, suggesting that she sees the unmodernized version as more than a quaint appendage and the modernized one merely as an interpretative tool.

Among autobiographical writings by women, Fitzherbert's is unusually early, but the tradition of which she was a pioneer became increasingly established in the seventeenth century, as Kathleen Lynch illustrates in *Protestant autobiography in the seventeenth-century anglophone world*. In her introduction, Lynch briefly engages with the scribal tradition to which the Fitzherbert autobiography belongs, dealing with another such manuscript text, the 'Confessions' of the Bermuda-based Richard Norwood, by way of illustrating the transatlantic dimension of her book. The chief emphasis of *Protestant autobiography*, on the

[5] For instance, the edition by J. E. McGuire and Martin Tamny of *Certain philosophical questions: Newton's Trinity notebook* (Cambridge, 1983).

[6] Along the lines suggested in my *Editing early modern texts: an introduction to principles and practice* (Basingstoke, 2007), esp. ch. 6.

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other hand, is on printed works. Indeed, the role of print is one of the principal themes of the book. A whole chapter deals with three printed collections of conversion narratives that were issued in 1653: the Independent minister John Rogers's *Ohel*; the volume *Spiritual experiences of sundry beleevers*, published under the auspices of Henry Walker; and an anthology of confessions of faith by newly converted Indians in Natick Massachussetts. A further chapter juxtaposes two books that were much reprinted at the time, Henry Jessey's *The exceeding riches of grace advanced by the spirit of grace, in ... Sarah Wight* (1647) and the *Eikon basilike* attributed to Charles I (1649). In each case, Lynch gives careful consideration to the affiliations and motives of the booksellers and printers involved in compiling and distributing the works, as well as to the significance of the testimonies that they contained. Her other main theme is the social and ecclesiastical background to the works with which she deals. A subsequent chapter places John Bunyan in context by considering autobiographical accounts by other members of his Bedford congregation, notably its original minister, John Gifford, and the slightly strange figures of Agnes Beaumont, whose reputation was compromised by a horse ride with Bunyan, and the suicide, John Child; yet another looks at translations of St Augustine in the context of Protestant–Catholic debates.

The book's agenda is ambitious. Quite apart from passages dealing with censorship in the period, or with Old St Paul's (brought in as background to *Eikon basilike*), it also has various axes to grind, for instance in repeatedly positing a close analogy between the role of witnessing in conversion narratives and that in the world of experimental science as expounded by Steven Shapin and Simon Schaffer in *Leviathan and the air-pump* (1985), a claim that readers may or may not find convincing.[7] At the end of the day, however, the book's focus is familiarly literary, with prolonged attention being given to exemplars from an established canon of authors from the period – John Donne, to whose conversion experience in all its complexity nearly a chapter is devoted; or John Bunyan, whose famous work, *Grace abounding to the chief of sinners*, dominates chapter 4, in spite of the novel evidence that the chapter presents about its context; or the leading Presbyterian, Richard Baxter, to whose 'recursive reworking' of his principles and beliefs (p. 257) and to the tensions in evidence in his *Reliquiae Baxterianae* (1696) the final chapter of the book is devoted.

In this respect, a refreshing contrast is offered by another work, albeit also by a literary scholar, Adam Smyth's *Autobiography in early modern England*. Smyth is naturally well versed in the literary history of the period and telling allusions to Shakespeare and other writers appear throughout his book; in addition, one or two of the figures with whom he deals might be seen as part of the canon, such as the North Country landowner and autobiographer, Lady Anne Clifford, though he approaches her from a novel perspective. But what Smyth does in the

[7] See pp. 84–5, 88, 152, 166–7, 171ff. On censorship, see pp. 37ff, and on Old St Paul's see pp. 113ff.

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bulk of his book is to open up a completely new world of life-writing, populated by virtual nonentities who found means of expressing themselves through media that might seem peripheral to autobiography as traditionally defined. As he explains in his introduction, his inspiration came from his experience in local record offices where he called up all the items that were catalogued under 'diary' or 'autobiography'. As a result, he was presented by a range of material – annotated almanacs, account books, commonplace books and the like – which suggested to him the idea that, through their use of such tools, people were enabled to reflect on their lives in ways which are significant in themselves. He even has a chapter on parish registers and the manner in which these, too, encouraged a reflectiveness on the part of the ministers responsible for them. In part, this led to the recording of detail about liminal members of society like outcasts and beggars, extending more widely at moments of crisis like the plague; but in other cases there are personal touches by the compiler, and one minister, John Wade of Hammersmith, became so autobiographical that his record is actually catalogued as a diary in the repository in which it is preserved, Hammersmith and Fulham Archives.

Smyth's most interesting chapters are those dealing with almanacs, accounts and commonplace books. The chapter on almanacs makes the point that the information recorded was often singular and non-narrative, rebelling against modern presumptions of the necessary predominance of narrative in life-writing, even if Smyth points out how these materials were sometimes re-deployed by their compilers in more narrative contexts. Equally arresting is the chapter on account books, a form of record-keeping on which early modern commentators laid great stress and which is clearly linked in a general way to life-writing: indeed, Smyth is able to give new meaning to Max Weber's view of the links between puritan spirituality and emergent capitalism through his detailed scrutiny of practices of this kind. Even the discrete transactions that are recorded in accounts often display a revealing hierarchy of value. In addition, added meaning could be invested through the reuse of material in different settings, something that Smyth illustrates at length through a detailed study of the account books of Lady Anne Clifford, which have been neglected by comparison with her more obviously autobiographical writings, yet which prove no less illuminating.

In the case of commonplace books, Smyth is able to offer an account of their rationale in terms of people's perception of themselves, which adds a new dimension to the existing scholarly literature on such compilations.[8] After a

[8] See especially J. M. Lechner, *Renaissance concepts of the commonplaces* (New York, NY, 1962); Peter Beal, 'Notions in garrison: the seventeenth-century commonplace book', in W. Speed Hill, ed., *New ways of looking at old texts: papers of the Renaissance English Text Society, 1985–1991* (Binghampton, NY, 1993), pp. 131–47; Ann Moss, *Printed commonplace-books and the structuring of Renaissance thought* (Oxford, 1996); Kevin Sharpe, *Reading revolutions: the politics of reading in early modern England* (New Haven, CT, and London, 2000); Daniel Woolf, *Reading history in early modern England* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 96ff; William Sherman, *Used books: marking readers in*

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rather refreshing acknowledgement of the extent to which this was a messy and eclectic genre despite the neat prescriptions which inspired it, he points out how men like the royalist Sir John Gibson, who compiled his manuscript while in prison in the 1650s, seem to have thought that the quotations that they recycled genuinely provided an account of themselves – 'the trophie of my sufferings', in Gibson's words (p. 135). As Smyth shows, this was at least in part because of a sense of typological equivalence which is characteristic of early modern culture. Here, as elsewhere, he makes perceptive use of a wide range of materials that have hitherto tended to be dismissed as void of shape and meaning, in this case drawing particularly on the rich holdings of such compilations in the Folger Shakespeare Library. Indeed, my one regret about Smyth's book, which is commendably succinct, is that room was not found in it for a systematic bibliography of the original sources on which is based, references to which are instead scattered piecemeal through the footnotes.

Notwithstanding this, what is exciting about Smyth's volume is the way in which it invests evidence that might be seen as trivial with unexpected meaning. Even the sprawling and repetitive signatures which were often executed in early modern books and manuscripts as a form of writing practice acquire significance as markers of identity. Equally interesting is Smyth's view of the way in which the owners of almanacs responded to and manipulated the media they deployed, pinning in notes or tearing out pages: in this respect, he builds on an article that he published in 2004 on the use of fragments from printed books in early modern manuscript compilations, itself largely based on another facet of the commonplace book of Sir John Gibson.[9] Most important is the way in which Smyth shows how all sorts of personal compilation can prove surprisingly revealing in unexpected ways: the result is to offer a fresh perspective on the self-perception of quite ordinary people in the early modern period as a whole.

Smyth's terms of reference mean that his book does not go beyond 1700, yet there is clearly potential for a comparable study of the eighteenth century, when, if anything, such self-conscious compilations became commoner than ever. Now, an edition of perhaps the most striking example of such writings has appeared in the form of John Money's long-awaited edition of *The chronicles of John Cannon, excise officer and writing master*, published in two volumes by the British Academy as part of its 'Records of Social and Economic History', volume I combining a lengthy introduction with the section of the text covering 1684–1733 and volume II covering 1734–43.[10] Cannon's autobiography has

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Renaissance England (Philadelphia, PA, 2008), ch. 7; Ann Blair, *Too much to know: managing scholarly information before the modern age* (New Haven, CT, and London, 2010), esp. ch. 2.

[9] See Adam Smyth, '"Rend and teare in peeces": textual fragmentation in seventeenth-century England', *Seventeenth Century*, 19 (2004), pp. 36–52.

[10] One oddity about the edition that is worth noting here is its overall title, *The chronicles of John Cannon*. It is true that on the title-page the title takes the form *Χρονεχά seu* ANNALES *or memoirs*, but Cannon seems to have thought of the work as his *Memoirs* (see, e.g., vol. II, p. 544)

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previously become familiar from the use made of it by such historians as Tim Hitchcock writing about eighteenth-century male sexuality, John Brewer dealing with the administration of the excise or Money himself in his account of provincial school-teaching in the period.[11] But it is excellent that we now have access to a full version of the text, which will undoubtedly prove invaluable to historians of all sorts of aspects of eighteenth-century life for many years to come. In his long and informative introduction, Money provides a background to various aspects of its content, including Cannon's career, his marital life and his patterns of sociability. He also has much to say about Cannon's churchmanship and his religious outlook, both of which bulk large in the latter parts of the text: not only was Cannon, as parish clerk, caught up in a complex ecclesiastical dispute in the diocese of Bristol of which a full account is given here, but he also kept a unique record of the sermons delivered by successive parsons in his rural parish. All of this enables Money to reflect very interestingly on the state of religious life in rural England in the age of emergent Methodism.

As far as Cannon's motives in compiling the work are concerned, Money compares him with various figures, perhaps notably the seventeenth-century puritan memorialist, Nehemiah Wallington, and the later eighteenth-century bookseller, James Lackington.[12] What is perhaps especially interesting in Cannon's case is the extent to which he considered it appropriate to combine his record of his life with a mass of more miscellaneous material which has here been merely summarized in order to keep the length of the published text down to manageable proportions, including detailed accounts of the scrivening work that Cannon carried out and the like. Perhaps most intriguing are the lengthy digressions in which Cannon indulged from time to time in his manuscript, dealing with such topics as longevity, or the value of learning, or industry and idleness; there are also literary extracts and excursuses on historical and other subjects, revealing an eclectic sense of the past to the background to which Money devotes some pages in his introduction. For these, Cannon often used a different, double-columned format from that of the main text of the diary, which he probably learned from his assiduous reading of *The Gentleman's Magazine*. In contrast to the main text of the diary, all Cannon's digressions are here summarized, in some cases rather perfunctorily, and,

and this is the running title of the manuscript throughout (Somerset Heritage Centre, DD \SAS/C1193/4).

[11] Tim Hitchcock, 'Sociability and misogyny in the life of John Cannon, 1684–1743', in Tim Hitchcock and Michèle Cohen, eds., *English masculinities, 1660–1800* (London, 1999), pp. 25–43; John Brewer, *The sinews of power: war, money and the English state, 1688–1783* (London, 1989), pp. 104ff; John Money, 'Teaching in the market-place, or "Caesar adsum jam forte: Pompey aderat": the retailing of knowledge in provincial England during the eighteenth century', in John Brewer and Roy Porter, eds., *Consumption and the world of goods* (London, 1993), pp. 335–77.

[12] See esp. Paul S. Seaver, *Wallington's world: a puritan artisan in seventeenth-century London* (London, 1985); James Lackington, *Memoirs* (London, 1791 and subsequent editions); Mascuch, *Origins of the individualist self*, ch. 2 and passim.

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though in his introduction Money quotes a couple of specimens of the learned references that they contain, that is as far as he goes in terms of publishing their text in full.[13] This is perhaps because, in commenting on them, he confesses himself slightly baffled by the strange mixture of apparent erudition and banality that they display. Yet one wonders whether an approach like Adam Smyth's would have helped to make sense of these and other aspects of the text, and it is a shame that Money has been so systematic in epitomizing them, rather than including at least a selection of them in full so that readers could evaluate these fascinating but slightly bizarre texts for themselves. Indeed, my own preference would have been for these passages to be published in their entirety, since the edition could easily have been a little longer than it is (it is in any case slightly wasteful of space in that the prelims to volume II recapitulate those to volume I in a manner that was surely unnecessary considering that very few people are ever likely to consult the second volume of a two-volume work on its own.)

What is equally notable about Cannon is his appetite for what might be called book-making, including his attention to the physical format of his text. It transpires that the extant manuscript is by no means his first attempt to produce a work memorializing himself, and this intense scribal activity is significant in itself. So is the manner in which the text is presented, reflecting Cannon's professional activity as a scrivener, a role serving important needs in eighteenth-century England on which Money remarks, alluding to his fuller comments on the topic in his earlier account of Cannon as a provincial schoolmaster.[14] The edition is illustrated with a series of colour reproductions from the original manuscript which give a good sense of the amount of trouble to which Cannon went in the presentation of his work. This is illustrated by the title-page itself, echoing an engraved frontispiece with its different sizes of lettering and its various calligraphic styles, in combination with an elegantly tinted architectural frame bedecked with medallions containing biblical texts. Elsewhere, there are astronomical diagrams and careful topographical drawings of Glastonbury, while perhaps most remarkable of all are three elaborate religious emblems with the text disposed in symbolically significant forms, one an elaborate Trinitarian symbol, another with its text strikingly inscribed within the initials 'J. C.' which take up two-thirds of the page.

Money reproduces many (though not all) of these illustrations, and he comments on some of the calligraphic flourishes that Cannon used to give emphasis to sections of his text, though others are elided. On the other hand, he does not offer as detailed a contextualization of this aspect of Cannon's manuscript as he does concerning Cannon's motives to life-writing. Yet it could be argued that Cannon's appetite for book-making – for creating a kind of personal anthology of information extracted from various sources, often rather

[13] Vol. I, pp. cxxxiii–cxxxiv.

[14] Vol. I, pp. cxxix–cxxx; Money, 'Teaching in the market-place', esp. p. 339.

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sententious in tone, and his presentation of it in a formal manner through the use of calligraphy – is a characteristic facet of eighteenth-century provincial culture which deserves more attention than it has yet received. As with the expression of autobiographical aspiration in unexpected places and forms that Adam Smyth has surveyed in the context of the seventeenth century, this surely tells us much about the values and concerns of largely self-educated figures like Cannon a century later.

To some extent, a compilation like Cannon's overlaps with one of the genres dealt with by Smyth, namely that of the commonplace book, which was as alive and well in the eighteenth century as it had been previously, as David Allan has recently illustrated in his *Commonplace books and reading in Georgian England* (2010). Allan's study is an illuminating one, doing justice to various facets of the compilations of this kind that survive, in which the intelligentsia in Georgian England continued to abstract and reflect on their reading as their predecessors had done; it was only in the early nineteenth century that the practice came under threat, due to the impact particularly of the novel. Yet Allan is disproportionately concerned with compendia made by the highly literate, his focus being on literary themes and his terms of reference taking him well into the Romantic era. Compilations like Cannon's arguably served an overlapping but slightly different purpose, which is tangential to the remit of Allen's book but which is significant in itself.[15]

Here, a context is offered by another recent book, Susan E. Whyman's *The pen and the people: English letter writers, 1660–1800* (2009), and particularly the chapter which explores literacy among farmers and workers in northern England in the period (her subsequent chapters, especially in the section entitled 'From letters to literature', move more into the territory covered by Allan). For this illustrates the deployment of calligraphy to create a personal record by recopying and recycling data which echoes the relevant part of Cannon's manuscript on a smaller scale. For instance, we encounter Titus Wheatcroft, parish clerk of Ashover, Derbyshire, in the early eighteenth century, who compiled volumes in which wise sayings and poetic and devotional extracts were written out in a careful scribal hand, interspersed by repeated examples of his signature and by knots and other calligraphic details; such activity on Titus's part followed that of his father, Leonard Wheatcroft, whose output had included an autobiography and a courtship narrative.[16] A further example is provided by the compilations of another Derbyshire figure, Gilbert

[15] See David Allan, *Commonplace books and reading in Georgian England* (Cambridge, 2010). Though he nowhere mentions Cannon, in the course of his book Allan notes some features overlapping with those commented on here in connection with Cannon and others: see especially pp. 26 and 30–1 on 'creative dexterity with graphic instruments in hand' and part 6 on the inclusion of self-referential and reflective material.

[16] Susan E. Whyman, *The pen and the people: English letter writers, 1660–1800* (Oxford, 2009), pp. 77–81, plate 16, and ch. 3, passim. My comments relate particularly to Derbyshire Record Office D5775/1–3.

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Soresbie, Jr, the elaborately scribed title-page to one of which – including the motto 'Vive la Plume' – forms the frontispiece to Whyman's volume.[17] Whyman is mainly concerned with what she dubs 'epistolary literacy' as exemplified by the various family archives that she has discovered: she rightly stresses the role of calligraphy as crucial to this, thus echoing the authors of writing manuals of the period like George Bickham, whose *The universal penman* (1733–41) is perhaps the classic work of the genre.[18] But it is clear that those who learned such skills were empowered by them not only to write elegant epistles but also to create documents in which they more or less self-consciously memorialized themselves, and Whyman's chapter thus provides a helpful setting for Cannon (who is briefly introduced on p. 82).

One could extrapolate more broadly to a provincial culture of book-making and memorialization going back to men like the Rye merchant and astrologer, Samuel Jeake, or the Plymouth surgeon, James Yonge, in the late seventeenth century, which clearly intensified in scale during the eighteenth, as is illustrated by the holdings of county record offices and similar repositories.[19] It is striking how commonly members of the middling sort like Cannon deployed the calligraphic and literary skills that they had acquired for commercial and civic purposes to leave records of themselves that they clearly considered valuable in their own right, and which they evidently hoped might also commemorate them to posterity. Quite apart from its obvious importance as an autobiographical text, Cannon's combination of self-reflection with broader digressions on moral and quasi-learned themes, and his self-conscious presentation of his manuscript, arguably make his work the outstanding example of a genre that should be better known. He and others like him were creative in tangible as well as intellectual ways in forming records of themselves which enhance our understanding of the period in which they lived.

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[17] Whyman, *Pen and people*, pp. 85–7, frontispiece and plate 20.

[18] See George Bickham, *The universal penman* (London, 1733–41; Dover reprint edition with introductory essay by Philip Hofer, New York, NY, 1954). On the genre as a whole, see Sir Ambrose Heal, *The English writing-masters and their copy-books, 1570–1800* (Cambridge, 1931).

[19] For Jeake, see Michael Hunter and Annabel Gregory, eds., *An astrological diary of the seventeenth century: Samuel Jeake of Rye 1652–1699* (Oxford, 1988); for his other manuscript compilations, see the list of Jeake manuscripts in Michael Hunter, Giles Mandelbrote, Richard Ovenden and Nigel Smith, eds., *A radical's books: the library catalogue of Samuel Jeake of Rye 1623–1690* (Woodbridge, 1999), pp. 334–9, 342–3. For Yonge, see his *Plymouth memoirs*, ed. J.J. Beckerlegge (Plymouth, 1951), and his *Journal*, ed. F.N.L. Poynter (London, 1963). For a single example from a century later, see F.W. Steer, ed., *The memoirs of James Spershott*, The Chichester papers, no. 30 (Chichester, 1962), but this could be very widely paralleled and much work is needed in this area.

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