

## REVIEWS

### **Two Contributions to Coke Studies**

*Charles M. Gray*†

*Sir Edward Coke and the Elizabethan Age*,  
Allen D. Boyer. Stanford, 2003. Pp xii, 325.

*The Selected Writings and Speeches of Sir Edward Coke*,  
Steve Sheppard, ed. Liberty Fund, 2003. Three volumes.  
Vol I: pp lxxxvii, 520; Vol II: pp vii, 663; Vol III: pp i, 285.

Of the two publications under review, one is a document collection, which for the most part requires only celebration for making important material accessible. I shall first discuss Allen D. Boyer's *Sir Edward Coke and the Elizabethan Age* and then turn to Steve Sheppard's *The Selected Writings and Speeches of Sir Edward Coke*.

#### I. ALLEN D. BOYER'S *SIR EDWARD COKE AND THE ELIZABETHAN AGE*

With respect to Mr. Boyer's book, I am going in a sense to commit the sin of reviewing a different work from the one the author actually wrote. This, however, is only a way of saying that Mr. Boyer seems to me to have had a very good idea for a new book on Sir Edward Coke, but not quite to have realized the best possibilities of just that conception.

Coke lived from 1552 to 1634. He was a barrister until his appointment as chief justice of the Court of Common Pleas in 1606, serving for the later part of that period (from 1592) as solicitor general and then as attorney general (but holding those offices did not preclude a lawyer from continuing private practice). He was a judge from 1606 to 1616, for the last three years of that time as chief justice of the Court of King's Bench. After displeasing the government in various contexts, he was dismissed from the Bench by Elizabeth I's successor to the throne as of 1603, King James I (not then an "unconstitutional"

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act, but a strong one, which almost certainly brought more detriment than benefit to the king's government). After his dismissal, Coke had an important further career, primarily as a member of Parliament. His fame as a lawyer, controversial judge, and political figure was much enlarged by his voluminous writings on the law.

Mr. Boyer's excellent idea was to write a book on the earlier part of Coke's career, before he acceded to the power of the Bench and the limelight of political contention. As his cut-off point Mr. Boyer chooses the end of Elizabeth I's reign. There might be a case for taking in the whole of Coke's pre-judicial career, but a possible small boundary dispute is not worth worrying. The change of monarchs certainly brought new moods, personalities, and issues onto the political stage; sticking fairly literally to the Elizabethan Coke perhaps usefully reinforces the point that Coke *was* an Elizabethan, for fifty-one years of a life that would have been historically important even if it had ended at that age. In emphasizing Coke's Elizabethanness, one needs only to be a little cautious about pinning too much of the drift of intellectual and political history to regnal shifts.

Before arguing that a book on the Elizabethan, or the pre-judicial, Coke could profitably ask some questions and insist on some categories that Mr. Boyer seems to me not quite to reach, I want to give full credit for a good introduction to Coke for the general reader, the better for confining the treatment to the earlier Coke so that the flavor of his life as a whole is not too dominated by its most dramatic and intellectually engaging passages. Mr. Boyer is interested in and well informed about Coke's family and local ties, his education, and the beginning steps of a legal career. He writes sensitively about Coke's character and mentality and about such subjects as his jurisprudence and his perspectives on history.

On these broader matters it of course becomes difficult to segregate the pre-1603 Coke from the post-. I sometimes wish Mr. Boyer had pushed a little harder on the question, "How much of 'Cokeanism' as a collection of stances on big intellectual questions—the positions, let us say, that challenged Spelman,<sup>1</sup> later Hale<sup>2</sup> and Hobbes, and were still challenging Blackstone—can we regard as pretty clearly formed before Coke was obliged to decide cases on the Bench and undertook to wage extensive extrajudicial warfare over outcomes in-

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<sup>1</sup> Sir Henry Spelman (1562?–1641), antiquary and attorney, known for his glossary of medieval legal terminology, *Glossarium Archaiologicum* (Londini 1664) (originally published 1626).

<sup>2</sup> Sir Matthew Hale (1609–1676), lord chief justice of England and the author of *Pleas of the Crown* (London 1685) (originally published 1678), *The History of the Pleas of the Crown* [*Historia Placitorum Coronae*] (London 1736) (2 vols), and *The History of the Common Law of England* (London 1713).

fluenced by his theories?" This, however, would be more to focus a question than to surmount the difficulties of answering it, and preoccupation with the question might have made it harder to produce the useful summaries and reflections on the general issues, well informed by both the sources and the secondary literature, that Mr. Boyer does produce.

For the rest, a good deal of the book is necessarily a presentation of the concerns of Coke's age and the political history he lived through—in the midst of, once he became a government lawyer. This has to depend mainly on secondary sources and to seem a bit "the same old story," though Mr. Boyer tells it imaginatively, and the story is not *quite* the same when it is seen as the setting of one particular life (which, I suppose, is part of the reason for biographies).

My main criticism of the book is that one major question seems to me hardly posed: what was Coke's contribution as an advocate to the history of the law? How difficult a question that is appears from the fact that an easier one—what was Coke's contribution thereto as a judge?—has not really been asked either. The reason it hasn't is that it can't be answered precisely and thoroughly across the board. The general question has to be broken down into the many legal topics on which lawyers argued and judges decided in a given period; once a topic is isolated, it is arduous to work out how the issues and their resolutions should be understood. One is dealing, after all, with a "lost world"—with a conceptual vocabulary (not to mention a language, though Law French is so translatable a jargon that language itself is a minor problem), with procedural canons, jurisprudential and political notions (not those of so "professorial" a character as Coke, but the common reflexes of the legal trade), economic and other practical bearings of litigation. In short, one is confronted with elements no one is born knowing nor educated in the modern world to know, which mostly have to be learned from the legal sources. There is of course much help now available from modern work in legal history—in which Mr. Boyer is well versed—but law is so characteristically shaped in the interstices, amid the technicalities, that basic knowledge of how the old common law worked is not enough to let one see what is going on in a specific case and how a judge or advocate has managed to size up a problem and nudge the law in one direction or another. Judges are easy because quite often in the reports they tell us what they believe is the right answer to the immediate problem and thereby make some law (though not with quite the force of more modern *stare decisis* jurisprudence). But advocates make law too, by persuading the judges that the view of the case that serves their client is the right answer. By reputation, Coke was exceptionally good at such persuasion;

my experience with the few specific legal problems I have worked on technically is confirmatory.<sup>3</sup>

What have I said but that a few observations by Mr. Boyer would be welcome on that which would be most valuable to know about the younger Coke and why it is not yet deeply knowable? Not a lot, except that I think articulating the problem could lead to some useful starting steps within the dimensions of such a book as Mr. Boyer's. I should like to know, for example, in how many cases Coke can be identified from the law reports as of counsel. That is mere counting (a full count would require using manuscript reports, but the printed ones will do as a sample to generate a first approximation). Where Coke stands in the won/lost statistics might be a fairly easy next step, as would identification of his principal competitors. Then one might go a certain distance into the substance of the cases without entanglement in more than a general book could unravel. What was the form of action of Coke's advocacy cases? What is the balance, say, between contract problems and property problems (for form of action is not a perfect clue to such distinctions—and of course those stock topics do not begin to take in everything)? I certainly do not know whether an experiment with a rough substantive profile of Coke's practice would produce satisfying results; I am only a little sorry that the experiment was not attempted.

I am the more sorry because Mr. Boyer cites numerous "Coke cases" for one purpose or another and says something of what they were about. I wish only for a more head-on and comprehensive stab at the "profile." By way of offering something more like what I am asking for, Mr. Boyer devotes chapter 8 to substantial description of three famous cases in which Coke argued (*Shelley's*<sup>4</sup> (pp 114–20), *Chudleigh's*<sup>5</sup> (pp 120–24), and *Slade's*<sup>6</sup> (pp 125–34)). That is fine for a taste, but there is usually more to be learned from the bread-and-butter. (The discussion of *Slade* and its antecedents is clear, and certainly

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<sup>3</sup> For the matters adumbrated in this paragraph, see my observations on the difficulties of judicial biography, with particular reference to Coke's, in Charles M. Gray, 1 *The Writ of Prohibition: Jurisdiction in Early Modern English Law* xvii (Oceana 1st ed 1994) (now available in electronic form in a corrected second edition with a third volume added, online at <http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/law/gray> (visited June 7, 2005)). My book represents, I believe, a fairly complete picture of Coke's influence, both as counsel and as judge, on the single topic of jurisdictional law, though the published three volumes cover only parts of the subject—there is a lot more to come in volumes 4 and 5, now in preparation, and probably more beyond those. See also Charles M. Gray, *Copyhold, Equity, and the Common Law* 93–146 (Harvard 1963), chapter 3 of which catches a good deal of Coke's contribution to the integration of copyholds into the system of real-property law. These works are cited in Mr. Boyer's bibliography.

<sup>4</sup> *Shelley's Case (Wolfe v Shelley)*, 76 Eng Rep 206 (KB 1581).

<sup>5</sup> *Chudleigh's Case (Dillon v Freine)*, 76 Eng Rep 261 (KB 1595).

<sup>6</sup> *Slade's Case (Slade v Morley)*, 76 Eng Rep 1074 (KB 1602).

Coke's contribution to the history of the law there is important. Through no fault part of his own, Mr. Boyer hardly gives an adequate picture of the formidable real-property problems in *Shelley* and *Chudleigh*. The reports in print of these factually intricate cases are very hard to unravel. Although there are good secondary accounts of the cases, which Mr. Boyer uses and cites, even they are difficult for general readers to grasp in all dimensions. It is possible, though not certain, that the discovery of manuscript reports superior, or at least supplementary, to the printed ones will eventually facilitate exposition.)<sup>7</sup>

My criticism can be generalized by saying that the institutional landscape needs more attention—the institutions of the law whose history Coke's individual story touches. For example, it deserves em-

<sup>7</sup> *Slade* basically concludes that an action of Assumpsit may be brought in circumstances where an action of Debt would lie. This is at odds with the normal common law principle that if a form of action or writ provides relief in a given situation another form may not, so to speak, intrude on the former's territory. The intrusion in this instance was brought about by a legal fiction: pretending that the party who could sue in Debt but wanted to sue in Assumpsit had made a separate contract to pay a debt he already owed. Aside from jurisdictional consequences (see note 8), the outcome of *Slade* meant that most future contract law developed under the rubric of Assumpsit, a writ applicable to a wider range of contracts than Debt and unencumbered by some procedural practices attached to the very ancient action of Debt. Mr. Boyer's good account of *Slade* is based on important modern research and analysis, all of which he cites. This case and its antecedents are the shining exceptions to my generally rather gloomy insistence that most of the law of Coke's period has not yet been expounded for modern students with the technical exactitude and clarity necessary to make it really comprehensible in, as it were, another culture.

Real-property law (that is, the law about property in land), to which both *Shelley* and *Chudleigh* belong, is the hardest subject to penetrate. The basic reason for this is that the field was undergoing revolutionary change in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Statutes of Uses and Wills, passed in Henry VIII's reign, opened new prospects for creating interests in land, especially the prospect of "tying up" land forever (that is, making it perpetually inalienable). Many ingenious and bafflingly complex devices were invented by lawyers and tested in the courts—essentially attempts to do with the help of the Henrician Statutes what was legally impossible to do before they were enacted (enacted for purposes quite different from those the lawyers tried to use them for). This tangled passage of legal history eventuated in the Rule Against Perpetuities, with which all modern lawyers are familiar, but there were many twists and turns in the road that led to that outcome. Both *Shelley* and *Chudleigh* lie along that road. (The so-called Rule in *Shelley's Case* in the simplified form generally known to lawyers—a conveyance to A for life with a remainder to the heirs of A fails to create a remainder, but operates as if the conveyance said "to A and his heirs," which means in fee simple—was not invented in *Shelley*. The Rule in those terms was a good two centuries old; *Shelley* did, however, probably apply something like it to an extremely fancy new-style conveyance.) *Shelley* and *Chudleigh* certainly do illustrate Coke's skill as an advocate in the real-property thicket, which he and his contemporaries regarded as the key test of lawyerly accomplishment. The field not only presented the greatest technical challenge, but was also, so to speak, the "big money" law in a still largely agrarian society governed by a landed aristocracy. The problem I want to call attention to is just the difficulty of explaining cases in this field in work of the compass of Mr. Boyer's until more fundamental scholarship has been done on them.

For readers interested in understanding this material, the best book to start with is A.W.B. Simpson, *An Introduction to the History of the Land Law* (Oxford 1961), especially chapters VI, VIII, and IX.

phasis that Coke, the most outstanding of all barristers, who did not become a serjeant at law except as a nominal step required for his appointment to the Bench, practiced through the heyday of what has been called “the rise of the barristers.”<sup>8</sup> That is to say, he was a King’s Bench lawyer (Queen’s Bench, in deference to Elizabeth I) when a jurisdictional revolution was taking place, the King’s Bench completing a process of acquiring jurisdiction that gave England an odd system of two virtually concurrent high courts. Mr. Boyer knows all this but fails to center it. Can Coke’s specific history be interestingly related to his profession’s advance in numbers and prestige and to the legal changes underlying that?<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The phrase is the title of a book by Wilfrid R. Prest, *The Rise of the Barristers: A Social History of the English Bar, 1590–1640* (Clarendon 1991), cited in Mr. Boyer’s bibliography. As the title suggests, that book is mainly about the career paths and fortunes of barristers, rather than the legal changes that made their rise in numbers and importance possible. Since the latter are hardly familiar knowledge now, a brief review of them may be in order.

In the Middle Ages, the Court of Common Pleas had exclusive jurisdiction over most real-property litigation and also over the action of Debt, the main vehicle of medieval contract law. See the discussion of *Slade* in note 7 for how Assumpsit added the function of Debt to its other functions (providing relief in the form of damages where there was an undertaking or agreement that could not be enforced by Debt) and thereby became the predominant contractual action. In jurisdictional terms, this meant that suits to enforce virtually any actionable contract could be brought in the King’s Bench.

As explained above, it took a legal fiction to make Assumpsit interchangeable with Debt. It took another for the King’s Bench to infringe the Common Pleas’ real-property jurisdiction radically. The medieval King’s Bench could not help a dispossessed owner regain his land, but it did provide a remedy called Ejectment for a wrongfully displaced lessee or renter. Eventually, Ejectment was fictionalized so that an owner could sue in the King’s Bench by pretending that the plaintiff was his lessee, usually a nonexistent character named John Doe. (Simplifying a lot of technicality, “Doe” would say he was thrown out of his leasehold, and the other side would say “Doe” was thrown out because his lessor did not own the land he had purportedly leased, then the rival aspiring owners would fight out their respective ownership claims.) While fictitious Ejectment could not do everything the Common Pleas actions could, it came pretty close for practical purposes, so that the two main common law courts approached concurrency in property as well as contract. The process was also helped along by fictitious rigmaroles called Bills of Middlesex and Latitats. (Basically, these took advantage of a rule that the King’s Bench could occasionally conduct proceedings beyond its normal jurisdiction for persons such as its prisoners; fictionalization consisted in making believe that persons with no such special relation to the King’s Bench had one.)

Practice in the Common Pleas was confined to elite senior lawyers royally appointed as serjeants at law; ordinary barristers could practice as advocates in the King’s Bench and miscellaneous courts other than the major two. The medieval King’s Bench had extensive civil jurisdiction, mainly in what would now be called tort law, because suits begun by the many varieties of writs of Trespass could be brought there. The largely sixteenth-century accretions reviewed here, however, greatly increased the King’s Bench’s place in the sun, and hence that of the non-serjeant barristers.

Two good general histories for the matters discussed in this note are Theodore F.T. Plucknett, *A Concise History of the Common Law* (Butterworth 5th ed 1956), and J.H. Baker, *An Introduction to English Legal History* (Butterworth 4th ed 2002).

<sup>9</sup> To call King’s Bench lawyering a “profession” is of course only a manner of speaking. All lawyers started out as barristers; the most successful moved on to the serjeanty (which did

For another instance: we are told about Coke's activities as solicitor general and attorney general (ch 14) without its ever being clear what those offices—standardly and as they were changing in the period surrounding Coke—came to in conception and practice. There is some literature on the government legal service, which is cited, but Mr. Boyer's reader is left uninformed as to the picture it gives and the degree to which close study of Coke might alter or fill out such a picture.

A smaller matter than the general shape of Coke's private and public practice may make my complaint more concrete. In recounting the treason trial of the Earl of Essex in 1601 (pp 282–86), Mr. Boyer is obliged to describe trial by peers of a nobleman. He does so (pp 282–83 for the immediate point), but there is something odd about the order of the presentation that comes to more than an awkwardness in the exposition. We see the Lord Steward on stage before being told that we are about to witness a rare kind of criminal trial and given some explanation of the procedure's distinctiveness. Then, when he has told us about this unusual event, it occurs to Mr. Boyer to take note of something much more fundamental: that the prosecution of crime in Elizabethan England, not as a rule crime committed by peers of the realm, was a very different thing than we are familiar with in the modern world (p 283). He knows this and cites some literature, but before getting around to fundamentals has spoken frequently of “prosecution,” leaving the naïve reader, I am afraid, liable to assume in the meantime that there must have been “public prosecutors” all over the country somehow working for the chief of the prosecutorial department in Westminster. To reemphasize: Mr. Boyer does not say anything of the sort or believe it; he is just not careful enough to show the naïve reader the institutional landscape or ambitious enough to contribute to *legal* history.

Apart from my central criticism, I do not think it is necessary to pursue small bones of contention. One subject that is not small in terms of the space devoted to it I want only to express a certain mystification about. Mr. Boyer is interested in sixteenth-century religious controversy and especially Puritanism. These are of course prominent features in Coke's environment, properly discussed if only as part of the background, and any treatment of an intelligent Elizabethan, not to mention one so publicly important as Coke, should at least ask, in-

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not debar practice in the King's Bench). In connection with Coke, another perhaps useful explicit question would be whether he in any way “chose” barristering. My guess is that he would probably have become a serjeant in line for a judgeship had he not been tagged as a government lawyer and catapulted to the Bench on the strength of that service. It would be interesting to know, though I have no idea whether there is any basis for knowing, whether he ever felt twinges of pride for having outdone all the reverend serjeants of his time.

deed dare to speculate about, how the age's unavoidable religious discourse appeared to such a person. So Mr. Boyer's concern with Coke and religion is commendable. Where he comes down I find a little puzzling. When he talks about Puritanism most directly (especially in chapters 10 and 11) he shows his awareness of how complex and elusive the concept is (pp 159–61) and how difficult to fit to Coke (pp 179–83). Yet throughout the book there seems to run an intimation that after all Coke was a "Puritan" in a significant sense, perhaps induced by duty or opportunism to bottle up his sentiments while working for a government disposed to get tough on "Puritans" (of a more ardent strain than himself), but latent with the will to be just and kind to "Puritans" (even those whose ardor and readiness to move from opinion to action exceeded what he could personally quite approve of), a latency waiting to hatch when Coke possessed the Bench (see, for example, pp 183–86). Well, maybe so, but I think there are ample grounds for caution on these matters.<sup>10</sup> I wonder whether Mr. Boyer doesn't give too much weight to the ultra-Protestantism of a sister and brother-in-law of Coke's (on which he has done original research) (pp 61–66), and, much more generally, whether he is skeptical enough of the old historical picture of an alliance of Puritans and lawyers leading the realm into resistance against Stuart government and ultimately into benign revolution. This fixture of the Whig interpretation of history is not simply false, but in need of cautious construction. It seems to me that this book's focus on the *Elizabethan* Coke, which forbids serious argument about the complicated strands of seventeenth-century history, is slightly vitiated by an air of implication about the future.

## II. STEVE SHEPPARD'S *THE SELECTED WRITINGS AND SPEECHES OF SIR EDWARD COKE*

In putting together his three volumes selected from Coke's writings, Mr. Sheppard has done a great favor to those interested in Coke or in the legal and intellectual history he touches. The material col-

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<sup>10</sup> I suspect Mr. Boyer of believing that Coke the judge did emerge as a champion of "Puritans," which is dubious. His courts' decisions certainly benefited "Puritans" across the spectrum, mainly by working out clearer rules on the jurisdiction and powers of the High Commission than were previously in place. Most of that, however, was nearly inevitable legal development. On the much-discussed matter of self-incrimination, the basic rules pre-date the judicial Coke. In applying them he showed little sympathy for those who took liberties with the law for Protestant religion's sake. See Charles M. Gray, 2 *The Writ of Prohibition: Jurisdiction in Early Modern English Law* § 5 (Oceana 1st ed 1994) (now available in electronic form in a corrected second edition with a third volume added, online at <http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/law/gray> (visited June 7, 2005)), or my summary of that material in Charles M. Gray, *Self-Incrimination in Interjurisdictional Law: The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, in R.H. Helmholz, et al, *The Privilege Against Self-Incrimination: Its Origin and Development* 47 (Chicago 1997).

lected is not esoteric, for with a good law library and general library at hand it can be dug out—unanthologized—by modest effort. But having a generous amount of it available in readable print, easy to work on at leisure and at home, is an obvious boon to the best-equipped scholar and a greater one to the student, wherever located, who just wants to get acquainted with Coke, whether from scratch or under the guidance of secondary literature.

The first volume is drawn from Coke's *Reports* of cases. Of unambiguous value are the prefaces to the several volumes (thirteen in all) of the *Reports*, for those are prime sources for Coke's general thinking on history and jurisprudence. The reports themselves are laden with problems for "hard core" legal history. If one were to take one's early modern English law from these reports alone, one would often be off base with respect to precisely what and how the courts decided; on the other hand, one would be well informed about the residue of the Elizabethan age and the early seventeenth century that survived into the future on the strength of Coke's heroic authority and literary diligence. None of this, however, diminishes the usefulness of having fifty-odd important Cokean reports (mostly of cases, some of extrajudicial pronouncements) within easy reach. Merely reading them from curiosity would provide a course in the institutions and legal problems of Coke's period—a course not many textbooks and classrooms offer—and they are documentation for a lot that can be learned in the first instance from the historical literature. Mr. Sheppard has supplied good synopses of the cases to help readers into what must sometimes seem alien territory.

Volume II is largely excerpted from Coke's contribution to the tradition of English legal treatises, though his products are so glossatorial that calling them "treatises" is almost ironic. Nevertheless, the four books Coke entitled his *Institutes of the Lawes of England* are indispensable, both for Coke's thinking and for understanding the law he inherited and helped develop. The *Institutes* are neither homogeneous nor comprehensive of all law. The first part (usually known as "Coke on Littleton," as Coke himself in effect subtitled it) is *the* great book on one of history's most impressive legal artifacts, the English law of real property. (It is written in the form of a commentary on a fifteenth-century textbook on property law, the *Tenures* of Sir Thomas Littleton.<sup>11</sup> Coke admired Littleton, a prominent lawyer and judge in his day, extravagantly, but the commentary is much more profound than Littleton's book.) The second is gloss, with a vengeance, on a

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<sup>11</sup> Sir Thomas Littleton's *Tenures* was originally published around 1481. For a modern edition, see *Littleton's Tenures in English* (Gaunt 2003) (originally published Butterworth 1825).

number of venerable statutes (vol II, p 746); the third (vol II, p 945) and fourth (vol II, p 1054) are important milestones in a history of more or less systematic presentation, respectively, of criminal law and the judicial system (the “diversity of courts”). Mr. Sheppard’s selections from all four parts are intelligently chosen to serve as an introduction to the *Institutes* and to get students started on both learning the law and learning about Coke. The next step beyond this excellent anthology should be full reprints of the books.

Volume III contains mainly speeches by Coke in Parliament, but also makes available some important miscellaneous Cokean documents.

Throughout the collection Mr. Sheppard avoids editorial intrusiveness. He provides a couple of handy aids for students: a chronology of Coke’s life (vol I, p xxxii), a table of regnal years (vol III, p 1379), and a fine bibliography of secondary works on Coke (vol III, p 1341).

Sir John Baker has written:

It is difficult to resist the comparison of Coke with his eminent contemporaries Bacon and Shakespeare; what they were to philosophy and literature, Coke was to the common law. Yet his works have received less editorial attention than a minor poet can usually expect, and his unpublished works have been completely forgotten.<sup>12</sup>

Although his collection is a preliminary measure, Mr. Sheppard has notably facilitated reversal of that neglect.

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<sup>12</sup> Sir John Baker, *Coke’s Note-Books and the Sources of His Reports*, in Allen D. Boyer, ed., *Law, Liberty, and Parliament: Selected Essays on the Writings of Sir Edward Coke* 357, 385 (Liberty Fund 2004) (internal citations omitted). Sir John Baker’s article was originally published in 30 *Camb L J* 59 (1972). Although *Law, Liberty, and Parliament* is not included in this Review, Mr. Boyer and the Liberty Fund have there made a further contribution to putting Coke studies in convenient reach and in perspective.