

## Witness to History: The Life of John Wheeler-Bennett

**Review Number:** 1396

**Publish date:** Thursday, 21 March, 2013

**Author:** Victoria Schofield

**ISBN:** 9780300179019

**Date of Publication:** 2012

**Price:** £30.00

**Pages:** 336pp.

**Publisher:** Yale University Press

**Publisher url:**

**Place of Publication:** New Haven, CT

**Reviewer:** Doug Munro

In 1929, Major-General (retired) Sir Neill Malcolm advised the 27-year-old J. W. Wheeler-Bennett on the course of his future career, telling his younger travelling companion that he should stick to the contemporary history of Germany, extend his contacts in the United States, and give Russia a miss: 'There is no good trying to be a Russian scholar, it would take too long to learn the language and there are too many imponderables'. Malcolm imparted a further piece of advice:

What I urge you to do is to study Germany and the German people from within. Don't just be satisfied with knowing the 'nobs', the upper military and political and social echelons; they have their place and their importance but there are even more important factors. Get down underground and study the grass-roots, learn what the people are thinking and saying, especially in the country districts, where consular and embassy people don't, as a rule penetrate. Earn the confidence of 'good' Germans, if you can find them, and be able to assess the villainy of the 'bad' Germans too (p. 54).

Wheeler-Bennett later claimed that Malcolm's advice 'set the pattern of my life', a statement which his biographer Victoria Schofield quotes without correction in *Witness to History* (see also p. 61). Wheeler-Bennett did stick with Germany as well as extending his knowledge and contacts in the United States. What he demonstrably did *not* do, or try to do, was to get to know the 'mobs' as well as the 'nobs'. True to his background and the attitudes that flowed from a wealthy Edwardian childhood, he consorted with the upper echelons. He certainly had warmth of personality and was possessed of the common touch: he was pleasant to club porters and it's a safe bet that he never shouted at the servants (p. 280). But his charmed circle was that of diplomats and dignitaries, politicians and monarchs. The last is exemplified by the index of *Witness to History*, which commences with 'Abdication (1936)' and ends with 'Zita, empress of Austria'. In between are the names of about 20 other members of British and continental royal families, depending on how they are counted.

What manner of man he was is also suggested by the mid-1950s photo that faces page 148 in *Witness to History*. Striking a pose that was typical of the decade, Wheeler-Bennett's chin rests on cupped hands and he wears a pensive, even faraway look. Well groomed and in finely tailored clothes, he sports a heavy ring on a

finger of each hand; his hair has Brylcreem waves; a trademark carnation adorns the lapel of his jacket. We are all entitled to our affectations – Richard Hofstadter, Arthur Schlesinger Jr. and A. J. P. Taylor went in for bow ties. Another affectation was Wheeler-Bennett's hyphenated name but that was his father's doing, by joining his own surname (Bennett) with his wife's maiden name. Nothing in the photo suggests a man of the people, much less an historian who got 'down underground' or concerned himself with 'the grass-roots'. Far from writing history from below, Wheeler-Bennett's *oeuvre* epitomised his moneyed origins and conservative outlook: his father made his fortune in the meat-packing business and was politically reactionary. As a biographer Wheeler-Bennett wrote about 'great men' – a German general (Hindenburg), a British monarch (George VI) and an English life peer (Viscount Waverley). As a historian of the recent past and contemporary events, he wrote diplomatic and military history from a decidedly 'high politics' perspective.

By any measure, John Wheeler-Bennett (1902–75) led a singular life. He clearly thought his life of sufficient interest to warrant three autobiographies – *Knaves, Fools and Heroes: In Europe between the Wars* (1974), *Special Relationships: America in Peace and War* (1975) and *Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns* (1976). Born into wealth, his delicate health prevented enrolment at Cambridge University. Instead, he joined the League of Nations Union as a voluntary worker. A generous allowance from his father meant that he had no need to seek paid employment. Instead he fostered his growing interest in international affairs by founding an information service called the Association for International Understanding, which had its own publication programme. He managed to do all this while still in his early 20s. When his father died in 1926, Wheeler-Bennett took a share of an inheritance worth £684,188 (over £32 million in 2011 values), providing him with the wherewithal for travel and for living on the Continent, intermittently, between 1927 and 1934. This was when Wheeler-Bennett, following Malcolm's advice, '[began] to shape his career as an expert on German affairs ... observing the inner workings of the German Reich' (p. 60), establishing an increasing circle of contacts, writing reports for his Association for International Understanding (by then incorporated into the British Institute of International Affairs) and gathering material for a number of his books – *Hindenburg: The Wooden Titian* (1936), *Brest-Litovsk: The Forgotten Peace* (1938), *Munich: Prologue to Tragedy* (1948) and *The Nemesis of Power: The German Army in Politics, 1918–1946* (1953). From his 'ringside seat' (p. 79) he became disillusioned about Germany and the prospects for world peace, increasingly so after the Nazi assumption of power. Charming and personable though he was, he nonetheless had a ruthless streak: he would terminate a friendship if he considered the person favourable to appeasement; he felt that Roosevelt's death was timely, on the grounds that a 'ga-ga' president would have been disastrous (p. 173); he was insistent upon Germany's unconditional surrender; and he opposed the return of captured German records after the war. In 1938 he was so disgusted by the fate of Czechoslovakia ('I had never known that one could be physically sick from humiliation and impotence') that he seriously considered migrating to the United States (p. 105). In fact, he did spend most of the Second World War there, first as a visiting lecturer at the University of Virginia and then in New York, where in 1940 he joined the British Information Agency which was attempting to change United States' opinion in favour of entering the war.

This is by no means the full extent of the activities of Wheeler-Bennett, a self described 'observer of men and events' (p.42) who from time to time participated in the affairs of state. Enough has been said in the previous paragraphs to indicate a worthy biographical subject, a project replete with attractions and challenges. The disappointment is not simply that Schofield, like Wheeler-Bennett (p. 282), belongs to The Great Man School of History. She also belongs to The Face-Value School of Biography and presents Wheeler-Bennett as he saw himself. Schofield replicates rather than expands upon Wheeler-Bennett's world-view. She assumes the mantle of ventriloquist and her evaluation of her sources is mostly uncritical. Those sources are largely Wheeler-Bennett's autobiographical writings, to an extent that has to be seen to be believed. The most effective way to demonstrate the point is to itemise the frequency with which one or other of Wheeler-Bennett's autobiographies is footnoted in the eighth chapter of *Witness to History* (pp. 170–96):

## Chapter 8 of *Witness to History*

**Wheeler-Bennett's autobiographical work referred to in the footnote**

Footnote 1

*Special Relationships*, p. 207

Footnote 2

*Special Relationships*, p.194

Footnote 3

*Special Relationships*, p.195

Footnote 4

*Special Relationships*, p.54

Footnote 5

*Special Relationships*, p.196

Footnote 6

*Special Relationships*, p.15

Footnote 9

*Special Relationships*, p.198

Footnote 13

*Special Relationships*, p.201

Footnote 16

*Special Relationships*, p.202

Footnote 18

*Special Relationships*, p.203-04

Footnote 19

*Special Relationships*, p.205

Footnote 20

*Special Relationships*, p.205; another source cited

Footnote 21

*Special Relationships*, p.206

Footnote 22

*Special Relationships*, p.206

Footnote 28

*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, p.15

Footnote 30

*Special Relationships*, p.206

Footnote 31

*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, p.15

Footnote 32

*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, p.19

Footnote 33

*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, p. 21

Footnote 34

*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, p. 20

Footnote 37

*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, pp. 28, 30

Footnote 38

*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, p. 35

Footnote 39

*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, p. 35

Footnote 40

*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, p. 42

Footnote 41

*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, p. 41

Footnote 43

*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, p. 54; other sources cited

Footnote 44

*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, p. 55

Footnote 49

*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, p. 69

Footnote 55

*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, pp. 72-3

Footnote 57

*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, p. 74

Footnote 58

*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, p. 72

Footnote 60

*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, p. 71

Footnote 61

*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, p. 77

Footnote 67

*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, p. 82

Footnote 69

*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, pp. 81-2; other sources cited

Footnote 70

*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, p. 85

Footnote 71

*Knaves, Fools and Heroes*, p. 155

Footnote 74

*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, p. 90

Footnote 84

*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, pp. 108-11; other sources cited

Footnote 87

*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, p. 115

Footnote 93

*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, p. 122

Footnote 101

There are extenuating circumstances for leaning so heavily on the autobiographies. In some cases – such as the visit that Wheeler-Bennett and his mother made to Asia – the only significant source is one of the autobiographies, in this case *The Gorgeous East* (unpublished). And at certain points the documentary evidence is sparse or lacking: there are only two surviving letters to his mother (p. 302, n. 85); it is possible that Wheeler-Bennett's reports of his American activities during the Second World War have been purged from the Lothian Papers (p. 303, n. 2); and there are no surviving letters between Wheeler-Bennett and Ruth Risher, his wife to be (p. 308, n. 31). It is also noticeable that the footnoting of the autobiographies is far less prevalent beyond chapter eight, partly because Wheeler-Bennett's final autobiography does not cover much of the content of Schofield's final chapters but largely because the shortfall is covered by other sources, such as the Eden Papers. Even so, there is indirect evidence that Schofield has not been assiduous in chasing up sources, unlike some other biographers of historians.<sup>(1)</sup> She explains that none of Wheeler-Bennett's reports to the Foreign Office are among his papers at St Anthony's College, Oxford, although it is possible that he reported verbally to General Malcolm (p. 295, n. 19). But neither is there any sign that Schofield has gone beyond the Wheeler-Bennett Papers and checked the records of the Foreign Office.

The result is an undue reliance on the autobiographies. Some biographers of historians avoid using their subject's autobiographical work wherever possible, preferring instead to rely on their own research.<sup>(2)</sup> Schofield has no such inhibitions. The extent to which the autobiographies drive her narrative – and consequently the extent to which Wheeler-Bennett's self-representations are replicated – can be illustrated by giving representative examples of how closely the autobiographies are paraphrased – although, be it stated, Schofield does not go to the extremes of some biographers of historians <sup>(3)</sup> where a good half of their text comprises quotations from diaries and letters:

***Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns***

***Witness to History***

Now I was master of my own destiny again – and I was fairly clear in my mind what I wanted to do (p. 15)

For the first time since the beginning of the war, Wheeler-Bennett felt that he was master of his own destiny (p. 176)

As we boarded [the *Queen Elizabeth*] I was handed a cable from my sister announcing the death of our mother, who had been a hopeless invalid for some years (p. 19)

As he and Ruth boarded, he was handed a cable from his sister, Irene. Their mother, whom Wheeler-Bennett described as 'a hopeless invalid for some years', had died at the age of eighty-three (p. 177)

[Garsington] became our property in 1945 because my sister and her husband wished to continue living in Oxford. I bought it from them in America by cable over Ruth's protests that she did not like Elizabethan houses (p. 23)

When Wheeler-Bennett heard that it was to be put up for sale, he immediately cabled his sister to say that he wanted to buy it, ignoring his wife's complaints that she did not like Elizabethan houses (p. 178)

(p. 20) Together we faced the new world of Britain in the middle forties: a Britain tired and war-weary, yet compelled to face the severities of continued wartime shortages while deprived of the continued wartime stimulus. I shall never forget the dour drabness of those years, the greyness of one's daily existence.... Food was scarce, scarcer than it had been in wartime. Bread was rationed for the first time in our national history, and had it not been for food parcels which Ruth's mother so generously sent us from America we should have been hard pressed indeed. As it was we were able to share our blessings with our less fortunate friends

and neighbours (p. 20)

Re-entry into England is not easy. The country was 'tired and war-weary, yet compelled to face the severities of continued wartime shortages ... I shall never forget the dour drabness of those years, the greyness of one's daily existence ... food was scarce, scarcer than it had been in wartime. Bread was rationed for the first time in our national history'. Fortunately for the Wheeler-Bennetts, their supplies were supplemented by food parcels which Ruth's mother sent from America, and which they shared with their 'less fortunate friends and neighbours' (p. 178)

*Witness to History* contains too many direct echoes from the autobiographies. It is not a case of Hamlet without the Prince, but too much of the Prince himself, and Schofield duplicates the syrupy tone of the autobiographies. Furthermore, Schofield notes that Harold Macmillan, who was both Wheeler-Bennett's friend and publisher,

could not but regret that, entertaining as the three volumes of John Wheeler-Bennett's memoirs were, 'they are too discreet. I would have liked to see on record some of the extraordinary tales with which he could fascinate us'. He acknowledged that Wheeler-Bennett probably judged rightly in deciding what material to include. 'There is a gulf of propriety fixed between the frivolity of the spoken word and the decorum of the printed text' (p. 280).

Such discretion was arguably excessive in the mid 1970s. For a biographer to largely run along the same tram tracks some 40 years later is an opportunity lost.

Another contemporary criticism was that Wheeler-Bennett put 'anecdote before analysis' (p. 271). Despite her over-reliance on the autobiographies, Schofield does warn that Wheeler-Bennett was in ill health when he wrote his memoirs and he did so 'mainly from memory' (p. 329). At numerous points in her footnotes, Schofield makes up for this lack of verification by providing correction and clarification. A notable correction (this time in the text) is that Wheeler-Bennett, whatever his assertions to the contrary, *did* return to Germany after the Night of the Long Knives (pp. 272–3). Schofield presents excuses for this error, one of which is that Wheeler-Bennett's 'memory of his presence in Germany in the mid-1930s was blocked on "psychological grounds"'. If dissociation was indeed the case, then it was sheer irresponsibility on Wheeler-Bennett's part to write autobiographies without recourse to his diaries and papers.

What is interesting from an antipodean perspective is that Wheeler-Bennett was never berated for his factual lapses, unlike the Australian historian Manning Clark who mistakenly perpetuated the story that he had witnessed the mayhem of *Kristallnacht*. He too failed to consult his diaries. In fact his wife was there and Clark was safely tucked away in England, arriving in Germany a fortnight later. To compound the error Clark, deliberately or otherwise, appropriated his wife's experience and repeatedly presented it as an epiphany. There was a furore in right-wing circles when one of Clark's biographers blew his cover.<sup>(4)</sup> Wheeler-Bennett is also open to the charge of not checking his memory against his diary entries, but he was such an establishment figure and so widely liked as a person – whereas Clark had made many enemies – that no one kicked up a fuss or manufactured a posthumous crisis.

A perennial question hanging over biographies of historians is the correct balance between the life and the works. There will be opinions for every taste. My own position mirrors that of Kathy Burk, one of A. J. P. Taylor's biographers, who puts the view that there isn't 'much point in writing a biography of an historian – or any writer, come to that – without having closely read and thought about the books, and then making an attempt to write analytically about them. However, this very much does not preclude writing about the life. How could you have one without the other?'<sup>(5)</sup> This, of course, is not to suggest that focus be entirely on the works. Important in itself, such an approach does not constitute biography.<sup>(6)</sup> Of the recent crop, Adam Sisman's biography of Hugh Trevor-Roper comes up short in discussing the works.<sup>(7)</sup> So too does the book

under review. Schofield displays little interest, and less understanding, of Wheeler-Bennett's *oeuvre*.

Take, for example, her notion that Wheeler-Bennett dubbed Hindenburg 'the wooden titan' because his 'final appraisal was that Hindenburg's life was both pitiful and tragic' (p. 96). Another reviewer has pointed out that the description came from the wooden colossi of Hindenburg built during First World War, into which people hammered nails, with the proceeds from the sale of the nails going to the German Red Cross. (8) One wonders how carefully Schofield read *Hindenburg: The Wooden Titan*, where all this is explained on pages 79–80. Furthermore, the text is complemented by the book's illustrations: opposite page 270 is a photo of 'Hammering nails into the wooden statue' (and in that cluster of photos is another of the unveiling of a statue). The misapprehension regarding 'the wooden titan' is a telling mistake that raises doubts about how thoroughly Schofield has actually read her subject's works.

Rather than providing substantive comment on Wheeler-Bennett's books, Schofield is generally content to provide the back stories and what reviewers said. Sometimes the more interesting details don't get included, such as Wheeler-Bennett initially intending to model *The Nemesis of Power* on Hugh Trevor-Roper's *The Last Days of Hitler* (see *Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, pp. 99–100). At other times, the back story is told far better in one or other of Wheeler-Bennett's autobiographies, such as the lead-up to Wheeler-Bennett becoming the official biographer of George VI (*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*, ch. 5). What we do not get from either Wheeler-Bennett or from Schofield is an insight into the murky underbelly of authorised biography. The person who suggested Wheeler-Bennett for the job was Harold Nicolson, the biographer of George V. It is well enough known that Nicolson had little respect for either his subject or the monarchy. He said so in his diary, but Schofield gives no inkling despite having consulted Nicolson's diaries. Wheeler-Bennett, by contrast, revered the monarchy, and felt that he was privileged beyond measure to have become a royal biographer. He probably had no idea of Nicolson's real feelings. (9)

Alan Bullock put his finger on the qualities that made Wheeler-Bennett a suitable (as distinct from a competent) royal biographer – 'He had the instincts of a courtier as well as an officer' (p. 198) – and Schofield also quotes Wheeler-Bennett's portentous statement that 'Royal Biography, like matrimony, is not to be entered into inadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly and in the fear of God' (p. 197). That is hardly the recipe for achieving critical distance or authorial independence. Nor is it any reassurance that Alan Lascelles, who was George VI's private secretary, could not fault the draft chapters: 'I would take [each instalment] home, armed with my sharpest blue-pencil, keenly looking forward to using it'. Alas, Lascelles said, his blue pencil 'nearly always remained unblunted ... such emendations as I have had to suggest were almost invariably the correction of typists' errors' (p. 209). That Lascelles was satisfied is hardly a signal for confidence. Rather, it makes the book immediately suspect, and indeed *George VI: His Life and Reign* is an anodyne and cloying biography.

The fact remains that Wheeler-Bennett was an anachronism in his own lifetime, and possessed of complacent attitudes, as Michael Bliss discovered. In the early 1970s Bliss was writing a biography of Wheeler-Bennett senior's Canadian business partner, Joseph Flavelle, and he contacted Wheeler-Bennett junior

who was delighted by my project, and for three years we had Easter luncheons in Manhattan as he passed through on his way home from wintering in Arizona. Sipping straight vodka in the leather and oak ambience of the Century Club, Sir John regaled me with stories of his father, Flavelle, prime ministers, and statesmen he had known. It seemed remarkable to talk to a man who had met both Kaiser Wilhelm II and Adolf Hitler. Very much his father's son, Wheeler-Bennett was among the last historians to believe that British imperialism had been an almost qualified success. (10)

Schofield quotes many examples of Wheeler-Bennett's exaggerated and sometimes nauseating courtliness. One such example concerns the dedication of his final volume of autobiography. To quote Schofield, '*Friends, Enemies and Sovereigns*



was published posthumously in 1976. Indicative of the achievement Wheeler-Bennett rated so highly – his status as royal biographer – he had chosen to dedicate “with humble duty and by gracious permission” his third volume of memoirs to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother’ (p. 280). He did so ‘with deep devotion’. It is a strange thing that a biographer of an historian largely eschews substantive discussion of the subject’s books and in its place routinely mentions such trivia as who gets named in the acknowledgment sections, and to whom the books are dedicated. To give a few examples of the latter: ‘Wheeler-Bennett dedicated [*Hindenburg*], “With affection and gratitude”, to the elected Conservative MP Gerald Palmer and his mother who had frequently entertained him at their Berkshire home, Prior’s Court’ (p. 96); ‘Among those whose assistance Wheeler-Bennett acknowledged [in *Munich: Prologue to Tragedy*] were ... Constance Morgan (to whom he dedicated the book)’ (p. 186); ‘*John Anderson, Viscount Waverley* was published on 27 September 1962, [and] dedicated to Ruth “with love”’ (p. 220); ‘[*The Semblance of Peace*] was duly dedicated to Deakin, “with admiration and affection”’ (p. 256); ‘He dedicated [*Knaves, Fools and Heroes*] “with my love” to his sister, Irene, now in her eightieth year’ (p. 270); ‘Appropriately, he dedicated [*Special Relationships*] to his American wife: “Ruth, with my devoted love, John”’ (p. 274). Schofield passes these inconsequentialities off as serious content – as fit items for inclusion – which indicates a misplaced sense of what is, and is not, relevant and significant. The result is that Schofield doesn’t come to grips with Wheeler-Bennett’s works.

There are also some sweeping assertions that fail to bear up to scrutiny. Schofield states that Wheeler-Bennett ‘virtually created the new early twentieth-century academic discipline of “international relations”’ (pp. 21, 282). She is explicit that this was through his earlier writings rather than his institutional work. No evidence is presented to support this claim and I haven’t been able to find any.

From the preceding discussion the question arises: who is best able to write a biography of an historian? It has been suggested that historians have the potential to make the best biographers *per se*.<sup>(11)</sup> I have never agreed with this, feeling instead that biographers are born, not made. You can either do it or you can’t. I said as much a few years ago when reviewing the biographies of the New Zealand composer Douglas Lilburn and the New Zealand artist Rita Angus. Neither biographer is an historian but they passed with flying colours, in my view.<sup>(12)</sup> On reflection, it might be better to qualify the notion that biographical writing is an innate skill and to add that a biographer usually needs a grounding in the subject’s primary interests, or else to be able to develop the requisite skills. Lilburn’s biographer is a composer and Angus’s biographer is an art critic. That accounts for at least some of their success in convincingly depicting their subjects. In the same way it is noticeable that biographies of historians are usually by other historians working in the same field as their subject, or in an adjacent one.<sup>(13)</sup> Although Schofield has an undergraduate degree in history, she doesn’t have a background in Wheeler-Bennett’s interests, and it shows. She is not equipped, and has not been able to acquire the equipment, for the task at hand – for the same reasons that Wheeler-Bennett never became a scholar of Russia. Even then Schofield might have done better had she consulted other biographies of historians in order to realise the possibilities of the genre, not least to get a sense of how to discuss Wheeler-Bennett’s writings.<sup>(14)</sup> A good short-cut would have been to read Mark Cornwall’s article on Elizabeth Wiskemann and the Sudeten question, or even the article on ‘The intellectual JFK[ennedy]’ by John Fair, whose MA thesis on British appeasement Wheeler-Bennett helped to supervise (p. 109). Each article would have served as a sure and suggestive model for how to proceed.<sup>(15)</sup>

Relentlessly descriptive and tiresomely reverential, *Witness to History* is an extended obituary which puts Wheeler-Bennett’s platitudes and pieties on full display. It is a missed opportunity. It presents insufficient added-value to Wheeler-Bennett’s memoirs. Rather than writing a penetrating biography, Schofield doesn’t venture beyond its subject’s frames of reference.

## Notes

1. For example Jonathan Haslam, *The Vices of Integrity: E. H. Carr, 1892–1982* (London/New York, NY, 1999), p. xii; Kathleen Burk, *Troublemaker: The Life and History of A. J. P. Taylor* (New Haven/London, 2000), pp. x–xii. [Back to \(1\)](#)

2. For example Jim Davidson, *A Three-Cornered Life: The Historian WK Hancock* (Sydney, 2010), p. viii. It would have been revealing had Schofield discussed her use of sources along the lines, say, of Erik Larson in his account of William Dodd's first year as United States Ambassador to Germany. Larson, *In the Garden of Beasts: Love, Terror, and an American Family in Hitler's Berlin* (New York, NY, 2011), pp. 369–75. Dodd was one of Wheeler-Bennett's many contacts.[Back to \(2\)](#)
3. Lewis H. Thomas, *The Renaissance of Canadian History: A Biography of A.L. Burt* (Toronto, 1975); John and Mary Postgate, *A Stomach for Dissent: The Life of Raymond Postgate* (Keele, 1994).[Back to \(3\)](#)
4. Mark McKenna, 'Being there: the strange history of Manning Clark', *The Monthly* (Melbourne), (March 2007), 22–37; republished, with footnotes, as 'Once more with feeling: the personal voice of Manning Clark', in *Against the Grain: Brian Fitzpatrick and Manning Clark in Australian History and Politics*, ed. Stuart Macintyre and Sheila Fitzpatrick (Melbourne, 2007), pp. 191–222.[Back to \(4\)](#)
5. Kathy Burk, e-mail to reviewer, 8 January 2010.[Back to \(5\)](#)
6. For example, Peter Ghosh, 'Hugh Trevor-Roper and the history of ideas', *History of European Ideas*, 37, 4 (2011), 483–505; Ronald J. Deibert, 'Harold Innis and the empire of speed', *Review of International Studies*, 25, 2 (1999), 273–89.[Back to \(6\)](#)
7. Adam Sisman, *Hugh Trevor-Roper: The Biography* (London, 2010); see also Doug Munro, 'History as a blood sport – the biography of Hugh-Trevor Roper', *Journal of Historical Biography*, 8 (2010), 62–76 <[http://www.ufv.ca/jhb/Volume\\_8/Volume\\_8\\_Munro.pdf](http://www.ufv.ca/jhb/Volume_8/Volume_8_Munro.pdf) [2]> [accessed 21 January 2013].[Back to \(7\)](#)
8. Richard Overy, 'Networker-in-chief', *Literary Review* (May 2012), 21–2.[Back to \(8\)](#)
9. David Cannadine, *The Pleasures of the Past* (New Haven, CT/London, 1989), pp. 32–3; see also Cannadine, *History in Our Time* (New Haven/London, 1998), pp. 60–1.[Back to \(9\)](#)
10. Michael Bliss, *Writing History: A Professor's Life* (Toronto, 2011), p. 160; Bliss, *A Canadian Millionaire: The Life and Business Times of Sir Joseph Flavelle, Bart., 1858–1939* (Toronto, 1978).[Back to \(10\)](#)
11. Mark McKenna, 'The strange history of Manning Clark', Trevor Reece Memorial Lecture, King's College, London, 27 October 2011.[Back to \(11\)](#)
12. Reviews of Philip Norman, *Douglas Lilburn: His Life and Music* (Christchurch, 2006); Jill Trevelyan, *Rita Angus: An Artist's Life* (Wellington, 2008), *New Zealand Journal of History*, 41, 1 (2007), 96–8; and 43, 1 (2009), 130–1, respectively <[http://www.nzjh.auckland.ac.nz/docs/2007/NZJH\\_41\\_1\\_12.pdf](http://www.nzjh.auckland.ac.nz/docs/2007/NZJH_41_1_12.pdf) [3]> [accessed 21 January 2013]; <[http://www.nzjh.auckland.ac.nz/docs/2009/NZJH\\_43\\_1\\_21.pdf](http://www.nzjh.auckland.ac.nz/docs/2009/NZJH_43_1_21.pdf) [4]> [accessed 21 January 2013].[Back to \(12\)](#)
13. Doug Munro, 'The cliographer's craft – or, biographies of historians', *Australian Historical Studies*, 43, 1 (2012), 11–27.[Back to \(13\)](#)
14. In addition to Haslam, *The Vices of Integrity*, Burk, *Troublemaker*, and Davidson, *A Three-Cornered Life*, examples of biographies of historians that achieve a good balance between the life and the works include Carole Fink, *Marc Bloch: A Life in History* (Cambridge, 1989); Gregory M. Pfitzer, *Samuel Eliot Morison's Historical World: In Search of the New Parkman* (Boston, 1991); David Cannadine, *G.M. Trevelyan: A Life in History* (London, 1993); Maxine Berg, *A Woman in History: Eileen Power, 1889–1940* (Cambridge, 1996); John G. Reid, *Viola Florence Barnes: A Historian's Biography* (Toronto, 2005); Philip Payton, *A.L. Rowse and Cornwall: A Paradoxical Patriot* (Exeter, 2005); David S. Brown, *Richard Hofstadter: An Intellectual Biography* (Chicago/London, 2006); Michael Bentley, *The Life and Thought of Herbert Butterfield: History, Science and God* (Cambridge, 2011); Mark McKenna, *An Eye for Eternity: The Life of Manning Clark* (Melbourne, 2011).[Back to \(14\)](#)
15. Mark Cornwall, 'Elizabeth Wiskemann and the Sudeten Question: a woman at the "essential hinge" of Europe', *Central Europe*, 1, 1 (2003), 55–75; John F. Fair, 'The intellectual JFK: lessons in statesmanship from British history', *Diplomatic History*, 30, 1 (2006), 119–42.[Back to \(15\)](#)

**Other reviews:**

Weekly Standard

[http://www.weeklystandard.com/articles/scholar-gentleman\\_707669.html](http://www.weeklystandard.com/articles/scholar-gentleman_707669.html) [5]

Wall Street Journal

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10000872396390444405804577561082057775496.html> [6]

---

**Source URL:** <https://reviews.history.ac.uk/review/1396>

**Links**

[1] <https://reviews.history.ac.uk/item/55638> [2] [http://www.ufv.ca/jhb/Volume\\_8/Volume\\_8\\_Munro.pdf](http://www.ufv.ca/jhb/Volume_8/Volume_8_Munro.pdf)

[3] [http://www.nzjh.auckland.ac.nz/docs/2007/NZJH\\_41\\_1\\_12.pdf](http://www.nzjh.auckland.ac.nz/docs/2007/NZJH_41_1_12.pdf)

[4] [http://www.nzjh.auckland.ac.nz/docs/2009/NZJH\\_43\\_1\\_21.pdf](http://www.nzjh.auckland.ac.nz/docs/2009/NZJH_43_1_21.pdf)

[5] [http://www.weeklystandard.com/articles/scholar-gentleman\\_707669.html](http://www.weeklystandard.com/articles/scholar-gentleman_707669.html)

[6] <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10000872396390444405804577561082057775496.html>