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KENNETH CAMERON'S WORK ON ENGLISH PLACE-NAMES: AN APPRECIATION

Kenneth Cameron's contribution to place-name studies comprises both an extremely distinguished corpus of writings published between 1956 and 1985, and the Directorship of the English Place-Name Society, which he assumed in 1967 and which he will retain after his retirement from the English Department at Nottingham. Under his Directorship the Society has produced fifteen volumes; and the editing of these, together with the administrative burdens imposed by his position as Honorary Director and Secretary, must have involved great sacrifices of time and energy. In spite of these burdens, the publications listed here form a compact body of steadily-appearing, erudite, useful work, with some astonishing peaks.

The first of the three studies which share the title *Scandinavian Settlement in the Territory of the Five Boroughs* (delivered as his inaugural lecture at the University of Nottingham) sounded a triumphant new note at a time when several of us who belonged to the same generation of place-name scholars were keenly aware that new notes were required. "Eccles in English Place-Names", in 1968, was another such. *The Significance of English Place-Names* (an Israel Gollancz Memorial Lecture delivered on a memorable occasion at the British Academy) was a generous survey of all the new work of 1965-75, and it conferred academic respectability on a body of writings which were still, even at that date, regarded as heretical digressions by a formidable body of older scholars. The O'Donnell lecture of 1980, "The Meaning and Significance of Old English *walh* in English Place-Names", is arguably the most satisfying and stimulating of all the items listed in the Bibliography.

It may seem perverse to instance these four papers as the peaks in a Bibliography which includes not only a three-volume county survey but also the most successful book on English place-names since Isaac Taylor's *Words and Places* in 1882. The Derbyshire survey is among the best in the EPNS series, distinguished from those which preceded it by greater thoroughness in the collection of material, and a steadier attention to minor names and field-names. The Batsford publication of 1961, *English Place-Names*, performed the rare and difficult feat of presenting a complicated subject in a manner which appealed to an enormous readership. These are notable achievements, but it is the advancement of the subject through new approaches which appeals most to colleagues working in the same field, and this is seen most clearly in the papers which I have instanced.

The inaugural lecture of 1965, and the second and third parts

of Professor Cameron's study of Scandinavian settlement in the east midlands which followed in 1970 and 1971, sparked off a controversy which is still lively. There is a deep division of opinion concerning the extent of Scandinavian colonisation of English land following the Viking invasions which began in A.D. 865. In my own most recent book I wrote that "it would be difficult, even if one wished it, to avoid taking sides on this matter"; and my position of *partis pris*, firmly on the side of Professor Cameron, perhaps disqualifies me as a judge of the historical issues involved. I can, however, recommend the last item in the Bibliography (which Kenneth himself calls his "last will and testament on Danish settlement") as a lucid and characteristically generous statement.

"Viking Settlement in the East Midlands" and Part 1 of a massive survey of Lincolnshire are the publications for 1985. Obviously there is much still to come. Place-names are not a narrow specialism. They are relevant to many aspects of philological, historical, geographical and archaeological studies, and they are amply sufficient occupation for a whole academic lifetime. Kenneth probably feels, as I do, that one lifetime is totally inadequate, but he is making the fullest possible use of his. May it be a long one!

Margaret Gelling