

Sir Henry Spelman, Dr. Barkham, Edmund Bolton and Wm. Barton for assistance upon his history, he says :

“ But let us hear Mr. Speed's own account of his chief assistants : ‘ For the body of the historie,’ says he, ‘ many were the manuscripts, notes, and records wherewith my honored and learned friends supplied me ; but none more, or so many, as did the *worthy repairer of eating-times' ruins*, Sir Robert Cotton, Knight, Baronet—another Philadelphus in preserving old monuments and ancient records—whose cabinets were unlocked and library continually set open to my free access, and from whence the chiefest garnishments of this worke have been enlarged and brought, such as are the antique altars and trophes in Stowe, by him preserved from perishing oblivion. The coins of gold, silver, alchamy, and copper of the Britains, Romans, Saxons, Danes, and English, with the broad seales of those kings since the same were in use—all of them so followed from the original moddles and moneyes by the most exquisit and curious hand of our age, as my eyes may witness ; they are the true prints from those stamps. The like most acceptable helpers, both of books and collections, I continually received from that worthy divine, Master John Barkham, a gentleman composed of learning, vertue and curtesie, as being no less ingenuously willing than learnedly able to advance and forward all vertuous endeavours. Besides these, some other supply I have had, for, my disease grown dangerous and life held in suspense, it behooved him who had toward the publishing bestowed so great cost, to forward to their finishing ; and to that end he procured to me his further charges, an assistant in the lives of our middle English kings, whose stories and raignes (by the judicious) may by their stiles be known to be writ by another penne. Lastly, for the matters of Heraldrie, the willing and ready pains of Master William Smith, an officer at arms and ever at hand.’ ”

Degary Wheat, in his “ Method and Order of Reading Histories,” thus commends Speed's History :

“ Our author, having traveled over all Great Britain, read diligently all our own h. . . .ians, and those of our neighbors, together with a diligent search in the public offices, rolls, monuments, and ancient charters, built up a splendid and admired theater of the British Empire, which, with great expedition and labor, he perfected in fourteen years in ten books. Wherefore, I do most earnestly exhort young men, and especially those who are of noble birth and intend to travel, that they would first peruse this beautiful theater of Great Britain and run over all the parts of it before they travel into foreign countries or visit strange nations.”