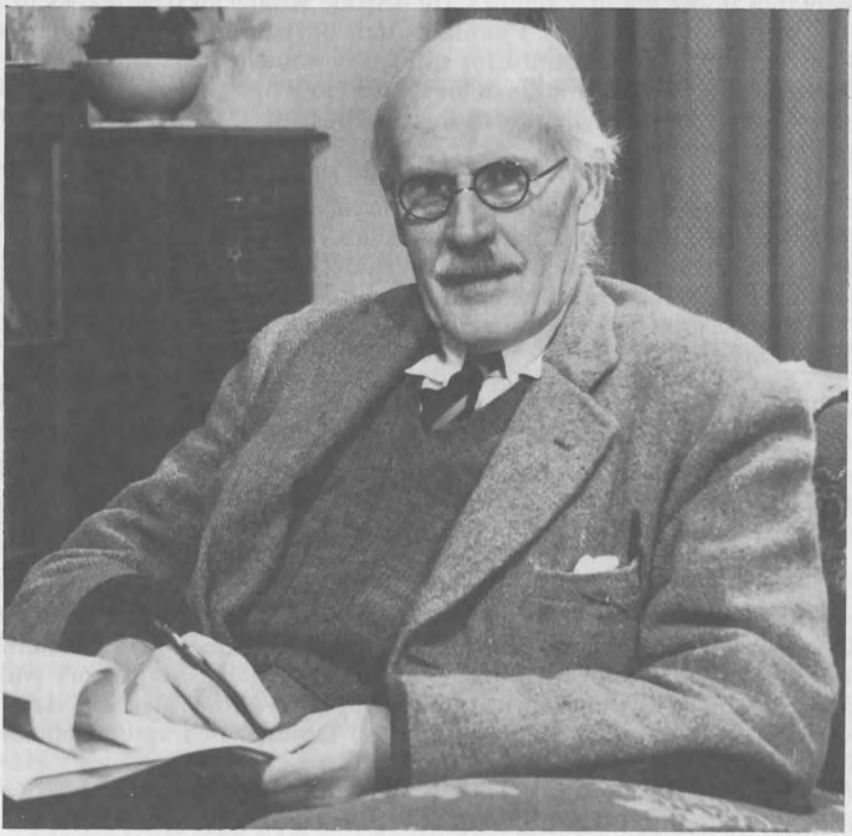
Obituary

Sir Harold Jeffreys

Harold Jeffreys held the record for the longest continuous tenure of a fellowship at an Oxford or Cambridge College, and had been senior fellow of St John's for more than ten years.



He was born at Fatfield, County Durham (now Tyne and Wear) on 22 April 1891; his father was headmaster of the village school and his mother had also been a teacher. He won a county scholarship to Rutherford College, a secondary school in Newcastle, and in 1907 he went on to Armstrong College, Newcastle, then part of Durham University, and now incorporated in the University of Newcastle. He came up to St John's in 1910 with an entrance scholarship, and graduated in 1913 as a Wrangler in Part II of the Mathematical Tripos, with distinction in Schedule B

(corresponding to the present Part III). His first major piece of research was on a topic that was to occupy him throughout his life, the structure of the Earth and the Moon; this work led to his election to a Fellowship in November 1914, and he was awarded a Smith's Prize in 1915. World War I had begun in August 1914; from 1915 to 1917 he did part-time research in the Cavendish Laboratory, and then he went to the Meteorological Office as research assistant to Sir Napier Shaw, continuing also to work on his own problems.

The formal side of the remainder of his career can be briefly summarised. He became a College Lecturer in 1922, supervising in mathematics till 1931. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1925, and was awarded the University's Adams Prize in 1926; in the same year he became a University Lecturer in Mathematics under the new statutes. He became Reader in Geophysics in 1931, and in 1946 was elected to the Plumian Chair of Astronomy and Experimental Philosophy, which he held until his official retirement in 1958. He received a knighthood in 1953 in recognition of his services to geophysics and in particular to seismology. In 1960 he was awarded the Copley Medal, the senior award of the Royal Society.

His distinction was internationally recognised, and he was awarded medals and honorary memberships by learned societies all over the world. In 1959, immediately after his retirement, he made a tour of the Australian universities; he then went on to India, where he met two distinguished Johnian mathematicians (R.P. Paranjpye, joint Senior Wrangler in 1899, and G.S. Mahajani, Wrangler with distinction in Schedule B, 1924), who later became Honorary Fellows. On his 80th birthday he was in Singapore; a few weeks later he led the British party in singing 'Blaydon Races' at a meeting in Japan.

In 1940 he married Bertha Swirles, lecturer in mathematics at Girton College, where she had been a Fellow since 1938. There were no children of the marriage. Sir Harold died on 18 March 1989, in his 98th year.

Jeffreys contributed to many branches of science, but geophysics was always the focus of his attention. His main source of data was the international network of seismic observatories throughout the world, which provided the raw material for finding the travel times of earthquake waves. Through his joint work with his research student K.E. Bullen, who came to St John's in 1931, these data were incorporated in what became known as the J-B Tables, which were first published in 1940, and have ever since been a standard reference for seismologists. Harold's painstaking analysis of travel times led him to important conclusions about the internal structure of the Earth.

Another important contribution of Harold's was to a problem involving both astronomical and geophysical phenomena. This is in part a St John's College story, and deserves retelling in some detail. In 1695 Halley compared contemporary observations of the Moon with positions derived from ancient eclipses, and concluded that the moon's orbital motion was speeding up, a phenomenon that came to be called 'the secular acceleration of the Moon'. These observations were confirmed by others, but it was not till 1787 that any explanation was given; Laplace found that perturbations due to the gravitational attraction of the other

planets caused a slow decrease in the eccentricity of the Earth's orbit and this in turn affected the action of the Sun's attraction on the Moon. His calculations gave a very good approximation to the observed acceleration, and they were confirmed by others. There matters rested, apparently very satisfactorily, until 1853, when John Couch Adams (of this College) announced that he had reworked the theory. Taking some previously neglected terms into account, he came out with a theoretical value for the acceleration that was only about half the observed value. Some astronomers accepted Adams's result, but others denied its correctness; the controversy continued for many years, and indeed some texts in celestial mechanics continued to give Laplace's treatment until early in the present century. It was pointed out by Delauney in 1865 that the discrepancy might be accounted for if the Earth's rotation were slowing down; a possible cause for this might be tidal friction, a suggestion first mooted by Immanuel Kant in 1754. As we now know, the length of the day is in fact increasing by about two milliseconds per century. Stimulated by G.I. Taylor's work on tidal friction in the Irish sea, Jeffreys undertook in 1920 lengthy calculations on the turbulent dissipation of energy in shallow seas over the whole world, concluding that it was of the right order of magnitude to account for the missing term in the secular acceleration of the Moon. Nevertheless, the problem is still under active discussion.

Throughout his career Jeffreys was firmly opposed to Wegener's theory of continental drift. Although a form of this is now widely accepted under the name of plate tectonics, for which there is a wealth of qualitative evidence, it is still open to his main objection: that as yet there is no fully developed quantitative theory to account for the driving forces that move the plates. One of his recurrent themes was that geophysics must have a sound mathematical basis; this runs through his famous treatise *The Earth; its origin, history and physical constitution*, first published in 1924 and revised at frequent intervals thereafter, the latest edition appearing in 1976.

Although Jeffreys was interested in mathematics as a tool for physical applications, he nevertheless had a wide and deep knowledge of those parts of pure mathematics that were important in this context; he insisted that basic theorems should be proved rigorously, even if they were not established in as great a generality as a pure mathematician might wish. The book entitled *Methods of Mathematical Physics*, written jointly with his wife, and often quoted as 'Jeffreys and Jeffreys' (or even 'J & J') first appeared in 1946, and has been revised several times; it is a mine of information on many branches of mathematics and their applications. He also published shorter books on operational methods, on Cartesian tensors and on asymptotic approximation, and he made some important contributions to numerical analysis.

Harold Jeffreys had strong and distinctive views on the place of probability and statistics in scientific method. In conformity with his general desire to express in quantitative terms everything that is capable of it, he felt that the language of mathematical probability should be used whenever uncertainty is present. He saw the essence of scientific investigation as the use of experimental or observational data to reduce uncertainty; in other words, to revise the estimate of the probability of some hypothesis either upward or downward. In this process the notion of inverse probability necessarily played an important part. He elaborated this point

of view in his book *Scientific Inference*, first published in 1931. In a later work entitled *Theory of Probability*, first published in 1939, he gave axiomatic foundations for his version of probability theory, and used these to construct a system of his own for the testing of statistical hypotheses. For a long time he received little support for this way of doing things, but in recent years an important school of 'Bayesian statistics' has emerged to advocate views close to his.

Among his other scientific interests were photography and botany, on both of which he published papers. He made some study of psychoanalysis and published a short paper on the unconscious significance of numbers.

He was an extraordinarily hard worker; his publications include more than 400 papers, and nine books, many of which underwent frequent revisions. He accomplished immense amounts of computation, almost entirely on a Brunsviga hand calculating machine. His preferred place of work was on the floor, with his Brunsviga on one side and his typewriter on the other, and with papers and reference books arranged in places around him.

He was in many ways a shy man; although he was a lively and lucid expositor in writing, he was not one of the world's best lecturers. His shyness did not however prevent him from making friends. When I first took up residence in College as a research fellow in 1938, he would often drop into my rooms during the evening; although he said little, it was a warm and encouraging silence, and we soon found something to talk about. For light reading he favoured detective stories; he had an encyclopaedic knowledge of that branch of literature, and of the works of P.G. Wodehouse. He was not averse to puns, and he once produced, impromptu, the only trilingual pun I have ever heard; I had mentioned to him a minor Swiss mathematician named Lhuilier, and he immediately remarked that if you translated him into English, he would be Euler.

After his marriage, he and Bertha lived for some time in the Thatched Cottage behind Bridge Street; it was demolished when the Park Street car park was built. He used to maintain that the thatched roof gave some protection against incendiary bombs, since they would bounce off the wire netting. However, the Jeffreys did have to move out one night because of an unexploded bomb; it was maintained afterwards that this was the first time that a lady, other than the wife of a Master, had officially spent the night in College. They moved up to Huntingdon Road in 1945.

His favourite means of transport was his bicycle. He and Bob Stoneley (another Johnian geophysicist) did a number of cycle tours together, and he continued to cycle until he was over 90. He did not aspire to sartorial elegance, and it used to be said that his appearance in shorts heralded the beginning of summer.

One of the stories about Harold refers to a meeting held during World War II to discuss the possibility of determining the profile of a beach from aerial photographs of the waves breaking on it; after a long discussion, during which Harold had said nothing, the chairman turned to him and asked whether there was anything he would like to say – he replied 'I'm glad it isn't my problem'. On other

occasions, however, I have known him remain silent during a long argument between others, but give the answer at once as soon as he was appealed to; he hadn't wanted to spoil the fun of the argument.

In 1961 a luncheon was held in St John's to celebrate his 70th birthday. In presenting to him a special volume of the Geophysical Journal, the President of the Royal Astronomical Society, W.H. McCrea (now Sir William) said 'I have known Harold for very many years, but I am less convinced now than when I first knew him that he has attained the age of 70'.

Harold Jeffreys was a firm believer in the unity of all science; he would often bring one science to bear on the problems of another. If a phenomenon caught his attention, he would deploy all his formidable resources to obtain a quantitative understanding of it, and he often returned to a problem again and again when new data became available. But he wasn't deadly serious all the time; he got a lot of fun out of his scientific work as well. He said once that he preferred to go on the geological excursions at the annual meeting of the British Association, because they went to all the best scenery, whereas the botanists were staring at the ground all the time.

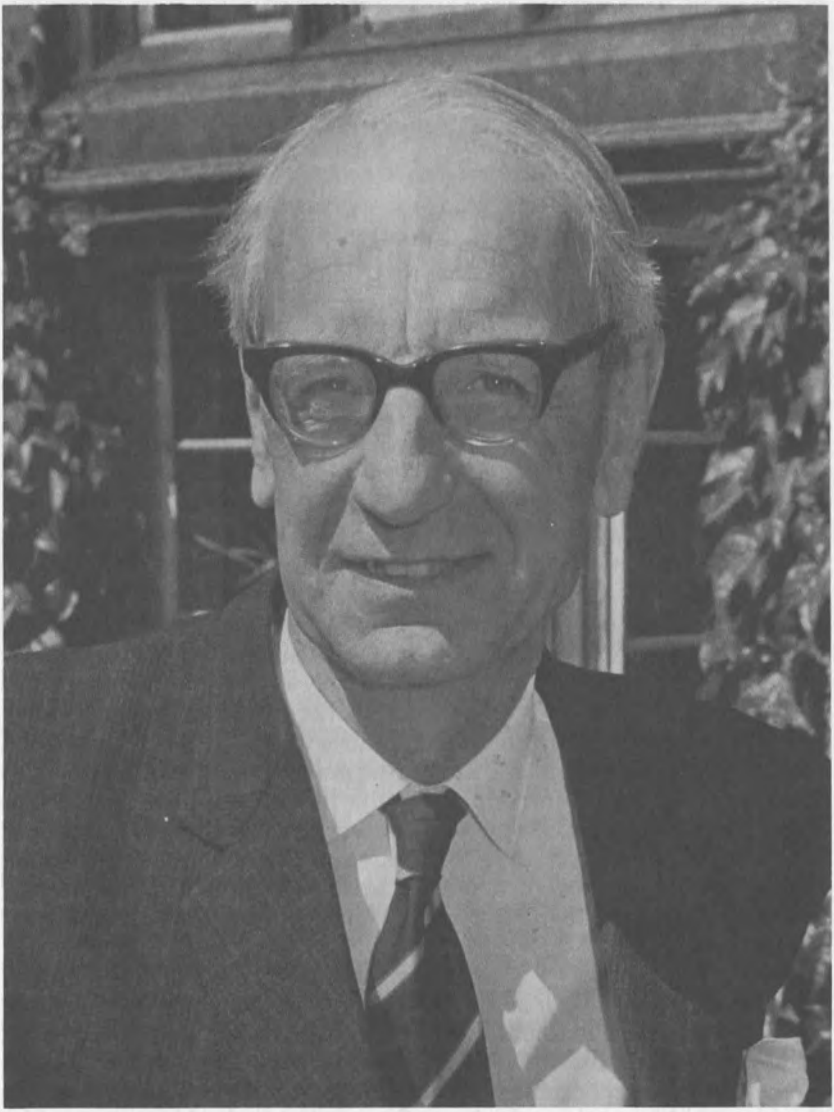
He had a deep affection for the College; even after he ceased to be able to come in regularly for dinner, he continued to take an interest in the College and its members. His portrait, painted by Zsuzsi Roboz in 1985, when he had been a Fellow for 70 years, hangs in the Small Combination Room.

I am grateful to Lady Jeffreys for her assistance in compiling this notice, to Clifford Evans for drawing my attention to an anonymous article in *The Eagle* (volume 5, 1867, pp. 129-40) on 'Professor Adams's recent discoveries in astronomy', and to Malcolm Pratt for providing me with information from the College records.

Frank Smithies

Obituaries

Professor Nicholas Mansergh



Philip Nicholas Seton Mansergh, who died on 16 January 1991 at the age of 80, was born on 27 June 1910 into an Anglo-Irish family long established in Tipperary. He was educated in Tipperary and Dublin before entering Pembroke College, Oxford. He spent all his working life in England; but he retained close personal and academic connections with Eire. By him, more than by most people, the obstacles to a dual loyalty to the Republic and the United Kingdom were easily overcome, while he turned the advantages he derived from his dual background to good account to the lasting benefit of both countries. In all his work, as for his personal happiness over more than fifty years, he owed much to the support of his wife, Diana. They married in 1939, and had three sons and two daughters.

In 1941 he joined the British war-time Ministry of Information, acting as its specialist in Irish affairs till 1944 and as director of its Empire division from 1944 to 1946. He was awarded the OBE in 1945 for his war service. In 1946 he was transferred on the dismemberment of the Ministry to the Dominions Office as an Assistant Secretary. But the experience he had acquired during the war and the skill with which he had deployed it had been admired beyond the ranks of the Civil Service and in 1947, at the early age of 37, he was appointed to the Abe Bailey chair of British Commonwealth Relations at the Royal Institute of International Affairs.

Teaching and academic research had been his first love. He had served as a tutor in politics at Pembroke College until 1940 and as well as working as joint editor under Sir Arthur Salter on a report on *Advisory Bodies* (1940), he had produced no less than three books before he was 30: *The Irish Free State, its government and politics* (1934); *The Government of Northern Ireland* (1936); *Ireland in the Age of Reform and Revolution* (1940). The first two books were factual works on contemporary politics, but in their understanding of the difficulties which the burden of history presented to Irish politicians in the first generation after Partition they revealed a judicious mind and a sensitive historical imagination. In the third his intimate knowledge and his respect for evidence combined with historical understanding to produce an introduction to the subject that was eventually accepted as a classic. Revised and re-issued in 1965 as *The Irish Question 1840-1921,* it was again re-issued in 1975 and is still in demand.

As Research Professor at the RIIA he responded magnificently to the requirement that he should apply his talents to the wider field of the Commonwealth. After quickly producing *The Commonwealth and the Nations* (1948), a serviceable introduction to the nature of an organisation then in rapid transition which confirmed that he had lost none of his

extraordinary readiness as an author, he laid the foundations for his continuation of the first consolidated account of the development of the Commonwealth which Keith Hancock had produced in the 1930's. Mansergh's own *Survey of British Commonwealth Affairs* (2 vols., 1952 and 1958) covered the years from 1931 to 1952. It yielded nothing to Hancock's as a work of scholarship. In its largeness of scope, in its reliability and in its perceptive blend of archival evidence and personal involvement, it shares with it the distinction of occupying the leading place in the literature on the nature and the history of the Commonwealth.

One year after the appearance of the first volume of the *Survey,* he was appointed the first Smuts Professor of the History of the British Commonwealth when the Smuts chair was founded in Cambridge in 1953. It would be surprising if he did not fear that in accepting the appointment he would be moving into barren territory. The history of the Commonwealth had not been wholly neglected in Cambridge; but it had been taught as an appendix to the history of the empire. As in most universities in the United Kingdom, the history of modern Ireland and of Anglo-Irish relations, the earliest and most abiding of his interests, had been taught still more peripherally – as an appendix to the study of the tribulations of the Liberal party from Gladstone to Lloyd George. But if he felt any apprehension, it did nothing to reduce the determination with which he seized this opportunity. Before long, he had not merely filled these gaps in the Cambridge curriculum; he had won for Cambridge an international reputation as a centre for Commonwealth and Irish history. His research flowing into his teaching and his teaching flowing back into his writings, he pursued a comprehensive and far-sighted programme of lectures to undergraduates, seminars for graduate students and individual tuition of graduate students in parallel with the publication of further notable books. Over and above the three volumes of *Documents and Speeches on Commonwealth Affairs, 1931-62* (1953-63) which complemented his Survey, he wrote in 16 highly productive years as the Smuts Professor: *The Multi-national Commonwealth* (1955), *South Africa 1906-61: The Price of Magnanimity* (1962), his expanded book on *The Irish Question* (1965) and, above all, *The Commonwealth Experience* (1969), a masterly analysis, detached but at the same time deeply engaged, of all he had learned about Britain's relations with Ireland and the nations of the Commonwealth; and he also embarked on an onerous responsibility as editor-in-chief of the India Office's documents on the transfer of power in India. The documents on *The Transfer of Power* were completed in 12 volumes between 1967 and 1982.

No less rapidly, but far less consciously, he had meanwhile endeared

himself from the moment of his arrival to all who worked with him in Cambridge. On colleagues and students alike, the impact of his personal qualities – his liberal sympathies, his largeness of mind, his disinterested attentiveness to all points of view, his assiduousness in discharging any duty and considering any request – was all the greater for being unforced, as was so much in keeping with the diffidence and reticence that were equally prominent in his character. And nowhere was this more true than in St John's College. His election into a professorial fellowship there soon after his arrival in Cambridge had been highly appropriate. A recent Master, E.A. Benians, had been a pioneer of Commonwealth studies and had taken the initiative in establishing in 1945 the visiting fellowship for scholars from the Commonwealth which has recently been re-named the Benians fellowship.

It was for his personal qualities, no less than for his academic distinction, that the fellows of St John's elected him into the Mastership in 1969. They were not to regret their choice. For the next ten years, assisted as ever by Diana, he presided over their affairs with dignity and sagacity and with a gentle but constant attention to the performance of his many varied duties. For him, perhaps, there was some regret that the election persuaded him in the spring of 1970 that he should vacate his chair; but it did not bring to an end his exceptionally productive career as a scholar.

He continued to teach graduate students, and also to edit the India Office documents. As prolific as ever, he extracted from his work on the documents a well-known lecture published as *The Prelude to Partition: Concepts and Aims in Ireland and India* (1978) and, about the time of his retirement from the Mastership in 1979, a major revision of *The Commonwealth Experience* (2nd edn. 1982). He then turned to what was to be his last book. Entitled *The Unresolved Question: The Anglo-Irish Settlement and its Undoing, 1912-72,* this could not fail to be both an unrivalled analysis of contemporary problems in Ireland and a monument to historical scholarship, and we can be thankful that it was completed before he died.

He died in Cambridge but was buried, as was his wish, in Tipperary. On 26 January 1991 in St Mary's, an old British Army garrison church, representatives of all Ireland gathered to give thanks for his life and work before his burial in St Michael's Cemetary. *An Taoiseach* (the Irish Prime Minister) and members of the Irish government were present. Dr Keith Jeffery from the University of Ulster, who represented St John's College, reported that 'although a solemn occasion, it was not overwhelmingly a sad one, for the predominant memory . . . was one of

cheerful kindliness and good humour'. It is a memory that will be shared throughout the academic world. With his spare stork-like figure and his charming smile he was as well known in Delhi as in Dublin, where he was an honorary fellow of Trinity College, in Canberra and Capetown as in London, in Oxford, where he was an honorary fellow of Pembroke College, as in Cambridge, and wherever he was known he will be long missed.

F.H.H.

John Ferguson, 1921-89

A large Johnian, in spirit as in frame: Aristotle would have recognised the very entelechy of his 'Great-Souled Man'. Physically vast (his father was Chestertonian, his mother tiny); a Muscular Christian still taking wickets almost to his end (a bit early, of cancer); endowed with sympathies and empathies so much wider than those of the rest of us as to make the word 'saintly' (dare one use it today? Oh, come on, why not?) come quite seriously to the mind: such was John Ferguson.

Trying to shoehorn him into a memorial notice, you might as well try to pot a Sequoia. But, well, he was a Classical scholar and a Nonconformist Christian with a commitment to absolute pacifism. Not a 'quiet don', oh my goodness no, but a tireless publicist: he wrote and wrote and wrote, about ancient authors and institutions and about Christian authors and Church history and theology; he lectured and preached indefatigably about Classics and about Christian pacifism, especially in Britain and the U.S.A.; he was President or Chairman of a host of bodies related to his two grand areas of commitment – plus the Weoley Hill Cricket Club; and he edited as indefatigably as he wrote.

And friends, that is the other thing: a world-wide company unnumberable, and Birmingham Cathedral was full nearly to bursting for his memorial service. The house of John and Elnora Ferguson, wherever it might be, seemed always full of people besides oneself, and it was, wherever it might be, the most truly colour-free, class-free, creed-free, gender-free ambience anyone was ever likely to encounter. The Fergusons were always whirling, very difficult to catch in repose; yet serenity was there at the back of all the bustle, and must have been fed by contemplation some time: it could be glimpsed momentarily in their

extempore prayer before bed (which appalled visitors might be called upon to lead: it does not seem to have diminished their numbers!)

John Ferguson's career sums itself up in three main decades (after his war in the Fire Service in Woolwich during the Blitz, a right hairy job, which left, however, enough space between raids to read for a London BD). The first period was as Professor of Classics at the University of Ibadan in Nigeria (1956-66), the second as Dean of Arts of the Open University (1969-79), and the third as President of the Selly Oak Colleges (1979-86). John Ferguson's contribution to Classical studies is not yet valued as it will come to be, for various reasons, but mainly because he 'wrote too much': he was an 'old-fashioned' Classic, who believed it to be his duty as a scholar to pass on the torch, demonstrate the excellencies of the literature and philosophy, encourage appreciation and understanding – not elicit laws of human behaviour or theoretical structures. In his books and papers and his editions of authors – Plato's Republic, Euripides' Hippolytus, Callimachus, Catullus, Juvenal – he was there for the reader's sake, willing to tell him simple, useful things, not only clever ones, and seeking to foster especially an understanding of the sound-patterns of ancient poetry. The commitment to usefulness came into its own especially in the 'courses and sources' for the Open University, most notably (with K. Chisholm) the admirable source-book *Rome: the Augustan Age.* The great Johnian Classics Glover and Charlesworth can be detected at the roots of John Ferguson's Classical work, as in some of the subjects he chose, for example *Ancient Utopias.*

At Ibadan they were fearfully good at languages (after all, they said, if you want a really difficult one, you just try Yoruba), and John Ferguson could bring them up Cambridgely, writing Latin and Greek. But he came to realise that his Nigerian pupils also had an easy familiarity with aspects of Greek and Roman culture that modern Europeans find baffling, such as witches and oracles; and he saw that there was work to be done on the history and cultures of western Africa in Greek and Roman times (his own contribution: *Africa in Classical Antiquity).* His heart was captured by Africa and Africans: his house, there and later here, filled with fine contemporary African sculptures and textiles, and billows and bellows of the laughter of African friends always wafting about.

For the last thing you could have called John Ferguson is 'austere', and he wasn't a prig or a prude or a spoilsport. He loved and knew about wine; he and Elnora had always been to any good play or opera by the time one heard about it; he conducted his own madrigal society in Ibadan and Birmingham; he introduced his friends to the works of Tom

Lehrer; and his and Quinn's are the first modern English editions of Catullus to print and comment on the whole text. He enjoyed the World and the Flesh, and shamed the Devil. And he could worthily have had a Nobel Peace Prize. He believed – and that was the theme of the last main phase of his career – that it was wrong to be doctrinaire as to how people should find their paths to the Idea of the Good: reconciliation of the insights of all the world's religions was high on his (as on Elnora's) list of aims to strive for.

The question is how one man could do and be it all: at least, for one thing, by being four-square, 'tetragonos aner', one in whose make-up all the elements harmonised and reinforced one another. That did not make John Ferguson quite everybody's cup of tea. There were those who found his benevolence overpowering or thought it patronising: those who thought the breadth of his enthusiasms won at the price of shallowness; those who thought the pacifism too naive or too relentless. And all were, perhaps, a bit jealous that one man should have had such a large handout from the divine cornucopia. But all was reconciled and redeemed in him by one overriding gift and one determining sense: the gift, that of the teacher, the sense, the sense of service – that all his gifts were only there to be used '. . . to Thy honour and glory, and to the good of Thy people, Amen'.

J.A.C.

Reuben Peck, 1913–91

William Reuben Peck was one of those to whom the College owes a debt of gratitude it cannot soon discharge. There are Porters and porters, but there was never any question about Reuben, who came to St John's in December 1963, and thereafter missed hardly anything, had his own ways of causing it to be known that he hadn't, and so ensured that there was no repetition. This was Reuben the dean whose prowess Deans with a big 'D' learned to admire. His early years had been spent working on the land near Quy where he had been born and where he lived for the rest of his life. There was always a country calmness about him, always the implication that he had seen it all before. Sophisticated under-graduates met their match in him and found a friend they came to trust. Head slightly cocked, cigarette too often in mouth (before they made him give them up), always knowing or sensing (as often as not sensing)

what was going on, for the next fifteen years Reuben kept a quizzical and all-seeing eye on Cripps and those who lived there. (On his

retirement in 1978, some of them, who knew how much they were going to miss him, offered him a night out, anywhere he chose. He opted for the Cripps Bar, still just about possible at that date. Old friends came from London and beyond. It was a lovely evening). The good he did by night in the Cripps Lodge during that period will not have been forgotten by many of those who learn on reading this that Reuben Peck died suddenly on 1 May 1991, after coming in from the garden. He was 77. One of the finest tutors (with a small 't') that St John's has had the good fortune to recruit was buried in his beloved village after a funeral service taken by the vicar of Stow-cum-Quy, and the Dean of St John's. 'You know, I loved the old College', he used often to say in the years of his retirement. How dearly the old College loved him was apparent from the large number of his friends from there, as well as from the village and the university, who paid their respects to him on that otherwise lovely afternoon. While sharing their grief with his widow, Laura, and his family, the old College thanks them for having shared with it the benefit of a good man who did so many good things.

P. A. L.

Obituaries

Professor John Sandwith Boys Smith

John Sandwith Boys Smith, Master of St. John's College from 1959 to 1969 and Vice-Chancellor of the University from 1963 to 1965, died on 3 November 1991 at the age of 90. He was born on 8 January 1901 at Hordle, Hampshire, where his father was the vicar, and was educated at Sherborne and St. John's College.

His great characteristics were integrity of character, lucidity of mind and devotion to duty. In an age when exceptionally able people were content to give a lifetime of service to the apparently small world of a university in the conviction that the great task of university education was to advance social mobility without lowering, indeed by raising, personal and intellectual standards, he stood out for these qualities among his peers.

In him the conviction was especially associated with the belief that the two ancient universities derived their vitality from the diversity of their consitituent colleges and the strength of the loyalties which those independent corporations could command. He expressed this belief, by example and not by writing educationist texts, in the lifelong service he rendered to his own college, which he entered in 1919.

As a fellow from 1927 he acted as Chaplain, Assistant Tutor, Tutor, Senior Bursar and Senior Bursar before his election as Master. In the post of Senior Bursar, which he held from 1944 to 1959, he displayed to the full his ability as an administrator, and to such good effect on the affairs and the finances of the College that he was the natural choice for the succession when the Mastership became vacant.

His tenure as Master was equally distinguished; its more varied responsibilities called for a wider application of his powers of leadership and good judgement, but he easily extended them. After his retirement from the Mastership he continued to act as elder statesman – less elderly and more statesmanlike than the norm – until his death. But he also put his belief into practice by using his exceptional talents to help in the establishment of new Cambridge colleges. Darwin College and New Hall, of both of which he was an Honorary Fellow, both benefitted from the practical, bursarial implementation of his vision, as did Lucy Cavendish College in its turn.

If he was always concerned for the health and the autonomy of the Colleges and watchful for any unguarded changes than might erode them, he never forgot that the Cambridge Colleges function within and on behalf of the collegiate university. He played an active role as a member of the university's central bodies and in the days when the university nominated members of the Cambridge City Council he

represented it as a member and as chairman of that Council's finance committee. These onerous duties, culminating in his spell as Vice-Chancellor, he carried out without stint and without remuneration, in the tradition which had made Cambridge the least expensive and most efficient of all British Universities – a distinction it still retains. For his services the university awarded him in 1970 an Honorary LL.D – a distinction Cambridge rarely confers on its resident members.

In all his work, for the university and for the College, he was of course an expert; but he was also, among many experts, a fount of wisdom. He was omniscient in many fields, from the statutes and finances of the university and the College to the niceties of heraldry, the history of College buildings, the birds and flowers of Cambridge gardens, and their hedgehogs, or the provenance of the College portraits; and he was meticulous in marshalling his knowledge and in deploying it. He did not flaunt it, but when he used it in its proper time and place, he unwittingly conveyed an air of intellectual distinction. His academical distinction lay in the field of theology. He was a university lecturer in theology from 1931 to 1940 and, from 1940 to 1943, Ely Professor of Divinity in the University and Canon of Ely Cathedral. His fellowship dissertation was entitled 'Religious faith: A discussion of certain of its characteristics'. In 1934 he published *Religious Thought in the Eighteenth Century*. But his distinction of mind was too wide and too deep-set to be confined within a single discipline. There is a tribute to it in the preface of the earliest work of one of his earliest pupils, Michael Oakeshott's *Experience and Its Modes* (1933).

It was the same with his emotions as with his learning. He did not parade his religious sentiments, but they were deeply held, and particularly so when they were consistent with the conclusions of reason and of reasoned morality. Although his occasional sermons were masterpieces for their fine prose and clarity of thought, he did not grasp at the opportunity to preach. When chairing meetings he was always deft, avoiding needless arguement by his objective presentation of the issues at stake and his ability to keep discussion to the point. In less formal dealings he was reserved, but in his restraint he was not aloof. He was a deeply sensitive man, capable of strong emotions, who shrank from betraying his feelings or losing his control of them. He loved poetry but his favourite poet was not Pope, whose rhyme and rigour might have appealed to his intellect; it was Wordsworth, who touched his heart. Among prose writers he gave a high place to the naturalist W.H. Hudson, but he rarely discussed his own appreciation, remarkably deep in so studious a man, of the countryside and the open air. He once recalled, however, that he could count the number of species by the birdsong that he heard while attending meetings in the Old Schools. He

liked claret, but never so much as to let it loosen his tongue. When writing *Memoirs of St. John's College, Cambridge 1919-1969*, published in 1983, he was inspired by his love of the place to which he had devoted his life; but no reference to his affection for it is allowed to intrude in this objective and invaluable record. As always, the complexities of his character were concealed by his self-control. But self-control was with him instinctive, requiring no great struggle. He lived by the simple precept of the dominical saying that was among his favourite biblical texts: 'The Light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, then thy whole body shall be full of light.'

He and his wife Gwendolen were married in 1942, and she survives him with their two sons.

F.H.H.

John Challice Hall, 1928-1992

John Challice Hall was born at 27 Wonford Road, Exeter on 23 January 1928. His father was killed by a tree falling on his car when John was a few months old. Jane, his mother, took him back to her mother's home where he was brought up by his mother, his grandmother and his aunt. His aunt ran a private school which John attended from 1933-36 and then moved to Exeter Public Schools from 1936-45. During 1942, the year of the Exeter Blitz, John's grandmother's house was burnt to the ground by incendiary bombs and the family were left homeless and with no personal possessions. In 1945, John matriculated as a Squire Law Scholar and studied Law at St. John's College until 1948, taking a second class in Law Tripos Part I in 1947 and a first class in Part II in 1948. He received the LLB in 1951 and the MA in 1952. From 1947-48 he was Secretary of the St. John's College Law Society.

After his graduation he was called up for National Service, becoming top in the Officer's Cadet Class and consequently receiving the 'Stick of Honour': he then served as an officer with the Royal Horse Artillery in Germany where he contracted colitis which plagued him for the rest of his life. He qualified as a solicitor after having served his Articles in Exeter between 1950-53 and also taught at the College of Law in Guildford from 1953-4, after which he returned to Cambridge.

In October 1955, he became a Fellow of the College, in 1956 an Assistant University Lecturer and in 1960 a University Lecturer in Law. He became a Tutor in 1961 and served as Senior Tutor from 1972 to 1983. Because of a shortage of academic posts for younger people, when he became Senior Tutor he wanted to retire from his lectureship to make room for a younger person, but he was persuaded to retain it until he reached the age of 60 in 1988. From 1970 he concentrated on Family Law, the study of which he pioneered in Cambridge. During this period he was a College supervisor in law until his death.

Upon his return to Cambridge he frequently moved from set to set until he settled down in F1 Second Court, previously occupied by the late Professor P H Winfield (the distinguished Law Fellow), and this became his home for the next ten years. He then kept in F6 Cripps Building until his death. It was typical of John that he was more willing to move so that his set could become an additional Reading Room for Law students. With the same unselfish spirit he initiated with the Domestic Bursar the sharing of his Cripps set with a non-resident Fellow to help relieve the problem of insufficient accomodation for Fellows.

Living in Exeter with his mother and grandmother, life without a father was incomplete, yet as he grew up his devotion and responsibility

to his mother developed. During 1975 his mother joined him in Cambridge, living alone in a flat. In spite of his numerous academic commitments John's care for his mother was discharged with faithful outgoing love. It was a daily early morning sight to see him rushing along on his bicycle to prepare breakfast for his mother. In order to give her periodic feelings of home and family comfort John bought a bungalow in the village of Barrow with a pretty garden, where they spent many happy days together. The loving devotion to his mother tended to isolate him and thus produce a lonely soul who needed a personal relationship outside the care of his mother. This situation seemed to be resolved when he became engaged to Gillian Boulind. Gillian had read Law at New Hall and was a qualified lawyer working in Cambridge and at the same time was a Law Supervisor for several Cambridge colleges. Tragically she died before they were able to marry. John's mother died in 1989. In spite of all the helpful service he gave to others John left one with the impression of a deep lack of any sense of his own worth, dismissing any appreciation from the recipient.

In addition to his College work he became Secretary of the Johnian Society in March 1984, succeeding Douglas Byrne who had held the post for thirty years. Prior to this appointment John had been a member of the Committee since December 1982. The Committee was initially cautious about the idea of having a Fellow as Secretary, feeling it might compromise the Society's independence, but knowing John they agreed to set aside these worries. The tenure of the Secretaryship until his death with all the hard work it involved proved more than satisfactory.

In 1970 he was appointed a Justice of the Peace on the Cambridge City Bench. His Magisterial work led to his appointment first as an Assistant Recorder in 1984 and in 1990 as a full Recorder. In 1991 he was authorised to sit in private law family work. His expert knowledge of the law, coupled with with his long experience as a Justice of the Peace, and his sensible and humane personality, fitted him admirably for this judicial work, and his services were much appreciated by the Lord Chancellor and his fellow judges.

He was Foundation Trustee of Homerton College and a governor of Caterham School. His help with the University of the Third Age was much appreciated by those who attended the Family Law discussions in his College rooms. His help for others was boundless, and he showed much kindness to the widows of Professor Dennis Bailey and Professor Meredith Jackson and to Gillian Boulind's mother, even to the extent of occasionally mowing her lawn. He was godfather to seven children. He was brought up in the Congregational Church tradition, now the United Reformed Church, and attended Emmanuel Congregational Church

immediately upon his arrival in Cambridge. After she arrived he escorted his ancient mother to church every Sunday morning. He seldom missed the evening service in the College Chapel. He latterly became part treasurer of Emmanuel Church.

John had experienced depressive illnesses several times during his life but the severe attack in the Spring of 1992 may have been exacerbated by the steroid drugs he was prescribed to combat a skin disorder of the leg. Five days before his death he confided in the Master (Professor Robert Hinde) that he was considering giving up his teaching and his commitment as a magistrate, but seemed to have no premonitions of his impending death. On 30 April he entertained Lord Mustill in Hall and attended a meeting of the College Law Society, but afterwards he journeyed to Barrow, where he took his own life. This was not the John Hall we all knew, and his tragic death remains a mystery. John left two letters in Barrow, one addressed to his cousin and the other to the Master. The latter expresses his gratitude for the kindness extended to him by members of the Governing Body.

A C Crook

Peter Stern, 1920-1991

Peter Stern, Fellow in German for eighteen years (1954-72) and, for the last year of his life Honorary Fellow, died in Cambridge in November 1991, aged 70.

He was born in Prague in December 1920, and walked out of Czechoslovakia in the summer of 1939 into Poland to escape the Nazis, meeting his lifelong friend and fellow Czech, Erich Heller at Gdynia in the Polish Corridor; they arrived in England on the same ship knowing no English. In the Second World War he served bravely in the air and was permanently wounded in the hand. After the war he took his Cambridge degrees, including a doctorate on the eighteenth-century aphorist Lichtenberg, and became a lively teacher in the German department for nearly twenty years and, though fonder of lecturing than supervising, a Director of Modern Languages in the College. His marriage in 1944 to Sheila McMullan of Newnham, another modern linguist, was to prove the centre of his life, and with their four children

and growing band of grandchildren – a Tolstoyan family he happily called it – their house in Barton Road, and its garden and lake, became home to many and a place of abundant hospitality. When he accepted a chair of German at University College, London in 1972 he never ceased to live in Cambridge, to the delight of his friends here, and remained active even after retiring from his chair, often lecturing abroad, mainly in the United States and Central Europe. He lived to see the liberation of his native land in 1989.

Peter Stern's commitment to literature and ideas was passionate as well as scholarly, and by his later years he was widely seen as the most controversial of Germanists working in English-speaking lands. He knew three languages impeccably, his Czech being native, but wrote and lectured mainly in English, which he had learnt last. Though his scholarship was deep and detailed, his profoundest reverence was for general ideas, much in the fashion of central-European savants of metaphysical interests and humanistic convictions in the last century and this; and his friendship with Wittgenstein around the end of the war, of which he has left a record, was among the deepest marks of his intellectual life. His Roman Catholic convictions, which were idiosyncratic and not unwavering, were joined with a natural radical fervour of mind

and a fiercely conservative morality which, as a combination, found no home for long in any political movement; and perhaps only his anglophilia was a constant in a mind that often startled with its unexpected views. The drumbeats of the Thirties, when he and his family suffered deeply, were never far from his thoughts; perhaps his most characteristic book, and certainly his most popular, was *Hitler: The Führer and the People* (1975), where he traced the intellectual sources of National Socialism, perceiving it as the outcome of perverted philosophy rather than the mere resentment of defeat or sheer mindlessness. That helps to explain the wholly exceptional passion that he brought to the history of ideas. No academic mind was less bound to the card-index, more openly contemptuous of facts for facts' sake, or more dedicated to erudition as a partisan activity, and he shone in polemical exchanges both here and in America, not least in Letters to the Editor. His chief hunting-ground, as a literary historian, lay in literature in German by non-Germans such as Rilke and Kafka and exiles like Thomas Mann, but in his last years he produced several books on Nietzsche – one of them, *Nietzsche on Tragedy* (1981), written in collaboration with another former Fellow of the college, Michael Silk. His recently published collection, *The Heart of Europe*, expresses in its very title the chief preoccupation of his professional life, which was to interpret the mind of central Europe in its classic humanistic phase to the Anglo-Saxon periphery that has escaped its perils and might easily ignore its glories. His death only weeks before his seventy-first birthday will impoverish more than German studies throughout the world and leave Cambridge, especially, grateful to his memory as a teacher and friend.

George Watson

Obituaries

Henry Dickinson Westlake, 1906–1992

Dick Westlake, who died on 23 July 1993, was a significant Classical scholar and a staunch Johnian. The Chair that he filled with distinction from 1949 to 1972 was the Hulme Professorship of Greek at Manchester; we of a younger generation only got to know and admire him after he retired, with Molly his wife, to the vicinity of Cambridge. He did some College supervising and Faculty examining, and the College gladly made him, as a former Fellow, a Member of the Combination Room.

Dick Westlake was born on 4 September, 1906. He went to Uppingham school during the first World War, and then was a Scholar of the College, matriculating in 1925 and graduating BA in 1929 and MA in 1932. He got, of course, Firsts in both Parts of the Classical Tripos, and was awarded a Strathcona Studentship, which he used to study partly in Germany and partly in Greece. He held a Fellowship of the College under Title A from 1932 to 1935, and published his book *Thessaly in the Fourth Century B.C.* in the latter year. His second World War was spent in the Regional Commissioner's office in Leeds. After the War he was appointed to a newly created Readership in Greek at King's College, Newcastle, then a part of Durham University, and in 1949 he succeeded T.B.L. Webster in the Hulme Professorship at Manchester, one of the main Chairs of Greek in the U.K.

Westlake served the University of Manchester fully and faithfully down the years, doing his stints as Dean of the Faculty of Arts and – surprisingly – that of Music and as a pro-Vice-Chancellor in the late 60s; but administration never became for him an alternative to scholarship. 1952 saw the publication of his *Timoleon*, 1968 that of his book of studies *Individuals in Thucydides*; and in 1969 appeared the first set of his collected papers, *Essays on the Greek Historians and Greek History* (which included some of the preliminary studies for the *Timoleon*). More remarkable is the fact that he had a decade and a half of substantial creativity *after* his retirement, so that he was in a position to publish, under pressure from his friends, a second volume of collected papers, *Studies in Thucydides and Greek History*, in 1989, which range in date of

original publication from 1970 to 1987 but include one completely new study written for the volume – and, remember, he was born in 1906!

The mode of his scholarship was quiet; Westlake headed no school and neither set nor subscribed to any trend. He bridled, once, when bracketed with the ancient history specialists: 'I have been a professor of Greek, remember', he said; but maybe that sense that his main role was as interpreter of an *author* (albeit a historian, Thucydides) was something that took over in him gradually. The effect, anyhow, is that Westlake's best work illuminates especially the *sources* of the history of the states of Greece, which will give it a lasting value when more pretentious structures go the way such things always do. And a scholar who is 'courteous, gentle and patient', as the *Times* obituarist justly said of Westlake, not just in his general relationships but with the materials of his study, will get them to reveal to him truths they refuse to vouchsafe to the hasty and bullying.

Westlake had a clear notion of what to do in the vacations: he went to as many as possible of the Isles of Greece. Certainly he sought a sense of ambience; but he was not archaeologically minded, nor did he travel for adventure, being content to go on packages and having little interest in modern Greek.

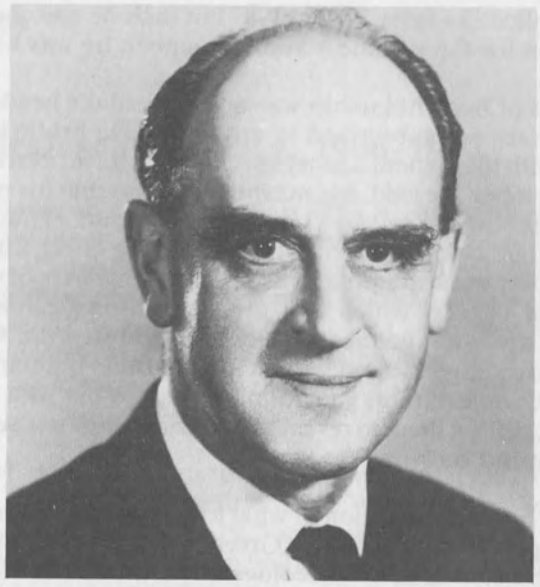
He was a lucky man, blessed with his wife, who survives him, with son and daughter and grandchildren; he had the affection of his friends and the respect of fellow-scholars, and was in command of all his faculties to the very end. A truly Greek felicity; so let his epitaph be in Pindar's words: 'Good fortune is the first of prizes, but good report the second bounty'.

J.A.C.

Jack Gale Wilmot Davies, OBE, 1911–1992

From an address given at the funeral service at Cambridge Crematorium on Friday 13th November 1992.

Jack Davies enjoyed his long and richly varied life. He was blessed with good health and many gifts, which he used well. At the age of 81, he died of a fast-growing brain tumour. Fortunately it was a short illness, and there was little sign of deteriorating health until the last few months.



JACK DAVIES
(Photograph by kind permission of the Bank of England)

Cricket was one of Jack's greatest loves. As an undergraduate he played for the University of Cambridge, and later for Kent, and he is celebrated for the time that he bowled out Don Bradman for a duck. For years he played a key role in the University Cricket Club. He was President of the MCC only a few years ago, and subsequently a life Vice-President.

Jack was also one of the most eminent professional psychologists in Britain. He served for a number of years as Secretary of the University Appointments Board, and became a Fellow of St John's, the college of which he was a member for over 60 years. Subsequently he went to the Bank of England, as Executive Director, in charge of personnel and premises. He also served voluntarily in a number of other public bodies. For many years, he was Honorary Treasurer of the British Psychological Society, a post that he still held at his death.

Jack was in some ways quite a private man, who kept his public and home life rather separate. He met Georgette, his wife, while he was working for the United Nations after the war, and they had lived together in Cambridge for over 40 years. Though they had rather

different interests, life for Georgette will be difficult and lonely without Jack.

For all Jack's distinguished achievements he will be remembered, not only for what did, but for the man he was. His face, craggy in later years, spoke of his good nature. His twinkly eyes and genial chuckle spoke of the pleasure he took in life. He was an amiable, clubbable man. People enjoyed his company, and he enjoyed theirs. Though shrewed in his assessment of people, he was never negative about them. He was a man of honour, absolutely straight in his dealings, and completely dependable. For all his worldly achievements and distinction, he was in many ways a rather unworldly man. He was strikingly unmarked by personal ambition, vanity or self-importance. The guiding principles in his life seemed to be a sense of duty, and enjoyment of whatever he did.

Fraser Watts

Professor F.W. Campbell, 1924–1993

Johnians will be saddened to learn of the death of Professor Fergus Campbell on May 3rd 1993. Fergus Campbell was elected to the Fellowship in 1955, having arrived in Cambridge as a University Lecturer some two years earlier. Within the Physiological Laboratory he pursued a highly distinguished career in visual physiology, of which more is written in the formal obituary below. In College he was an inspiring supervisor in Physiology, also directing studies in Medical Sciences from 1955-1964. Following his appointment to a personal chair in 1983 his undergraduate teaching responsibilities ceased, but research students, both his own and those of others, in sometimes quite distantly related disciplines, continued to benefit from his encouragement, advice and seemingly endless fund of scientific anecdotes. Members of the College Larmor Society will long remember his lecture on the subject of "Hypnosis", complete with a practical demonstration in which he convinced a member of the audience that she had seen him walking across the ceiling! Such practical demonstrations were at the heart of his philosophy as a scientist that any day spent in the laboratory without carrying out a new experiment is a day wasted. Always friendly and approachable, Fergus was prepared to argue almost any subject under the sun, sometimes adopting the most outrageous positions in order to draw out his opponent. He will be greatly missed.

The following is reproduced by permission of the *Times* newspaper.

Fergus Campbell, Professor of Neurosensory Physiology, Physiological

Laboratory, University of Cambridge, 1983–91, died on May 3 aged 69. He was born on January 30 1924.

Fergus Campbell was one of the leading visual scientists of his generation, whose work has a world-wide influence in physiology and neuroscience, psychology, opthalmology and optometry.

He was the son of a general practitioner in Glasgow. In accompanying his father round the Gorbals in the 1940s, he gained a first-hand insight into the appalling conditions so many lived in, and into the human qualities that could emerge in spite of it. He carried his vision with him for the rest of his life and it left him a little alienated from the ways and thoughts of some of his southern colleagues, while fiercely loyal to those he admired.

He followed his father by gaining medical qualifications at Glasgow University, where he first developed his enthusiasm for research. This took him first to Oxford in 1952, but shortly afterwards to Cambridge, where as a lecturer in physiology and fellow of St John's College, he developed into a brilliant experimental physiologist who earned an international reputation in two fields of vision research.

With Gerald Westheimer he was among the first to determine objectively the quality of the image cast on the retina in the living human eye. This was achieved by imaging a bright line on the retina and analysing the pattern of light returning through the pupil. The small quantity of returning light, interference by eye movements and parasitic images, made these observations very difficult, but Campbell had a genius for setting up optical equipment so as to collect the relevant light and exclude the numerous sources of unwanted light.

The second field, from the early 1960s, was the use of sinusoidal grating patterns to determine the Modulation Transfer Function (MTF) of human vision. The MTF requires a neural response in the visual system and so it reflects this response as well as the quality of the optical image. Campbell could thus measure the performance of the retina and optic nerve in transmitting visual patterns to the brain.

His analysis of this performance, and experiments using a new technique of desensitising the visual system by exposure to specific stimuli, led to the idea of spatial-frequency selective "channels" in the visual system, which apparently break up the image into different frequency and orientation components.

This concept has been enormously influential in modern thinking

about the visual process and also represented an experimental prevision of the current mathematical idea of decomposing images into "wavelets". These and the other achievements represented by his 120 scientific publications were recognised by an *ad hominem* chair at Cambridge, the Tillyer medal of the Optical Society of America and election to a fellowship of the Royal Society in 1978.

Fergus Campbell was a very sociable person, and his laboratory was usually thronged with visitors and colleagues. Sometimes they overflowed into the corridor outside; where one would meet distinguished visitors from abroad waiting until "rush hour was over in Grand Central Station" as one of them put it.

It was a unique experience to talk with him in a lab well stocked with experimental equipment, for every argument was instantly turned into a possible experiment and, if possible, very quickly into a practical one. His experimental genius was matched by his ability to provoke and draw out ideas from his colleagues, convert them into predictions and make measurements to confirm or disprove them.

His sociability extended to the coffee room where he held forth with an almost inexhaustible supply of stories. One never heard him complain in spite of family tragedies and crippling arthritis of his back. The extraordinary number and distinction of his colleagues and collaborators, and the affection in which they held him, was very evident at the "Fergus Feast" which marked his retirement from his Chair (though certainly not from his laboratory) at Cambridge in 1991.

He is survived by his wife Helen and three children.

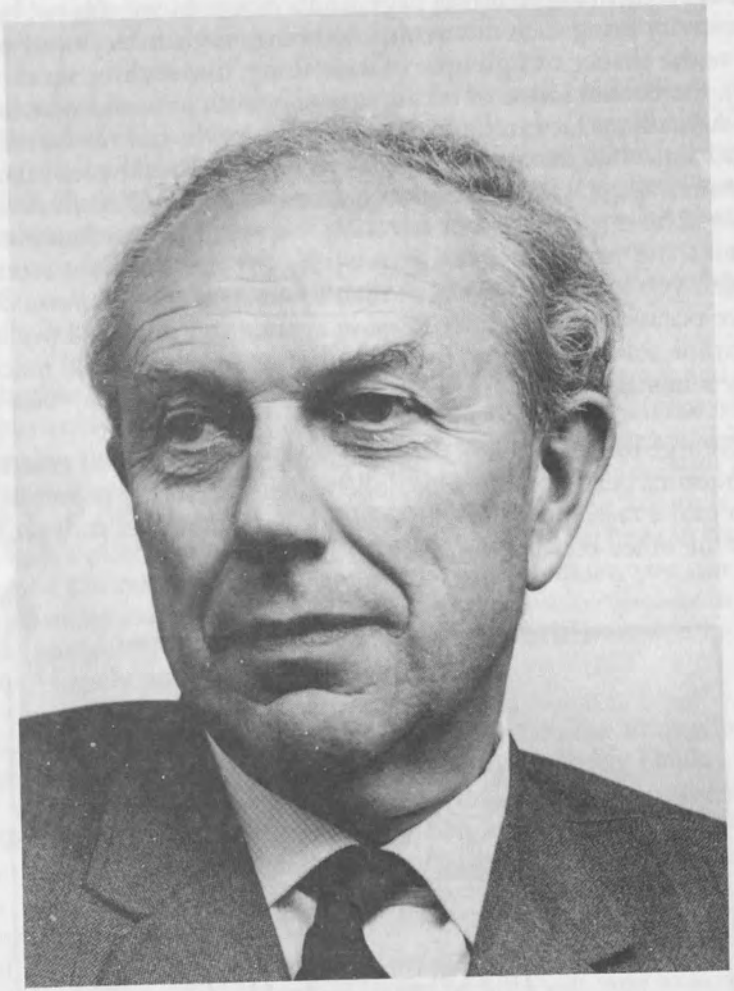
Memorial Plaque

A revised Memorial Plaque to the memory of Ernest Earle 'Dave' Raven, Fellow and Dean, and of his wife Esther Margaret, was dedicated at a small family service in the Chapel on 1st May, 1993. Their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren were present. Esther Margaret's brother, the Rev. John Brooks (B.A. 1931) read the lesson and John Raven (son, B.A. 1959) formally read the words of the plaque.

A.A.M., Dean

Obituary

Alec Crook and the buildings of St John's



Alec Charles Crook, FRIBA
1908–1993

Alec Charles Crook was born on the 30th January, 1908, in Waddesdon, Buckinghamshire. His father was a master builder, the owner of a high quality country firm. When he left the Aylesbury Grammar School he moved for a time to Leicester, and I first met him there some seventy years ago, in Stoneygate, one of the southern suburbs, as members of a circle which as it happened also included his future wife Joan. I was then a child of ten, and he in his mid-teens. It was not to be expected that we should have had much in common, either in friends or interests, but my memory is of a big boy who was always friendly, kind and helpful, and never intimidating – an assessment which later time only reinforced. When I was twelve my father moved away to the North, and when soon afterwards Alec moved away in the opposite direction, we did not meet again for many years. Meantime he had returned to Leicester to study architecture at the Leicester College of Art and had settled to work as an architect, becoming an Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1939 (F.R.I.B.A., 1956).

On my return from an expedition to the Nigerian rain forest in 1948 I found G.E. Briggs (Fellow 1920-85; President 1952-63), appointed to the chair of Botany, and was asked if I would help with the administration. Knowing the burdens which even in those days the University imposed on heads of department I agreed. I was to run the department as a place to work in, buildings, equipment, assistants and accounts (for £50 a year, part-time). The Botany School had been a very advanced building in 1904, when it was opened by the King and Queen, but untouched since then, it left much to be desired in 1948. Turning for help to the Department of Estate Management I was to find Alec established as its chief architect. It was a great pleasure to meet a friend in such a position, and it did not take me long to discover that I had found a pearl beyond price – highly accomplished technically, yet basically an artist, a master of proportion, colour and texture, that was not all. Here was an architect whose pleasure lay in (a) finding out what his clients really wanted and (b) giving it to them. (a) is the hard part. Very few members of the general public can read an architect's drawing in the sense of being able to visualise what the consequences of implementing it will be, and in this field at least, university teachers are just like the general public. The generalisation holds even in places where one would least expect it. The Lecturer in charge of

planning the new Workshops for the Engineering Department once told me how, having discussed machines and their positioning with the technical staff, he drew up a tentative plan, took it round and discussed it with each individual member of the teaching staff. He was astonished at how few could read it, let alone make constructive suggestions for improvements.

But our problem was different, and one ideally suited to Alec's unusual talents. If the average scientist cannot visualise an architect's drawing, every active worker knows what is wrong with the laboratory in which he works. All this Alec could find out before beginning to plan the new laboratory to fit into the old shell. Then he could take his tentative plan back and discuss it with staff and technicians in the actual room which was to be refitted. If necessary this was done again and again before work began, and it yielded almost universal satisfaction. By contrast, when the great expansion of the universities was well under way complaints about unsuitable features of new laboratories were constantly being heard. This may in part have been due to architectural arrogance, but lack of communication was probably a more important cause. To know in full detail a client's needs does not fetter the architect's freedom of artistic expression – indeed, many great works of art owe much to the difficulties of the medium. One thinks of the block of marble, rejected by many sculptors because of its awkward shape, until Michaelangelo saw it and could visualise the "David" inside it. Alec had been doing just this – defining every last complexity of his problem before starting to solve it. In later years we were to see much of this habit of mind in St John's. Of course such a painstaking process is not quick. To refit the whole Botany School a little at a time took a matter of fifteen years, but Alec never flagged, and in consequence generations of research workers have had good reason to be thankful to him.

The operation had two other advantages, one being that it was rarely if ever necesary to come back soon and do the work again; "one of the least economical methods of building known to the trade" as Cresswell put it. As an example of what can all too easily happen, when my daughters were studying at the University of Sheffield, a new accommodation block for Halifax Hall came into use. One of their friends, allocated a new room, unpacked her books

and loaded them into the hanging bookcase, which promptly detached itself from the wall and crashed to the floor. Summoned to inspect the ruins, the caretaker said reproachfully, "Oh miss, you're not supposed to fill them shelves with books".

The other advantage was that it was inherently much less expensive than putting up a new building to the same standard. Taking numbers of undergraduates, research workers and graduate staff the Botany School was in those days roughly a third the size of the whole Department of Chemistry. The new building for that, put up at much the same cost, cost £3 million. Spread over 15 years, the internal reconstruction of the Botany School cost about £300,000, in spite of having a higher standard of fittings and services. Thus, depending on how you look at it, this single example of Alec's work either saved the taxpayer two thirds of a million pounds, or presented the University with a very high class building which it would not otherwise have had; because in those days the University's allocation of money for new buildings was entirely taken up with rehousing departments whose old buildings were even worse, like the Cavendish Laboratory.

In the winter of 1952 the Master, Mr, later Sir James, Wordie, asked me to take on the oversight of repairing and, where necessary, reconstructing the old buildings of the College. Before 1925 these had been much neglected for a long time. Then the Junior Bursar, Dr Shore, had made a thorough-going repair of the Library roof. In 1933 he was succeeded by Dr Cockcroft who made great progress with the worst problems – the Great Gate, the Hall, the superstructure of the Combination Room ceiling, and Second Court South of the Shrewsbury Tower – before the war in 1939 brought this work to an end. In the intervening 13 years deterioration had in some parts been proceeding rapidly, and the Council wished to mount an attack on the whole remainder.

I agreed, on the understanding that I would deal at once with points of danger, and try within five years to assemble a comprehensive survey, with plans and estimates, to put before the Governing Body.

A short summary of the next happenings will suffice us here, as the details are to be found in several articles in *The Eagle* starting in April 1960. It soon became clear that very much needed to be done, so that the survey would be a substantial job, involving a great deal of detailed work. My previous experience of Alec's unusual qualities suggested that he would be the ideal person to direct this, and that he would have no difficulty in collaborating harmoniously with the various experts who would have to be called in. At the same time his staff could undertake the mass of detail. Fortunately the College was able to make an agreement with the University on these lines: it proved to be most satisfactory, and lasted until the work ended almost fifteen years later.

Needless to say all this attracted a great deal of interest among the Fellows, and the detailed personal attention which Alec gave soon made him a familiar figure. His qualities became known more particularly to the members of the Old Buildings Committee (which at this stage included a majority of the members of the Council), most of whose meetings he attended.

In 1957 the survey had been completed and the estimates of cost of repair and restoration were accepted by the Governing Body. The Old Buildings Committee had then to implement the project, and it seemed natural to continue the arrangement with the University, Alec now becoming executive architect and the staff of the Estate Management Advisory Service (as it had by then become) furnishing the detailed backup.

As Alec became increasingly well known, his qualities appreciated and the value of his services to the College realised, it also seemed natural that the Council should appoint him to a Fellowship under Title E from October 1962.

This appointment gave him much satisfaction, and not only because he was now a full member of a society which he had come to value. It carried with it the right to be presented for an M.A. degree, while the University, alas, had been all too tardy in recognising the value of Alec's work. The point was rubbed in in the following year when, the College's turn having come, Alec was nominated as a Proctor. From being on the periphery, this thrust him into the very heart of the ancient University organisation.

Meanwhile, finding, as so many do, that as his family grew older, they required more room, he had bought Stapleford Hall. This was a fine old house, which could have been an ornament to the village, but had fallen into so parlous a condition as to deter purchasers by the prospect of unquantifiable repair bills. This did not deter Alec, quite familiar with such situations, and he gradually brought it back to such a state that it was sold through the pages of "Country Life" when it became too large for a married couple whose children had grown up. He and his wife simply moved across to a more convenient house which had built in a corner of the garden.

The same years saw the restoration of the old buildings advancing steadily. One matter which *The Eagle* articles already mentioned do not record is that so harmonious was the relationship between the College and the men who worked there for so many painstaking years that the Old Buildings Committee sought the permission of Mr Barlow, who had been Clerk of Works from the beginning, and Mr Vigar, who had fixed all the new stonework, to have their heads included among the new carvings. There they are, in the decorated string course below the dormer windows in Second Court, respectively West and East of M staircase. Then, without asking anyone's permission, the workmen insisted that the carver include Alec's head in the same string course between E and F staircases, where it can be expected to remain until the next major overhaul perhaps three centuries hence.

I mentioned earlier a relation between the difficulties of the medium and the creation of great works of art. It may be that the restoration of the ancient buildings of the College will come in time to be regarded as a great work of art, and Alec's artistic gifts will become more widely recognised. But however risky such a projection of the development of public taste may be, there is no doubt that in the course of the restoration Alec had had to confront and surmount every conceivable difficulty.

While all this was going on, work was also advancing on planning the Cripps Building. When Alec became a Fellow, he could also without impropriety sit on the New Buildings Committee, where once again he rendered invaluable service, and although no-one realised it at the time, built up the background for the next step.

For some time it had been apparent that the ancient convention of having a part-time Junior Bursar to run the College as a place to live in was unsatisfactory. Fragmenting the post into several part-time ones to cope with the extra load created its own problems, not least those of recruitment. The Council decided to make the post full-time from 1 October 1966, when by coincidence all the three part-time officers intended to retire at the same time. Clearly, in addition to the normal duties, the first holder of the new post would be confronted by two unusual tasks – he would have to complete the restoration of the old buildings, and bring into use the new Cripps Building. Who better qualified to do all this than Alec? The post was offered and his attachment to the College made the decision to transfer from the University's service easy.

Much of the remaining restoration simply involved finishing work already well on the way to completion, but there was still the Library Stair to put back in its original dignified form after the ruin produced when Penrose cut through it to give access to his new Chapel Court building. In characteristic style Alec produced an ingenious three dimensional solution which also provided a much needed ladies' cloakroom accessible from the half-landing of the Stair, and also by burrowing underneath, direct access from the Library to its store by the south end of Penrose's building.

Also in 1966 the Cripps Building was beginning to come into use. It was much the largest group of sets of rooms – 200 in all - which the College had ever been able to build. Merely furnishing, equipping and recruiting staff for such a new building is a substantial if straightforward task. But nowadays it is unheard of here for all the systems of a large and complex modern building to be in full working order when the client takes delivery from the builders. Many defects are simple and easy to remedy locally. Others are more complex and demand a knowledge of the structure and functioning of the services. For example, a testing plug left inadvertently in a drain under the cellar floor can produce unexpected effects in quite remote parts of the building. Yet other defects are serious and demand the return of the builders. Here Alec's experience and judgement were essential for the swift resolution of problems and the smooth establishment of full working order. This was just as well, because the fame of the Cripps Building had spread far and

wide, and during the Easter vacation of 1967 the College had agreed to accommodate the Bilderberg Conference, an international gathering of eminent personages, politicians, industrialists, financiers, under the patronage of Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands. They were accustomed to meet in one or other of the great international hotels of Western Europe, and had never met in a College before. The Cripps Building and the College organisation stood the test, and Alec was delighted to receive, personally and on behalf of his staff, the very warm thanks of the organiser for the quality of the accommodation and service, regarded as standing out among the general run of their meetings.

The modernisation carried out around 1950 during the stewardship of G.E. Daniel (Fellow, 1938-86; Steward, 1850-55) had extended the kitchen across the Lane to the South, cutting off the west end, which thus became a back yard – little regarded then but later essential as a builder's yard for the duration of the restoration. That complete, the area became free again and Alec presided over the planning and construction of the Buttery Dining Room and the surrounding area, providing facilities of great potential and thus creating scope for much subsequent social change.

To facilitate the changeover to his successor, he resigned the Bursarship on 31 December 1974, a month before his 67th birthday, but only to undertake new tasks on the College's behalf.

The ancient buildings of the Cambridge Colleges have been well served for architectural history. In 1886 Willis and Clark produced the two-volume "Architectural History of the University of Cambridge and of the Colleges of Cambridge and Eton". But for St John's this stopped short at the activities of Gilbert Scott. Urged on by the Fellows, he had torn the heart out of the old College, demolishing the old Hospital, (incidentally, at that time no building of any College had a more ancient connection with the University than this), the old Chapel, the two Combination Rooms and much of the Master's Lodge in order to extend the Hall by three bays, build a new Chapel and Master's Lodge, and create two new Combination Rooms out of the remains of the Master's Long Gallery. What a thing it was to be quite sure that you were doing something better than had ever been done before! But in St John's the period since

1886 has been a century of unprecedented buildings, trebling the living space in College. When Alec retired, although there was much scattered information, notably in articles in *The Eagle*, there was no systematic account of all this. Although diffident about his literary abilities, he needed little urging to undertake the task himself, producing *Penrose to Cripps, A century of building in the College of St John the Evangelist, Cambridge*. (C.U.P., 1978). Not only was this very favourably reviewed, but it "prompted several Fellows to suggest that it would be helpful if the history of the earlier buildings of the College were written up..." This led to the even more spacious account *From the Foundation to Gilbert Scott* (C.U.P., 1980), from the Preface to which the quotation is taken. The Prefaces to the books make clear that the views expressed in them are Alec's own. The College thus has two volumes reflecting the outlook of a practicing architect with long experience of all the buildings involved, to add to its many historical studies from other backgrounds. There can be few if any ancient Colleges equally fortunate.

Yet even then his labours for the College were not complete. In 1895 *The Eagle* had published as an extra number partial lists of occupants of College rooms, prepared from what scanty records were available by G.C. Moore Smith (M.A. 1884; Hon. Fellow 1931-40). In 1935 it had done the same for the much more comprehensive lists drawn up by E.E. Raven (Fellow, 1923-51; Dean 1926-51). N.F.M. Henry (Fellow 1960-83) had been one of those encouraging Alec in his historical work; now he proposed to extend the lists of room occupation by another forty years to 1976. But that was a much harder job. In 1935 a room of a given number was the same size and shape as in 1895 (and usually much father back than that). But the last half century was a time of many alterations to existing rooms, of which there were still records or memories. Norman Henry proposed that the lists of occupants be accompanied by details of these topographical changes: and Alec agreed to make architect's plans of them, provided that Norman would go round with him holding the other end of the tape. The project expanded into the volume *Use and Occupany of Rooms in St John's College. Part I. Use from early times until 1983*. (C.U.P. 1984) which gives detailed, scaled, before-and-after ground plans of all the areas where partitions had been moved or other alterations had taken place. Thus

not only can one specify exactly what a given set number meant in 1983, one can do the same for 1935. This must be unique, flying as it does in the face of the normal human attitude of restricting history to the past, and assuming that as everyone knows where something is now, there is no point in writing it down.

When advancing years began to restrict mobility, Alec and his wife left their home in Stapleford for a flat in Beaufort Place, which brought the centre of Cambridge within easy reach. Apart from occasional disabilities, he could then easily spend time almost every day in the College to which he had become so attached. He could converse in undimmed voice with old friends and rest his undimmed eyes with satisfaction on so much which he had himself achieved.

"How happy he who crowns in shades like these

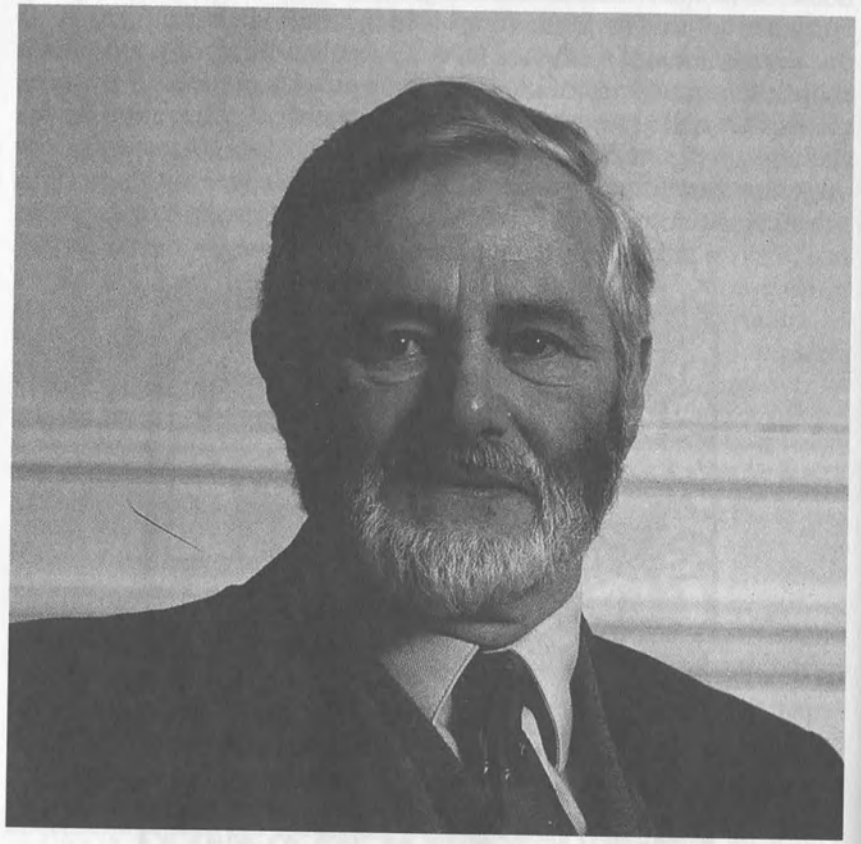
A youth of labour with an age of ease".

He died unexpectedly on a Christmas visit to members of his family on 26 December 1993.

G.C.E.

Obituaries

Kenneth John Pascoe 1920-1994



There is an old Cornish saying, *An lavar goth, yu lavar guyr,* which means, 'He who loses his tongue shall lose his land', and true-blooded Cornish men and women are wont to claim that the real Cornwall does not begin as you go west until after Truro where the language is still spoken. If that be true then Ken Pascoe was indeed a true Cornishman having been born on 14 May 1920 in a house in a small hamlet called Three Mile Stone in the parish of Kenwyn

which is indeed three miles to the west of Truro and where, close by at East Langarth, his father John Pascoe was a miller and corn merchant. This region has been identified as the Tregafran of Domesday where 'Leofric held it before 1066, and paid tax for 1 acre of land. Land for 1 plough, 1 smallholder with 1 slave. Pasture, 40 acres. Value formerly and now 12d'. Whether or not Kenwyn itself represents the Cenion of antiquity is not known.

Ken first went to school at Chyvelah about a mile down the road and afterwards at Truro School from 1930 until he came to the College as a scholar and as a pupil of James Wordie to read Natural Sciences Tripos Pt.II (Physics) in 1941. He then became interested in the properties of materials and he conducted research into the deformation of single metal crystals at the Cavendish Laboratory.

In 1943 he entered the Royal Naval Scientific Service where he was engaged in the measurement and assessment of strains caused in ships by cargo loading and the action of the sea. The results of this research were used by the Admiralty to formulate new criteria and rules for improved ship design. He became a Senior Scientific Officer in the R.N.S.S. in 1949.

Ken Pascoe joined the University Engineering Department in 1949 as a Demonstrator at a time when it was considerably smaller than at present. There were only four professors then compared with four times as many now and, under Sir John Baker as Head, the Department was much more compact than at present. This meant that a new recruit could make his mark with comparative ease soon after he was appointed and Ken was fortunate to be able to join the Materials Section at a time when Dr Tipper was continuing her research into the causes of the many failures of the American all-welded Liberty ships and oil tankers, mass produced to replace losses due to submarine and air attacks. Many of these ships were showing a strong tendency to break in half not only in rough, cold weather but even when in dock. Dr. Tipper concentrated her attention on the phenomena of brittle fracture which she rightly supposed to be the cause of the Liberty ship disasters, and Ken Pascoe's experience gained when he was at the R.N.S.S. was, of course, of considerable value. The original purpose of the Admiralty sponsored research on the structural behaviour of riveted and

welded ships was completed in 1951. However, in 1954 a British-built tanker, the *World Concord*, sailing for Greek owners under the Panamanian flag, broke in two in the Irish Sea and Dr. Tipper and her team were commissioned to study and report on the disaster.

Ken Pascoe was elected into a Title B Fellowship in 1960 having been appointed a University Lecturer in 1953. He now began to play an important part as a Supervisor in teaching our considerable number of undergraduates reading for the Mechanical Sciences Tripos and he contributed greatly to the excellent performance of Johnians in that Tripos. He had in the meantime written a text-book, *The Properties of Engineering Materials* which was to run into several editions and to become a popular book for those reading for Part 1 of the Tripos. He was the kind of teacher who both instructs and educates his pupils and he contributed greatly to their subsequent successes. From 1965 to 1980 he was a Tutor of the College dealing in a cheerful and friendly manner with the multitude of day to day problems that that office engenders.

On the nomination of the College Ken was elected Senior Proctor for the academical year 1984-1985, having been a Pro-Proctor in the previous year and he was again Pro-Proctor in the following year. He took his proctoring very seriously although his tour of duty was after the time when members of the University were required to wear academical dress in the streets after dusk and this meant that nightly walking had become unnecessary. However there were still many ceremonial occasions in the Senate House and various other duties such as supervising the regulations governing the carrying out of University examinations. This involved, in the Easter term, visiting all the rooms in which examinations were being held several times, particularly because it was known that on some occasions invigilators, on hot afternoons, had been found to be asleep.

Ken Pascoe twice held the office of Steward, from 1980-1982 and from 1986-1987, a job which was usually regarded as a thankless one because it is impossible to please all the the Fellows dining at any one meal and because it is very difficult to keep within an agreed budget. Nevertheless Ken seemed to do remarkably well at this balancing act.

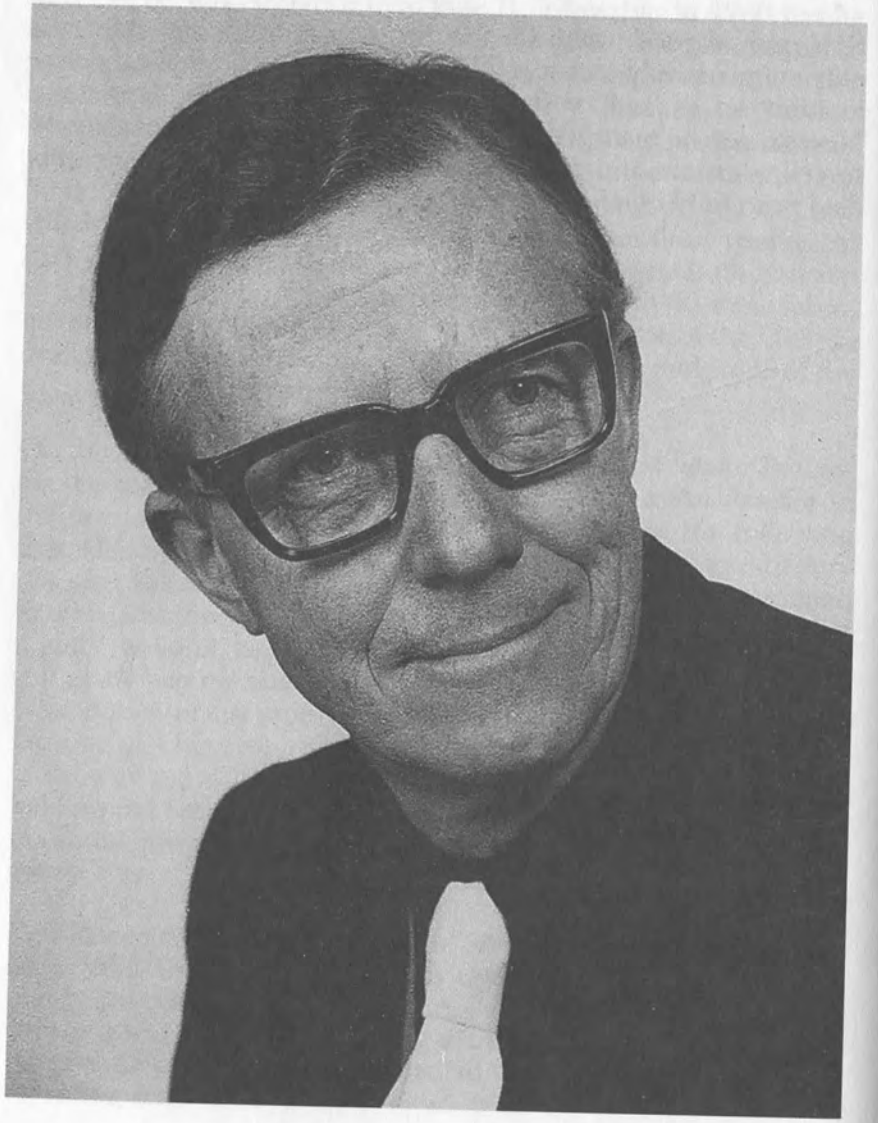
Ken Pascoe was essentially a modest man, a typical Cornishman in his preference for simplicity which was the basis of many of his habits. In College affairs he was restrained in expressing his opinions and never vehement, but he did not take the easy path when he felt that a principle was at stake.

Ken enjoyed good health for the greater part of his life and it was only comparatively recently, following a stroke that physical deterioration set in and, with it, understandably, some depression. Nevertheless he managed to come into College in a wheel chair on several occasions and thus kept in touch with College affairs. He died peacefully on 15 November 1994.

A.M.P.B.

Mark Jones was Chaplain of St John's from 1984-1989. He is currently Head of Divinity at Eton College.

Basil Hall 1915 - 1994



Basil Hall, who died suddenly in Switzerland last October, took up the post of Dean (with primary responsibility for the Chapel) at St John's in the Easter term of 1975. Though his Johnian career was relatively short, he imprinted himself on both the minds and affections of those who knew him well and especially those whom he taught.

To Junior Members of that vintage he was shy but not remote. He enjoyed holding court at Chapel breakfast and appeared to take genuine pleasure in whatever conversation happened to be rattling along. There was good sherry and talk at his Thursday evening 'at homes' in I staircase, New Court. Though outwardly solemn (and sometimes he *was* solemn) there was usually a kindly twinkle in his eye and an ironic smile on his lips.

The dry sense of humour surfaced on one occasion in particular. Undergraduates of my generation will remember how Tim Dewes received a mysterious summons to the Lodge to provide the Master with a report on the state of College cricket. Tim duly arrived in clean bib and tucker, only to be told by a smiling Nicholas Mansergh that he must have been duped. The note had been typed on Basil's typewriter, using his notepaper, not *by* Basil, but with his full connivance.

The most high-minded of men, he nevertheless coped sympathetically with the foibles of youth. Towards the end of my first year, I was collared at Chapel breakfast and given the job of reading the lesson at the Commemoration of Benefactors later that morning. It was the well-known passage 'Let us now praise famous men...' from *Ecclesiasticus*. At that time I knew absolutely nothing about the Apocrypha (and, to be frank, I was in a slightly fragile state from the night before) so unfortunately I read the wrong chapter. Apparently the Fellows blamed Basil... But he never upbraided me (and I still have a letter from Nicholas Mansergh saying ah... how nicely ah... I had read the wrong aaah... lesson).

With Renford Bambrough (who was the other Dean) Basil gladly became a patron of the T.E.Hulme Society. Its brief was to cover a wide range of political, moral, aesthetic, philosophical and theological matters. Of course, it was the College pseuds'

club... but that hardly mattered, and we had some very good meetings.

Few realised, I think, that Basil was an absolute master in his own field. He stood in the first rank of British reformation scholars and his publications will be read and consulted for many years to come. The reason for this is partly that Basil was both historian and theologian, and he would reserve his most acidic comments for those from either one of those disciplines who worked in ignorance of the other.

Basil was always deeply concerned for his students. As a teacher he was patient, wise and thorough, for which I can vouch from my own experience. Notionally, he supervised me for an Early Modern History outlines paper in Part II: but what I *really* wanted to know about was the Reformation and the theological disputes that followed it. He was a stimulating teacher, fiercely independent and fair-minded, and he delighted in pointing out passages in which Protestants wrote things one would have expected from Catholics and *vice-versa*. He would not allow sixteenth and seventeenth century authors to be hijacked for dogmatic reasons.

It was interesting to see that, though he was attracted to the cautious 'bookish' Erasmus, Basil was fascinated by Calvin (something which, in recent years, has been a rather non-U in English theological circles). He wanted to untangle Calvin from the web of stereotypes and caricatures which have grown up around him.

But Basil was no hero-worshipper. My impression is that he admired Calvin for his determination to wed theology to the day-to-day pastoral and political realities of Church life. He was no stranger to controversy and, I suspect, he relished it: but never for its own sake. He was Valiant-for-Truth.

I think that Basil would have defended the position he took in the Commemoration Sermon published in the last number of *The Eagle* stoutly, even passionately, and against all comers. The piece has caused some comment (and please don't write to *me* about it); but it is characteristic of the man for those who knew him.

After recovering from the bout of ill health which persuaded him to retire from St John's, he continued writing right up to the time

of his death. A certain fastidiousness saved him from the vice of over-publishing, but he leaves a solid corpus of distinguished work, much of it collected in the volume *Humanists and Protestants 1500-1900* (Edinburgh, 1990).

Sadly, he never completed the book about Calvin which should have been his monument; but his papers have been deposited in the Exeter University Library and are available there to anyone who wishes to quarry material from them. The most recent number of the *Journal of Theological Studies* contains what I assume to have been the last review he ever wrote.

What then of Basil's role in the College as priest and pastor? He was a reluctant singer of the daily office (supposing himself to be the unmusical member of a musical family). As with everything else, however, he approached the task with resolution and arranged singing lessons.

Charles Stewart recalls a day when he received an urgent phone call from I staircase, New Court. He went along to find Basil in a pother about having to transpose a set of responses. Could he do it? Basil was determined, and got through the ordeal with Charles standing at his right shoulder and humming the notes.

It is a curious fact that, as Dean, Basil, the former Presbyterian, initiated a move upwards in churchmanship terms. It was in his time that, on certain high feasts, the main Sunday morning Sung Eucharist took the shape of a Solemn High Mass with three ministers and incense.

This pattern still exits: and, twenty years on, one could make a reasonable case for its being the liturgical highlight of Cambridge ecclesiastical life. On Whitsunday, with spring sunshine pouring through the stained glass, white-robed figures moving with stately tread, and clouds of incense ascending with the plainsong to the saints above on the lofty ceiling, one feels oneself to be standing on the threshold of a higher and unearthly sanctuary.

The motive for this was pastoral (though it is impossible that it was unrelated to Basil's own inner spiritual journey). By Basil Hall's time,

the old centre ground of the S.C.M. had quite evaporated. The only committed Christians among the undergraduates were simply either Evangelicals or Catholics. Evangelicals of various flavours had a comfortable niche in the life of the Chapel in the form of a simple 8.30 a.m. Communion Service. Basil agreed with Andrew Macintosh that the College's high churchmen were not particularly well served and that, from time to time, they should have the opportunity of giving expression to their more colourful liturgical predilections. So it made sense that these 'smoky' services should begin.

Basil demanded much from himself, and he expected similar high standards from others; yet, backed always by Valerie his wife, he was gracious, kind and courteous. Meeting him some years later he gave wise counsel, and then wrote me a long and reflective letter. He may not have had a wide influence, but he greatly deepened the intellectual and spiritual life of enthusiastic young Chapel-goers in College at that time. We learnt much from him.

Obituaries

Bertram Hughes Farmer, 1916 – 1996

Drawing by R. Tollast

Benny Farmer, Fellow of the College since 1948, President 1967-71, died after several months of illness on 6th February 1996 a few weeks short of his eightieth birthday. A distinguished geographer, he was best known for his work on agriculture and rural development in South Asia.

Born in Malmesbury, Wiltshire, Benny came up to St John's in 1934; I would hazard a guess that he was the first from the town's County Secondary School to do so. Elected an Exhibitioner in 1935 and a Scholar in 1936 he took Firsts in both parts of the Geographical Tripos. Following graduation in 1937 he took a Certificate of Education and a year later was appointed to teach at Bournemouth School. There he taught for two years before war service, first in the ranks of the Royal Tank Regiment and then, from 1942, as a commissioned officer in the Field Survey section of the Royal Engineers. It was postings to and experience in Singapore, Indonesia, India and especially Ceylon (Sri Lanka) which led to his life-long interest in the problems of South Asia. Having commanded an Air Survey Liaison Section for two years, 1944-6, and with a Mention in Dispatches he left the army with the rank of Major in 1946.

His excellent academic record and experience in overseas survey helped him to gain an immediate academic appointment at University College Swansea where he taught for two years before a recall to Cambridge in 1948. Many of his anecdotes (and he was never short of them) stemmed from these two years in Swansea; certainly his affection for South Wales remained with him for the rest of his life. While at Swansea he married Anne who died just a few months before him in November 1995. They are survived by their four children, David, Pauline (Polly), Hugh and John and their eight grandchildren.

Although only at first a Demonstrator in the University Geography Department (he was not appointed Lecturer until 1952) he was immediately elected to a Fellowship of the College. For the next 47 years St John's was his second home; he was Director of Studies in Geography 1952-77, a Tutor 1958-61 and President 1967-71. A man of great energy and commitment he served on a remarkable number of University and College committees. These included at

various times the Council of the Senate, the General Board, the Faculty of Geography and Geology (Secretary and later Chairman) and the Council of the College. As an academic who practised the highest standards and expected them of others he was in demand from many academic bodies. He was an external examiner for Oxford, Sheffield, Leicester, Nottingham and SOAS, an editor for the Institute of British Geographers and, in his semi-retirement for the Royal Geographical Society, and an administrator-cum-guiding hand for the Board of Extra-mural Studies, The Workers Educational Association, the Institute of British Geographers (President in 1972) and the British Association of Orientalists (Chairman 1966-7). He did long service as a Syndic of the University Press, chaired the Smuts and Mary Euphrasia Mosley funds and served on several appointment boards to prestigious chairs. His appointment as the first Director of the Centre of South Asian Studies at Cambridge, a post which he held from 1964 until his retirement in 1983, was the one which probably gave him the most personal satisfaction. Letters addressed to the Centre of Salvation Studies never ceased to amuse. Under his leadership the Centre became a vibrant place where, as Sudhir Wanmali writes— 'one would meet the most gifted scholars of South Asia not only from Cambridge but from all over the world'.

Despite the years in war service and all the above commitments (and there were many, many more) Benny, who was a well-organised bundle of nervous energy found time for his family, his garden and allotment (I must be one of many who was annually given a day-to-day report on the progress of his sweet peas), and research and publication. Following another visit to Ceylon in 1951, and with Leave of Absence taken there in 1955-6, he produced his first major work, *Pioneer peasant colonisation in Ceylon* in 1957, by which time he had been chosen as a member of the Ceylon Land Commission. Six years later he wrote *Ceylon, a divided nation*; at the same time he had begun to extend his primary research into agricultural developments in South India. This work, recognised and supported by a Gill Memorial award from the Royal Geographical Society and a Prix Christian Garnier from the Societé de Géographie de Paris, generated many academic papers and in 1974, his *Agricultural Colonisation in India since Independence*. Three years later he edited *Green Revolution? Technology and change in rice-growing areas of Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka*. His last book was more general; *An Introduction to South Asia*, 1983, quickly became an authoritative standard introduction to the region and the work for a new edition (in 1993) occupied much of his time in his retirement, so-called.

Benny will be vividly remembered by all who came in contact with him whether in department, college or in the field. Johnian undergraduates remember his lively but demanding supervisions in A9 New Court, the set he occupied from 1949. One of his early pupils, Ian Goodhand, wrote recently of Benny's great enthusiasm and passion for his subject and of his good teaching and wise counselling. Another, David Stoddart, recalls how Benny would take telephone calls in the next room but continue to shout criticisms of his essay through the half-open door. Those he supervised for doctorates remember him as a guru who not only kindled their interest and encouraged them to muddy their feet in the rice fields but, through his many contacts, set them on their way. One of them, Barbara Harriss-White kindly permits me to quote from a letter she wrote on hearing of his death:

> Memories keep flooding back: of an inspired teacher of rows of students, some of whom decided that names like Oodagamangalam, Tissamaharama and Trincomalee were worth getting their tongues around (as he had done), and that the famous 'diversity' in the 'unity' of India was worth exploring much further; of Benny up to his knees in the ooze and deep in earnest conversation with a ploughman aft of a buffalo team about his standards of puddling; of animated conversations under a relentless sun about contour bunding, water management, pests and crop diseases; hot and sweaty meetings trying to make sense of official data; of Benny topping a tender coconut, or chuckling with wily pleasure at having outwitted some bumptious official.

It was in recognition of such inspiration and guidance that a web of his former students from Britain and Asia dedicated a volume of essays to him in 1984. Edited by Tim Bayliss-Smith and Sudhir Wanmali and entitled *Understanding Green Revolutions: agrarian change and development planning in South Asia* the volume (or, to be strictly accurate, a bound set of blank pages as it wasn't quite ready!) was

presented to him at a memorable dinner in the Senior Combination Room of the College on 14th April 1983 in the presence of over a hundred geographers past and present, several of them by then Professors. That so many gathered for the occasion was in part a reflection not only of the esteem in which he was held but of the way that, as Director of Studies he had, from 1952, steadily built up Geography numbers in the College. As a result a second Fellow, Clifford Smith, was elected in 1961 and supported Benny at St. John's until his appointment to a chair of Latin American Studies at Liverpool in 1970. He was followed by Jack Langton (1970-3, now at Oxford), Tim Bayliss-Smith (1973, and currently Director of Studies) and Robin Glasscock (1977). All Geographers, senior and junior, are 'bonded' by the Purchas Society (named after Samuel Purchas, BA 1597, Johnian and Geographer) founded in 1948 by Benny and Glyn Daniel (who had been instrumental in bringing him back to St John's after Swansea) for students of Geography, Anthropology and Archaeology. For various reasons, some no doubt apocryphal, the Society gradually became the Geographical Society of the College and, now in its 48th year, largely remains so. The enduring camaraderie of the Society has its roots in Benny's enthusiasm, support and good humour in the early years. He could produce a good story whenever it was needed and sometimes when it wasn't.

Benny's academic worth was recognised in some quarters but not in others. As President of the Institute of British Geographers for 1972 he was one of the very few who achieved this distinction with neither a doctorate nor a chair. Some were surprised that he did not succeed Professor Alfred Steers to the University Chair of Geography in 1966. A year later his Readership in South Asian Geography was warmly welcomed as, in 1981, was his Honorary Doctorate from the University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka, and in 1983, the Victoria Medal of the Royal Geographical Society. Looking back it is surprising that he was not elected to an *ad hominen* professorship in the University.

In the College, Benny's career was crowned when he was elected President, 1967-71. Under J.S Boys Smith as Master he was a good choice; his warm and easy friendliness was an excellent complement to the somewhat reserved dignity of Boys Smith. The period was one of considerable apprehension and uncertainty in the face of the

gathering storm of unrest in the late sixties. Boys Smith, with his characteristic foresight, sought to improve the formal lines of communication with junior members while Benny, relying on his friendly contact with various College officers and members of staff, tirelessly sought to provide accurate intelligence on the realities of the undergraduate perceptions of the time. As President it fell to Benny to preside over the election of Boys Smith's successor. He was naturally an excellent 'continuity man' in helping Nicholas Mansergh settle into his Mastership.

Benny was popular with the staff and always concerned for their welfare. Thus, with J.A.Crook, he was instrumental in preserving the Pig Club as a society of Fellows and senior staff when, in 1954, its strictly piggy duties (for the provision of College food in the post-war period) came to an end. There were times, however, when Benny would resume his military bearing and deal with minor peccadillos or breeches of custom as if he were presiding at a Commanding Officer's Orders. And when walking with a colleague through the courts, shuffling appropriately, he would always pick up the step.

Arising from royalties from the book published in his honour in 1983 a B.H. Farmer Fund was established with a view to helping Geography undergraduates in their overseas travel. The Fund to which he himself later contributed is still modest but, as I write, four second-year students are the latest beneficiaries and in this way his name will live on.

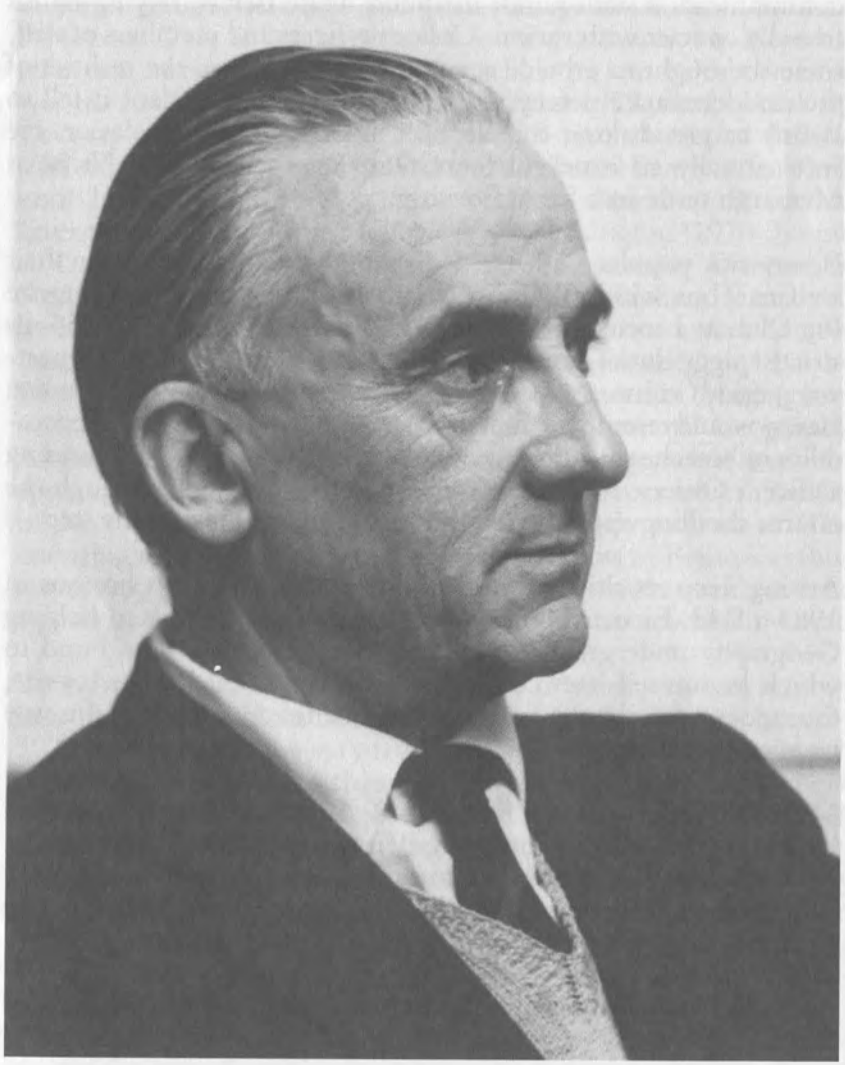
My watch tells me that it is 12.45pm. A few months back I would have known the time from seeing Benny, a meticulous time-keeper, cycling across the Broadwalk towards luncheon, a nap and some gardening after a morning's work in A9. He was active almost to the end.

A service in his memory was held in the College Chapel on 27 April 1996.

Robin Glasscock

I am grateful to Andrew Macintosh and Tim Bayliss-Smith for their comments.

R. A. Lyttleton 1911-1995



Raymond Arthur Lyttleton (1911-95) was a Research Fellow of the College from 1937, a University Lecturer in Mathematics from 1945 until 1959, when he became a Reader in Theoretical Astronomy and a Professorial Fellow from 1969 until his death on May 16, 1995.

Ray Lyttleton, as he became known in later life, attended King Edward's School, Birmingham, where he showed unusual ability in two quite disparate activities, the scoring of runs at cricket and the solution of mathematical problems. Winning an award in 1930 to Clare eventually decided him to seek an academic career though to the end of his life he maintained an abiding passion for cricket and indeed for a wide range of ball games. He was not alone among Cambridge mathematicians in this respect, but he was alone in being a formidable practical performer. At the age of 38 he captained the College Old Boys against the College 1st Eleven. Batting first, the College scored 165, or thereabouts. At 65 for 6, or thereabouts, things looked distinctly grim for the Old Boys. But Lyttleton was still there. Deciding that playing cautiously was no longer the correct policy, he opened out. With the result that the Old Boys won, losing only a single further wicket. With Lyttleton ending on 130*, or thereabouts. Perhaps the most interesting feature of the afternoon was the expression on the faces of the College team as they walked off the field at the end. The look of utter disbelief that they could have been mauled so comprehensively by a scruffy old don. A few shots perhaps, reminiscent of former glories, but not a sustained hammering over upwards of two hours, a hammering that ended with an immense six over mid wicket.

Lyttleton took the Mathematical Tripos in 1933, being placed at what was then described as a B* Wrangler. Which in practice meant that he found it possible to secure such grants and scholarships as would permit him to begin a career in research – not easily achieved in those days at the depths of the Great Depression. In 1936-37 he obtained a Proctor Visiting Scholarship to Princeton University, where he studied with the great American astronomer, Henry Norris Russell, an experience that was to prove pivotal in his life.

St John's was almost unique among Cambridge Colleges in opening its annual competition for Research Fellowships to graduates of other Colleges, permitting Lyttleton to submit an entry for the competition of 1937, which he did while still at Princeton. The topic was on the origin of the solar system. In the early years of the century all of the planets had been thought of as forming coevally with the sun. But as a consequence of work, notably by Harold Jeffreys and J.H. Jeans this view had fallen into disfavour. However,

difficulties had been found with Jeans' work and it was these difficulties that Lyttleton's essay had resolved, for which he was awarded one of several Research Fellowships in 1937. Additionally, he was appointed on his return from the United States to a Junior Lectureship in the Faculty of Mathematics.

The writer first made Lyttleton's acquaintance in the spring of 1939, a time so remote from the present day that it was usual to refer to people that you had known for many years by their surname. The problem he was then interested in was that of a star moving through a diffuse gas, which he believed was hugely important for understanding the evolution of stars. It was partly dynamical, which he would handle, and partly physical which I was supposed to take on. Actually it did turn out to be hugely important, but not in the way that we thought at first.

Ray Lyttleton's style was unusual for a scientist, and in this he was much influenced by his Cambridge background. Whereas most scientists tend to hack a path through an intellectual jungle, never quite knowing where the path will lead, Lyttleton liked to see his objectives defined already at the beginning, something that is rarely possible. But possible as it turned out in several celebrated cases. The problem of the rotational breaking up of a spinning incompressible fluid had tormented famous mathematicians from Jacobi in the 19th century, to Cartan in the 1920's, but still without an eventual solution. It was a problem that suited Lyttleton, who worried away at it from the time I first met him in 1939 until the early 1950's, when at last he succeeded in finding the long sought-after conclusion to the problem. Published in a monograph by the University Press in 1953 under the title *The Stability of Rotating Liquid Masses*. This achievement undoubtedly played a role in Lyttleton's election in 1955 to the Royal Society of London.

In later years, Lyttelton's interests followed two main paths. Through the 1960's he was much occupied as a consultant at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California. It was J.P.L. that held the NASA contracts for the widest ranging space vehicles, especially those that first visited the outermost planets, ultimately leaving the solar system altogether. As a world authority on celestial dynamics, Lyttleton was in much demand for his advice on the orbital intricacies of these

flights, and he spent a high proportion of University vacation time on them, extending over a decade in the 1960's and 70's.

His other abiding interest was concerned with the structure and evolution of the Earth. He belonged to the Harold Jeffreys school, which holds that viscosity values in the solid mantle of the Earth are so very high that the internal Earth movements postulated by geophysicists are flatly impossible. Geophysicists point, on the other hand, to a wide range of facts in support of their point of view. But for Lyttleton the phenomena in question were not so much facts as illusions, which he sought to explain otherwise.

There were few who knew him who did not at some stage encounter the razor edge of his wit. He had a special gift, which I always thought he inherited from a grandfather, a well-known Irish lawyer. It was to invent absurd examples of the form of argument used by an opponent, ostensibly to point out to the opponent the error of their argument, but actually to make the rest of us laugh. This led quite inaccurately to his being generally regarded as an iconoclast. Actually, when called on to take part in any formal function he was formal almost to a fault. The traditions he often derided he would adhere to extremely punctiliously. And in administrative matters he was an outstandingly successful secretary of the Faculty of Mathematics, as well as a highly efficient Geographical Secretary of the Royal Astronomical Society.

In 1969, Ray Lyttleton was appointed to a personal professorship in theoretical astronomy, and from then on he made his working base at the Institute of Astronomy. He is survived by his wife Maeve Marguerite, the daughter of F. Hobden, formerly of Shanghai.

Sir Fred Hoyle

Alan Traviss Welford 1914 – 1995

Photo courtesy of the University of Adelaide

The Reverend Alan Welford died on 16th June 1995, while on holiday in France. He was 81.

Alan Welford was born on 27th January, 1914, in London. He was admitted to St John's as a pensioner in 1932 by Martin Charlesworth who, deflecting him from reading Classics, suggested that the Sciences might be a better bet. His Tutor, John Boys Smith, was of the same mind and, consequently and naturally, he was placed in the first class of the Natural Sciences Tripos (Part 1) of 1934 and elected a Scholar of the College. From his schooldays Welford had felt a vocation to be ordained and, following his success in the Natural Sciences, he determined to read for Part 1 of the Theological Tripos. He was placed in the third class of this Tripos of 1936, indicating to his tutor that he was 'very annoyed with himself'. Moving smartly on to the Moral Sciences Tripos (Part 2, Psychology), in 1937 Welford regained his place in the first class, thereby confirming the wisdom of a scientific career. Yet his attraction to theology or, rather, to the understanding of basic Christianity, remained a distinct feature of his interests for the rest of his life.

Alan Welford was appointed Chaplain of the College in 1938 having served, following his ordination, a short curacy in Crayford, Kent. He combined the office of Chaplain with that of Junior Bursar during the harsh times of the College in the years of the war. In 1946, following a year at Princeton, he was appointed Director of the Nuffield Unit for Research into the Problems of Ageing, and, in 1947, to a University Lectureship in Experimental Psychology. His career as a scientist was well and truly launched. Two important and influential papers shortly followed as did the beginning of a long and happy marriage to Ruth Brown, a colleague in the Nuffield Unit.

In 1956, the College recognised Welford's achievement and potential by appointing him a Tutor and electing him to a Fellowship. Here he remained until 1968 when he chose to migrate to Australia as Professor of Psychology in the University of Adelaide where he served until his retirement in 1979.

Alan Welford will be remembered by many as a solid and caring Tutor to the natural scientists and as Director of Studies (1961-68)

in that subject. In the former capacity he had clearly benefited from his own experience as a pupil of such College giants as Charlesworth and Boys Smith. He was, to be sure, a shy person and his long silences on tutorial occasions could be somewhat disconcerting to his pupils. Yet they in turn, at, for example, his sherry parties for Freshmen naturally responded in kind, swaying gently (as Freshmen always did) in serried ranks of silence. What mattered, however, was that, when the chips were down, Alan Welford, with his deep reassuring voice and the manner of a well-disposed bloodhound, was invariably an epitome of decisive tutorial care and concern.

Welford was, perhaps, more at home in directing research students than in the teaching of undergraduates. Here he was a model of enthusiastic devotion and there are many testimonies to his motivating and encouraging the research of those in his care. His own research, initiated under the auspices of Sir Frederic Bartlett and Dr. Kenneth Craik, Fellows of the College, flourished throughout his career and he was the author of a large number of papers and books. His best known are: *Ageing and Human Skill* (London, 1958); *Fundamentals of Skill* (London, 1968), and, with J.E. Birren, *Behaviour, Ageing and the Nervous System* (Springfield, Ill., 1967). He served as the first editor of the journal *Ergonomics* from 1957-1963 and he was a Fellow of the British Psychological Society, of the Gerontological Society and of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia. He was admitted to the (Cambridge) degree of Sc.D. in 1964.

Despite his conspicuous success as a scientist, Welford remained deeply attached to his personal vision of the Christian faith and the tension exemplified in his Tripos performance remained at the core of his personality for the rest of his life. Two books testify to this: *Christianity: a Psychologist's Translation* (London, 1971) and *Christian Christianity* (Felixstowe, 1993), which was to be his last publication. Alan Welford was strongly committed to belief in the possibility of dialogue between scientific thought and that of religious faith. Where religion was concerned, Welford was unorthodox. He took his stand in the Modern Churchman tradition favoured (very diffidently) by Boys Smith; but he was free from the rigorous constraints of the philosophy of religion which marked the integrity of his Tutor, as also from the discipline of the trained theologian. His

approach, then, was that of robust common sense, of a no-nonsense, plain man's sensibilities. It is doubtful whether, in these days, his contribution in this sphere will prove very influential. But that he attempted it is a sure testimony to his commitment to those values of mutual understanding and forbearance that characterises the College at its best and which Welford had so notably appropriated.

In the ordinary conduct of life Welford was conservative by inclination and nature. He disliked, for example, sermons at Evensong and radical innovations such as the admission of women to the College. He was devoted to his long and very successful marriage and, with Ruth, much enjoyed foreign travel. He spent his retirement in houses in Honolulu and Aldeburgh, travelling widely on the continent from the latter.

That he should have met his end suddenly during the course of a relaxed visit to France in the company of his beloved wife, Ruth, a glass of wine beside him, is very much what he would have chosen.

A.A.M.

OBITUARIES

Derrick Robert Puffet, 1946-1996

Derrick Robert Puffett was born in Oxford on November 30, 1946. He suffered from muscular dystrophy from an early age and spent his life in a wheelchair. He graduated with first-class honours at New College Oxford, and was a Research Fellow at Wolfson College Oxford for some ten years before taking up a lectureship in Cambridge and a Fellowship at St John's in 1984. He married Kathryn Bailey, herself distinguished in music analysis, in 1989. Ill-health from the early 90s made it difficult for him to participate in College life, and also hampered his teaching – a task which he cherished. It was with great reluctance that he gave up his lectureship and his post as Director of Studies at St John's in 1994. He died on 14 November 1996.

Derrick Puffett was a pioneer among British musicologists. He was among the first to adopt the formalist approach of the music theory centred at Yale University, developing it, along with colleagues at Kings College London, to establish music analysis as an essential discipline within the university curriculum in Britain. By the 1980s, music analysis was 'all the talk' (if not 'the rave') of musicology. This was quite an achievement, given the opposition that Derrick often witnessed, even in his own universities of Oxford and Cambridge. It is a credit to his commitment and charisma that he managed to raise the profile of the discipline in the two universities, almost single handedly, inspiring many undergraduates and graduates to the subject. It was both his passion for music and the rigour of his analytical approach that attracted them to him.

Supervisions with Derrick were always incisive; his sharp wit and his keen eye for errors made them something of a challenge. He was both a goad and a guide. Sometimes the strength of his opinion was devastating, but it was never something that could not be made up over a meal or at one of his end of year champagne and ice-cream parties. He simply wanted the best for his students – which is why, I suppose, he fed us with Möet et Chandon and Häagen-Dazs.

The strength of his opinions, however, was balanced by an open mindedness when it came to the editing of the internationally influential journal *Music Analysis*. He opened it up to new ideas, which he did not necessarily agree with; but which needed an airing, and Derrick wanted to maintain the impetus of the discipline. It is perhaps to his credit that the recent criticism of formalist analysis by the so-called 'new musicology' was already inherent in the journal. Of course,

Derrick Robert Puffet, 1946-1996

he was not going to let formalism lose hands down; his counter-offensive, in the editorial of the journal (Vol. 13 No. 1), will probably be remembered as one of the most significant contributions to the debate. But it can never be said that he was narrow or hard-line in his approach – his publications and translations attest to the diversity of his interests. His polemics were not simply directed at new-fangled ideas but at old-fashioned notions too; the task at hand was always to gain a critical and a musical understanding of composers and their music.

Derrick's final period of illness was one of the most productive of his life, thanks not least to Kathryn's constant care and support. The articles he completed during this time on Beethoven, Debussy, Berg, Webern and Stravinsky will undoubtedly be recognised not only as some of his finest work, but will establish him as one of the great writers on Western music of our time.

Daniel Chua

Malcolm Schofield adds:

My first encounter with Derrick was in Sandy Goehr's rooms in Trinity Hall, where Peter Goddard (then Senior Tutor) and I (as Tutor to Musicians) had been invited for the usual negotiations which precede the offer of a Fellowship. Derrick's warmth and huge grin are what I remember from that meeting. We naturally saw quite a lot of each other over the years, and the warmth and the grin seldom failed to materialise, although he could be pretty fierce if he disagreed with one. He was not a comfortable person, but a passionate contemplative, whose massive physical frame conveyed an extraordinary sense of both gentleness and frustratingly suppressed energy. In the first instance our meetings would usually be to talk about music students, teaching, and admissions, but Derrick always wanted to know how my own research was going, and whether I had stimulating pupils to teach Classics to. Not surprisingly he had no patience with the idle, the self-indulgent, and the uncommitted, but would support strongly those of his students who worked hard with no pretensions, especially perhaps the ones who were a bit unsure of themselves. At the same time I remember his sadness at the fate of the idlest of all, who was sent down for failing the

Tripos. I said: 'I thought you thought he deserved it.' 'Well, I do,' he replied, 'but it's such a rotten thing to happen to anyone'.

I became general Admissions Tutor for three years in 1985, and in this role was viewed with some suspicion by Derrick, as I attempted to thread my way between the often conflicting viewpoints of the Organist, the Tutors and the Director of Studies in Music on the occasion of the annual competition for Choral and Organ Students. I remember anticipating a particularly robust discussion with him the year that the famous boy treble Aled Jones applied (voice now broken) for a place in the tenor line-up. The candidate's academic record was not of the strongest. But when I entered Derrick's room I found his face wreathed in smiles. He said he had just enjoyed half an hour's talk with about the most musical person he had ever met in his life – and to my utter astonishment said that despite the low grades he was prepared to take him if George wanted him. The irony was that George decided that the voice (Welsh or not) was not ready.

Derrick was always hugely proud of his Fellowship of the College, and regretful that he could not contribute more. He served a brief term on the College Council, which he regarded as an important duty. In his later years he was unable to lunch or dine with the fellows, and I no longer had Tutorial business to discuss with him. But if I saw him sitting at his desk in D2 Chapel Court I would sometimes drop in for a chat. The last time I ever spoke to him was one such occasion last summer. We talked for over half an hour, mostly about the future of music teaching in the College, for which he was deeply concerned. He would have been delighted to know that the Council has elected a newly appointed Lecturer in the Faculty to be Fellow and Director of Studies. Derrick was himself utterly unique and irreplaceable.

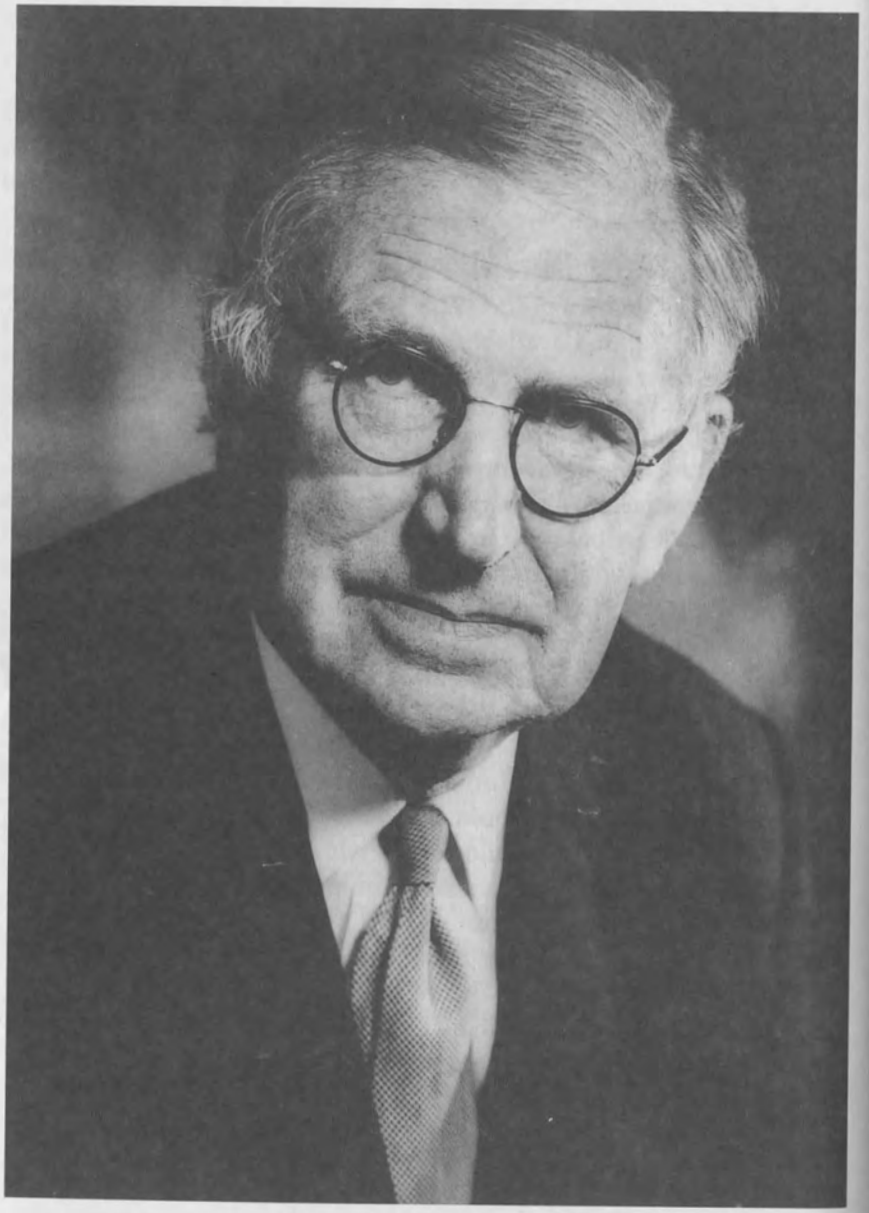
Professor Sir Nevill Mott, CH, Hon.ScD, FRS 1905-1996

Professor Sir Nevill Mott was born in 1905 and took his BA at St John's College in 1927. He was a Fellow at Gonville & Caius College 1930-33 and 1954-96 and Master 1959-66. He was made an Honorary Fellow of St. John's College in 1964 and won a Nobel Prize for Physics in 1977. He died in August 1996.

Nevill Mott played a major role in the development of solid-state physics, from its infancy in the 1920s when the techniques of quantum mechanics first became available, through to his Nobel-prize winning work on non-crystalline semiconductors in the 1970s, and his final work on high temperature superconductors in the 1990s.

His parents met when students under J J Thomson at the Cavendish, and his father became Director of Education in Liverpool. Mott was sent to Clifton College because it was reputed to have good science laboratories, but while there he found his interests to lie with mathematics. He won a scholarship to St John's College in mathematics and physics in December 1923, and came up to read the Mathematics Tripos in 1924. He embarked on Part II which he completed in 2 years, gaining Distinction. He recalls in his autobiography, 'A Life in Science' (1987), varying degrees of success with his supervisors in the College. Harold Jeffreys (later Plumian Professor of Astronomy and Experimental Philosophy) would ask 'Have you any questions' which, if the answer was no, he would follow with 'Well, if you haven't any questions you'd better go'. Ebenezer Cunningham, less distinguished in research, provided more inspiration, and introduced him to a research problem that occupied him for much of his professional career, that of the metal-insulator transition. During this time he spent long enough in the practical physics classes run by Dr G F C Searle (who had taught his parents) to establish that he found experiments dull, and he determined to be a theoretical physicist.

Nevill Mott spent his third year, with his examinations behind him, preparing for research. He describes 1926 as a 'most fortunate time to start research in theoretical physics because there were so many easy problems to solve'. Quantum mechanics was developing rapidly,



Professor Sir Nevill Mott, CH, Hon.ScD, FRS 1905-1996

through the work of Heisenberg in Göttingen and Schrödinger in Vienna and Dirac in Cambridge, and Nevill Mott had appreciated how much work there was to do to match quantum mechanics to experiments. In Cambridge it was Paul Dirac, also a Johnian, who understood the new theories, but Nevill Mott did not identify him as an accessible teacher, and he went instead to Ralph Fowler, Rutherford's son-in-law. Fowler was off to the USA for a year, and left Nevill Mott to work by himself, largely from the German literature. He found the 'wave-mechanics' of Schrödinger to be more accessible than the matrix mechanics of Heisenberg, and used this intuitive formalism for much of his work over the following half century. Nevill Mott spent the next year in Copenhagen working with Niels Bohr, was in Cambridge in the spring of 1929, and the rest of the year in Göttingen. During this time he had built up his confidence, and was able to show how quantum mechanics modified the scattering of alpha particles with helium atoms from the classical model due to Rutherford, and this matched very well the experiments carried out by Chadwick.

He spent one year in Manchester, working with Lawrence Bragg, but was invited back to Cambridge to a University Lectureship and College Fellowship at Gonville & Caius. One reason for returning was to be nearer his future wife, Ruth Horder, a Newnham classics undergraduate. He spent 3 years in Cambridge, working on problems in nuclear physics. Not having taken his PhD, he was still registered as a research student and therefore paying £4 per term to Fowler as his supervisor. When Fowler again went on sabbatical he left Nevill Mott to supervise his students. This unusual situation was resolved when Mott's name was taken off the register, and so he did not get his PhD (He was eventually given an honorary doctorate by Cambridge in 1995!)

Mott moved, at the age of 28, to Bristol to be Professor of Theoretical Physics. There he switched from nuclear to solid-state physics, and built up Bristol as one of the leading groups in this rapidly emerging field. The implication of quantum mechanics on, for example, the properties of metals had been made earlier, by Sommerfeld, Bloch, Peierls, and Wilson, but there was still a very large distance between these early models and the realistic, predictive models for materials that would

have impact on engineering-oriented sciences such as metallurgy. Mott appreciated that the art was to develop theory just far enough to provide strong working models, and always looked to experiments to provide the match with his models. This approach proved to be very effective, and with a number of colleagues he laid down much of the framework for current understanding of metals and semiconductors. His co-authored books from this period, *'The Theory and Properties of Metals and Alloys'* with Harry Jones, and *'Electronic Processes in Ionic Crystals'* with Ronald Gurney, are still widely used. His work on the nature of semiconductor-metal contacts and the generation of the photographic 'latent image' in silver halide emulsions stands out particularly. During the war, he was eventually brought to head a theoretical physics group at Fort Halstead in 1943, working on problems related to munitions such as deformation in metals due to projectiles. He was much concerned by the arrival of atomic energy, with which he was not directly involved, and was one of the founders, in 1946, of the Atomic Scientists' Association, set up to inform the public about the true facts of atomic energy. His own publications for this Association were critical of British policy. He was also much involved in international scientific cooperation, and was active for many years with Pugwash (an international group set up to discuss ways of avoiding nuclear war), hosting a Pugwash conference in Caius College in 1962.

Mott was elected to the Cavendish Professorship of Physics in Cambridge in 1954. He took over from Lawrence Bragg, who had succeeded Rutherford and had built up a strong crystallography group in the Cavendish, among whom were Perutz, Kendrew and Crick. Mott appreciated that there were difficult decisions to be taken; in particular, nuclear physics had been the creation of Rutherford, but at Cambridge was being overtaken by the advancing scale of the technology. Mott was surprised to discover that no one in the University (Vice-Chancellor, Registrary, internal electors) seemed to have views on such matters of strategy; he had had a close working relationship with the Vice-Chancellor at Bristol, Philip Morris, and had expected something similar in Cambridge. Mott did shut down the linear accelerator, and also recognised that the fledgling molecular biology group was growing too fast for it to stay within the Cavendish. Solid state physics and

radio-astronomy were the two areas which particularly flourished during this period. He was now less active in research, considering that his time for research was probably behind him, and he had also decided that he had obligations to address the pressing educational and administrative problems that he found when he came. He pushed for reform of the Natural Sciences Tripos, and was baffled and frustrated by the effectiveness of the rear-guard actions from those who feared change. It took him three years to get the reforms which made it possible to learn quantum mechanics earlier than the third year of the Tripos!

He was elected Master of Gonville and Caius College in 1959, and had a generally uncomfortable time. His predecessor was Sir James Chadwick, who had been Rutherford's right-hand man in the Cavendish in the 1930s and had won the Nobel Prize for Physics for the discovery of the neutron. He had returned to Cambridge from Liverpool, where he had built up an excellent Department, but did not find it easy to deal with the strongly factious Fellowship, and had retired early. Mott's experience was similar; following a very acrimonious battle within the Fellowship for the appointment of a new Bursar, he came to the view that he did not lead a united Fellowship, and in 1965 he resigned the Mastership. Unlike Chadwick, who is said never to have put a foot inside the College after he resigned, Mott remained in the Fellowship and was active in the College.

After the resignation from the Mastership, with more time to devote to his science, Mott took up interest in the new field of non-crystalline semiconductors. The electronic structure of crystalline solids had for some time been understood in terms of the effects of diffraction from the translationally symmetric lattice, but this description could not be readily translated to materials with no such symmetry, such as glasses. Whether or not such a disordered material could be an electronic conductor was the basic question, and this touched on the more general question of what determined whether a material should be a metal or an insulator. This was a problem that Mott had been alerted to many years previously in connection with the electronic properties of nickel oxide. Together with Phil Anderson, based at Bell Labs in New Jersey, but for

several years a visiting professor at the Cavendish, he established the central concepts that were needed to provide the framework for the rapidly increasing pool of experimental information. By the 1970s when he had retired as Cavendish Professor, he was immersed in this field. His approach was intuitive; mathematical formalism was used to shore up the results that he knew were right, rather than to provide the framework. He produced the enduring concepts and models, including the 'temperature to the power of one quarter model' for the variable range hopping of charges trapped in the random potential due to the disorder present. He again produced the text that defined the field, co-authored with Ted Davis, 'Electronic Processes in Non-Crystalline Solids', which ran to two editions, and wrote also 'Metal-Insulator Transitions'.

This was the time that I came across Nevill Mott; to a new graduate student he was an unlikely figure, appearing to be timelessly old, but with a boyish enthusiasm for acquiring new information that none of us could match. What really impressed us was his conviction that what mattered were the new experimental results. He had a steady stream of visitors from all over the world visit the Cavendish to present their latest findings, which though often poorly digested and presented, were lapped up by him. Mott won the Nobel Prize in 1977. He shared the prize with Phil Anderson (their joint work on disordered materials was cited) and also with van Vleck with whose work he was less directly associated. He enjoyed the associated ceremony, and also that attached to his many honorary degrees (at least 28). Mott's final research interest was the field of high temperature superconductors, which were discovered in 1986 and provided a 'gold rush' for many scientists. For him these were materials close to his cherished 'metal-insulator' transition. He worked with Sasha Alexandrov, and generated new models (magnetic polarons). The problems caused by advancing age, both his own and his wife's, weighed increasingly heavily with him, but he found energy and relaxation in his science.

Nevill Mott was elected to an Honorary Fellowship of the College in 1964, and used his dining privileges from time to time. He was in the College in December 1994, when he gave the after-dinner speech in the Hall at the end of a one-day conference at St John's. He described where he, Cockcroft, and Dirac sat for dinner in Hall when he was an undergraduate in the 1920s, then touched on the many research areas which he had seen come and go in the Cavendish. In doing so, he spanned the several generations of science to which he had so importantly contributed, and gave us a sense of continuity back to the inception of solid-state physics which no one else could convey. He was without doubt one of the giants of twentieth century physics.

Richard Friend

Abdus Salam, 1926–1996

Abdus Salam, who died on 21 November 1996, was one of the leading theoretical physicists of the century and the first Muslim to win the Nobel Prize. He was born on 29 January 1926 in Jhang in the Punjab in what was then India, the son of a clerk in the office of the Inspector of Schools. At age 14, he entered Government College, Lahore, breaking all records in the matriculation examination. He continued in like fashion, winning an unprecedented succession of prizes and scholarships, through the B.A. courses in both English and Mathematics, ending by taking his M.A. in Mathematics from Lahore in June 1946.

That summer, Salam won a scholarship to Cambridge. St John's had been expecting another student from India, who had intended to do research in English Literature, but he withdrew in August. The Indian High Commission offered to nominate another student in his place and the College said that it would prefer an undergraduate. It was by this happenstance that Abdus Salam came to St John's.

Once in Cambridge, Salam did not take long to impress his new teachers, as the recollections by Fred Hoyle which follow make clear. Salam first took a two-year course to Part II of the Mathematical Tripos, followed by Part II of the Physics Tripos a year later, being placed in the First Class in each. In 1949 he began research in the Cavendish Laboratory. Nicholas Kemmer, one of the pioneers of theoretical

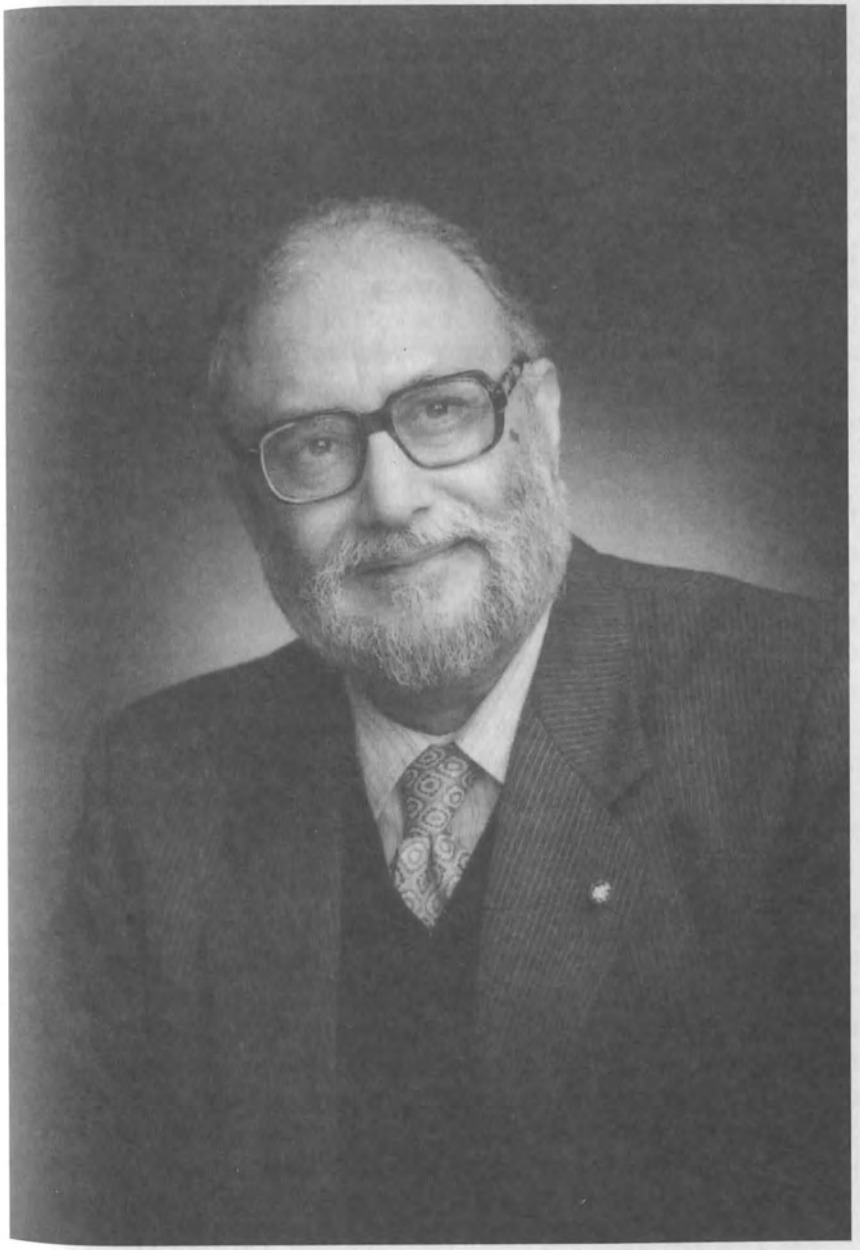
elementary particle physics, later Tait Professor of Mathematical Physics in Edinburgh, was his first official research supervisor, but Kemmer put him in the direction of Paul Matthews, then a postdoctoral fellow, thus initiating a lifelong association. Matthews introduced Salam to the problems of renormalisation theory.

Renormalisation theory provides the methods by which sensible answers (and highly accurate experimental predictions) can be obtained from quantum field theories, which would otherwise just produce infinities. It was in this technically extremely difficult but crucially important area that Salam first became known internationally. In January 1951, he went to the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey, USA, for the Lent and Easter Terms, accompanying Matthews, who officially became his supervisor. It was here, on 2 May 1951, that he learnt of his election as a Research Fellow of St John's.

Salam however had already made arrangements to return to Government College, Lahore, now in Pakistan, as Professor of Mathematics. Here he spent the academical years 1951-54, returning to College in the long vacations. Although he had always intended to return to Lahore, his years there were frustrating because he found it almost impossible to continue with his research. So in 1954 he accepted an invitation to return to Cambridge as a University Lecturer in Mathematics and Fellow and College Lecturer of St John's. In 1957 he was persuaded to move to Imperial College as Professor of Physics, where his old supervisor joined him as Reader. In 1959 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society at the age of 33.

The central theme of Salam's research was the attempt to form a unified theory of the forces of nature, using principles of symmetry. His greatest triumph, probably the greatest in elementary particle physics in the last forty years, was his construction of a theory which successfully unified electricity and magnetism together with the weak nuclear force (which is responsible for radioactivity) into a single theory. For this he shared the 1979 Nobel Prize with S. Glashow and S. Weinberg.

An achievement in its own way as outstanding was his creation of the International Centre for Theoretical Physics in Trieste, Italy. This was



Abdus Salam, 1926 – 1996

borne out of his own frustration in attempting to carry on research after returning home to Pakistan. He saw that for it to be possible for theoretical physicists from the Third World to be able to continue with their research, a first rate international research centre at which they could take leave was essential. Creating the Institute took all the qualities which made Salam such a remarkable physicist: charisma, irrepressible enthusiasm, vision, and an astounding capacity for hard work. Salam was Director of the Institute from its inception in 1964 until 1994, retaining his Professorship at Imperial.

Abdus Salam was elected an Honorary Fellow of the College in 1972, he was awarded an Honorary Sc.D. by the University of Cambridge in 1985 and he was appointed an Honorary K.B.E. in 1989. He will be remembered not only for his contributions to some of the most significant advances in physics in the twentieth century but also for inspiring and facilitating the work of so many young physicists from all over the world.

Peter Goddard

Sir Fred Hoyle adds:

I am not sure of it, but I think Abdus Salam arrived in St John's just in time to experience the exceptionally bitter winter of 1947-48. Unless you actually experienced those post-war years it is surely impossible to visualise how bad it really was. Churchill had promised us an ascent to the 'broad sunlit uplands'. What it actually brought was a descent into that appalling winter of 1947-48.

I had rooms in New Court which by common consent was the worst place in College to be. Designed with mid-nineteenth century spaciousness, rooms that had been planned with large fireplaces and wide chimneys that gobbled coal supposedly to service the boilers supplying steam to the academic engine. Designed to be lit in the morning by a College servant and 'made up' similarly throughout the day. But definitely not in 1947-48. If you wanted a fire in that winter you lit it yourself, and if you wanted it 'made up' you made it yourself. Except you didn't because you were out of coal. My ration for a whole

week's supervision of mathematics students in I8 New Court was one bag per week.

The one luxury we enjoyed was non-material. John's still maintained four College Lecturers in Mathematics. There was Peter White and Frank Smithies on the 'pure side' and, Leslie Howarth and myself on the 'applied side'. Howarth had the rooms next to mine on the same landing of I staircase. How I envied him for them! The reason being that they were technologically more advanced than mine. The fireplace had been blocked there and Howarth luxuriated in a gas fire, of which the operative area of the front measured about 4" x 8". Off-peak hours it would glow a fairly bright red but those who arrived at noon for a supervision with Leslie would be greeted by a small rectangle of pale pink.

Temperatures outside were at -20°C day after day after day and I didn't have even a 4" x 8" rectangle of pale pink to offer my students. So everybody soon learned to pick on whatever was available. Like everything else, clothes were severely rationed. Meaning that it was a case of wearing whatever you could lay your hands on, no matter how outlandish the garments. Anyway my students soon learned to pick on whatever they could seize hold of, as we sought earnestly to solve ingenious problems of spheres rolling on spheres. It was into this icy atmosphere that Abdus Salam found himself plunged on his arrival in Cambridge. Much of his later success can be attributed to the fact that he survived it.

Abdus had already done a mathematics degree back in India, as it would have been then, Pakistan as it became, at just about the time Abdus travelled to Cambridge. Warmth into cold he must have expected. But food into no-food he did not. His food ration book would have been taken immediately on his arrival in College. Through that first winter, he always averred in later life, he lived on apples, which was all that were in the markets to be bought without coupons. Except perhaps potatoes with which I suppose he was not equipped to cope. No joke this - even as late as 1951-52 the weekly cheese ration was a mere one ounce. Why people stood for it tells a not particularly flattering story about the British temperament.

As the senior of the four College Lecturers in Mathematics, it fell to Peter White to decide how to group students. A grouping into an occasional one, but mostly in twos and sevens, lasted generally for a year. Occasionally there would be a permutation that produced a minor shift but not often. Each student got two hours of supervisions each week, one hour of pure and one of applied. And there was an alternation term-by-term between White and Smithies on the pure side and Howarth and myself on the applied side.

It was a system that put as little strain as possible on the individual College Lecturer. The smaller Colleges with only one mathematician as a Fellow tended to pair, one College with a pure expert and another with an applied expert who taught together with students from both. There was still a sprinkling of College dons who sought to do both pure and applied, L.A. Pars of Jesus and, perhaps outstandingly, A.E. Ingham of King's. I am told that my own graduate student, J.V. Narlikar, who became a Fellow of Kings in the 1960s, was practically the last of the do-both experts.

Anyway, Abdus Salam was one of the rare ones who had to be 'taken' alone, there being no obvious partner or partners with whom he could be grouped. Howarth had him in the Michaelmas Term of his first year. Howarth told me over coffee one night after dinner that he had a 'man from India who was very good', which was the first I ever heard of Abdus. What I also heard about Abdus from Howarth was that he had the embarrassing habit of greeting his readers in the John's Courts with a fully pledged Muslim salute, practically going down on the cobble stones with his knees. It must have taken for Leslie, or for Peter White I suppose, to inform Abdus that such reverences was not considered necessary in Cambridge. At any rate the full Muslim greeting had been reduced to a wave of the arm and a cry - or shout as we would say - by the time it came to my turn in the Lent Term to have Abdus for supervision on a one-to-one basis.

It was the Lent Term when the real cold struck, with matters reduced to plain survival. I would be anticipating the end of the hour, when it would be possible to rush to the Combination Room, where an austerity

fire would be burning, and Abdus, would no doubt be anticipating his next apple.

The Lent Term gone, but not forgotten, it was mid-June before I saw Abdus again. I ran into him in Second Court. I asked him how he had done in 'Prelims'. He said awful, with a lot of absurd mistakes and then disappeared with a big laugh. In the case of Prelims the class list plus actual marks was sent round to supervisors. Abdus had a first and was, I believe, third on the list.

Then it was into his Tripos year, when I seemed to see much more of him. Howarth left at approximately this time, to take up the Chair of Applied Mathematics at Bristol, which was perhaps the reason for my seeing more of Abdus. It was a clash of two cultures. Back home he had been educated in what might be called the Ramanujan school, according to which knowing what is true takes first priority, with knowing how to prove it a definite second, while I had absorbed the Cambridge system in which knowing what is true is not seen as of much relevance, only knowing how to prove it. Between us we managed to solve most Tripos problems.

I could never bring myself to build up neat files of solutions to Tripos questions the way many did. Doing things however inpromptu led to much suffering in October, when having gone wholly rusty over Long Vac, it all started up again. By mid-November the dread of getting tied-up was wearing off, and so on through the year until by mid-May it all seemed straightforward to a degree where one would never believe that come October everything would be back to square one. It was in the bad times when I found it much less of a strain to tackle hard problems with a student like Abdus than it was to be asked easier things by those chaps who just sat there and stared out into space. With the latter you had to roll two stones uphill simultaneously. One stone, was the problem itself, the other was to get the chap to understand. With Abdus you only had one stone and he would do a fair amount of the pushing.

The Earth had moved relentless again around its orbit and Abdus had done what was expected, a First in Part II of the Mathematics Tripos. And I ran into him again, this time in Third Court, as you go round the

corner towards the Library. He gave me his big hail. I stopped in my tracks and we walked towards each other. He had a problem he said, a policy problem, which was this:

The people back home, Pakistan now, had granted him a scholarship for a third year. He had a thought that he might take Physics Part II, rather than Maths Part III. But not having 'done' any experimental physics to this point, he could hardly expect to achieve better than an upper second. Whereas if he went for Maths Part III he felt reasonably confident of a first, which would be much better received by the authorities back home. What did I think he should do?

After some moments of discussion I eventually said he should do what he judged would be best for Pakistan in the long run, rather than being too much concerned by short-term judgements, which I rather thought meant he should do Physics Part II. In after years he always said this was the most critical conversation of his life. In the event he did take Physics Part II, and in the event he got still another first. And of course among the Cavendish staff, having someone of high mathematical understanding crashing around the lab like a beginner was quite an experience. Especially as the breakages were done with a big chuckle. Anyway it soon got Abdus very well known and he was soon into the latest avant garde research in theoretical physics, renomalisation theory.

As the years moved with remorselessly increasing rapidity he was soon a Fellow of the College, soon a University Lecturer, and then - regretably - leaving to take a Professorship of Theoretical Physics at Imperial College. I always hoped that one day Abdus would return to Cambridge and I think that an offer of a Chair in Theoretical Physics would indeed have brought him back. There were two chances in the 1960s. But on both occasions the Faculty of Mathematics instructed the electoral board that there was a greater need for an appointment in Continuum Mechanics than in Theoretical Physics. This I did not believe myself and it was one of the reasons why from the mid-1960s my relations with the Faculty fell to zero point.

After I had left Cambridge in 1972 and after Abdus had become the Director of the International Centre for Theoretical Physics in Trieste, I

would drop in on him with a fair frequency. So in the event I saw more of him in later years than I might have expected. One firm view of his, which he held to the end of his life, I must record now by way of ending this short appreciation.

For Abdus, the greatest Scientist of the twentieth century was undoubtedly Dirac. Of course, you could say this was one John's man supporting another. But when I asked him if this included Einstein he was clear in his answer, which went something like this:

'Einstein had his mathematics all done for him. Dirac invented his. Not only that, but it was Dirac who first made it clear that the route towards real understanding in theoretical physics lies through abstract mathematics not through engineering mathematics.'

For those of us who do not aspire to more than engineering mathematics this may seem deflating. But I think it was entirely correct.

OBITUARIES

Frederick Hanley, 1900-1997

Frederick Hanley was born on a farm in Yorkshire in 1900, attended Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Wakefield, and entered Clare College, Cambridge in 1919 to read for the Natural Sciences Tripos. He obtained 2nd Class Honours in Part I and then took the post-graduate Diploma in Agricultural Science in 1923 for which he was awarded the Drewitt Prize.

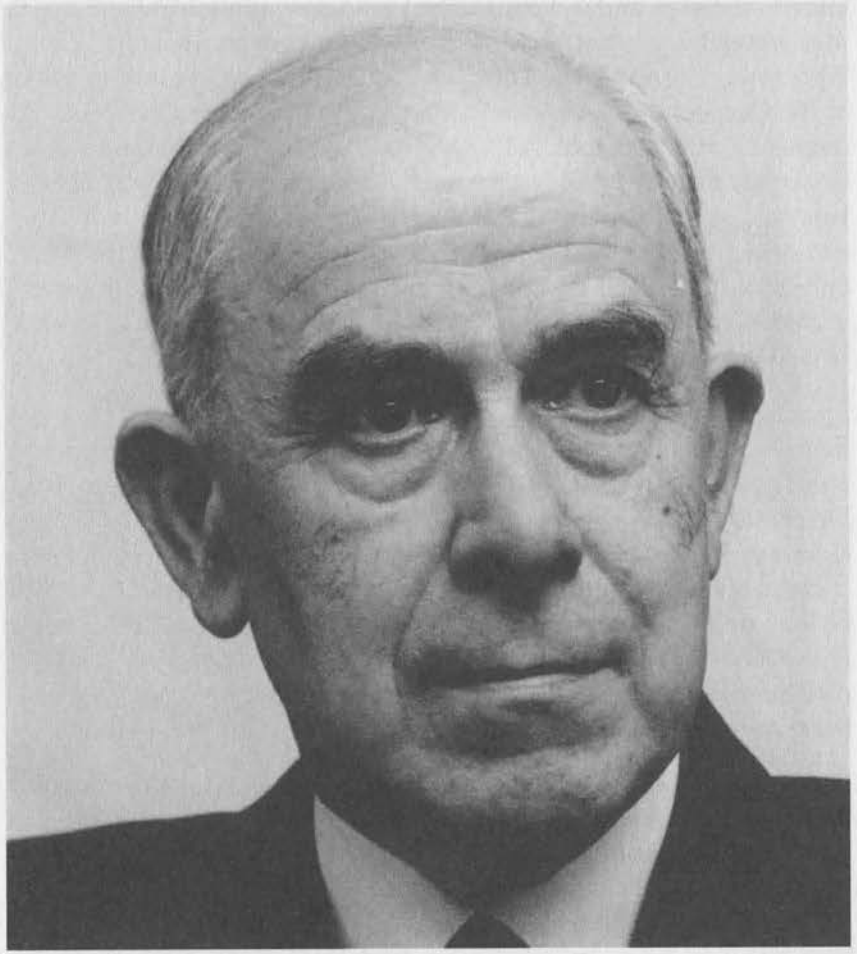
His first appointment was as a graduate assistant on the Cambridge University Farm in 1923 where he worked with Amos and Woodman on the problems of silage making. Later he went to Lancashire as assistant to the County Agricultural Officer, but returned to Cambridge in 1928 as Advisory Chemist in the University's Agricultural Advisory Department, which gave technical advice to farmers in the Eastern region. This post he held until the University's advisory work ceased and was replaced by the National Agricultural Advisory Service. It was for his work in this capacity, especially during the Second World War, that he was awarded the O.B.E. The reclamation work on the clay lands of Cambridgeshire and on the neglected light peats of the Fens owed much of its success to his careful soil work and his knowledge of crop production.

After the war he was appointed Lecturer in Agriculture (1945-50) and Reader in Crop Husbandry in 1950. In 1953 he was elected a Fellow of St John's. His greatest contribution to agricultural education was the way in which, as Director of Advanced Students at the School of Agriculture, he re-organized and supervised the post-graduate teaching after the War to produce a new Diploma in Agriculture which, from its inception in 1947 until Agriculture was suppressed at Cambridge in 1965, supplied many leading agriculturists both for this country and for developing countries overseas, and a Diploma in Agricultural Science which allowed a fully trained scientist to use his science for agricultural purposes.

He was active in research and led a group studying a wide range of crop problems, with special emphasis on long-term effects of crop rotations.

He also took a keen interest in University administration, serving for more than 20 years on the Faculty Board of Agriculture and for some time on the General Board.

W.J.Ridgman



Frederick Hanley, O.B.E., M.A., 1900–1997

Professor Sir Harry Hinsley, 1918-1998

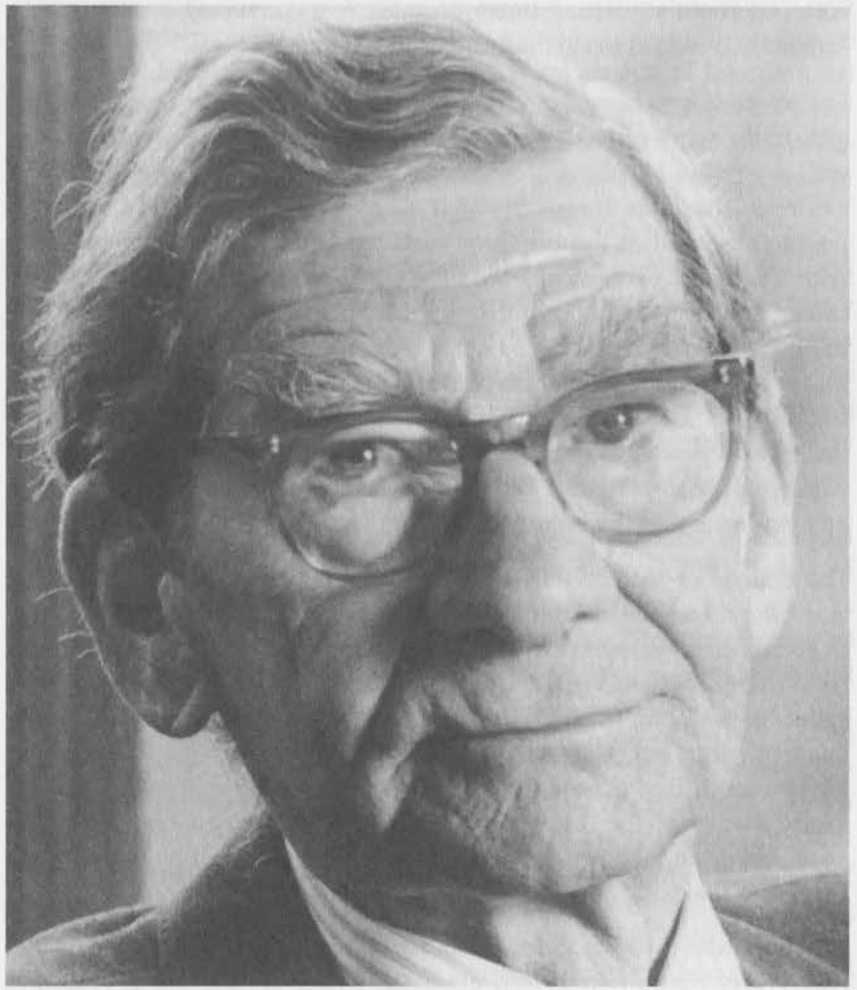
Professor Sir Harry Hinsley, who died after a short illness on 16 February 1998, will be remembered by Johnians as a former Master of the College, of which his membership stretched backed over sixty years, most of them spent in residence in Cambridge. Yet these bare facts hardly hint at the extraordinary reputation he leaves: not only as a well-known historian and a distinguished academic administrator but as a man whose life was entwined with one of the great secrets of the Second World War. The secret was Ultra intelligence, derived from the breaking of the German codes, especially those using the Enigma machines. As an undergraduate at John's, Hinsley had been snatched from his studies to work at Bletchley Park, analysing the decrypted information. Having kept the secret during the war, and for long after, he was later authorised to disclose it as the official historian of British intelligence, on which he worked into his retirement. On his hospital bed, when I visited him shortly before his death, he noted wryly that the scanner, which was to help diagnose his lung cancer, was called Ultra.

Francis Harry Hinsley was born in Walsall on 26 November 1918. His father worked in the coal department of the local Co-op; his mother was later a school caretaker. He attended the Wolverhampton Road Elementary School before going on a scholarship to Queen Mary's Grammar School, Walsall. In December 1936 he sat the scholarship examinations at St John's and was elected to an open exhibition, which he took up the following October. We can surely take satisfaction in the fact that the robustly meritocratic tradition of our college made it a good match for Hinsley, just as he was a good catch for the college. Here was the making of a lifelong connection.

It was the Second World War that introduced the only discontinuity. Unsurprisingly, Harry had got a First in Part One of the Historical Tripos in 1939; but he was never to take Part Two. Characteristically, he went on holiday to Germany that summer, often hitchhiking to make his limited funds stretch further. He later liked to tell the story of how, on the steep road out of Berchtesgaden, he got a lift in the sleek limousine which was going up to meet the Führer; and of how Hitler brushed past

the travel-stained student standing to watch his departure. As though savouring the last dregs of summer in pre-war Europe, Harry delayed his return home until the last moment.

Back in Cambridge, he was one of the youngest and brightest of the bright, young recruits who were discreetly enlisted in the Government



Professor Sir Harry Hinsley, O.B.E., M.A., F.B.A., 1918–1998

Code and Cypher School, which had moved to Bletchley Park just before the outbreak of war. It was here that top-secret work took place, both on breaking the enemy codes, notably those generated by the Enigma machines, and in making best use of the signals intelligence, code-named Ultra. It was an environment later dramatised in Robert Harris's bestselling novel, Enigma, for which the author acknowledged Harry Hinsley's assistance. Bletchley's style - a transplanted Oxbridge common room subsisting uncomfortably in a converted country house - manifestly suited his genially spartan habits.

Still an undergraduate, Harry was soon recognised as bringing unusual gifts to the work of analysing the Ultra decrypts, relying on intuition as well as logic in his piercing inferences about enemy strategy, often from evidence that was fragmentary. It was obviously unusual, as many people observed at the time, for such trust to be reposed in someone who had never even completed his degree. What was to make Harry's career unique was his opportunity, half a lifetime later, to assess the importance of what Bletchley achieved, with special security clearance for research on the relevant records. His own view, soberly argued and cogently documented, was that Ultra intelligence shortened the war by one or two years. He knew from personal experience how important it was not only to penetrate the Germans' secrets but to keep from them any evidence that the security of Enigma had been compromised.

The culture of secrecy inculcated at Bletchley persisted long after the war. One reason, as he later explained, was that Enigma remained in use in some less developed nations surprisingly long into the postwar era. So as undergraduates in the 1960s, we still had little idea how Harry had spent his war. Not until the 1970s, when parts of the story had already begun to seep out, was Harry commissioned to supply a full account. He did so in five massive volumes, British Intelligence in the Second World War, published between 1979 and 1990, which are his monument as an historian, making sense of a secret history which he had himself helped to make.

Bletchley was thus the pivot of his life. It was here that Harry had met Hilary Brett, herself an Oxford graduate, whom he married in 1946, and

who survives him. They were to have three children and to create a happy family home in postwar Cambridge, once Harry returned to St John's. He had been elected to a Research Fellowship at the college in 1944 and took it up at the end of his war service, of which his own research, not surprisingly, had been one casualty. When he was appointed as a University Lecturer in History in 1949, he had published little.

Harry Hinsley's first two books, Command of the Sea (1950) and Hitler's Strategy (1951), belong to this period, both in time and in theme. He also published interesting essays on aspects of international relations and grand strategy; but not until his remarkable book, Power and the Pursuit of Peace (1963) did he produce a work that did justice to his range of interests, both in the practical exercise of power and in the way that this has been theorised historically.

Harry was now fully stretched in the College as a teaching Fellow, and served as a Tutor from 1956 to 1963. He was a busy don and, in many ways, he looked the part: an inveterate pipe-smoker, an intrepid cyclist, a witty and sociable man, able to communicate his own enthusiasm to the dullest undergraduates. His rasping, sub-Churchillian cadences, were affectionately imitated by his pupils, just as his transparently machiavellian strategies were indulgently appreciated by his colleagues.

Harry Hinsley was promoted in 1965 to a Readership, and in 1969 to a Professorship, both of them personal appointments in the History of International Relations, a field which he did much to foster in Cambridge. He was research supervisor for a prodigious number of PhD students. Meanwhile he had served his college as President and emerged as an obvious internal candidate for the Mastership.

Elected Master in 1979, he also served a two-year stint as Vice-Chancellor of the University in 1981-3. In both roles, he found himself coping equably with problems that were suddenly thrust upon him, whether it was the admission of women to the college - he had not previously been in favour of this step - or the need to make cuts in the university's budget. The University Press too owed him a debt for supporting a tough-minded strategy to turn around its finances.

Academic honours came steadily in later years, especially once the value of his history of intelligence was recognised. He was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1981 and was knighted in 1985. Whether he had really been happy in the Master's Lodge was never easy to tell from his mien, sometimes cheerful, always stoical, occasionally sardonic. But his affection for the College was testified by the amount of time he continued to spend within its walls - he and Hilary now chose to live nearby in Portugal Place - and by the number of friends he found there. In retirement, Harry remained active almost to the end, his frame now bent with arthritis, but with a mind, shrewd and playful by turns, that itself remained something of an enigma.

Peter Clarke

Peter Linehan adds:

The first time I met Harry, when I presented myself as a scholarship candidate in 1960, he seemed very old. Though in fact Mr Hinsley was still only in his early forties, I clearly remember wrongly spotting a resemblance to Franz Liszt in extremis. Indeed so old did he seem that on not seeing him about the place in 1961 I drew that wrong conclusion often drawn by undergraduates ignorant of the existence of academic leave. In fact, Harry was very much alive in 1961, as in 1962 those of my contemporaries who were his pupils very soon discovered.

He was an unusual teacher. Associating himself with an earlier age, he took the view that any intelligent historian could teach anyone, even a Johnian, any intelligible period of history (a conviction probably encouraged by his own Bletchley experiences). What with Caius on the up, as it was then, this studied amateurishness struck even us as high-wirism. Yet with Harry somehow or other it worked. 'If you want to do modern this term, you'll go to Mr Miller, because he's a medievalist', he informed us. 'But if you want to do medieval, then you'll come to me, because I'm a modernist.' And we all assented to this and nodded gravely, though we weren't all fools, or even thoughtful rugby footballers (which Harry himself had been, which was extraordinary, though, given that, the rest followed. He had especially enjoyed playing

in the rain: 'I liked it most when it was wet'). So he supervised me on 'The Coronation of Charlemagne', which was only one of his set-pieces, and in accordance with some characteristically Hinslaic variation of the immutable Hinslaic precepts I also went to him for modern things.

As a lecturer, he was spell-binding then, and thirty years on was spell-binding still. I recall particularly an occasion shortly before his death when he kept his post-prandial audience on the edges of its seats in the Fisher Building as he reminisced on Bletchley days, with not a note and for exactly the hour prescribed. Many of the audience on that occasion were candidates for the MPhil degree in International Relations, the course he pioneered, which over the years brought so many often interesting students to the College as well as spawning so many more more questionable courses in its wake.

Spare in manner yet expansive by turn, secretly he loved the limelight. Like Peter Clarke, I remember the distinctiveness of his pronunciation (which was certainly not Walsall) the idiosyncrasy of which was more often feebly mimicked than artfully reproduced. 'That was a caricature, wasn't it?', he asked after the late David Hoskins's marvellous take of him at a History Society dinner.

His contribution to the College is incalculable. It was during his Mastership that at long last the College decided to 'go mixed'. Though not by nature a mixer, once the change had been made Harry proved wholly supportive of it.

Because he was Reader in the History of International Relations, when in 1967 he said that there would be no war in the Middle East people took notice. And when, later that year he pronounced at lunch one day that Harold Wilson wouldn't dare devalue, and as he said it the Fellowship rose as one from its agitated eggs on toast and scuttled off to the bank to see what could be saved, Harry's view was that the Fellowship was rushing it. And Harry had no time for rushing.

When he became Vice-Chancellor in 1981, happily Cambridge's spate of occupations and sit-ins was over. He wouldn't have been comfortable with occupations and sit-ins. The fashion now was for economy. This

was as well. Harry loved economy. 'Another £25 down the drain', I still hear him grumbling at the end of the College Council's discussion of the very full referee's report on a candidate for a research Fellowship (one he rather fancied, I seem to remember). At a party at home on the evening before Degree Day, the first occasion on which he was to preside as the Vice-Chancellor's deputy (this must have been June 1980 or 1981), dodging between the assembled mums, dads and graduands, I was explaining to him the ceremonial over which he would be presiding in the morning. (I had been Senior Proctor some years before.) Did he have all the kit? I enquired, as Tutors with their wits about them enquire of their pupils on this evening of the year. 'Yes, yes, m'boy, yes, all the kit.' 'And bands?' 'Bands. What do you mean, bands?' I explained to him what bands were, the long Geneva bands he would need in the Senate House, fished out mine, my dingy proctorial bands, last laundered about six years before, and handed them over to him. And that was the last I saw of them.

'Just half a scuttle', he signalled to me, because I was nearest it, with a half-twist of his arthritic wrist one winter afternoon as the Combination Room fire was about to go out on the Council's discussion of economies.

Invariably courteous in his wry way, winter and summer he would emerge in three-piece suit, swathed in his plastic mac and topped by his invariable black beret. Latterly, when he had to do his own shopping again, he would be seen in mid-August in the Sidney Street Sainsburys wrapped up against imminent blizzards. Remembering him there now, a man I like to think I had known over thirty-five years and usually enormously admired, thirty-five years on I find myself left wondering. But that was Harry all over. Harry made you think.

Dyfrig Morgan, 1927-1997

Dyfrig Morgan was a University Lecturer in Applied Plant Physiology in the Department of Applied Biology but to readers of *The Eagle* he will be better known as Tutor, Senior Tutor and prominent senior member of the College from 1969 until his retirement as Senior Tutor in 1990.

His scientific contribution centred on the development of the oil-seed rape which has added so much colour to the countryside of southern England but, I suspect, he would have preferred to colonise it with red rather than yellow. Son of a Welsh miner, educated and brought up in Wales, and with his first post at Aberystwyth, we were never in doubt about where he had come from and where his heart remained. That did not detract for a moment, however, from the energy and commitment with which he entered every aspect of University life - teaching, administration, tutoring and sport - from the moment that he arrived. All this he did with a firmness of purpose that was tested from the start when he was one of the Proctors facing the famous 'riot' at the Garden House Hotel in 1970. With firmness of purpose, however, went a sense of fun. This was not least in evidence when he led the Fellows' charge to Twickenham via 'The Sun' at Richmond every December. After the Match he led the remains of the pack back to the London Welsh Club for more inspiration. How impressed I was that he knew that conqueror of All Blacks, Carwen James!

Scientist as he was, he also trusted his instincts, especially as regards people and, as it seemed to me, his instincts were usually proved sound. Moreover, Welshmen are sometimes seen by non-Welshmen as 'indirect' but not this one. He knew his own mind and spoke it - crisply. This may be one reason why he felt at home on sabbatical in Australia and was tempted to stay on. It does not explain, however, something that surprised us all at the time - why he came back so enthusiastic about Australian Rules football. Perhaps it was just one of many examples of the way in which he responded to atmosphere and to the enthusiasm of others, especially the young. A father and family man, he was intensely proud of his boys - the two at home, John and Edwin, and also those in College on his side, among whom, of course, in latter times were the

girls who received the same commitment and support. This was recognised by the girls. He was justifiably proud to be elected the first president of their sports club, The Flamingoes.

While supporting rugby, for some years he played cricket and golf. He was a devious exponent of the flighted ball and an eloquent admirer of the greens and the greenery of Worlington. In the last years he endured a progressively wasting neurological illness, and throughout this period he maintained his interest in sport. He also retained his sense of humour, all this with the calm and cheerful devotion of wife Clare.

Malcolm Clarke

Dyfrig Morgan, M.Sc., M.A., 1927–1997

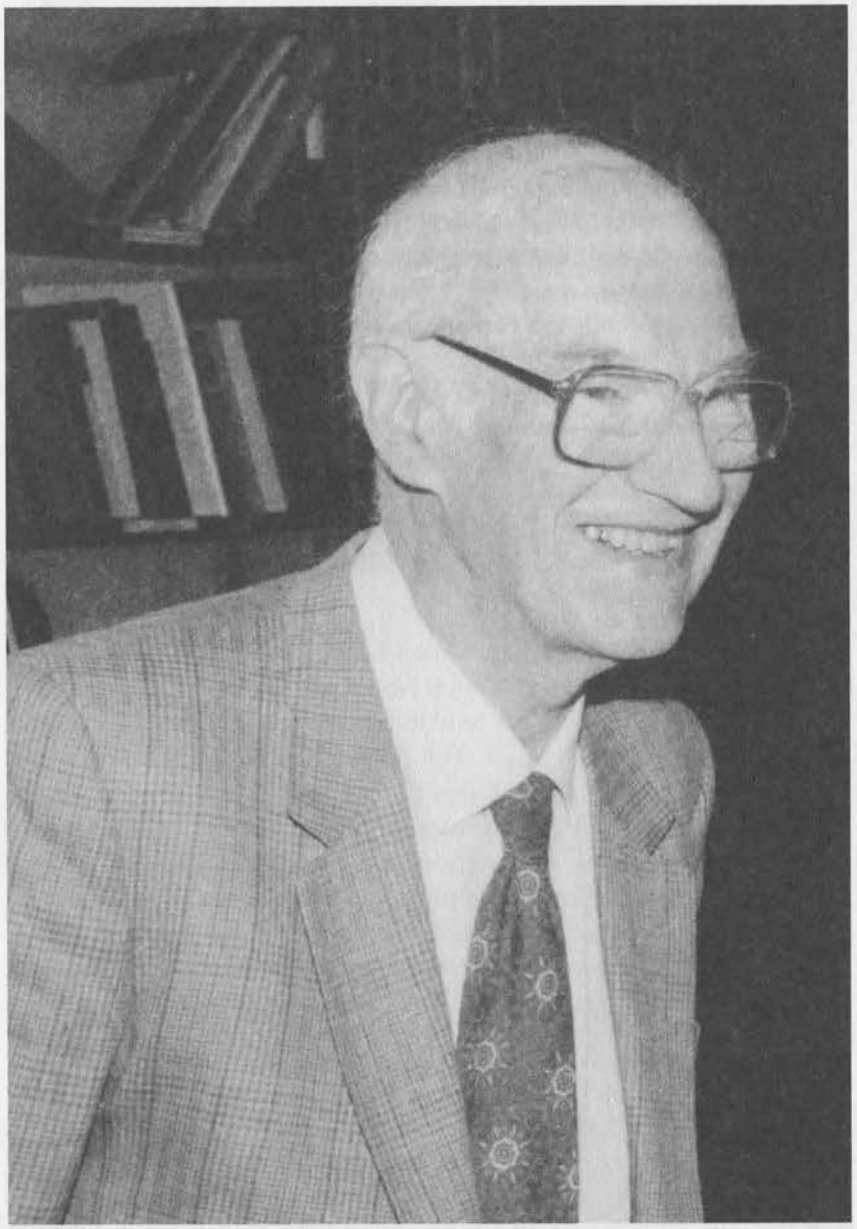
Dr Henry Mathison Pelling, 1920-1997

Henry Pelling was a no-nonsense, no flourishes historian of modern Britain for whom history was a matter of fact. When in a celebrated review of A. J. P. Taylor's English History, 1914-1945, published in Past and Present (1966), Pelling lambasted Taylor for his neglect of the social and economic aspects of his subject, and, on Taylor's home ground, for his alleged carelessness with facts, it was no doubt the latter dereliction that pained Pelling more.

There was nothing of the flamboyant about him. Everyone's idea of a Cambridge (or for that matter an Oxford) don, he was happier in the company of his college colleagues than in the public forum. Forever master of the quip devastating, and meter-out of the sharp one-liner, shortly before his death he mentioned that he needed to send a letter to his colleague, Professor X. Would I bring him an envelope and a postage stamp? Pause, while he licked his lips. Then: 'A second class stamp will suffice'.

'Pelling here', you would hear when he pick up the 'phone, and he sounded forbidding. But he wasn't. Not at all. Though dry, he was not arid, as some college bachelors tend to become, given time. The children of his Oxford colleagues named their hamsters after him, because for all the outward appearance of austerity he delighted in his colleagues' families, submitted cheerfully to the rigours of their Christmases, regularly enquired after the progress of their children, and when those children were growing up would invite them to things and make a great fuss of them. More than once on such occasions one felt that he felt he was missing something, sometimes rather keenly. (Save the Children was an equal beneficiary with the College in his will.)

The son of a stockbroker, Henry Pelling was born at Prenton, Cheshire, and was at Birkenhead School between the ages of six and eighteen. He came up to St John's in 1939 and achieved a First Class in Part I of the Classics Tripos before departing for war service in the Royal Engineers. Returning to Cambridge, in 1947 he was awarded a starred First in Part II of the Historical Tripos. In 1949 he migrated to Oxford, as a Tutorial



Henry Mathison Pelling, Litt.D., F.B.A., 1920–1997

Fellow of The Queen's College. Pelling often recalled that whereas Queen's told him to bring black tie, the LSE, where he was also under consideration, promised to reimburse him his train fare. What he could not remember, and this was uncharacteristic, was whether or not the LSE had been prepared to convey him first-class.

His Oxford years saw Pelling at his most prolific. Between 1954 and 1963 no fewer than nine of his sixteen books were published, amongst them his America and the British Left and The British Communist Party, as well as studies of the American labour movement and British trade unionism and his celebrated Short History of the Labour Party (1961), now in its 11th edition. Although prevailed upon to serve as Dean of Queen's in 1962-3, writing and research occupied him almost entirely. On being asked whether he had any problems, and answering that yes, his gas fire didn't work, a Queen's freshman was disconcerted to be told by the dean that his didn't either. Very Pelling.

In 1966 he returned to Cambridge as Assistant Director of Research in History and to the Fellowship of St John's in which he spent the rest of his life. Although having some forty research students under his supervision, he remained highly productive. In 1971, however, he suffered a severe stroke and, despite all that he wrote thereafter, including his enormous biography of Churchill (1974), really he was never the same again, and after a fall on the Second Court cobbles in 1994 (ironically on his way back to his rooms from a meeting of the College History Society to which he was so devoted) he became increasingly frail. Even so, a combination of his own indomitable determination and the care, affection and bananas provided by the College enabled him to see his Churchill's Peacetime Ministry, 1951-55 through the press. Nor was there any diminution of the terrier-like commitment to the cause of accuracy which earlier had set him in pursuit of the likes of Palme Dutt, Oswald Mosley and their posthumous apologists.

He had been appointed Reader in Recent History in 1976. His long overdue election to the Fellowship of the British Academy had followed in 1992.

In his Who's Who entry he chose to describe himself as 'socius ejectus' of St John's, referring to the brief lapse of his fellowship in 1980. The puckishness was typical on two counts, reflecting both the allusive and the pernickety in him. (He was a great leaver of carefully timed grenades which when they exploded generally showered petals.) The allusion was to Thomas Baker, the non-juror Fellow of the College who described himself as 'ejected' in the early 1700s. As to the rest, suffice it to say that not everyone at the time saw it Pelling's way. 'Dash it all', he would say, as he often did.

Henry Pelling was as widely renowned for his genuinely good will as he was for his seriously bad puns. Secretly generous, he made an elaborate pretence of being careful with his pennies. When psephology was invented, Henry was there lying in wait, his constituting a pioneering contribution to the subject. Before long the bookies were in such dread of him that eventually they refused to take his bets on elections unless he would also bet on the horses. Even so he made a substantial killing on the size of Labour's majority in the last General Election. When last I saw him, two days before he died, and was alarmed by the uncharacteristic absence of newspapers, and asked him (more or less) how he was filling his days, 'I am listening to The Archers', he replied. 'But I cannot make much of it'. Given time, no doubt sooner or later he would have detected inconsistencies in the affairs of Ambridge too.

Peter Linehan

Reprinted by permission from *The Independent*, Obituaries, 21 October 1997

Sir Samuel Curran 1912-1998

Sir Samuel Curran, FRS, physicist, died on February 25 aged 85. He was born on May 23, 1912. Sam Curran was one of a remarkable group of scientists whose inventions made an incalculable contribution to the winning of the war against German weapon technology. At the Royal

Aircraft Establishment, Farnborough, with other physicists including Philip Dee, Bernard Lovell, Alan Hodgkin and Joan Strothers (later to become his wife), Curran was deeply involved in the development of centimetric radar, using cavity magnetrons. The bulk of Curran's work, (and that of his wife), however, was done at the Telecommunications Research Establishment at Swanage, and later Malvern, not just Farnborough. Giving radar a hitherto unimagined accuracy, this was a decisive weapon in the winning of the Battle of the Atlantic, enabling U-boats to be pinpointed by the maritime patrol aircraft of Coastal Command and destroyed with impunity as never before.

Curran also played a prominent part in the invention of the proximity fuse, effectively a miniature radar set in the nose of a shell, which obviated the need for anti-aircraft gun crews to score a direct hit on targets (or to hope for a lucky burst). The proximity fuse was a major factor in increasing the rate of destruction of enemy bombers and was responsible for coastal anti-aircraft guns being able to shoot down a large proportion of the V1 flying bombs which bombarded Southern England from the summer of 1944 onwards.

Meanwhile, as well as playing a role in all these developments, Joan (whom he married in 1940) was quietly cutting up strips of tinfoil and developing an idea which came to be known as "Operation Window". This was the scattering of clouds of this foil by British bombers, confusing German gunlaying radar and providing a measure of protection against flak for Bomber Command's night raids. Perhaps Window's most spectacular success was its use, dropped with great precision by the Lancasters of 617 squadron, to synthesise a phantom invasion force of ships in the Strait of Dover on the night of June 5-6, 1944; this kept the Germans unsure of whether the brunt of the Allied assault would fall on Normandy or in the Pas de Calais.

Samuel Crowe Curran was one of the last surviving physicists of the great Rutherford years at the Cavendish Laboratory, Cambridge. Educated at Wishaw High School and Glasgow University, where he took first class honours and a PhD, he went to Cambridge to research for a second PhD, but after only two years the Second World War broke

out and his skills were required by the Royal Aircraft Establishment where he and a team of scientists were on a five-week secondment in the summer of 1939. (He eventually gained his Cambridge PhD in 1941.)

At Farnborough part of his job was to liaise with the electronics firms which were developing the scientific team's ideas. This period was exciting - but it had its hazards. On one occasion a colleague in the nose of a Beaufighter, to which a radar scanner was being fitted under Curran's directions, accidentally set off the nightfighter's 20mm cannon and two shells went screaming past inches from Curran's head. On another, he escaped death when, on the very point of takeoff, he gave up his place in a Halifax bomber for a demonstration of H2S blind bombing radar to the head of research at EMI, who had not yet seen the equipment in action. The Halifax crashed into the Welsh hills, killing all on board.

Early in 1944 Curran was sent to the United States to work on the highly secret Manhattan Project - the development of the atomic bomb. During his period at the Radiation Laboratory, Berkeley, California, he invented the scintillation counter - a device for measuring radioactivity that is still in use in almost every scientific laboratory in the world. But he got little credit and no money for his invention. It was all part of the war effort.

Although at the end of the war Curran was offered a post at the University of California, he decided to return to Glasgow University to work with his former supervisor, Philip Dee who had been appointed to the Chair of Natural Philosophy there. Together they supervised the installation of a 300-megavolt synchroton for nuclear physics research. During this period, Curran invented the pulse-amplifier, a modern proportional counter to examine the energy of many types of radiation. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society and was recognised as a world leader in his field. Meanwhile the Department was rapidly gaining an international reputation.

But Curran, realising that there were no opportunities for advancement in Glasgow, began to feel the need to move again. In 1955 he was invited by Sir John Cockcroft to join Sir William (later Lord) Penny, as a Deputy

Chief Scientist at the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment at Aldermaston, to help develop Britain's hydrogen bomb. This was accomplished in 1957, Curran taking responsibility for a substantial part of the complex work.

After five years he felt that he had achieved what he set out to do, and when, in 1959, he was invited to take over the Royal College of Science in Glasgow and steer it to university status as the University of Strathclyde, he accepted. Thus, in 1964 he established the first new university in Scotland for 400 years and the first technical university in Britain. Remembering his wartime days, he set in train co-operation with industry at a time when it was not fashionable for universities to do so. He actively encouraged departments to appoint visiting professors from industry and with the help of Tony Benn (then Technology Minister) he built a "Centre for Industrial Innovation" (the first Science Park) where academics and industrialists could co-operate in research. And he encouraged members of staff to accept consultancies in industry.

Remembering his own frustrating experience at Glasgow University, and drawing on his American experience, he encouraged departments to appoint promising members of staff to personal professorships. All these things are commonplace now; but they were not when Curran hit the university scene.

Curran was outward-looking and in 1966 he established a close academic link between Strathclyde and the Technical University of Lodz, Poland. At a time when Poland was part of the Soviet bloc and communication between the two countries was difficult, the Poles called these exchanges of students and staff their "window on the West".

Two things angered him: one was the very low salaries paid to scientists compared to those paid to businessmen. "Someday we will pay a terrible price"; the other was the lack of recognition of the part that science and technology had played in winning the Second World War; there were no scientists in the parades to mark the 50th anniversaries of VE and VJ days.

Curran's recreation, apart from supporting Motherwell FC, was golf and he was proud of the fact that he once had an article on The Physics of the Golf Swing published in Business Scotland. Well into his eighties he could still be found doing his twelve holes twice a week at Buchanan Castle Golf Club.

The Currans' first child, a daughter, was severely handicapped. This was a great sadness to them but they threw themselves into work for the disabled, forming a Scottish society, Enable, for parents of handicapped children and other concerned people, which now has more than eighty branches.

Sam Curran is survived by his wife Joan, their daughter and three sons. He was made an Honorary Fellow of St John's College in 1971.

Reprinted by kind permission from *The Times*, Obituaries, 19 March 1998.

The Rt Hon Sir John Megaw, 1909-1997

Sir John Megaw, who died aged 88 on 27 December 1997, was an Ulsterman of high principles, strong convictions and great kindness. He had a brilliant academic and legal career. But he was denied a place on the Law Lords' bench, partly because he was not prepared to modify his intellectual standards or cultivate acquaintanceships just for the sake of personal advancement.

John Megaw was from an old North Antrim family. He came up to St John's in 1928 with the John Stewart of Rannoch Scholarship. He took a First in Part One of the Classical Tripos in 1930. In 1931 he was placed in Division I of the First Class for Part II of the Law Tripos, together with only two others, both Johnians. Megaw's conspicuous ability became legendary. Mr SJ Bailey (later Rouse Ball Professor), used to describe Megaw as the cleverest undergraduate he had ever met. Megaw also played rugby for the College. Upon graduation he became Choate Fellow at Harvard.

Megaw gained the Certificate of Honour in the Bar exams in 1933. He also continued to play rugby, first for Richmond then Ulster and ultimately for Ireland. One game for Ireland clashed with Call Night, so Megaw's Call to the Bar had to be postponed for a term.

Megaw then became the pupil of Henry Willink, whose Chambers specialised in the arcana of commercial law. By 1933 Willink had a large junior practice and when he became KC in 1934 Megaw was invited to become a tenant in his Chambers. But work was generally scarce and ill-paid. Often there was no work for young juniors. So Megaw could continue to play rugby, although his rugby career and practice did not always match well. On one occasion, to the intense irritation of his leader, Willink KC, Megaw arrived at Court sporting a large black eye. Megaw had to explain that it had been sustained in the international that weekend!

Megaw felt strongly that the Munich agreement would be disastrous so in 1938 he joined the Territorials. During the war he served in the Royal Artillery, becoming a Colonel. He was on both active service and in staff posts. In 1945 he was pressed to become a Unionist candidate for Parliament but he declined and returned to the Bar.

Megaw soon developed a broad commercial practice. His success meant he was in demand as a pupil-master. His pupils included Michael Kerr (later a Lord Justice) and Elihu Lauterpacht, subsequently Professor of International Law at Cambridge. Work for newcomers at the commercial Bar remained scarce and ill-paid. There were few scholarships and pupils generally had to pay a fee to their master. But Megaw, through his generosity, ensured that young people of talent could survive their early years in Chambers.

Megaw took silk in 1953. During the 1950s there were four preeminent QCs at the commercial bar. They were John Megaw, Alan Mocatta, Eustace Roskill and his brother Ashton. The first three were all in the same Chambers. Megaw did not have the more obvious flair for advocacy of either Eustace Roskill or Mocatta, but he was a complete master of law. He thrived on complex cases which required intense legal analysis, particularly those involving private international law.

Megaw's intellectual authority was celebrated. There is one story of a solicitor arriving to negotiate and announcing: "In my brief case I have the Opinion of Mr John Megaw QC". The opposition apparently sued for peace immediately, without waiting to be told Megaw's conclusions.

In 1957 Megaw was appointed a Recorder of Middlesborough. Then in January 1961 he was appointed, with eight others, to the High Court bench. Sir John sat in the Queen's Bench Division, particularly in the Commercial Court, but also on Assize and at the Old Bailey. There he was the last Judge to put on the Black Cap to pass a sentence of death for murder.

Megaw's reputation as a meticulous lawyer was enhanced as a Judge, particularly in commercial cases. One of his most important decisions was the test case of ***Chandris v Argo Insurance Company***. Megaw's analysis of how and when a claim on a policy of marine insurance arises remains a classic statement of principle.

In 1969 Megaw was appointed to the Court of Appeal. Here he encountered Lord Denning, Master of the Rolls. They had very different temperaments and attitudes to the law. Megaw believed that justice sprang from a strict application of legal principle and certainty in the law. Lord Denning believed that justice in particular cases might require inventive judicial adaptation of legal principles. This contrast could lead to sharp divisions of opinion, sometimes concealed in the careful language of the law reports. One particularly striking example is ***Launchberry v Morgans***. Megaw believed that the majority judgments of Lord Denning and Edmund Davies LJ were wrong in principle, even if they produced a superficially satisfactory result. His dissenting judgment poured scorn on the reasoning of the majority. His view was vindicated by the House of Lords, who unanimously overturned the majority decision below.

This difference of philosophy was unfortunate for Megaw. When he began to preside over a division of the Court of Appeal, his court was allocated a high percentage of dull or trivial appeals. This unpalatable diet doubtless exacerbated Megaw's general impatience with any Counsel he thought were either ill-prepared or had an unarguable case. On one celebrated occasion Megaw became so incensed with the

tenacious but doomed argument of a QC (subsequently a Lord Justice) that he snapped his pencil in two and stormed out of court.

Such outbursts, which were quite contrary to his genial and kindly behaviour out of court, also could not have helped Megaw's chance of elevation to the Lords. By 1976 Megaw was the senior Lord Justice. His legal acumen fully justified promotion and he undoubtedly hoped for it. But he was passed over three times in four years. On the last occasion, in April 1980, the candidate preferred was Eustace Roskill, who had been Megaw's contemporary in Chambers. In August that year, in the middle of the Long Vacation, Megaw quietly resigned.

But he did not really retire. In 1981 there was a serious civil service strike. Megaw agreed to be chairman of a committee that was hurriedly appointed to consider civil service pay and conditions. True to form he made recommendations which he believed accorded with principle and justice. But they were exactly the opposite to the conclusions the government wanted.

Megaw was also invited by the new Master of the Rolls, (Lord Donaldson) to become one of what is disparagingly called "the mothball fleet". They are retired Lords Justices who sit as additional judges in the vastly overworked Court of Appeal. Megaw undertook this work with good humour and tact. Once he even sat as the "junior" judge in a court presided over by Mustill LJ (now Lord Mustill) who had been pupil to Megaw's pupil, Michael Kerr! Finally when he was 85 Megaw insisted that he should sit no longer, as he thought his great age might cause a public scandal. It had not because he was as alert and perceptive as ever.

John Megaw was made a Bencher of Gray's Inn in 1958 and was its Treasurer in 1976. For years he was dedicated to its interests and those of its members. He took particular trouble over awards to students. He presided over the scholarships committee with charm and informality, ensuring that applicants could demonstrate their talents at their ease.

Sir John was appointed CBE in 1956 and was made an Honorary Fellow of the College in 1967. He retained his links with the College and he

promoted the idea of a periodic dinner for members of the Winfield Society and Johnians in legal practice. This has now become a successful annual event.

Megaw received an Hon. LLD from Queen's University Belfast in 1968. He was the Visitor of the New University of Ulster from 1976 and it awarded him an Hon DSc in 1990.

In 1938 he married Eleanor Grace Chapman. For forty years they lived very happily in Chelsea where they raised a son and two daughters.

Richard Aikens QC

Joyce Nicholls, 1922-1997

Joyce Nicholls, who died at the age of 75 on 23 June 1997 was a much loved member of this institution, indeed she was an institution in herself. Joining the College staff as a bedmaker in 1962, in 1973 she transferred from bed to board, and in 1981 to the High Table where she served the Fellows far better than they deserved for fifteen years. Up and down the Hall and up and down the Combination Room, she must have done the equivalent of who knows how many marathons. No wonder she was sometimes a bit flustered, and sometimes not entirely accurate with the soup ('Oh, Sir, I *am* sorry. Let me get a cloth'). She took a close, motherly interest in the affairs of the Fellows ('Well, it *is* a bit late, Madam, but I'll see'), was the first to seize and cuddle a Fellow's child at its christening party and to chide him (it was still him then) for not telling her that he had become a grandfather ('Oh, *Sir*!'). Mrs Nicholls' retirement in December 1996 was marked by a party and a presentation for which more Fellows stumped up than the College knew it had. Her death soon after was especially cruel, for she of all people had richly deserved many years of comfortable retirement with her family, whose sad loss the College mourns as deeply as it does its own.

Peter Linehan

OBITUARIES

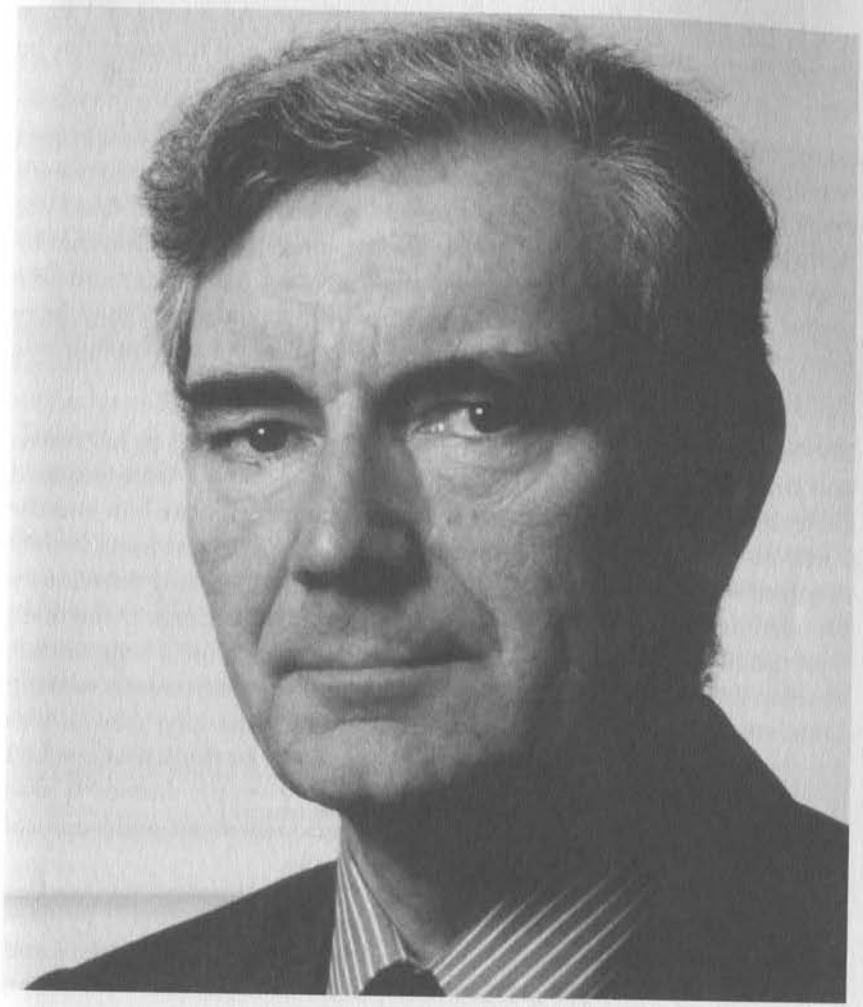
John Renford Bambrough, 1926-1999

I

Renford Bambrough started his academic career as a classicist and in 1957 became a Lecturer in the Classics Faculty, specialising in ancient philosophy. The central metaphysical and ethical questions raised by Plato and Aristotle remained the focus of his work throughout his life, but he was much influenced by contacts with Wittgenstein and John Wisdom and found himself increasingly considering the ancient questions in the context of more recent philosophical work. This shift in the centre of gravity of his interests was recognised by his move in 1966 to a Lectureship in the Moral Sciences Faculty.

One Aristotelian theme which he found particularly congenial (and which is reinforced by Wittgensteinian thoughts) came to form a central element of his developed philosophical outlook. It is that each subject matter requires investigation by methods distinctive and appropriate to it. We can seriously mislead ourselves by bringing standards and procedures suitable to one area into the appraisal of claims from another. For example, ethical judgements are certainly not susceptible of the kind of proof or investigation offered in mathematics or science. It does not follow that there cannot be ethical knowledge or that ethical claims cannot be rationally investigated and conclusively established. Bambrough steadfastly defended the possibility of objectivity in areas of enquiry such as ethics, aesthetics and religion and in so doing set his face resolutely against powerful intellectual trends. He maintained that we need to attend to the individual character of each kind of thing we are asked to consider, and that we must take care not to be overimpressed either by its resemblances to other things or by its differences from them. Attachment to subjectivist or relativist theories results, in part, from ignoring this precept.

Generation after generation of undergraduates, some eagerly swimming with prevailing subjectivist or relativist currents and some lazily swept along by them, came up against the rock of Renford



Mr Renford Bambrough

Bambrough's calm and unhurried defence of objectivity. I belonged to the 1966 wave, since he was at that time Director of Studies in Moral Sciences for New Hall (another instance of the generosity of St John's and Johnians to that newly founded institution). When in 1986 I returned as a colleague at St John's, I found many of the same puzzlements and difficulties still being sorted out with the same deft

touch, the same unfailing courtesy and patience. As a teacher I have myself many times found that the moves he made and the examples he used are exactly the right ones to set a pupil thinking effectively.

Supervisions with him were a slow and serious matter. His measured responses and probing questions taught one, by example, to weigh one's words and to be sure that one really meant what one said. The discussions could sometimes be frustrating, since it might seem that he was refusing to answer one's pressing concerns. Only later did one realise that his aim was to make one aware that questions may have false presuppositions and to encourage one to reflect on whether one was pursuing the right issue.

The St John's Moral Sciences Society met for many years in his rooms and under his chairmanship. He would sit in his broad, leather-seated chair on one side of the fireplace with the speaker opposite him and the audience in rows of chairs in the body of the room. An immense variety of topics was discussed over the decades. There were many tenaciously pursued arguments and lively discussions, but proceedings in the main were quiet and sedate. He was never frightened to let a long silence develop and some question or comment to get the discussion moving again would indeed always appear. Renford took the long view. It was not necessary to gabble or get hot under the collar or think that one had to solve the problems of the universe that evening. Rather it was important that those who desired to think seriously about philosophical questions should have the opportunity to do so.

Influential, provocative and widely esteemed publications by him include the paper "Universals and Family Resemblances" (1961) and two books, *Reason, Truth and God* (1969) and *Moral Scepticism and Moral Knowledge* (1979). His influence was also spread through his editorship, from 1973 – 94, of the journal *Philosophy*. A trend which he found uncongenial was the increasingly technical nature of much philosophy. He was not against formalisation, specialist vocabulary and the like where they were required. But he thought that philosophers were very apt to suppose that they were required when they were not. *Philosophy* under his editorship remained dedicated to discussion which was both

intellectually rigorous and yet written in a way which made the ideas and arguments intelligible to any serious reader. He was himself a very elegant writer, with a good feel for the telling metaphor and the well-turned phrase. In his Editorials and Booknotes in *Philosophy* he kept up, for over twenty years, a wide-ranging and civilised commentary on the philosophical scene. In addition to editing *Philosophy*, he also served on the Council of the Royal Institute of Philosophy for many years and was, in 1989-90, President of the Aristotelian Society.

He might have hoped for more recognition within the profession but, looking back, several things make it explicable, if not just, that he did not achieve it. One factor was the unfashionable nature of his views. Another was his style. Had he been willing to enter the arena, to debate at length and in the sort of terms familiar to other philosophers, then the interest and implications of his views might have been more apparent. But he preferred to operate through the pithy aphorism rather than the tediously explicit argument, thus remaining true to his own conception of the close link between literature and philosophy. A third factor was the comparatively narrow range of his interests. He thought profoundly about certain central topics but did not contribute (except via his editorship) to the many other areas of debate within philosophy.

Throughout these remarks the theme of Renford Bambrough's seriousness is a recurrent note. Indeed *gravitas*, and stoicism in the face of adversity, were striking features of his public philosophical persona. But it would be entirely wrong to neglect the fact that he was also a notable raconteur and wit. He was a fine poker player; and he relished the fact that certain all night sessions at philosophical conferences, where he and a group of close friends were reputed to play for very high stakes, were legendary. His many pupils, both undergraduate and graduate, can testify to his kindness and to the steadiness of his support and concern.

Jane Heal

II

John Renford Bambrough, a Fellow of the College for nearly fifty years, was immensely proud of his Northern background as also of the College's long tradition of welcoming Northerners. He quoted with proud, ironic enthusiasm the adage that Northerners were 'a little rude and not cultivated, yet likely to respond to education'. JRB responded to education all right: he was to become one of the great teachers of St John's in the second half of the twentieth century, widely revered and appreciated by generations to whom he taught Moral Sciences/ Philosophy as well as by other junior members to whom he gave of his time and company.

He came to the College as an Open Scholar from Bede School, Sunderland, and from Wearmouth Colliery where, famously, he had done his National Service as a 'Bevin Boy'. A double first in Classics (BA 1948) and a John Stewart of Rannoch Scholarship in Classics (1947) paved his way to graduate studies as a Carrington-Koe Student (1948). He was elected to a Fellowship in 1950 and, such was the trust that the College already had in him, appointed a Tutor in 1952 at the tender age of twenty six.

As a younger Fellow, JRB's influence and wider contributions were largely post-prandial. He invited select junior members to such extravagances as the Empty Chair Society where anything might be said. But said, anything and everything were processed by the Bambrough logic machine and the resulting conclusions were such that the sayers wished that they had not said, and all were convinced that Philosophy was the answer to everything. The Theological and the Moral Sciences Societies were subjected by his presence to the same rigorous process. JRB was uniquely able to impart massive enthusiasm for clear thinking: theologians were purged of facile reductionism, bees were removed from moral crusaders' bonnets and leftists were encouraged to save time by becoming – at least not leftists. For all this Renford Bambrough was admired and loved; he was a proper don; he was available and he understood that talk was the life-blood and the adrenalin of a collegiate society.

His steady care of his charges as a Tutor (largely to Mathematicians) for eleven years gave place in 1964 to his undertaking a prosecuting role as Dean. The inclusive Bezzantine cry of the fifties, 'You're all sent down!', was replaced by a more measured approach but in circumstances that had J.S. Boys Smith, the Master, worried. In the late sixties the College establishment faced the Revolution in which undergraduates were inspired by the upheavals of Paris in 1968 where students had reacted forcefully to the lack of care for them there. Since the situation in Cambridge was different and the Colleges naturally cared for their junior members, the argument for revolution was reversed and Cambridge was guilty of Neo-Fascist Paternalism. A certain younger Fellow whose political views, proto-Thatcherite, were set in granite but whose dress included the sandals and jeans of the Left, proved a reliable spy at the Left Lunch Club and his reports facilitated JRB's icy, reasoned reactions to the swaying ranks of fraternal solidity sat in before him. 'If one is guilty, then we're all guilty' was examined with all the resources of Universals and Particulars and the result was that the malefactors were genuinely torn, seeing the force of proper argument but clinging nonetheless to their articles of faith. There is no doubt that they genuinely held him in awe, a point confirmed by the fact that their *Führer* was moved to complain formally to the Disciplinary Committee that it was unfair of the College to appoint so able a philosopher as Dean.

In 1979 Renford Bambrough was elected President for a four-year stint in succession to Harry Hinsley who, in turn, succeeded Nicholas Mansergh as Master. It was a successful duet. Harry Hinsley's intuitive 'cosmic sweep' and his 'fix it' approach were restrained by the more calculating reason of the President. They deserved each other and they complemented each other. The Presidency was to be the peak of JRB's College career, though he was a serious and well-supported contender for the Mastership on two occasions.

The boisterous and seminal young don was by now overlaid with the *gravitas* and dignity of middle years. His contributions to the editorship of *Philosophy* and *The Cambridge Review*, to international gatherings – notably in the USA and in Israel (here, at Beer Sheba University in 1986, Prime Minister Shimon Perez was an enthusiastic member of his

audience), to broadcasting, to the Governing Body of Sedbergh School, of which he served as Chairman, replaced naturally his earlier very focused College contributions. But he was careful, by regular dining and attendance at desserts, to keep in touch.

JRB had rowed in a Gentlemen's boat during his undergraduate days and was a solid supporter of the LMBC, proudly displaying an oar on his wall. Harry Hinsley as Master was moved to decline the *ex officio* Presidency of the Club, rightly perhaps, for he was not suited to that particular devotion. It was appropriate, then, that Renford Bambrough should step into the breach and his tenure was marked by some very witty speeches at Bump Suppers ('Little Lord Snowdrop' comes to mind – a term he coined to describe a certain blue boat cox who married rather well). The only difficulty was that the members of the club did not always give his work the careful attention it deserved, being concerned to give effect to less cerebral carousing. Croquet was another interest and it was played with the object of winning. Important shots were mostly preceded by a characteristic blowing of the nose which proved effective only sometimes.

Early retirement sadly coincided with the onset of the horrible Lewy Body disease. It was particularly sad for JRB's friends to see so acute a mind fade into radical forgetfulness. Yet he bore the affliction with a residual dignity, consistently and devotedly comforted by Moira and his four children – Moira whom he had married in 1952 and who was his life-long companion and support.

'I know that you know all this', he once said. 'But I also know, from some things that some of you and some others have said and written, that you need to be reminded of what you know.' That is a fitting epitaph to a great thinker and a massively loyal son of St John's College.

Andrew Macintosh

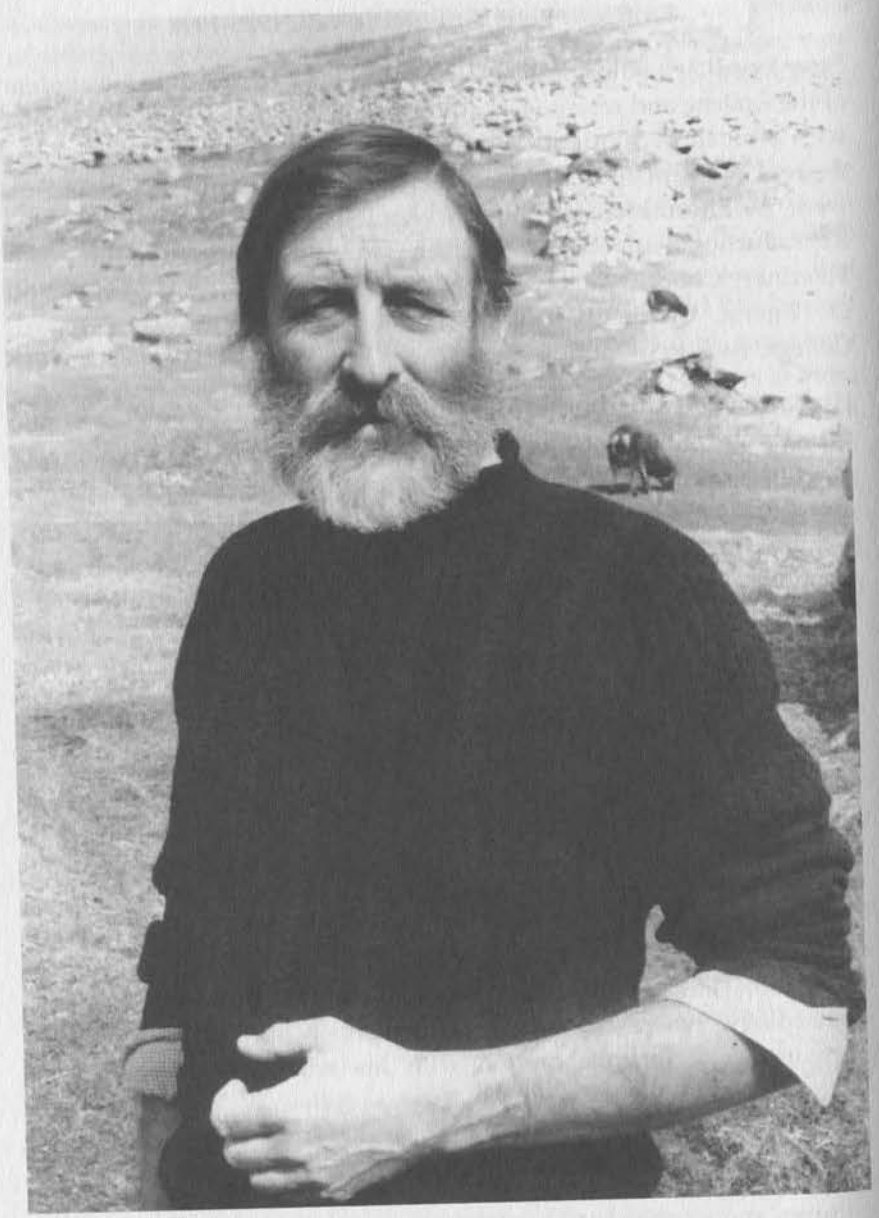
Professor Peter Arundel Jewell, 1925-1998

Peter Jewell, who died on May 23rd, 1998, had been an affiliated student of the College and returned as a Professorial Fellow in 1977. A biologist with a broad background and extensive interests, he held Bachelor's degrees in Agriculture and Physiology. His academic appointments were in Pharmacology, Biology, Zoology, and the Physiology of Reproduction – appointments which had brought him from the Royal Veterinary College, via the Zoological Society of London, the University of Nigeria, University College London, and the Royal Holloway College, back to Cambridge.

His early papers, on the anatomy and pharmacology of small domestic animals, led him to focus on the ecology and breeding biology of mammals. Among the pioneers of studies of the population dynamics and inter-species relations of small mammals, he was one of the first to use the trapping and retrapping of marked animals to obtain data on fecundity and breeding success, and on how these varied with age. He initiated a long-term study of feral Soay sheep on St Kilda, where his elegant field experiments demonstrated the importance of female choice in mate selection and also the costs of reproduction: intact rams lived less long than castrates.

Such studies enabled him to make major contributions to conservation. Of special importance were his studies of topi, a large African antelope, in which he demonstrated the flexibility possible in mammalian social organisation in relation to environmental conditions. He applied his work to the management problems posed by large animals in game reserves, with special reference to their interactions with the human population. His interest in animal-human relations also led him into archaeology, where he published a number of papers on animal remains, some in collaboration with his wife, the biologist Juliet Clutton-Brock.

He applied this interest in animal-human relations also to domestic animals. He was fascinated by the contributions of animals to human cultures, and worked hard to prevent the extinction of domestic breeds. A lecture he gave in 1971 did much to bring the importance of genetic



Professor Peter Jewell

conservation to a wider audience, and led to the formation of the Rare Breeds Survival Trust – the first national body attempting to conserve domestic livestock, and a model for comparable organisations elsewhere.

But Peter Jewell's achievements are not to be measured solely by his empirical contributions, nor by those of the devoted graduate students who followed in his footsteps. He did not spare himself in supporting causes about which he felt strongly. He served on the Councils of the British Ecological Society, the Association for the Study of Animal Behaviour, the Fauna and Flora Preservation Society, the Mammal Society, and the Zoological Society of London, including its Breeding Policy Committee and its Gene Bank sub-Committee. He acted as a consultant in Britain and abroad, and assisted in surveys by the ODA and the EEC.

In the College, of course, academic achievements are expected and personality is at least equally important. Peter was greatly admired for his energy and enthusiasm – enthusiasm partly expended on the Campaign for Real Ale. A military paramedic, called in when he was taken ill on St Kilda, got a dusty answer when he tried to tell Peter that he was too old for fieldwork. He went on publishing until a few weeks before he died. His conscientiousness and energy were, to a considerable extent, responsible for enabling the notorious Committee appointed to choose new curtains for the Combination Room to reach a conclusion after deliberations which extended over ten years. But most important were his unfailing good humour and his kindness to juniors as well as to peers. Always ready for a chat, his socialism and his opposition to the church hierarchy often put him in the position of defending the underprivileged. His extraordinary ability to listen, assimilate and reply made any discussion with him a real pleasure.

Robert Hinde

Professor Allan MacLeod Cormack, 1924-1998

Allan Cormack, Nobel Laureate in Medicine and Physiology, was famous as one of the developers of CAT scanning, an advance in X-ray diagnosis which allows information on the entire three-dimensional region scanned by an X-ray beam to be imaged rather than the traditional two-dimensional flat image of everything squeezed together on the X-ray film.

Cormack was born in South Africa in 1924 and attended the University of Cape Town. After graduation, he spent four years of postgraduate study at St John's College, Cambridge, working with Otto Frisch on the properties of Helium 6 before returning to be a lecturer in the Cape Town Physics Department. While at Cambreidge, he met his future wife, Barbara Seavey.

As the only qualified nuclear physicist in Cape Town, he was asked to spend part of the week at Groote Schur Hospital (later famous for heart transplant surgery) to deal with radioactive materials, and in particular, to find a way to measure X-ray absorption by different parts of the body.

It was there, for the first time, that he began to think about the X-ray imaging problem and how most of the information in an X-ray was being wasted. In 1956, Cormack went to Harvard University on sabbatical, where he began completely different work with the physicists Norman Ramsey and Richard Wilson on the scattering of protons.

While at Harvard he was invited to join the Physics Department at Tufts University by the then Chairman, Julian Knipp. He continued the nuclear physics work for many years at the Harvard cyclotron.

When Cormack realized that tomography, used in mapping in diverse fields such as astronomy and oceanography, could be applied to the X-ray analysis problem, he was surprised that he was unable to find a solution in the existing scientific literature. He decided to work out the problem himself, first with a mathematical analysis and then with crude (by today's standards) experimental set-ups.

After confirming his calculations with experiments on objects as diverse as a penny and a pork chop, he published his results in a series of papers in the *Journal of Applied Physics* in the mid-Sixties with the unpresumptuous titles "Representation of a Function by its Line Integrals", with "Some Radiological Applications, I" and "II".

Having solved the basic problem, Cormack had little interest in the engineering aspects and the first commercial CAT scanner was patented by the Englishman Godfrey Hounsfield in 1968. Hounsfield applied fast computers to the mathematical analysis of thetomographic X-ray data and succeeded in obtaining images of the inside of the body. The two men shared the Nobel Prize in 1979, meeting for the first time in Stockholm.

Cormack was a modest man who enjoyed the academic routine at Tufts, teaching undergraduates and graduate students and serving on university committees. In fact, when word of the Nobel Prize reached students in Introductory Physics, in the excitement and confusion surrounding the award's announcement, he said at the time that, having lived in an "ivory tower" all his life, he was hoping to return to it as soon as possible.

After the prize, he continued his normal duties at Tufts, taking his turn at teaching several of the regular courses in mechanics, optics and modern physics with the other faculty until his retirement in 1995. After retirement, Allan Cormack continued to use his office in the Tufts Physics Department and maintained many of his professional activities.

David Weaver

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David Christy Dunn, 1939-1998

The broad grin, the smiling eyes, the infectious laugh, the great intellect, the single-mindedness, the burning enthusiasm, the love of family, work, play and life. These are the lasting impressions of David who very sadly died of myeloma in August of 1998. There were no obstacles for David, just things to get over, under, round or occasionally through, usually with a disarming smile hiding his unflagging resilience and tremendous drive and ability.

I am privileged to have known David since 1972, when he had the double challenge of teaching me anatomy and rowing. I never asked him which he found more difficult but his approach was the same in both. He radiated a passion for both subjects and expected hard work from those who wished to achieve. He led by example.

To look through his list of achievements gives a measure of one part of the man. Many of us would be proud to achieve just one of these in our lifetime. It hides the other side of the man who was humorous, loved his family life and had a host of hobbies.

David's medicine started at St John's and St Bartholomew's. After a spell with the British East Greenland Expedition he started his surgical training in London. He returned to Cambridge as Assistant Director of Research to Professor Roy Calne who was doing pioneering work in liver transplantation. His research into mechanisms of graft rejection contributed significantly to the discovery of drugs, such as Cyclosporin, used to control the rejection process. This in turn meant that transplantation could become a viable treatment for liver, kidney and other organ failures. Today transplantation is a routine surgical procedure giving years of quality life to many people.

In 1974, at the age of 35, he was appointed Consultant at Addenbrookes. After initially working in vascular, neonatal and upper gastrointestinal surgery he was quick to realise the potential of keyhole surgery. He headed the Royal College of Surgeons' Comparative Audit Unit which led to the creation of recognised keyhole surgery training programmes. He was well used to applying computer programmes successfully in his

Mr David Dunn

surgical audit. At the time of his death he was President of the Association of Endoscopic Surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland. He travelled widely teaching and learning. His enquiring mind was always keen to seek out and apply new ideas.

As if this was not enough he wrote a stream of academic papers and several surgical books. Generations of Cambridge medical students will remember his infectious enthusiasm from the surgical teaching he organised for them. Deep compassion underpinned his clinical practice, perhaps surprising in such an ambitious and able man. Patients loved him as they appreciated his very high professional standards and recognised that he valued them as people. This, combined with his honesty, instilled tremendous confidence in his patients.

David rowed in the Goldie crew and always appeared highly amused that he never made the Lady Margaret First May Boat. At the time he was at St John's LMBC was going through one if its golden times when the University crews were full of LMBC men. Rowing for Goldie did not guarantee a First May Boat seat. After his own rowing career had ended he spent countless hours coaching, organising and inspiring LMBC crews. His first May Head crew was in 1974. There were to be many others over the next two decades. As in other fields of life he imparted not only his knowledge and skills, but also his enthusiasm and his unashamed will to win.

In addition to coaching LMBC the Cambridge University Boat Club soon recognised his skills. He started coaching the Goldie crew and soon the Blue Boat as well. His use of computers in predictions for crew selection initially caused amusement from established coaches but was later found to be successful. His coaching contributed to the end of the long run of Oxford Boat Race wins in the 1970s and 80s under their coach Dan Topolski. Latterly David took on the post of CUBC Senior Treasurer.

I once asked David how he managed to marry such a lovely Danish lady. He said that he met her in Cambridge one summer, followed her back to Denmark and told her they had to get married. I have never asked Anne her version! Marriage to Anne, and the children, in spite of all David's other activities, underpinned his whole life. He always

delighted in his children's talents and abilities and was devoted to Anne. In return she was his greatest supporter. David was especially thrilled to see his two sons rowing at Henley Royal Regatta and developing into national and international oarsmen.

It is difficult to believe that David had any more time or energy to give to hobbies, but he did! He always had an interest in fast cars, although at one time swapped a Triumph TR4 for a VW van when children arrived in brisk succession. Other sports cars soon appeared, the latest a Jaguar. Speed in the air attracted him too. He flew a Tiger Moth. Latterly he took up water colours, for which he clearly had a talent. He sold them for charity.

David was brutally frank about his last illness but, as always, his irrepressible will and optimism never let it dominate him. He approached death as he approached life and would not let it dim his spirit. His friends and colleagues admired him for his realism combined with his wish to use his remaining time to best effect. Sadly, during his last illness David had to bear the loss of his two younger brothers. Richard, the former independent television executive, died only two weeks before David.

David's children organised his Memorial Service in Great St Mary's, Cambridge. During this celebration of David's life they read a wonderful mixture of prose and poems. Over 700 people, from all parts of his life, attended, a measure of the love felt for and the influence of the man. David remains an inspiration to us all and is sorely missed.

Jamie MacLeod

Richard Johann Dunn, 1943-1998

Richard Dunn, CBE, television executive, died of an apparent heart attack on August 4, 1998 aged 54. He was born on September 5, 1943.

One of the most popular members of what has always been a highly competitive, not to say cut-throat, industry, Richard Dunn suffered from

the misfortune of having his name ineluctably linked with a single programme. When in April 1988 Thames TV disregarded Foreign Office pleas and transmitted *Death on the Rock* – a programme based on the SAS shootings of IRA suspects in Gibraltar a month earlier – Dunn, then the company's chief executive, could hardly have been expected to foresee all the consequences that would flow from his decision.

Some of these, admittedly, were matters of legend rather than of fact. It was never, for example, Dunn's own belief that the 1991 auction process for ITV franchises was the direct consequence of Margaret Thatcher's indignation over what Thames had done – a fury that was, if anything, compounded when the programme was broadly cleared in an independent report by a QC and a former Conservative Cabinet minister which Dunn himself had commissioned.

Still less was it the case that Thames lost its 25-year-old London weekday contract as the result of this episode. It forfeited its franchise for a much simpler reason: it put in a bid £10.5 million below that of its rival Carlton.

Not that this reverse was any more than a hiccup in Dunn's career. Half-anticipating that Thames might lose its franchise – its only sure hope was that Carlton might fail to pass the quality threshold – Dunn had already prepared a Plan B for his company's future. Thames rapidly became the most successful independent production company in the UK, earning more in the next two years than it had when it held its licence. It sold out to Pearson for nearly £100 million a little while later.

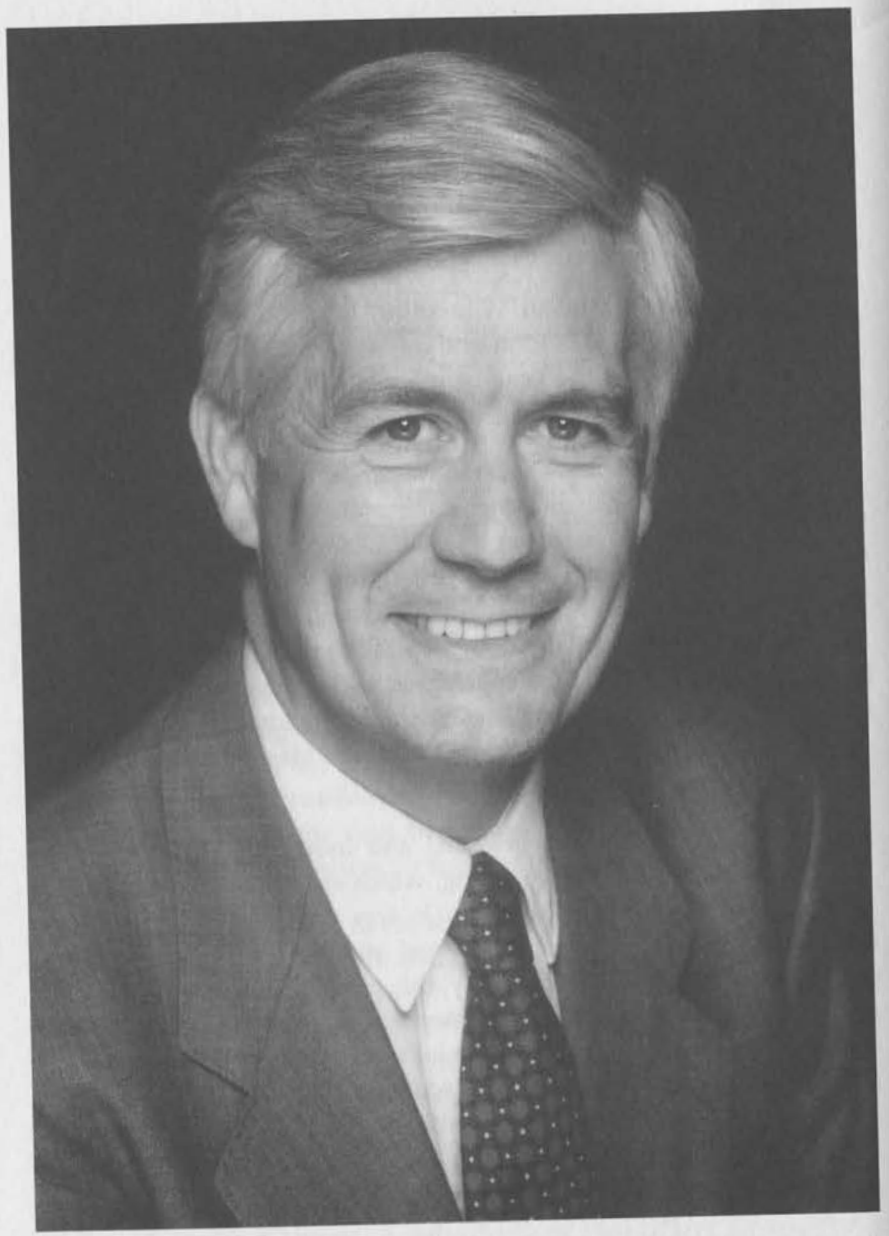
After that Dunn, who had never seen himself as primarily a production man, gradually became more and more of an industry counsellor and facilitator (he had won his spurs in this respect as chairman both of ITN and of the ITV Association). From Pearson Holdings he moved as executive director to News International TV in 1995 – concentrating while at Osterley on the international scene and the coming of digital television – and departing from there last year to enjoy a private portfolio based on the St James's Investment Partnership, dedicated to funding new developments in television. He had also become chairman of the Magazine Channel, a subsidiary of Headwater Cross-Media, another digital venture.

An Icelander by origin on his mother's side, Richard Johann Dunn was born in Colchester and initially brought up in Clacton-on-Sea in Essex. His father was a retired Army officer who became an insurance official with Sun Alliance. Sent to Forest School in East London, he went on from there with a scholarship to St John's College, Cambridge, where he read fine arts. His striking good looks enabled him to blossom as a university actor – he founded the Lady Margaret Players – and he also took a prominent part in sport, winning a Blue for boxing and vigorously playing football (something he continued to do until a couple of years ago). At St John's he was awarded the Sir Joseph Larmor Plate in 1965, and at the time of his death he was a member of the Marketing Committee of The Cambridge Foundation.

His first serious job was with Associated British Pathé, where he combined writing with making some management films and a few cinema "shorts". He then went to be managing director of the EMI experimental cable network in Swindon, where his essentially community-based role impressed Howard Thomas of Thames Television. Refusing an invitation to take charge of Southern TV's regional programming, he went instead at Thomas's instigation to be personal assistant to Jeremy Isaacs, then director of programmes at Thames. It was here that he first really showed his qualities, and his rise was effortless and swift.

Primarily concerned with personnel and industrial relations he did much to clean up the over-manning, which at the time was as much a blot on the television industry as it was on the print one. Never anything but measured in speech – and without any form of pomp or aggression – he reached probably the peak of his achievement by getting rid of 1,000 jobs when Thames was compelled to give up being a contractor and become instead an independent production house. By 1985 he had been appointed chief executive of Thames, taking over from Bryan Cowgill when he fell out with the board over his attempt to snatch *Dallas* from the BBC.

Despite his management background, he could always be counted upon to lend a sympathetic ear to those with creative preoccupations. One of



Mr Richard Dunn

his boldest early moves, as director of production, was to promote David Elstein from editor of *This Week* to executive producer of all Thames documentaries. It was an unlikely combination that worked out extremely well.

By the late 1980s there were many who saw in Dunn – who felt a real commitment to public service broadcasting – a future Director-General (or even Chairman) of the BBC. Probably that was largely wishful thinking – he had never, even before the troubled days of Death on the Rock, been looked upon with much favour by the Tory Government and he certainly did not qualify as "one of us". (He even once attended and spoke at a meeting of John Mortimer's anti-Thatcher June 20 Group, formed during the bleakest of Labour's years in the wilderness.)

But he was always the diplomat, and no one would have made a better spokesman for the entire broadcasting industry. He was appointed CBE in 1995 and that same year was delighted by his election to the Garrick Club, where in the last three years of his life he became an increasingly familiar and welcome presence.

Richard Dunn married in 1972 an American, Virginia ("Jigga") Gaynor. She survives him, together with two sons Andrew (19) and William (13), and a daughter, Elizabeth (12).

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Professor Ronald Robinson, 1920-1999

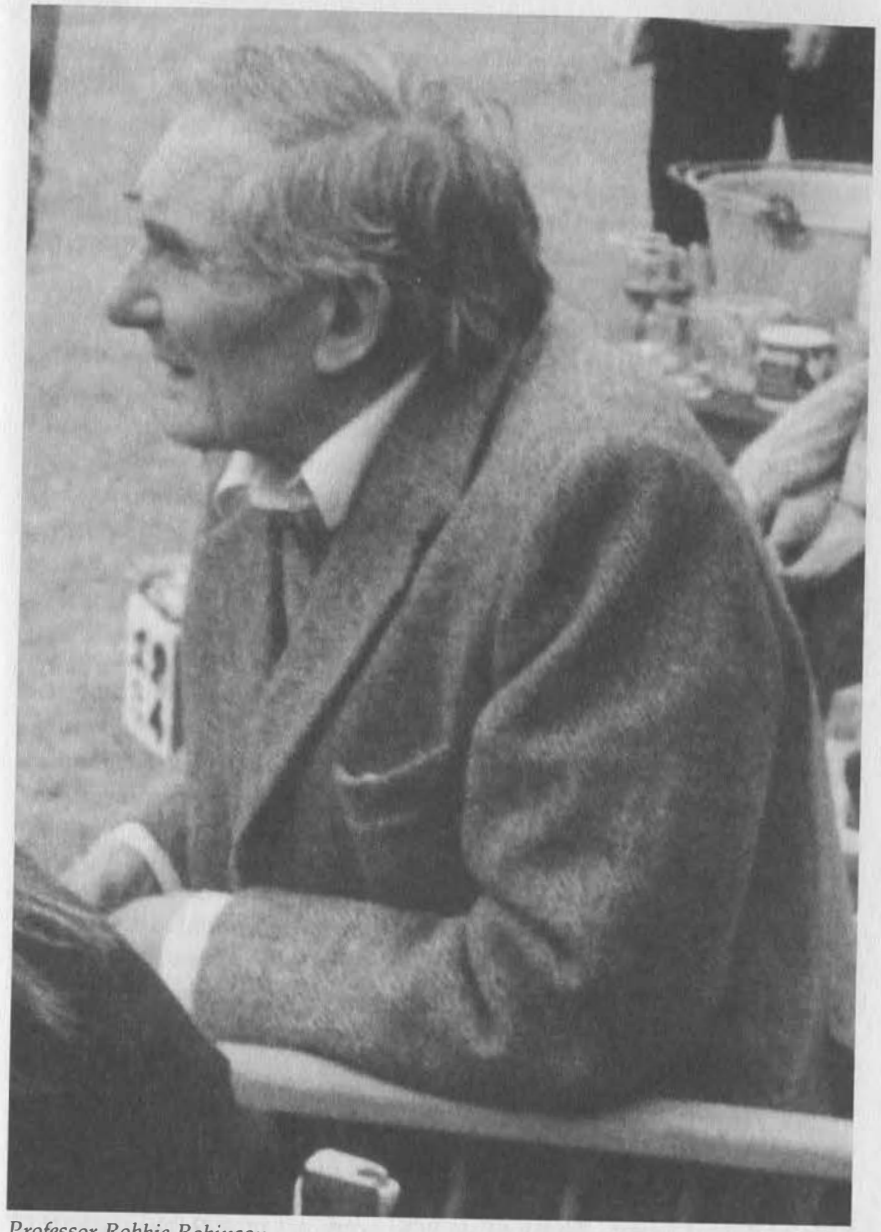
'O Ron, you don't want to finish up like that, do you?', Ronald Robinson's anxious mother asked him as a bent senior fellow shuffled across the College court at the outset of her son's academic career. Mercifully he didn't. Well into his seventies, Robbie (as he was universally known except at home where for reasons best known there he was Mark) continued straight of back and sharp of eye. The straightness of the man is the abiding memory of him. Because he was so invariably straight, Cambridge often found him disconcerting.

In 1947, meanwhile, Mrs Robinson's question was spot on. For in the year in which Denis Compton was flailing the bowling all over England the dashing young Robinson must have seemed the very antithesis of everyone's idea of the cobweb-covered don. He must particularly have seemed so to the cobweb-covered confraternity itself.

And so he continued. Though hailing from the other side of the river, throughout his time at St John's College Robinson was indeed the Compton of the Cambridge courts – as later he remained of the Balliol quads (where it was staircase golf rather than room cricket that the young gentlemen tended to steady themselves with towards the end of a strenuous evening).

A Battersea boy who never forgot his debt to Battersea Grammar School, he was a born communicator. In his early years he had preached on Battersea Rise in the Plymouth Brethren interest, and, although it was sooner rather than later that he parted company with anything remotely resembling organised religion, to the end he retained his affection for the Psalm which in the late 1930s he preferred as his text. Psalm 107, with its ultimately up-beat message, no less than Dickens, Seeley and Kipling, imbued the historian of Empire with his perennial philosophy.

These and the RAF. Elected a History Scholar of St John's in December 1938, in 1941 he was posted to Coastal Command and sent for training to Rhodesia. The experience of the next four years in 58 Squadron, during which he was awarded the DFC, was formative. Formative and decisive. Early on in their careers his post-war supervision pupils



Professor Robbie Robinson

would learn of Louis XIV's 'tarmac heart', and in the bar after, when the dubious merits of one or other of the arguably clubbable grandees of the History Faculty were mooted, would find themselves faced with the really taxing question: 'But would you *fly* with him?'

The war years had wed Robinson to Africa, and between 1947 and 1949 he was a research officer in the African Studies Branch of the Colonial Office, working on 'trusteeship' for his PhD. From this he emerged with a precocious understanding, edged with scepticism but also informed by sympathy, of the complexities of government decision-making: an understanding which he was able to turn to good account as a youthful member of the Bridges Committee on Public Administration in 1961-2, and throughout the 1960s as the ever-quizzical Chairman of the series of Cambridge Conferences on the Problems of Developing Countries – the importance of which, as well as his galvanising contribution to their success, is recounted in one of the contributions to the volume in his honour edited by A. Porter and R. Holland, *Theory and Practice in History of European Expansion Overseas* (1988).

Better than anything else perhaps, the title of that volume indicated the nature of the changes that had overtaken the subject since Robinson had set out to study the infrastructure of what was then still called imperialism, and in his first venture into print, written in conjunction with the late Jack Gallagher, had turned a vast and highly topical subject upside-down and inside-out.

'The Imperialism of Free Trade', Robinson and Gallagher's fifteen-page essay of 1953, may well be accounted the most influential article in any field of post-war British historiography. It was followed in 1961 by their *Africa and the Victorians. The Official Mind of Imperialism*, a subtle and coruscating critique of the Marxist interpretation of the imperial theme. Robinson and Gallagher's was an academic collaboration (though conspiracy probably describes it better) which set the agenda for the next generation of historiographical reconstruction and beyond.

As its title page proclaims, *Africa and the Victorians* was written 'with the help of Alice Denny'. Those of us who were his pupils had reasons of our own for knowing what that help meant. Without Alice ('Tony' in

real life, confusingly matching Robbie's 'Mark') and their then young family in whose chaotically convivial Thorneycreek domesticity, at a time when par for the course with the dons was a measure of warm sherry undergraduates found themselves immediately at home, Robbie would have been inconceivable.

Then there were the evenings, all too often late evenings, in the 'dug-out', the St John's rooms which he shared with his close friend, the medievalist Edward Miller. For such of his future pupils whose first experience of the duo resembled that of the present writer, who on presenting himself for a scholarship interview in the late 1950s found a game of room cricket in progress and was banished to square leg until the arrival of the next candidate while Miller carted Robinson 'with contumely' (a much-favoured phrase) to all four corners, those rooms were one of the places in which they grew up. (Not that every evening was like that. On some of those far-off, uncalculating pre-HEFCE evenings, the dug-out also witnessed other, ostensibly more intellectual activities: meetings of the College History Society, for example, not least that Kipling occasions on which 'Songs of Empire; was performed; supervisions even.)

So it was as much a wrench for Cambridge as it was for him (and for him it was the bitterest of disappointments) when in 1970 the Smuts Reader, which by then he was, was not preferred to the Smuts Chair. The remainder of his career Robinson spent in Oxford, as Fellow of Balliol and Beit Professor.

'We voted for pleasure', Richard Cobb revealed on the occasion of the Oxford election – though, as was not infrequently the case with Richard's revelations, that was not the whole of the story. Pleasure was only part of the package. By one of the Balliol History tutors who knew him best Robinson is remembered for supplying a leaven of levity and for a genius for remaining invisible, but equally for a capacity for materialising djinn-like when he was really needed, and especially when he was really needed by his graduate students (and the graduate students he always had endless time), as well as for his readiness to take on thankless chores far beyond the call of duty. In his capacity as

Chairman of the Modern History Board he played a key role in the Faculty's colonisation of the Oriental Institute, and by means of a succession of succinct *ex cathedra* pronouncements effectively redrew Oxford's boundaries of political incorrectness.

Spare and agile (he had won soccer blues in goal), in any gathering Robinson appeared taller than he measured. Famous (and famously feared) for his impromptu interventions on state occasions, he often said he hated the Establishment ('bastards'). But the Establishment was not so easily put off. Try as he might, no one was, for his charm was wholly disarming. With his ever-mobile face and almost audible eyebrows, he was the most enchanting of men, with a graciousness about him reminiscent of 'Gone with the Wind'. For this, again Tony was not unresponsible.

Endlessly generous, not to say recklessly so, he gloried in spontaneity ('lovely') and reports of 'the Good Ol' Boys' (a secret society not notable for the input of its academic contingent). He was a mass of contradictions and, although he had often to deny it, a masterly impresario of the inconsequential. Sometimes he seemed not to be listening. But he always heard. They don't make dons like that any more.

He delighted in words, in both the play of them and their resonances; he was a master of words. And, as well as words, not so much music as singing; he was a unremitting singer. Having frequently driven his friends close to distraction in his middle years by missing appointments either by hours or entirely ('I'll pay, old boy, but I can't come'), later on he punished them with Christmas cards in the first week of December (Christmas could never come soon enough for him).

He had little time for institutions, glorying instead in his warm and wide family, and, uncertain as he affected to be about other particulars, keeping a patriarchal count of his numerous grandchildren and their offspring. He was heart-warmingly blessed in his family, above all during the last gruelling months.

Beyond that, he regularly had his old air crew home for the New-Year sing-song, more often than not dismissed life's problems as 'a piece of

cake', and (although his own was not without its cruel reverses) persisted in shrugging off and laughing throatily (and how we shall miss that laugh!) at the absurdity of it all, which he often described as 'very curious', remained deeply suspicious of government at every level, almost until the end restoked his apparently permanently coked-up pipe with his beloved Gold Block, and leaves behind him hosts of friends and generations of pupils infused with something of that 'lyric spirit' in accordance with whose generous precepts he continued to live that life to the full and well beyond almost until the very end. The love and affection he inspired amongst those friends and pupil were – I was about to write 'this side idolatry'. But then I hear him chiding me, as he used to chide me after I'd read him an essay: 'load of old balls, old boy'. (And he hadn't been listening then either.)

He was exceptional and will be exceptionally and sorely missed.

Ronald Edward Robinson, historian: born Battersea, London, 3 September 1920. DFC 1944. Married 1948 Alice Josephine Denny (two sons, two daughters). Fellow of St John's College, Cambridge, 1949-71; Tutor 1961-66. Lecturer in History, Cambridge University, 1953-66; Smuts Reader in the History of the British Commonwealth, 1966-71. CBE 1970. Beit Professor of the History of the British Commonwealth (Emeritus), Oxford University, and Fellow of Balliol College, 1971-87; Faculty Board of Modern History, Chairman, 1974-76. Died Cambridge, 19 June 1999.

Peter Linehan

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