



PAUL LANGFORD

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# Paul Langford

## 1945–2015

PAUL LANGFORD HAD A NOTABLE influence on how the political history of eighteenth-century England was written and thought about; and he had no less marked an impact on the academic institutions to which he belonged and whose shape and future he helped to determine. Equally effective as a tutor encouraging pupils to make the most of their abilities, and as a chairman leading fractious committees towards consensus and decision, he was nonetheless a strikingly self-contained and self-motivated man. Formidably well organised, and a person of obvious good sense, he seemed always to know his own mind and what he was about, and to be moving methodically towards his goals without any hesitation, deviation or particular fuss. It was a recipe for sustained academic success in a career which brought him both public recognition and considerable private fulfilment.

### I

His roots lay in South Wales, in the Vale of Glamorgan, and in Gloucestershire, in the Forest of Dean. He was born in Mid-Glamorgan Hospital, Bridgend, on 20 November 1945, the elder son of Frederick Wade Langford and his wife, Olive (née Walters), who were then living in Llanharan. By the time he was ten they had moved twice and finally settled in Cinderford in the Forest of Dean, which remained the family home. Paul no doubt owed much of his determination and drive to his father, a Welsh Methodist who was evidently a man of some ambition. He was a successful manager for the Co-operative Society in Gloucestershire, and

an effective public speaker who became a major figure in the committees and activities of the Rotary Club, not only there but nationally. The son must have delighted his father in 1957 when he won a scholarship to Monmouth School, then a notable direct grant school, and was soon 'much admired for his calm, measured judgment' in the debating society. At the time Monmouth had a fierce reforming headmaster, Robert Glover, and two renowned history teachers, Robert Parry and Brian Stevens. Stevens taught an A-level Special Subject on the Elder Pitt, which sparked off Paul's interest in the period he was to make his own, while leaving him with a lasting detestation of Pitt himself.<sup>1</sup> Glover once horrified him by turning up with some guests at the Speech House Hotel in Cinderford, where he was working as a waiter and breaking school rules. The headmaster made no comment until Paul's last day at Monmouth. Congratulating him on winning an exhibition to read history at Oxford, he simply remarked that he was 'a very fine historian' but 'a bloody awful wine waiter'.<sup>2</sup> The exhibition was at Hertford College, but before taking it up he took a year off, part of it spent in Lichfield doing some teaching, part in France polishing up his spoken French (he was soon to be equally fluent in German).

When he arrived in Oxford in 1964, Hertford was scarcely a college renowned as a nursery of first-class historians, but he can hardly have required much nursing. He was awarded a scholarship at the end of his second year, and it was a piece of good fortune (or perhaps it was good management) when Felix Markham, Hertford's Modern History tutor, arranged to send him to John B. Owen at Lincoln College for tuition on eighteenth-century England, and particularly on his Special Subject, 'Britain and India in the Age of Warren Hastings'. The two clearly hit it off, and Owen quickly came to admire him as 'the ablest pupil I have had in over twenty years'.<sup>3</sup> While still a student, Paul also had the good fortune and great good sense to meet and get to know his future wife, Margaret Edwards, whose father was a Forester (that is to say born within the registered boundaries of the Forest of Dean) and a gardener famous there for his carnations. While Paul was at Hertford, she was training to be a teacher at Hereford College of Education, and in vacations they both

<sup>1</sup>Richard Carwardine, 'Address' at Memorial Service, 30 April 2016. On Pitt's 'personal ruthlessness beyond any politician of his age', see P. Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727–1783* (Oxford, 1989), p. 225.

<sup>2</sup>Carwardine, 'Address'.

<sup>3</sup>Lincoln College Oxford Archives [hereafter LCA], 'Paul Langford fellow's file' [hereafter PL file], J. B. Owen to the Rector, 17 April 1969 and 15 March 1970.

worked in that same Speech House Hotel in Cinderford, visited castles all over the country together (a passion of Paul's later replaced by one for the houses of the landed aristocracy) and went to the theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon whenever they could. She also remembers how hard he worked in term-time, particularly in the run-up to Finals, when he had potential examination questions arranged on separate index cards, with an outline of possible answers neatly attached, and then, with her help, memorised them. Thus effectively equipped, he obtained the expected first-class degree in 1967, 'one of the best firsts of his year with consistent first-class marks throughout the range of papers', Markham reported.<sup>4</sup>

He immediately began work for a DPhil, with Owen as his supervisor, on 'The first Rockingham administration, 1765–6', a topic which Owen had suggested. A series of appointments at Lincoln quickly followed, a Grimshaw senior scholarship in 1968, a junior research fellowship in 1969 and finally a tutorial fellowship, in effect a permanent appointment, when Owen moved to a chair in Calgary in 1970 and Paul was elected in his place. He was supported for the tutorial fellowship not only by Owen and Markham but also by the powerful voice of Dame Lucy Sutherland, Principal of Lady Margaret Hall, who had supervised him for a year and found his work 'distinguished and indeed remarkable in so young a scholar'. The fact that she had herself begun research on Rockingham and Burke, and published her first academic article on the subject, gave her recommendation special weight.<sup>5</sup> There were also reports on him from Robert Shackleton and others who had been impressed by his conversation at dinner, or by a paper he had read to a seminar.<sup>6</sup> Favourable opinions were being gathered in.

That there were several of them says something about Paul's reputation at this early stage; and there were two other features of his seemingly inevitable progress which appeared striking to his contemporaries beginning historical research at much the same time. One was the fact that he was working on a topic in high political history at a time when the tide was running against it, and doing so with a 'quiet, modest, unassertive,

<sup>4</sup>LCA, PL file, Felix Markham to the Rector, 16 March 1970.

<sup>5</sup>LCA, PL file, Dame Lucy Sutherland to the Rector, 13 March 1970; A. Whiteman, 'Lucy Stuart Sutherland (1903–1980)', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 69 (1983), p. 616. Paul naturally contributed to her Festschrift, taking as his subject 'The Rockingham Whigs and America, 1767–1773', in A. Whiteman, J. S. Bromley and P. G. M. Dickson (eds.), *Statesmen, Scholars and Merchants: Essays in Eighteenth-Century History Presented to Dame Lucy Sutherland* (Oxford, 1973), pp. 135–52.

<sup>6</sup>LCA, PL file, letters to Vivian Green 5 January, 8 May 1970.

but determined conviction that what he was doing was the right kind of thing, however unfashionable'.<sup>7</sup> The other—itself an unfashionable if not quite unheard of thing at the time—was the speed with which he finished his doctorate, in just over three years, despite shouldering the burdens of a tutorial fellowship for one of them. He was awarded the DPhil in 1971. He had already married Margaret on 22 July 1970, in Lincoln College chapel, filled with her father's specially grown orange carnations for the occasion. The college was to be his academic home for the rest of his career.

## II

For almost thirty years, until 1998, he was an assiduous college tutor, and for most of that time Lincoln's senior history tutor, occupying the handsomely panelled 'Wesley Room', as was wholly appropriate for an eighteenth-century historian and one born into a Methodist family.<sup>8</sup> There he could be observed at work by curious tourists (though usually only at the appointed times), and there he taught his undergraduate pupils, often singly when they were from Lincoln, generally in pairs when they came from other Oxford colleges, and a growing number did so as his reputation increased. All of them started off in some awe of him as he sat in his wing-backed chair, tips of fingers touching, eyes half-closed, while they read their essays. But he was listening attentively, making the odd note and then always encouraging them to improve their own arguments: 'he seemed to have a genius for getting you to realise you had picked up more about a subject than you thought you had'.<sup>9</sup> For many years, with one or two colleagues, he held a faculty seminar on the eighteenth-century Special Subject which was the lineal descendant of the one he had studied himself as an undergraduate, now reformed and rechristened 'Politics and empire 1763–86' and then 'Politics, reform and imperial crisis, 1774–1784'. In that setting also, and in the pub to which they adjourned afterwards, he treated

<sup>7</sup> Blair Worden to the author, 17 May 2016.

<sup>8</sup> As V. H. H. Green established, this was not in fact Wesley's room in his early days in Lincoln, where the Holy Club met and Methodism had its origins, but he may have occupied it during his later years as a Fellow: P. Langford, 'Vivian Hubert Howard Green (1915–2005)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/94873>> (accessed 12 May 2016).

<sup>9</sup> Tim Knowles, 'Address' at Memorial Service, 30 April 2016; Guy Rowlands to the author, 10 June 2016.

students very seriously and in much the same style. He ‘never talked down to them, wasn’t didactic, just learned’.<sup>10</sup>

Unusually for a college tutor at the time, he did very little undergraduate teaching outside his chosen century. Although he gave tutorials on European as well British history between 1700 and 1800, he rarely ventured outside those dates. He was single minded in the use of his time, in teaching as in research, and determined to make himself, as he very soon became, the acknowledged Oxford expert on his own territory. Not surprisingly, he attracted a growing number of graduate students eager for his supervision, often eight at a time, and as many as ten at one point in the early 1990s.<sup>11</sup> He had joined Peter Dickson in running the faculty’s eighteenth-century graduate seminar, and arranged for it to meet in what he called the ‘appropriately Augustan splendour’ of the Beckington Room in Lincoln; and he played a large part, along with Leslie Mitchell and Joanna Innes, in making it a seminar where graduate students felt comfortable and happily contributed—not always a characteristic of such occasions in Oxford. Here too, and at the dinners with students which followed, he showed a disarming willingness to listen, accompanied by what one participant calls ‘a delicious wry smile which could speak volumes: sometimes hinting at scepticism, sometimes a quiet recognition of things well done, and sometimes a smile about the sheer pleasures of scholarship’.<sup>12</sup>

These were some of the qualities, understated but quietly effective, which helped to make him so persuasive in the academic politics of his college and faculty, especially when they were backed up by his obvious and life-long conviction that sensible people ought to be able to reach a consensus on what was best for the general good.<sup>13</sup> Early on he won some fame as a negotiator in Lincoln when he was ‘parking ombudsman’ (a role which fell to the junior fellow), and quickly settled previously insoluble arguments about which fellows should have rights to the college’s few spaces off Turl Street. But that was small beer. Once he was sure of his ground, he was eager to promote more permanent reforms, and ready to tread on toes when it was necessary. He was a notably reforming Senior Tutor of Lincoln from 1977 to 1980, building on the work of his predecessor to raise the academic performance and reputation of the

<sup>10</sup> Joanna Innes to the author, 20 September 2016.

<sup>11</sup> LCA, PL file, Langford to Robert Fox, 25 September 1992.

<sup>12</sup> Sir David Eastwood to the author, 11 August 2016.

<sup>13</sup> Compare his remarks on ‘high politics’, below, p. 131.

college by tightening up the system of ‘collections’ (written examinations) which undergraduates were supposed to take at the beginning of every term. He also added to the college’s tutorial resources (and helped the early career development of younger scholars) by persuading it, against some opposition, to introduce three short-term ‘junior tutorial fellowships’, later to be termed Darby Fellowships.<sup>14</sup>

The story was much the same in the faculty. As chairman of the examiners in the Final Honour School of Modern History in 1979, he was able to get his colleagues to agree on an ingenious scheme ‘to increase the amount of double-marking (which everyone agreed was needed) without breaking the examiners’ backs (which everyone feared)’.<sup>15</sup> In 1981 he persuaded a faculty meeting to recognise the reality of the decline in language teaching in schools, and require candidates taking the Modern History preliminary examination in their first year to study one text in a foreign language rather than two, as had been the previous rule. At the time this seemed the most radical of revolutions to the old guard, but it had long been campaigned for, and it did not prevent Paul’s election as chairman of the Modern History faculty board in 1986. He was plainly a man who had judgement and good sense. He also had staying power. Doing his bit for public education more widely, he was a Senior Examiner in History at ‘A’ Level for the Oxford and Cambridge Schools Examinations Board every summer from 1970 right through to 1983.

Nothing was allowed to get in the way of his own research and writing, however. After his thesis was finished, he produced three books in very short order. The thesis itself, published as an Oxford Historical Monograph in 1973, was quickly followed in 1975 by a short monograph on the Excise Crisis and in 1976 by a volume on British foreign policy in the eighteenth century.<sup>16</sup> All were well received. One reviewer of *The First Rockingham Administration* thought the author was to be congratulated on tackling an unappealing subject so well. The anonymous reviewer in the *Times Literary Supplement* made clear the historical minefield between ‘Namierite’ and ‘Whig’ interpretations through which the author had ventured cautiously to tread, but found the book ‘lively throughout’ and sometimes ‘beautifully provocative’. This reviewer was no less an authority on Whig interpretations than Sir Herbert Butterfield, though Paul may

<sup>14</sup>LCA, College Order Book, 1978–9, and associated committee papers.

<sup>15</sup>Blair Worden to the author, 18 May 2016.

<sup>16</sup>P. Langford, *The First Rockingham Administration, 1765–6* (Oxford, 1973); P. Langford, *The Excise Crisis: Society and Politics in the Age of Walpole* (Oxford, 1975); P. Langford, *The Eighteenth Century, 1688–1815* (London, 1976).

well not have known it at the time.<sup>17</sup> Reviews of *The Excise Crisis* were less qualified. It was immediately welcomed as a classic study, resting on substantial original research and throwing wholly new light on Walpole's political limitations and his misjudgement of public opinion.<sup>18</sup> The book on foreign policy, by contrast, was explicitly intended for students, providing them with a running commentary so that they could set foreign policy squarely in the overall domestic context, where it belonged.<sup>19</sup> It did precisely that, as the pencilled underlinings in the several well-thumbed copies still on the open shelves of the Bodleian Library demonstrate.

Meanwhile, in 1974, Lucy Sutherland had persuaded him—instructed might almost be a better word—to take on his next major scholarly pre-occupation, as General Editor of the *Writings and Speeches* of Edmund Burke. She was keen to see it follow the great Cambridge/Chicago edition of Burke's *Correspondence*, which had been edited by Thomas W. Copeland, and Oxford University Press had agreed to take it on, despite the fact that it never had the substantial American funding behind it which had supported the *Correspondence*.<sup>20</sup> The task of General Editor was hence a daunting one. Nonetheless, with his characteristic drive, Paul got the whole edition moving:

Above all, he personally undertook the invaluable preliminary work of surveying the vast holdings of Burke drafts, notes and fragments in the libraries at Sheffield and Northampton. It was his sense of the extent to which authentic versions of speeches could be reconstructed from this manuscript material that constitutes the claim of the edition to have made original contributions on a massive scale to the Burke canon.<sup>21</sup>

He also showed how the job should be done by himself editing one of the first two volumes to appear, volume 2, *Party, Parliament, and the American War, 1766–1774*.<sup>22</sup> This was hailed as a major scholarly achievement, scrupulously edited to standards of which Burke himself would have

<sup>17</sup> John Carswell in *English Historical Review*, 90 (1975), 446–7; Sir Herbert Butterfield in *Times Literary Supplement*, 20 July 1973, p. 833.

<sup>18</sup> E.g., John Carswell in *Times Literary Supplement*, 24 October 1975, p. 1253.

<sup>19</sup> Langford, *Eighteenth Century*, p. vii.

<sup>20</sup> T. W. Copeland, A. Cobban and J. P. Boyd (eds.), *The Correspondence of Edmund Burke* (Cambridge and Chicago, IL, 10 vols., 1958–78); Oxford University Press Archives, correspondence between Thomas W. Copeland, Lucy Sutherland and Dan Davin, 19 July, 13 September, 29 September 1972, kindly shown to me by Hollie Thomas.

<sup>21</sup> Peter Marshall to the author, 1 June 2016.

<sup>22</sup> P. Langford and W. B. Todd (eds.), *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, vol. 2 (Oxford, 1981). The other volume published in 1981 was volume 5, *India, Madras and Bengal, 1774–1785*, edited by P. Marshall, associate editor of the series, and W. B. Todd.

approved and an auspicious start to an important series.<sup>23</sup> With later volumes Paul kept a close eye on progress, but generally left their editors to get on with it unless they showed signs of never finishing.

Once his own volume was out of the way and the spade-work done for the whole edition, therefore, he was able to turn to less demanding projects. One was his contribution to the eighteenth-century volume of the *History of the University of Oxford*, 'Tories and Jacobites 1714–1751'.<sup>24</sup> Another was his chapter on the eighteenth century in the *Oxford Illustrated History of Britain* (Oxford, 1984), edited by Kenneth O. Morgan, which has a claim to be the most widely read piece of prose he ever wrote, since it was reissued by the Press in various guises down to its appearance in 2000 as *Eighteenth-Century Britain: a Very Short Introduction*.<sup>25</sup> There were other essays of his at the time which seemed to indicate that something more exciting might be in the offing, especially a path-breaking piece on 'Property and "virtual representation" in eighteenth-century England' in 1988.<sup>26</sup> Anyone who saw him in these years hard at work in the Upper Reading Room of the Bodleian in term-time, or in the two dozen and more provincial record offices he visited in the vacations,<sup>27</sup> knew that he must be engaged on some large enterprise. But there was no prior indication of how substantial an advance on his earlier work it would turn out to be, both in the breadth of its historical vision and in the depth of its scholarship, until the appearance in rapid succession of the two books which made his name and by which he will always be remembered. The new breadth of vision was prompted by an invitation from John Roberts, the General Editor, to write a volume in the recently planned 'New Oxford History of England', and it produced *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727–1783* (Oxford, 1989). The fresh focus for his scholarship became evident when he received a later invitation to give the prestigious Ford Lectures in 1990, and this resulted in *Public Life and the Propertied*

<sup>23</sup> E.g., John Brewer in *Times Literary Supplement*, 23 October 1981, p. 1233; Colin Brooks in *English Historical Review*, 99 (1984), 196–7.

<sup>24</sup> L. S. Sutherland and L. G. Mitchell (eds.), *The History of the University of Oxford*, vol 5: *The Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1986), pp. 99–127.

<sup>25</sup> P. Langford, *Eighteenth-Century Britain: a Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, 2000).

<sup>26</sup> P. Langford, 'Property and "virtual representation" in eighteenth-century England', *Historical Journal*, 31 (1988), 83–115. For another sign of new interests, see his 'Thomas Day and the politics of sentiment', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 12 (1984), 57–79.

<sup>27</sup> He applied for College funding to visit at least twenty-four Record Offices in these years (and also to do research in libraries in the USA): LCA, PL file, letters 1983–88. Leslie Mitchell commented to me that whenever he visited a fresh archive in the provinces, 'Paul had invariably been there first'.

*Englishman 1689–1798* (Oxford, 1991). It was predictable of Paul that his New Oxford History volume was the first of the series to be published, and that *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman* was sent to the press as soon as the last of his lectures had been delivered.

### III

The two books, on which he must have been working simultaneously, were very different in style and content, the first a novel interpretation of a whole society, with particular focus on the two themes in its title (taken from William Blackstone), the second a massive work of dense scholarship on a particular and particularly important topic. (He had hoped to publish a shorter synopsis alongside the latter, in the shape of the Ford lectures more or less as delivered, but the Press demurred.) *A Polite and Commercial People* deliberately set out ‘to emphasize the changes which occurred in an age not invariably associated with change’; and to underline the role as agents of change, not of a small aristocracy, but of ‘a broad middle class whose concerns became ever more central to Georgian society and whose priorities determined so much both of debate and action’. Britain was no longer a traditional society in any sense. It was a ‘plutocracy’ in which ‘power was widely diffused, constantly contested, and ever adjusting to new incursions of wealth, often modest wealth’; and it was held together by the commerce and politeness which were essential elements in what Paul called ‘the peculiar modernity of the Hanoverian age’.<sup>28</sup> There was nothing very unusual in pointing to new kinds of commerce and consumption when explaining rapid social change in the eighteenth century; but the stress on the importance of polite modes of behaviour in regulating and conferring status across a broad social range was novel. It made politeness central to historical understanding of the eighteenth century for the first time.

The overall effect of the book was therefore to turn attention away from a landed elite and established church towards the middling and commercial classes who had left as indelible a mark on manners and attitudes as on the economy and politics. Paul confessed that the result was ‘a bias perhaps’ (p. xi), and there were reviewers who thought that sections of society above or below his very large middle class got short shrift, but all of them welcomed the book as giving new life to a much

<sup>28</sup> P. Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727–1783* (Oxford, 1989), pp. xi, 25.

neglected period of English history. It contained some nicely quotable phrases in the author's most assured style, to the effect, for example, that 'a history of luxury and attitudes to luxury would come very close to being a history of the eighteenth century' (p. 3). It was also very witty. Until we read Langford's treatment of them, few of us ever supposed that the intricacies of English politics in the 1750s could be so entertaining. One review concluded that he had set a standard 'in terms of scholarship, liveliness and sheer historical craftsmanship' which later New Oxford Histories would find it difficult to match.<sup>29</sup>

*Public Life and the Propertied Englishman* presented more of a challenge to its audience, a book, one reviewer said, that was 'wonderful to own but dreadful to read', because it was chock full of the results of original research undertaken in every corner of England. John Brewer agreed that it deployed 'a learning that is as formidably deep as it is breathtakingly broad', and while it might not be an easy read, it was 'an astonishing achievement, a new anatomy of eighteenth-century England'.<sup>30</sup> Langford's anatomy was based once again on the broad middle ranks of society, and he concentrated here on the importance of their property, the many forms which it took and its role in giving them political identity and agency, in what was increasingly a propertied rather than a status-based society. In his Preface he was careful to make clear where he differed from the views taken by other historians of the eighteenth century:

I hope in some measure to have provided a corrective to the view that Georgian politics was overwhelmingly controlled by its aristocracy, as conventionally defined ... and to argue that our perception of eighteenth-century life has been dictated rather too much by the patronage preoccupations of the gentry, by the retrospective appeal of plebeian revolt, and by the long-standing English obsession with party politics.<sup>31</sup>

Here he was not only distinguishing his interpretation from the old Namierite paradigm of an eighteenth century dominated by the power and patronage of its landed aristocracy, which had never had any appeal for him.<sup>32</sup> He was also separating his approach from more recent interpre-

<sup>29</sup>Linda Colley, in *Times Literary Supplement*, 20 April 1990, p. 415. For longer, considered, reviews see J. Innes, 'Not so strange? New views of Eighteenth-Century England', *History Workshop*, 29 (Spring 1990), 179–83; and N. Rogers, 'Paul Langford's "Age of Improvement"', *Past and Present*, 130 (February 1991), 201–9.

<sup>30</sup>Daniel A. Baugh, in *Albion*, 25 (1993), 325–7; John Brewer, in *History Today*, August 1992, 53.

<sup>31</sup>P. Langford, *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman 1689–1798* (Oxford, 1991), pp. vi–vii.

<sup>32</sup>J. B. Owen commented that Paul's doctoral thesis on Rockingham 'steered carefully between the eulogies of Macaulay and his Whig successors on the one hand and the strictures of Namier and John Brooke on the other': LCA, PL file, Owen to the Rector, 15 March 1970.

tations in terms of political parties and popular radicalism which were equally far removed from Namier's model.<sup>33</sup> As he explored how property was defined, contested and defended at every level of the political structure, he had come to realise the special character of the politics created by the growth and diversification of a large and propertied governing class. As he said in his Preface, his research in the archives, local as well as central, had led him away from 'high politics' to an appreciation of 'politics in its fullest and authentically "highest" sense, as the means by which communities organise themselves for what they perceive to be the public good'.<sup>34</sup>

He was also at pains to explain that he was, as he had always been, 'a political historian concerned primarily with relationships of power and influence, with the ways in which individuals and groups obtained and exercised authority'.<sup>35</sup> He acknowledged a great debt to social historians (and he might have added economic historians) who had illuminated some of the relationships between property, social class and power which contributed to the peculiar character of Georgian society. But he was never very sympathetically disposed towards their kinds of history, despite his own interest in property and its social distribution.<sup>36</sup> He did not need to be. He was a political historian through and through, and *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman* had a major impact across the whole field because it was demonstrably authoritative in its own terms. It spoke to different historical constituencies and offered all of them new arguments and a vast amount of new material to ponder. Critics might find fault with its neglect of one or another kind of property, or of the centre as opposed to the localities on which it lavished so much attention, and question whether property was quite so overwhelming a political preoccupation as its author seemed to suppose.<sup>37</sup> It was sometimes underappreciated also because its arguments were too buried in its text. But it was, and remains,

<sup>33</sup> He had made clear where he agreed and disagreed with one important contribution to these debates when reviewing John Brewer's *Party Ideology and Popular Politics at the Accession of George III* (Cambridge, 1976) in *English Historical Review*, 92 (1977), 617–22.

<sup>34</sup> Langford, *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman 1689–1798*, p. ix. In *Polite and Commercial People* (p. 5) he had made much the same point about 'the politics of politeness' being 'the pursuit of harmony within a propertied society'.

<sup>35</sup> Langford, *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman*, p. ix.

<sup>36</sup> He once dismissed an important book on urban history by an economic historian, which I had praised in his hearing, because one or two of its statistics seemed to him based on wholly unreliable contemporary sources.

<sup>37</sup> On some of these issues, see J. Innes, 'Politics, property and the middle class', *Parliamentary History*, 11 (1992), 286–92.

undeniably a great book. There was no disputing the fact that it made all those working on the eighteenth century ‘think differently and think better’, and together with the recent Oxford History it marked ‘a historiographical breakthrough in our understanding of eighteenth-century England’.<sup>38</sup>

Academic honours naturally followed. Paul was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1993, and awarded an ad hominem Readership in Oxford in the following year. In 1996, when the University’s policy on professorial titles changed, he was one of the first to be promoted to that status. Never content to rest on his laurels, however, he was already contemplating another ‘major book’ and embarking on the necessary research. The working title was ‘Manners and Character: the British Portrayed, 1700–1850’.<sup>39</sup> Intended to draw on the voluminous printed material recording foreign representations of the inhabitants of the British Isles, its theme may have been suggested to him by some of his work on manners for *A Polite and Commercial People*, and by the further work on manners being generated by a new seminar for Master’s students given with Joanna Innes on ‘Polite society in eighteenth-century Britain’ which ran from 1993 to 1999. An early fruit of the research was an entertaining and enlightening Raleigh Lecture for the British Academy in 1996 on ‘Politics and Manners from Sir Robert Walpole to Sir Robert Peel’, which pointed, for example, to the decline of formality in English politics between the days when Walpole’s birthday was ‘a ceremonial event second only to that of royalty’ and the early nineteenth century when ‘politicians chose to remain gentlemen, exposed to a parliament of gentlemen, and a public of would-be gentlemen’.<sup>40</sup> That was followed by other papers drawing on similar material, on ‘British politeness and the progress of western manners: an eighteenth-century enigma’, on ‘Manners and the eighteenth-century state: the case of the unsociable Englishman’ and on ‘The English as reformers: foreign visitors’ impressions 1750–1850’.<sup>41</sup> The

<sup>38</sup> Sir David Eastwood to the author, 1 Aug 2016; Julian Hoppit, review in *Journal of Modern History*, 66 (1994), 139–42.

<sup>39</sup> LCA, PL file, application for the title of professor, 19 December 1995.

<sup>40</sup> P. Langford, ‘Politics and manners from Sir Robert Walpole to Sir Robert Peel’, *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 94 (1996), pp. 103–25.

<sup>41</sup> In, respectively, P. Langford, ‘British politeness and the progress of western manners: an eighteenth-century enigma’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6<sup>th</sup> ser., 7 (1997), 53–72; P. Langford, ‘Manners and the eighteenth-century state: the case of the unsociable Englishman’, in J. Brewer and E. Hellmuth (eds.), *Rethinking Leviathan. The Eighteenth-Century State in Britain and Germany* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 281–316; P. Langford, ‘The English as reformers: foreign visitors’ impressions 1750–1850’, *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 100 (1999), pp. 101–20. See

last of these opens with a book on ‘England and the English’ published in German in 1818, translated from a French text which was itself translated from an English text ostensibly written by a Spaniard, but in fact written by Robert Southey.

The source material was, to say the least, difficult to handle, quite apart from its sheer volume and the predictable problems of separating out representations of the Welsh, Irish and Scots from those of the English. The book which finally emerged after much research, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character 1650–1850* (Oxford, 2000), was striking for its use of little-known material in French and German, and given other pressures on the author’s time it is a minor miracle that it appeared as soon as it did. Yet it contained little by way of scholarly apparatus or precise analysis of how far the representations and stereotypes it reported might be taken to reflect English reality. Paul was depressed when it received cooler reviews than his previous books,<sup>42</sup> but the whole project seems to have been one still without clear boundaries or a fixed central focus. It was better suited to be the source of stimulating essays on diverse subjects than the foundation for a third work of major historical significance.

#### IV

By the time *Englishness Identified* appeared, however, Paul’s whole career, rather than just his historical research, was changing direction. In 1995 he had become a member of the British Academy’s Humanities Research Board, the body initially set up to administer the Academy’s funds which came from government for postgraduate awards and for other research programmes, and which finally—after much uncertainty about the direction of government policy and some controversy within the Academy itself—evolved into the Arts and Humanities Research Council.<sup>43</sup> When John Laver, the first Chairman of the Board, was about to step down in

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also P. Langford, ‘Manners and character in Anglo-American perceptions, 1750–1850’, in F. M. Leventhal and R. E. Quinault (eds.), *Anglo-American Attitudes: from Revolution to Partnership* (Aldershot, 2000), pp. 76–90.

<sup>42</sup> For example, David A. Bell in *London Review of Books*, 22, no. 24 (14 December 2000), pp. 26–7; C. Dallett Hemphill, in *Journal of Social History*, 35 (2002), 1000–1002.

<sup>43</sup> J. Herbert, *Creating the AHRC. An Arts and Humanities Research Council for the United Kingdom in the Twenty-First Century* (London: British Academy, Occasional Paper 12, 2008), p. 5 and passim. Herbert’s narrative traces the stages by which the Board became a fully fledged Research Council, and is useful as an interim history, but the topic would merit a much fuller account.

1998, Paul was the unanimous choice of the committee appointing his successor. In his application he had been clear about the challenges of the post and about its attractions for him, given his experience. He noted that recent changes in government policy would radically alter the context within which the Board operated. It would require a new strategy to ensure that it was properly responsive to the needs of all the disciplines within its domain, and not, as it often appeared, representative only of academics in the 'golden triangle'. He stressed that he wanted to continue with his own research in order to retain academic credibility, and he commented on the frustrations he had found in Oxford when Senior Tutor of a college and vice-chairman of a faculty board, and which he would be glad to leave behind:

In my estimation, the more parochial units [in a university] are not necessarily the least taxing. One of the features of Oxford life is the extent to which individuals can find themselves having to exercise a large measure of personal responsibility with a minimum of bureaucratic support and among colleagues of extremely diverse disciplines. Not the least of the attractions of the [Humanities Research] Board is that the support is a great deal better and the diversity markedly less.<sup>44</sup>

The administrative support was indeed a good deal better, especially from Michael Jubb, the Director of Programmes, whom Paul had encountered when Jubb was doing doctoral research into fiscal policy under Walpole, and with whom he now formed a close partnership. In the summer of 1998 they worked together on plans to implement 'heads of agreement' between the English Funding Council (HEFCE) and the Academy on how proposed new funding of some £8m should be handled, before he formally took up his post on 1 October.<sup>45</sup> The post had changed since he applied for it, and it would change further before he left. He was now to be Chairman and Chief Executive of an 'Arts and Humanities Research Board' which still lacked independent legal status and was responsible to the Academy and to HEFCE. He had taken leave from his posts in college and university, but he had to keep both of them regularly informed since the likely length of his absence altered from a total of four years to three and his employer shifted from the Academy to the Funding Council, as political circumstances changed.<sup>46</sup> The goalposts must have

<sup>44</sup>LCA, PL file, Langford to the Rector with draft application for HRB post, 23 June 1997.

<sup>45</sup>Herbert, *Creating the AHRC*, pp. 18–19.

<sup>46</sup>LCA, PL file, Langford to A. P. Weale and Rees Davies, 14 October 1997, 7 October 1999; P. W. H. Brown to Nigel Berry, 30 January. 1998.

seemed to be moving throughout what turned out to be his short but remarkably busy two-year tenure.

By the end of his first year, the new Chairman was able to report that the AHRB now had a budget of over £50m, and that agreement had been reached to ensure that future funding would come from all the Funding Councils and not just HEFCE, so that the Board was 'able to serve the whole of the United Kingdom, just as the science and social science research councils do'. It was 'a defining moment for the future of arts and humanities research'.<sup>47</sup> By the end of his second year, he could report that there had been progress in building up an independent administrative base in Bristol, that the Board had enjoyed twice as much funding as in the previous year, and that it had taken on new responsibilities from HEFCE in the shape of funding for Museums and Galleries. The first Research Centres had been launched, extra funding had been devoted to awards for research leave, and a new Resource Enhancement scheme, intended to make important resources more widely available to researchers, had been advertised. The aim was 'to realise potential' by supporting existing researchers and departments of high quality as well as by funding new centres of activity. It was now 'an explicit aim of the Board and its funders to develop towards full Research Council status', and it had adopted a Corporate Plan for the next five years which would support their case.<sup>48</sup>

In order to achieve all this Paul had to win the support of several constituencies. The most important initially was the chief funding council, HEFCE, whose leaders found him much easier to deal with than some members of the Academy who had earlier been suspicious about the implications of movement towards research council status. With Paul at the helm, one of those involved in the negotiations remarks, 'the environment changed completely' because he saw 'the bigger picture and embraced it' and so got the AHRB 'off to such a flying start'.<sup>49</sup> He also had the perhaps more difficult job of managing a committee structure within the Board in which there were traditional tensions between disciplines, as between archaeologists and classicists, and in which newcomers from the Performing and Visual Arts had to be persuaded they were fully at home. Here his natural skills as a chairman came into their own. He recognised

<sup>47</sup> AHRB, *Annual Report 1998–9*, p. 2.

<sup>48</sup> Herbert, *Creating the AHRC*, p. 23; AHRB, *Annual Report 1999–2000*, pp. 2–3; AHRB, *Corporate Plan 2000–2005*.

<sup>49</sup> Bahram Bekhradnia to the author, 5 July 2016.

that board members had different interest groups behind them, listened to all of them and reached, if not consensus, then broad agreement, because he had what John Morrill describes as ‘that priceless gift of always being in it for others and not for himself’, so that his complete lack of self-interest or any disciplinary prejudices always won the day.<sup>50</sup>

Finally, and not least demanding in terms of energy, he had to be an effective advocate for his Board and its activities to universities, colleges and researchers across the United Kingdom. He visited forty institutions in his first year as Chairman, and he and Jubb between them had been to over a hundred by the end of the second.<sup>51</sup> He had to reassure some of the more conservative strands in humanities scholarship that the advent of the AHRB did not mean some enforced transformation of scholarly processes and priorities but offered new opportunities, and at the same time explain to them some of the problems which came with success when extra funding and publicity led to vastly increased numbers of applicants and success rates fell.<sup>52</sup> In this environment it made a big difference for the new institution that its foundations were laid by a scholar of unquestioned authority as well as an administrator of uncommon creativity. He had been determined from the start to make the AHRB a Research Council in waiting, to develop a national strategy, consult widely, establish a full complement of programmes and show their social and cultural benefits to the country as a whole.<sup>53</sup> To have done most of that in only two years was, even by his own standards, quite an achievement.

## V

It was inevitable that Paul’s abilities would attract the attention of head-hunters and institutions looking for new chief executives, and they might well have thought him ready for a move. In the course of his second year at the AHRB it became clear that acquiring research council status would, sooner rather than later, mean a separation of the roles of Chairman and Chief Executive in accordance with approved principles of corporate governance; and in October 1999 he was asked to stay on, but only for a third year.<sup>54</sup> It would have been understandable if the prospect

<sup>50</sup> John Morrill to the author, 8 July 2016.

<sup>51</sup> AHRB, *Annual Report 1998–1999*, p. 3; Herbert, *Creating the AHRC*, pp. 22–3.

<sup>52</sup> Herbert, *Creating the AHRC*, p. 21.

<sup>53</sup> Michael Jubb, cited in Carwardine, ‘Address’.

<sup>54</sup> Herbert, *Creating the AHRC*, p. 23; LCA, PL file, Langford to Rees Davies, 7 October 1999. In

held little appeal for him. He was in any case already being offered other opportunities. He came close to appointment to at least one vice-chancellorship, but was not in the end successful; and he was approached about becoming the head of at least two Oxford colleges, one of them his own. He was elected Rector of Lincoln in November 1999, to take up office in the autumn of 2000.

The statement which he submitted to Lincoln in advance of his election, at the request of the college Governing Body, makes an instructive contrast with his application for appointment to the AHRB two years earlier. It referred again to some of the political frustrations of Oxford's collegiate system, but demonstrated a new sense, learned from his recent experience, of how they might be overcome. He made it clear that he saw the Rectorship of Lincoln as 'an efficient rather than dignified part of the constitution' (though it should be added that he turned out to be pretty good at the dignified parts of the job too). It was the Rector's task to propose policies in response to the fundamental questions faced by all colleges trying to shape their own future in a hostile financial and political environment. There was an evident need for a policy for the size and shape of Lincoln and for its role in research. There should be a 'professional manager' in charge of academic administration across the college. There should be professional financial planning embracing all the college accounts, and a clear strategy for fundraising and development. The Rector, in short, was a leader 'crucial to the effective functioning of a college as a community'—not quite a chief executive, perhaps, but more than simply a chairman.<sup>55</sup> The Governing Body clearly approved, and if there were a few sceptics, they could scarcely say they had not been warned of what was to follow.

From the start, he had the indispensable help of a professional Bursar, Tim Knowles, who had once been his pupil, and who supervised all college accounts and financial planning: recent Bursars had been tutorial fellows with other responsibilities. Within a year there was also a professional Senior Tutor, Anne-Marie Drummond. She was responsible for all academic administration, including student admissions, and hers was only the second such appointment in an Oxford where dons had historically preferred to take turns administering one another. She had been a junior research fellow in Oxford, but more recently an administrator in

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the summer of 1999 there seems to have been some discussion about a separate Chairman of the Board: AHRB, draft minutes of meeting of 2 July 1999, made available to me by Michael Jubb.

<sup>55</sup> LCA, PL file, statement for the Governing Body, 8 November 1999.

Oxford and two other universities. The Rector and the new officers led discussion of what became a ‘Strategic Plan 2001–2006’, accepted after some debate by the Governing Body. It included an explicit emphasis on the need to maintain and if possible improve academic performance while eliminating an operating deficit, and so far as was practicable to make the college financially self-sufficient.<sup>56</sup>

By the time Paul retired in 2012, much of this had been achieved. The value of the college endowment had more than doubled and financial security been assured. The academic performance of students, when judged by examination results, had noticeably improved. There were new academic posts, and new buildings, finished, taking shape or planned, small ones inside the college, much larger ones, for graduate students, for example, in college properties elsewhere. Little could have been done without substantial financial support, from alumni and from charitable trusts with which the college was connected, and that was only forthcoming because the Rector had been able to win their confidence and support. What appealed to them were the clear-headed realistic goals which he incorporated into a ‘Vision 2007–2027’ of how the college should be when it celebrated its six hundredth anniversary: self-governing, self-sufficient, and academically one of the leading colleges in the university.<sup>57</sup> As so often in his career, his personal stature had made all the difference.

When he returned to Oxford, he continued to play a part in the affairs of the British Academy, including chairing the committee representing both social sciences and humanities which set out to demonstrate the contribution they made to the national wealth in *That Full Complement of Riches* (2004). He also began to play a role in the government of the university, sitting on its council for six years and agreeing in 2002 to chair the joint committee with Oxford City Council which mounted a bid for Oxford to become a European City of Culture. The bid failed, but this was another piece of chairmanship which won plaudits from all sides, ‘town’ as well as ‘gown’. In the end, however, he found the university’s bureaucracy ‘rather wearisome’. The governance of Lincoln, he added, ‘was another matter’.<sup>58</sup> His continuing collaboration with his publishers, Oxford University Press, was also another matter. In 2002 he edited for them the eighteenth-century volume in a new *Short History of the British*

<sup>56</sup>The Strategic Plan was published together with remarks from the main college officers in *Lincoln College Record 2001–2002*, pp. 7–16.

<sup>57</sup>Knowles, ‘Address’. Paul reviewed his own ‘Twelve Years of Rectorship’ in *Lincoln College Record 2011–2012*, pp. 66–8.

<sup>58</sup>*Lincoln College Record 2011–12*, p. 66.

*Isles*, and in the same year he completed the demanding work he had begun in 1997 as Consultant Editor for the eighteenth-century section of the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, published in 2004. Working with associate editors for particular subject areas, and with three in-house research editors (all of whom had been his undergraduate or graduate pupils), he was responsible for choosing authors to write some 1500 new biographies and replace or revise 4000 old ones. His particular contribution, as one might expect from his publications, was the greater emphasis now placed on India and America, and on non-metropolitan society in England and Scotland, including such matters as entrepreneurship, crime, intellectual life and the role of women as agents of informal political influence.<sup>59</sup> The decisions he most enjoyed making, however, because he had completely free rein, were which lives he should write himself. His two choices were both notorious challenges for their biographers. The life of Horace Walpole (in 14,000 words) reflects Paul's fascination with a 'complex and somewhat ambivalent personality' he first encountered when he read W. S. Lewis's great edition of the *Correspondence*.<sup>60</sup> The biography of Burke (21,000 words), a more predictable choice, is a superbly rounded portrait of the man whose character had preoccupied Paul for longer than any other eighteenth-century figure.<sup>61</sup>

Burke 'clearly grew on him', Peter Marshall has observed, and reflection on Burke's life at this time seems to have been part of another shift in Paul's historical interests, away from manners and representations, and back towards political power and how it was exercised, particularly at the centre, back to 'high politics' in other words, which had never lost their appeal for him. In some of his publications he continued to draw on the storehouse of evidence collected for *Englishness Identified*,<sup>62</sup> but he had begun to plan a book of essays on prime ministers from Walpole to Blair, which would have had much to say about changes in how government was managed over the centuries, changes of substance as well as style. He became a member of the Editorial Board of the *History of*

<sup>59</sup> Information from Philip Carter.

<sup>60</sup> See his review of volumes 37 to 39 in *English Historical Review*, 91 (1976), 433. P. Langford, 'Walpole, Horatio, fourth earl of Oxford (1717–1797)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/28696>> (accessed 12 January 2017). He later wrote the life of another somewhat eccentric figure for the online ODNB: Vivian Green, his former colleague at Lincoln: Langford, 'Vivian Hubert Howard Green (1915–2005)'.

<sup>61</sup> P. Langford, 'Burke, Edmund (1729/30–1797)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4019>> (accessed 12 January 2017).

<sup>62</sup> E.g. P. Langford, 'South Britons' reception of North Britons, 1707–1820', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 127 (2005), pp. 143–69.

*Parliament* in 2004 (and was its chairman from 2008 to 2012); and his 2005 ‘History of Parliament Lecture’ on ‘Prime Ministers and Parliaments: the long view’, gives a foretaste of what that book might have offered if he had been able to complete it. It had some good jokes, about there being ‘no counting of noses’ in the younger Pitt’s cabinets because only one nose (‘as large as the steeple of Strasbourg’) counted, for instance, and about Rockingham spending a year in office without plucking up the courage to speak in parliament at all. But there were also more serious reflections, on fluctuations in the importance of the cabinet and the relative power of the incumbents of 10 and 11 Downing Street, for example, and on the modern evisceration of ‘what is still called local government’.<sup>63</sup> It was as polished a performance as any of his earlier public lectures, and as masterly a demonstration of the depth of learning on which he was always able to draw.<sup>64</sup>

Despite all this writing on modern and not so modern political history, it is difficult to discern precisely where Paul’s own political sympathies lay. As a young man he would have said they were firmly with the liberal left, and although he may have moved towards the right over time he was a long-standing member of the Oxford branch of the Association of University Teachers. It seems clear from his publications that he never had much sympathy for conventional radicals such as John Wilkes, but he had no sympathy at all for the arrogance and prejudices of the English ruling elite. It is telling that the quality in Burke which he chose to focus on in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* was Burke’s ‘detestation of those who made abusive uses of the power entrusted to them’.<sup>65</sup> It seems likely that he sympathised most with the middling propertied English men and women, the polite and commercial people of his *Oxford History*, and with their successors who were to be found where he and his wife had grown up, in the farming and small-business communities of the Forest of Dean. In their youth, as in the later eighteenth century, such people were more likely to have been ‘chapel’ than ‘church’, but Paul himself was never a particularly religious man. His Methodist ancestors would scarcely have approved of someone who at one time owned a sports car and even bought

<sup>63</sup> P. Langford, ‘Prime Ministers and parliaments: the long view, Walpole to Blair’, *Parliamentary History*, 25 (2006), 382–94.

<sup>64</sup> A similar example, originally given as a seminar paper, is his last historical publication, P. Langford, ‘Swift and Walpole’, in C. Rawson (ed.), *Politics and Literature in the Age of Swift: English and Irish Perspectives* (Cambridge, 2010), pp. 52–78.

<sup>65</sup> Peter Marshall to the author, 1 June 2016.

a weekly lottery ticket, as he did.<sup>66</sup> For him religion was a matter of local practice and local loyalties, sanctioned by time. As Rector he naturally attended college chapel regularly, just as he had been an active member of the church and community when he and his family lived in Berkshire, where Margaret was headmistress of a successful Church of England primary school, and he took his turn mowing the grass in the churchyard.<sup>67</sup> But that too was part of politics in the ‘highest sense’, as he had defined it in his magnum opus, the politics to be found in the Forest of Dean as much as in an Oxford college, where there were ‘communities organising themselves for what they perceive to be the public good’.<sup>68</sup>

## VI

The life and loyalties of a small college therefore meant a great deal to Paul and Margaret when they moved into the Rector’s Lodgings. They entertained every student to drinks at least once a year, and Paul had formal meetings with each of them every term to discuss their progress with their tutors. Since he played the piano himself (and at one time the viola), he naturally encouraged the musical life of the College, raising funds for choral scholarships and for a fellowship in music shared with another college, and planning a garden building with space for musical and theatrical performances. When Margaret retired as head of Streatley School in 2003, they began to look ahead to the time when Paul might do the same and they would move out of the Lodgings. In the past, they had often had a house in the country: in the 1970s Dorothy Cottage on the edge of the Forest of Dean, and from the later 1980s houses in Berkshire so that their son Hugh could attend Margaret’s school, first Lutyens Cottage, Westridge Green, and then Valpys at Ashampstead, where they were able to walk on the Downs and entertain colleagues from London as well as Oxford when Paul was at the AHRB. Now they were able to return to the Forest, buy The Orchard, a handsome spacious house in Hope Mansell near Ross-on-Wye, in 2005, and start planning.

They took particular pleasure in laying out and improving the garden. ‘Gardening’ was the only recreation Paul acknowledged in *Who’s Who*, and for him that included the heavy work of building paths and steps and

<sup>66</sup> Information from Joanna Innes.

<sup>67</sup> Information from Margaret Langford.

<sup>68</sup> Langford, *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman*, p. ix.

digging drainage trenches, dressed 'like a scruff', Hugh remarked, which would have surprised those accustomed to his habitual suit and tie when he was in Oxford. In the country, however, and especially on long walks with his cairn terrier, he was able to relax and to release some of the pent-up tensions of a busy working life. (They were normally visible in Oxford only in his habit of clenching and unclenching his fists when some issue or person tried his patience.) He did not, of course, stop thinking and writing about history when in the country. He had taken up swimming himself when Hugh did, and even became a qualified referee for the Amateur Swimming Association in order to have a role; but when not refereeing he was to be seen working on an A4 pad beside the pool, and he did the same at home in front of a TV set. The Orchard naturally had a library, with his books double-banked on purposely designed shelves, so that once he had retired as Rector he could dedicate himself to family life, write the next book, play the piano, dig in his garden and walk his dog. It was an attractive prospect.

It was not to be. By the beginning of 2011 he seemed increasingly unwell, stricken with what was eventually diagnosed as vascular dementia; and after a short period of leave from the college which had already been planned, he retired as Rector in September 2012.<sup>69</sup> The college elected him an Honorary Fellow, as Hertford College had earlier done, and Lincoln named the garden room which he had planned for musical performances the Langford Room in his honour. He had already been awarded honorary degrees by the University of Sheffield and the new University of Lincoln. It may well be that the academic news that gave him most satisfaction towards the end was the report that the final volume of the edition of Burke's writings and speeches had at last, with Peter Marshall's help, been completed. When published it contained a dedication to him as the Editor of the edition 'who planned it at its outset and guided it to its completion'.<sup>70</sup>

Having been cared for devotedly by Margaret as his illness took its toll, he died on 27 July 2015 soon after being admitted to Ross Community Hospital. He was buried like his parents at Yew Tree Brake Cemetery in Cinderford, in the Forest he had always loved. There was a memorial service in the University Church, Oxford, on 30 April 2016, attended by friends, colleagues and students, and by representatives of the many institutions to which he had belonged and whose history he had influenced.

<sup>69</sup> LCA, PL file, letter to the Sub-Rector, 13 December 2011.

<sup>70</sup> P. J. Marshall and D. C. Bryant (eds.), *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, vol. 4: *Party, Parliament and the Dividing of the Whigs 1780–1794* (Oxford, 2015).

His had been a life of unusually varied personal and public achievement; and although he was in many ways a very private person, he was someone it was always a pleasure to meet and to talk to, and a man it was impossible not to remember and admire.

PAUL SLACK

*Fellow of the Academy*

*Note.* I owe thanks to a large number of Paul's friends and colleagues for information and advice, among them Bahram Bekhradnia, Susan Brigden, Philip Carter, Richard Carwardine, Peter Dickson, Anne-Marie Drummond, Sir David Eastwood, Robert Faber, Perry Gauci, Joanna Innes, Michael Jubb, Tim Knowles, Peter Marshall, Leslie Mitchell, John Morrill, Keith Robbins, Guy Rowlands, Sir Keith Thomas, Nigel Wilson and Blair Worden; and I am indebted to the Rector of Lincoln College, Henry Woudhuysen, and the College Archivist, Lindsay McCormack, for facilitating my use of the College archives. Paul's family, Margaret and Hugh Langford, have helped me most of all.

There are appreciations of Paul's life and work in Perry Gauci, 'Paul Langford (1945–2015)', *Lincoln College Record 2014–2015*, pp. 68–9; Leslie Mitchell, 'Oxford Donnery at its best', *The Oxford Historian*, 10 (2012), p. 29; and Paul Seaward and Robin Eagles, 'A tribute to Professor Paul Langford FBA', <<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org>>, 13 August 2015 (accessed 9 January 2016). A portrait of him by June Mendoza hangs in Lincoln College Hall. There will be a full bibliography of his publications in P. Gauci and E. Chalus (eds.), *Revisiting the Polite and Commercial People: Essays in Georgian Politics, Society and Culture in Honour of Professor Paul Langford* (Oxford, forthcoming 2019).