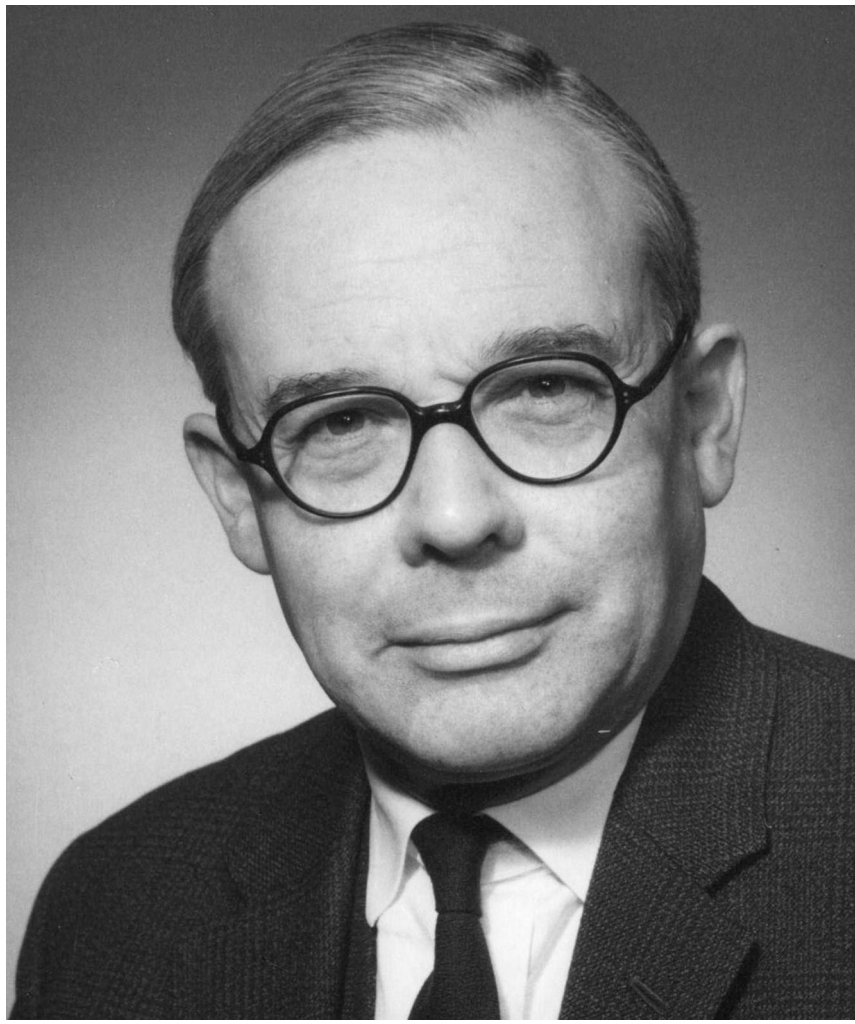

PETER FRASER

Photograph: B. J. Harris, Oxford

Peter Marshall Fraser
1918–2007

THE SUBJECT OF THIS MEMOIR was for many decades one of the two pre-eminent British historians of the Hellenistic age, which began with Alexander the Great. Whereas the other, F. W. Walbank (1909–2008),[1] concentrated on the main literary source for the period, the Greek historian Polybius, Fraser's main expertise was epigraphic. They both lived to ripe and productive old ages, and both were Fellows of this Academy for an exceptionally long time, both having been elected aged 42 (Walbank was FBA from 1951 to 2008, Fraser from 1960 to 2007).

Peter Fraser was a tough, remarkably good-looking man of middle height, with jet-black hair which turned a distinguished white in his 60s, but never disappeared altogether. When he was 77, a *Times Higher Education Supplement* profile of the *Lexicon of Greek Personal Names* (for which see below, p. 179) described him as 'a dashing silver-haired don'. He was attractive to women even at a fairly advanced age and when slightly stout; in youth far more so. The attraction was not merely physical. He was exceptionally charming and amusing company when not in a foul mood, as he not infrequently was. He had led a far more varied and exciting life than most academics, and had a good range of anecdotes, which he told well. He could be kind and generous, but liked to disguise it with gruffness. He could also be cruel. He was, in fact, a bundle of contradictions, and we shall return to this at the end.

[1] For whom see J. K. Davies, 'Frank William Walbank 1909–2008' *Proccedings of the British Academy*, 172, *Biographical Memoirs of Fellows*, X (2011), 325–51.

Biographical Memoirs of Fellows of the British Academy, XII, 137–185.

Peter Fraser the scholar wrote as 'P. M. Fraser' almost from the beginning,[2] and except in very personal contexts disliked any expansion of his initials, as insisted on by the Academy as part of the title of its biographical memoirs. In what follows, he will be called Fraser throughout. He was born on 6 April 1918 in Carshalton, Surrey, youngest of three sons of an employee of the Royal Bank of Scotland, Archibald Fraser, and his wife Lily Louise, née Sydenham. Archibald Fraser, an austere teetotaller, was proud to be a Scot; his own father had been a Gaelic speaker and made the barrels for whisky. The interest in whisky skipped a generation, because the subject of this memoir was an expert in single malts. Fraser could always hold his drink and seemed unaffected by it the next morning.

He was brought up in East Sheen, a prosperous suburb of south-west London, and was educated at Colet Court, the preparatory school for St Paul's, where he was duly enrolled in 1931. At Colet Court he was conspicuous for his inability to sing: 'will the boy at the back please stop'. It must have been about this time that, as he once revealed, he was expelled from the Boy Scouts for using bad language. Then, when he was thirteen, his mother died of cancer after two years of illness, and he was not allowed to attend her funeral. He was, without doubt and by his own private acknowledgement in much later life, badly and permanently affected by this, and by his father's rapid remarriage. In the short term he is remembered as having withdrawn to his room and his books; in the longer term the damage may have taken the form of a tendency to hardness, even occasional ferocity, in human relations. The immediate practical consequence was financial, a worsening in the family circumstances (his mother owned the house they lived in); the early 1930s were in any case years of world economic depression. This led in January 1933 to Fraser's transfer, after four terms at St Paul's,[3] to City of London School. He never regretted the move, and he evidently maintained a good relationship with Mr H. C. Oakley, one of his teachers, whom he thanked in 1957 for compiling the index of names and subjects to his revision of Rostovtzeff's *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*.

In autumn 1937 he went up to Brasenose College Oxford (BNC) with a major scholarship in classics. A meeting that summer began a lifelong friendship with another BNC classical scholar-elect, Barry Nicholas, a

[2] Only his very first article, 'Zeus Seleukeios', *Classical Review*, 63 (1949), 92–4, is signed 'Peter Fraser'.

[3] It is just possible that he came across his later collaborator George Bean (see below, n. 39) in this period, but Bean taught the older boys.

future Roman lawyer and tutor at that distinguished legal college (FBA, All Souls Reader, Professor of Comparative Law, and then Principal of BNC), who was to be Fraser's collaborator in a pair of articles in the 1950s.[4] They met, through a common family friend, in Nicholas's home town of Folkestone. Nicholas was a Downside-educated Catholic who retained his faith through his life; Fraser lost his at an early age—for all that his first wife was the daughter of a prebendary of the Church of England and his third a devout Anglican—and the humanist ceremony at his cremation was conducted according to a form stipulated by himself. Another BNC classicist friend was Robert Runcie, future Archbishop of Canterbury, but Runcie's wartime membership of BNC lasted only during 1941–2, by which time Fraser, as we shall see, was already on active service. So unless, as is possible, they came across each other in the Middle East during the war (where Nicholas was also stationed),[5] Fraser and Runcie must have got to know each other in post-war BNC, where Runcie took a first in Greats (classics) in 1948 before being ordained priest in 1951. Four decades later, when Fraser was Acting Warden of All Souls in 1985–7, Runcie was College Visitor *ex officio* as Archbishop, and Fraser hosted him there, for instance at an informal lunch at which Runcie spoke to another guest and showed intimate first-hand knowledge of the Lebanon, where his chaplain and hostage negotiator Terry Waite had himself been taken hostage at the beginning of 1987. Fraser's attitude to religion was Thucydidean: he was happy to occupy the Warden's stall in chapel (just as Thucydides must in his military capacity as an Athenian general have presided over routine animal sacrifices and libations to the Olympian gods); and true to an essential conservatism he regarded religion approvingly as a social and moral cement; but he felt no personal commitment.

At BNC, Fraser was taught by Maurice Platnauer and Alan Ker, now a forgotten figure; but because he felt that Platnauer treated him like a schoolboy, he went for classes or tutorials on Pindar given by a future president of the Academy, C. M. (later Sir Maurice) Bowra, Warden of Wadham.[6] To

[4] P. M. Fraser and B. Nicholas, 'The funerary garden of Mousa', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 48 (1958), 117–29; 'The funerary garden of Mousa reconsidered', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 52 (1962), 156–9. See P. Birks, 'John Kierran Barry Moyland Nicholas 1919–2002', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 124, *Biographical Memoirs of Fellows*, III (2004), 219–39 citing 'Mousa' at p. 227 and calling Fraser a 'lifelong friend'. Fraser delivered an address at Nicholas's memorial service.

[5] Fraser and Runcie both won the MC.

[6] On Fraser as a Bowra pupil, L. Mitchell, *Maurice Bowra: a Life* (Oxford, 2009), p. 24 with p. 323 n. 120. The motive (escape from Platnauer) is based on information provided by Dr S. West, FBA, and derived from a conversation she had with Fraser near the end of his life.

plead interest in specialisms not available in one's own college can be a means of partial or complete escape from mediocre tuition available there; but Fraser's love of Pindar, that exceptionally difficult early classical author, was genuine and permanent. His own academic writing and teaching was, with a few backward glances,[7] confined to a much later Greece, that of the Hellenistic age; but the enthusiasm for Pindar is prophetic of Fraser's subsequent scholarly range, in that almost all of Pindar's poetry evokes and documents the wider world beyond Athens and Sparta. Fraser was drawn to regions such as Rhodes, Cyrene, and Pindar's native Boiotia, all of which produced victors celebrated by Pindar in his epinikian odes.[8] Fraser was always a shrewd and avid book-collector,[9] and owned (but eventually gave away to a younger friend) a copy of the precious limited Nonesuch edition (1928) of Bowra's translation of Pindar's Pythian odes with the introduction by Bowra's Wadham colleague H. T. Wade-Gery. Fraser had a leaning towards difficult poets, as we shall see when we discuss his work on Lykophron's *Alexandra*; he possessed virtually every edition of that 'obscurum poema', starting with the Aldine *editio princeps* of 1513. He started assembling this particular corner of his library very early: his copy of the 'old Teubner' of Lykophron by G. Kinkel (1880) is inscribed 'BNC 8. iv. 46'. More generally, he haunted the bookshops of Charing Cross Road even as a schoolboy, so his room at home (taken over by his half-sister in 1940) was full of books.

In his short and truncated period as an undergraduate, Fraser made one brief personal acquaintance which he acknowledged as significant for his later career; but the meeting took place in London, and the scholar was no Oxford don but a Cambridge product, a retired barrister, and a scholar based in the Scottish highlands and possessed of private means: William (later Sir William) Tarn, FBA, then nearly seventy. It was at around this time that Tarn published *The Greeks in Bactria and India*

[7] Thus the posthumous *Greek Ethnic Terminology* (Oxford, 2009) considers Homeric and even Mycenaean usage, and draws on classical evidence: Herodotus, Thucydides, the Athenian tribute-quota lists.

[8] For Fraser on Rhodes and Boiotia see below, pp. 148 and 158. On Cyrene, P. M. Fraser, 'An inscription from Euesperides', *Bulletin Societé royale d'archéologie d'Alexandrie*, 39 (1951), 132–143 [= *Supplementum epigraphicam graecum*, 18, 772], and, from these proceedings, his Academy *Lecture on a Master Mind* 'Eratosthenes of Cyrene', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 56 (1970), 175–207. Note also the warm and evocative sketch of Cyrene ('as a social unit … essentially aristocratic and strongly bound to the past') at the end of *Ptolemaic Alexandria* (Oxford, 1972), vol. 1, pp. 786–9. At various times from the 1950s to the 1980s, Fraser gave graduate classes on the inscriptions of Cyrene and of Rhodes.

[9] Fraser's extensive collection of epigraphic books and site-series now forms part of the library of the *Lexicon of Greek Personal Names*.

(London, 1938), a daring and romantic work of mainly numismatic reconstruction. Together with E. R. Bevan, FBA, author of *The House of Seleucus* (London, 1902), Tarn was, in the interwar period, virtually the only British authority on the Hellenistic age, at least in its eastern (Seleucid and Ptolemaic) aspect.[10] In 1996, in the preface to *The Cities of Alexander the Great* (p. viii), Fraser recalled talking with Tarn over tea in the premises of the Hellenic Society in about 1938, and says it was Tarn who 'first stimulated my interest in the Hellenistic Age'. That preface also reveals that at some point early in the war, sitting in spare-hours on a gun-site, Fraser read Tarn's first book *Antigonos Gonatas* (Oxford, 1913), and had his 'eyes opened to the fascination of the age of which Tarn had at that time taught us almost all there was to know'. He was, as he later remembered in conversation, entranced by that evocation of 'a real third-century man'.

The problem about Fraser's academic development is to know when he acquired his formidable store of erudition, and who it was who taught him what he knew. Before we turn to Fraser's war-time activity, we may consider the academic facts, with some anticipation of the years 1945–8. His not especially brilliant Oxford undergraduate career (second class in Honour Moderations, 1939) was shortened by the outbreak of the Second World War: in normal days he would have taken Greats (the full final examination in ancient history and philosophy) in summer 1941. Instead, in 1940 he took just two sections of the special examinations introduced under emergency wartime provisions: Greek history from 561 to 478 BC with Herodotus V–IX in Hilary (spring) 1940, and Greek History from 478 to 421 BC with Thucydides I–IV in Trinity (summer) 1940. For these two papers, both of which covered standard and well-trodden periods of Greek history noticeably remote from his later interests, he went for tutorials to Marcus Niebuhr Tod, FBA, of Oriel College. The degree of BA was conferred in absence on 6 May 1943, and the certificate supplied by the Principal of BNC states that he had resided for nine terms and had been absent on war service since 15 August 1940. He was thus eligible in the usual way, twenty-one terms from his matriculation, for the MA which was conferred in person on 26 July 1946. When he came back to Oxford after the war, he was registered as an advanced student on the strength of a perfunctory note from Platnauer and a more informative reference

[10] Fraser's older contemporary Walbank (see above, n. 1) had published *Aratos of Sicyon* in 1933 and then *Philip V of Macedon* in 1940, both with Cambridge University Press, and thence embarked on the great Polybius commentary for Oxford University Press. G. T. Griffith, FBA (1908–85) published *Mercenaries of the Hellenistic World* (Cambridge) in 1933 and went on to help Tarn with the revised third edition of *Hellenistic Civilisation* (London, 1951).

from Tod, who was promptly appointed his supervisor. Tod's letter, dated 25 October 1945, recalled that he had taught Fraser for the short exam in Greek history and described him as 'from the first, a student of quite unusual calibre'. He continued 'the war has enabled him to become familiar with a considerable part of Greece', and concluded that he was qualified to do 'research of a very high order'. This was a remarkably prescient and perceptive estimate, made on slender evidence, most of it dating from five years earlier. In May 1946, Tod asks that Fraser be transferred to a Romanist supervisor, and calls Fraser 'a tireless worker, well qualified to hunt out the evidence. He can read effectively work in French, German, Italian and modern Greek' (in those days of high linguistic proficiency, Tod did not need to specify his pupil's thorough command of the two relevant ancient languages). Then follows the only adverse comment: 'his microscopic handwriting has caused me many a headache'.[11] Dacre Balsdon[12] was appointed instead, but evidently saw little of his pupil, as he admits when asking in 1948 that Fraser be transferred to Camden Professor H. M. Last, who has 'long been doing it [i.e. supervising him] unofficially'. In summer 1948, before Fraser had even submitted his doctoral thesis, a new university post was in effect, as we shall see, created specially for him, as Lecturer in Hellenistic History, and it was this which prompted Balsdon's request: it was, he wrote with possibly sincere self-deprecation, 'no longer becoming that he should have as supervisor someone of my status'. Those were unusual times in Oxford, which was filling up again after the war; but even so this is an extraordinary trajectory for a demobilised ex-serviceman still in his twenties and with no very glittering academic CV. In those distant days, when competition was less fierce, and colleges cared less about publication and were willing to gamble on youthful promise, it was not rare for tutorial fellows to be appointed straight after or even before their final exams.[13] But a university lecturership was a different matter, carrying with it from the start an obligation to 'engage in advanced study or research' and to give 'not less than 36 lectures or classes' at a demanding level.

We will return to Fraser's academic, as also to his military, career, but it seems an unavoidable if astonishing conclusion that, despite and in the middle of active service in North Africa and then a demanding and lonely

[11] This complaint can refer only to size. For Fraser's beautiful handwriting (the clear, neat hand of an epigraphist), see below, n. 23.
[12] J. P. V. D. Balsdon, 1901–77, FBA 1967.
[13] For one example, see below, p. 151 (W. G. Forrest), but there are others.

role with SOE (Special Operations Executive) in Greece from 1943, Fraser somehow found the time—and the books—for wide and deep reading in ancient and modern languages during the years between joining the Army in August 1940 and returning to Oxford five years later. He certainly made exceptionally rapid progress after 1945. The second problem floated above was, who if anyone taught this prodigy? Of the Oxford scholars mentioned above, only Tod, Balsdon and Last come into question. Balsdon is effectively disqualified on his own evidence. Last was undoubtedly an important influence and a steady supporter until his death in 1957 (he was Principal of BNC after retiring in 1949 from the Camden chair, itself attached to BNC). Fraser wrote Last's *Dictionary of National Biography* entry, and paid tribute to him as a supervisor of graduate students, noting in particular that he 'possessed unusual patience and skill in determining suitable subjects of research'.[14] But even if we read between the lines of that tribute so as to credit Last with the suggestion that Fraser should write the history of post-classical Rhodes, it is not plausible that Fraser actually learned much Hellenistic history from Last, who was a Roman constitutional historian with a veneration for Theodore Mommsen. Tod, by contrast, was a Greek epigraphist of international distinction, and surely imparted some of the requisite skills to Fraser, no doubt with practical lessons in squeeze-taking on the Greek inscriptions in the Ashmolean Museum.[15] But the only published acknowledgement is in the other direction: the preface, dated November 1947, of Tod's *Greek Historical Inscriptions from 403 to 323 BC* (Oxford, 1948) thanks 'Mr P. M. Fraser' as one of four 'friends and colleagues' who had helped the author. The other three—H. T. Wade-Gery, FBA (Wykeham Professor of Ancient History at Oxford 1939–53), and the Americans W. K. Pritchett, FBA and B. D. Meritt, FBA—were all established figures with many epigraphic publications behind them.[16] Much later in life, Fraser was still proud of this, 'my first acknowledgment'. But in any case, Tod was not centrally concerned with the Hellenistic period. One other name should be mentioned as an early influence on Fraser: the phenomenally learned Italian Jewish emigré Arnaldo Momigliano, a

[14] P. M. Fraser, 'Last, Hugh McIlwain', *Dictionary of National Biography*, 1951–60 (1971), pp. 609–11 at 610 (=*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 32 (2004), pp. 604–5 at 605). Fraser then says, with evidently personal feeling, that Last '… remained a constant, if not infrequently sardonic, adviser as the work [of the graduate student] progressed'. Fraser's *Cities of Alexander the Great* (Oxford, 1996), see below, p. 175, is dedicated to Last's memory: 'D. M. / H. M. L.'

[15] At any rate, this is how Fraser himself taught 'hands-on' epigraphy to others.

[16] Fraser inherited Wade-Gery's special badger-hair brush for taking paper squeeze-impressions of inscriptions.

published expert on Hellenistic history, as on much else.[17] Just ten years older than Fraser, he spent the war in Oxford, in a hand-to-mouth existence; he arrived in 1938, so it is theoretically possible that they had met before 1940. But there is no evidence, and Fraser was then an undergraduate, so a meeting is not likely. They were certainly close in the immediate post-war years, in the most literal sense (Fraser recalled that they sat in adjacent seats in the library): in 1948, Momigliano gave Fraser a copy of his first book *Prime linee di storia della tradizione maccabaica* (Torino, 1931), and they collaborated in 1950 on a learned article.[18] (One of Fraser's first sets of Oxford lectures after 1948 was on 'Documents in Maccabbees and Josephus': see below, n. 38.) However, in career terms, in that period of strange dislocation of lives, they were not so much teacher and pupil as friendly rivals with similar interests (in 1936 Momigliano had written an article about the history of Rhodes,[19] an Italian possession since 1912): thus both were interviewed for a classics job at the University of Bristol to which Momigliano was appointed in 1947, so removing the only serious alternative to Fraser as candidate for the Hellenistic lecturership created at Oxford in the following year.[20] To conclude, Fraser seems to have been largely an autodidact as both epigraphist and Hellenistic historian.[21]

[17] 1908–87, KBE, FBA, lecturer at Bristol 1947–51, professor of ancient history, University College London (UCL), 1951–75. See P. R. L. Brown, 'Arnaldo Dante Momigliano 1908–1987', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 74 (1988), 405–52.

[18] A. Momigliano and P. M. Fraser, 'A new date for the Battle of Andros? A discussion', *Classical Quarterly*, 44 (1950), 107–18; appendix by PMF, 116–18.

[19] A. Momigliano, 'Note sulla storia di Rodi', *Rivista di Filologia e di Istruzione classica*, 14 (1936), 49–63.

[20] The relationship continued to flourish between Oxford and London: in the 1960s, Momigliano arranged for Fraser to give undergraduate classes in later Greek epigraphy at UCL (attended with trepidation by, among others, Bob Allen and Tim Cornell) complete with squeezes, see above, n. 15; and Momigliano's associate membership of All Souls was brokered by Fraser. In 1976, Momigliano wrote perceptively to the college in support of Fraser's application for funding for his Lexicon of Greek Personal Names. As late as 1982, Momigliano, enclosing an affectionate letter on Scuola normale (Pisa) writing paper, sent Fraser the then recent reprint of E. Ciaceri's commentary on Lykophron (Catania, 1901). That poem was another shared interest: Momigliano had published two important articles on Lykophron in 1942 and 1945 (*Journal of Roman Studies*, 32, 53–64; *Classical Quarterly*, 39 (1945), 49–53). Perhaps in some freezing Oxford library in the later 1940s Momigliano drew Fraser's attention to the poem's importance for early Roman contacts with Greece (see below, pp. 151 and 177), but Last or Balsdon could have done as much; or he could have got there by himself.

[21] One way in which, in the UK, a pupil may try to repay part of a debt to a teacher who was FBA is by writing his or her obituary memoir for this Academy. Fraser, FBA for nearly half a century, wrote no such memoir. He wrote the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* entry for Last (not FBA): see above, n. 14. Tod was obituarised in these pages by R. Meiggs, FBA, 'Marcus Niebuhr Tod 1878–1974', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 60 (1975), 485–95; Balsdon by P. A. Brunt, FBA, 'John Percy Vyvian Dacre Balsdon 1901–1977', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 65

When his career finally settled down in the mid-1950s and he became an Extraordinary Research Fellow of All Souls College (see below, p. 152), Fraser was suspicious of well-trained juvenile brilliance, as displayed in the college's 'prize fellowship' examination; he had made his own early way through a special and uncompromising variety of self-fuelled precocity.

In May 1943, when Fraser received his Oxford BA, it was very much *in absentia*: he was actually in Alexandria learning modern Greek and preparing to be dropped by parachute into the Peloponnese.[22] He had enlisted in the Seaforth Highlanders (note the Scottish connection again) in August 1940, and served in North Africa: this was surely as relevant as Pindar to his later interest in ancient Cyrenaica. A story is told of a near-miss from the bite of a scorpion, evaded only by an impressively rapid exit from a trench. He was wounded at the second battle of El Alamein (23 October–6 November 1942) and was approached in hospital in Cairo, where he was asked if he would like to work for SOE in occupied Greece as a BLO (British Liaison Officer). He said Yes. The military authorities must have known in a general way of his educational background in classics, but they can hardly have guessed his superb linguistic aptitude for the job. Fraser's flawless modern Greek, his ἄπταιστα Ἑλληνικά,[23] was originally acquired with a family in Alexandria, and was to be a lifelong part of him; it was kept fresh and green by countless post-war visits, and deepened by extensive reading in modern Greek literature, especially the poetry of Cavafy. He never taught modern Greek language and literature in Oxford, and did so anywhere only during his few unhappy and financially motivated years as a visiting professor at Indiana University, Bloomington USA, in the mid 1970s.[24] (His biennial reports to All Souls show that for a

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(1980), 573–86. Fraser gave a privately circulated memorial address for his dear friend Anne (L. H.) Jeffery, FBA (1915–86), but her Academy memoir was written by D. M. Lewis, FBA, 'Lilian Hamilton Jeffery 1915–1986', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 73 (1987), 505–16. She was anyway Fraser's contemporary, like Barry Nicholas, for whom he gave a commemorative address. Otherwise, there are only the obituary of Eric Gray, signed 'Peter Fraser' (*Independent*, 1 Aug. 1990), see below, n. 32 for Gray; and an affectionate memoir of Max Debbane, his regular host during the writing of *Ptolemaic Alexandria* in *Bulletin Societé royale d'archéologie d'Alexandrie*, 42 (1967), 129–31. For his controversial *Times* obituary of Louis Robert, see below, p. 162.

[22] This required a period of training in Palestine, then a British mandate.

[23] Fraser disliked and despised the monotonic Greek introduced in the early 1980s. He himself went on writing his modern Greek with accents and breathings, in a script as neat and elegant as his English hand.

[24] There seems to be only one mention of Cavafy in all *Ptolemaic Alexandria*: vol. 1, p. 580, in connection with an epigram of Kallimachos.

few years after 1965 he toyed with a book-project with the provisional title 'Society and letters in the Ionian islands [i.e. Corfu, Zakynthos etc.] under the British protectorate', but nothing came of this.) He remarked of Bowra that 'although Maurice read many languages, he could not speak any of them with that fluency that establishes a second identity'.[25] This has a strong element of indirect autobiography. For much of his academic working life he would spend as much as half the year away from his family and college working on inscriptions in Greece (often on an island), a Persephone-like style of life which culminated in his partly residential directorship of the British School at Athens in 1968–71.[26] He was drawn to Greece and made many enduring friendships there, but his affections were always mixed with exasperation: a typed report by Capt. P. M. Fraser to the War Office in 1945 describes the Greeks as 'certainly the most tiresome people in Europe and certainly the most lovable'. He maintained this ambivalent attitude until his death.

The 25-year-old Fraser was dropped into the Peloponnese from a Lancaster bomber based in Cyrenaica on the windless night of 12 July 1943. The drop remained as a vivid memory, which he wrote up in the 1980s. The account is worth summarising and quoting from, because it illustrates the often suppressed romantic in him, and as the beginning of a stormy love-affair with the country (there is no evidence that he visited Greece before the war). He writes that shepherds' fires were visible on all the mountain ranges, and near Kalamata in Messenia the Italian anti-aircraft guns popped off all around them: they were flying low and easily picked up. The base of the aircraft opened and he saw one fire laid out in a particular pattern; this was his. When he landed he was greeted by a bearded Greek officer who held out a peasant's cap full of cherries. A wonderful welcome. They drank some wine and some marvellous water and then set off on mules to their first halt above Kalamata. After that night, the long mountain walks began.

His task in the Peloponnese was to arm 'officer bands' of non-ELAS *andartes* (irregular fighters; ELAS, standing for 'Greek popular liberation army', was the military wing of the 'national liberation front' EAM, itself dominated by KKE, the communist party of Greece). British policy in Greece was the reverse of its policy in Yugoslavia, as described (and one-

[25] L. Mitchell, as cited above, n. 6.

[26] His university lecturership initially required him to spread his lectures over all three Oxford terms, but from 1961 he was allowed to concentrate them in two terms, so as to allow him more time for research abroad.

sidedly defended) in part three of Fitzroy Maclean's *Eastern Approaches* (London, 1949): there Churchill abandoned support for Mihajlovic and the royalists by switching to Tito and his communist partisans. The trouble was that in Greece, as in Yugoslavia, the communists were better than their political rivals at fighting the German Wehrmacht. On his own account, Fraser's story was one of only very partial success; indeed, when reminiscing late one evening in Kabul, Afghanistan, in September 1978 (he was always more relaxed and forthcoming when abroad), he said of SOE in southern Greece 'I estimate our contribution to the war effort as *nil*.' This characteristically extreme and negative judgement should not be pressed as evidence for the reality: after all, he won the MC in 1944 for 'difficult and complicated negotiations in occupied Greece'. His written reports soon after the event do, however, make clear that, to use his own words, his personal relations with EAM/ELAS were always of the worst, that he was always a suspect in their eyes, and that most of their propaganda in the area—he is speaking of Argolido-Korinthia—was turned against him. (In the wilds of western Arkadia he was told, by an obscure 'responsible' who did not know his name, that 'Capt. Fraser is well known as a white slave trafficker'.) He qualifies this by saying that the political organisation was less offensive than the military, who were without exception most difficult and fractious. He records successes among the failures and frustrations, notably raids on the airport at Argos between 5–8 October 1943, with no involvement by a disapproving ELAS, which claimed to fear reprisals (Fraser's report insists that there were in the event none of these). But ELAS attacks on him were becoming more violent, and he was evacuated from this region to western Messenia in April, where ELAS was on better terms with the BLOs. By 1944 (August–November) he was in eastern Thessaly, where he ran a caique base on the Pelion (Pilio) coast, attempting to bring in arms from Asia Minor for the resistance fighters. Here, too, the conduct of ELAS was 'for them, exemplary'. By the end of the war (mainland Greece was liberated in September 1944) he was in command of a large tract of territory in the Volos area of Thessaly, including civilians. His well-informed penchant for central Greece was to be displayed at the academic level most obviously in *Boiotian and West Greek Tombstones* (Lund, 1957), co-authored with the Swedish archaeologist Tullia Rönne, who survived him by less than a year (1925–2008);[27] and Pilio remained a favourite destination in later and less dangerous years.

[27] Later Tullia Linders, who became an authority on the treasure records of the sanctuary of Artemis at Brauron near Athens; see G. Nordquist, *Opuscula*, 1 (2008), 183–4; see below, n. 53. At

He certainly visited Rhodes in summer 1948, as the preface to his doctoral thesis says explicitly. But the decision to study Hellenistic Rhodes was taken before the end of 1945. Where and when did he get the idea? Perhaps in Oxford (see above, p. 143). An alternative suggests itself, though there is no direct proof.[28] The British occupied the Dodecanese after the surrender of the German garrison in May 1945 and before the islands were formally ceded to the Greek state in 1947. This was the battered but cheerful post-war Rhodes of Lawrence Durrell's *Reflections on a Marine Venus* (London, 1953). It is surely possible that, even before 1948, Fraser had already taken the unique opportunity to pay unobstructed visits to the epigraphy-rich island which would be the subject of his doctoral dissertation. It was also the subject of *Rhodian Funerary Monuments* (Oxford, 1977), not to mention *The Rhodian Peraea and Islands* (Oxford, 1954, co-authored with G. E. Bean; the 'peraea' is the Turkish mainland opposite). If so, his personal knowledge of the island began very early. The same is true of another long-term preoccupation. We have already seen

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the time of the publication of 'Some more Boeotian and West Greek tombstones' (*Opuscula Atheniensia*, 10 (1971), 53–83), she was T. Rönne-Linders. The main book was conceived in 1950, at the suggestion of the Oxford-based Jewish refugee Paul Jacobsthal (1880–1957), to whose memory it is dedicated, just after his death. The origins of Fraser's extensive Swedish connection (which included a lecture tour in April 1956) are mysterious, but may have begun in 1950 with his working relationship with Rönne. Fraser translated from the Swedish a slight and belle-lettristic essay-collection by E. Löfstedt, as *Roman Literary Portraits* (Oxford, 1959), and E. Kjellberg and G. Säflund, *Greek and Roman Art* (London, 1968). He often published in Swedish journals, e.g. the important essays on the Sarapis cult, *Opuscula Atheniensia* (1960, 1967); and the early 'The Tribal-cycles of Eponymous Priests at Lindos and Kamiros', *Eranos*, 61 (1953), 23–47, cf. 59 (1951), 102–8 (a lexicographical note). He also helped the Swede J. Crampa with *Labraunda: the Greek Inscriptions* (Lund, 1969 and 1972).

[28] There is however a piece of indirect evidence. A letter from a Greek ministry, dated 6 July 1948 and in reply to a request made on Fraser's behalf by V. R. Desborough, Assistant Director of the British School, *refuses* permission for Fraser to take squeezes and photographs of unpublished inscriptions in Rhodes museum. Mention of unpublished inscriptions might hint at first-hand knowledge of what was lying around—and at earlier visits? On the other hand, knowledge could have come in another way. Hiller von Gaertringen's article 'Rhodos', in A. Pauly and G. Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie d. klassischen Alterumswissenschaft Supplementary Volume 5*, 731–840 (Stuttgart, 1931), had referred to an unpublished inscription mentioning 'common land', κοινὰ χώρα, and Fraser, referring to it at second hand in his doctoral thesis in 1950, remarked 'the early publication of this important inscription (as indeed of many others retained in secrecy by the Greek authorities in Rhodes) is much to be desired'. In his thesis he says that in July 1948 Professor Morriconi allowed him a brief glimpse of the important inscribed list of the priests of Halios, which had come to light during allied bombing of Rhodes (eventually *Supplementum epigraphicum graecum*, 12, 360). This does not suggest that Fraser had general rights of access, and the thesis itself does not publish inscriptions, nor does it correct readings from autopsy. It is a curious fact that Fraser never published a Rhodian inscription other than a tombstone, despite his long involvement with the island. (See further below, p. 157.)

that Fraser's acquaintance with the city of Alexandria, to which he devoted his largest-scale single-authored work *Ptolemaic Alexandria* (3 vols., Oxford), began with modern Greek lessons nearly thirty years before the book was published in 1972.

Whatever his youthful politics may have been before the war, his experience in Greece soured him permanently towards leftist politics, there and elsewhere. Disillusionment with what had been achieved by himself and other members of the British Military Mission is no doubt a large part of the explanation of his subsequent reluctance to talk about that period of his life, though he undoubtedly had a good war. The reluctance was in any case incomplete. His oral testimony is acknowledged by Mark Mazower in the preface to *Inside Hitler's Greece* (New Haven, CT, and London, 1993), and in the last year of his life he gave a half-hour interview about his army days; a recording survives on CD. But he was a man of a particular class, country, and upbringing, as well as of naturally reserved and ironic temperament, and wished to separate himself from enthusiastic or even boastful recorders of flashy exploits—'showmen' as he called them. There is no great mystery about this. It may also be true, as suggested by one of the speakers in a memorial address in All Souls on 31 May 2008,[29] that he felt a personal sadness at the sufferings of those Greeks who had helped him and paid for it, sometimes with their lives.

Two other consequences of the war years may be remarked. First, his acquisition of a copy of N. K. Alexopoulos' full-length modern Greek history of ancient Tegea (one of the two main cities of Arkadia before the founding of Megalopolis in the years after 371 BC) shows that, at surprising moments, he found leisure for scholarship of sorts.[30] On the flyleaf he wrote 'Peter Fraser, Athens 25. xi. 44', so that when Athens was on the verge of the appalling civil war episode known as the 'Dekemvriana' (fighting broke out on 3 December, and Churchill and Eden visited on Christmas Day), young Capt. Fraser was browsing the local bookshops for works on ancient Greek history. We have already noticed his earlier

[29] The Greek military historian Stathys Kalyvas of Yale. Fraser's subsequent reticence about the war may help to explain why (unlike Andrewes and Gray, whose roles and achievements in the Peloponnese were similar) he is not among the fifty 'SOE Heroes' who are selected for individual biographical treatment in Alan Ogden's *Sons of Odysseus: SOE Heroes in Greece* (London, 2012). He does feature in the text at a couple of points (pp. 244 and, for the attack on Argos airport, 283). More important, 'Captain Peter Fraser's report of 1944' is explicitly said (p. 243) to be the basis for the 'Overview of the Peloponnese' which forms Ogden's chapter 13. This means it is a little ungrateful not to treat him as a full 'hero'.

[30] He gave the copy to the Ashmolean (now Sackler Library) in Oxford. Published in 1926, it is a serious though not important work, with footnote references to ancient and modern sources.

wartime reading of a heavyweight monograph on Hellenistic history by Tarn.

Second, his SOE colleagues included some figures who would beneficially influence his later academic career. T. J. Dunbabin (1911–55), a legendary figure in occupied Crete, was a 'thesis fellow' of All Souls and an authority on early Greek overseas settlements; his reference letter for Fraser in July 1953, written near the end of a short life, is the very first item in Fraser's fat college file. Major Andrewes (A. Andrewes, FBA) features in Fraser's wartime reports of his activities in the Peloponnese. He succeeded Wade-Gery as Wykeham Professor in 1953 and was another of Fraser's All Souls referees (yet another was Bowra, and inevitably Last was a supporter behind the scenes).[31] Finally, Eric Gray, student (i.e. fellow) of Christ Church, and like Dunbabin a tall and good-looking Australian, was also operating as a BLO in the Peloponnese (Patras region, western Peloponnese) and wrote an extensive diary which survives in typescript; Fraser makes the occasional appearance.[32] Gray was a historian of ancient Rome, but with a particular interest in the Roman-controlled Greek East and its epigraphy: his unstructured but evocative lectures in the 1960s and 1970s on Flavio-Trajanic 'documents' introduced grateful undergraduates like the present writer to the name of the great French epigraphist Louis Robert (1904–85), on whose relationship to Fraser see below (p. 160). When Fraser returned to Oxford from military service, he had no secure tutorial fellowship to step back into, unlike the crucially older Gray and Andrewes. His senior scholarship at Christ Church in 1946–7 surely owed something to Gray's patronage.[33]

Restarting an academic career in these circumstances cannot have been easy from any point of view, including and especially financial: he had married in 1940 and there were children to support. From 1947 to 1948 he was a college lecturer (non-tenured stipendiary teacher) in ancient history at Balliol College. There he taught Brian MacGuinness, future philosopher and biographer of Wittgenstein, who recalls that 'we knew he had been parachuted into some of the places he was teaching us about'. After not much more than two years of postgraduate research he was, as we have seen, appointed to a tenured university lecturership in Hellenistic

[31] There is no reference letter from Last in the college file, but a letter from the then Warden John Sparrow, dated 3 Feb. 1955, mentions Last's support.

[32] Fraser wrote a newspaper obituary when Gray died in 1990, a few weeks after his exact coeval Andrewes (see above, n. 21).

[33] The guess is reasonable, although the Christ Church archives show that Gray was not actually on the appointing committee (information provided by the college archivist Judith Curthoys).

history at an annual salary of £600, a very different matter from a college lecturership. H. T. Wade-Gery's letter to Last (chair of the relevant Faculty Board) in support was sent from the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton; it speaks of a post in Hellenistic history as 'not a luxury but a need of long standing and quite vital to our well being: we can certainly find the man for it'. But the post carried with it no college fellowship or teaching room, and his 'default' college attachment remained BNC until 1954. At BNC he taught some undergraduates, including the future Wykeham Professor W. G. Forrest of New College: in 1950–1 he took Forrest and Wade-Gery's son Robert[34] as a tutorial pair for that relatively early and (from the undergraduate point of view) difficult period of Roman history for which the Greek historian Polybius is the main literary source, but for which inscriptions are an indispensable supplement. As the ancient history tutor at Wadham College from 1951 to 1977, Forrest himself taught the same minority period, and with a definite Fraserian slant, consisting of attention to patterns detectable in early Roman contacts with the Greek east, and a rejection of Maurice Holleaux's celebrated thesis that such contacts did not antedate the end of the third century BC.[35] The Rome-aware Greek poet Lykophron is relevant here, on a third-century date for the *Alexandra*; but for Fraser's change of mind on this latter point in the course of the 1970s, see below, p. 177.

Fraser did apply for at least one Oxford tutorial fellowship even after his university appointment in 1948 (we have seen that in 1947 he was a candidate for a lectureship at Bristol). The idea was evidently to supplement his income and acquire a proper college attachment and a teaching room. In 1951 he and Peter Brunt, then at St Andrews, applied for Tod's old post as ancient history fellow at Oriel. After the interviews, Brunt, who was another Last protegé, went to see Last in despondency, convinced that Fraser would be elected. 'You needn't worry about Fraser', said Last, 'he's made it clear to the fellows of Oriel that he doesn't want to teach.' Brunt (later FBA and Last's successor-but-one as Camden Professor at Oxford) used to say later that 'Oriel wanted a good knock-about tutor, so they took me.'

[34] Later Sir Robert Wade-Gery, KCMG, fellow of All Souls 1951–2011, with interruptions.

[35] With Forrest's dissenting contribution to P. S. Derow and W. G. Forrest, 'An inscription from Chios', *Annual, British School at Athens*, 77 (1982), 79–92 at 90–1, compare Fraser's review of H. Schmitt, *Rom und Rhodos*, *Classical Review*, 9 (1959), 64–7, esp. 64–5 and *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, vol. 1, pp. 764–7. At the end of their 1982 article, Derow and Forrest made acknowledgement 'above all to Peter Fraser'. Ten years earlier, Forrest was thanked for having 'borne the heat of the day' by reading parts of *Ptolemaic Alexandria* (vol. 1, p. ix).

Only at the end of 1953 did Fraser finally secure a college attachment, winning the jackpot of an All Souls fellowship, thanks to a fabulous string of Oxford backers, already listed above. (For his proposed programme of research, see below, p. 163.) This supplemented his annual university income of £950—as it had then grown to be—by a mere couple of hundred pounds; but it brought with it prestige and a sense of personal and professional acceptance, as well as elegant rooms and free meals of no ordinary quality in those drab years for the history of British food. From this point, his career path was fixed and secure. It might be thought that that would have been true from 1948 and the obtaining of a university post, but as late as 1949 he was actually considering abandoning academic life, allegedly tempted by jobs with the BBC, broadcasting to Greece. How seriously tempted, is not clear. We shall see that throughout his life he hankered for wider fields of activity than the purely academic (probably a legacy of his experiences in the war). But this restless Mediterranean tendency was always tempered by canny caution, and though he more than once contemplated violent and reckless changes of direction which would have involved resigning from All Souls and Oxford, in the end his outside commitments were always undertaken as extras not replacements. This was even true of his most conspicuous non-Oxford employment, as Director of the British School at Athens 1968–71. Normally this type of post involves secondment and full-time absence from a university position, but Fraser managed to do both jobs simultaneously—and to earn two salaries.[36] Anyway, from this point on, the present memoir will concentrate for the most part on his research and publications; his career vicissitudes were, by 1954, over for good, although money never ceased to be a worry, as his college and university files show. These worries will from this point be ignored, although it must be said that they go far towards explaining why he took on surprising jobs, both for the university (as junior proctor, 1960–1) and for his college (as domestic bursar, 1963–5); and even why he revised two great works by Rostovtzeff for Oxford University Press.

The subject of his D.Phil. thesis, as eventually submitted in March 1950, was 'Studies in the History and Epigraphy of Hellenistic Rhodes' (changed from 'A History of Hellenistic Rhodes' when Fraser convinced himself that such a history could not be written because of gaps in the evidence, and unless art and philosophy were included). It begins with 479 BC and the Persian Wars, but the main focus is the period of steady

[36] At first he waived part of his university stipend on a semi-voluntary basis, but this was soon restored at his request because of school fees.

Rhodian success inaugurated by the synoikism in 408/7, when the three old cities Lindos, Ialysos and Kameiros pooled their resources and formed a new city Rhodos on the north tip of the island. Fraser saw in this the hand of Dorieus, the famous pentathlete who features in the pages of Thucydides, and whose father Diagoras was magnificently celebrated in Pindar's Seventh *Olympian Ode*, where the synoikism is adumbrated.[37] After Alexander in particular (d. 323), the city-state of Rhodos maintained independence and prosperity in a world of kings. Fraser's terminal date is 164, when the Rhodians were punished by the Romans, with harsh economic and territorial measures, for their spectacular and uncharacteristic miscalculation in backing the wrong, i.e. anti-Roman, side in the Third Macedonian War fought by Rome against King Perseus, whose power was annihilated at the battle of Pydna in 168.

Though the thesis was never published, some account of it is necessary, not only because it exhibits so many of his mature characteristics and interests but also because it nourished many of his later publications, down to and including the posthumous book on ethnic terminology. He also, obviously and naturally, drew on it for his early teaching and lecturing after 1948:[38] the thesis shows a formidable general grasp of the political and social history of the Hellenistic world. It was, in those days before doctoral word-limits, a massive work of about a third of a million words (the text-volume is 685 pages and the notes-volume 410, totalling 1,095). It narrowly escaped being even longer. The two-part thesis originally included a Part III dealing with the extensive Rhodian overseas possessions, the so-called Peraea or 'land opposite' (i.e. what is now the Turkish mainland, part of ancient Caria), and the neighbouring islands, Nisyros, Tenos etc. But in 1948 his friend George Bean, professor at Istanbul and formerly teacher of scholarship Greek at St Paul's school,[39] discovered

[37] Dorieus' role is denied, on no very compelling grounds and without reference to Fraser's dissertation, by V. Gabrielsen in P. Flensted-Jensen and others, *Polis and Politics: Studies in Ancient Greek History presented to Mogens Herman Hansen on his Sixtieth Birthday* (Copenhagen, 2000), pp. 177–205. On Pindar and the synoikism, see B. Kowalzig, *Singing for the Gods* (Oxford, 2007), p. 256.

[38] He lectured from 1948 to 1952 on 'The Hellenistic Age', 'Historical documents in Maccabees and Josephus', 'The Aegean from Alexander to Pompey' (mainly based on Delian hieropoiic lists), 'Greek inscriptions 403–323 BC' (see above, p. 143 on Tod's 1948 collection), 'Greek and Roman theories of kingship', 'Ptolemaic Edicts', 'Macedonia', 'Rome and Greece in the 3rd cent'. In later years he gave classes on the inscriptions of Rhodes, Kyrene, and the Antigonids, on the 'Hellenistic city at work', and on Lykophron's *Alexandra* (1963 and 1981). His memorable farewell series of classes (1984–5) was on Hellenistic religion.

[39] Where he taught Sir Kenneth Dover, PBA; for a photograph of a seated Bean in a gown, correcting a Greek prose, see Dover's *Marginal Comment* (London, 1994) plate 6. Bean wrote

some new inscriptions in the relevant part of Caria, and they decided, like the three old Rhodian cities in 408, to 'pool their resources', as the thesis preface puts it. The result was the co-authored *The Rhodian Peraea and Islands* (Oxford, 1954), the preface to which says, without further explanation, that Fraser had been unable to join Bean on a planned visit to the Peraea in 1948, so Bean went alone. Certainly Fraser was on Rhodes in July 1948, so the reason may have been domestic or financial. The book has lasted well, and though it announces itself as a work of collaboration, the division of labour was clear, and we may note two sections by Fraser (the actual inscriptions at the beginning were the work of Bean). He distinguished between 'incorporated' and 'subject' peraia; the latter was directly ruled from Rhodes. The concept of subject peraia has not gone unchallenged, but a good modern judge concludes that it 'has stood the test of time quite successfully'.[40] In the important final chapter, his discussion of the Rhodian nesiotic league, or league of Aegean islanders (formed *c*.200 BC), is better, fuller and more nuanced than anything written since.

This relocated Part III of the thesis would have been in addition to Part I (an extremely detailed and well-written historical narrative from 479 to 164 BC) and the far more important Part II, 'Antiquities'. Today that subtitle would be considered disastrous. All it means is constitutional and social history, in the broadest sense, including religion and cult (the priesthoods of Athena Lindia and of Halios, the Sun-god, patron deity of the synoikised city of Rhodos). Individual chapters in Part II deal with the complicated gentilitial structure of the population; the constitutions of the old three cities; the constitution of Rhodos; the Rhodian navy, a

three successful semi-popular books about western Turkey, including *Turkey Beyond the Maeander* (London, 1971), covering Caria, which he explored with J. M. Cook, FBA, Director of the British School after the war; they wrote up these visits in a series of articles in the School's *Annual* (1952, 1955, 1957). Bean's relations with Louis Robert became poor, and this may bear on Robert's attitude to his collaborator Fraser in turn. Bean was one of the few scholars who dared to answer Robert back. When the Roberts (Louis and his wife Jeanne, authors of an annual epigraphic bulletin) observed, in intended enlightenment of Bean and Cook, that a certain inscription was a hexameter, Bean replied 'Did they suppose we had not noticed this? … Are we alone in feeling that criticism of this kind is rather tiresome?': *Annual, British School at Athens*, 52 (1957), 87 n. 110. The late John Cook confirmed to me long ago that this was written by Bean. He added that Robert was kind to young scholars—until they 'started to run between his legs', as he put it.

[40] V. Gabrielsen, *Classica et medievalia*, 51 (2000), 129–84, sought to overturn Fraser and Bean on the Subject Peraia, but not convincingly: see H.-U. Wiemer in R. van Bremen and J.-M. Carbon (eds.), *Hellenistic Karia* (Paris, 2010), pp. 415–34 at 420, whence the quotation in the text. The distinction is perpetuated by A. Bresson, *Recueil des inscriptions de la Pérée rhodienne (Pérée intégrée)* (Besançon, 1991). See also N. Badoud in Badoud (ed.), *Philologos Dionysios: mélanges offerts au prof. D. Knoepfler* (Geneva, 2011), pp. 533–66.

small and specialised citizen-manned arm which most famously enabled the city to resist the Macedonian Demetrios 'the Besieger' in 305; and the Rhodian army, which *inter alia* policed the peraia.

The thesis is no 'antiquarian' accumulation but an organic unity, one which moreover seeks to solve a historical problem. The structural Part II is full of meticulous detail, but it is all intended, with gathering emphasis and with conspicuous clarity of expression, to explain the paradox posed at the start of the narrative Part I. That puzzle is: how did this maritime island republic (the Venetian analogy is hinted at in a footnote in the naval chapter) pull off the remarkable feat of remaining a viable and successful city-state in a world dominated by the Hellenistic dynasties and then the Romans (at least until the error of judgement by the ruling faction in the years immediately preceding Pydna)? Part I itself already offers a simple political explanation: Rhodes was very good at identifying likely winners and at attaching itself to them, untroubled by anxieties about loyalty or consistency of alignment. Part II argues that the Rhodian system was a compromise between the old and the new, the classical and the Hellenistic. It blended some of the main features of classical Athenian-style democracy with an efficient and above all hierarchical command-system, at the top of which were the five prytaneis—answerable to the assembly, but possessed of great executive latitude. Fraser suggests that the administration of the peraia in particular was modelled on Seleucid methods of control,[41] or at any rate that similar techniques were developed independently to cope with similar problems.

Some parts of Fraser's doctoral work did see the light of day in revised and deepened form, not only that entire third which formed his contribution to *Rhodian Peraea*, or obvious spin-offs such as the article on Alexander and the Rhodian constitution.[42] A section of *Boeotian and West Greek Tombstones* (Lund, 1957) repeats the thesis' discussion of Rhodian formulae for the commemoration of citizens, foreigners, and certain elusive groups in between;[43] and a few pages of *Rhodian Funerary Monuments* draw heavily on the same material.[44] Less specifically, but no less important, the interest in names and onomastically founded prosopography is already there in the thesis. For instance, he casually mentions that the

[41] This point is made briefly at *Rhodian Peraea*, p. 93 f., cf. p. 89, but is properly presented and argued for only in the thesis, which extends it to Hellenistic Rhodian history generally, not only that of the Peraea.

[42] *Parola del Passato*, 7 (1952), 192–206.

[43] Fraser and Rönne, *Boeotian and West Greek Tombstones*, pp. 96–8.

[44] Ibid., pp. 46–9.

Milesians formed the largest single group of foreigners at Hellenistic Athens, and he notes the frequency at Karian Knidos of personal names formed in Rhod-, as evidence for close social contacts between Rhodes and Knidos, although the latter was not part of the Rhodian Peraea except between 188 and 167 BC.

The six decades since 1950 have not overturned Fraser's conclusions, though naturally there has been new evidence. Nobody since then has examined Rhodian society with so clear a grasp of Rhodes' place in the Hellenistic world, or in such penetrating detail;[45] and it is a great pity that so few of those who have written about Hellenistic Rhodes in the second half of the twentieth century appear to have consulted the thesis. They would have done so with great advantage, but nobody can be blamed for not citing unpublished work, and the responsibility for the lack of impact of his five hard years of doctoral work is Fraser's own. (The declaration slip pasted in the front contains only three names, those of Susan Sherwin-White, the present writer, and Ellen Rice, all doctoral pupils of Fraser.) Why then did he not publish the thesis? His attitude to it was characteristically ambiguous. He never cited it in print, and did not like other people to cite it either. And yet in the late 1960s, as his reports to All Souls College show, he planned to publish it after all. In 1969, when Director of the British School at Athens, he tells his college he is now revising it 'basically' (i.e. fundamentally) for publication. But this idea fades, and the main result of his Rhodian work at this period is the very different *Rhodian Funerary Monuments* (1977).[46] Although, as noted above, the introduction exploits the thesis for a short section on foreigners at Rhodes, and there is an interesting section 'hero or mortal',[47] this is essentially a work of archaeology. Fraser remarked once that the Director of the British School at Athens needs an excavation or other project if he or she is not to become a pure administrator, and his 1977 book was his substitute for an excavation.

An answer to the question, why did he not publish his thesis in the early 1950s, can only be speculative. In their report dated 17 January 1951,

[45] R. M. Berthold, *Rhodes in the Hellenistic Age* (Ithaca NY, 1984) is a sound and useful treatment, but superficial by comparison.

[46] See also 'Note on two Rhodian institutions', *Annual, British School at Athens*, 67 (1972), 119–24. Part of this deals with the democratic institution of jury-pay; cf. G. de Ste Croix, *Classical Quarterly*, 25 (1975), 50–2. At 50 n. 2, de Ste Croix of New College, Oxford complained that the only detailed account of the Rhodian constitution was that of van Gelder (H. van Gelder, *Gesichischte der alten Rhodier*: The Hague, 1900). Across the road from him in the Bodleian library was a far fuller, better and more up-to-date one.

[47] On which, however, see now C. P. Jones, *New Heroes from Achilles to Antinoos* (Cambridge, MA, 2009), p. 116 n. 1.

the examiners, G. T. Griffith and A. H. M. Jones, saluted the high quality of the thesis, recommended the award of the degree, and concluded 'This work as a whole could be published as it stands or with only insignificant alterations.' He did not, however, supplicate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (this may be no more than the snobbery attached to higher degrees at that time in some old-fashioned quarters); instead, he entered the thesis for the valuable triennial Conington Prize for best thesis in the main branches of classical studies, and duly won it. None of this was encouragement enough for him to publish it—then. He was acutely conscious of the provisional nature of the evidence, and must have felt frustrated at the number of inscriptions which he knew were 'retained in secrecy' by the Greek authorities in Rhodes (see above, n. 28; this situation had improved by the late 1960s). But we must also reckon with a temperamental pessimism, such as we have noticed in regard to his SOE activities; it is not too strong to call it depression (see also below, p. 159 for his work on the inscriptions of Samothrace). One of the constitutional chapters of Part II of the thesis ends 'these dry bones can not live' without a literary source like Polybius to give them flesh and blood. The examiners noted the change of title (not 'A History …' but 'Studies in …', see above, p. 152), and accepted the reasons for this; but added that they felt that 'Mr Fraser has been too modest in his claims,' and had written as complete a history of Rhodes as was possible in the state of the evidence.

Fraser's first book was not *Rhodian Peraea* but a light revision in the previous year of M. I. Rostovtzeff's *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World* (Oxford, 1953).[48] He was suggested to the Press by Momigliano as reviser of the equivalent Roman volume, which appeared in 1957, and one reason for this suggestion was no doubt his successful work on *Hellenistic World*.[49] Fraser's already wide historical range, and his near-total command of the primary and secondary material, made him entirely suitable for the Hellenistic task, but at the same time that kind of work is always educative.[50] It is also possible that Rostovtzeff's leisurely three-decker format (text in volume 1; separately printed footnotes in

[48] Rostovtzeff was a Corresponding FBA, and, unusually, was obituarised as such in these *Proceedings*: A. H. M. Jones, 'Michael Ivanovich Rostovtzeff 1870–1952', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 38 (1952), 347–61.

[49] The archives of Oxford University Press have nothing about the 1953 book.

[50] Seeing Fraser's own *Greek Ethnic Terminology* through the press taught the present writer much. As a direct result, the fourth edition of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, ed. Simon Hornblower, Antony Spawforth and Esther Eidinow (Oxford, 2012) has entries on Glaucus (6), Orus, Xenion.

volume 2; and general index and index of sources in volume 3) had some influence on the similar layout of the similarly ample *Ptolemaic Alexandria*. Fraser once commented to a graduate student that he liked to 'savour the notes separately',[51] though his last two books have them at the bottom of the page in usual OUP style.

Already in 1950, before he had been viva-ed for his Rhodian doctoral thesis, Fraser had embarked on what would become *Boeotian and West Greek Tombstones,* co-authored with T. Rönne (Lund, 1957; see above, n. 27 for the mystery of his Swedish connections). We have seen that in its treatment of social structure, as illustrated by naming habits and the inclusion of definers such as demotics and ethnics, Fraser's contribution to this book drew directly on the Rhodian thesis, as well as anticipating his later interests. (Note, for example, p. 103 on the popularity of theophoric names derived from river-gods in Boeotia at all periods.) But in most respects it is a departure. Although the catalogues and the strictly archaeological side were mainly done by Tullia Rönne and became her dissertation for a Stockholm licentiate, the book as a whole is offered as a study of 'lively and independent artistic activity in two provincial centres, particularly in the Hellenistic age' (p. 198). Its use calls for a first-rate epigraphic and archaeological library, and in general it is not a book for beginners or even non-specialists:[52] Fraser never put himself out to reach a wider public.[53] For the historian, the book's most important conclusion is that the tombstones confirm the picture of Hellenistic Boeotia as a conservative place, 'secluded and rustic', already drawn by literary sources (p. 101).[54] Fraser liked conservative cities and regions (see above, n. 8 for Cyrene); and he tried to keep All Souls that way, by resisting passionately the admission of women fellows—despite having begun and ended his publishing career with works of collaboration with distinguished female scholars![55] (See below, p. 181 for Elaine Matthews.)

[51] Jane Hornblower.

[52] Some of A. G. Woodhead's review at *Classical Review*, 9 (1959), 166–7 expresses negativity about the subject-matter ('rather dreary backwaters of Greek art', etc.), but his complaint, that the book makes no concession to the reader, is justified.

[53] By contrast, G. Nordquist's obituary of Rönne-Linders (see above, n. 27) stresses her lifelong commitment to popularisation. Fraser, as the senior partner in the collaboration, probably determined the book's austere format. Nordquist notes that Rönne's early work with Fraser led to the interest in epigraphical material and temple-records for which she is best known, under the name Tullia Linders.

[54] It is an unconfronted difficulty that the features of the monuments which are taken to support this conclusion are also found in west Greece, where there is no such literary tradition of seclusion etc.

[55] Not to mention his edition of the literary essays of the suffragist Alice Meynell; see below, n. 122 for this book, some ten chapters of which (out of thirty-seven) are about women authors.

During the years of work on the Boeotian and West Greek material, Fraser, who always preferred to have more than one project on the go at any time, was preparing his edition of the inscriptions of the north-east Aegean island of Samothrace (*Samothrace. Excavations Conducted by the Institute of Fine Arts of New York University, Volume 2, Part 1, The Inscriptions on Stone*, New York, 1960, but the preface date is 1958, and his visits to the island took place in 1954–7). The island is of exceptional interest because of its sanctuary of the twin gods the Kabeiroi. This was a 'mystery' cult (i.e. a cult requiring initiation), and we are told that it was at one of these ceremonies that Philip II of Macedon met his future wife Olympias, mother of Alexander. Fraser's volume was one of a lavishly produced site-series whose general editor was the American Karl Lehmann. The episode was not a happy one, and there is clear evidence from outside the book itself that Fraser had a dismissive view of the inscriptions and regarded his work on it as wasted labour,[56] so he seems to have been too anxious to be rid of his obligations, and did his work too fast. It is certainly surprising to be told, in the very first sentence of a publication of that sort, that the inscriptions are 'disappointing',[57] but this is not the first time we have noticed expressions of gloom on Fraser's part about the limits of the evidence he was using, and the worth of what he did (see above, p. 157). Some of this may have been part of a cautious defensive posture and not necessarily to be taken literally. But there were particular troubles about this whole project, arising from the subordination of a strong-minded individual to the demands of a generally edited series. One particular text led to a disagreement with Lehmann, who had discovered and published the *editio princeps* of the stone in question. No. 9 is a very short dedication from war-booty by a Macedonian whose name is not fully preserved. Lehmann had sought to fill the gap on the stone excitingly, so as to produce a well-known figure (Philip) Arrhidaios, half-brother and briefly successor of Alexander the Great. Fraser, for sound technical reasons, rejected this reading and supplemented the name as Adaios, an unknown Macedonian. This disagreement spilled over into the actual publication. Fraser, with unconcealed annoyance, took the unusual step of printing an addendum at p. 137, making his own position clear after Lehmann had misrepresented it in the then new edition of the *Guide to Samothrace* (Locust Valley, NY, 1960).

[56] His report to All Souls in May 1956.

[57] 'The inscriptions published in this volume, though on the whole disappointing in both substance and preservation, add a great deal to our knowledge of the Sanctuary but very little to that of the political history of the city' (Fraser: *Samothrace: the Inscriptions on Stone*, p. 3).

The publication of the Samothrace inscriptions in 1960 coincided with his election to this Academy.[58] But that high point in his career was followed by what must without doubt have been the lowest, the lengthy and destructive review of that same volume by Louis Robert[59] in *Gnomon* for 1963 (twenty-eight pages, some of it in the tiny type size which that journal reserves for discussion of detail). Robert perceived, correctly and acutely, that Fraser had undertaken the work as a *corvée*, and he accused him of not struggling hard enough with the difficulties of decipherment, restoration and interpretation, and of not treating the material at sufficient length and depth. Robert's main complaint was also the most curious, in view of Fraser's later founding and editorship of the great *Lexicon of Greek Personal Names*. Many of the inscriptions in the Samothrace volume consist entirely of lists of names (e.g. those of the *theoroi* or sacred envoys to the sanctuary). Robert said that Fraser's handling of these was inadequate, and that he appeared to be interested only in grand political history, the 'history of events', not in the sort of social history which can be written from apparently banal personal names. It is tempting to think that the jolt administered by this review acted as a needed corrective,[60] and that Fraser was impelled in his subsequent onomastic direction precisely by Robert's strictures. But though that may be part of the truth, it does not cover the facts completely. Fraser's fascination with 'banal' Greek names, and his use of onomastically founded prosopography, is already—as we have noticed above—evident both in the Rhodian thesis of 1950 and in many of his writings in the following decade. It seems that his dislike of the Samothrace task, and perhaps also his difficulties with the general editor, led him to be uncharacteristically perfunctory just where we would have expected fullness and exactitude. But there is no need to go all the way with Robert. Fraser's discussions of the international clientele of the sanctuary on Samothrace have permanent value. Of particular interest and importance are his treatment and explanation of the surprisingly many Roman visitors (the texts he edited include a remarkable bilingual Greek–Latin sacred law), and the connection he drew between this Roman popularity and the story that Aeneas took the Penates to Rome from Samothrace, an island which the Romans regarded as kin to their own

[58] And he was promoted from Lecturer to Reader in 1964. (He had been promoted Senior Lecturer from 1 October 1954—but the grade was abolished on 27 October of the same year!)

[59] FBA (Corresponding) since 1946.

[60] And so the present writer suggested in a brief memoir of Fraser in the *Annual of the British School at Athens*, 103 (2008), 1–7 at 6. But that was before rereading the Rhodian thesis and the whole of Fraser's 1950s work, with a view to writing the present fuller memoir.

city. Only recently, as scholars have grasped how seriously such religiously based interstate kinship was taken at all periods, has Fraser's contribution been properly appreciated.[61]

More generally, Robert's relentlessly wounding critique, which makes painful reading even after half a century, needs to be seen in perspective. In the first place, Robert was—as he more or less admits at one point—asking for a very different sort of book from the one under review. Fraser was publishing only the inscriptions found in the course of the excavations (this and only this was surely his remit), and it should be noted that on the argument between Fraser and Lehmann—Adaios or Arridaios?—Robert sided decisively with Fraser. But Robert would have preferred a complete edition and re-edition of all the Samothracian inscriptions ever published, as had been done for Priene and Didyma. Robert was also, it must be said, asking for an instructive discursiveness which was a marked feature of his own work and which not all publishers would have permitted.[62] His own rich and lengthy discussion of the Macedonian name Eulaios, treated by Fraser in one short sentence, is a case in point. On the other hand, Robert was capable of voicing the opposite objection, as when he and his wife criticised Jonas Crampa's edition of the new Labraunda inscriptions for wordiness, not altogether fairly.[63]

In the second place, there is the scholarly personality of Robert himself. Fraser was not alone in receiving this sort of excessively severe treatment. At least one other distinguished epigraphist suffered under the lash, usually in the *Bulletin Epigraphique* but also in Robert's multi-volume *Hellenica*. Some contemporaries claimed to detect a pattern in Robert's selection of victims. John Cook remarked of A. Laumonier's *Les cultes indigenes en Carie* (Paris, 1958) that 'J. and L. Robert persecute this book with a rancour that they normally reserve for the work of non-French scholars and M. Ch. Picard',[64] and among those non-French scholars Cook surely counted his own friend and collaborator George Bean. Here is a further clue. Robert had a low view of Bean,[65] and had refused to allow Fraser and Bean to refer to an inscription in the Rhodian peraia

[61] See F. Battistoni, *Parenti dei Romani: mito troiano e diplomazia* (Bari, 2010), pp. 128–37, esp. 135. Cf. Fraser's *Samothrace* pp. 16–17 and 118–20 no. 63 (the sacred law).

[62] And which was not admired by all other scholars at the time. On the features which contributed to the 'laborious' lengthiness of J. and L. Robert, *La Carie*, ii (Paris, 1954), see J. M. Cook (as cited below, n. 64), 52.

[63] *Bulletin Épigraphique*, 1973: no. 403.

[64] J. M. Cook, 'Greek archaeology in Asia Minor', in *Archaeological Reports for 1959–60*, p. 50.

[65] As is shown by many entries in the annual epigraphic bulletin by J. and L. Robert, reporting epigraphic publications by Bean from the late 1940s.

which he had discovered in 1948, and which Bean actually saw for himself on the spot soon afterwards in the same year.[66] To some extent, Fraser may have been condemned by association.

How far back did the bad academic relationship between Fraser and Robert go? The 1963 review of *Samothrace* was not the first episode. Before then, Fraser had been noticed disapprovingly in the *Bulletin*, as far back as his 'Zeus Seleukeios' (1949), one of his first two published articles;[67] but he had not so far been singled out for special obloquy. One item on Fraser's side may be relevant. In 1957 he had published, in the *American Journal of Archaeology,* a long, destructive review of Jean Pouilloux's *Recherches sur l'histoire et l'épigraphie de Thasos* (Paris, 1954), and Pouilloux was not only a devoted Robert pupil and a friend at that time (see the Avant-propos, pp. 7–8), but he treated the inscriptions in the somewhat indirect Robert manner. Fraser had hard things to say both about the method and about the conclusions, which audaciously and imaginatively turned the fifth-century athlete Theagenes into a politician of the first magnitude.[68] Fraser considered that the evidence did not bear the weight of conjecture, and he was surely right. But this will not have gone down well in Paris, and Robert may have decided that now was the time to call Fraser to order. The final scene in the unattractive drama may be recorded here, in anticipation of chronology. When Robert died in May 1985, Fraser contributed an obituary (11 June 1985) to the *Times* of London, not commissioned in the usual anonymous way but prefaced by his initials. In other words, he volunteered to do it. Though the obituary calls Robert a 'genius', who 'stood head and shoulders above all his contemporaries at home and abroad', Fraser spends most of the obituary on Robert's academic character: he was a 'ruthless critic of those who fell short of his own standards, and pursued, indeed cherished, vendettas over many years … This public and sometimes prolonged execution of colleagues not only robbed him of most personal sympathy, but also … drove many workers in the field into silence … No abuse or irony [was] too strong or long for those he wished to humiliate.' This obituary caused offence in some quarters. In conclusion, it must be said that it was Fraser's misfortune that much of his working career coincided with that of Louis

[66] Fraser and Bean, *Rhodian Peraea*, p. 75 n. 1.

[67] *CR*, 63, 92–4 with *BE*, 1951 no. 46. The memory still rankled in Fraser's last book: *Greek Ethnic Terminology* (Oxford, 2009), p. 188 n. 34 ('I was chastised for this …' etc., but he then offers a modified defence of his old position).

[68] When, towards the end of his life (1917–96), Pouilloux returned to the topic at *Bulletin de Correspondence Hellénique*, 118 (1994), 199–206, he ignored Fraser's review entirely.

Robert, an altogether exceptional figure working in the same approximate field.

This is a disagreeable topic. Let us move on, with relief, to Ptolemaic Egypt and especially Alexandria. Wartime acquaintance apart, Fraser's interest in this region goes back to the beginning of his research career. He lectured on 'Ptolemaic edicts' very soon after his university appointment began in 1948, and one of his first two articles (1949, see above, n. 67 for the other) was a note about the city name 'Alexandria ad Aegyptum'.[69] Thereafter, for many years he contributed to the *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* a bibliographical bulletin on the Greek inscriptions of Greco-Roman Egypt.[70] His two most substantial publications in this area were the studies of the cult of Sarapis in 1960 and 1967[71]—heavily onomastic and prosopographic, it should be noticed, and the work for the first was done in the 1950s (see above for Robert's criticisms of *Samothrace* on precisely this score). But he had a greater work in mind, though not what eventually emerged. When he was elected to All Souls, it was to a research fellowship in addition to his university post, and his main project then, as promised to the college, was a corpus of the Greek inscriptions of the Ptolemaic Empire, including the overseas possessions.[72] For many years this continues to feature in his reports to the university and to his college as his main focus of research, and he explains more than once that the book on Ptolemaic Alexandria will be ancillary to this. In the end, it was the subsidiary book which got written, and on a massive scale as we have seen. The corpus of inscriptions was in the end abandoned (but he worked on it intermittently until at least the 1970s, and a mixture of handwritten and typed-up drafts, as well some squeezes and photographs, are deposited in the Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents in Oxford; it is hoped that the book may after all be published in some form). That is, he gave up what for many years had been his main project. It is not easy to understand why, and we can only guess. *Rhodian Funerary Monuments* (whose preface is dated 1975) did not detain him for many years after the publication of *Ptolemaic Alexandria* in 1972; the work, as we have seen, was mostly done during his directorship at Athens (1968–71). The

[69] 'Alexandria ad Aegyptum again', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 39 (1949), 56.

[70] Every year from 1952 to 1962, except for 1953. The last such bulletin he wrote was for *Berytus*, 15 (1964), 71–93.

[71] See above, n. 27.

[72] It seems that originally the plan was to redo the Ptolemaic part of W. Dittenberger's *Orientis graecae inscriptiones selectae* (Leipzig, 1903–5: Dunbabin's reference letter says Dittenberger's *Sylloge* by an error) but this was soon superseded by the plan for a new work.

Ptolemaic inscriptions were, we may speculate, displaced in his mind and plans by more pressing concerns. Two other big undertakings in Fraser's life took shape in the early 1970s, as he looked for new challenges after the Athens directorship: the Lexicon of Greek Personal Names and the Institute for Afghan Studies, both of them his brain-children. It was the second rather than the first of these which changed his intellectual direction, in that his next monograph, *The Cities of Alexander the Great* (Oxford, 1996), flowed directly out of one of the spectacular epigraphic finds at Old Kandahar: a metrical Greek dedication which made it virtually certain that Kandahar was Alexandria in Arachosia (below, p. 173). Greek personal names, by contrast, were always a sideline, even in his final years.

All this is to anticipate. *Ptolemaic Alexandria* occupied Fraser for most of the 1960s: the preface says he had taken account of very little published during and after 1967. It is his largest, most ambitious and most important single-authored work, and is what, for most serious students of the ancient Greek world, defines him as a historian. The book is a contribution to social and cultural history, and to the history of science and mathematics, although the author disclaims specialist competence in these areas. Like some other massive works of scholarship, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* almost defied treatment at normal reviewing length, and received few conventional notices worth mentioning.[73] The most aggressively critical treatment did not take the form of a review at all, and appeared thirteen years after the book itself. It was by another of the present writer's late teachers and inspirations, Moses Finley, who devoted five pages of *Ancient History, Evidence and Models* to an angry and rhetorical attack on *Ptolemaic Alexandria* as 'the best of the current crop of pseudo-histories of ancient cities' (expanded three pages later to 'city-histories or regional histories');[74] Finley even described Fraser, with exaggeration and inaccuracy, as 'in this country, the chief patron of such studies'.[75] He confined his objections

[73] It was not reviewed at all by *Classical Review*; G. Giangrande in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 94 (1974), 233–5 at 234, complained of the absence of a treatment of Alexandrian law, but this was unfair: see pp. 107–15 of the book, with the twelve pages of footnotes in vol. ii, nn. 110–84. The *Times Literary Supplement* review (by T. G. H. James, 9 Nov. 1973) was generally admiring, but see below, n. 82.

[74] (London, 1985), pp. 62–6. Quotation from p. 62, cf. 65.

[75] Fraser was not professor of Greek history at Oxford, and was in no position to impose research topics. The only candidate for the 'patronage' Finley referred to was his doctoral pupil Susan Sherwin-White's *Ancient Cos* (Göttingen, 1978), hardly 'pseudo-history'. Finley's own study of a larger and more important island, *Ancient Sicily* (London, 1968), was not pseudo-history either.

(which we shall discuss shortly) to the first half of the book, that which deals with the city, not the culture, of Alexandria.

The task Fraser set himself was to cover every aspect of the life of by far the most successful of the cities founded by Alexander the Great, 'Alexandria ad Aegyptum', Alexandria by Egypt, the capital of the Ptolemaic dynasty of Egypt. Except for an epilogue dealing with Roman Alexandria, the period covered is the Hellenistic age, from the foundation in 331 BC to the Roman conquest. Elsewhere, Fraser would discuss Byzantine and Arab Alexandria.

Much knowledge is taken for granted: for something like a conventional narrative history, the reader must wait until pp. 118–31, part of chapter 3, 'City and Sovereign', and, even there, only the years from 170 BC to the battle of Actium (31 BC) are described in detail. It is true that the preceding chapter, devoted to the population of the city, is organised chronologically, in three periods; but for these pages to make full sense the reader needs to know which Ptolemy came after which.[76] However, the divide between periods II and III is important for the whole book, because it was at that time (145 BC) that Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II—locally nicknamed Kakergetes or 'Evil-doer'—expelled the foreign groups in the city. In this way, as the ancient writer Menekles of Barke commented, the intellectual life of Greek cultural centres other than Alexandria was enriched, to the exact extent that that of Alexandria itself was impoverished (we might compare what Hitler did for the European and North American universities and institutes to which Jewish academics fled in the 1930s).[77] The middle of the second century BC is the hinge on which the book turns. In the city's greatest phase, the intelligentsia came from the Ptolemaic empire, and especially from Kyrene, Kos and Samos (but not Cyprus).[78]

The two halves of the text-volume of *Ptolemaic Alexandria* are 'The Framework' (300 pp.) and 'The Achievement' (500 pp.); the Mouseion (Museum) and Library might have been treated as part of 'framework', but in fact brilliantly open the second half. Moses Finley took exception to the 'Framework' half, which was divided into 'foundation and topography', 'the population', 'city and sovereign, 'trade and industry', 'religious

[76] She also needs to know the fluctuating extent of the Ptolemaic empire at all periods.

[77] Cf. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 1. 468: this destructive act nevertheless 'provided the rest of the Greek world with a welcome supply of trained teachers and practitioners in many fields'.

[78] See, for example, p. 307. There, as elsewhere, Fraser unfairly disparages the contribution of Cyprus to 'the intellectual life of the Greek world at this or any other time' (*Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 1, p. 79). This may be true of Alexandria, but what about Zeno of Kition and Klearchos of Soloi?

life'.[79] He constructed his argument against Fraser by a series of gloomy quotations from the book, all tending to emphasise our ignorance, and the limitations of our sources; then he attacked Fraser's way of handling the evidential gaps. It might be thought that two more different types of scholar than Louis Robert and Moses Finley could not easily be imagined, but they were both irritated by the same thing, Fraser's over-stated and perhaps congenital (see above, p. 157) pessimism in the face of his own material. Finley would have preferred Fraser to fill the gap by the application of sociological models, and the modern literature on cities in general; in other words, he wanted him to be somebody more like himself. But Fraser's educational background was totally different; and in fact, Fraser does proceed to evaluate the evidence, which the reader soon realises is not nearly as exiguous as it had been represented at first. On two important matters, however, Finley was surely right. Fraser's tentative figure of a million for the population of Alexandria in the second century BC was too high,[80] demanding as it did an impossible rate of growth, one not equalled even by early modern London.[81] Second, Fraser should not have taken the absence of native Egyptian religious life to be evidence of a lack of religious activity by that part of the population.[82] In this connection, the reader should not miss Fraser's long note (vol. ii, p. 312 n. 391, actually from the chapter on trade) featuring a native Egyptian tombstone with what had been thought to be a carving of a Buddhist wheel of life, but which—he shows—had turned out later to be a drawing of a cake.

The standards of scrupulosity never dip for a moment throughout the two halves but, in the present writer's opinion, the enduring value of *Ptolemaic Alexandria* is greatest in the scholarly areas least travelled by other inquirers, except by technical specialists in medicine, science, the Sibylline Oracles and so on. In particular, Fraser has his favourite individual neglected figures, of whom three stand out. One favourite, Kallimachos, needed no rehabilitation or rediscovery, and even in the late 1960s could not by any stretch be called 'neglected'. But Fraser has many interesting

[79] This chapter is called 'The Cults of Alexandria' in the Table of Contents at p. xi. This is not the only small but disconcerting discrepancy between that page and the actual chapter-titles.

[80] Based on two statements of Diodorus, one of which was that in his own day (the first century BC) Alexandria was the most populous city in the world. Fraser adduced this, but added the cautious words 'if correct'; these disappeared in Finley's quotation of him.

[81] Fraser was aware of Finley's critique of his section on the population and planned, but never published, a reply.

[82] Much the same point was made by the *Times Literary Supplement* reviewer.

and important things to say about the other two, Eratosthenes of Kyrene and Agatharchides of Knidos.

Agatharchides has often suffered from an unspoken assumption that the only relevant fragments are those collected by Jacoby (in whose collection of the Greek historians he is number 86). The wide sweep of Fraser's enormous and subdivided chapter 10, 'Aspects of Alexandrian Literature', enabled him to take into account the additional extensive material from Agatharchides' *On the Red Sea*, preserved by Photios, and included only in C. Müller's *Geographi Graeci Minores* (Paris, 1856–61).[83] Though Fraser treated Agatharchides twice, once under historiography and once under geographical writing, he was able to present a unified picture of the man and his writings, and he extracted historical judgements (a strongly adverse view of Roman imperialism as well as of Ptolemaic), and a definite 'oecumenical vision', from Agatharchides' geographical as well as from the more obviously 'historical' writings. Some of the evidential basis for this was fragile, and it has recently been doubted whether Agatharchides really was a 'pragmatic' historian in the Polybian sense of a believer in history as a school for politicians (he certainly avoided parochialism), or whether Rome played any role in his thinking at all.[84] But on the last point there is still not unanimity, and in any case it is agreed that Fraser was right to use Photios' résumé to reach a view about Agatharchides' attitude to history-writing.[85]

Eratosthenes, to whom many pages of *Ptolemaic Alexandria* are devoted in different chapters of the book, was also the subject of Fraser's Academy 'Master Mind' lecture of 1970; there was—as with Momigliano's account of the sharp-eyed exile Timaios, favourably cited by Fraser—something autobiographical in the portrait, which is notably sympathetic. Eratosthenes' ambitious versatility—he was geographer, mathematician, historian, poet, literary critic, philosopher, and expert on chronology—corresponds, in a way, to Fraser's own determination to do justice to the Alexandrian cultural and intellectual achievement in its wide-ranging entirety.

On Kallimachos, Fraser also wrote *con amore*. In particular, one of the best sections of the book, a sketch of Kyrene, is prompted by Kallimachos'

[83] Jacoby postponed text and treatment of this to his never-written volume V.

[84] W. Ameling, 'Ethnography and universal history in Agatharchides', in T. C. Brennan and H. J. Flower (eds.), *East and West: Papers in Ancient History presented to G. W. Bowersock* (Cambridge, MA, and London, 2008), pp. 13–59, at 19 and 24 n. 60; but note the final admission that Ferrary, like Fraser, takes the crucial passage to be about Rome.

[85] Ibid., pp. 24–5.

devotion to his native city:[86] Fraser was surely right that none of the other Alexandrian poets cared so much and so obviously about his birthplace. In other respects his treatment of Kallimachos was perhaps less successful, though the chapter on 'The horizon of Callimachus' (chapter 11) is evidently intended as the climax, not merely the conclusion, of the whole vast enterprise. But in fact, the treatment of Kallimachos' epigrams in chapter 10 is superior to anything in chapter 11. Allowance must be made for changed attitudes, but today Fraser seems too credulous towards the biographical traditions, especially but not only the story of Kallimachos' quarrel with Apollonius Rhodius, treated by Fraser at length, but 'now generally discarded'.[87]

Conversely, Fraser has his dislikes, and the treatment of Apollonius Rhodius' Argonautic epic is notably and unfairly impatient ('structurally weak', 'hurried and trivial', 'perhaps would have done better in another medium'). Only with the interesting discussion of religious aetiologies (vol. 1, pp. 627–32) does Fraser do justice to the poem on its own terms.

No one reading or handling these three majestic volumes can fail to wonder whether it—and in particular volume 2, containing the 1,116 pages of notes—needed to be quite so massive. Susan Stephens in 2010, in her chapter 'Ptolemaic Alexandria' in the *Blackwell Companion to Hellenistic Literature* (Oxford), saluted Fraser's book as 'the most helpful source on the subject', despite the lapse of nearly forty years; many of his assertions had been challenged (she said), but the 'encyclopedic quality of the notes alone make it indispensable'.[88] It is an unusual feature of those notes that literary and other sources are quoted in full, rather than merely cited with references; and they are quoted at extraordinarily generous length. This is very welcome in the case of out-of-the-way authors not included in standard series of texts, and of documentary evidence not easily available otherwise. It is much harder to see why Fraser should have thought it necessary to quote, for example, Strabo and Diodorus Siculus by the yard in the early chapters, or to do the same with the main literary figures dealt with in the closing sections. The reader envisaged by Fraser is no beginner (see above on the factual knowledge presupposed) and might reasonably have been expected to have easy access to such familiar and basic Greek authors. The reason given in the preface for what the author himself calls the 'wearisome length of the notes' is curiously uncritical

[86] Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 1. 786–9.
[87] P. J. P[arsons], 'Callimachus (3)', in *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (fourth edition).
[88] Ed. J. J. Clauss and M. Cuypers, pp. 46–61, esp. 61, 'Further Reading'.

and unhistorical. Fraser says he has followed in essentials the doctrine of Jerome, namely that he sees his task as being to cite the evidence but that he leaves you, the reader, to judge its reliability: 'Meum fuit citare testes, tuum est de fide testium iudicare.' Actually, he does nothing of the sort, and quite right too. The book is as vigorously opinionated as anyone could wish.

Publication of *Ptolemaic Alexandria* followed very soon after Fraser's return from Athens, at the end of his three years as Director of the British School there (1968–71).[89] But 'return' is not quite the right word, because he continued in his Oxford post as Reader in Hellenistic History throughout, and gave all his statutory lectures and classes in one term of the academic year.

Fraser's directorship was relatively short, but could not have come at a more ugly and difficult time in the history of modern Greece. The junta (the 'Colonels' as they were called in this country) seized power in April 1967, and fell in July 1974. That is to say, in parochial British School terms, the military dictatorship began in the directorship of A. H. S. ('Peter') Megaw, and ended in that of Hector Catling, and the decision to keep the School open was taken well before Fraser became director in October 1968.[90] Nevertheless, Fraser's directorship was, in some compatriot quarters, unpopular and controversial, in ways the other two directorships were not. It is, for instance, extraordinary that the only mention of Fraser anywhere in Ανασκαφές, the lively and anecdotal unofficial 'celebration' of the School from 1886 to 1986 (London, 1989), is as one of the former students of the School who played a leading part in the Allied Military Mission in Greece during the war. (See p. 22, where Fraser's is one of eight names listed by Nicholas Hammond, FBA, in his chapter 'The School at War'). Of Fraser's directorship, there is not a word. It is hard to see why this should have been so, except for an attitude which is illustrated by his continuing difficulties with Father Peter Levi, SJ (1931–2000). In summer 1969 Fraser opposed Levi's readmission to the School because he judged that he had in the recent past been using it for political purposes which

[89] The 'School' is not a school in the normal sense, but an overseas institute. The present author's personal acquaintance with Fraser began at this time (late 1971), as his—very junior—colleague at All Souls.

[90] Some School students thought it should have closed for the duration of the dictatorship (although nobody at the time could have known how long that would be); but that was in any case a decision for the Managing Committee as a whole, not for the Director. It may be added that Megaw's departure was not an act of political protest. On the contrary, for purely personal reasons he wanted to stay on longer, but to his annoyance this request was rejected.

might have led to the School's closure (students were, then as always, obliged to provide written undertakings not to engage in political activities).[91] Fraser was not a regime sympathiser in these years,[92] but he took the undoubtedly correct view that, with his linguistic skills and his wartime experience of dealing with Greeks, he was better placed than anyone else to negotiate for the School's interests at an extremely delicate time; and he 'fully understood that the key role of the director would be to maintain diplomatic relations with people of all views'. The record was not put straight until Cathy Morgan, Director of the School in June 2008 when it hosted a day of memorial tributes to Fraser, gave a conspicuously honest and warm account of his directorship, from which I have just quoted. In particular, she noted that he possessed and exercised the highly effective diplomacy needed to keep all the School's excavation permits. She also made the important point that, against some conservative resistance from London, he opened the School to foreign students with no national institution of their own. She sums up his achievement thus: 'This was the directorship that saved us as an institution, and allowed us to grow into the broad-based community that we are today.' One other important contribution must be mentioned, the famous Fraser 'lacuna list' for the School library, enabling gaps to be filled by second-hand purchase over many years. Fraser had worked on this from as long ago as 1960.

In his Athens period, Fraser's main academic project—apart from seeing *Ptolemaic Alexandria* through the press[93]—was *Rhodian Funerary Monuments* (*RFM*), published in 1977.[94] As we have seen, this mainly archaeological work replaced an unexpected intention to publish the 1950 thesis after all. *RFM* is written in the spirit of *Boeotian and West Greek Tombstones*, in that it is a catalogue of artistically and epigraphically undistinguished material, this time from Rhodes and Kos.[95] But it is an

[91] Levi's own account of his activities at the time can be found in his *The Hill of Kronos* (London, 1981), chap. 7. See esp. p. 147.

[92] So rightly Cathy Morgan, in the talk mentioned below.

[93] The general index was compiled by Dorothy Crawford (now Dorothy Thompson, FBA) and Elaine Matthews, but this means that the indexes of literary sources, inscriptions and papyri were the work of the author.

[94] The preface is dated 1975, but the Acknowledgements show that the work began some years earlier. In June 1972 he asks All Souls for financial help towards the production of the archaeological map for *RFM*. This is the first mention of the book in the college file, but the request proves that work on it was far advanced. It is not clear exactly when the idea of revising the Rhodian thesis was replaced in his mind by *RFM*.

[95] See p. 8, with the review of E. Craik, *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 101 (1981), 227, complaining that what she took to be Fraser's explanation for this poor quality was not convincing: competition ought to have led to good not bad work. But Fraser was saying rather that the general level of available talent was low.

advance on the earlier book in that Fraser offers wider social and religious comment of great interest and importance, for instance on the implications of the burials arranged by the *koina* (associations, mainly of foreigners) on Hellenistic Rhodes.[96] This section (pp. 58–70) argues that the encouragement given to such associations by the Rhodian state contributed richly to the social harmony which Strabo judged to be a salient feature of Rhodian life. The concluding pages of the section, about the difficult but interesting epigraphic evidence for slaves who fell in battle defending the city, ought to have attracted more notice than they have done from students of ancient war and slavery.

Both Hellenistic Rhodes and the Alexandria of the Ptolemies were cosmopolitan and sophisticated places to live and work, at least for their elites, and each was home to a large metic (resident foreigner) element. That was surely part of their scholarly attraction for Fraser. Buddhist prayer-wheels apart (see above, p. 166), the Greek far east features several times in *Ptolemaic Alexandria.* Several footnotes cite the then recent epigraphic finds at Kandahar in southern, and Ai Khanoum in northern Afghanistan, the ancient satrapies of Arachosia and Bactria respectively. These had been published, in exemplary fashion, by French scholars, including but not only Louis Robert, as part of the long-standing programme of excavation by the Délégation archéologique Française en Afghanistan. Now that French monopoly was to be challenged. In June 1972, the Society of Afghan Studies was formed in London, 'to promote study and research in the history, antiquities, archaeology, ethnography, languages, literature, art, culture, customs, and natural history of Afghanistan'. A residential institute was established in Kabul, and the first chairman of the managing committee was P. M. Fraser.

After his directorship of the Athens School had come to an end, and *Ptolemaic Alexandria* was out of the way, Fraser was obviously restless, and dissatisfied with the prospect of a return to a purely academic existence. He applied for two full-time administrative jobs in 1972, both of which would have meant resigning from Oxford: the Mastership of Van Mildert College, Durham University, and the secretaryship of this Academy, in succession to Derek Allen. The first idea evaporated quickly, but in April his university file treats the second appointment as a virtual certainty: it was just—the minute says—a matter of timing the formal resignation from the Readership. But a month later it had fallen through (terms of employment could not be agreed), and Neville Williams was

[96] Also notable is the appendix (pp. 76–81) on the type of hero-cult envisaged by the inscribed monuments; but see above, n. 47.

appointed instead. Early in the following year, 1973, Fraser began his two years as visiting professor at Bloomington, Indiana. Though there was an option of a permanent appointment, the motive seems to have been purely financial, and he obviously hated the work, which involved him in teaching bread-and-butter Greek history courses. There was, I think, some trouble at the end of the period about a student in modern Greek to whom he had given a low grade.

More constructive were the two other ventures which he began at this time, the Afghan Society and the Lexicon of Greek Personal Names, both of which called for organisational and even diplomatic gifts of a high order, but were compatible with staying put in Oxford. He did however toy with the idea of asking for his university Readership to be made formally part-time, and told Warden Sparrow that if the college were to advertise for a Senior Research Fellowship, he would consider himself a possible candidate. As late as 1978, in the first year of the Wardenship of Patrick Neill, he was still fretting about his position, and hoping for a fully paid college Research Fellowship. But in the end he withdrew the request, and decided to soldier on until retirement from the Readership in 1985.

It was in these years (the mid-1970s) and even earlier (as background to *Ptolemaic Alexandria*) that he must have done the spadework for his 1978 revision for OUP of A. J. Butler's *The Arab Conquest of Egypt and the Last Thirty Years of the Roman Domination* (Oxford, 1902); as a bonus this revision includes two shorter but still substantial pamphlets by Butler (1913 and 1914). The modestly entitled 'Additional Bibliography' is in fact an extraordinary labour of love and quiet learning: it is no mere list of post-1902 works but a 39-page analytical essay which updates every aspect of Butler's wide-ranging monograph (the new material is at pp. xlv–lxxxiii).[97] A survey of the contents of the opening sections on the primary sources will give some idea of the expertise required for the job: Greek, Coptic, Arabic, Syriac, 'other languages' (Armenian, Ethiopic and Georgian), and finally the Pahlavi papyri. It was a multiple work of affection in that Butler had been a fellow of Fraser's college Brasenose, and his grandson Rohan Butler (1917–96)[98] was a fellow of All Souls, son of another fellow of All Souls, Sir Harold Butler, and a personal friend of Fraser for many years (he lent Fraser A. J. Butler's own copy of *Arab Conquest*).

[97] The revision of *Arab Conquest* was reviewed by R. Bagnall, now FBA, in *Classical Journal*, 1979/80, 347–8. He saluted the erudition of Fraser's additional material and said that no other living scholar could have done it; but drew attention to some errors and unevenness of handling.
[98] Rohan Butler, CMG, was Historical Adviser to the Secretary of State for Foreign (and later Foreign and Commonwealth) Affairs from 1963 to 1982.

In summer 1973 Fraser went to Afghanistan to sign the agreement for the establishment in Kabul of a physical British Institute of Afghan Studies on behalf of the Afghan Society. He made several other visits on his own, and for a memorable month in autumn 1978 led a group of interested friends to Kabul, Balkh, Bamiyan and Kandahar.[99] The main institute building was in Kabul, housed in what had been the embassy hospital, and including a small library and a dining-room, formerly the operating theatre. The resident director from 1976 was Ralph Pinder-Wilson (1919–2008), an almost exact coeval of Fraser, and a former deputy keeper of the Department of Oriental Antiquities at the British Museum; in 1968 he had been a visiting fellow of All Souls, writing a monograph on Islamic glass. But the main justification of the institute's existence was not in Kabul but at Old Kandahar in the south of Afghanistan and west of the modern city. Here British excavations began in 1974, with a view to uncovering the presumed Hellenistic settlement from which must have originated inscriptions of the Mauryan period (324–180 BC), including a bilingual Greek–Aramaic edict of the third-century King Asoka, found in 1957. These excavations were reported, from 1978, in the short-lived journal *Afghan Studies* (4 volumes in 3, 1978–82).[100] It was in volume 2 of this journal,[101] dedicated to Sir Harold Bailey, that Fraser published the most spectacular epigraphic find of the entire excavation,[102] a statue-base bearing a four-line metrical dedication in Greek by the 'son of Aristonax' (the man's own name is not known because the text is incompletely preserved). The importance of the text lies in the words 'among the Alexandrian citizens' (the letters are almost all preserved, and the restoration Ἀλεξ[ανδρεῦσιν] ἐν ἀστοῖς seems inescapable, though Fraser was always needlessly cautious about it[103]). This indicates that Kandahar was an Alexandria,

[99] Including Fraser's third wife Ann, John Boardman, FBA, and his wife Sheila (later Sir John and Lady Boardman), Rachel Maxwell-Hyslop, FBA, and the present writer.

[100] In December 1983 the society was, in view of the political situation in Afghanistan, reconstituted as the Society for South Asian Studies, and the journal was replaced by the new *South Asian Studies* (vol. 1, 1985–). That Society became, as a result of a further merger in 2007, the British Association for South Asian Studies. The journal *South Asian Studies* still exists, and publishes occasional articles about Afghanistan.

[101] 'The son of Aristonax at Kandahar', *Afghan Studies*, 2 (1979), 9–21. The inscription is *Supplementum epigraphicum graecum*, 30 (1980), no. 1664 (not accurate at the crucial point).

[102] The reader should bear in mind that the present section of this memoir is not offered as an account of the excavation as a whole, but of the part it played in Fraser's own scholarly development.

[103] Fraser's objection (*Cities of Alexander the Great* (1996), p. 136 n. 61), that a dedicant would not refer to himself by his ethnic when making a dedication in his home town, applies only to a restoration taking the singular form Ἀλεξ[ανδρεύς] i.e. the son of Aristonax himself, not to the plural form Ἀλεξ[ανδρεῦσιν] etc., 'among the citizens of Alexandria'.

in fact Alexandria in Arachosia or 'among the Arachotians'. By 1996, however, Fraser had become convinced of the identification on quite other grounds, namely the evidence of the Arab adaptation of the geographer Ptolemy. The relevant sentence mentions the city of Iskandariya and Qandahar together in a way which, in Fraser's own words, 'makes the equation Alexandria in Arachosia = Qandahar virtually certain'.[104] In the course of publishing the inscription, Fraser was naturally led, in some lengthy footnotes, to touch on many of the problems raised by Alexander the Great's city-foundations in the entire region; and this important treatment was obviously the seed from which his 1996 book on Alexander's cities (see above, n. 14) would grow.

The 'son of Aristonax' inscription was discovered on 2 December 1978 and seen by Fraser *in situ* during November 1979. At the end of the following month (27 December 1979) the Soviet Russian army invaded Afghanistan, and the British excavations at Kandahar were a minor casualty of this cataclysm. In fact, the 1978 season (October–December) turned out to be the last season of all: the excavations planned for the winter months of 1979–80 never took place because of the difficulties of local travel to Kandahar. The institute in Kabul continued to function in a small and perilous way for a while: Pinder-Wilson was arrested by the Afghan Secret Police in March 1982 on trumped-up charges and released and expelled in July. After that, as we have seen, the Society for Afghan Studies ceased to exist as such (end of 1983; see above, n. 100).

It is regrettable that, although a good set of photographic records was taken to London, the six seasons of British excavation at Old Kandahar were never summarised in a final consolidated volume or volumes on the lines of *Fouilles d'Ai Khanoum* (Paris, 1973–2002). The only published monograph which could, in a sense, be said to owe its birth to the Kandahar excavations and to the Afghan Society and Institute was Fraser's own *Cities of Alexander*. Though this was published in 1996, it took him many years to write, after many more years of brooding on the problems, and it may for convenience be discussed here, out of strict sequence. After all, it was really a product of research done in the 1980s, alongside his work on the Lexicon of Greek Personal Names. The preface to *Cities* speaks of 'a long period of gestation resulting, in part at least, from other preoccupations' (p. vii). More vividly and explicitly, a handwritten letter from Fraser to the present writer, dated 5 December 1992, asks for comments on a printout of *Cities*, and says 'the Lexicon sucks my life-blood'.

[104] *Cities*, p. 101 and n. 49.

The Cities of Alexander the Great ought to have been Fraser's most accessible and widely read book, presenting as it does new or neglected evidence for an important but under-researched aspect of the activity of one of the most written-about figures in world history, and dealing as it does with some exotic and glamorous regions of the Greek near, middle and far east. But, characteristically, Fraser mostly ignored the opportunity to weave romance, or even to write in a crowd-pleasing manner (much untranslated Greek, as usual); and this despite the preface, in which he unbends to the extent of reminiscing about Sir William Tarn in the unusually chatty and autobiographical way already mentioned (above, p. 141). An authoritative reviewer, writing in the world's most influential electronic classics journal,[105] summed up *Cities* as 'not an easy book; it makes few concessions to the reader. It begins with no programmatic statement, no review of the literature or summary of the problem, but with a list of the three types of sources that will be treated' (this refers to the admittedly intimidating opening nine-line sentence). This was not altogether fair: the last two chapters ('General Assessment of Alexander's Foundations' and 'Epilogue') are much more readable than the rest of the book, though the same reviewer noted that even here Fraser did less than justice to his own achievement, a common feature of Fraser's writing, as we have seen. Despite these self-erected obstacles to its own appreciation, the book has a novel thesis, and an important one. (We may leave aside the conclusion, well and elegantly reasoned but unsurprising, that Alexander's choice of sites for his foundations should be explained in terms of strategic requirements and economic potential; see pp. 189–90, comparing the imperial strategists of British India.)

The thesis is that the literary sources all grossly exaggerated the number of genuine foundations for which Alexander himself was responsible, and that this exaggerated total originated in—Ptolemaic Alexandria (we are back with that city after all!). Ptolemaic propagandists wished to reduce the achievement of the rival Seleukid dynasty, who were in historical reality the great urbanisers of the Hellenistic age. They therefore redesignated many Antiochs and Seleukeias as Alexandrias. Fraser posited a lost treatise 'On the Cities of Alexander', composed in Egyptian Alexandria, and he argued that the various lists that have come down to us (in the epitome of the *Ethnika* of Stephanus of Byzantium, in the Alexander Romance, and so on) derive from this lost work. After this

[105] Gary Reger, *Bryn Mawr Classical Review*, 97.04. 25

work of severe reduction, Fraser then proceeded to examine the small remaining total of genuine Alexander-foundations, and to ask what their likely intended purpose or purposes might have been.

The research for *Cities* took Fraser far away from Greek literary and epigraphic sources. A reviewer rightly remarked that 'Fraser makes excellent use of the neglected Arab and Persian geographers'. There is even an eight-page appendix (Appendix 3) on the evidence of the Chinese Buddhist pilgrims. Fraser candidly owns ignorance of Chinese. But we have seen (above, p. 172) that he knew enough Arabic to up-date Butler's *Arab Conquest*. It was from the Arab adapters of Ptolemy that he was able to clinch the identification of Kandahar as an Alexandria. This was, at the end of Fraser's—mostly destructive—analysis of the evidence for the many supposed individual Alexandrias, left as one of the few certain foundations of Alexander the Great himself.

Before we pass on to the Lexicon of Greek Personal Names, a project which occupied Fraser from the early 1970s up to his death, we may notice his long-standing fascination with the *Alexandra* of Lykophron, because it was in 1979 that he published his most important contribution to the understanding of that famous problem poem. Most of its 1,474 exceptionally difficult Greek iambic lines are in the form of a prophecy by the most beautiful of the Trojan king Priam's daughters, Kassandra, whose name at Sparta is said to have been Alexandra. The Trojan War is imagined as taking place in the future, as is the entire history of east–west conflict until the Roman conquest of Greece. Kassandra's personal tragedy is her sexual assault by the Greek Lokrian Ajax at the time of the sack of Troy; the central part of the poem is launched by a detailed and horrific prediction of this act of male violence, and continues with a narrative of the miseries which the returning Greeks will suffer as punishment for this 'one man's crime' (line 365), and with an account of the new pan-Mediterranean cities which will be founded by those who do not reach home. These individual 'return-stories' or *nostoi*, the longest of which is a rewriting of material from Homer's *Odyssey* with an explicitly western (i.e. Italian/Sicilian) slant, are in fact myths of colonial identity. The poet here draws on knowledge of local cults and traditions of conflict with indigenous peoples. It will be seen why the Fraser who wrote about Alexander's city-foundations should also have been drawn to a poem which has, as one main theme, Greek settlement of the Mediterranean. And indeed his 1979 article concentrates on one of these *nostoi* sections, that about Cyprus. But he had wrestled with the poem for many years before that (his first

two-term Oxford class on it was in 1963),[106] and one main reason for his original interest had to do with the evidence it provides for early Greek awareness of Roman power, and early Roman designs on Greece.[107]

But there lies the problem: when was the poem written? It predicts Roman 'sceptre and monarchy over land and sea', a line (1229) which has usually been thought to show impossible prescience at the date of the historically attested tragic poet Lykophron (early third century BC): at that time Rome had no overseas provinces. Momigliano's solution was to dilute the significance of the prophecy by treating 'land and sea' as conventional hyperbole for 'extensive'. Others, since antiquity, have argued that the Roman sections are interpolations. The radical solution is to regard the poem as pseudonymous and to down-date the whole of it to the early second century, after the defeat of Philip V of Macedon by Titus Quinctius Flamininus: that event, and that individual, may indeed be alluded to, with the poet's customary indirectness. (The poem's difficulty is not syntactical. It arises from Lykophron's cryptic and periphrastic way of referring to gods and heroes, and from the unusual vocabulary used.)

For a long time, most explicitly in *Ptolemaic Alexandria*,[108] Fraser accepted the traditional early third-century date, though without ruling out the possibility of interpolation. Then in 1979 (and in his entry on Lykophron for the third edition of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 1996), he turned his back on the hypothesis of a third-century author of the *Alexandra*.[109] The mind-change came about as follows. The long section about Cyprus derived (he now argued) from two learned prose-writers, Eratosthenes and Philostephanos. But these two were active in the latter part of the third century, and if the argument for derivation is correct, the whole poem must date to the early second century. For Fraser, the crucial evidence[110] consisted in a marginal ancient comment (not published until 1880 and therefore not included in Hugo Berger's edition of the geographical fragments of Eratosthenes, also 1880). It concerns the five Greek

[106] His second was in 1981, attended by a very small audience, including Dr Stephanie West and the present writer.

[107] See above, n. 35 for Fraser's rejection of the 'Holleaux thesis'.

[108] Vol. ii, pp. 1065 ff., n. 331. Even here, Fraser doubted Momigliano's attempt to play down 'sceptre and monarchy over land and sea' as merely conventional flattery.

[109] 'Lycophron on Cyprus', *Report, Department of Antiquities of Cyprus*, 1979, 328–43.

[110] But not the only evidence. He also noted that Lykophron's reference to copper-mining on Cyprus (line 484) corresponds to a fragment of Eratosthenes preserved by Strabo, and that he may owe to Philostephanos his knowledge of Praxandros, the Spartan who went to Cyprus as city-founder (line 586).

city-founders who came to Cyprus: 'he says, *phesin*, that the five were . . .'. Now the same commentator had just cited Eratosthenes explicitly for a detail about a place called Magarsos in Kilikia, and Fraser therefore took 'he says' to be a back-reference to Eratosthenes. But it could refer to the poet Lykophron himself (a possibility Fraser anticipated but rejected), and for this reason Fraser's theory has not been accepted by all.[111] This does not mean he was wrong to date the whole poem in the early second century, indeed there are other very good reasons to think he was right. One can only speculate as to why Fraser's attention turned in the mid-1970s to this section of the poem in particular, apart from the personal wish to honour two old friends, Vincent Desborough, FBA and Timothy Mitford, FBA, who had distinguished themselves in the study of the history and epigraphy of Cyprus. The academic stimulus may have been the publication in 1974 of a new papyrus fragment of Eratosthenes' strange poem *Hermes*.[112] This unexpectedly revealed that the poem mentioned the Cypriot city of Paphos. Mitford himself provides a link to our next main topic, because he was mainly responsible for collecting the Greek personal names from Cyprus, which were included in the first volume of the *Lexicon* (covering the islands and Cyrenaica).

Until near the end of his life, Fraser planned a full-length commentary on Lykophron, in which he would surely have returned to the matter of dating. But at his death he left only a few pages of typed-up material, mostly about the textual history of the poem, and apparently dating from the 1990s. However, in 2003, in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, he published a by-product of his Lykophron work. This was a brilliant interpretative study of a Hellenistic inscription from the oracular sanctuary of Dodona in north-west Greece.[113] In this curious text, with its even more

[111] R. C. Badino, *Filostefano di Cirene: testimonianze e frammenti* (Milan, 2010), pp. 133–8. I am also indebted to a letter from Professor P. J. Parsons, FBA, in March 2012.

[112] *Oxyrhynchus Papyri no.* 3000 = *Supplementum Hellenisticum* no. 397.

[113] 'Agathon and Cassandra (*Inscriptiones Graecae*, IX.1² 4.1750)', *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 123 (2003), 26–40. In this connection note also 'The world of Theophrastus', in S. Hornblower (ed.), *Greek Historiography* (Oxford, 1994), pp. 167–91, at 182–4, discussing the literary evidence (esp. Lykophron 592–632) for the Greek hero Diomedes as mythical city-founder in SW Italy and the 'islands of Diomedes'. Fraser's study was just too late to notice the remarkable evidence from the Adriatic island of Palagruza (pottery graffiti with dedications to Diomedes, see *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*, 48 nos. 692 bis-694). But when the small Palagruza exhibition came briefly to Oxford (Ashmolean Museum), he was naturally excited and told us all to go and see it.

curious decoration (a phallus *in natura*), a man called Agathon claims to belong to the thirtieth generation from Kassandra. Fraser pointed out that in the last book of the *Iliad*, one of Priam's sons, and thus a brother of Kassandra, is also called Agathon (24. 249). This, then, is a kinship claim based on Homer. He also explained the decorative feature in an ingenious and convincing fashion.

Fraser's greatest scholarly monument is the *Lexicon of Greek Personal Names* (henceforth *LGPN*: six volumes published to date, 1987–2010, and the project is nearly complete. Southern and Inner Asia Minor remain to do, but much of the material is already collected on computer files). Even *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, though a massive undertaking, stands alongside other such large-scale, heavily annotated single-authored works as Rostovtzeff's social and economic histories, or Édouard Will's political history of the Hellenistic world (*Historie politique du monde hellénistique*: first edition Nancy, 1966–7), and indeed belongs in a recognised tradition established by Bevan's much older two-volume *House of Seleucus* (London, 1902). *LGPN* was and is something new and original in intellectual conception; and in the early 1970s, when it began, it was ahead of its time, in this country at least, in requiring organised international teamwork. Finally, *LGPN*, from the very first, required fund-raising skills of a high order. Fraser possessed all three of the attributes necessary to make a success of *LGPN*: scholarly distinction of a special sort, taking the form of familiarity with a vast quantity of primary material and the vision to see how it could best be assembled in a rolling programme of research; exceptional organisational and administrative ability; and the charm and worldly cunning needed to raise money. It is safe to say that the threefold achievement represented by Fraser's creation, and continuing direction, of *LGPN* would have been beyond the powers of any other classical scholar of the twentieth century. This Academy can be proud that it accepted *LGPN* as one of its major research projects in 1973, although the Academy archives reveal some internal misgivings (not all of them well informed) about the viability of the project. In particular, there were worries about the time-scale, and it seems clear that Fraser was guilty of over-optimism.

The aim of collecting all Greek personal names, over a period of a millennium and a half from the archaic period to the seventh century AD, was to provide a research tool for (to give only some obvious examples) the social and religious historian interested in the spread of the Greeks

overseas[114] and the diffusion of their cults,[115] and the student of the Greek language and its dialects.[116] *LGPN* was never planned as a full-scale prosopography, with career details and so forth, and is thus of only indirect importance for traditional political history. The information about each individual is strictly limited to: name, immediate family affiliations (son, daughter, mother, father), patronymic, date, and brief statement of source. By far the largest percentage of such sources are documentary, above all epigraphic, and for this reason alone Fraser the epigraphist was the right man for the controlling role.

The aims of the project, and its intended procedures, were set out by Fraser in an article in 1976,[117] and this elegantly written manifesto was mainly honoured thereafter. But one important change had been decided on by 1987, when the first volume was published: the original plan merely to summarise the data about common names was abandoned in favour of full and complete coverage even of such extremely common names as Dionysios and Apollonios. It is hard now to imagine how Fraser ever allowed himself to conceive of anything short of the comprehensiveness which, subject only to the appearance of new evidence or accidental omissions, gives *LGPN* so much of its authority.

The work is organised by a compromise, at every level, between the geographical and alphabetical principles. The volumes (some split into two fascicles) cover very large or populous geographical regions such as II (Athens and Attica, 1994) or VA (coastal Asia Minor, 2010); they appeared with remarkable fidelity to the order of publication and the coverage promised in the preface to volume I in 1987. Within each volume the names are arranged alphabetically, but within each name (where there is a plurality of individuals), the arrangement becomes again geographical.

[114] For an examination of the overseas names of those great early colonisers the Euboians, see D. Knoepfler, FBA, 'Was there an anthroponymy of Euboian Origin in the Chalkido-Eretrian Colonies of the West and of Thrace?', in E. Matthews (ed.), *Old and New Worlds in Greek Onomastics: Proceedings of the British Academy*, 148 (2007), 87–119. That volume gave special attention to 'new' (i.e. colonial) Greek worlds, and to names taken over from non-Greek cultures e.g. Iranian.

[115] For what can be done in this regard with Greek 'theophoric names', names formed from divine names, see R. Parker, FBA, 'Theophoric names and the history of Greek religion', in the Festschrift for Fraser: S. Hornblower and E. Matthews (eds.), *Greek Personal Names: their Value as Evidence: Proceedings of the British Academy*, 104 (2000), 53–79.

[116] A. Morpurgo Davies, 'Greek personal names and linguistic continuity', pp. 15–39, and L. Dubois, 'Hippolytos and Lysippos: remarks on some compounds in 'Ιππο-, ιππος', pp. 41–52, in Hornblower and Matthews, *Greek Personal Names*.

[117] P. M. Fraser, 'A new Lexicon of Greek Personal Names', in F. G. Emmison and R. Stephens (eds.), *Tribute to an Antiquary. Essays Presented to Marc Fitch by Some of his Friends* (London, 1976), pp. 73–81.

Thus in IIIA (the Peloponnese, Sicily, etc.) the fifteen bearers of the name Deinokrates are listed by the sub-regions to which they belonged, thus the Argolid, Korinthia, Lakonia, Sicily and so on. But these sub-regions, and inside them the individual poleis, are listed alphabetically. The rolling programme adopted was the only way possible in the real world of limited human and financial resources: it allowed *LGPN* to appear in instalments rather than at the end of decades of work (or not at all). In particular, it enabled the project to proceed large region by large region, so that the work of different regional epigraphic and other documentary experts overlapped; but the ancient Greek literary sources (which name individuals from all over the Greek world) naturally had to be filleted for names early in the project's history. These names were then distributed among the regional volumes as need arose.

It would be wrong to treat *LGPN* as a one-man band, even at the level of organisation and decision-making (it has already been made clear that there were many academic contributors, a small paid team in Oxford and a loose network of unpaid helpers, in the UK and abroad). From the earliest years, Fraser was supported by a small advisory committee which met in All Souls College for many years, then in Lincoln College and New College, after Fraser handed over the chairmanship to Nigel Wilson, FBA, who was himself succeeded in 2000 by Robert Parker, FBA. One of the early members was Sir Kenneth Dover, FBA and PBA, whose autobiography records his own victory inside the Academy over philistine and ignorant criticism of *LGPN*'s value.[118] The Lexicon was fortunate in that the Academy was represented at Advisory Committee meetings by Mr Peter Brown, Deputy Secretary and subsequently Secretary of the Academy. He had an excellent working relationship with Fraser. Most important, from the early 1980s Fraser was helped by Elaine Matthews (1944–2011), who graduated from a humble role as card-puncher in the 1970s to Assistant Editor and eventually Co-Editor.[119] This professional association developed into a warm friendship, and this, together with the domestic support provided by his third wife Ann, enabled him to keep working on *LGPN* right up to the end of his life, in his ninetieth year.

After September 1985, when he retired from his university readership, he was able to give more time to *LGPN*, though he never allowed it to

[118] See K. Dover, *Marginal Comment: a Memoir* (London, 1994), p. 179. The word 'philistinism' is Dover's own.

[119] For appreciations of Elaine Matthews's role in *LGPN*, see Newsletter 15 (2012) of the Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents. This is available on the *LGPN* website: <http://www.lgpn.ox.ac.uk/>.

occupy all his working hours: both *Cities of Alexander the Great* and his final book, to be considered below, were written slowly and over many years, in his 'spare' time from Greek personal names. Normally, his college fellowship would have lapsed with his university post. But by chance the Warden of the College, Sir Patrick Neill, began a four-year term as Vice Chancellor of Oxford University in 1985, and Fraser served as Acting Warden for the first half of this period.[120] He had already been Sub-Warden from 1980 to 1982, but that was a routine deputy post which was filled according to seniority. Fraser was a great success as Acting Warden. In a way, this was only to be expected. He knew how both the college and the university worked (he had been domestic bursar of the one and proctor of the other, see above, p. 152) and, as we have seen more than once already, he had an excellent head for affairs. More surprisingly, this uncompromising and superficially stern scholar became something of a cult figure among the junior fellows, who appreciated his indiscreet and privately displayed wit ('Fraserisms', as these sallies were known). In 1987 he edited a selection of the best memorial addresses commemorating twentieth-century fellows of All Souls, a beautifully produced book printed privately for the college. This carried anonymity to an extreme (the preface is unsigned, and even the fragment of his long-time favourite poet Pindar, which forms the book's epigraph, is unattributed and untranslated).[121] And yet Fraser listed it among his publications in *Who's Who*! From his personal point of view, the Acting Wardenship softened the blow of a retirement which he only pretended to welcome, and postponed the day when he would have to find a new home for his enormous library of Greek history and inscriptions. Some of his epigraphic books, as we have seen, were bought by the Academy for the use of *LGPN* researchers (see above, n. 9); other books were housed in an extension to the house in Blenheim Drive,[122] where he worked in the evenings and weekends on his

[120] The Acting Warden for the second period (1987–9) was Tony Honoré, FBA, who delivered an address at Fraser's memorial service in 2008.

[121] *Memorial Addresses of All Souls College Oxford, published for All Souls for private circulation* (Oxford, 1989). The Pindar fragment is number 131b in the standard edition of B. Snell and H. Maehler: 'the body of all men is subject to overpowering death, but a living image of life still remains' (trans. W. H. Race).

[122] Including many books of modern poetry and literature, in English and other languages. Fraser was exceptionally well read, with distinctly old-fashioned tastes even for his time. One surprising fruit of this reading is a book of which space precludes discussion in this memoir, *The Wares of Autolycus. Selected Literary Essays of Alice Meynell*, chosen and introduced by P. M. Fraser (London, 1965). Meynell (1847–1922), a Roman Catholic convert, was an essayist, poet and suffragist; there is a London 'blue plaque' to her outside the Spanish Catholic Chaplaincy in Palace Court, W2, off the Bayswater Road. The essays had originally appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

own monographs. In his last two decades of life, he would bicycle precariously between these two professional axes of his life—the house in north Oxford and the *LGPN* offices in the city centre, where he would give informal instruction to the staff, including and especially Elaine Matthews.

His final and posthumous book, *Greek Ethnic Terminology* (Oxford, 2009), brings together the two main strands we have traced in his work since the 1970s: the interest in Greek overseas city-foundations, and in Greek personal names; after all, ethnics are part of Greek nomenclature. The book, published by this Academy as a supplementary volume of *LGPN*, is in large part a detailed examination of a surviving literary text, the epitome of the *Ethnika* written by the grammarian Stephanus of Byzantium, and of Stephanus' sources. (The original, which was in sixty books, was probably compiled in the sixth century AD, the epitome up to four centuries later.) Fraser's aim, in which he succeeded overwhelmingly, was to demonstrate that the material preserved by the Epitomator is more reliable and valuable than had been previously supposed. This demonstration is mainly carried out in the fifty-page small-print Appendix I, on Hellenistic eponymous cities and their ethnics—that is, cities named after an individual male or female, usually royal, such as the many places called Antioch, Apameia, Arsinoe, Berenike, Laodikeia, Stratonikeia, and so on. Only the Alexandrias are excluded, because they had been the subject of his 1996 book. This gazetteer is a remarkable achievement just on its own, 'une précieuse liste', as Denis Rousset called it in his review,[123] acknowledging its usefulness and expressing the hope that it would lead to further research.

The book is, however, much more than a monograph on Stephanus and on the documentary evidence with which he must be supplemented, and against which he must be tested. It is offered as a contribution to Greek social history, as the author's preface announces (p. xii). His hope, he there says, has been to shed light on 'the varying Greek attitudes the concepts of ethnicity and citizenship'. He does just this. For instance, the book will be necessary reading for anyone interested in the status of slaves or of 'metics' (resident foreigners) in the old and new cities of the ancient Greek world.

Rousset was, however, right in his often critical review to warn that the reader looking for a synthesis on Greek ethnic terminology would be disappointed. It is rather, he said, a series of studies on a variety of subjects, which will be read with profit. Fraser left the typescript in an unfinished

[123] *Bryn Mawr Classical Review*, 2011. 12. 25. For more favourable assessments, see M. Ricl, *Klio*, 93 (2011), 228–33; M. Zahrnt, *Gnomon*, 84 (2012), 276–8; M. Fragoulaki, *Journal of Hellenic Studies,* 132 (2012), 229–30.

state, and at the height of his powers would no doubt have found ways of unifying the elements more effectively. But the book as we have it is full of interest at every level from the most general to the most detailed. No one but Fraser possessed the command of the often highly recondite and intractable sources (minor grammarians and geographers, as well as epigraphic and numismatic evidence from the entire Greek world over many centuries) to produce so many illuminating general observations, backed up with apt examples drawn from phenomenally wide reading and epigraphic study over many decades.

P. M. Fraser leaves behind him a massive shelf-ful of his published books, and a similarly massive box of his articles and reviews. Despite the separation of naming which he insisted on, and which we noticed at the start of this memoir, P. M. Fraser and Peter Fraser are not so easily detached by typographical fiat. Peter Fraser was a man of contradictions and even perversity, a blend of warm and forbidding, tolerant and harsh, generous and grudging, institutionally loyal, but also detached and even subversive towards his various intellectual homes. From the academic point of view, the greatest contradiction and paradox in P. M. Fraser is this: the rigorous scholarship and apparently limitless erudition were driven by a powerful motor of concealed romanticism. This was in turn the product of an imaginative fascination with, even love of, the individuals and communities of the post-classical Greek world. In his labours on *LGPN* he never lost sight of the individuals whose lives were there collected: he chuckled over some of the odder names, and wondered how and why, and as a result of what human experiences or religious persuasions, the parents came to choose them.[124] As for communities, the shrewd but in the end badly miscalculating Rhodians, the provincial and introverted Boiotians, the Kyrenaians, so strongly bound to their past, above all the sophisticated high-achieving elite citizen and immigrant population of Egyptian Alexandria—they were all real people to him, and he wanted to share this reality, without either spelling out this essentially generous aim, or making it at all easy for less gifted or learned folk to follow him. He did not indulge in facile illusions of continuity between the ancient Greek past and the present-day Greeks with whom he had so many warm friendships, but at the very end of his life he could not resist a comparison. The final page of the final chapter of his final book insists on 'the surviving force of local ethnics today. This may be at any level from the nation

[124] For an example, Podilos ('Footy'), see Hornblower and Matthews, *Greek Personal Names*, p. 129 n. *.

through the region to the city and finally to the village.' He goes on to illustrate this by a rare piece of autobiography: 'today a man may say … είμαι Ιθακήσιος[125] ['I am a man of Ithaka'], as a burly χωριάτης [villager], accompanying his εγγονάκι [grandchild] to see the same doctor as I was waiting to see in Argostoli [on Kephallonia][126] said to me a few years ago, thus repeating the words attributed to Odysseus'.[127] He died in Oxford on 15 September 2007, but it is on Kephallonia, in the Commonwealth War Graves cemetery, that his ashes are buried.

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Note. Elaine Matthews was originally commissioned to write this memoir, but she herself sadly died in summer 2011, leaving only some notes on Fraser's early life, up to the Second World War, and nothing at all on his academic work. I have gratefully drawn on these notes, which include her handwritten record of a meeting with Veronica Fraser (half-sister). Miss Fraser has kindly renewed her permission for this to be used, and she supplied me (at a meeting in September 2012) with further interesting information. Simon Bailey (Oxford University Archives) made Fraser's university file available to me, and I read (but have not directly quoted from) his college file, by permission of the Warden of All Souls, Sir John Vickers, FBA. I have received valuable help of other kinds, including e-mail replies to queries, from: Sir John Boardman, FBA, Alan Bowman, FBA, Peter Brown, Esther Eidinow, Alexander Fraser (son), Judith Curthoys (Christ Church archivist), Martin Maw (archivist of Oxford University Press), Cathy Morgan, Hilary O'Shea, Peter Parsons, FBA, Eva Rystedt, Tony Spawforth, Dorothy Thompson, FBA (author of Fraser's entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*[128]), and Stephanie West, FBA. I thank them all.

[125] The monotonic accents are Fraser's, despite the attitude described above, n. 23.

[126] A town made famous by both book and film version of Louis de Bernière's *Captain Corelli's Mandolin.*

[127] Fraser, *Greek Ethnic Terminology*, p. 319.

[128] Dorothy J. Thompson, 'Fraser, Peter Marshall (1918–2007)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford, January 2011: online edition January 2013, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/99081>, accessed 2 April 2013.