



HENRY CHURCHILL MAXWELL-LYTE

SIR HENRY CHURCHILL MAXWELL-LYTE

1848-1940

SIR HENRY CHURCHILL MAXWELL-LYTE was an original member of the British Academy, and served on its Council from 1907 to 1912. He was the only son of John Walker Maxwell Lyte of Berry Head near Brixham, Devon, and Emily Jeannette, daughter of Col. John Craigie, H.E.I.C.S.,¹ and was born at No. 1 Hyde Park Place West on 29 May 1848. His father, who died when he was a few weeks old, was the second son of Henry Francis Lyte, vicar of Brixham, and author of 'Abide with me', 'Praise my soul the King of heaven', and other well-known hymns.²

His early childhood was spent in London, in Devonshire, and on the Continent; and the *Keepsake* for 1854 contains some 'Stances Improvisées à un enfant, Henri Lyte, partant de Monceau pour les Alpes' by Alphonse de Lamartine, who was married to one of his cousins. A stay of a year and a half in Italy about this time inspired him, as he relates in his draft memoir³, 'with an intense love of the scenery and art of that country which remained with him to the end of his life'. Indeed, there can have been few years when he did not spend some time in Italy. His mother had an apartment in Rome, where for many years she habitually spent the winter. It was in Rome, too, that he first met his future wife; and from the time of his

¹ Col. Craigie (d. 1845) married Emily, daughter of Col. Charles Churchill (d. 1812), who was a grandson of General Charles Churchill (d. 1712), elder brother of John, Duke of Marlborough. Charles Churchill, the poet, is said to have belonged to this branch of the family.

² The hymns mentioned were sung at the memorial service held in London for Sir Henry Maxwell-Lyte. Henry Francis Lyte married Anne, daughter of Dr. William Maxwell of Falkland, co. Monaghan, a direct descendant of the Rev. George Walker, the defender of Londonderry. Sir Henry was also heir-general of the family of Mohun of Fleet, Dorset.

³ See p. 378.

marriage till the autumn of 1938 he made a practice of taking his annual six weeks' holiday in Italy.¹

From a preparatory school at Geddington he went to Eton at the beginning of 1861, entering Vidal's house and having William Johnson for his tutor. He stayed there five years, 'undistinguished', he writes, 'either in lessons or in athletic sports'.² But he already showed the direction in which his tastes were to develop by articles on the history of Eton College contributed to the *Eton Scrap Book*.³

The winter of 1865 was spent in Rome, and the next year (1866) Lyte matriculated at Christ Church, taking his degree as B.A. in 1870, after obtaining Second Class Honours in the now extinct School of Law and History. He had already begun to work at the Public Record Office as early as January 1868 on the history of his own family, and much of his last year at Oxford was given up to reviving the Oxford Architectural and Historical Society, then almost moribund.

He married within a few weeks of leaving Oxford (3 Jan. 1871) Frances Fownes, daughter of J. C. Somerville of Dinder House, Wells, Somerset, and set out on a long tour in Egypt, Palestine, and Turkey, which involved crossing Europe while the Franco-German War and the turmoil which it involved had not yet subsided. On his return he settled in London and began his career as a man of letters.

At the end of 1875 he brought out his first book, *A History of Eton College, 1440-1875*, which was immediately successful and remains the standard work on the subject. It was a pioneer work, and carried out under serious

¹ He sometimes stayed with Sir Henry Layard at Venice on these journeys.

² He rowed, but without getting his 'cap'. In later years he was a good lawn-tennis player.

³ The writer of an excellent memorial notice in the *Eton College Chronicle* of 7 November 1940 remarks: 'If he does not appear to have achieved any particular scholastic success here, it may well be because history was still an unrecognised subject, but it is hardly possible that such an inspiring tutor did not help him to find his vocation.'

difficulties, since the records of the College had not been too carefully preserved, and Lyte was not allowed access to some of the more recent documents. But it showed that diligence and accuracy of research which is characteristic of his work without any sacrifice of interest for the reader. New and enlarged editions appeared in 1889, 1899, and 1911, the last of which incorporated new facts collected for the *Victoria County History of Buckinghamshire* by A. F. Leach, though without accepting all Leach's conclusions. Each edition had something new, either from later books or from the store of information which the author was constantly collecting from documents or from the reminiscences of old Etonians. He often attended on the Fourth of June at Eton, and always retained the liveliest affection for his old school, to which he sent two of his sons, one of whom attained the dignity of 'Captain of the School', to his father's great satisfaction.

In 1879 Lyte was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, and in the same year read to the Royal Archaeological Institute the nucleus of a series of papers on *Dunster and its Lords*, printed in the *Journal* and afterwards collected in a volume for private circulation. This was the first public expression of that interest in Somerset, his wife's county, and that of his own ancestors the Lytes of Lyte's Cary, which determined the direction of his unofficial work in later years, and lasted to the end of his life. In the meantime his work on Eton had led to his employment by the Historical Manuscripts Commission, and its ninth report, published in 1883, contains an elaborate account by him of the muniments of the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's. The writer of his obituary notice in *The Times* describes it as 'perhaps the best thing of the kind ever done', and it remains the indispensable manual of all who have the privilege of using that magnificent collection. Its sole important defect is the omission of a number of early charters contained in a roll, then just discovered, which the Dean and Chapter reserved for publication by

one of their own body. These have since been used in the volume of early charters of St. Paul's edited by Miss Gibbs, issued in 1939. With this appeared a shorter report on the manuscripts at Eton not directly relating to the College. During the next few years he made a number of other reports for the Commission, notably one on the manuscripts of the Duke of Rutland at Belvoir Castle, which contained an account of his romantic discovery in a disused loft of a quantity of correspondence mainly of the Elizabethan age, among which was found a letter of Warwick, the King-maker, and a letter containing a new detail in the life of Shakespeare. Lord Pembroke's similar discovery at Wilton, a few years ago, was less exciting because of the later date of the letters found there. I have a personal interest in the Belvoir discovery, since it was from that source that Sir Henry produced, and handed to me for identification, a fragment of a chronicle, which proved to be the last 'gathering' of the unique manuscript of the chronicle of Adam of Usk, all the rest of which is in the British Museum, and had been edited for the Royal Society of Literature by Sir Edward Maunde Thompson. A second edition was at once issued containing the new material.

Such leisure as this employment permitted was devoted to a new book, *A History of the University of Oxford from the Earliest Times to the year 1530*, published in 1886. This, like the book on Eton, succeeded at once; it neglected the fictions inspired by the secular rivalry of Oxford and Cambridge, and gave a lively picture of a medieval university before its government fell into the hands of the colleges. But no later editions appeared, nor did the projected second volume. The work has been carried on by other hands, while the writer had, even before its publication, been called to the task which is his indisputable claim to the gratitude of historians.

In 1885 Sir William Hardy was on the point of retirement from the post of Deputy Keeper of the Public Re-

cords. He was already an old man when he succeeded his brother Sir Thomas Duffus Hardy, and a man of less energy. A hard worker himself, he lacked the power to make others work hard too. The Public Record Office was consequently, to judge by the stories told by the survivors from that period, not unlike the Inland Navigation Office in Trollope's *The Three Clerks*; discipline was slack and the Office abounded in petty jealousies, to some extent an inheritance from the original complex organization of six locally separate offices under one chief. The succession to Sir William Hardy had seemed assured to Alfred Kingston, one of the ablest of the staff, but his sudden death in April, 1885 left the authorities somewhat embarrassed. There were able men in the office, some of whom had already made their mark as scholars, but none of them seemed likely to get the Office to work smoothly. It was necessary to try the effect of a stranger, and Lyte's work for the Historical Manuscripts Commission marked him as a possible candidate.

None the less it was a complete surprise to him when Sir William Hardy called him into his room and asked him whether he would be prepared to accept the office of Deputy Keeper if it were offered to him by Lord Esher. He might well have hesitated, but fortunately he did not. He was nominated by the Master of the Rolls, and the appointment was approved by a Royal warrant dated 28 January 1886.

He found himself, as he says, 'when less than thirty-eight years of age . . . the head of a Government Department. Most of the staff were strangers to him, and he had much to learn about official methods, but he soon was firmly seated in the saddle.' He might have spoken more strongly. His appointment was resented as a criticism on the department, all the more galling because it was deserved; and when I joined the staff seven years later, the resentment had not completely died out. A weaker man would have failed, but Lyte had a certain toughness both

physical and moral which carried him through. He came as a 'new broom' to an Office, which to quote a parody written by one of the ablest of the juniors,

In good Sir William's golden days . . .
Did nothing in particular
And did it very well.

The records were housed partly in the Repository, built by Pennithorne in 1851-6 and awaiting completion, partly in the Rolls House and Chapel, and partly in some old houses in Chancery Lane which also provided quarters for a resident clerk. Work on these records was, of course, always going on; but it proceeded slowly, and large blocks of documents were unlisted and unexamined. Such lists as were in print were mostly in the inconvenient form of appendices to the annual reports of the Deputy Keeper, or among the old folio volumes issued by the Record Commissioners. The manuscript lists inherited from the old separate record offices were still the main means of reference, and vast accumulations of documents had accrued since they had been made. The grandiose scheme for the publication of medieval records, begun by Palgrave and continued by Thomas Duffus Hardy, had broken down, and only the Calendars of State Papers and the Rolls Series remained active. The staff of the Office had nearly all come in, under the old plan of recruiting for the Civil Service, at eighteen or nineteen, and so owed the whole of their higher education to their apprenticeship in the Office, except in so far as the short six-hour working day gave scope for reading to obtain a London degree or for a call to the bar. They were underpaid and had no prospects of any post more lucrative than that of principal clerk in an administrative department but for the slender chance of becoming Deputy Keeper. Their scholarship, though often sound, was narrow, and out of touch with historical and legal scholarship in Europe, and even in England. The library, inconveniently housed and little used, consisted mainly of the valuable collection got together by the

Record Commissioners, together with what had since come in by exchange with other countries and as Parliamentary Papers. There were no county histories except Lysons's *Britannia* and very few general historical works.

'From the very first', to quote the memoir, 'Lyte took the view that his predecessors had not devoted sufficient attention to the medieval records in their own charge. Between the years 1838 and 1885 little had been done to make known the contents of the invaluable documents of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries stored in the great repository in Chancery Lane. A few casual and inconvenient appendices to the Annual Reports of the Deputy Keeper, two volumes of genealogical extracts from Inquisitions of the reigns of Henry III and Edward I, six volumes of an unsatisfactory Calendar of documents and extracts relating to Ireland; and a Return of Members of Parliament represent the total output for the period.

'While there were in the Public Record Office itself, the British Museum, and in various other libraries many collections of extracts and notes from the rolls of Chancery formed for particular purposes, no attempt had been made to deal with these important records in a systematic fashion.'

He projected

'a series of Calendars of the rolls, prepared on a uniform model and indexed according to a uniform system. His desire was that the work of one of his assistants should be indistinguishable from that of another. While it would have been impossible for any one man to examine minutely the proof-sheets of the numerous volumes which were successively undertaken, there was hardly a page in them which had not been rapidly examined by himself with a view to correcting erroneous readings of proper names, or examining questionable translations.'

He could not extend quite the same care to the work of editors not on the staff, but he did his best to assist them in keeping their work in line with other volumes issuing from the Office.

The need of such a series of dated documents, in a form in which they could be quickly and easily used, was forcibly impressed upon him by the immediate task of sorting and arranging the various groups of unsorted miscellanea,

most of which were only dated by the handwriting, i.e. within a limit of from fifty to one hundred years; while other blocks were still untouched. It is scarcely possible for a modern research-worker to realize how much of his labour is made even feasible by the diligent and unswerving adherence to this policy of providing a firm framework of dated documents into which the undated letters and memoranda of greater interest could be fitted. The plan adopted was to calendar the entries on the rolls in the order in which they were written, without attempting chronological arrangement, as in the earlier Calendars of State Papers. The slight inconvenience to the user was more than balanced by the greater certainty that nothing was omitted by accident. Another point in which Lyte showed that uncommon quality, common sense, was his refusal to consider the expenditure of public money on the publication of material which was or could be classified by counties: in his view the legitimate field for the work of local societies. The only exceptions to this rule are the six volumes of *Feudal Aids*, prepared as a guide to the topography of England as a whole, and the *Catalogue of Ancient Deeds*, of which six volumes were printed, a class so hopelessly confused by earlier attempts at arrangement that the only course seemed to be to list them higgledy-piggledy as they were packed. In the forty years of his service he completed, as editor-in-chief, calendars of the Patent Rolls up to 1553 (omitting the reign of Henry VIII included in the *Letters and Papers*), of the Close Rolls to 1400, of the Fine Rolls (a later development) to 1377, and of the Charter Rolls to 1417, besides fourteen volumes of Chancery Inquisitions, three of Curia Regis Rolls, and a small volume of minor Chancery rolls. The *Calendar of Papal Registers* and the later *Calendar of State Papers—Rome* arose from a visit to Rome in 1890, and were meant to put the considerable body of transcripts made by Father Joseph Stevenson and Mr. W. H. Bliss at the service of those who could not consult them in London. The early series was, however, so

imperfect that it was necessary to make a calendar from the original registers, which, though at first much criticized, has been of great historical value. After twenty-five years of this work, when the Office had settled down to new ways, he found time for some individual work in a new edition of the *Liber Feodorum*, previously printed quite uncritically by Caley for the Record Commissioners. With the help of his staff, he identified a number of the originals from which the book was derived, and substituted for a mere copy of an unintelligently compiled manuscript a dated series of returns relating to knight's fees and serjeanties in the form of a critical text, with introductory accounts of the occasion of each group of documents. In this he was helped by the advice of his old friend J. H. Round, and had the services of his staff, particularly C. G. Crump, intellectually the most gifted of his subordinates, and a skilled and patient genealogist, Anthony Story-Maskelyne. This, like the long series of calendars, was team-work, though the team was smaller, and the leader's personal contribution to the task much larger.

When the text of the *Book of Fees* was finished Lyte turned his attention to a subject which had for a long time occupied his mind, viz. the relation in which the enrolment of Chancery writs stood to the writs themselves and to the warrants which authorized the Chancellor to affix the Great Seal. In the process of sorting and arranging these warrants he had collected a number of notes, which he now digested into a formal treatise, *Historical Notes on the use of the Great Seal of England*, published in 1926, a few weeks after his retirement. This book, his last and, as he says, 'most elaborate' work for the Public Record Office, illustrates both the strength and the weakness of his work as a writer. It is packed with laborious and carefully verified information, of the utmost importance for the diplomatic criticism of all documents proceeding from the Chancery as an administrative office; but it has never received from historians the full attention which it deserves. And this is

not entirely due to the arid nature of the subject-matter (which is indeed often extremely interesting historically), but partly to Lyte's unwillingness to commit himself to theories which he did not regard as proved, however valuable they might be as a framework for the mass of detail which he had collected.

In the course of his official work he managed to find leisure to contribute an account of his ancestors, *The Lytes of Lyte's Cary* to the *Proceedings* of the Somerset Archaeological Society in 1892, which J. H. Round, not usually a complacent critic, described as 'a masterpiece of modern genealogy';¹ and on other occasions papers on the Norman families of Busci, Falaise, Martin, Curci, and Fitzurse. He also resumed his studies of Dunster, the home of his wife's uncle, Mr. Luttrell, and brought out in 1909 a *History of Dunster* in two volumes containing a full and careful account of the place and of the families of Mohun and Luttrell, with many illustrations mostly from excellent photographs taken by himself. The care he took to obtain a paper sufficiently smooth to do justice to the process-blocks and free from china clay is a good example of his regard for small details. In 1918 he prepared for the Somerset Record Society a selection of documents relating to *The Honour of Dunster* 'to illustrate the actual working of the feudal system and its decline'. This has a special importance in view of the comparative scarcity of records of honour courts. In 1920 he edited, also for the Somerset Record Society, *Two Beauchamp Registers*, cartularies of the family of Beauchamp of Hacche, while after his retirement he contributed, in 1931, another volume of *Historical Notes on some Somerset Manors connected with the Honour of Dunster* and then continued the series of bishops' registers begun by other hands for the same society, completing those of Bishop Bekynton, of Bath and Wells, and his four immediate successors. He was still busy with this series of registers till a very few days before his death.

¹ *Studies in Peerage and Family History*, p. xi.

Something must be said of Lyte's administrative work, which, as exemplified by the scheme for medieval calendars, was of more immediate historical importance than his literary output. He obtained new buildings for the Public Record Office and rescued masses of material from the damp and rats of unsuitable places of deposit. He also made it possible to say with some approach to accuracy whether or not a document of any given nature was likely to be found in the Public Record Office. The magnificent series of *Lists and Indexes* (some, alas! like the *List of Sheriffs* unfortunately too soon out of print) replaced the awkward Appendixes to Reports. Fifty volumes were published between 1892 and 1926, and these were supplemented by typed lists of other classes placed in the search rooms. Lyte took credit to himself, and I think justly, because the only addition made to the Rolls Series under his direction was Maitland's *Memoranda de Parlamento*. It raised the standard of scholarship in a series which, despite its past merits and the contributions of Stubbs and other sound workers, had come to be partly a supplement to Civil List pensions, and partly a means of eking out inadequate salaries in the Public Record Office. In later years Lyte would have looked favourably on any proposal to print some of the fifteenth-century chronicles, had it been made by a competent scholar; but by that time it had got to be taken for granted that the series was closed, and that all the money to be had was to be used for calendars. He carried through two reorganizations of the establishment, and saw the salaries brought more or less into line with those of other departments. He reformed the library, and made it in J. H. Round's opinion the most convenient for a medievalist to work in, properly equipped with the means for identification of places and for general reference. And he made great improvements in the standard of indexing for record publications. He left the office well organized and working as a united team, and his successor was appointed from its own staff.

The charge of the Land Revenue Records was added to his duties in 1902, and immediately after his appointment as Deputy Keeper he was made a member of the Historical Manuscripts Commission (24 March 1886), and from that date till his retirement from the Record Office conducted the business of the Commission as Acting Commissioner.

His administration was too vigorous to escape criticism, and much of this may be found in the first report of the Record Commission, issued in 1912, to which he replied in the *74th Report of the Deputy-Keeper*. The destruction of the Rolls House and Chapel was considered inevitable by the architects employed by the Office of Works, and he deeply regretted the loss of the former building. He secured the recovery, from debris, of the medieval chancel-arch of the Rolls Chapel, which can now be seen on an inner wall of the new building. The tombs¹ and stained glass were preserved, and the space occupied by the chapel became a museum, for which he chose the exhibits and prepared the catalogue. He appended an historical account of both buildings to the *57th Report of the Deputy-Keeper*.

A more serious criticism, and one which makes a considerable figure in the report of the Record Commissioners in 1912, is that in the great sorting of documents which accompanied the move into new buildings insufficient care was taken to preserve the history of individual documents. It can only be said in reply that the task of making large classes of new material accessible was held to be of greater importance, and that the previous practice of the Office had not paid proper regard to recording the source from which particular documents came. Neither the new chief nor his staff had received a modern technical training as archivists.

The Record Commission had the good effect of suggesting the formation of an advisory committee of historians to assist the Master of the Rolls, a step which ensured a

¹ The discovery of some spoiled stones from the frieze of Henry VII's Chapel at the back of Yonge's tomb confirmed its traditional attribution to Torrigiano.

closer contact between the official and the academic bodies interested in the Public Records. This committee, which continued to meet for some years, helped officials and historians almost equally, enabling them to understand each other's needs and difficulties and to plan accordingly.

Maxwell-Lyte (as he became in 1898) was made a C.B. in 1889, and K.C.B. in 1896. In 1929 he received the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters of Oxford. He was President of the Pipe Roll Society and of the Somerset Record Society, and Chairman of the committee appointed by the British Academy for the preparation of a dictionary of Medieval Latin. In all of these he took an active part, and it was largely through his influence and advocacy that the scheme for a Medieval Latin dictionary was not limited to the period before A.D. 1000. He served on the Council of the Society of Antiquaries, of which he became a Vice-President, and was an Honorary Vice-President or Honorary Fellow of a number of learned societies. An honour which he highly appreciated was his election, in 1903, to the ancient Society of Dilettanti, whose meetings he continued to attend until after his ninetieth birthday.

By his early and very happy marriage he had three sons and three daughters, who survive him. The death of his wife in 1925, after more than fifty years of constant companionship, was a severe blow to him; and his success in renewing his interest in life under new conditions at the age of 77, and maintaining it till his death, is another proof of that tenacity which was shown, on its physical side, by his twice recovering from a broken hip-bone. The second accident occurred in his ninetieth year, in 1937 on a visit to his favourite valley of Aosta.

There is something inhuman in the effort to take a dispassionate view of the characteristics of an old and honoured friend, endeared by the memory of much kindness and of work happily shared. It is too like the man who

would botanise
Upon his Mother's grave.

It seems best to begin by quoting from his own comments on his literary work in his draft memoir.

'From what has been said above it will have been seen that Maxwell-Lyte showed a considerable interest in genealogical studies. He did not, however, take an exaggerated view of the value of such studies, or of their results. What he enjoyed in them was the mental exercise required for the weighing of evidence and the solution of difficulties. He did not inherit his father's or his grandfather's fancy for rare books.¹ His own library consisted mainly of historical books of reference and books on the fine arts. He had a considerable collection of engravings, mostly of the English school, and he occasionally bought specimens of Italian majolica.'

Maxwell-Lyte's taste for genealogy was, as we have already seen, bound up with a value for his own forbears and the antiquities connected with them.² His house in Warwick Square had windows containing the heraldic glass from Lyte's Cary, which were always a pleasure to him. But he can hardly have appreciated the extent to which genealogy can be used as a key to the composition of medieval political combinations, or he would have spoken of it less apologetically. His library too, though not rich in rarities, was an unusually good working library, well housed and well ordered. His interest in art, which he attributes to his early experience of Italy, was not limited to old masters or historical portraits. He had a special interest in medieval painting, architecture, and sculpture, and in majolica. Just before the outbreak of the present war, in August 1939, he flew to Geneva and back in order to see the Exhibition of Spanish Pictures there—and this despite his age and lameness. Many of his later journeys were made by air for the sake of saving time and avoiding

¹ The Berry Head Library was sold by Messrs. Southgate and Barrett in July 1849. The sale, comprising 4,308 lots, took 17 days.

² His ancestor Thomas Lyte drew up a great genealogy of James I and was rewarded with the 'Lyte jewel'. Another ancestor, Henry Lyte, wrote a 'Niewe Herball' known to book collectors and botanists as 'Lyte's *Dodoens*' (1578).

fatigue: a preference which again marks a victory of common sense over long habit. He was often to be met at Private Views, and he had an eye for the artistic possibilities of landscape which made him an excellent photographer. He used to say, laughing, that he could always be found on one of his Italian holidays by an inquiry for an Englishman with a large camera and tripod.

As the head of a department, the capacity in which I knew him best, he was a considerate and understanding chief; embarrassingly modest at times about his own work, even to the point of submitting his own drafts for the criticism of a junior colleague—a reversal of the usual procedure. Coming into the Office as a stranger, and none too welcome at first, he kept his social and his official life entirely distinct; though after the completion of the new buildings Lady Maxwell-Lyte and he held annual receptions in the Museum to which the staff were invited. These developed later into a series of official receptions by the Master of the Rolls, and were of great value as affording an opportunity for those not professionally concerned with Records to learn the nature of the work carried on in the Public Record Office. Of Maxwell-Lyte's personal qualities it is enough to say, in this connexion, that he transformed the somewhat unfriendly attitude of his department as he found it, into one of whole-hearted and ungrudging co-operation.

In attempting to estimate his work as a whole, the difficulty arises that the part of it which has had the greatest influence on the study of history—has indeed enormously widened its scope, especially with regard to the Middle Ages—is the part which has left no literary memorial. The great series of Calendars, the Lists and Indexes, are *biblia abiblia*, and the administrative work behind them only finds expression in a series of brief Reports of work done. But in real importance this outweighs the literary work which survives in print, because it covers a wider field, and makes progress possible where it was impossible before.

The work which remains in print, whether popular, like the histories of Eton and Oxford, or more technical, like the reports and the books on Dunster and on the Great Seal, or the editions of records, is marked by diligence, accuracy, and careful historical scholarship, but takes rank with that of the antiquary, rather than that of the professional historian. By birth and education, an education more calculated for acquiring a cultivated taste, in the manner of the eighteenth or early nineteenth century, than the technical equipment of modern historical scholars, he was inclined to follow the antiquarian tradition. And he had the virtues of his type: the capacity to look on his task broadly, and to carry through a common-sense policy without too much regard for abstract principles. He had, too, the dilettante's regard for detail; and both these characteristics may be observed in a short paper which he contributed to the *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* on the use of I and J, U and V, in manuscripts and by the early printers; a caution against pedantic over-exactness in the reproduction of the exact spellings of texts which were themselves inexact copies of originals in which no great uniformity of spelling was observed.

He died on 28 October 1940 at Dinder House, Wells, after a short illness, having retained to the last his interest in the work which he was doing on one of the later Wells registers. I had a letter from him about it dictated only a day or two before he died. It was this lively interest in all that he did which made it, after his retirement, such a pleasure to his old colleagues in Chancery Lane, or to his associates in the Somerset Record Society, to visit him in his home in Warwick Square.

In preparing this notice I have made use of a draft memoir which seems to have been written by Sir Henry Maxwell-Lyte about the time of his retirement. The passages in quotation marks are taken from this. I have also used a statement prepared by the late A. E. Stamp for his first report as Deputy Keeper of the Public Records, but never printed, and the notices printed in

The Times (30 Oct. 1940), the *Antiquaries Journal* (Jan. 1941), and in the *Eton College Chronicle* (7 Nov. 1940). I am indebted to Major J. Maxwell-Lyte and to the Misses A. and E. Maxwell-Lyte for information on various points, and also to the present Deputy Keeper, Mr. C. T. Flower. To all these I offer my warmest thanks.

C. JOHNSON