Lafayette

R. G. COLLINGWOOD, 1934

ROBIN GEORGE COLLINGWOOD

1889–1943

ROBIN G. COLLINGWOOD was born on 22 February 1889. His father, the late W. G. Collingwood of Coniston, north Lancashire, was the friend and biographer of Ruskin and much of his Ruskinian attitude was transmitted to his son. R. G. Collingwood grew up with a keen appreciation of all the problems of art, from the actual details of handicraft to the theory of the subject in its profoundest sense. The training in draughtsmanship which the son received was to be of great value to him as an archaeologist, and the individual and unorthodox approach of Ruskin to many of the philosophical and political ideas of the day made Collingwood later on a critic original and stimulating on all subjects. W. G. Collingwood in his later years was a zealous archaeologist and did important work on pre-Norman and Roman archaeology in the northern counties.

He sent his son to Rugby, where he laid the foundations of his fine classical scholarship and at an early age developed intellectual interests and hobbies unusual even in a gifted schoolboy. From Rugby he won a scholarship to University College, Oxford, his father's college. He obtained a first class in Classical Moderations, but it was not until he came to the Final Honour School of Literae Humaniores that his talents were fully developed and noticed. He was placed in the first class of course, and his examiners were able to observe that a mind of unusual power was maturing for the service of scholarship. Fortunately there was a vacancy at Oxford ready for him. The Master and Fellows of Pembroke in the summer of 1912 were looking for a tutor in philosophy, and Collingwood was interviewed at the time of his final examination still wearing his scholar's gown. So well were Collingwood's gifts attested by his sponsors that he was preferred to senior candidates, and Pembroke thus obtained as a Fellow one of the greatest scholars of his generation, who was to shed much lustre upon the college by his brilliant and versatile achievements.

Already he had begun his career as an archaeologist under his father's guidance and he had attended the lectures of Professor Haverfield on Roman Britain. In due course he was to succeed Haverfield as the leader and guide of all students in the subject. In 1911–12 he was assisting at the excavation of

the site at Corbridge which first aroused his interest in the Roman Wall, which later he was to set in its proper place in the whole picture of the archaeology of the Roman Empire. In 1913 he was given by Haverfield his first independent command, so to speak, the excavation of the Roman Fort at Ambleside. But this work in archaeology, as Collingwood himself always maintained, was a side-line or hobby. Although in it he was to make a reputation which many academic men might covet for their one and only activity, he was and remained primarily a philosopher. Indeed his view of mental activities as portrayed in *Speculum Mentis* and other writings makes it clear that he must by his own canons give priority to philosophical studies. Philosophy was the keystone of an arch of which history was a part. He was always insistent on the importance of historical ideas in philosophy, and this point of view placed a gulf between him and many of his philosophical colleagues at Oxford who regarded philosophy as a more self-contained activity. This placed him not so much at direct variance but rather out of touch with the more regular school of philosophy at Oxford which has been satirized by the remark, unfair no doubt but not wholly inapt, that their view of philosophy was that there must be no nonsense about knowledge. Collingwood also was extremely interested in the philosophy of religion and in the fundamental problems of Christian truth. He became a member of a circle of which Canon Streeter and Miss Lily Dougall were leaders and contributed much to their discussions.

On the outbreak of war in 1914 Collingwood passed into the service of the Admiralty Intelligence, where his skilful deduction and meticulous and exact method were extremely valuable. As most of this work was secret and much of it no doubt completely transient, little is known about it, but amongst other tasks he wrote a study of the juridical problems concerned with the navigation of the Scheldt up to Antwerp. In the autumn of 1918 he married Miss Ethel Graham, daughter of the laird of Skipness in Kintyre, where he was later to spend many holidays. His marriage vacated his fellowship, for he had not completed the seven years which the austere statutes of Pembroke College imposed, and still impose, upon celibate fellows. However, it was possible under the statutes to elect a married fellow and the college re-elected Collingwood after a delay imposed by the demise of the Mastership and the election of the present Master, Dr. Homes Dudden. On returning to Oxford Collingwood resumed all his academic interests both philosophical and

archaeological. It was a busy time for all Oxford tutors. The University was crammed with students returned from the Services and had the usual harvest from the schools. Collingwood later used to maintain that the ex-service students, although admirably serious and industrious, were a little bit blunt and dense and that it was some little time before the old degree of scholastic acuteness revived, a point worth noting at the present time. Collingwood in addition to his work for Pembroke became philosophy tutor to Lincoln College, until his appointment to one of the new University Lecturerships which were created to relieve tutors of their excessive burden of individual teaching.

After a short stay in north Oxford Collingwood found a house in the country at North Moreton in Berkshire about thirteen miles from Oxford. Thus began what was to be the most fruitful and serene period of his life. It was an arduous life, for his teaching duties were heavy and he was becoming more and more the principal consultant of the archaeologists of Roman Britain. The bibliographies appended to this notice reveal how active he was in writing. His way of life in term time was extremely regular. He slept four nights a week in College and three at home. He was always at home during the week-end; this cut him off from the week-end sociabilities of Oxford and contributed to his reputation as a somewhat remote and mysterious figure. The present writer can remember many occasions when his guest on Sunday night at Pembroke exclaimed with unconcealed disappointment, 'But where is Collingwood?'

Collingwood's academic life was devoted to his teaching and writing, to the necessary examining and administrative work involved by his subject. Although he had well-defined views on University education he was not actively concerned in University politics, nor could he be said to be ambitious for his college. He worked within the institutions which he found and did not set out to change them. Indeed his somewhat conservative and critical cast of mind made him averse from many of the ideas of University reformers at that time. Thus he never served on the Hebdomadal Council or the University Chest, and it did not fall to his lot to be Proctor. He was, however, a most valuable Visitor of the Ashmolean Museum, and he was a Delegate of the Press from 1928 to 1941. Here his wide range of knowledge made him a most admirable delegate. He was one of the busiest readers of learned manuscripts in philosophy and archaeology. He read German, French, Italian, and Spanish and was always the man for some subject off the beaten

University track whether it was yachting, fairy stories, or *graffiti*. He read manuscripts at a very high speed, and the reports he made to the Delegates were delivered with a lucidity and roundness of expression which are all too rare in the extempore speech even of highly educated Englishmen. He published his own books with the Press and the officers of the Press recall what an admirable author he was. His manuscripts came in completely finished, he altered nothing in proof and he added no footnotes, for he considered footnotes a sign of imperfect digestion of the material. His draughtsmanship was also excellent and was employed for his collection of *Roman Inscriptions* in Britain which it is hoped will be completed after the war.

He served his turn as Examiner in Greats and for University scholarships. His lectures were models for less methodical, less eloquent, and less audible teachers. Each lecture was a completed whole and delivered in tones both clear and fluent which made it easy to hear in any part of the College Hall. In his private tuition it was sometimes thought that his less gifted pupils were not always able to appreciate his presentation of philosophical problems, but the ablest men were full of admiration for his lucidity. In spite of all this, Collingwood never quite had the influence in the intellectual life of Oxford which might have been expected. To some extent Oxford is to blame. Philosophic tutors were distrustful of Collingwood's philosophy, while he, even before the publishing of his *Autobiography*, did not leave them in doubt as to the low estimation in which he held their method and much of their matter. The most intelligent undergraduates were often repelled by his lectures or at least not interested by his approach to the subject. In part this was due to Collingwood's refusal to flatter any passing interests or enthusiasm and to his disconcerting habit of telling people, as it were, to bathe in Jordan. He had a quick eye for the flaws of all neologies. His insistence on the importance of history also was unpalatable to young students in Greats if their cast of mind were purely analytical.

He was sometimes said to be a sophist, and his auditors felt that they were being tricked rather than properly confuted. His manner in discussion was agreeable but also somewhat insidious. He was concessive; his code word was 'certainly'. His interlocutor was led on to state certain propositions and then found them to be mutually inconsistent. In an argument with Collingwood one was nearly always defeated but very often not convinced. In general conversation his style of talk was delightful

and he was a most courteous companion and listener. He had the remarkable quality of talking freely and easily and yet with a perfection of diction which would have made it possible to report his remarks in print without any revision. This was due to two qualities. He had a natural command of elegant and literate English and his wide knowledge made him conversant with a wider range of subjects than almost anyone else in Oxford. He had also supreme intellectual self-confidence which prevented him from being taken by surprise, shocked, or rattled by anything that might be said. He rarely contradicted or engaged in emphatic dissent. He would not rudely dismiss a statement made to him, but would usually deal with it in the Socratic manner by asking questions often very embarrassing to the person who had raised the subject. This was not always agreeable to the rash and the self-opinionated.

In 1934 the Waynflete Chair of Metaphysical Philosophy fell vacant on the retirement of Professor J. A. Smith, and Collingwood was appointed to succeed him. This made him a Fellow of Magdalen and his chair gave him for the first time freedom from individual tuition. In 1934 he became a Fellow of the British Academy and in 1938 an Hon. LL.D. of St. Andrews. Unfortunately his health had already given signs of breaking down. In his last years at Pembroke he had several periods of poor health and a term's leave had not made much improvement. He was a poor sleeper and was unable to restore his energies by keeping to his bed. Sea travel was restorative to some extent and he took a voyage to the East Indies. On another occasion he had a narrow escape from drowning while sailing a yacht single-handed in the Channel. Moreover, he was constitutionally incapable of idling or lazing. His mind pressed him on to more and more voluminous reading and further writing. It was felt by many in his last few years that his powers and his judgement were not what they had once been. His short *Autobiography* published in 1939 was regretted by most of his Oxford friends. It revealed amongst other things a sharp change in his political outlook which swung suddenly from conservatism to radicalism, a change legitimate enough in itself but requiring a much better rationalization than he gave himself in the last chapter of the book. In spite of this his greatest contribution to political thought was still to be made. By what must have been a heroic effort of resolution and energy he produced his *New Leviathan*, an attempt to revive the Hobbesian approach to political theory in a manner relevant to this

century but following strictly the method and form of the original *Leviathan*. The final judgement on this book has not been passed, but when young men return from the war to think deeply of the complexities of political problems those who have the patience and skill to read it will have to admit that at least one of their elders has done his best to lead them to the inmost penetralia of the mystery of political obligation.

Collingwood resigned his Professorship in 1941 and retired eventually to his native home at Coniston which he had inherited from his father in 1932. He died and was buried at Coniston in January 1943.

Collingwood's services to philosophy and archaeology can only be properly valued by those who are versed in these subjects. To men of learning in general he remains as an example of nearly all the virtues and qualities of a great scholar, of intellectual courage, lucidity of thought, clarity and grace of exposition, thorough mastery of all the relevant data in his particular field, enlightened and liberalized by a wide general knowledge in art, letters, history, and science, which few in this age can hope to equal.

R. B. McCallum

NOTES ON COLLINGWOOD'S PHILOSOPHICAL WORK

WITH A BIBLIOGRAPHY

COLLINGWOOD always held that philosophy ought to be systematic; but his published works are rather a series of systems than the component parts of one. Looking back in his fiftieth year, he described his life-work as an attempt to bring about a *rapprochement* between philosophy and history, and it is his changing view of this relationship which governs the development of his philosophical thought. In his earliest book, *Religion and Philosophy* (1916), he had roundly declared that these disciplines were 'the same thing'; but his experience of working at them concurrently led him during the next twenty years to change his mind about their nature, and so first to doubt their identity and then later to re-establish it on a firmer basis.

On the side of philosophy the identification broke down as he moved away from the realist theory of knowledge which, with reservations, he had imbibed from his Oxford teachers. He soon began to hold that in philosophy, as the mind's self-knowledge, subject and object were not independent or self-subsistent. The philosopher's knowledge of facts was organic to the facts, so that his mind was the facts knowing themselves, while the facts were his mind knowing itself. History and other forms of non-philosophical experience were philosophical errors, for they falsely took their object to be something other than mind itself.

Changes in Collingwood's view of history equally necessitated a denial of its identity with philosophy. In *Religion and Philosophy* he had considered, only to reject, the view that history is through and through uncertain, and therefore not knowledge at all. But second thoughts arose out of his work at the history of Roman Britain and his awareness that ignorance of the antecedents of his period introduced into his work a coefficient of error whose magnitude he could never measure. This sceptical conclusion was not to be evaded by holding that some facts at least were certain, for their apparent certainty was an illusion, a false inference from paucity of evidence. There are so many accounts of the Battle of Mons that the truth about the angels is for ever unascertainable, and we are forced to conclude that the truth about the Siege of Pylos is in no better case, since the accepted version rests on a single ancient authority.

This is the position reached in *Speculum Mentis* (1924), a survey of art, religion, science, history, and philosophy as forms of intellectual experience. The book records the personal experience of an artist, a theologian, an historian, and a philosopher, for Collingwood was all of these; he was less of a scientist, and critics may have been right in regarding the section on science as the weakest of the five. Like Hegel's *Phenomenology*, which the book often recalls, it is a history, a history of the mind's advance to self-knowledge; and yet its author sums up his account of history by saying that 'history as a form of knowledge cannot exist', because it falsely regards its object as a realm external to mind and thereby makes it unknowable.

Before *Speculum Mentis* was published Collingwood had begun to lecture on moral philosophy. In these lectures he tried, following T. H. Green, to give his pupils ideals to live for and principles to live by; they contained some of his best work, and it is a loss that they remain unpublished, although some of their contents can be reconstructed from his interesting essay on *The Devil* and from scattered passages in his later books. They were rewritten from year to year and came to have a lengthening introduction afterwards worked out in detail and published as *An Essay on Philosophical Method* (1933). Written at the climax of his powers, this book is Collingwood's philosophical masterpiece; in it his style, always vivid, reached a concentrated energy and terseness of expression unparalleled elsewhere in his work, and his position was more thoroughly and carefully elaborated than it was later when he was writing against time, knowing that his working life must be short.

The kernel of the book is his conception of the 'scale of forms'. To define or describe a philosophical concept, he argued, is to give an account of the various forms (e.g. pleasure, utility, duty) in which the concept (e.g. goodness) is exemplified. These forms are specified on a scale whose stages differ not only in degree but in kind as well, so that they are not only opposed to one another as higher to lower, but are also distinct from one another as different specifications of the same generic essence. The lower of any two adjacent forms may be described as the appearance of which the higher is the reality, or the perversion of which the higher is the truth; the lower promises what the higher performs, so that each form sums up in itself its predecessors. The scale reaches neither infinity nor zero, because the highest specific form now attained is simply the generic

essence itself so far as our thought yet conceives it, while as we descend on the scale the concept never wholly disappears, although its forms become successively more immature. It follows that philosophy studies not an inert object capable of being split into the clean-cut divisions of a classificatory system, but an object which is living and developing, an object at least akin to, if not identical with, history.

The aim of Collingwood's argument is not to vindicate for philosophy a method different from that used in any other study; he is careful to point out that his rejection of 'scientific' methods in philosophy holds good even if those methods are not now or never were used in science. His real aim is to purge philosophical thinking of false presuppositions and so to destroy the errors which he found in the sceptical philosophies, whether analytic or critical, of his own time. He supports his contentions by reference to the practice of great philosophers in the past, but he is plainly advocating deliberately what they had practised more or less unconsciously, namely an interfusion of philosophical and historical thinking; and it is this which makes his book a philosophical landmark.

It is clear that by this time he had worked his way beyond historical scepticism. If the history of philosophy, on which he constantly drew, was a possible study, then the past, and not merely the past of philosophy, was presupposed to be ascertainable. His reasons for accepting this presupposition begin to appear in his Inaugural Lecture (1935), where he maintains that the criterion of historical truth is not correspondence with fact but the innate or *a priori* idea of the past; the historian's task is to use evidence in order to give content to this idea. The evidence available consists of the whole perceptible world, transformed into data or authorities solely by the work of historical thought and criticism (e.g. a statement in Thucydides is part of the perceptible world, but it remains a series of marks on paper, dumb and unintelligible until it is made into an historical datum by our historical knowledge that the marks are Greek letters forming words with certain meanings, &c.). Out of the present evidence, which is always fragmentary, the historian creates his picture of the past by an exercise of constructive imagination, but his work differs from a novelist's by being localized in space and time, self-consistent, and, because justified by the evidence, true.

More light on Collingwood's new view of history is supplied by his British Academy lecture (1936). The processes of nature,

he contends, are sequences of mere events, observable solely *ab extra*; they are the exclusive concern of the physical scientist, and a 'philosophy of nature' is impossible. But the processes of history are processes of actions, which have an inner side consisting of processes of thought. The historian paints a true picture of Caesar's actions only when he has looked at them from within and so discovered what thoughts in Caesar's mind determined him to do them. All history thus turns out to be the history of thought, and the only genuine study of mind in its conscious working is history; the 'philosophy of mind', including ethics, collapses into history, while psychology, legitimate and invaluable as the science of feeling or of mind's preconscious level, becomes an imposture when it professes to be a science of thought.

History, however, has been described as the work of 'constructive imagination'. By what right, then, can it claim to be knowledge at all? For an answer we must turn to *The Principles of Art* (1937), where, in one of the most original and elaborately detailed parts of Collingwood's philosophical work, he has expounded his theory of imagination (distinguished from make-believe) as that stage in the life of mind which triumphs over the tyranny of feeling and provides both the foundation and the materials for all subsequent developments of thought.

The Academy lecture still left a place outside history for metaphysics as the study of the One, the Good, or the Real. But in *An Essay on Metaphysics* (1940) even this territory is invaded by history's advance. The study of the Real is now dismissed as pseudo-metaphysics, and genuine metaphysics becomes an investigation of the basis on which civilization rests, i.e. of the 'absolute presuppositions' implicit in any scientific inquiry as its foundations (e.g. natural science takes it absolutely for granted that nature is uniform or law-abiding, logic that from true premisses true conclusions can be deduced). These are not answers to scientific questioning, since they must first be presupposed before the questions (e.g. what law does this movement exemplify?) can arise. Now, according to Collingwood's 'logic of question and answer' (used in this book and briefly expounded in his *Autobiography*), truth or falsity is always truth or falsity of statement, and a statement is intelligent and intelligible only as the answer to a question. Hence the ultimate presuppositions of the question can be neither true nor false, and the metaphysician's business is not to prove or disprove them (for that is impossible), but only to ascertain what they are and

to expound what they mean. Since this is a purely historical task, the identification of philosophy with history now seems to be complete.

The doctrine that the metaphysician's attitude to the presuppositions he discovers must be one of 'unquestioning acceptance' is a stumbling-block, but not the only one, in this book. By denying any overlap between relative and absolute presuppositions and by describing the method of metaphysics as 'analysis', Collingwood seems here to be traversing his *Essay on Philosophical Method*. Moreover, the body of his *Essay on Metaphysics* is not an historical but a philosophical argument, so that philosophy and history seem to diverge after all. Realizing these difficulties, Collingwood started to write *The Principles of History*, in which he intended to expound in detail his theory of history as well as to clear up problems of method and to show how what have hitherto been regarded as philosophy and history might now be synthesized in a new study transcending and incorporating both. Since it is doubtful if the manuscript is sufficiently complete for publication, his life-work is likely to remain without its coping-stone; and it is probably a pity that he was diverted from completing it into writing *The New Leviathan* (1942). In writing books, however, as their prefaces show, his aim had always been practical, and when the war started he felt bound to write on politics and civilization in order thereby to make what contribution he could towards defeating the threatening onslaughts of barbarism.

Although *The New Leviathan* has been better received by reviewers than any other philosophical book by its author, it is less original than its predecessors. Of its four sections, Man, Society, Civilization, and Barbarism, the first had been largely anticipated in *The Principles of Art* and the *Autobiography*; the second and third are in substance a fresh analysis of certain features long recognized in our political tradition; and the fourth is purely historical. Still, it was much that an Oxford philosopher should publish a treatise on politics; it was more that, gathering up all his powers in resistance to the ill health which, as certain passages betray, had begun to affect his judgement, he produced in a brilliant tract for the times a sustained, reasoned, and vigorous plea for our civilized way of life.

When we consider Collingwood's theory of imagination, his logic of question and answer, and his writings on the nature of history, we may safely affirm that philosophers in future will be unable to close their eyes to history and the problems which its

existence poses to philosophy. And when we add to these his *Essay on Philosophical Method*, the *specimina philosophandi* in his *Essay on Metaphysics*, and the richness of his books and articles on aesthetics, we may conclude that his was the most original and constructive mind in English philosophy since Bradley.

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T. M. KNOX

APPRECIATION OF R. G. COLLINGWOOD AS AN ARCHAEOLOGIST

THE clue to interpretation and understanding of Collingwood's position in archaeology is his endowment with special artistic gifts, partly hereditary and partly developed by constant application, superimposed upon a philosopher's outlook. His earliest ventures in archaeology were distinguished by able surveys and drawings and by closely reasoned and concise descriptions: and these gifts induced Haverfield to place the excavation of the Roman fort at Ambleside in the young man's care. Collingwood carried out the task with diligence and ability: details were, indeed, revised from year to year, but the ultimate result was sure. In particular, his treatment of the Agricolan fort, buried below the Hadrianic, was an essay in reconstruction neither imitated nor equalled. While considering Ambleside, Collingwood composed a paper upon the neighbouring fort at Hardknot and the history of the road across Wrynose Pass. Here, however, emerged in rather crude form a tendency, which marked and sometimes marred his work, to drive the evidence hard and to build upon it a series of conclusions whose very artistry disguised the inherent weakness of foundation. But it was also characteristic of Collingwood's courage that he later retracted many points in the paper, giving his reasons for doing so in full.

Presently his works of synthesis began to appear. It was no mean task to write books which were to rank with Haverfield's for grace and precision, even if they never quite achieved Haverfield's maturity and poise. But his prose had all the master's clarity and was accompanied by a power of artistic criticism and draughtsmanship which Haverfield had not possessed. His first edition of *Roman Britain* was a masterpiece, and it may be doubted if its brilliance was ever eclipsed by subsequent enlarged versions. His powers of synthesis were also particularly attracted by Hadrian's Wall. Here he excavated once only: he was content to summarize and formulate the results obtained by others, who were delighted to lay them in full before so able a critic and exponent. Starting from his own papers, which analysed the literary evidence about the Wall, related numismatic evidence from the Wall to that from the province at large, and gave the death-blow to current theorizing on these questions, he came to interpret almost year by year to the general public the steadily evolving body of knowledge on

the Wall produced by the excavators in technical annual reports. This was an invaluable service: sometimes, indeed, his ideas marched ahead of those entertained by the workers: it was not their theory, for example, that the dual Wall and Vallum were to be explained by the duality of legatine and procuratorial administration. But apart from this instance, where his agile mind raced like hare against tortoise, this relationship was notable for its happy concord: indeed, his earnest and concentrated interest in the problem led one continually to forget how much engaged his attention in how many different fields. For example, he was also writing an inimitable series of topographical studies of the Roman forts in Cumberland and Westmorland, and these monographs were in turn the offshoots of a much larger enterprise. It had been Haverfield's intention to revise and bring up to date the Corpus of Latin Inscriptions for Britain. When he died, work had begun but had not gone far: and Collingwood, entrusted with its completion, embarked upon a bold plan, now in fruition, which places the British volume far above its compeers. Each inscription was to be illustrated, not by photography but by a sensitive and meticulous drawing from Collingwood's own pen: a process for which he evolved a technique, mounting his own accurate rubbings of the stones upon a transparent screen and thence producing a rendering in black and white. Many of these drawings have been published, since it was his policy to spread outlay by building up gradually a stock of printer's blocks, and the ability of their execution is a matter of common knowledge and especial admiration. Fortunately, he had drawn all the important stones before his death and when all are published, under the able editorship of Mr. R. P. Wright, the world will fully appreciate the magnitude and value of the ambitious task. None but Collingwood would have contemplated it, for who else possessed the genius necessary for the task?

Amid the spate of opuscula upon inscriptions and northern sites, three larger works deserve mention. His *Archaeology of Roman Britain* brought up to date the vast amount of accumulated material on this scattered subject, and introduced a valuable classification of brooches. A new edition was in contemplation when the present war put an end to such projects: and the fact that many chapters needed revision is a tribute to the volume of study and excavation which Collingwood inspired and in no sense a reflection upon their quality when written. His ninth edition of the *Handbook to the Roman Wall* presented the results

of research on Hadrian's Wall up to 1930; and in this field his inspiration again had helped to create an even more urgent need for a new edition, since the basic hypotheses of 1930 are quite out of date. Finally, the history of the province was reviewed at large in the Romano-British section of *Roman Britain and the English Settlements*. To those learned in the subject, this book is possibly the most stimulating that Collingwood ever wrote. The general reader, however, may discover too late that it has one major defect. It does not sufficiently distinguish between objective and subjective, and combines both in a subtle and apparently objective presentation. There are, in fact, many points in which his text goes far beyond the evidence or ventures into realms where evidence is deceitful upon the weights. Striking examples of this are his explanation of the duality of Hadrian's Wall and Vallum, already mentioned, his conclusion that the foundation of the *colonia* at York is connected with troubles under Julius Verus, or his reconstruction of events leading up to the story of King Arthur and his Knights after the cessation of Roman rule. Bury himself, whose extravagancies Collingwood had severely castigated, perpetrated no bolder flight of fancy than the last. Again, political passion led him at least once to disregard abounding evidence. Hating Fascism, he subjected Agricola to systematic denigration, despite the abundant evidence of his competence and energy. So much must be said, if the book is to be justly assayed and if due weight is to be given to the many parts unaffected by theories or dislike.

It was an inevitable result of his career that Collingwood's powers of analysis and appreciation outshone his ability in fieldwork. His attitude to excavation was profoundly influenced by the selective method of excavation, introduced and perfected by F. G. Simpson on Hadrian's Wall: and the first lesson which he drew from these methods, that excavations should be conducted with specific problems in mind upon sites likely to provide an answer, was salutary and useful. But Collingwood's corollary, that to pose a problem permitted its answer to be predicted, was a product of the study rather than the field. For there are problems thus soluble, particularly those purely philosophical problems which it was Collingwood's daily task to consider. But to the field-worker excavation, no matter how carefully planned in advance, is always a plunge in the dark: and, while problems under consideration form a more regular pattern on Hadrian's Wall than on most Roman monuments, even there no excavation has ever followed a preconceived

course: the expected is always accompanied, and often overshadowed, by the unexpected: and while Collingwood's favourite *dictum*, that 'what you are not looking for, you do not see', is of wide application, an excavator's first duty is to see everything without the blinkers imposed by prearranged concentration of vision. Collingwood's own excavations, however, illustrate that he was by no means alive to these and other pitfalls. His mistakes at Ambleside can be dismissed as due to apprentice zeal. But his planning of the excavations at Bainbridge left much to be desired. To examine the headquarters building in isolation, relating it neither to stratification within the fort nor in turn to the history of the rampart, was in fact to miss the opportunity of even a preliminary survey of the fort's history. Still less fortunate was his excursion into pre-history at King Arthur's Round Table, near Penrith. There he had made up his mind in advance what he was to find and found it with fatal precision. When the writer, one of his oldest friends and admirers, came to translate the German report upon a second examination of the site a year later, it was sad and inexorable reading, a very verdict of Nemesis. Granted that Collingwood was then physically ill and psychologically bedevilled by complicated private and professional entanglements, one has nevertheless the feeling that he had fallen into a pit of his own digging, from which not even the sagacity of his younger days would perhaps have saved him. This was high tragedy, the remorseless fate of those whose brilliance illuminates many fields but not with steady light and, conversely, not with steady perception.

The value of Collingwood's work and personality to archaeology thus lies first and foremost in that task to which he most assiduously applied himself, namely, the Roman inscriptions of Britain. He has there laid the foundations of an imperishably accurate record, and each of his catalogues and many monographs on the subject is a gem. Secondly, his earlier papers of definition and synthesis are milestones on the road of knowledge: their impermanence is due to the fact that they are records of progress, which we leave behind as we advance. But last, and to his contemporaries by no means least, must come the overwhelming inspiration of his personality. The writer well remembers how, as a shy undergraduate, he attended, two years before the appropriate time, lectures which were really 'Greats' lectures. Collingwood was lecturing on Hadrian's Wall: the high-pitched incisive tones, the spoken thoughts as clear cut as his beautiful written prose, the enthusiasm for the subject at

concert-pitch, all these things placed these lectures far above the average of the epoch. Later, he came to know Collingwood, consulting him over a piece of written work. How delicate the appraisal, how sensitive and how kindly the criticism of a piece of work which was in fact a waste of time, and showed only a knowledge of the subject not yet allied to critical faculty. A negative verdict from him became a positive encouragement to start again, on the right lines. And so acquaintance deepened into friendship and affection. Only his friends know how much he did for them. His house in Oxford became a focus of discussion, and a haven of refuge when in difficulty. One sometimes thinks that we made too much of those chances, thoughtlessly added too much of extra burdens, saddling him with so many of our problems, 'kettles to boil', as he used humorously to call them. Certain it is that overstrain and ill health told upon him markedly after 1932, and that thenceforward those who loved him best tried to save him most. Those who knew him best will be least willing to sit in judgement upon the collapse which came at last, but will remember him as he was in the fullness of his powers, an able scholar, a brilliant philosopher and archaeologist, a kindly and understanding husband and father, the centre and attraction of a number of devoted pupils and disciples. To have been so much is to have lived and to have lived thus is to have lived well. *Non cum corpore extinguuntur magnae animae.*

I. A. Richmond

R. G. COLLINGWOOD: BIBLIOGRAPHY OF WRITINGS ON ANCIENT HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

THIS list is arranged chronologically under years and in each year-group under the headings of the different periodicals.

AA = *Archaeologia Aeliana.*
AJ = *The Antiquaries Journal.*
CW = *Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society's Transactions.*
EHR = *English Historical Review.*
JRS = *Journal of Roman Studies.*
PSAN = *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquities of Newcastle upon Tyne.*

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