

PLATE XXVIII



Photograph by Walter Stoneman

ERNEST FRASER JACOB

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1894-1971

ERNEST FRASER JACOB was born on 22 September 1894, the only son of Ernest Henry Jacob, Professor of Medicine at Yorkshire College, Leeds, and of Emma Fraser. Ernest Jacob's family included a number of men distinguished in various fields—clerical, antiquarian, and military. His great-great-grandfather was Edward Jacob, the Kentish antiquary and naturalist (1710-88); his great-grandfather was John Jacob, the Guernsey antiquary (1765-1840); his grandfather was Philip Jacob, Archdeacon of Winchester; his collateral ancestors included Major-General Sir George Jacob of the Indian Army (1805-81); Brigadier-General John Jacob, also of the Indian Army (1812-58); and William Stephen Jacob (1813-62), the astronomer, who also worked in India. Ernest's family had strong Wykehamist connections; his father, uncle, and grandfather were educated at Winchester.

Ernest's father died in March 1894, before his son was born, and Ernest was brought up by his mother with help of his uncle, Bishop Edgar Jacob (1844-1920), who looked after his education, and had a great influence on Ernest's early life; Ernest was devoted to his memory. Bishop Jacob was indeed a remarkable example of the best type of vigorous Anglican churchman of the Victorian and Edwardian period; to call him 'Trollopian' would do him very much less than justice. Born in 1844, he was educated at Winchester and New College, Oxford; ordained by Bishop Samuel Wilberforce in 1868, he went out to India as chaplain to the Bishop of Calcutta from 1872 to 1876, and after returning to England was for eighteen years (1878-96) Vicar of Portsea (a Wykehamist living), which he found with a dilapidated, half-empty church and one curate, and left with several new or rebuilt churches and twelve curates; it was he in fact who began the celebrated 'Portsea experiment', making it a training-ground for able young clerics. He went on to be successively bishop of two recently created dioceses: Newcastle (1896-1903) and St. Albans (1903-19); he was a man of great business capacity and legal acumen, combined with kindness and sympathy. I have dwelt on Bishop Jacob because he is important as providing the background to Ernest Jacob's early life; he helps to explain, for instance, Ernest's deep, active, and

lifelong devotion to the Church of England; and it was probably his uncle's connection with St. Albans that first interested him in medieval history and antiquities; it can hardly be an accident that one of Jacob's first appearances in print was to collaborate with M. R. James on Matthew Paris's illustrated life of St. Alban (1924). One incident of his childhood that Jacob recalled was being taken to tea with the veteran disciple of John Keble, Charlotte M. Yonge, then living near Winchester.

After going to a preparatory school at Twyford in Hampshire, Jacob went on to Winchester College in September 1907, at the age of 13 (slightly younger than the average), and was placed in the house of the Reverend F. P. David, and left in 1913 at the age of 18.

It is noteworthy that throughout his time at Winchester, and until he took Classical Moderations at Oxford in 1915, Jacob was a classic, not a historian; indeed there was comparatively little specialized historical teaching at Winchester in his time. He won the King's Gold Medal for Latin Essay, and the Warden and Fellows' Prize for Iambics, and the Holgate Divinity Prize; his English verse also was adjudged the best, but the authorities awarded the King's Medal elsewhere, on the score that Jacob had already the King's Medal for Latin Essay! It was at school that Jacob learnt German as well as French, which was to stand him in good stead in later years. The master who probably had most influence on him was Montague John Rendall, who was headmaster during Jacob's last three years at school; Rendall had a great interest in artistic things, especially in early Italian pictures, and this probably helped to give Jacob that interest in medieval art which he always had. The Archaeological Society at Winchester College was already beginning to be active, and was later to produce some leading archaeologists, but it is not clear that Jacob played much part in it.

In 1913 Jacob went up with a classical scholarship to New College, Oxford, and in Hilary Term 1915 took Classical Moderations, with a Second Class. The First World War had now begun, and Jacob left Oxford to go into the Army; he was commissioned in the Hampshire Regiment, reaching the rank of Captain, and fought with distinction; he was twice wounded, and was mentioned in dispatches. Dr. A. L. Rowse has told us how Jacob went in 1917 for his convalescence to Fowey in Cornwall, where Quiller-Couch befriended him.

After the war Jacob returned to Oxford, to New College. On

the strength of Classical Moderations and his war-service Jacob was entitled to take the B.A. degree, which he took in 1918; but for the next two years, in fact until his election to All Souls, he was (in theory, at least) reading for the Final Honour School of Modern History, as he explained when applying to All Souls. At that time specialization did not begin so early as it does now, and it was not uncommon for a man to take Honour Moderations and even Greats before going on to read Modern History. Nevertheless, this was an all-important and wholly fortunate change in the direction of Jacob's studies. Hitherto, as has been pointed out, both at school and at Oxford before the war, Jacob's work had been in classics, in which his performance had been creditable but not outstanding. Now, when he was able to turn to history, he did so with resounding success; though he never in fact took the History School, he won two Historical Essay prizes and an All Souls Fellowship in 1920. The two Prize Essay subjects then set, as it happened, were both in modern history: the Stanhope Essay was on the seventeenth-century politician, Robert Spencer, second Earl of Sunderland; the other, the Gladstone Essay, was on coalition ministries in the history of Great Britain. Jacob's success illustrates his versatility, for it would be difficult to imagine two subjects further removed from the fields in which he was later to work.

Jacob was very fortunate in having Ernest Barker as his tutor at New College, until the latter left Oxford in 1920, for Barker was one of the best tutors in Oxford, and demonstrated a standard of teaching that Jacob never forgot. Barker, in his memoirs, has left an affectionate and enthusiastic account of his pupils, Jacob among them, especially those in the '*annus mirabilis*' of 1919, when so many bright young men were back from the war. Clearly Ernest Barker had a profound influence on Jacob, and was probably responsible for getting him interested in medieval history, though this, as we shall see, was reinforced by Vinogradoff. Perhaps Jacob's future concentration on thirteenth-century history owed something to Barker, who had written a book a few years before on the Dominican Order and Convocation, characteristically inspired by having a live Dominican, Father Bede Jarrett, as his pupil—a good example of the two-way traffic of the tutorial system. Barker was also, of course, much interested in the history of political theory, and probably planted in Jacob his lifelong interest in that subject; it is significant that one of Jacob's earliest publications was an essay on Nicholas of Cusa, contributed to a book of essays on political

thought to which Barker wrote the introduction and drew special attention to Jacob's essay.

In 1919 and again in 1920 Jacob sat the All Souls Fellowship examination, being elected on the second occasion. In these post-war years the competition was unusually strong; the other candidates included some remarkable persons, such as Leslie Hore-Belisha and Aldous Huxley, as well as more strictly academic men like Humphrey Sumner and E. L. Woodward. When applying to All Souls in 1920, Jacob mentioned his future plans as being teaching and research on the Normans in Sicily. This seems to be the only record of this particular project, which may have been suggested by Barker, or possibly by the work of Haskins or Evelyn Jamison; in any case it was short-lived, for it soon gave place to thirteenth-century England, as we shall see.

It was in these post-war years, as a young graduate, that Jacob attended the seminars of Professor Vinogradoff. He was immensely proud of this, and in later years would tell anecdotes of the great man; clearly he owed a lot to Vinogradoff's influence; indeed it would be hard to say which he owed more to—Ernest Barker or Vinogradoff: perhaps more to Barker personally, and to Vinogradoff technically. Vinogradoff was conducting a series of seminars from 1919 to 1923, successively on the Age of Bracton, the Age of Edward I, of Edward II, and of Edward III. These seminars were attended by about ten people, some of them young dons, some research students, some undergraduates. At the beginning of each term Vinogradoff assigned to each individual a subject, which he or she worked up into a paper, whose reading would take about half an hour. The author of the paper read it to the seminar on his assigned date, and he was followed by Vinogradoff himself, who discoursed upon the paper that had just been read. He had already had a copy of the paper, so his discourse was not extempore, but had been thought out in advance, which made it all the more interesting. The members of the seminar also worked through records such as the *Rotuli Parliamentorum* and related documents. At this time, too, E. A. Lowe was conducting seminars on palaeography, and R. L. Poole on diplomatic. There were indeed giants on the earth in those days.

The D.Phil. degree had just been introduced into Oxford (it was said, to satisfy American demands), and Jacob was one of the earliest medieval historians to take this degree; he chose as his subject 'Baronial Reform and Rebellion, 1258-67', and he

may well have been inspired to do this by attending Vinogradoff's seminars, one of which had been on the Age of Bracton. Jacob was formally admitted to work for the degree in 1921, the standing committee on the D.Phil. and B.Litt. degrees recommending that 'no supervisor need be appointed'—perhaps it was not thought necessary or seemly for a Fellow of All Souls; but one may suspect that, in fact, he received a good deal of advice from Vinogradoff. Finally, in July 1923, the examiners, Vinogradoff and W. H. Stevenson (of St. John's) reported favourably, and Jacob received the degree. In due course in 1925 the thesis was published by the Clarendon Press, under the title *Studies in the Period of Baronial Reform and Rebellion, 1258-67*, as volume viii in Vinogradoff's series, Oxford Studies in Social and Legal History. It is based partly on judicial records connected with the Provisions of Oxford, partly on similar records related to the settlement of the *Dictum de Kenilworth*. It shows great skill in making such records throw light on social and administrative history; it stresses throughout the importance and the needs of the mesne and lesser tenants, and it provides an interpretation of the controversial *communitas bachelerie*. It is probably the most vigorous and original of all Jacob's books, and is a very remarkable achievement for one who was at that time a comparative beginner.

While still remaining a Fellow of All Souls, Jacob was a lecturer in Medieval History at King's College, London, from 1922 to 1924, working with Professor Hearnshaw. Then from 1924 to 1929 he was a Student of Christ Church, Oxford, and lecturer in Medieval History; this entailed his temporarily giving up his All Souls Fellowship, to which, however, he was restored when he went to Manchester in 1929. During all this period at King's College and at Christ Church, his main interests were in the thirteenth century. I have already mentioned his book on Baronial Reform and Rebellion; this was accompanied by the publication of two documents on that period, in the *English Historical Review* (1922, 1926); he read a paper on the reign of Henry III to the Royal Historical Society in 1927, in which he dealt among other things with Matthew Paris and with the importance of Henry III as a patron of art; and he went on to translate Charles Bémont's life of Simon de Montfort, the translation coming out in 1930. But his interests ranged wider than this; he quickly picked up the interest in medieval scholasticism that reached England in the early 1920s; one of his earliest articles, belonging to his King's College, London,

period (1924), was 'Scholasticism and Personality', which in fact discusses the work of Gilson and Clement Webb. In 1924, as already mentioned, he collaborated with M. R. James on the illustrated life of St. Alban; in an appendix on John Dunstable's hymn to St. Alban, he suggests that the hymn was rewritten by John Whethamstede, 'who seems to have been addicted to writing on special occasions hexameter very similar in ornateness of style and metrical monotony to those of the hymn'; this is an interesting anticipation of his later interest in Whethamstede. In 1926 he edited, with G. C. Crump, *The Legacy of the Middle Ages*, to which he contributed a chapter on medieval political theory; the volume is also memorable because Powicke wrote for it one of his best essays, 'The Christian Life in the Middle Ages'. In 1928 he contributed to *History* an essay on Abbot Suger, which, rather surprisingly, is more concerned with Suger's administration than with his artistic theory and achievement. And perhaps I may contribute here two personal reminiscences that show how his interests ranged at this time. When I first met him at All Souls in 1924, I remember talking to him about Edmund Bishop's *Liturgica Historica* (with which my head was full at the time); Jacob at once responded with an enthusiasm and a familiarity which warmed my heart and would probably have been difficult to find in most Oxford historians of this period. And when I went to see him in his Christ Church rooms in 1927, I found him bubbling over with enthusiasm about medieval German art and architecture, particularly about Bamberg; it was this interest that produced two years later a characteristic article in *History* on 'Medieval German Art: a Beginner's Notes'. But of all the things that Jacob wrote in this period, two of the most valuable were the two chapters he contributed to Volume VI of the Cambridge Medieval History in 1929, on Pope Innocent III and on Henry III; in the first he brought out not only Innocent's political achievements, but also his achievements as the organizer of the Roman Curia (the dots on St. Peter's beard) and of the whole Church, in a way that has hardly been equalled in English. In the second he showed a sensitivity and sympathy for Henry III, and among other things (following up the work of Lethaby) an appreciation of Henry's genuine importance in the history of English art. It should be remembered that Jacob's work at this time on Henry III was running parallel with that of Powicke and R. F. Treharne at Manchester, but it derived, I think, from an independent source, namely Vinogradoff, and Jacob had some

important things to say. Much of Jacob's work at this time shows his interest in art history, which may go back to Montague Rendall at Winchester, as has been suggested. It is curious that this is less apparent in later days, when he was concentrating on the fifteenth century. But after all, it would perhaps be difficult to write 'a beginner's notes' on English Perpendicular.

One is apt to think of Jacob's work in this early Oxford period as being wholly devoted to the thirteenth century, and of his work on the Conciliar period as belonging wholly to his Manchester period and after. But in fact he showed this 'Conciliar' interest very early; as early as 1925 he contributed a notable chapter on Nicholas of Cusa to Hearnshaw's volume, as has already been pointed out. Jacob's interests at this period are reflected in the lectures he gave—and it should be remembered that at Oxford a lecturer's choice of subjects is entirely his own. From 1924 to 1928 he lectured regularly on thirteenth-century England, as one might expect; he also lectured, more occasionally, on the Richard II Special Subject, and on the recently established Special Subject on St. Augustine (1927), in which he was much concerned, and on Innocent III in 1927, no doubt when he was writing his chapter for the Cambridge Medieval History. He put on one course for advanced students in 1926 on 'Judicial Record: the Plea Rolls'. But we also find him lecturing on the Conciliar Movement and Conciliar thought, from 1925 to 1928, which shows the direction in which his mind was working. About his work as a tutor at this period we do not have much record, except for one valuable and unexpected piece of evidence. K. B. McFarlane in his last year as an undergraduate was sent to Jacob, then newly established at Christ Church; and many years later he confided to a friend that it was Jacob who really made him feel that it was worth while going on with medieval history. That was a tribute indeed from one who was far from uncritical and was later to differ widely from Jacob in his attitude to the fifteenth century.

In 1929 Jacob left Oxford for Manchester, and began the second stage of his career. In 1928, on the death of H. W. C. Davis, F. M. Powicke had been appointed Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford, thus leaving vacant the Manchester chair of Medieval History. Powicke's chair was not something to be filled lightly, nor was Jacob's succession a foregone conclusion. A committee of the Manchester Senate met at intervals between October 1928 and February 1929; Tout, Powicke, and

other leading medievalists were consulted; and half a dozen names were considered, two of whom (including Z. N. Brooke) withdrew from candidature, and finally it was agreed to appoint Jacob as from September 1929.

The position to which Jacob succeeded was a very important one, but at the same time not an easy one; it required all the considerable tact that Jacob could command. The work of Tout, Tait, and Powicke, both as scholars and teachers, had made the Manchester History Department into what was at that time probably the most important centre of medieval historical studies in the whole country (not excluding Oxford and Cambridge). Apart from the great men just mentioned, at one time no less a person than A. G. Little used to travel up from Kent once a fortnight to teach palaeography; and for a time Robert Fawtier had been at the John Rylands Library. Indeed, the Rylands Library was not the least of the attractions of the place. At the same time, the pre-eminence of the history department, especially now that the founding fathers had gone, was, understandably, not accepted by the rest of the university without perhaps some feelings of rivalry or resentment. And the position inside the department was not too easy, either. At one time there had been four or five chairs of History at Manchester: Ancient, Medieval, Modern, and Economic, with Tout, at the end of his time, as a kind of super-professor with general oversight. When Jacob arrived there was only one chair (of Medieval History), the one that Powicke had left, though Ancient History was just at that moment being raised again from a readership to a professorship; the others had now become readerships, no doubt chiefly owing to financial stringency; funds were not so liberally available in those days. There was inevitably a certain amount of tension inside the department as well as outside. Then Namier arrived in 1931 to hold the newly revived Professorship of Modern History. The story of how Jacob 'captured' Namier, by means of an adroit telegram, after reading a review of *England in the Age of the American Revolution*, has been told by Lady Namier in her life of her husband; it was a brilliant and imaginative stroke, worthy of the great fisherman that Jacob was; and it made the History Department as important in modern as it was in medieval studies. But Namier was not an easy man to work with.

With this situation, Jacob coped admirably, like Holy Wisdom, *fortiter suaviterque disponens omnia*. Although a very different kind of personality and a very different kind of scholar

from Powicke, he seemed a perfectly natural successor. He had the great advantage of being the undoubted head of the department. And whereas the professorial head of a department in a university like Manchester could be a despot—one can think of some departments where this was so; there was emphatically nothing of this sort with Jacob, as there had been nothing of this with Powicke; the present writer, who worked at Manchester under both Powicke and Jacob, can testify to this. The History Department was sufficiently small, both in its teaching staff and in its students, for everyone to know each other. Jacob managed everything and everybody with tact and consideration and with a constant consultation of the staff, which made one forget any constitutional disabilities. He had a genial, invulnerable benignity that was irresistible; and if 'Uncle Ernest' sometimes tickled one's sense of humour, that only made him all the more endearing. Above all, the thing that impressed one, and still impresses one, about Jacob was the unreserved whole-heartedness with which he threw himself into his work at Manchester. Coming to an unfamiliar milieu—rather like the clergyman in Mrs. Gaskell's *North and South*—after nearly a decade spent at All Souls and Christ Church, a lesser man might have been tempted to look upon Manchester as a 'good jumping-off ground' (an attitude which so understandably infuriated the great Mancunians); but there was no hint of this in Jacob; Manchester completely won him.

The structure of the History School at Manchester meant that it was in their third year that those history honours students who chose to specialize in medieval history came most closely under Jacob's care; for them there was a 'special period', 'the Period of the Conciliar Movement, 1378–1448', and a special subject arising out of this, 'the reign of Henry V', with set books such as the *Gesta Henrici Quinti*, once attributed to Thomas Elmham, the St. Alban's Chronicle, and Nicholas of Cusa's *De Concordantia Catholica*. At the same time in accordance with an important and long-standing practice of the Manchester History School, each student did a miniature thesis, thus introducing him early to the problems and methods of historical research, and sometimes leading on to postgraduate work. And, of course, those who did go on to do research for the M.A. or Ph.D. degree (and some of them came in from outside for this), continued to work with Jacob; he helped them to choose their subjects and supervised them; and it was for them that he ran a small class in medieval bibliography. In all this Jacob was following the

traditional methods of Tout and Powicke. It was in this work of teaching undergraduates and postgraduate students, both individually and in small classes, that Jacob showed himself at his best. His technique was perhaps not unlike that of a good college tutor, of the Ernest Barker type, combined with the tradition of the Vinogradoff seminar, and transferred to a larger, though not so very much larger, field. Nothing could have been more unlike the role of a professor as sometimes envisaged, on a mass-production scale, where the student only sees the professor from the other end of a great lecture-theatre, and where everything is geared to interrupt the professor's research as little as possible. Jacob's role was rather like that of St. Benedict's abbot, adapting himself to each individual: *multorum servire moribus*; though I think the blandishments and persuasions were more in evidence than the upbraidings. Jacob took infinite trouble over his pupils and their individual needs, and this was something that they never forgot. Two personal impressions may be quoted. The first is from Mr. James Crompton, who was Jacob's undergraduate pupil at Manchester just before the last war, and his research pupil at Oxford just after the war. He writes:

I think of him always, as I first, and indeed as I last saw him, sitting behind that familiar pile of books, continental journals, and a mass of papers, for he was always a very industrious scholar. He used to talk, beaming, often with eyes half-closed, and always opening up new avenues of exciting interest. On my very first meeting the whole world of Late Antique Learning, of Medieval Christian and Secular Latin Verse, and of the Celtic Monastic achievement was opened up to me. I knew nothing whatever before that of Medieval history, but I think I was 'converted' on that occasion, and converted for life to medieval studies.

The other impression is from Professor J. S. Roskell, an undergraduate and then research pupil of Jacob's at Manchester, subsequently a lecturer, and finally occupying Jacob's chair at Manchester. He writes:

Looking back, I think I had the feeling that Jacob was the first 'public person' I ever knew. In 1930 he was only 36, but already very magisterial. He had an air of being a 'man of affairs', and being very energetic and public-spirited, indeed he was. He helped me feel that history was not just a matter of books and scholarly learning, but a thing 'men of the world' took note of and into account. His interests were genuinely broadly cultural. I mean he was the friend in the university of people like Vinaver, Wilenski, and T. B. L. Webster. He delighted in expensively illustrated books on architecture and art. He

had a good taste in pictures. One of his great attributes as a tutor was his ability to spot what people's scholarly inclinations were, even when, perhaps specially when, they did not recognize them themselves. Frank Taylor tells me that even in his third year, Ernest told him, to his own great surprise, that he was 'a manuscript man', and so it proved. Then to take my own case: my B.A. thesis was on foreign merchants in England under Henry V. He spotted my *penchant* for stringing together facts about individual merchants, especially about Hanseatics and Italians, and when I first thought of doing an M.A. and a subject was under consideration, and I was anxious to explore some aspect of Lancashire history, he suggested the knights of the shire. All else that I have put together on parliament followed naturally, but it originated in that suggestion. There was always a certain natural aloofness in his manner, no 'bonhomie', at least none that I experienced. His kindness took rather the form of careful consideration of one's needs, one's scholarly needs, but, if here financial needs impinged, then those too. I am not thinking here of loans or that sort of thing, but of working for one's means of support, 'labouring' by the usual and possibly other channels for the sustenance (in scholarships and fellowships and the like) of those he had decided to back. I think he must have been a great and efficient lobbyist.

A list of Jacob's research pupils at Manchester, and of their subjects, is instructive, as showing what a solid body of work he was instrumental in getting built up; one's only regret is that some of this work did not get to the stage of publication. The research pupils were as follows: F. D. Hodgkiss, working on Robert Hallum, Bishop of Salisbury; Frank Taylor (now Deputy Director and Principal Keeper of the John Rylands Library), on the chronicle of John Strecche for the reign of Henry V, and on the *Gesta Henrici Quinti*; C. E. Hodge, on the abbey of St. Albans under John Whethamstede; Margaret E. Turner (now Mrs. Poskitt), on the English Carmelites in the first half of the fifteenth century; J. S. Roskell (now Professor of Medieval History at Manchester), on the knights of the shire for the County Palatine of Lancaster, 1377-1460 (published by the Chetham Society in 1937); Mrs. Dorothy Newell (*née* Wolff, now Mrs. Sarmiento), on English notaries at the Papal Curia in the fifteenth century, with special reference to William Swan; A. R. Myers (now Professor of Medieval History at Liverpool), on the Commons in the reign of Henry V and the minority of Henry VI, with special reference to parliamentary petitions; C. H. Thompson, on Uthred of Boldon: a study in fourteenth-century political theory; Arthur H. Wood, on Richard Ullerston; John Flitcroft, on the constitutions for the

promotion of university graduates, 1417-58; Maurice Oldfield, on representation of the clergy in Parliament in the later Middle Ages, and on Convocation and Parliament in the fifteenth century; Kathleen Edwards, on English secular cathedrals in the Middle Ages; Thomas Kelly, on Reynold Pecock; and F. R. Johnston, on the cult of St. Brigit of Sweden in fifteenth-century England.

One of Manchester's assets lay in the resources of its various libraries. In the University library the historical section had as its nucleus the library of E. A. Freeman; Powicke has described the awe with which, as an undergraduate, he began to work there. In the History Department itself there was a small but valuable library for the use of third-year and research students, known as the Philip Howarth Library, which Jacob, like his predecessor, kept well and imaginatively stocked; I rather painfully remember once admiring a book in Blackwell's, a fine seventeenth-century copy of the *Glossa Ordinaria* with Nicholas of Lyra; but before I could summon the courage to buy it, I next found it on the shelves of the Philip Howarth. The famous Chetham Library, near the cathedral, contained an important collection of early books. And above all, there was the John Rylands Library, in the centre of the town in Deansgate, in a splendid building in Basil Champneys Perpendicular. The Rylands Library had had a primarily religious motive behind its foundation—a place, it was said, where the working man could read his Bible in peace; but this was very liberally interpreted to include Ottonian Gospels and a rich collection of other manuscripts and early printed books from the Lindsay and Spencer collections.

In the days before the depression, though things were beginning to change even in Jacob's time, the endowments of the Rylands could provide an almost unlimited supply of books and periodicals, English and foreign, useful to a student of medieval history. The John Rylands Library played a very important part in Jacob's Manchester life. The library was in fact closely and profitably geared to the university (and has now quite recently been merged with the University Library). Jacob became a governor of the library, as Tout and Powicke had been before him. Lectures in the History Department were arranged so as to leave Fridays free for staff and students to work in the Rylands. The manuscripts were in the charge of a distinguished succession of scholars connected with the university: Robert Fawtier; Moses Tyson, himself a pupil of Tout and Powicke,

who taught palaeography at the University and later became University Librarian; and Frank Taylor, one of Jacob's own pupils. Tout and Powicke had started a tradition of giving lectures at the Rylands, afterwards printed in the *Bulletin* of the library, and Jacob continued this with even greater enthusiasm and regularity; between 1930 and 1944 almost every year, in January or February, and sometimes even after he had left Manchester, Jacob gave a lecture at the Rylands Library, which was afterwards printed in the *Bulletin*, as can be seen from his bibliography. And other members of the university staff published there as well. To have a journal ready at hand was a great encouragement and challenge.

The study and teaching of local history had already, in Powicke's time, become a notable feature of Manchester, which was something of a pioneer in this way; this was largely the work of a remarkable local historian, Dr. G. H. Tupling. Jacob continued to support this vigorously. Moreover, Jacob was active in the Chetham Society, which had for some time been one of the best societies in the country for the scholarly publication of local records; this was the golden age of such societies, when so little money went such a long way. In 1933 Jacob became a member of the Council of the Chetham Society, and from 1938 until his death (long after he had left Manchester) he was its very active President, with Tupling as its Vice-President. It has been well said that together they made an ideal pair of co-directors: Tupling brought the detailed knowledge and expertise of the practising local historian of the region, Jacob a warm appreciation of the significance of local history as an integral part of the national story and the statesmanship and vision of the historian of great reputation with important interests and connections in the wider world outside. 'E. F. J. was the beneficent seigneur, G. H. T. his mild-mannered, efficient seneschal of the lordship.'

Another feature of Manchester, which went back to Powicke, was the History Conference; this was a small group of historians, partly staff, partly research students, who met several times a term at the university to dine together and then hear and discuss a paper, read by someone who generally came from outside. The venerable James Tait, the last survivor of the department's heroic age, was a very regular attendant; we sat round a table, and there was a regular little ritual: when the speaker ended, James Tait would carefully empty his pipe on to a piece of blotting-paper, and open the discussion. Not all the speakers

were medievalists; Jacob invited men like Outram Evenett and George Kitson Clark from Cambridge. It was an admirable institution, one of the many ways of binding the historians together and introducing them to scholars and projects from outside.

Of Jacob's fifteen years at Manchester, the first ten were spent in normal peace-time conditions, the last five in war-time, when Jacob had to divide his time between the university and war-work in the local office of the North West Regional Commissioner, an organization designed, it seems, to provide government for the region in case communications with the rest of the country were cut off. At the same time he continued with his teaching, and from 1942 to 1944 was a Pro-Vice-Chancellor. The strain of this double work, which involved night duty in underground quarters, was severe, and his health suffered. This was probably why he resigned his chair at Manchester in 1944; he was not an old man, only fifty, but perhaps he felt that he could not face the strain of impending post-war reconstruction and development.

When Jacob left Manchester in 1944, he naturally returned to Oxford to resume his Fellowship at All Souls. At first, from 1944 to 1950, he acted as Domestic Bursar, which left him largely free for research. After a time, as things turned out, a very suitable and congenial post became open to him, with the retirement of Sir Keith Feiling from the Chichele Professorship of Modern History, attached to All Souls College, to which Jacob was elected in 1950, and which he held until his retirement in 1961; after that he continued until 1970 as Librarian at All Souls, succeeding Sir Edmund Craster, whose *History of the All Souls Library* he published, adding an epilogue. Whereas at Manchester he had been directing a History Department and automatically supervising a great deal of research, his position back at Oxford was very different, owing to the nature of the place; for better or worse, no one directs anything or anyone at Oxford, not at least in the humanities. Jacob was simply one among a number of potential lecturers and supervisors, especially at first, when he was something of a freelance Fellow of All Souls, but this was so even later, when he was Chichele Professor. The most that can be said is that he was a member of the History Faculty Board, while he was Professor, and served as Chairman of the Board from 1951 to 1953. He had indeed a number of distinguished research pupils, who were devoted to him, as he was to them; but he did not and could not 'direct' a 'school'. What influence he had (and it was considerable) was

a personal one, not a constitutional function. All this, of course, Jacob understood very well, and I do not think he ever chafed against it. It may be noted that whereas in his earlier Oxford period he had taken a leading part in establishing the St. Augustine special subject, in his later Oxford period he was not, I think, responsible for any changes in the syllabus; he did not introduce any new special subject, for the special subject on Henry V was not established until some years after his retirement. While he was Chichele Professor he regularly conducted a seminar for research students on medieval bibliography, similar to the course that he, and Powicke before him, had been used to give at Manchester. He also gave lectures on English church history in the fifteenth century, and one year (1956) he lectured on the special subject on Dante, a subject that had always interested him. As at Manchester, so at Oxford, the research pupils he supervised indicate the range of his interests; they included James Crompton, working on Lollard doctrine; C. M. D. Crowder, on the English nation at the Council of Constance; J. B. Morrall, on William of Ockham; P. D. Partner, on the States of the Church under Martin V; D. R. R. Watt, on Scottish university students, 1340-1410; C. T. Allmand, on the relations between the English government, the higher clergy, and the papacy in Normandy, 1417-1450; J. J. V. Palmer, on Archbishop Henry Bowet. Jacob continued to hold the Medieval Group, meeting to hear and discuss papers, on similar lines to the Manchester History Conference, which Powicke had introduced to Oxford and Galbraith had continued; under Jacob it moved from Oriel to All Souls. Jacob was good at maintaining contacts with medievalists in other faculties, as his activity in the Dante Society showed; he was one of its oldest members. As might be expected, Jacob enjoyed attending international conferences, and had many contacts and friends abroad, and some of these came to lecture at Oxford, such as G. Le Bras (an old friend who had contributed a chapter on canon law to *The Legacy of the Middle Ages* many years before), Stephan Kuttner (to whom the *Essays in Later Medieval History* were dedicated), and Yves Renouard.

In view of Jacob's knowledge of ecclesiastical history and his strong ties with the Church of England it was natural that he should be invited to serve on a number of Commissions set up by the Archbishops over the years: the Commissions on the Relations between Church and State (1932-5), on Canon Law (1944-6), on Church Courts (1952-4), and on Crown

Appointments (1962-5); to the Reports of these Commissions he made valuable historical contributions. He was a member of the Church Assembly 1945-65, and one of the Church Commissioners from 1948 onwards. He was a member of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, Chairman of the Council of the Canterbury and York Society, and Chairman of the British National Committee of the International Historical Congress. He was Birkbeck Lecturer in Ecclesiastical History at Trinity College, Cambridge (1935-6), and Creighton Lecturer in London in 1951. He was a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries from 1928, and Fellow of the British Academy from 1946. In 1957 he was made an Honorary Doctor of Letters in the University of Manchester.

After his retirement he continued to live in Oxford, partly in All Souls, partly in his house in the Woodstock Road, where his mother had kept house for him for so many years. In recent years his health had been failing, and in 1971 he was seriously ill; after spending some months in a nursing home at Goring-on-Thames he returned to All Souls; and there it was, as he would have wished, that he died on 7 October 1971. An Oxford college can rarely have had a more devoted son.

What struck one most about Ernest Jacob's personal characteristics? First and foremost, I think it was his unflinching kindness and charitableness. I do not think anyone ever heard Jacob speak cruelly or maliciously about anyone, and this was no mean achievement in the academic world. This was not simply the product of an easy-going, uncritical temperament. Jacob was in fact a very shrewd critic and a very shrewd judge of men, and was capable of anger if he thought that injustice was being done. If he restrained his tongue, it was because he trained himself to do so. His kindness also showed itself in a most practical way, as has been noted, in the immense amount of interest and trouble he took over his pupils, and indeed over any fellow scholar; that is his best memorial.

Another lighter but pleasing feature about Jacob was a certain learned playfulness; he delighted, for instance, in sending Latin letters and notes to his friends; I myself received a Latin telegram of congratulations on my election to Oriel. There is a Latin hymn to St. Anselm, which he wrote for St. Anselm's Hall at Manchester in 1935; and a Latin poem, 'H. G. Custodi', composed in honour of Dr. Guppy, the Rylands Librarian, in 1941. There is a charming Saturnalian Prologue (this time in English verse), which he composed for a Christmas party in the

History Department at Manchester, in 1933, which introduces each of his pupils in turn, in a recondite phrase.

Jacob was what a medieval biographer might have called *dapsilis*; he enjoyed the good things of life, and enjoyed sharing them with others. He collected a fine library. He loved music, and naturally enjoyed the Hallé Concerts at Manchester; in the earlier part of his life he was a chamber-music player on the violin. One of the great joys of his life was fishing, particularly salmon fishing; this was perhaps derived from his Scottish border connections through his Fraser mother's family. He spent many fishing holidays on the Eden and elsewhere in the north, in Scotland and in Ireland; and a friend remembered his surprise at seeing Jacob, with stubby little fingers, very deftly fashioning flies for fishing.

Jacob was a lifelong bachelor, yet with strong family ties; he was devoted to his mother, who lived to a great age; and he maintained a small colony of aunts in his cottage at Stanton Harcourt. Finally, a most important characteristic of Jacob was that he was a devout and practising Christian, a faithful attendant at the chapel of All Souls, at his parish church of St. Margaret's, and at the cathedral. The last time I saw him, a few weeks before his death, he told me that he had gone back to reading the New Testament in Greek. And throughout his life he gave unstinted service to his Church. No doubt all this was in some ways traceable to his family upbringing and traditions. But the important thing is that he carried it through into an age when such things are no longer so common as they were.

Something has already been said about Jacob's publications down to 1929. His publications during his period at Manchester (1929-44) and his second period at Oxford (1944-71) may be considered together, since they covered the same ground—the history, and especially the ecclesiastical and intellectual history, of the later Middle Ages, particularly during the Conciliar period, both in England and abroad. It may be noted that Jacob published comparatively few large books: his edition of the Chichele register and his volume on the fifteenth century in the Oxford History of England, together with his earlier book on baronial reform and rebellion, are about the only examples. Instead, his most characteristic form of published work consisted of a steady stream of articles and lectures, only a small selection of which were gathered up into two volumes of collected papers: *Essays in the Conciliar Epoch* (1943, revised 1953) and *Essays in Later Medieval History* (1968). Jacob seems to have been at his

happiest and most stimulating when dealing with a succession of *ad hoc* problems and interests, rather than when rising to deal with a big task like the volume in the Oxford History of England. In the stream of articles, it was perhaps the series of Rylands Lectures, already noticed, which were the most important; in fact it must have been the necessity of producing these that provided an all-important, recurrent stimulus. Valuable as this was in encouraging Jacob's characteristic genre of writing, it may have had the effect of pushing the big assignment of the Oxford History volume into the background; if the latter had been written twenty years earlier, it might have been a better book.

The first of these Rylands Lectures, on 'The Fifteenth Century; some Recent Interpretations' (1930), is really in the nature of an inaugural lecture, setting out what Jacob thought most needed doing in the field he had taken up: more work on the literature of mystical and reforming movements, following up the pioneer work of Margaret Deanesly, H. B. Workman, and Hope Emily Allen; more work on the papal curia and its relations with England, following up the work of J. Haller in his *Papsttum und Kirchenreform* of nearly thirty years before; more work on episcopal administration, following up A. Hamilton Thompson's work on monastic visitations and Irene Churchill's work on Canterbury administration—and this clearly adumbrates Jacob's own work on Chichele's register; more investigation of manuscript treatises on reform (like Ullerston's), on sermons, and on formularies (like William Swan's letters), on petitions to Rome and on English cases in the tribunal of the Rota, and on English payments to the Camera Apostolica (similar to the work of Annie Cameron (Mrs. Dunlop) on Scottish entries). It is interesting to compare these desiderata both with his own subsequent work and with the research work on to which he put his pupils. Everyone who has had to encourage and supervise research knows that one of the problems is to help students to find suitable subjects or texts to work upon, and this was something that Jacob excelled in.

Many years later, in his inaugural lecture as Chichele Professor at Oxford (1951), Jacob reviewed the scene again. After drawing attention to work on economic and financial history, such as the study of the merchant class, he went on to say: 'Rather more than thirty years ago it was predominantly the philosophy of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries that claimed the attention of the historians of medieval thought.'

Beyond Scotus lay, in the opinion of many scholars, the unprofitable period when scholasticism was bringing about its own destruction.' He then went on to explain how the thought of the later Middle Ages was coming to be appreciated through study along four main lines: the 'Devotio moderna', the neoplatonists, the Ockhamists, and the history of science. I think that a comparison of these two surveys of 1930 and 1951 suggests that Jacob's interest was coming to centre more and more on medieval thought.

The long series of Jacob's articles may be roughly classified as follows. First, there are some which deal with a general view of the period, like the two surveys of 1930 and 1951 just mentioned, and the articles on 'Changing Views of the Renaissance' (1931) and on 'Huizinga and the Autumn of the Middle Ages' (1968). Then there are articles on the Councils, ranging from 'Some English Documents of the Conciliar Movement' (1931) to 'Reflections on the Study of the General Councils in the Fifteenth Century' (1964) and 'The Bohemians at the Council of Basel' (1949); these represent, in one form, that continuation of Haller's work that Jacob had desiderated.¹ That same continuation, in another form, is also represented by some essays on Englishmen's relations with the Court of Rome, centred on William Swan's letterbook: 'To and from the Court of Rome in the early Fifteenth Century' (1939) and 'The Disputed Election at Fountains Abbey, 1410-16' (1950). And these in turn connect with the essay on petitions for benefices during the Great Schism (1945) and the wider problem of the maintenance of English University clerks in the later Middle Ages (1946)—which was one of Archbishop Chichele's headaches.

Some of the articles are studies of important writers of the Conciliar period, and earlier, such as Ockham (1936), John of Roquetaillade (1956), Dietrich of Niem (1935), Nicholas of Cusa (1925, 1937), Sir John Fortescue (1934), Reynold Pecock (1951); it will be seen how Jacob's long-standing interest in political thought keeps coming out. Another group of essays

¹ In the preface to *Essays in the Conciliar Epoch* (1943), Jacob wrote: 'Elsewhere, in a work specially devoted to the Council of Constance, it will be suggested that a solution is to be found as much in the diplomatic as in the ecclesiastical history of the age'; and this was repeated in the 2nd (1953) and 3rd editions (1963). This suggests that Jacob for many years intended to write a whole book about the Council of Constance, but this project never seems to have materialized. Perhaps the writing of the volume on the fifteenth century in the Oxford History precluded it.

deal with devotional movements of the period (again, one of the desiderata of 1930): on the *Imitation of Christ* (1938), in which Jacob supports the authorship, or editorship, of Thomas à Kempis as against Gerson; on the *Brethren of the Common Life* (1940); and on Gerard Groote and the beginnings of the 'New Devotion' (1952).

Another group of articles deal with humanism, both of the fifteenth century and earlier; such as 'Florida Verborum Venustas' (1933); 'Some Aspects of Classical Influence in Medieval England' (1932), which deals particularly with the twelfth century; and 'Christian Humanism' (1965), which ranges from Dante to Colet; Jacob was emphatically not one of those who believe that only fifteenth-century Italians can be regarded as genuine humanists.

Another large and important group of essays are concerned with Archbishop Chichele and are clearly inspired by Jacob's *pietas* towards the founder of All Souls and by the impending fifth centenary of its foundation (1938) and of Chichele's death (1943); they begin with 'Two Lives of Archbishop Chichele' (1932), which draws an instructive contrast between his two biographers, Arthur Duck in the seventeenth century and Dean Hook in the nineteenth, and lead up to the great edition of Chichele's register in the Canterbury and York Society's series (1937-47), but do not stop there; the register is followed up by the Creighton Lecture on Henry Chichele and the ecclesiastical politics of his age (1952) and a more general discussion on 'Founders and Foundations in the Later Middle Ages' (1962). Allied with these are essays on other medieval bishops and their administration, again taking up a point made in 1930: St. Richard of Chichester (1956), Thomas Brouns, Bishop of Norwich (1964), Archbishop John Stafford (1962), the medieval chapter of Salisbury (1947), the medieval registers of Canterbury and York (1953). Finally there is one essay, on the Book of St. Albans (1944), which must have given Jacob great pleasure to write, touching as it does on one of his great hobbies—fishing.

Evaluation of these very numerous essays will inevitably vary according to individual interests and predilections. Personally I find the essay on Abbot Whethamstede and his writings, 'Florida Verborum Venustas', one of the most characteristic and satisfying; it is clearly one that Jacob much enjoyed writing, and it is hard to understand why he omitted it from the first edition of his *Essays in the Conciliar Epoch*. In some of the essays we are given

a wide sweep, like the two inaugural lectures of 1930 and 1951, or the essays on Gerard Groote, or on Christian Humanism. Others deal with more specialized points, though they all have a coherence and connection with certain dominant topics, as I have tried to show. In all of them we are introduced to a wealth of relevant literature and documentation, especially foreign, which is extremely useful, even if we sometimes feel we are caught up in an animated bibliography. In general the effect of these essays is like a series of highly stimulating tutorials, sometimes a little over our heads (as a good tutorial should be), rather than a course of magisterial lectures giving us all the answers; this no doubt reflects the characteristic features of Jacob's teaching method.

On a scale midway between his articles and his major works, two books may be mentioned that show Jacob's skill at the best kind of popularization, and both, it may be noted, were written to fit into a series. *Henry V and the Invasion of France* (1947) was, as he explains, the natural outcome of many years of teaching the special subject on Henry V at Manchester, and had just been delivered as lectures in Oxford; and in view of the events of three years before, the theme had a very topical interest, as he also points out. Jacob was able to correct the popular estimate of Henry V by showing that he was a no less considerable figure as an administrator and a diplomat, than he was as a soldier, and this connects up with Jacob's interest in the English contribution to the Council of Constance. *The life of Henry Chichele* (1967) is one of his last writings, and one of his best; it is in fact one of the best short biographies of a great medieval churchman available. It is the end product of the years of work spent on the register, lucidly set out, and covers many of the problems that so much interested Jacob: the Conciliar Movement, Anglo-papal relations, convocation, the promotion of graduates, episcopal administration, the founder himself. It is one more indication that Jacob's best work was done whenever he touched on Chichele.

Finally there are Jacob's two major works: the edition of Chichele's register, for the Canterbury and York Society, in four volumes (1937-47); and the volume on the fifteenth century in the *Oxford History of England* (1961). I will take the second first, for it was projected before the other, though it came out later. While I think the volume on the fifteenth century has been too harshly judged by some of its critics, it must be confessed that the book is in some ways disappointing, especially

as Jacob had shown himself a skilful generalizer, on a much smaller scale, in the chapters he contributed to the Cambridge Medieval History over thirty years before. Why was this so? Partly perhaps because the book took so long in the writing. It was first announced in 1934, when Jacob was forty; it did not appear until 1961, when he was an ageing and probably rather tired man, just retiring from his chair; as has already been suggested, it would probably have been a better book, if it had been written twenty years earlier. At the same time, paradoxically, while it was belated, it was from another point of view premature. Compared with earlier periods like the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the fifteenth century had been comparatively unexploited in recent times, with some notable exceptions. Perhaps this was what Tout had in mind when he declared that 'the history of the fifteenth century could not be written: it was too hard' (as Jacob quoted in his 1930 Rylands Lecture). And it is to be noted that Tout in his great work took good care to stop at 1399. To some extent therefore Jacob had to be a pioneer, cutting his way through the primeval forest; it could not be simply a matter of assimilating and summarizing a series of long-digested and long-discussed studies. This is perhaps what gives a rather undigested appearance to some parts of the book. This may at first sight seem surprising in view of the vast mass of Jacob's own essays on the period; but if these are carefully examined, it will be seen that they are mostly on continental or Anglo-continental rather than on English history, and on ecclesiastical and cultural rather than on political history. Straight political history was not really where Jacob's heart lay, and yet so much of the Oxford History had to be political narrative. Much the best parts of the book are the chapters on the Church, on social analysis and on the 'peaceful arts', as one might expect, for it was here that Jacob was most at home and had so much to say that is very valuable and thought-provoking; one wishes indeed that he could have written a whole book on these topics, where he could have done full justice to his experience and expertise.

There remains the other great work—the edition of Chichele's register. This seems to me undoubtedly the most impressive and uniformly successful of all Jacob's work, and the one for which he will be most justly remembered, and blessed, by future generations. The edition was made possible by the generosity of All Souls College, who allowed it to be published simultaneously by the Canterbury and York Society. Jacob owed

much to the help of a number of very able collaborators, such as Mr. H. C. Johnson (of the Public Record Office), particularly for the volume of wills; Miss Ethel Stokes and Miss Isobel Thornley, who did the bulk of the transcription; Dr. Kathleen Edwards, who compiled the index; and other experts such as Dr. Rose Graham and Professor Hamilton Thompson. A voluminous episcopal register of the later Middle Ages is a notoriously difficult thing to tackle, and indeed few had so far tackled it on this scale. Jacob organized the edition with great skill. He edits all the non-routine documents *in extenso*, including an important collection of wills, to which he provides a valuable introduction, explaining procedure and contents; and above all he gives us a superb general introduction of 272 pages, in which he shows us just how a fifteenth-century archbishop lived and worked, and all the various strands of interest involved—relations with crown and papacy, convocation, heresy, diocesan administration, and so forth. And he does all this in a simple, straightforward way; we are not overwhelmed with polyglot erudition, as elsewhere we sometimes seem to be. And yet Jacob's wide-ranging experience of English and foreign history helps to explain it all. It is difficult to see how it could be bettered. I think the secret of this success was Jacob's genuine, long-standing piety towards the founder of his college. *Sanctus amor patriae dat animum.*

W. A. PANTIN

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