



NICHOLAS HAMMOND

*Bromhead*

# Nicholas Geoffrey Lemprière Hammond 1907–2001

NICK HAMMOND stands in a class of his own among Fellows of the Academy. Others have been men of action, but few have been remembered as much for that as for their scholarship; others have been fêted abroad, but very few have attained the iconic status that he held in Greece; others have lived to see a son of theirs elected to the Fellowship, but very few indeed a daughter. What these achievements already hint at, the reality confirms: here was a personality of quite exceptional drive, a physique of the same robustness as his intellect, and a family life of unusual serenity. Hammond's whole career is a story of clearly focused motivation and unhesitating decisiveness, in his case (perhaps again unusually) coupled with a disposition of kindly bonhomie.

He was a son of the Church, born on 15 November 1907 at Ayr, where his father, the Revd James Vavasour Hammond, was the Episcopalian Rector of Holy Trinity Church. The Hammond family was not of Scottish but of Channel Island descent; but the Revd James Hammond had cemented the Scottish connection by marrying Dorothy May, the daughter of a Glasgow average adjuster in a shipping firm. The two had met while James Hammond was serving as a curate at St Mary's Episcopalian Cathedral. After their marriage came the move to Ayr, and the birth of their four children, of whom Nicholas was the second. It was to be his grandfather, Alfred May, who largely paid for the children's education: Nick was sent to a preparatory school in Ayr where his gifts, both intellectual and, when necessary, in physical self-defence particularly attracted note; then, after the First World War, he won a scholarship to Fettes

College, and his experience there was the root of a lifelong affection for the city of Edinburgh.

The family home remained in Ayr until the late 1920s; but the Channel Island link is deep enough to be of some interest in its own right. The 'Hamon' family could trace their residence in Jersey back to the time of the Conqueror, and the Revd J. V. Hammond had been the first member of his line to move permanently away from the island. His paternal grandfather had in his time become Bailiff of Jersey, the civil head of the island's community. The family were much intermarried with other noted Jersey families, and the Bailiff had married one of the Lemprières, of Breton origin: the wife's brother was to father the famous Mrs Langtry, the 'Jersey Lily'. The Lemprière family could also lay claim to the compiler of a noted Classical Dictionary of 1788, and a tradition as historians of the Channel Islands which went back even further. Nick's third given name commemorated all these links.

In 1926, Nick moved on as a Kitchener Scholar to Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. By now he had acquired a clear destiny as a Classicist, and an equally clear reputation as a formidable sportsman: hockey (for which he became President of the University Club), rugby and tennis were among his accomplishments, but he also became Treasurer of the Union. Rather in the manner of earlier scholar-athletes like C. B. Fry, he achieved brilliant First Classes in both parts of the Classical Tripos, with a Distinction in History which seems to have settled the more precise path of his future career.

Already there were signs that, as an ancient historian, his approach was going to be of a distinctive kind. After graduating in 1929, he left for Greece on the first of that series of extended, long-distance, cross-country walking expeditions for which he soon became famous. Something had acted to direct his interests towards the mountainous north-western region of the country, Epirus, well away from the familiar seeding-grounds of Classical civilisation. For many weeks on end, he walked across this very rugged country, repeatedly crossing the modern frontier (not an ancient one) of Albania. He was to repeat this exercise annually, and by 1933 he had devoted a total of seven months to it. As a topographical historian, he was enrolling himself in a long-standing and characteristically British tradition, covering some three centuries: like his forerunners, he believed that personal autopsy not only was the key to understanding military and other history, but could also result in the discovery of important but hitherto unknown monuments. From the most distinguished of these, William Martin Leake, Nick adopted, along with the necessary recording of what

he saw by means of notes, sketches and (in his case) photographs, the admirable practice of timing himself over each stretch of his walks—not that Nick's timings could be applied by ordinary mortals, at least of the jaded modern age. But the whole undertaking was to be revelatory: he rapidly added to his skills a confident handling of prehistoric archaeological material, an asset to which none of his predecessors could have aspired, and he had an excellent eye for the lie of the land. He reached, for example, the important historical finding (to be revealed presently in his first major publication)<sup>1</sup> that an army or a migratory people, seeking to move on southern Greece from the interior of Macedonia while avoiding the plains of Thessaly and Boeotia, must cross and then re-cross the main chain of the Pindus Mountains to do so. Many years later he was to summarise, in an entertaining paper, these experiences of the 1930s.<sup>2</sup>

It was during his second walking venture in 1930 that a telegram somehow reached him, summoning him back to Cambridge. It had been sent by Henry Thirkill, the Senior Tutor at Clare College. Clare at this time was a modest and (as we shall see) parsimonious college, which felt a need to make an appointment to a Research Fellowship in Classics: one of the dons at Caius had spoken highly to Thirkill of their graduate of a year previously. Nick made the laborious journey back to Cambridge and, after a one-to-one interview with Thirkill lasting only minutes, he was offered the position, with the implication that it could mature into a full Fellowship. Thus, some months before his twenty-third birthday, he could return to Greece in the knowledge that, barring accidents, his whole career was now secure. A request to be reimbursed for his considerable travel expenses was, however, brusquely turned down by Harrison, the Bursar.

So it was that he joined a small, all-male, celibate society which must have averaged twice his age. From the start, he was responsible for the entire Classical teaching of his 'side', for both parts of the Classical Tripos, with its heavy emphasis on the languages. Linguistically, Nick excelled: F. W. Walbank recalls attending an evening course in Modern Greek, given by Bertrand Hallward in 1930: on one occasion, Nick was brought in to demonstrate a fluency which already exceeded that of the teacher. He brought his typical vigour to all these duties; in return, he not

<sup>1</sup> 'Prehistoric Epirus and the Dorian Invasion', *Annual of the British School at Athens*, 32 (1931–2) (1934), 131–79.

<sup>2</sup> 'Travels in Epirus and South Albania before World War II', *The Ancient World*, 8 (1983), 13–45.

unnaturally assumed an entitlement to speak at the Governing Body. Learning with some dismay, before his first meeting, of the very low wages (even by Cambridge standards) paid to the College servants, he ventured to raise the issue under 'Any Other Business'. He was never to forget the Master's response, 'That's quite enough from you, young man'.

The Fellows nonetheless came to appreciate the qualities of their new recruit: proposals to promote him to a full Fellowship were thwarted for six years, on financial grounds, by the same Bursar; but in 1936, when the University itself appointed him to a Lectureship, the pressure to do so became irresistible. The publication in 1934 of the long paper already mentioned had helped to bring this about. Nick's nomination as Junior Proctor in 1939 was a confirmation of Clare's regard. Meanwhile, there was still sport, an aspect which Clare took at least as seriously as the academic: as a rugby hooker, the young Research Fellow was a regular member of the college first team until, at the onset of the Cuppers competition, the protests of other colleges forced his withdrawal.

Sport, too, had a hand in one of the two most decisive episodes of his whole life, both of which belong to the year 1938. It was while Hammond was taking a characteristically forceful part in a mixed hockey match, shouting exhortations to the triple blue Norman Yardley who was a member of his side, that he first met Margaret Townley, a final-year Newnham undergraduate who was also playing. They met again when Nick gave a talk to the Newnham Classical Society; and again when Margaret stayed with a friend whose father was, by coincidence, also a Minister (but a Presbyterian one) in Ayr. Margaret was the daughter of yet another Scot, the electrical engineer James Townley who, Paisley-born, had taken the road southwards and risen to be in charge of electricity supply for the LCC. Their wedding in 1938 was to inaugurate a marriage that lasted serenely for over 62 years.

The other event was portentous in a very different way. The War Office had begun to take its soundings, among academics particularly, of men who possessed special skills that could prove useful in the now imminent war. Their discovery that this supremely fit, thirty-year-old Classicist had fluent modern Greek, passable Albanian, and an unrivalled knowledge of the topography of northern Greece, was to bear richer fruit than they can have imagined. All too soon, he had to withdraw from further progress up the academic ladder, and from what was about to become his family circle (he was sent abroad just four weeks before the birth of his eldest child, Caroline, who would be more than four years old before he first set eyes on her).

Commissioned in the early summer of 1940, he was hastily trained in handling explosives, and flown out to Greece in June. His first mission was, transparently, at least in part of his own devising: to instigate a rising in Albania against the Italian occupation of the previous year. But at this precise moment, neither Italy nor Greece was yet at war: the Greek policy of strict neutrality required Hammond's immediate withdrawal before he could embroil anyone in his plan, though within days Italy was to join the Axis alliance. Instead, he was sent to Palestine, to pass on to special groups of trainees his new-found expertise in demolition and in wireless operating: some of the groups were composed of Zionist sympathisers with the Allied cause, among them names destined for fame in Israeli history (Moshe Dayan led the very first; another included Yigael Yadin). That October, Greece declared war on Italy and there followed the winter campaign in the Albanian frontier region, when the Greek army inflicted a resounding defeat on the Italian forces. Much as Nick would have relished joining them, he was not allowed to return to Greece until 15 March 1941, as a member of the Special Operations Executive. But this was the eve of the German invasion, and he was in time only to join in the forlorn retreat of the Greek and British forces.<sup>3</sup> From this experience, not for the last time, he was lucky to escape with his life: most notably at the end, on 31 May, when a German fighter machine-gunned the *caïque* in which he was escaping from Crete, killing two of his nine companions but then, providentially, wobbling and firing wide.

From now until early in 1943, Nick returned to his training duties. To his great satisfaction, his charges now included Greek volunteers who had escaped their country's occupation: from them he chose future comrades-in-arms, and it was from this time that his nickname, *Lochagós Vamvakopyrítis* ('Captain Gun-cotton') derived. All the while, clandestine operations in occupied Greece were being planned and indeed executed, at first by others: a striking success in the combined exploit of dynamiting the Gorgopotamos viaduct in November 1942 encouraged high hopes for the potential of British collaboration with the Greek Resistance forces. When the time came for Nick to be parachuted into Thessaly on a moonlit night in February 1943, he was to endure eighteen months of unbroken hardship, on hardly a day of which he was not in danger of death, by German action, by internecine fighting between rival guerilla forces, by accident, disease, injury, or betrayal. Protected only by a series

<sup>3</sup> See his 'Memories of a British Officer Serving in Special Operations Executive in Greece, 1941', *Balkan Studies*, 23 (1982), 127–55.

of ingenious disguises, he had prophetically anticipated one of them back at Clare in the 1930s, where he is recorded as having appeared at a masquerade of the College Dilettanti Society in the guise of 'a villainous Albanian bandit'.

Nick published several full accounts of his own part in these events:<sup>4</sup> their story in general has many times over been narrated, less often evaluated. From his own pages, negative sentiments emerge repeatedly, most often disillusionment with his Greek collaborators and impatience with the lack of understanding on the part of GHQ Cairo. To voice the exhilaration which many British participants derived from the unswerving courage of their Greek helpers, civilians and *Andartes* alike, he usually preferred to cite the comments of comrades such as Major R. R. Prentice and Captain H. A. Wickstead. A single root cause underlay these dissatisfactions: politics. Nick belonged to a generation for whom 'political' was a mildly pejorative epithet, more or less synonymous with 'left-wing'. It was galling for him to find that effective co-operation with the anti-German forces in Greece depended on the whims of two organisations, EAM and ELAS, which (as he rightly discerned) were already deeply infiltrated with Communism. For most of the British military, including it seems the staff at GHQ, this was not an obstacle: if these people would fight the enemy, they must be helped regardless. But Nick had a longer view of Greek affairs than they: he was appalled by the brutality of ELAS towards other Resistance groups, and by the designs which (again, rightly) he suspected that they held for seizing political control of Greece after the war, and he used every opportunity to alert his superiors to these aspects. He could not know of Stalin's undertaking to Churchill not to intervene in Greek affairs: still less that the promise would be honoured.

He leaves his readers with the impression that his was a voice crying in the wilderness; yet the facts encourage a more positive reading. For a start, GHQ was highly appreciative of Nick's personal contributions: at the very beginning of 1944, he was awarded the DSO and appointed liaison officer to all the ELAS units in northern Greece; twice mentioned in despatches and promoted Lieutenant-Colonel, in May he was appointed Acting Commander of the entire Allied Military Mission, a position that he later resigned on grounds of his differences with GHQ policy. Another positive factor was that Nick's 'apolitical' stance again and again paid

<sup>4</sup> See especially *Venture into Greece: with the Guerillas 1943-44* (London, 1983: Greek translated edition, 1984); 'The Allied Military Mission in Northwest Macedonia', *Balkan Studies*, 32 (1991), 107-44; *The Allied Military Mission and the Resistance in West Macedonia* (Thessaloniki, 1993).

dividends; the ELAS commanders and their political colleagues found that they were dealing with a man who was a hard negotiator, a fierce disciplinarian when necessary, and a shatteringly straight talker in their own language. This was not what they expected from their foreign helpers; repeatedly, the outcome was that concessions were made, in strategy, in collaboration, and even in subordination to the orders from British Headquarters, which perhaps no one else could have exacted. The farewell line from the able ELAS commander 'Kikitsas' to him, 'You're a good officer, but a bloody awful politician', which Nick quoted with relish and would have liked to reciprocate, conveys very much less than the whole truth. By the time that Nick was evacuated from Greece on 29 August, the war was running strongly in the Allies' favour; by 1 November the last German was to leave the Greek mainland, in a liberation that was largely free of additional bloodshed. Nick had by this time been repatriated and was recovering from the recurrent malaria which had been troubling even his iron constitution, though without ever incapacitating him for more than a day or two. In 1946, the new Greek Government honoured him with its highest distinction, the Grand Cross of the Order of the Phoenix.

Eventual demobilisation made it possible for him to resume his former positions in Cambridge, at the university and at his college. By now Thirkill, the former Senior Tutor, had become Master of Clare and he at once showed his confidence in Hammond by inviting him to become Senior Tutor. For the next seven years, Nick adopted the role of the 'College man' *par excellence*. He entered forcefully into College affairs and was soon, after Thirkill, its dominant personality. He evidently realised that Clare's pre-war image, as a place for 'men with nice instincts' (Thirkill's favourite phrase, which usually turned out to mean the sons of old Clare men), with its indifference to the academic performance of students and dons alike, and its emphasis on sport, would no longer quite do. One of his first steps was to invert the pattern of undergraduate residence, bringing the Freshmen into College at the expense of later years; other measures met with initial resistance, but he persuaded Thirkill successively that further Research Fellows must be admitted as he himself had once been; that the College should expand and, especially, that the number of research students should rise dramatically from the tiny handful present before the war; and that new undergraduate accommodation should be built.

All of these changes were rapidly assimilated: Nick, still in the prime of life, pursued them and everything else with his old vigour. One of his tutorial pupils recalls how Nick followed the then prevalent custom of entertaining at breakfast, in his case at 7.45 a.m. It was evident from the



tutor's dress and brusque arrival that for him it was not the first, but at least the second engagement of the day, after a game of squash. More telling is an anecdote about his additional role as graduate tutor. A recent arrival from America had had the effrontery to decline an affiliation with Jesus College and, at the suggestion of his senior colleague Max Perutz, found his way through the unfamiliar streets to Clare. The Head Porter telephoned Mr Hammond to ask for an interview, somehow conveying by his tone of voice that he expected it to be a tiresome one. 'I'll see him at five to one' Nick stipulated, judging that lunch would give him an unimpeachable pretext for terminating the interview quickly. By the end of those five minutes, he had admitted James D. Watson, so giving the college, a decade later, the accolade of its first Nobel Laureate.

Many another Oxbridge college of those days had its 'good College man', often of sporting prowess, sometimes with a record of military distinction in one or the other world war, conservative in disposition, conscientious in all his duties—except that of conducting research. The remarkable thing about Hammond was how radically he diverged from this stereotype in the last and most important respect. Even before the war started, he had evidently decided on a new academic trajectory for himself, temporarily turning away from his early topographical studies and addressing instead some of the absolutely central issues of Greek history and historiography which he had encountered in his teaching. The first fruits of this change were already published or in press by the time he left for the war: the list of topics—the legislation of Solon, the two battles of Chaeronea, the composition of Thucydides' history and the sources for that of Diodorus Siculus<sup>5</sup>—give the skeleton of what was now, from 1945 onwards, to be fleshed out. To these and many like subjects, Nick brought his own distinctive qualities: a prodigious knowledge of the ancient sources and an unshakeable faith that, sometimes after due amendment, they (or the best of them) could be fully vindicated; a completely independent line of thought, derived from his own cogitations, which could not easily brook rival interpretations of the same material; a robust reliance on practical common sense; and that same unhesitating decisiveness which had stood him in such good stead in time of war.

<sup>5</sup> 'The Seisachtheia and the Nomothesia of Solon', *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 60 (1940), 71–83, first given as a paper to the Cambridge Philological Society in 1938; 'The Two Battles of Chaeronea (338 BC and 86 BC)', *Klio*, 31 (1938), 186–218; 'The Composition of Thucydides' History', *Classical Quarterly*, 34 (1940), 146–52; 'The Sources of Diodorus Siculus', i and ii, *ibid.*, 31 (1937), 79–91 and 32 (1938), 137–51.

These qualities he now went on to apply to one after another of the issues which most exercised the historians of the day. In succession there appeared, always in prominent journals, studies of the constitution of Lycurgus at Sparta;<sup>6</sup> of the chronology of the Pentecontaetia,<sup>7</sup> the early tyrannies<sup>8</sup> and the career of Miltiades;<sup>9</sup> more military studies, now including (after his amphibious experiences in the war) re-assessments of naval engagements such as Sybota<sup>10</sup> and Salamis.<sup>11</sup> The central place of these topics in contemporary syllabuses of ancient history meant that the attention of undergraduates would invariably be directed to these papers, if often (at Oxford anyway) as a challenge to their critical abilities. But the old interests in topography and archaeology had never been forgotten: his account of Classical houses at a remote site in Epirus, which he had seen more than twenty years earlier, was a typical presentation of primary archaeological evidence;<sup>12</sup> and two important new pieces of 1954 dealing with the Isthmus region (another part of Greece which he had come to know well), on the affiliations of the sanctuary at Perachora and on the north–south land route across the Isthmus, were to be cited for decades afterwards.<sup>13</sup>

In this same year, he surprised academic colleagues by accepting the Headmastership of Clifton College; yet it was not an uncharacteristic decision for someone of such breadth of experience, or as devoted as Nick was to the whole educational process. Here he remained until 1962, remembered as a forceful but genial Headmaster. His insistence on teaching the senior Classics forms himself bore detectable fruit in the quality of their 'A' level scripts in ancient history, as F. W. Walbank (marking them for the Examinations Board) could testify. He became a member of the Committee of the Headmasters' Conference; formed a new local affinity with Gloucestershire (for which he was later to serve

<sup>6</sup> 'The Lykurgan Reform at Sparta', *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 70 (1950), 42–64.

<sup>7</sup> 'Studies in Greek Chronology of the Sixth and the Fifth Centuries BC', *Historia*, 4 (1955), 371–411.

<sup>8</sup> 'The Family of Orthagoras', *Classical Quarterly*, 6(2) (1956), 45–53.

<sup>9</sup> 'The Philaids in the Chersonese', *Classical Quarterly*, 6(2) (1956), 113–29.

<sup>10</sup> 'Naval Operations in the South Channel of Corcyra, 435–433', *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 65 (1945), 26–37.

<sup>11</sup> 'The Battle of Salamis', *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 76 (1956), 32–54, with 'A Correction', *ibid.*, 77 (1957), 311; and 'On Salamis', *American Journal of Archaeology*, 64 (1960), 367–8.

<sup>12</sup> 'Hellenic Houses at Ammotopos', *Annual of the British School at Athens*, 48 (1953), 135–40.

<sup>13</sup> 'The Heraeum at Perachora and Corinthian Encroachment' and 'The Main Road from Boeotia to the Peloponnese Through the Northern Megarid', in *Annual of the British School at Athens*, 49 (1954), 93–103 and 103–22 respectively.

as Deputy-Lieutenant); and edited a volume of essays for the school's centenary.<sup>14</sup> But there is much evidence that he still felt the call of academic life: for one thing, his output of publications was not interrupted: he returned to the topic of Solon, this time from the aspect of his agrarian reforms<sup>15</sup> and now, in his fifties, set out (for the first time, apart from his youthful memoir of the Cambridge Classicist J. E. Sandys),<sup>16</sup> to consolidate his thought into books. In 1959, he began a long association with the Oxford University Press, who published his *A History of Greece to 322 BC*, a concise text-book which became prescribed reading at more than one level.

His next step, in moving to the H. O. Wills Chair of Greek at the University of Bristol, will have seemed to him as short in conceptual terms as it was in geographical: no pigeon-holing for him, whether as historian or as school-teacher. He embarked on yet another highly successful branch of his versatile career, building up the Bristol Department of Classics into one of the largest and best in the country. D. J. Blackman, who as Assistant Lecturer in 1964 was one of Nick's early appointments, remembers the immense popularity of the lectures, which now he could (was indeed required to) devote to literature as well as history. When Blackman left to pursue a career in politics Nick, who had drawn only strength from the variety of his own career, supported him warmly and in disregard of differences in their political views.

These years also saw his productivity rise to a new peak. There were major papers: notably one on the first Athenian Confederacy<sup>17</sup> and a second on the campaign of Marathon.<sup>18</sup> Most important of all, he now set out to distil thirty-five years of first-hand experience into his huge volumes *Epirus* (Oxford, 1967) and *A History of Macedonia* (Oxford: vol. i, 1972; vol. ii, with G. T. Griffith, 1979; vol. iii, with F. W. Walbank, 1988). On top of all this, he began an editorial engagement with new editions of two central works of reference, the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* of 1970, which was to hold the field for 26 years, and the early volumes of a new *Cambridge Ancient History* (vol. i (1970–3), vol. ii (1973–5), vol. iii.

<sup>14</sup> *Centenary Essays on Clifton College* (Bristol, 1962).

<sup>15</sup> 'Land Tenure in Athens and Solon's Seisachtheia', *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 81 (1961), 76–98.

<sup>16</sup> *John Edwin Sandys* (Cambridge, 1932).

<sup>17</sup> 'The Origins and the Nature of the Athenian Alliance of 478/7 BC', *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 87 (1967), 41–61.

<sup>18</sup> 'The Campaign and the Battle of Marathon', *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 88 (1968), 13–57.

(1982–91) and vol. iv (1988)) which will certainly have a still longer life. In both, he was a substantial contributor as well as an energetic editor.

The consolidation of his work on northern Greece had involved engaging once more with its prehistory. A series of papers between 1967 and 1974 presented a new and visionary account of the early connections of the region, both northwards into the Balkans and the Russian steppe, and southwards to the Bronze Age heart-land of Greece, based on close study of prehistoric material culture and shaped by one over-riding conviction: he had become persuaded over the years that migrations, warlike or otherwise, had been the dominant agent of change in early Greece, and he was presently to publish a monograph, *Migrations and Invasions in Greece and Adjacent Areas* (Park Ridge, NJ, 1976) which synthesised his views on this issue. Three of the papers on the prehistory of northern Greece appeared as the first three chapters when, soon afterwards, the OUP produced a volume of his *Studies in Greek History* (Oxford, 1973). The rest were made up of his earlier articles of the late 1930s, 1950s, and 1960s previously listed, reissued in a revised form with, in some cases, a brisk response to the opponents who had emerged in the intervening years.

During his time at Bristol, besides acting as Pro-Vice-Chancellor from 1964 to 1966, he also found time to serve two institutions with whom he had long-standing associations, first as President of the Hellenic Society (1965–8), then as Chairman of the British School at Athens (1972–5). The latter was an especially fitting landmark in a connection which was to span seven decades: he had been the School's first Visiting Fellow in 1953, and his term of office as chairman was long remembered for the swift and genial discharge of its duties. His election to the British Academy came in 1968.

Soon after his retirement in 1973, he returned to live in Cambridge, where Clare very properly elected him Honorary Fellow in 1974. Now emerged perhaps the most surprising phase of his career in research; and it is not hard to identify the trigger which released it. In 1968, at a conference on ancient Macedonia, he had spoken on the early capital of the Macedonian kingdom, Aigai, where all its rulers save Alexander the Great had continued to be buried, long after it had lost its political status.<sup>19</sup> He proposed that Aigai had not been, as the learned consensus held, a place in the vicinity of ancient and modern Edessa, possibly forming no more than

<sup>19</sup> 'The Archaeological Background to the Macedonian Kingdom', later published in *Ancient Macedonia*, i (Thessaloniki, 1970), 53–67.

an alternative name for that city; but had lain much further to the south-east, at the site today known as Vergina. Previous excavation here had uncovered a much earlier cemetery of the tenth to eighth centuries BC, and a Hellenistic palace dating from somewhat after Alexander's time, but little from in between. For once, Hammond's view was not based on the leading ancient testimonies, and it looked a long shot. Then everything changed: in 1976, his friend Manolis Andronikos began to excavate a large mound on the site, the 'Great Tumulus', and in the following year brought to light a whole series of rich tombs. The most spectacular of these, Tomb II, he identified, to general acclaim, as that of Philip II, the father of Alexander: much of the acclaim was directed at Nick, the original proponent of the identification of Aigai, and further supporting evidence—the discovery of a theatre (a theatre had been the scene of Philip's murder in 336 BC), the study of the cremated bones of Tomb II which, at least on one view, conformed to Philip's known pathology—added to it. Nick himself, it goes without saying, warmly supported Andronikos' identification.

Controversy was not to be altogether absent: quite a number of scholars contested the identification of Philip as the occupant of Tomb II, and in 1991 Nick returned to the fray to chastise them.<sup>20</sup> But this in itself did not detract from his identification of Aigai, so long as the burials were agreed to be royal ones. The bolder course has since been attempted of denying even this, and thus re-opening the search for Aigai.<sup>21</sup> Macedonia is a region which abounds in imposing built tombs of broadly Classical date, some of them equally strong candidates for royal status; and the sources are inconclusive on the location of Aigai. But the general verdict has been that this was a triumphant vindication of Nick's topographical insight.

What is beyond debate is the sequel: the year 1977 released a flood of new work from him, devoted to Macedonia, Philip and, above all, Alexander the Great, which filled the next two decades and saw him into his nineties. Books on Alexander and his historiography appeared in 1980, 1983, and 1993;<sup>22</sup> they were joined by *The Macedonian State*

<sup>20</sup> 'The Royal Tombs at Vergina: Evolution and Identities', *Annual of the British School at Athens*, 86 (1991), 69–82 (on the dissidents, see pp. 80–2 and n. 57).

<sup>21</sup> P. B. Faklaris, 'Aegae: Determining the Site of the First Capital of the Macedonians', *American Journal of Archaeology*, 98 (1994), 609–16.

<sup>22</sup> *Alexander the Great: King, Commander and Statesman* (Park Ridge, NJ, 1980; 2nd edn., Bristol, 1989); *Three Historians of Alexander the Great* (Cambridge, 1983); *Sources for Alexander the Great: An Analysis of Plutarch's Life and Arrian's Anabasis Alexandrou* (Cambridge, 1993).

(Oxford, 1989) and *The Miracle that was Macedonia* (London, 1991). As for the articles, in 1993–7, the Amsterdam publisher A. M. Hakkert produced four volumes of Nick's collected writings<sup>23</sup> to add to the earlier Oxford collection: over *sixty* of those in vols. ii, iii, and iv were more or less closely linked to Alexander, and dated from this general period. They covered every aspect imaginable, from royal journals, insignia, pages and coinage to the Macedonian agricultural economy, *militaria*—units, weaponry, transport—and (the most sensitive topic of all, as we shall see) the Macedonian language. Meanwhile, new studies of decisive ancient battles, the majority of them now involving Macedonia—in chronological order Thermopylae, Philip's defeat of the Illyrians (an unlocated battle for which, characteristically, he had a setting to propose), the Granicus, Issus, Cynoscephalae, Pydna—had continued to punctuate his output through these years.<sup>24</sup>

But Vergina had unleashed a new side of him, one that in his critics' eyes fell little short of hero-worship of Alexander. Certainly the abiding theme of these later writings is Macedonian victory, Macedonian achievement and the greatness of Philip and Alexander. Like his lifelong belief in migration as an historical factor, these were attitudes that had now fallen out of academic favour, and the influence of his later writings was thereby diminished, at least in 'mainstream' scholarship. But much else remained undiminished with the passing of the years: his productivity, his relish for debate in print, even his physical energy, which had meanwhile found yet another outlet.

In 1973–4, immediately on his retirement from Bristol, he had accepted an invitation to spend a year as Johnson Professor at the University of Wisconsin. This was to be the first of a long series of terms or years spent at overseas universities, many of them in the United States: Reed College, Oregon as Mellon Professor in 1975–6; Wisconsin again, as Brittingham Professor, in 1977; Haverford College, Philadelphia in 1978; St Olaf College, Minnesota in 1981; the University of Pennsylvania in 1982; at Swarthmore as Cornell Professor in 1983; Trinity College, Hartford in 1984; the National Humanities Center, North Carolina in 1986; Carleton College, Minnesota as Benedict Professor in 1987. Of these, Wisconsin, St Olaf and Carleton awarded him Honorary Doctorates

<sup>23</sup> *Collected Studies*, (Amsterdam): i (1993); ii (1993); iii (1994); iv (1997).

<sup>24</sup> To be found most conveniently in *Collected Studies*, iv, 43–62 (Thermopylae); ii, 213–21 (Philip against the Illyrians); iii, 93–108 (the Granicus); iv, 213–24 (Issus); iii, 351–75 (Cynoscephalae); iii, 377–95 (Pydna).

of Letters, to add to the Doctorates which he had earlier taken at Bristol (1965) and Cambridge (1974). Even this schedule was not intensive enough for him, interspersed as it was with visits to the Antipodes: he was Visiting Professor at the University of Auckland in 1980, at the University of Adelaide in 1984, and at Newcastle University, New South Wales in 1988, 1990, and (by now in his mid-eighties) in 1992. Audiences in each of these places had found that the stimulation of his lecturing style was as great as ever, and the word had been passed on.

But there was a third and deeper commitment, to Greece. His links with the Athens School had provided opportunities for periodical revisits over the intervening years, but what now took place was something stronger, an extended and emotional home-coming. In Greece, there were not a few people still alive who remembered at first hand his war-time exploits; and his reputation had received a further boost from his role in bringing about the discoveries at Vergina. Invitations to visit the University of Ioannina (as Leverhulme Professor in 1978) and the National Hellenic Research Foundation (1985) followed naturally enough; so too, in due course, did election as a Companion of the Society of Friends of the Greek People in 1993, and a further Honorary Doctorate from Ioannina in 1996. When the time came to celebrate his own eightieth birthday in 1987, it was to Athens that he brought his family, children, grandchildren, babies in arms and all. Everywhere he was fêted; but especially in northern Greece, where he would attend the series of Macedonian Congresses in Thessaloniki and later tour the villages where he had long ago dodged the German occupation forces. Later still, in the 1990s, when contemporary politics brought the issue of Macedonia to the forefront of Greek consciousness, his many publications on ancient Macedonia, and particularly his conviction on the currency of the Greek language there<sup>25</sup> were eagerly cited in support of the region's essential and long-standing Hellenism.

It is pleasant to record that in Albania, too, he was not forgotten: as early as 1971, he had been one of four British scholars unprecedentedly invited to a conference in Tirana on the ancient Illyrians. With only one weekly flight into the country, this visit extended to a fortnight's stay with, once again, some re-visiting of old haunts. Contemporary political relations made this a delicate mission, and the politically sensitive subject of the conference even more so: for the Albanians, the Illyrians were not

<sup>25</sup> Seen most notably in his paper 'Literary Evidence for Macedonian Speech', *Historia*, 43 (1994), 131–42, repr. in *Collected Studies*, iv, 77–88.

only regarded as ancestors, but credited with a major territorial expansion into parts of Epirus which had generally been seen as Greek, in antiquity as today. Frank Walbank, who was also a member of the party, remembers more than anything else the tact and reticence that Hammond displayed in the face of such claims: Kikitsas's gibe of long ago, 'a bloody awful politician', once again stood refuted.

Only in his final decade, after a fall on the stairs of his house in Belvoir Terrace, was the physical pace of Hammond's life visibly abated. He and Margaret moved to a ground-floor flat off Chaucer Road, but he was still often to be seen in College, now walking with the aid of a stick, even if he could no longer act as chauffeur, on Wednesday evenings, for a colleague five years his senior. Now too came perhaps the heaviest blow to fall in his unusually serene life, when his daughter Caroline, whose distinction as a scholar of early Christianity had been recognised by her election to the Academy in 1994, died in the following year at the early age of 55: her husband and fellow-scholar Ernst Bammel, too, was to survive her by little more than a year. These were heavy losses, but Nick bore them with the same unshakeable calm as he had every physical or mental crisis. His continuing academic productivity was evidence of the unfailing happiness and support which he derived from Margaret and their four surviving children. Not long before his death, he completed the manuscripts of an edited translation of Aristotle's *Poetics* (since published by the Museum Tusculanum Press of the University of Copenhagen) and of a study of the tragedies of Aeschylus—not the first subjects to come to mind within his *oeuvre*, but in fact merely an extension of an earlier interest in Greek drama and especially dramatic production, on which he had periodically published since his Bristol days.<sup>26</sup>

His scholarly achievement, partly because it was utterly *sui generis*, is particularly difficult to evaluate. It was shaped by many untypical factors. His lifelong devotion to education, in every sense and at every level from the secondary onwards, gave it an unusual direction: until late in his life, much of his research had been driven by his teaching. His boldness in venturing into widely diverse branches of Classics,

<sup>26</sup> See 'Personal Freedom and its Limitations in the *Oresteia*', *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 85 (1965), 42–55; 'The Conditions of Dramatic Production to the Death of Aeschylus', *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*, 13 (1972), 387–450; 'Illustrations of Early Tragedy at Athens' (with Warren G. Moon), *American Journal of Archaeology*, 82 (1978), 331–50; 'Spectacle and Parody in Euripides' *Electra*', *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*, 25 (1984), 51–61; 'More on Conditions of Production to the Death of Aeschylus', *ibid.*, 29 (1988), 5–33.



together with his intensely personal view of the activity of research, is reflected in his own unclassifiable status; the fact that he had had no formal research supervisor of his own, nor was later in a position to attract a large following of research pupils, accentuated this. With little doubt, his best work was to be found in the fields where not only his exhaustive knowledge of the ancient sources, but also his personal virtues and experiences had full rein: the volume on Epirus, the trilogy on Macedonia and the best of his battle-reconstructions where he had walked over the landscape. Here the reader felt repeatedly in the presence of knowledge which none but the author possessed, and of a correspondingly sure judgement.

The same could hardly hold true for all his work: in his detailed reconstructions of central events in Greek political history, and especially in his source-criticism, there was more often a sense of the subjective and the arbitrary; of an orderly and definitive picture being offered where there was none to be had. At the same time, these qualities served him admirably as a writer of first-hand memoirs, and indeed of general historical works, where briskness and concision of style were at a premium. Supremely affable in his personal dealings, he was combative on paper, treating any dissident view as a direct challenge and hurrying into print to refute it. Of an earlier figure in Hellenic studies with whom Nick would never have dreamed of comparing himself, Arthur Evans, it was once written that 'He was always true to his principles, and always true, at the same time, to his own unconscious sense of the preminent importance of the workings of his own mind.'<sup>27</sup> This judgement, which was that of Evans's own half-sister Joan, was not meant to disparage him: on the contrary, it was part of a tribute to, and an elaboration of, his essential integrity. Within limits, a parallel judgement could be applied to Hammond and his work. In his case, there is again no disparagement in saying that the greatness of the scholar could not quite match the greatness of the man.

By a happy piece of timing, Clare College organised a luncheon in his honour on 24 February 2001, attended by some 200 guests: among them were to be found representatives of the College entry of 1930, his first pupils, as well as current students of the class of 2000. Nick made a brisk, dignified response to the speeches. Exactly a month later, he was gone: pursuing one of his many enthusiasms, he was attending a concert in

<sup>27</sup> Joan Evans, *Time and Chance: Arthur Evans and his Forebears* (London, 1943), 351.

Jesus College with his wife and his daughter Alison when, on their way through the cloisters, he collapsed in their arms and died. It was an appropriate seal to his long life.

ANTHONY SNODGRASS

*Fellow of the Academy*

*Note.* In compiling this memoir, I have had the indispensable help, first and foremost of Nicholas Hammond's wife Margaret and his daughter Alison Skaer; then from F. W. Walbank, FBA, close friend and collaborator of his last twenty-five years; from Ernst Badian, FBA, Professor A. J. Graham and Dr David Blackman; and from John Northam, Timothy Smiley, FBA, and Gordon Wright, Fellows of Clare.