

John Rowland Dinwiddy (1939–1990)

John Dinwiddy, whose untimely death at the age of fifty occurred in the spring of 1990, was educated at Winchester College, and at New College, Oxford, where he obtained his first degree in 1960. After a spell as assistant master at Eton (1960–63), he spent four years as a lecturer at Makerere University College of the University of East Africa, before returning in 1967 to London to take up seriously the historical research which the limited library facilities at Makerere had forced him to postpone. The Committee of the London Institute of Historical Research recognized his quality by awarding him a research fellowship for the session 1967–68, and he obtained his doctorate of the University of London in 1971. By this time he had already been appointed, in 1969, a lecturer in the history department of Royal Holloway College of the University of London, where he was to serve throughout his academic career, becoming a senior lecturer in 1978, reader in 1983 and professor in 1989. Expanding his original postgraduate studies of the activities and the thought of British constitutional reformers of the early nineteenth century, he established himself as an expert in this field with a stream of articles in the learned journals, some of them of conspicuous excellence, and more recently the fruits had begun to appear in monograph form: his short book in the Historical Association Studies series, *From Luddism to the First Reform Bill. Reform in England 1810–1832* (1986), designed as an aid to teaching, was a model of its kind.

When the general editorship of the undertaking for the publication of the complete works of Jeremy Bentham fell vacant, he was thus a natural choice for this exacting role, and from 1977, for some six years, first as joint and then as sole general editor, he organized and coordinated the work of the international group of Bentham scholars contributing to this enterprise and, not least important, revealed talents for drumming up financial support. During this period he saw through the press, with meticulous attention to editorial detail, five of the volumes prepared for the series by other individual editors, and he himself subsequently prepared two expertly edited volumes in the series of Bentham's published correspondence. In undertaking all this editorial and administrative activity he sacrificed to this major collective enterprise much time and energy which might otherwise have been devoted to the building up of a larger corpus of his own individual scholarly publications.

A spin-off, however, from this editorial work was his short monograph, *Bentham*, in the Past Masters series produced by Oxford

University Press, published in 1988: this, in happier circumstances, might have been the harbinger of a more exhaustive biographical study. The same year, in collaboration with Otto Dann, he edited a volume of essays, *Nationalism in the Age of the French Revolution*, to which he himself contributed a paper on England. Shortly afterwards he joined what must be the very select number of British scholars to achieve publication in Chinese, this item being a paper on Bentham's Utilitarianism, which had been delivered at an academic conference in China in May 1987.

Meanwhile, side by side with these scholarly activities he more than pulled his weight in teaching and administration in Royal Holloway College and in the University. A first-rate teacher he took a close and sympathetic interest in the progress of his undergraduate and post-graduate students and fired them with his enthusiasm for historical learning. Colleagues, and also scholars in other institutions, found him a firm friend and unfailingly ready to help in case of difficulty: one young lecturer at a provincial university recalls how, hearing of his frustrations in teaching on account of lacunae in his library's holdings, Dinwiddy immediately presented him with copies or offprints of all his articles in the learned journals. No call to service went unanswered. From 1978 to 1984 he served on the committee of management of the Institute of Historical Research and on its finance sub-committee. In 1984, though not yet of professorial rank, he agreed to take on the burdensome and time-consuming task of chairmanship of the University Board of Studies in History and discharged its duties with exemplary efficiency. He played a leading part in setting up a very successful combined degree course in Modern History, Economic History, and Politics in his College, and more recently gave the College sterling service as Dean of Arts. In November 1987 he was elected to the council of the Royal Historical Society. As a committee man he impressed colleagues with his fair and balanced judicious approach to administrative problems. His teaching and his administrative achievements alike gained from his genial personality and quiet, even temperament, behind which lay much creative energy, resourceful initiative, and a shrewd as well as extremely learned mind. His elevation to a chair in 1989 was a well-deserved recognition of his outstanding qualities; and his early death is a tragic loss both to scholarship and to all his many friends in College and University, by whom he is sorely missed. Dinwiddy married Caroline, daughter of Lord Franks, who survives him together with their two daughters.

University College London

IAN R. CHRISTIE