

Professor Nicholas G. L. Hammond (1907-2001)

Nicholas Hammond, President of the Hellenic Society from 1965 to 1968, possessed an unusual array of talents in diverse fields. His broad frame gave an early indication of his immense stamina, which he invariably drove to its limits, whether walking in the Greek mountains as a student or as an officer there during the war. Born in Scotland of Channel Island stock, he was a scholar at Fettes College, Edinburgh and then at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. At Cambridge he was president of the University Hockey Club and a redoubtable tennis player. Following an outstanding First Class in both parts of the Classical Tripos and the award of several university prizes, he was elected to a Fellowship at Clare College in 1930. By this time he had already begun to visit the remoter parts of northern Greece, where he walked vast distances with unflagging energy, recording roads and paths, copying inscriptions, identifying ancient sites and acquiring a fluent knowledge of modern Greek and a smattering of Albanian.

During the war Hammond had a varied and highly responsible career, first doing demolition work during the German advance in Greece and Crete (where he narrowly escaped being gunned down in a small caique), then in Palestine teaching Greeks wireless telegraphy and a group of Jews from the Haganah (including Moshe Dayan and Yigael Yadin) the arts of demolition and guerrilla fighting, and lastly parachuting into Thessaly and subsequently commanding a body of British troops, stationed at Pentalofos in the Pindus range to collaborate with Greek guerrilla fighters. On one occasion this took him into Thessaloniki disguised as a Vlach shepherd. He ended his war service with malaria and amoebic dysentery, but with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, two mentions in despatches, a DSO and the award of the Greek Order of the Phoenix. His account of this activity can be read in his book *Venture into Greece*.

After the war he returned to Clare College as Senior Tutor and University Lecturer and remained in Cambridge until 1954, when he moved to Bristol to become Headmaster of Clifton College. In 1962 he was elected to the Wills Chair of Greek in Bristol University, where he remained until his retirement in 1973.

Throughout these years his lasting passion was Greece and Greek history. He published enormously, writing over 130 articles (later assembled in four volumes) and about fifteen books, including his *Epirus* and his three-volume *History of Macedonia*. He also launched the new edition of the *Cambridge Ancient History*, co-editing the first four volumes. Yet this did not deter him, in retirement, from undertaking almost annual visits to a score of universities and research institutes in the United States, Australia, New Zealand and Greece as Visiting Professor or Research Fellow. His outstanding achievements were recognized by several honorary degrees, by his election as Fellow of the British Academy in 1968, his appointment as CBE in 1972 and, in 1992, in Greece, as Companion of the Society of Friends of the People. To his great satisfaction he was also made an honorary citizen of Jannina, Thessaloniki and Pentalofos.

Nick Hammond enjoyed a *viridis senectus*, blessed in his happy sixty-year marriage with Margaret, which was marred only by the death of the eldest of their five children, Caroline, herself a distinguished scholar. He maintained his long connection with Clare College and in March 2001 he and Margaret attended a special lunch given by the college in their honour. Nick went on working to the end. Only a week before his death he had despatched the manuscript of a book on Aeschylus to a publisher.

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