



Perhaps no other British scholar had so wide-ranging an influence on the development of African studies both within the British Isles and overseas as did Thomas Hodgkin. The service in his memory held last May at Balliol, of which he was an Emeritus Fellow, brought together, amongst many others, Africanists of different disciplines and filled the chapel to overflowing. Colleagues from the pioneering days of the fifties, when the study of Africa as a respectable field of scholarly enquiry still had to be established, and graduate students, who had recently been seeking the counsels of this elder statesman of African history and politics, sat side by side and later drank the claret he had so thoughtfully and characteristically laid down for the occasion of his death. This he had known for some time must not be far away, but up until the end he was continuing what for him was a life-long enquiry into the continent which since the late forties had been the centre of his many academic and political concerns. He had just spent the winter in Sudan, which combined his interests in Africa and Islam, before he collapsed suddenly in Greece on his way home to Crab Mill.

Thomas Hodgkin had, of course, interests that ranged beyond Africa, as his book on Vietnam, published not long before his death, witnessed. But it is as a great Africanist we must remember him here.

Thomas Hodgkin did not have as large a corpus of books to his name as many of his students were subsequently to have. But few of them have published books with such a continuing influence. Nationalism in Colonial Africa (1956), and African Political Parties (1961) are still essential reading for anyone interested in the study of the years that saw the dissolution of the great colonial empires of Africa. His introduction to Nigerian Perspectives, a collection of readings on Nigerian history published to mark Nigeria's independence, was, until the appearance of the second edition in 1975, by far the best survey of Nigeria's pre-colonial history available. The introduction to the second edition showed the remarkable range of his reading and his ability to keep abreast of the latest scholarship and to present this in an elegant prose to a broad public, for Thomas' first concern with Africa had been as an adult-educator. Today no intending student of pre-colonial Nigerian history could do better than embark on his studies with this revised introduction.

Thomas not only made major scholarly contributions to Africanist literature; he also played a major role in African university education, being the founder director of the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana, where a distinguished roll of students and teachers, both African and expatriate, gathered round him. As Secretary of the Delegacy for Extra-Mural Studies at Oxford University he played a crucial role in the development of adult education in the new universities established in

English-speaking Africa after the Second World War.

Thomas Hodgkin was a great teacher, but, in the tradition of the sheikhs of the Muslim world in whose scholarship he was so passionately interested, he was also a great student and saw these roles as inseparable, and right up to his death listened to and learnt from those whom, not long ago, he had himself taught.

For Thomas the study of Africa was not a dispassionate academic exercise. His scholarship was guided not only by his belief in the equality of all human beings, but by his outrage at the abuses of the colonial system, the presumption of one people to arrogate to themselves the direction of the affairs of another under whatever pretext. It was this conviction that led him to resign from the British administration service in Palestine in 1937 and was to inform much of his academic and political activity thereafter.

For a great many Africanists, Thomas will be missed above all for the loss of those informal seminars that all visits to his house became when his beloved wife Dorothy, the distinguished crystallographer and Nobel prize winner, and whichever of his three children were in residence, made friends of all ages and nationalities part of a wider Hodgkin family. And few left that house, whether at Boar's Hill or latterly at Crab Mill, without their perspectives on Africa and the wider world unchanged.

MICHAEL CROWDER

#### MEMORIAL TO THE LATE DR. DONALD M. MACKAY

Following the death of Dr. D.M. Mackay, reported in ARD No. 28, many have felt that his life and work should be commemorated. It has been decided to raise as substantial a sum as possible in the next six months and to expend this upon a suitable group of charitable aims to act as a memorial to the life and work of Dr. Mackay.

Among the many objects of Dr. Mackay's concern, the health of those in plantation industries occupied a central place, and the suggestions that have been put forward and are feasible in terms of cost include:-

- i) fellowships for those in plantation industries to attend courses or to visit centres of good work, usually within the same geographical region.
- ii) a prize of some type in plantation health work.
- iii) a portrait and plaque in one of the teaching rooms of the Ross Institute.

It is proposed that the final choice be made by the appeal committee, but suggestions from donors would be welcomed.

The appeal committee has been set up, and further particulars can be obtained from Professor D.J. Bradley, Ross Institute of Tropical Hygiene, Keppel Street, London WC1E 7HT.