

OBITUARIES

Sir Ian Richmond

I. A. RICHMOND, professor of the Archaeology of the Roman Empire in the University of Oxford, died on October 4 at the age of sixty-three. He was educated at Ruthin School and Corpus Christi College, Oxford. Studentships from his university and the British School at Rome enabled him to engage for two years after graduation in field research centred on Rome. In 1926 he was appointed lecturer in classical archaeology and ancient history at Queen's University, Belfast, whence he returned to Rome as director of the School. In 1935 he was appointed to a post in Roman-British history and archaeology in the Newcastle upon Tyne Division of the University of Durham, where he remained, as lecturer, as reader and as professor, until 1956, when he accepted the post in Oxford which he held until his death. He received a knighthood in 1964, the same year as he became president of the Society of Antiquaries of London.

Richmond had few equals either in investigation or in exposition. Almost all aspects of Roman provincial archaeology have been enriched or illumined by his activity, and he has been justly acknowledged for several years as the leading authority in a by no means narrow field.

The twin son of a Lancashire surgeon, Richmond sometimes compared his own work as an excavator with that of a surgeon. He had a flair for, and much experience in, the study of structural evidence. This enabled him to be economically selective in an excavation and still to obtain the full picture, as he did that of the legionary fortress at Inchtuthil in Perthshire, a little at a time over fourteen years. The method was only successful in his own hands, for less skilled excavators require a bolder approach. Richmond would excavate boldly when occasion demanded, and strip off a whole site level by level. Excavators the world over have benefited from working with him on the Corbridge training courses, where he taught techniques by example rather than precept.

On Hadrian's Wall, Richmond provided the sustained effort which brought to fruition programmes of research sometimes initiated by others and carried through in collaboration. In the decade before and the years immediately after the Second World War, problems which had remained obdurate for generations were tackled in a scientific spirit and solved finally and convincingly. The Museum of Antiquities in Newcastle upon Tyne, which he opened in 1960, was largely his creation, and is a permanent monument to him.

Richmond was a first-class teacher, but never surrounded himself with a large circle of undergraduates or recent graduates; for good or ill that was not his way. He was given honorary degrees by six universities, including that where he had spent half his working life. Learned societies and universities also honoured him by asking him to deliver endowed and named lectures. He will be remembered by a wider public for the hundreds of lectures, illustrated, delivered without a script out of the depth of his knowledge, sound, clear and gravely gay, which he gave, up and down the country, to any interested audience.

He held the highest office in national societies, and was a valued member of national boards and commissions in both England and Scotland; he also found time, when already a busy man, to hold office in local societies and to serve on committees and councils. He was no passenger on these bodies, and his cheerful common sense was much in demand. He used the time on the long train journeys to draft his reports.

Richmond's published work includes *The City Wall of Imperial Rome* (1930), a substantial contribution to the

Northumberland County History—*The Romans in Redesdale* (1940), the tenth (1947) and eleventh (1957) editions of the *Handbook to the Roman Wall, Roman Britain* (Collins, 1947), *Roman Britain* (Pelican, 1955), and *Roman and Native in North Britain* (1958). Excavation reports, illustrated by his own photographs and drawings, and substantial papers on many different facets of his main subject, are to be found in the journals of local and national societies.

He was not merely an able man, but a good man. He took an unconcealed delight in success, but was never ambitious at the expense of others. He would spend hours with the writer of a paper or report going through it with him sentence by sentence improving the language. On meeting an acquaintance he never failed to ask the right question about himself and his family. He could be stern, but was always open; his normal mood was of robust good humour and impish wit. He would help a friend or colleague when he needed it most and seemed to deserve it least. It was his explicit policy to do things for other people; he did so as if he were indefatigable, which unfortunately he was not.

J. P. GILLAM

K. R. Butlin

KENNETH RUPERT BUTLIN died on October 1, 1965, at the age of sixty-eight. He was educated at Oundle School and, with an interruption for military service, at Trinity College, Cambridge. Shortly after the First World War he took a first in chemistry and almost immediately left for Argentina, where he worked on the fermentation of sugar. Thereafter he remained interested in the chemical activities of micro-organisms and, returning to the United Kingdom in 1929, he joined A. C. Thaysen's group of microbiologists, then working at the Royal Naval cordite factory at Holton Heath. This group was transferred as a unit to the Chemical Research Laboratory, Teddington, in 1933, and it was from Teddington that Butlin published the research for which he will be most remembered.

His earliest papers were concerned with the chemical activities of the acetic acid bacteria, and his review of these organisms is still required reading for those interested in the subject. During the Second World War, Butlin, with the rest of Thaysen's group, turned his attention to the problem of food yeast production, making use of molasses, a project which gave him valuable experience of large-scale production of microbes and which involved, incidentally, one of the earliest uses of continuous culture. At the end of the War, Thaysen and H. J. Bunker (a leading authority on the sulphur bacteria) left Teddington, and research on microbiology at the Chemical Research Laboratory was left in the hands of a small section of the Corrosion Group, headed by Butlin, studying bacterial corrosion. This process is largely the responsibility of the sulphate-reducing bacteria (*Desulfovibrio*), and Butlin's small group rapidly established themselves as leading authorities in this field: they were, for example, among the first to work with authentically pure bacterial cultures.

The then director of the Chemical Research Laboratory, R. P. (now Sir Patrick) Linstead, perceiving the broader ramifications of chemical microbiology, initiated the expansion of Butlin's microbiology section until, in the early 1950's, it became an independent Microbiology Group, mainly concerned with the study of sulphate-reducing bacteria but also with a variety of bacteria of economic and industrial importance. In 1950, Butlin accepted responsibility for a few hundred bacterial cultures of industrial importance which the National Collection of Type Cultures proposed to discard, and thus