

OBITUARY

MAURICE M. SCHOFIELD, 1915–1989

Maurice Schofield died in November 1989. He was a member of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire from 1950, a council member from 1953, and served as president. More than any other member he, with his wife Eunice, symbolised the society and what it stands for. His interest in the history of the North-West, and his enthusiasm and enjoyment in talking with friends at meetings made him a lively and central figure. And the verve with which he presented his own research work made his lectures to the society memorable occasions, more so in recent years when jointly presenting the results of collaborative research work with Eunice. Especially noteworthy were the many votes of thanks he made to guest speakers for he was masterly at adding an insight of his own or a pertinent historical anecdote, and he had the gift of always sharing his enthusiasm for historical investigation.

Maurice's own contribution to the maritime history of the North-West is well known. Many years ago he wrote a pioneering study on Lancaster, *Outlines of an economic history of Lancaster, 1680–1860* (2 vols. 1946, 1951). In our *Transactions* he published papers on 'The Statutory Registers of British Merchant Ships for North Lancashire' (vol. 110), 'The Letter Book of Benjamin Satterthwaite of Lancaster, 1737–1744' (113), 'The Virginia Trade of the firm of Sparling and Bolden of Liverpool, 1788–1799' (116), 'The Slave Trade from Lancashire and Cheshire outside Liverpool' (126), and 'Shoes and ships and sealing wax: eighteenth-century exports to the Colonies' (135). In recent years he and Eunice became honorary research fellows in the department of Economic History at the University of Liverpool, and jointly undertook a large-scale ESRC project collecting and analysing data from the Liverpool Plantation registers. His collected notes are now deposited in the archives at the university. His work on trade and shipping represent an important contribution to our knowledge of the developing economy of the region during a period of conspicuous growth.

His involvement with research and the Historic Society represented only a part of a busy life, teaching at Wade Deacon School in Widnes, founding and chairing the Widnes Historical Society, and teaching extra-mural classes for the University of Liverpool. He was, too, an active member of the Society of Friends. But it was for his involvement in local and regional history that he will be best remembered by members of this society. For me, a Southerner, he epitomised the virtues I think of as particularly characteristic of a Northerner: he was direct and forceful, enthusiastic and informed, and, above all, attentive and kindly. We have lost a colleague who gave our society character and distinction.

M.J. Power