



An Eightieth Birthday

Professor Gareth Jones celebrated his eightieth birthday on 10 November 2010.

A large company of Fellows and guests drank his health after dinner in Hall. Professor Jones responded as follows:

Reading the speeches of others who have attained this age I realise that I am expected to give you an autobiographical vignette, or more accurately an academic autobiographical vignette. My children persuaded a reluctant me that I should do so.

My early years

The Rhondda Valley, and Tylorstown in the Rhondda Valley, is so very different from Cambridge. When I was young it was a mining valley in decline; the pits were closing one by one. In each village there were streets of grey stone, slate roofed houses, creeping up the mountainside. I was born in one of those houses in one of those streets; our house was notable, so to speak, for it had a bay window and a monkey puzzle tree in the tiny garden which faced the street. Both my grandparents who died before I was born were colliery managers who had worked their way up the hard way. They and their wives were of fierce Welsh non-conformist stock: lots of chapel and lots of lemonade. It may surprise some of you to know that my paternal grandmother was President of the South Wales Temperance Society. Father had six siblings. My mother was the youngest of 13 whose oldest brothers had fought in the Boer War. My father was bilingual; my mother spoke Welsh correctly but was more comfortable in English. So, sadly, Welsh was never spoken at home. Father was a chartered surveyor employed by the Rhondda Council; my mother trained as a school teacher and was the first of her family to be educated abroad, in a teachers' training college in Exeter! On her marriage she was required to give up her job. They too were chapel going teetotallers and I was made to conform. Sundays were miserable. There I sat in my Sunday suit with no games, no newspapers, and no music. Light relief was chapel at 10.30 am, Sunday school at 2 pm and chapel again at 6 pm, with 40 minute sermons in the morning and evening—and the services were in Welsh which I barely understood. My loving parents could never quite understand why I mildly protested!

I duly passed my 11 plus and went to *the boys'* Rhondda County School for Boys (there were four other grammar schools in the Rhondda, exemplifying

the Welsh dedication to education). The school was in Porth, at the junction of the two valleys, the Rhondda Fawr (Big) and the Rhondda Fach (Small), some four to five miles from my home. The education was traditional but limited. For example, I wanted to do Latin for Higher School Certificate but there was no teacher who could teach it to that level. In the adjacent girls' school it was taught. But it was unthinkable that I should be allowed to go there. The Iron Gate between the two schools was firmly locked. There was no contact between the schools—no plays, no concerts (indeed music was absent from the boys' school), no social contact whatsoever. I never spoke to a girl (cousins apart) until I went to College. The subjects which were taught were by and large well taught, and I was happy there.

UCL and Cambridge

My Higher School results were good. But it was never suggested that I should apply to Oxbridge. But I did apply to UCL and was accepted. I still do not understand why I took this bold step on my own initiative. My parents never went to London. But they found me digs, in Camberwell, near the Elephant and Castle, with a Welsh dairy man—the Welsh had a monopoly of that trade at that time. They were very kind and gave me an evening meal although the cuisine was limited, bacon and eggs, every night for the ten weeks of the College term. I worked hard, too hard; indeed in my second year it was only with the greatest effort that I sat the exams. UCL was a sad victim of the Blitz, its main court was a shell, but its tuition was excellent. I owe much to the College. It gave me great pleasure to receive, years later, the Provost's, Sir James Lighthill's, invitation to become a Fellow. James had sold me his house when he left Trinity and Cambridge for UCL! These events were not inter-related.

A family friend suggested that I should apply to Cambridge, and I duly went up to St Catharine's as an affiliated student, financed by my parents (a great struggle for them), and had equally fine tuition. During my final year, when I was an LL.B student (now the LL.M.), I saw a poster, advertising the Joseph Hodges Choate Fellowship, tenable at Harvard University, and was encouraged by the late Dick Gooderson, my tutor and the most conscientious of directors of studies, to apply. One Saturday morning, returning from lectures, the Head Porter accosted me and said, "The Vice-Chancellor wants to see you at 12.30, in Downing College." I had only the vaguest idea what the Vice-Chancellor did and had no idea who he was. The interview with him, Sir Lionel Whitby, was sticky. "There are many applicants", Mr Jones, or was it Jones? Pause, long pause,

longer pause, then, “Mr Jones, Jones, have you heard of Maitland?” (Maitland, an honorary Fellow of Trinity and Downing Professor of the Laws of England, was and is the greatest of English legal historians.) Jones, doubtless unctuously, “Was he not a Fellow of Downing?” “He was something like that”, responded the Vice-Chancellor. “Would you like to see his portrait?” We went to another room and gazed at Maitland, reverently and silently, for what seemed ages. The silence was interrupted with a polite dismissal.

Harvard University

I had heard of Maitland. But I had never heard of Joseph Hodges Choate. A prominent lawyer, he was the US Ambassador to the Court of St James at the turn of the 19th and 20th century. The Fellowship was partly funded by the Harvard Club of New York City (Choate had been its President) and the Fellowship brought with it the privilege of staying there free when the holder was in New York. I did stay for five nights in the Christmas vacation, but I could never afford to eat there. A month ago I stayed there again, and the food was just as expensive. More importantly the Choate Fellowship brought with it a handsome set of rooms in the Winthrop House in Harvard College, and membership of its senior common room. The Winthrop House has links with Trinity. John Winthrop, a staunch Puritan, and the first Governor of Massachusetts, was a Trinity man. But my working life was in the Harvard Law School. They were rigorous academic days. For example, the Dean, the formidable Erwin Griswold, a staunch Republican but one of the few Republicans who had stood up against that awful witch hunter Senator Joe McCarthy, was shocked at the hesitant, timid suggestion that classes should be cancelled on the Friday and the Saturday after the Thanksgiving holiday. There would be classes on Friday and Saturday as usual, he decreed. A sybaritic long week end was not for the Law School! Life in the Winthrop House was very different since it was my leisure ground and there I made good friends, post-Docs from other disciplines, one of whom remained a life long close fiend. At the end of the academic year there was a journey across the States, travel, largely by courtesy of Greyhound buses, staying with newly made American friends or their parents, back from Vancouver, through the Rockies and home from Montreal on an ancient Cunard liner, an eleven day journey to Liverpool, quite a contrast from my introduction to New York City, after a five day journey on the sleek *SS United States*, her maiden voyage. I left the USA with sadness. The confident enthusiasm of the society had seduced me.

Oxford and King's College London

On my return I expected to do military service. I had done my basic training at Oswestry while in Cambridge. However, on my return I failed my medical; poor eye sight was the verdict. So what now? The Bar was an attractive prospect. I did my pupillage, but there was little work and I had little money. Moreover, the prospect of academic life had become more appealing after Harvard. I accepted a College lectureship in Oxford. I was shared between Exeter and Oriel Colleges, with rooms in Oriel. The Colleges were very different. Exeter was fun and academically lively, Oriel, stuffy and pretentious, living on its Oxford Movement past, though a few Oriel Fellows, including Hugh Trevor-Roper, the newly appointed Regius Professor of Modern History, went out of their way to make me feel welcome.

The two years in Oxford were the most important of my life for other reasons. I became a close friend of Brian Simpson, then a Fellow of Lincoln College. In his home I met Vivienne Puckridge, who had been at St Hugh's Oxford with Brian's wife. Within six weeks we were engaged to be married—prompting my younger son to remark, when I foolishly told him this fact years later, that he always thought that I was the most cautious of persons! My parents were delighted that Viv had agreed to marry me. They approved, but my mother was concerned that Viv would not look after me with her single devotion. I was the only child of a mother touching 40 when I was born. I was much cosseted, some may say spoilt rotten. The traditional Jewish mother with an only son and only child was her pale shadow. Could Vivienne look after me as I should be looked after? In particular, would she see that I was warmly clad? My mother had long shopped in Howells, Cardiff's Sachs of Fifth Avenue; she bought me a trousseau, under vests, pants socks etc. The salesman had told her that they were seconds, but, "Gareth, no one would know they were not perfect garments." Unfortunately, the undervest was marked SUB STANDARD to my fiancée's consternation!

Brian also introduced me to Robert Goff, his predecessor as a law Don at Lincoln College and now at the Bar. Robert had long wanted to write a book about the law of restitution (roughly, the law of unjust enrichment), a subject which I had studied at Harvard. He invited me to collaborate and six years later, after revision upon revision, it was published. It was the first English text on the subject, inspiring many younger Dons, notably my younger friend, Peter Birks, who would become Regius Professor in Oxford. Gratifyingly, the

subject also became accepted by a once sceptical profession; the fact that young Robert Goff was to become the Senior Law Lord helped the profession to walk to Damascus, although Robert had long ceased to be involved in the publication of the text which has gone through seven editions. Sadly, Robert is not well enough to be with us this evening. It gives me great pleasure that Lady Goff, Sarah, is present, as is William (now Lord) Goodhart Q.C. and Lady Goodhart. William and I wrote a book on a subject much loved by Chancery lawyers, *Specific Performance*.

In 1958 I left Oxford for King's College London where I spent three happy years. Newly married and academically more confident I anticipated that my career would lie there. But one morning I received a telephone call from Professor Jack Hamson, a Fellow of this College, suggesting that we met over coffee in King's for a chat. I was puzzled. I had sat at his feet as a LL.B. student but my acquaintance was politely formal. He said that he had read with interest my essay which had been awarded the Yorke Prize in Cambridge a few months beforehand. Events occurred pretty rapidly after this coffee break: an invitation to dine in Trinity College, a meeting with Tony Jolowicz and Eli Lauterpacht, the then Trinity Law Dons, followed by a letter from the Master, Lord Adrian, offering, on behalf of the Council, a College Lectureship with the promise of a Fellowship, the then time-honoured formula. I accepted and was admitted as a Fellow in October 1961. I guess that I must have sent a c.v, although I cannot recall doing so. The post was never advertised and my former Cambridge tutor was never asked for a reference.

Cambridge and my first years at Trinity

Our first Cambridge home in 1961 was a flat which had no central heating; we had two sons, aged one year and one newly born. I looked after my one year old Christopher for a week while Viv was in the Evelyn Nursing home with the newly born Steven; that was my learning period for changing nappies! The winter of 1962–1963 was a cruel one. The Cam was frozen, as were the water pipes of our flat; for four weeks I collected water from a neighbour's house some forty yards away. I taught in College in what is now the innermost room of the Law Reading Room, wearing an overcoat and gloves. No double glazing or central heating there either. In contrast, the Fellowship, then a mere 109 in number, with no visiting fellow commoners, was warmly welcoming. I got to know my colleagues, old and young, reasonably well. The years between 1961 and 1966 were busy, teaching nine hours a week in the College (including a

year as Steward, my first taste of College office!), and my stint of University teaching. I had been appointed a University Assistant Lecturer. The University was cash-strapped, then as it is now, and I had to wait five years before I got my lectureship.

I return to the Harvard Law School

In 1966 I was invited to return to Harvard as a Visiting Professor in its Law School. During my year there I became good friends of two distinguished legal historians, John Dawson and Sam Thorne. At that time, among other work, I was transcribing an early 17th century manuscript of some 170 odd folio pages, written in law French, and their scholarship was invaluable in helping me to incorporate the law French text into the manuscript which was to become my *History of the Law of Charity 1532–1827*. The teaching also went well. It was an exciting year which ended with an offer of a tenured full professorship at the Law School. It was an offer a non-tenured lecturer in the other Cambridge could not refuse. But there was a formidable snag. As the immigration law then stood I had to return to the UK for two years before I could apply for a permanent visa. After a halcyon two months in Berkeley, having taken two and a half weeks to drive across the USA, with three children aged 6, 5 and 2, (we were to repeat that journey six years later), we returned to the UK. During those two years, waiting for a visa, so much happened: my father suddenly died, I was the only child; in the United States there were anti-Vietnam riots, Harvard Square and campuses across the Continental US went up in flames; and it was clear that Vivienne was not happy at the prospect of living permanently in the US. So, with much misgivings, I wrote to Derek Bok, who had succeeded Erwin Griswold as Dean of the Law School and was soon to become President of Harvard, declining his renewed invitation to come to the Law School.

My Trinity Tutorship

In 1967, when I was still pondering whether to leave, the Council asked me to become the Tutor of Side A. I accepted, and was, as events transpired, the last of the 'old-fashioned' tutors. I had a Side of 140 plus, and had the sole power, after consultation with directors of studies, to admit undergraduates. In 1970, after lively College Meetings, directors of studies, led by maths staff, successfully demanded that the teaching staff, and the teaching staff alone, should admit undergraduates. It was no longer possible to take the odd chance that a candidate of promise, but not yet of achievement, would fulfil that promise. However, I recognised that change was bound to come. Two years

later, early in 1972, I became Senior Tutor, but I did not foresee that my tenure would be so short-lived. In 1974 Stanley de Smith, who was Downing Professor of the Laws of England, died. At that time there were only two chairs of English law. A senior member of the Faculty suggested that I might as well “have a shot”, so I applied for the vacant chair. To my surprised delight I was elected.

My University life

My academic life changed. I had to resign my tutorship and my post as a Director of Studies. The General Board reluctantly allowed me to supervise two hours a week on condition that some of my pupils were also pupils from other colleges. I regretted losing personal contact with my Trinity tutorial and legal pupils. I had enjoyed my tutorship. It had lasted only seven years. Four of my tutorial pupils are now fellows of this College and others have achieved distinction in the world outside Cambridge. And it was sad to leave such a harmonious law staff.

Inevitably, the University became a more important player in my life. In the years that followed I became Chairman of the Faculty Board, served on its numerous committees, on the rather boring Council of the Senate, as it was then called, and on the more interesting General Board. While on the General Board I was asked to investigate whether the appointments’ committee of the then bitterly divided English Faculty had acted with scrupulous propriety. Adrian Poole assures me that times have changed and the Faculty is now a “nest of singing birds”. While a member of the Press Syndicate I supported Keith Moffatt’s ultimately successful campaign to compel the reluctant Press Officers to disclose fully to the Syndicate the financial accounts, in particular, the salary structure. This was not an enjoyable experience. In contrast, membership of the Fitzwilliam Museum Syndicate, which I was to chair for twelve years, was. Michael Jaffe was the Director much of this time. He was a formidable, imperious, imperial figure, not always easy to work with, but his aesthetic eye helped to make the museum a “collection of beauty, quality and rarity.” I had little time for work on outside bodies although I did my stint on the Council of the British Academy.

My Chicago years

After my election as Professor I took a long planned sabbatical leave, returning once again to Harvard and for the first time to the University of Chicago. The University of Chicago is a very serious University and its law school is no exception. There were inter-disciplinary seminars twice or three times a week. My research interests were the law of restitution and legal history,

and there were frequent legal history seminars organised by John Langbein and Dick Helmholtz. But it was the interrelationship of law and economics which dominated the research programmes. The reclusive Ronald Coase, an economist, had been recruited to the Law School in the 1960s and was to win the Nobel Prize in 1991. A younger faculty member was Richard Posner, now a senior Federal judge, who had just published his *Economic Analysis of Law* which was to prove to be highly influential, and there was a constant stream of like-minded, deeply conservative economists from across the Midway, including two other Noble Laureates, George Stigler and Gary Becker. Cambridge never had such inter-disciplinary seminars.

Unlike other major American universities, Chicago had the 'quarter' system. For twenty years after my first visit I spent each Spring Quarter in Chicago. The Spring quarter roughly coincided with Cambridge's Easter vacation and the first weeks of Cambridge's Easter Term. I also endured two Chicago winters. But there was the compensation of visits from the Southside of Chicago (where the University is) to the Downtown of the City, arguably the handsomest and architecturally the most distinguished of all the cities in the USA, to hear its marvellous orchestra under Solti and then Barenboim and to enjoy its splendid Art Institute. On occasions some Cambridge colleagues teased me about my Chicago visits. Perhaps they had in mind the apocryphal story of the honorary Fellow of Trinity, then the Head of another College, who had spent much time in MIT; one morning, he was greeted in King's Parade by a distinguished MIT visiting professor with these words: "Hi! Harry, I didn't realise that you were on sabbatical in Cambridge!" I comforted myself with the knowledge that I fulfilled all my Cambridge University duties, including examining.

I was not completely wedded to Chicago. I lectured in many other countries and I recall with particular pleasure my visits to Australia, Canada, India and the Netherlands.

As Vice-Master: the first six years

I remained active in the College. All in all I served nineteen years on the College Council, nine of these as Vice-Master. I first became Vice-Master in 1986. Andrew Huxley was Master. During Andrew's tenure I backed warmly Anil Seal's initiative to persuade the Senior Bursar, John Bradfield, to support the creation of the Isaac Newton Trust. And on Andrew's retirement in 1990 I had my first experience of meeting the Patronage Secretary whose task it was to advise the Prime Minister on 'Royal' appointments, including, of course,

the Mastership of Trinity. I suggested that he should consult as many fellows as wished to be consulted and said that I was ready to answer any questions that he would put to me. He assured me he would adopt these suggestions but that he would take wider soundings. The College welcomed the appointment of Michael Atiyah. In 1992 I ceased to be Vice-Master, having held the office for six years.

Vice-Master again

For some thirty years it has been the custom that no Vice-Master should serve more than six *consecutive* years. In 1996 some fellows persuaded me to stand again as Vice-Master after John Davidson's term of office had ended. I was duly elected, unopposed, as I had on the previous election. On September 30th 1997 Michael Atiyah resigned. Once more the Patronage Secretary, now called by another name, contacted me as the 'go between', and the similar process of consultation began again. As we know this led to the appointment of Amartya Sen. Amartya could not take up his appointment until January 1st 1998. During the interregnum I had to fulfil the duties of Master. My re-election in 1998 was opposed. Although I was re-elected with a very handsome majority I did not enjoy that particular experience for a number of reasons. I decided to resign one year later. The Vice-Master has a busy life, as those who have held the office know; there are countless committees, many of which the Vice-Master chairs, and countless social functions; and sometimes the Vice-Master has to deal with the most sensitive personal issues. Busy though one's Vice-Magisterial life was, it was a privilege to be asked by one's colleagues to serve in that office.

The following years

From 1998, from time to time, I taught at the Law School of the University of Michigan, a distinguished school but less intense than Chicago, and was active in the American Law Institute as an *Adviser* of the *Restatement of the Law Third, Agency*, and the *Restatement of the Law Third, Restitution and Unjust Enrichment*. They were happy years, academically and socially. In 2003 Viv's health began to fail. She died in July 2004. She was a most loving wife, mother and grandmother. In Trinity she is remembered as the most gracious and welcoming of hostesses; prominent on the committee of Trinity in Camberwell, she was much loved in the College by all who knew her.

Forgive me, Master, ending on this most personal of notes. I owe much to Trinity. I have never regretted refusing invitations to go elsewhere. It is a particular

privilege to retain one's fellowship after the normal retirement age. And one of the many pleasures is the opportunity to meet and talk to fellows of different disciplines, many of whom are so much younger than oneself. Sadly now that the Society is so much bigger it has become increasingly more difficult to do so.

Finally, Master, may I thank you once again for your kind introductory remarks, and to you, the Fellows and guests my apologies for the length of this address....



A Visiting Year at Trinity **by Joan Richards**

When I opened the Master's invitation to be a Visiting Fellow Commoner at Trinity the historian in me grinned. I knew that in the eighteenth century to be a Fellow Commoner was to pay enough in fees to be allowed to eat with the Fellows and not to take exams. In my sabbatical year at Trinity, I did not feel called to live up to the reputation of this rather hedonistic group, generally referred to as 'empty bottles', but was thrilled to be allowed their privileges; to be able to live at Trinity for a full year, eat with the Fellows, and not take exams.

In its somewhat quirky historicism, this response was typical of me. I have spent all my professional life as a historian of science, with a particular interest in English mathematics in the post-Newtonian world, but the vicissitudes of life as a wife, mother and professor at Brown University have meant that I have spent little time actually in England. My England has therefore tended to be rather different from that of most of its current inhabitants. So it was wonderful to have the opportunity to live in contemporary England for a year.

It was even more wonderful that I was to be at Trinity, because so much of nineteenth century English mathematics was centred here. It was a Trinity man who first led me to my historical interests. William Kingdon Clifford was an irresistibly charming and romantic figure who was at Trinity in the 1860s. He entered as a devout Anglican, but soon fell away from the church. Although he graduated second in his class in 1867, he was too disillusioned to stay in Cambridge, and was more comfortable teaching mathematics at the secular University College London.