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OBITUARIES

FELIX HULL, B.A., PH.D., D. LITT., F.R.HIST.S.

Felix Hull, the first archivist in Kent to hold the title 'County Archivist', died in May 2010 at the age of 95. He was probably the last survivor of a remarkable generation of pioneering local government archivists who began their careers before the Second World War.

Having started his career as a teacher, in 1938 he was appointed Assistant Archivist at the Essex Record Office which at that early date was setting a recognized standard for county record offices. After the end of hostilities – during which, as a Quaker, he served in London in the Friends Ambulance Unit – he took an extra-mural History degree while continuing to work at Chelmsford, and then became the first County Archivist of Berkshire in 1948. After completing a London PH.D. thesis on Essex rural society, he became County Archivist of Kent in 1952, a position he held until his retirement in 1980.

One asset at his disposal was a purpose-built county archive repository, for Kent had been one of the first county councils to build one. The Clerk to the Council, W.L. Platts, whose initiative this was, had intended it only for the storage of official records owned by the Council, and gave Felix Hull's predecessors very little authority to accept material other than donations. But around 1950 this policy was relaxed, so that as in other counties the storage facilities came to be regarded as a place of safe keeping where archives of great families, dioceses, historic boroughs and so on could be placed on deposit, and many such were deposited, within a comparatively short time. These and the official collections now form the core of those to be found not only at CKS but also the East Kent Archives Centre and a substantial part of the ecclesiastical and unofficial deposited records at Medway Archives.

With what now seems astounding speed, Dr Hull's *Guide to the Kent County Archives Office* was completed and published by 1958, summarizing the holdings acquired to that date. It was one of the largest county archives guides at that time, and reflects his clear thinking and organizing skill as well as his expertise and that of his staff. Two large supplements to the Guide followed; also his detailed (and at the time comprehensive) *Catalogue of Estate Maps, 1590-1840, in the Kent County Archives Office* (1974).

perhaps reflecting an area of particular interest. The *Kentish Sources* series of books, undertaken by his deputy Elizabeth Melling, was a trend-setting undertaking in the educational use of archives. On top of this, Felix Hull was a pioneer in the management of modern records. As early as the mid-1950s he had needed to persuade the County Clerk that the repository would be full within two years unless the archivist was authorized to take a more critical and systematic approach to the accumulation of files, and he produced guidelines for their selection and retention which other county councils adopted. Consequently Kent was regarded by the 1970s as holding a primary position in county archives.

Dr Hull represented his profession as Chairman of the Society of Archivists from 1960 to 1963, and served two terms as its President, from 1976 to 1982. His presidential addresses, published in the Society's Journals, might be seen to contain his credo as an archivist and still provide interesting reading today.

Having joined the Kent Archaeological Society in 1953 and serving on its Council, Dr Hull became a Vice-President (in 1975) and later a Patron (1984). Among much other work for the KAS including many articles in *Archaeologia Cantiana*, he edited a collection of records called *A Kentish Miscellany* (1979), for which he chose to calendar the memoranda from the statute book of Queenborough; a further major undertaking was his *Calendar of the White and Black Books of the Cinque Ports* for the Historic Manuscripts Commission. In 1983 the KAS published and presented to Dr Hull (and Miss Melling) *Studies in Modern Kentish History* on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Kent Archives Office.

He also supported the Workers' Educational Association, and his training manuals for UNESCO showed his commitment to the training of archivists worldwide. He is remembered with respect and fondness by his staff not only for his dynamic energy but also for his kindness and readiness to listen to opinion, which reflected his Quaker background. His son Philip remarked in his funeral address on his 'great respect ... for the philosophy of Quakerism – its refusal to be dogmatic but to judge all issues on their merits, and its belief in moving forward through intelligent, caring dialogue'.

In 1995 he and his wife, Olive, moved from Bearsted to Hayling Island. She survives him, as do Philip, their daughter Rosemary and three grandchildren.

MARK BALLARD

DAVID PERKINS, PH.D., M.SC., M.I.F.A.

David Richard John Perkins, the first Director of the Trust for Thanet Archaeology, died on the 10th August 2010 in hospital at Margate aged 72. Born and brought up in Ramsgate, David had a passion for the history of Thanet inspired by his father's love of historical subjects and his grandmother's tales of local life and folklore. David's school career was frequently interrupted by spells in hospital and convalescent homes as a result of brittle bone disease. After training as an artist specialising in book and technical illustration at Margate Art School he followed various careers including work as a commercial artist and running a business designing and manufacturing leather goods.

At the age of 38 David came relatively late in life to follow archaeology as a career. His introduction to archaeology came during a visit in 1976 to the excavation of a Henge at the Lord of the Manor, Ramsgate directed by Nigel Macpherson-Grant. David volunteered to help on the same day and his illustration skills were soon in demand. He progressed quickly from volunteer to full time supervisor working on archaeological projects with the Isle of Thanet Archaeological Unit and the Manpower Services Commission Youth Training Scheme. Among these early projects was the excavation between 1978-9 of the Church of All Saints, Shuart, with Frank Jenkins and the discovery and recording of the shipwreck of the HMS *Stirling Castle* off the Goodwin Sands in 1979. An early career highlight for Dave was the excavation of over 300 graves at the Ozengell Anglo-Saxon cemetery, Lord of the Manor, Ramsgate, between 1977-1980. The full results of this excavation unfortunately still remain unpublished.

Despite early set-backs David recognised the importance of disseminating the results of the work he was carrying out and from 1981 regularly submitted reports for inclusion in *Archaeologia Cantiana*. One of his earliest reports was a joint publication with Sonia Chadwick Hawkes detailing the rescue excavations carried out on the Monkton Anglo-Saxon cemetery during the laying of the Monkton Gas Pipeline.

In 1982 the Isle of Thanet Archaeological Unit began compiling its own sites and monuments record for use in research and local government planning some years in advance of the creation of a county-wide record. David Perkins was instrumental in collating the Thanet Sites and Monuments Record and was assisted by volunteers from the Isle of Thanet Archaeological Unit and the Manpower Services Commission. The five years that the record took to research between 1982 and 1987 revealed to David that Thanet's archaeology was of national importance. Meanwhile new sites continued to be added – their number doubled between 1982 and its completion in 1987 – signalling that many more sites awaited discovery.

In 1988 The Trust for Thanet Archaeology was formed as a professional

archaeological unit for Thanet with David Perkins serving as its first Director until his retirement in 2003. Formal qualifications through part-time study were added to his growing professional reputation. A B.Sc. in archaeological science from the Polytechnic of East London (East London University) was followed by an M.Sc. gained through studying Roman and Anglo-Saxon glass; a summary of the results of the study of the Anglo-Saxon glass appear in volume CXX of *Archaeologia Cantiana*.

David joined the Kent Archaeological Society in 1976, the same year he first volunteered on an archaeological excavation. He was the local secretary for Thanet from 1984 onwards and served on the Fieldwork Committee from 1989 until his retirement in 2003.

Notable amongst his archaeological achievements were the excavation of Iron Age sites at Dumpton and North Foreland as well as the seasons of training excavations he directed on the Roman Villa at Abbey Farm, Minster. Over the years many people heard David speak about his discoveries or took part in digs with him. An acknowledged authority on the archaeology of Thanet by this time, David was awarded a Doctorate by the University of London in 2001 for his thesis on the prehistory of the Isle of Thanet – The Gateway Isle.

Battling against the poor health and increasingly reduced mobility that had affected him since childhood, David remained an enthusiast for Thanet's Archaeology after his retirement. His last publication on the Bronze Age round barrows of Thanet appeared in the county journal in July 2010 just before his death.

Despite his growing reputation and long list of published work David Perkins remained an ordinary man, pleased to share his knowledge and he encouraged others to take part in his work. Concerned to keep up the link between amateur and professional archaeology David was at the time of his death president of the Isle of Thanet Archaeological Society. David leaves behind many friends and students and an unrivalled body of research on his beloved Isle of Thanet. His determination to understand the archaeology of the Isle of Thanet, his enthusiasm and diligent research remain as an inspiration to us as the current custodians of the archaeology of the Isle.

EMMA BOAST