

SIR MAURICE SHELDON AMOS, K.B.E., K.C.

The death of Maurice Sheldon Amos has robbed the combination room of the Cambridge Law Faculty of one of its most vivid personalities and keenest intellects. But our loss is greater than this, for he was much loved for his qualities of heart.

His ancestry is of interest. His grandfather, Andrew Amos (1791—1860), Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, 1815, was the first professor of law in University College, London, succeeded Macaulay as member of the Governor-General's Council in India, and for the last twelve years of his life was Downing Professor of the Laws of England.

His father, Sheldon Amos (1835—86), Clare College, Cambridge, was professor of jurisprudence in University College, London (1869—79), and afterwards until his premature death a judge of the Court of Appeal in Egypt.

Maurice followed in their footsteps as Cambridge undergraduate, as servant of the British Commonwealth abroad, as professor of law in University College, London, and as legal writer.

He was born in 1872, was educated privately, won a scholarship at Trinity College, Cambridge, was placed in the first class of the Moral Science Tripos, won the Cobden Prize in 1895, was called to the bar in 1897, and obtained the *licence en droit* at the University of Paris in 1899.

He served in Egypt from 1898 to 1915, first as inspector of native Courts, then as judge (both of first instance and appeal), and lastly as Director of the Khedivial Law School.

From 1915 to 1917 he was engaged in war work, including membership of Lord Balfour's mission to the United States. From 1917 to 1925 he was Judicial Adviser (at first acting and then titular) to the Government of Egypt. After his retirement he was frequently employed by the Government in legal work abroad, both in litigation and conventions, for which his knowledge of continental law and the French language made him most valuable. He served as Quain Professor of Comparative Law in University College, London, from 1932—1937. He was created K.B.E. in 1922 and K.C. in 1932. During the last years

of his life he divided his time between Cambridge and Ulpha, near Broughton-in-Furness. His best-known legal writings are: *The English Constitution* (1930), *Introduction to French Law*, with F. P. Walton (1935), and *The American Constitution* (1938).

This bare record reveals a man of parts and of achievement. But it falls far short of doing justice to his vitality and versatility. He had pursued the higher mathematics and theoretical physics as a hobby. I have heard it said that he was the only amateur mathematician capable of talking intelligently with professionals. He was also a voracious reader of history and literature. He had a keen affection for the United States, to which he made his first visit when a young man. On that occasion he had the good fortune to become acquainted with Mr. Justice Holmes. They talked of the Civil War, in which Holmes was wounded. Holmes was describing where he was at the time. Maurice, who had studied the campaign closely, said: 'Then you must have been in General X's Division'. Holmes turned to him with words which probably gave him greater pleasure than any other commendation in his life: 'Oh admirable young man!'

He was a vigorous talker: to be fair one ought perhaps to say boisterous. Some found his conversation overpowering. Not so many others, including myself, if I may be personal: looking back I count Maurice's conversation, which I was privileged to enjoy from time to time during more than thirty years, as one of the major pleasures of life.

It is not only Maurice who will be missed here. Lady Amos—there never was a more devoted marriage—has many friends in Cambridge. It must be some solace to her that when he died last year he was in the fullness of his powers, chopping trees within a few days of the end.

H. A. H.