JOSHUA WHATMOUGH

Joshua Whatmough, who died on 25 April 1964, was born in Rochdale, Lancashire, on 30 June 1897, the son of Walter and Elizabeth (née Hollows) Whatmough.[1] In conversation, and occasionally in print, Whatmough used to refer to his childhood familiarity with the local speech of his home region, although, as many members of this Society will recall, his adult style of speech was a variety of educated British English moderately close to the norms of RP, yet always flavored with reminiscences of Lancashire phonetics.

His attachment to his origins is illustrated by the earliest items in his bibliography (see the list in his 1957 Festschrift) and by his reference as recently as 1963 (preface to *The dialects of ancient Gaul: Grammar, Part I*) to his friend Hugh Scott Esq., of Rochdale.

From the very start, Whatmough came from no life of ease and was accustomed to working diligently for what he got. The habit of hard work, persistent application, systematic husbanding of time, and prompt dispatch of obligations stayed with him throughout his life. These characteristics account for the prodigious amount of work he accomplished, the businesslike bustle that marked his energetic step, the directness and impatience he could at times show, and the traces of haste that can be seen in some of even his most painstaking work. When ideas stirred in him, Whatmough could not long stand still; and he was rarely at a loss for thoughts—or words to express them.

His university education was one in the mainstream of British training in the classics. He received the M.A. from the University of Manchester in 1919, after a distinguished record as Faulkner fellow, Entrance scholar, Fraser scholar, Classical Prose prizeman, and Graduate scholar. Then, in 1926, after distinction as Exhibitioner and Craven scholar, the M.A. was conferred on him by Emmanuel College, Cambridge.

His teacher at Manchester was the Latinist (and master of the Italic dialects) Robert Seymour Conway. Conway was of enormous influence in Whatmough's whole intellectual and scholarly formation, and one can do no better than read Whatmough's own words on this point (*Bursians Jahresbericht* 266.21, 1939):

Fast während der ganzen letzten zwei Jahrzehnte seines Lebens war ich infolge enger persönlicher Verbindung mit Conway gut bekannt. Er war mein Lehrer; kurze Zeit war er mein Kollege in Harvard; wir arbeiteten zusammen an einem seiner letzten Bücher; und er war mein Freund während dieser ganzen Zeit. Von Anfang an bewunderte ich in ihm einen der (nach meiner Kenntnis) einzigen beiden Männer, die mir alle anderen an Energie und Verstandeskraft, nicht dem Grade, sondern der Art nach, turmhoch zu überragen schienen. Nachdem dies gesagt ist (und es klingt wie Heroenkultus), sei ferner gesagt, daß wir uns

[1] I wish to thank Mrs. Jean Bassan most heartily for her highly skilled and painstaking help in verifying the accuracy of reference in the list of Whatmough's published works and in consulting past editions of reference works for the facts of his life.

It is with infinite sadness that I reflect that Bernard Bloch, who requested this obituary, is himself no longer here to receive it.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0097850766023828 Published online by Cambridge University Press

nicht immer in Übereinstimmung befanden, besonders gegen Ende seines Lebens; und Conway war einer von denen, mit denen zu sprechen nahezu unmöglich ist, wenn man sie nicht 'restlos akzeptiert'. Wenn also unsere Meinungsverschiedenheiten diesen kurzen Bericht über sein Leben und Werk vor der Gefahr kritikloser Verherrlichung bewahren, so wird ihn die Bewunderung, die ich jetzt noch für den Mann hege, und die Dankesschuld, die ich niemals abzahlen kann, vor der anderen Gefahr bewahren, die, wie man sagt, jetzt jedem großen Mann nach seinem Tode von seiten seines Biographen droht—und unter seinesgleichen war Conway ein großer Mann.

In fact, in reading Whatmough's interesting and characteristically written necrology of his old master (loc.cit. 21–40), one sees in strikingly many respects a mirror image of the pupil. To take one passage among many (31):

Conway kehrte jedoch immer wieder zu seiner ersten Liebe zurück. Die zahlreichen Artikel über die Völker und Sprachen des alten Italien, die er für die Encyclopaedia Britannica schrieb, seine glänzende Verwendung der Volksnamen zur Aufhellung der Vorgeschichte Italiens, sein kühner Versuch, den Kampf mit den rätselhaften Fragmenten des Eteokretischen aufzunehmen, seine Pläne für ein etymologisches Wörterbuch des Lateinischen, seine zwei Kapitel über Italien im etruskischen Zeitalter, die er für die Cambridge Ancient History schrieb, und zu allerletzt die nach seinem Tode erschienene Ausgabe der venetischen Inschriften, all das zeugt für die dauernde Vorliebe für seine anfänglichen Studien. Das letztgenannte Werk allerdings hätte niemals das Tageslicht erblicken können ohne die außerordentliche Freigebigkeit der Amerikaner, denn der finanzielle Rückhalt von England war gänzlich unzureichend. Unglücklicherweise hatte, als Conways viele Jahre vorher geschriebenes Manuskript endlich zum Druck kam, Conway selbst das Stadium erreicht (früher oder später erreichen es die meisten), wo er, überbürdet durch alle möglichen Aufgaben und genötigt, eine knappe Pension mit dem Geld, das er durch öffentliche Vorlesungen und auf anderen, seiner eigentlichen Arbeit mehr hinderlich als förderlichen Wegen verdienen konnte, zu ergänzen, sich nicht die Zeit nehmen konnte oder wollte, anderer Leute Ansichten zu berücksichtigen und seine eigenen zu revidieren und selbst freundliche Kritik für persönliche Untreue zu halten schien.

Whatmough's professional career was one of straightforward accomplishment and recognition in the fields where he chose to concentrate his efforts. He was successively Lecturer in classics at the University College of North Wales (1921–25) and Professor of Latin at the Egyptian University, Cairo (1925–26); following his settlement in 1926 in the United States—of which he became a naturalized citizen in 1942—he was Professor of Comparative Philology at Harvard University until 1963, when he became emeritus. Until about 1944 there was at Harvard a committee on courses in comparative philology, of which Whatmough was chairman. From that time until 1951 there was a Department of Comparative Philology, of which he was likewise chairman. In 1951 the discipline of linguistics received separate recognition, and the Department changed its name and scope; but Whatmough remained chairman until his retirement. Although he never lost his interest in the philology and linguistics of the Classical languages, these changes in departmental structure matched the general shift in emphasis of his own interests and aspirations.

After serving as a special lecturer in comparative philology at the University of Chicago in 1939, he returned as Visiting Professor in 1948. For the 1949 Linguistic Institute he was appointed the Society's Collitz Professor of Indo-European Linguistics. In 1955 he was designated Sather Professor of Classical Literature at the University of California at Berkeley, where he delivered the

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Sather Lectures; and in 1957 he was appointed Lowell Institute Lecturer. In 1964, just before his death, he lectured at Grinnell College. One last academic appointment, which death prevented him from fulfilling, was that of Danforth Visiting Lecturer for the weeks of 5 October to 14 November, 1964.

From 1932–39 Whatmough served as a member of the advisory council of Yenching University, Peiping; from 1929–36 as a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, for which he was editor of publications in 1936; and from 1951 until his death as representative to the Permanent International Committee of Linguists (CIPL), UNESCO. He served two terms as Editor of *Harvard studies in Classical philology* (1932–34 and 1941–48) and sat as associate editor for *Classical philology* (1945–48) and for *Word* (1947 until his death). He was a member of the Linguistic Circle of New York, of which he was at one time vice-president, and a corresponding member of the Comitato Permanente per l'Etruria (Firenze).

In 1942 the honorary A.M. was conferred upon him by Harvard University. He was also elected an honorary member of Phi Beta Kappa. In 1959, on the occasion of the First International Celtic Congress, in Dublin, the University there honored him, along with only four other distinguished contributors to the field, with the degree of Doctor of Letters. Whatmough was President of our Society in 1951. In 1957 his friends and students presented him with a Festschrift on his sixtieth birthday. He was the chief figure in securing the invitation for the 9th International Congress of Linguists to meet in the United States, and he was instrumental in obtaining two substantial grants for support of that Congress.

Throughout his career Whatmough published actively. As collaborating editor of the *Liber glossarum*, published under the auspices of the British Academy (Paris, 1926), Whatmough took responsibility for the collating of certain manuscripts.[2] His book-length publications were *The Prae-Italic dialects of Italy* (1933) (*PID*), *The foundations of Roman Italy* (1937), Κελτικά (1944), *The dialects of ancient Gaul* (1948–51, 1963), *Language: a modern synthesis* (London, 1955; New York, 1956), and *Poetic, scientific and other forms of discourse: a new approach to Greek and Latin literature* (the Sather Lectures; Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1956).

The general flow of his scholarly interests can be seen fairly clearly in his publications. From his first published work in 1916, a fascination with ancient Italy asserted itself, and this remained with him all his life, though his active scholarly contributions in this field dominated only the first two or three decades. In these studies Latin proper was for him more a tool than an end in itself. Very early, perhaps because he was teaching in Wales, Whatmough developed a slight interest in Welsh (one published note), but he never really cultivated the modern Insular Keltic. His work in Gaulish shows as early as 1933, but it was in the forties (starting in 1944) and the fifties that this became his strong preoccupation and most significant scholarly output. As a Classicist he was always interested in Greek, and we see evidence of this in 1929, 1944, 1948, 1952, and 1956, not to mention the numerous reviews he wrote, especially in *Classical philology*. But Greek was peripheral in his scholarship. On general Indo-European problems

[2] In 1920 there was, in addition, the *Key* to the exercises in Walters and Conway's *Deigma*.

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Whatmough published relatively little; he seemed more occupied with solving internal riddles in the subgroups of his choice. After his discussions of the problem of the labiovelars in Indo-European in 1936 and 1937 (*Proc. 4th Intl. Cong. of Linguists* and *Mélanges Pedersen*), Whatmough's first extensive publication on Indo-European proper was 'Root and base in Indo-European' (*HSCP* 54.1–23, 1943), a critique of the views set forth and implied on the subject during the preceding decade by Benveniste, Kuryłowicz, van Langenhove, and others.

With the publication of 'The neural basis of language and the problem of the "root" ' (*HSCP* 52.125–37, 1941), he began to turn his attention more and more actively to the consideration of general linguistic problems. Here, he moved from the formal and semantic characterization of 'roots' and 'bases' to a search for correlates in the current theories of a neural basis for thought. In his later years, Whatmough perhaps took greatest pride in the theory which he elaborated in his lectures under the name 'selective variation'. An inspection of his bibliography, starting in the late forties and stretching through the remainder of his career, and of his two books of the mid-fifties, will indicate the degree of his interest in and contribution to the field of general linguistic theory.

During most of his active life, particularly the latter part of it, he reviewed an immense number of works, including his own *DAG* (*ZCPh* 24.154–6, 1953). That his powers of trenchant observation remained to the end is illustrated by several late reviews, e.g. his lively critique of A. Morpurgo's *Mycenaeae graecitatis lexicon* (*CP* 60.202–4, 1965).

It is fitting now to consider the substantial nature of the fields in which Whatmough's achievement and contributions are already assured. *The foundations of Roman Italy* (London, 1937) deals generally with the geography, prehistoric archaeology, ancient tribes and dialects, and the separate regional cultures of the Italian peninsula—an attempt at a synthesis for the general reader, following upon the technical evidence of the *PID* as seen in the light of the vast archaeological literature. For us, the major interest begins with chapter 4, on the tribes and their dialects, and the first appearances of writing: Etruscan, Venetic, Raetic, Lepontic and Lugurian, Keltic, 'East Italic', Umbrian, the minor Italic dialects (north Oscan, Sabellian, Faliscan), Oscan, Greek, Messapic, Sicel, Phoenician and Punic in the islands, and unknown indigenous elements of these same islands. It is worth noting that more recent scholarship has improved or altered the classification, from amongst these, of Venetic, Messapic, Raetic, and Sicel; and for all these last except Sicel, Whatmough took an active part in the later refining scholarship. Whatmough not only had a summary specialist's knowledge of these dialects and cultures; he had also contributed in print at one time or another to the basic understanding of Lugurian and Lepontic, Keltic, Raetic, and Messapic, and to technical problems in Venetic, Umbrian, Etruscan, 'East Italic', Latinian, Oscan, Sicel, and Greek.

Surely, Whatmough's most substantial single scholarly work was the *PID*, of which the first volume (on Venetic) was by Conway and the second (covering Raetic, Lepontic, Gallic, 'East Italic', Messapic, and Sicel) was Whatmough's. Its purpose is well set forth and may be found by the interested reader in vol. II,

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pp. vii–viii, where Whatmough remarks on the dangers of depending on photographs for purposes of epigraphic record. On the dangers of photographs, Conway had written earlier (*PID* I.vii):

> At least five photographs are needed of any injured or weathered face of stone to provide evidence which, even from the photographer's point of view, can be called trustworthy—one taken full in front and the others at suitable distances from above and below and from either side. For this reason we are inclined to deprecate the costly fashion of burdening editions of such monuments with illustrations which profess to be facsimiles of any and every fragment therein reported. A facsimile, it cannot be too often repeated, is worth just as much as the skill, knowledge, and good faith of the editor who presents it, and no more; and his knowledge may often be expressed more safely in an articulate form.

Whatmough's contributions in the *PID* may conveniently be viewed under two rubrics: Messapic and the minor dialects. His treatment of the latter, in particular of Raetic, Lepontic, and 'East Italic', remains in large part unsuperseded. As for Gallic, the remains of North Italy are in any case dwarfed by the materials assembled in *DAG*.

The sections on Messapic in the *PID* (258–430, 530–40, 562–78, 594–610, 619–26, 632, and glossary passim) form of themselves a whole handbook for that language, fragmentary as our sure knowledge of it may be. This was by far the fullest and most systematic account of the language since Mommsen's pioneering work of 1850. Apart from original contributions of detail by Whatmough in this and subsequent publications, the *PID* account, together with the independent publication by Ribezzo of the Corpus inscriptionum messapicarum in *RIGI* (vols. 6–19), was until very recently the standard reference on Messapic. Only in the last few years, and surely facilitated greatly by Whatmough's cumulative and synthesizing contribution, has a rash of new and major Messapic studies appeared: O. Parlangèli, *Studi messapici: iscrizioni, lessico, glosse e indici* (Milano, 1960); O. Haas, *Messapische Studien* (Heidelberg, 1962) (Inschriften mit Kommentar, Skizze einer Laut- und Formenlehre); C. de Simone, *Die messapischen Inschriften und ihre Chronologie*, and J. Untermann, *Die messapischen Personennamen*—these two forming the zweiter Teil (Wiesbaden, 1964) to H. Krahe, *Die Sprache der Illyrier*.

It is interesting to compare Whatmough's views, cited above, on photography with the remarks of Haas (18–19). We also read in C. de Simone, Vorbemerkung: 'Die Inschriften-Edition stellt sich ergänzend neben die "Studi Messapici" (Milano, 1960) von O. Parlangèli, dessen Lesungen und Wiedergabe der Schriftzeichen häufig zu wünschen übriglassen. Der Kontrolle meiner Texte dienen die beigegebenen Photographien.'

Even though he was obviously interested in following up and exploiting the conclusions and implications to which a collection such as the *PID* led, Whatmough often took pains to point out that he considered his first task to be that of establishing the corpus as solidly and minutely as possible. Thus, once he had done as much along these lines as he could with early Italy, we are not surprised to see him tackling ancient Gaul in similar fashion. This next task, begun in the late twenties as a natural continuation of the Gallic (and even Ligurian) section of the *PID*, came to fruition with the microfilm publication (1948–51) of *The dialects of ancient Gaul* (1376 pp.; *DAG*). To publish the corpus (though not the

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projected ultimate grammatical analysis) in microfilm form was a deliberate decision on Whatmough's part, intended to be a move in the direction of economy and ease of consultation in libraries of the future. Needless to say, the collection is an invaluable one, both for the dialect geography of antiquity and, especially, for the refined study of Continental Keltic. But it is questionable whether this microfilm form of publication has made it as accessible as it might otherwise have been; a relatively inexpensive print-out might ultimately be desirable.

From the earliest publications we note a strong insistence on the consideration of linguistic facts in the context of associated objects and the total relevant culture. 'The Calendar in ancient Italy outside Rome' (*HSCP* 42.157–79, 1931) deals with an interesting philological area not brought into a focussed whole since Mommsen in 1859. A much more restricted, but far-reaching, context leads from the consideration (*CQ* 16.181–9, 1922) of the problematic *iovilae* series of Oscan inscriptions to the question of the worship of Juno in the whole of ancient Italy. Whatmough had a long-standing interest in the linguistic identification of ancient tribes and in the systematic possibilities of correlation between linguistic facts and other features of culture, as disclosed both by textual philology and by archaeology. The fact is often overlooked that Classicists and classical Orientalists were insisting on language-and-culture approaches long before such studies became popular among anthropologists.

Whatmough's crowning achievement in accounting for ancient pre-Roman dialects might easily have been his grammatical and dialectological analysis of the materials of Gaul, particularly the varieties of Continental Keltic. But death cut short his labors before this was completed. Nevertheless, we do have a large proportion of the total, when we consider that the basic corpus (as of 1950) has been made available. Moreover, the plan and scope of the *DAG*, the geographic and chronological coverage together with an extensive critique of prior scholarship, were set forth in Κελτικά (*HSCP* 55.1–85, 1944), which amounted to a monograph introduction to the *DAG* proper.

The first yield of the *DAG* was 'Alpes populique inalpini' (*HSCP* 60.175–85, 1951), in which Whatmough set forth all the fragmentary grammar he could wring from the sparse remains of the Alpine areas lying between ancient Italy and Gaul, where Keltic, Raetic, Illyrian, Ligurian, Germanic, Italic, and perhaps pre-Indo-European all met in an ancient linguistic mosaic. A convenient summary of the main linguistic characteristics of the areas other than Alpine (i.e. Narbonensis, Aquitania, Lugdunensis, Belgica, Germania Inferior, and Superior), as well as a compact account of the scope of the *DAG*, appeared in the article 'Hi omnes inter se differunt' (*Orbis* 1.428–41, 1952). This sketch places the Keltic of these regions in its context of Ligurian relics and encroaching Greek (in Narbonensis), of Iberian (in Narbonensis and especially Aquitania south of the Garonne), of Germanic encroachment (in Belgica, and strongly in Germania Inferior, but only weakly in Germania Superior), and of ultimate Latin encroachment throughout; it is noteworthy that the Agri Decumates were solidly Keltic (as were Lugdunensis and Aquitania north of the Garonne), and went with northern Raetia and the upper Rhine and Danube until Illyrian traces increase further east. A more detailed treatment of the Keltic and encroaching Germanic character of the Agri Decumates, with Upper Rhine and Danube, was given in

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1958 as one of the Hauptvorträge under the title 'Onomastics and linguistics' at the 6th International Congress of Onomastic Sciences in Munich (*Kongressberichte*, Band I, München 1960, 68–79).

Although publication of the grammatical yield of the *DAG* remains incomplete, a collectanea volume in photo-offset from typescript (obviously not as Whatmough had earlier planned in the middle of his career) was published in Ann Arbor in 1963, under the title *The dialects of ancient Gaul. Grammar, Part I:* Alpine regions, Narbonensis, Aquitania, Germania Inferior. Following a somewhat autobiographic preface and a prefactory note (8–12), the volume includes addenda to Κελτικά (13–19)[3] and to *DAG* (21–4). The section on Alpine regions (25–34) is, except for a few sentences and the final material (33–4), identical with *HSCP* 60.175–85, 1951. In the section on Aquitania south of the Garonne (89–105), Whatmough mentions the dissertation of Stephen Peter Schwartz (Harvard, 1962), but it is not clear to what extent this is drawn on. The section Germania Inferior (129–51, the concluding pages of the volume), analyzing only the Germanic material, is largely the work of Audrey R. Duckert (Radcliffe Ph.D., 1959). The sections on Narbonensis (49–87) and Aquitania north of the Garonne (107–28) are, to judge by absence of note to the contrary,[4] largely the work of Whatmough in their present form.

The broader impact of Whatmough's work on studies in the dialectology of ancient Europe is illustrated by a recent reference made by R. Lazzeroni (*Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa*, serie II, 31.129, 1962):

> La possibilità di un frazionamento dialettale dell'indoeuropeo d'Iberia, cui possono avere, naturalmente, contribuito anche isoglosse specifiche, è confermata, da un punto di vista generale, dalle ricerche del Whatmough sui dialetti della Gallia antica né dovrebbe stupire la sporadica coesistenza di tradizione e di innovazione in un'area marginale, quando si tengano presenti, p. es., le vicende dialettali della seconda rotazione consonantica germanica o il trattamento della palatali i.e. nell'area balto-slava.

Short and stocky of stature, fastidious of dress, with a boutonnière in his lapel, a full head of well-brushed snow-white hair and a bright ruddy complexion, Joshua Whatmough was a figure of marked individuality who commanded one's attention both in a lecture hall and at meetings. A man of strong and forthright feelings, his lively eyes could alternately pierce and twinkle, and his crisp rhetoric could fashion a savory needle-sharp phrase with stinging rapidity in nimble debate. The field of linguistics is less lively now that he is gone.

ERIC HAMP, *University of Chicago*

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Numbering is continued from the list in E. Pulgram (ed.), 1957, Studies presented to Joshua Whatmough on his sixtieth birthday (The Hague, Mouton, 1957). Items which were not seen and which could not be verified are marked with an asterisk.

[3] 'Not attempting, for example, to bring up-to-date mere bibliography—that fetish of the timid and incompetent compiler—but only matters of consequence' (15).

[4] 'Unless otherwise specified the Grammar is my own work' (11). 'Areas which have been done by former students, whether in print or not, are (with some necessary changes) given here, with appropriate credit to their authors' (19).

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1957

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