

Richard Hogg (1944-2007). In memoriam

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Professor Richard Hogg died suddenly at the age of only 63 on 6 September 2007 of a heart attack, midway through the sabbatical year which should have allowed him to bring important projects on dialectology and on Old English to completion. His best-known achievement is the six-volume *Cambridge History of the English Language* (CHEL, 1992-2001), of which he was General Editor.

Richard's roots were in Edinburgh, where he grew up and studied. After nearly forty years away he was still wholly a Scot in speech and sympathies. His postgraduate career in Edinburgh had begun with two contrasting academic preoccupations: the Chomskyan analysis of present-day English syntax on the one hand (his PhD topic), and Middle English dialects on the other (his research post). In their very different ways, both represented state-of-the-art linguistics of the time. At the age of 25 he took up a lectureship in Amsterdam, and four years later he moved to Lancaster. In 1980 he arrived in Manchester as the surprisingly young Smith Professor of English Language and Medieval Literature. Not that I recall him ever teaching literature: it was rarely possible to get him to do anything that he didn't want to.

Richard's early publications are mostly on the syntax of quantifiers in present-day English, including the book *English Quantifier Systems* (1977) derived from his PhD. Increasingly he started to focus on the sounds and forms of historical English, especially Old English, on which he became an authority. He tackled linguistic change generally, and an interest in analogy led to one paper called simply 'Snuck' – an explanation for that common variant of sneaked. He also worked in phonological theory, publishing the influential textbook *Metrical Phonology* (1987) with his colleague and former student, Chris McCully. The historical strand led to the multi-author CHEL, a big project which took many years of good management from planning to successful completion. It has become a standard work in the field. Richard himself edited the first volume on the earliest period of English and wrote the chapter on phonology and morphology. Last year we jointly edited a new one-volume History of the English Language, and Richard

was still working on his own Grammar of Old English (volume 1 published in 1992, volume 2 nearly complete at his death and to be prepared for publication by Robert Fulk).

He ranged widely. Interests included English dialectology – both the facts of variation in historical and present-day English and the ways in which scholars have approached these facts. Likewise he followed the history of English grammar writing and attitudes to language. His main current project, three-quarters finished (and to be completed by Derek Britton), was a History of English Dialectology that combined those themes of language variation and of intellectual and cultural history. He was planning a joint monograph with his newest colleague, Nuria Yáñez-Bouza, on the history of prescriptivism in England.

In the mid-1990s Richard became one of the three founding editors of a new academic journal published by C.U.P., *English Language and Linguistics*. It would look for the best in English language scholarship, but with a constant eye to its relation with linguistic theory. In addition to his scholarly expertise, Richard brought to the project a shrewd understanding of the academic world and of academic publishing. Throughout his career he strongly promoted the importance of English Language studies. Philologists pay close attention to textual evidence; linguists build theories; Richard did both.

Although he wore it lightly, he was always a thinker, and time and again his judgement was proved sound. He would come up with imaginative, often ingenious suggestions both as a theorist and as an organiser. In meetings he could talk his way through the twists and turns of a complicated sequence of ideas with a body language to match. He had acted as Dean of the Faculty of Arts in Manchester (1990-93), and he was an influential figure nationally and internationally, often called on as advisor or consultant. In 1994 he was elected a Fellow of the British Academy, and a decade later of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

Richard was a supportive colleague and fun to have around, always ready for conversation and gossip. He made friends easily. A Canadian colleague who met him for the first time in summer 2007 was struck by his obvious pride and delight in talking of his family and their achievements. His wife, Margaret, is now a professor at Lancaster, and their two sons, Daniel and Robert, made up a warm and close family. Margaret, who is English, had met Richard in Edinburgh.

Richard was an inspiring teacher. His enthusiasm for the English language was infectious, and in breaks he could chat about football, film or country music. Indeed the lectures themselves were often studded with anecdotes. He started a blog in 2006 in an ‘attempt to expose some of the many fallacies about English’. He embraced social networking too. As he wrote to his students last spring, ‘Just to prove I’ve not forgotten you, I’ve posted a new blog. Miss you all but ever so glad I’m on leave!’. They miss him too: evidently he was both admired and adored by his students. In fact there was great affection for Richard in all the various circles he moved in, and his premature loss is a sad blow.

Major publications by Professor Hogg

- 1992 *A Grammar of Old English, 1: Phonology*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, xii+355
- 1992 *The Cambridge History of the English Language, I: the beginnings to 1066* (ed.). Cambridge: C.U.P., xxiii+609
- 1992 "Introduction". In R. M. Hogg (ed.), *The Cambridge History of the English Language, I: the Beginnings to 1066*. Cambridge: C.U.P., 1-25
- 1992 "Phonology and Morphology." In R.M. Hogg (ed.), *The Cambridge History of the English Language, I: the Beginnings to 1066*. Cambridge: C.U.P., 67-167
- 1994 "Dialect Variation and Historical Metrics." *Diachronica* 11.13-34 (with C.B. McCully)
- 1994 "Linguistics and Philology and Chickens and Eggs." In F. Fernandez, M. Fuster and J.J. Calvo (eds.), *English Historical Linguistics 1992*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 3-16
- 1996 "Tertiary Stress in Old English: Some Reflections on Explanatory Inadequacy." In D. Britton (ed.) *English Historical Linguistics 1994*. Amsterdam, John Benjamins, 3-12
- 1996 "Old English Open Syllable Lengthening." *Transactions of the Philological Society* 94.57-72
- 1997 "Some Remarks on Case Marking in Old English." *Transactions of the Philological Society* 95.95-109
- 1997 "Using the Future to Predict the Past: Old English Dialectology in the Light of Middle English Place Names." In J. Fisiak (ed.), *Studies in Middle English Language*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 207-220
- 1997 "The Morphology and Dialect of Old English Disyllabic Nouns." In R. Hickey and S. Puppel (eds.), *Language History and Linguistic Modelling*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 113-126.
- 1998 "On the Ideological Boundaries of Old English Dialects". In J. Fisiak and M. Krygier (eds), *Advances in English Historical Linguistics*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 107-118.
- 1998 *Historical Linguistics 1995, vol. 2 Germanic* (ed.) (with L.v. Bergen). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- 2000 *Generative Theory and Corpus Studies* (ed) (with R. Bermúdez-Otero, D. Denison and C. B. McCully). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

2000. "On the (non-)existence of High Vowel Deletion." In A. Lahiri (ed.) *Markedness and Language Change*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 353-376. Páginas web
2002. *An Introduction to Old English*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
2003. "The Actuation Problem in Optimality Theory". *Studies in Optimality Theory*. Kluwer Academic Publishers.
2005. "Old English Dialectology", in van Kemenade, A. & Bettelou, L., *Handbook of the History of English*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
2006. *A History of the English Language* (with David Denison). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (second edition to be published in April 2008)

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John was Scottish and proud of it...”

Michael Hoey
Thursday May 3, 2007
The Guardian



Nigel Vincent
Thursday September 20, 2007
The Guardian

“As a good Scot, **Richard Hogg** enjoyed malt whisky, the novels of Ian Rankin and watching England lose football matches. His election as a fellow of the Royal Society Edinburgh in 2004 was a source of particular pleasure... Most of Richard's published work betrayed his love of solving problems, the more complicated the better...”

He was a dedicated and effective teacher whose lectures were notable for an informal style which masked a formidable erudition. He had the happy knack of adapting as easily to the demands of the beginner as to those of advanced and doctoral students who shared his own enthusiasms.”