

**OBITUARY**

BEAN. We regret to record the death on December 7<sup>th</sup>, 1977, of George Ewart Bean, who taught Greek to the top classical eighth forms from 1926 to 1943. He was at St Paul's as a boy from 1916 to 1921 when he went to Pembroke College, Cambridge, where he was awarded a Shoolbred Scholarship and in 1923 a John Stewart of Rannoch Scholarship for Classics. He graduated with a first class in Part I of the Classical Tripos and a third in Part II. When early in 1926 Mr C. G. Botting fell ill, and later retired, Bean took over his work.

The following appreciation by F. G. Commings describes what it was like to be under him:

In the nineteen-thirties the Classical Upper and Middle Eighths had alternate weeks of Latin and Greek. The legendary Leslie Mathews, Old Pauline, unconventional, uninhibited, was the Latinist; George Bean, Old Pauline, predictable, conservative, a gentle giant, was the Hellenist.

Most of us arrived in the M.VIII without having met George before, unless we were tennis players, or in the break had not left the corridor clear enough for the grave and enormous strides of a frame shaped like an outsize robot, begowned and apparently carrying a toy brown attaché case.

Somehow you could not imagine his teaching below 8<sup>th</sup> Form level. It was not that he was obscure, or inhabited too rarefied an atmosphere, or was unfriendly or unapproachable. He was the very reverse of all these things. But he was almost too rational, too polite and too nice for the very young. Indeed, the more irreverent and childish of us in the Classical Eighths indulged in gentler and affectionate ragging of him occasionally, even to practical jokes. But a waste-paper basket, carefully balanced over the quarter-open door, which momentarily converted him into "The Man in the Wicker Mask", brought forth nothing more than the stately and mild rebuke: "I say, friend, have a care there." One was always called "friend" when chided, I remember, but nothing at all at other times.

He was the essence of fine scholarship, sanity and soundness and the perfect foil in the two-man team. After a week of Leslie's ebullience, brilliance, absent-minded inconsequentiality and rumbustious humour, you often welcomed 12.50 on a Wednesday. A quiet tap at the door, a head poked round just below lintel level, an enquiring look at Leslie, who was probably declaiming with relish a footnote in German from his text of Horace, and disgorging a peppermint on to the page at the same time, - and we were off on another intensive week of Greek prose and verse writing, prepared and unseen translation, interspersed with carefully dictated notes on, say, "Matriarchy versus Patriarchy in Athens", snapshots of classical sites, and excursions into the technicalities of Goodwin's "Moods and Tenses".

Forty years later I remember George Bean with grateful affection.

About the end of 1943 the British Council claimed him for work in Turkey where he began a new life and career which brought him the international reputation on which *The Times* obituary which is printed below rightly concentrates:

Professor George Ewart Bean, who died on December 7<sup>th</sup>, aged 74, was for over a quarter of a century a familiar figure to the villagers of Western and Southern Asia Minor, among whom he has become almost a legend. After graduating from Cambridge he had returned to his old school, St Paul's, to teach scholarship Greek. But the war took him to Turkey; in 1946 he became head of classics in Istanbul University; and from that time until his retirement in 1971 he spent a large part of his vacations travelling from village to village in Asia Minor discovering ancient remains, recording the many hundreds of Greek inscriptions that he found, and identifying ancient sites.

Being broad in the shoulder and almost six foot six in height, he did not travel easily in Turkey and often found the physical conditions too constricting for what he called "a full-grown man". But his impressive presence and command of Turkish spoken in a deep bass voice rendered him unforgettable. Those who had the good fortune to travel with him learned how to win the confidence of villagers and officials, and those who follow in his steps find their stature enhanced if they can claim acquaintance with him. He was in very sense a big man. He was also a keen sportsman who had played doubles at

Wimbledon for some years and captained Surrey at badminton\*.

Bean's most lasting scholarly work consists of the monographs in which he published the Greek inscriptions of Side, of Lycia and (with T. B. Mitford) Cilicia for the Austrian Academy; his *Rhodian Peraea* (with P. M. Fraser); numerous chapters; articles in learned journals; topographical entries in reference works; and the re-editing of the *Classical Map of Asia Minor* (on a revision of which he was working in Ankara last month). But he will be most widely remembered for the authoritative and humane archaeological guide-books that, with his wife Jane at his shoulder, he completed in the last dozen years or so: *Aegean Turkey*, *Turkey's Southern Shore*, *Turkey beyond the Maeander*, and (due to appear next spring) *Lycian Turkey*.

\* *Marginal note by (?) Mrs Bean: for 10 years.*