



MARTYN JOPE

Edward Martyn Jope 1915–1996

MARTYN JOPE, a chemist by early inclination and training and a productive biochemical researcher at the start of his career, was also a self-taught archaeologist who early on established himself as a formative figure in the emerging discipline of medieval archaeology. He was able to change career paths, establish a new department of archaeology in the Queen's University of Belfast, set up the Northern Ireland Archaeological Survey and achieve distinction both as a medievalist and as a recorder and interpreter of Early Celtic Art. His background as a scientist allowed him ultimately, too, to become an important bridge between archaeology, especially as represented within the British Academy, and the world of science.

The Jopes were of Cornish extraction, the name being traceable back to the early fourteenth century when a Jope was Portreeve of Liskeard. Martyn's grandfather was a Methodist minister in Devon and Cornwall and his father, Edward Mallett Jope, was born in Devon, though by 1915 he and his Lincolnshire-born wife Frances Margaret were living in Carshalton, Surrey where their only child Martyn was born on 28 December 1915. (Edward Jope was a civil servant, ending his career as a Principal in the Unemployment Assistance Board.) They moved to nearby Wallington and Martyn attended Whitgift Grammar School in Croydon before going as a boarder to his father's much-loved old school, Kingswood in Bath, where he was Head of House and a member of the rugby XV. He took to Kingswood with as much enthusiasm as his father had, revelling in the setting and getting to know the North Somerset and Gloucestershire countryside within cycling distance of the school. His long association with the west country and intimate knowledge of its archaeology began in

part from this and in part from family holidays to Padstow, where his grandfather had long been minister.

Even at Whitgift Martyn showed an interest in chemistry to which he turned with some zest, blowing himself up in his home lab, he used to recall, by mixing potassium chlorate and red phosphorus in a marble mortar. He had a successful and enjoyable time at Kingswood, excelling in Physics and Chemistry but at the same time acquiring distinctive skills and powers of observation as an artist and draughtsman that were to serve him well in archaeology.

In 1935 he went up to Oxford with Oriel's Senior Chemistry Scholarship, having explained at interview that he would really like to devote his life to 'pursuing the molecular mechanisms which must operate underlying all biological processes', which in a certain sense he eventually did. He looked back to his first term as providing him with the basic philosophical concept that guided his thinking throughout his life. The University Lecturer in Chemistry, Neville Vincent Sidgwick, systematically went through the main elements in their periodic order demonstrating how their chemical behaviour was directly related to the electronic structure of the atom nucleus, showing more clearly than Martyn and his undergraduate contemporaries had ever hitherto grasped the fundamental principle of the properties of matter. By the end of his undergraduate career Organic Chemistry had relentlessly beckoned him towards the biological sciences and his first professional scientific work was to be on the biology of blood.

Meanwhile, however, Martyn's already substantial knowledge of archaeology and architectural history had propelled him into another and parallel interest at Oxford and he became an active member, Secretary, then President of the Oxford University Archaeological Society. The society's resources were urgently called upon late in 1936 and early in 1937 when a vast area of ancient tenements north of Broad Street was demolished and a huge mechanical excavation ensued to accommodate the New Bodleian Library. Building recording was done under the leadership of W. A. Pantin and recovery of below-ground archaeology was coordinated by R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford. Martyn gave weeks of assistance in excavation, recording and artefact recovery—a baptism of fire in what a later generation would describe as rescue archaeology. It not only brought him into a close working relationship with two scholars who were to remain friends and powerful influences on his life for years but also gave him an insight into the disciplines of field archaeology and the potential of archaeology to supply missing elements of medieval history,

not least the early history and topography of towns and the organisation of economic life as evidenced by artefacts, notably pottery. The rapid analysis of the discoveries and their prompt publication by Pantin and Bruce-Mitford was another object lesson.

Fresh from his experiences at the New Bodleian site, but already deeply acquainted with the archaeology, historic buildings and archaeologists of the west country, Martyn and his friend Ian Threlfall in 1938 and 1939 excavated a thirteenth-century long house and associated structures at Beere near North Tawton in Devon. This was one of the first medieval peasant houses in the country to have been investigated by modern archaeological techniques. The prolific ceramic finds led him to regional studies of west country medieval pottery which benefited from his similar studies in the Oxford region. It eventually led him to forge new techniques of study and especially to develop distribution maps as a tool to define what he saw as elements of regional cultures in medieval England. Martyn's eventual report on the Beere excavation lies at the head of several subsequent generations of work by others to investigate rural settlement and the nature of medieval peasant life in Britain.¹

With his Oxford reputation as an archaeologist outpacing his work as a chemist he was persuaded in 1938 to accept appointment to the staff of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales. Working from London he briefly became involved in field investigations in Caernarvonshire and gained insight into the working methods of the commission, valuable when he himself became a commissioner many years later. By 1940, however, he had returned to biochemistry, working on Nuffield and Medical Research Council projects, mainly at the London Hospital, though he continued to live in Oxford. In 1941 he married Margaret Halliday, a Scottish research biochemist working at the Dyson Perrins Laboratory in Oxford, and they began a life-long and mutually supportive professional and personal partnership. Initially there was joint work on haemoglobins, jointly published. Increasingly, too, Margaret participated in the archaeological projects Martyn carried out throughout the 1940s in parallel with his biochemical research. By the end of the decade there were significant achievements in both fields.

The New Bodleian excavations had confronted Martyn with copious amounts of medieval pottery, then little understood or valued, and only dateable within broad terms. By dint of studying and publishing numerous

¹E. M. Jope and R. I. Threlfall, 'Excavation of a medieval settlement at Beere, North Tawton, Devon', *Medieval Archaeology*, 2 (1958), 112–40.

groups of excavated pottery from these and other excavations in Oxford and the Oxford region, he was able to determine the range of ceramic fabrics and forms found in the region throughout the medieval period. By the use of distribution maps, showing both the locations where different types had been found and—importantly—the negative evidence, where in excavated pottery groups they had not been found, he was able to define the geographical range of each category. The problem of dating the various ceramics was tackled partly by recording which types or fabrics were consistently found associated together and partly by identifying archaeological sites that were themselves inherently dateable by documentary or other evidence. Two excavations on earthwork castles which were thought to have a limited period of occupation in the mid-twelfth century—Ascot Doilly and Swerford—produced groups which helped to define the ceramics of that time. An ingenious and opportunistic small excavation below Oxford Castle Mound, erected in 1071, revealed ceramics below the mound which must therefore have dated to before 1071—Oxford's Late Saxon pottery.² Another approach was to find the kiln sites which produced the various wares. Martyn's excavation of the Brill kilns revealed the source of one series commonly found in the Oxford region. In a decade Martyn had in effect defined and demonstrated the disciplines upon which the study of medieval pottery could be based, established and dated the ceramic sequences for the Oxford region—and also for parts of Devon and of Gloucestershire—and laid foundations for the discipline to develop nationally later in the twentieth century.

Pottery, though of great interest to Martyn, was a means to an end—the application of the techniques of prehistoric and Roman archaeology to the study of medieval life. His many excavations in and around the city of Oxford for the first time provided archaeological evidence for the extent and character and growth of the Saxon and medieval town—one of the first systematic attempts at medieval urban archaeology.³ The report on his work at the Clarendon Hotel site in the centre of the city stands at the head of much later work on urban archaeology throughout Britain.⁴ The nature of the earliest castles in England was another subject that he felt could be elucidated by field study and excavation. His work at the small

²E. M. Jope, 'Late Saxon pits under Oxford Castle mound: excavations in 1952', *Oxoniensia*, 17–18 (1952–3), 77–111.

³E. M. Jope, 'Saxon Oxford and its region', in D. B. Harden (ed.), *Dark Age Britain: Essays Presented to E. T. Leeds* (London, 1956), pp. 234–58.

⁴E. M. Jope 'The Clarendon Hotel, Oxford', *Oxoniensia*, 23 (1958), 1–83.

castle sites at Swerford, Hinton Waldrist, Ascot Doilly,⁵ and Deddington demonstrated it. The long-running rescue excavation at Deddington ultimately led to the site being taken into Guardianship by the then Ministry of Works. This frenzy of archaeological work on so many fronts produced a regular flow of publications many of which, seven decades later, are still used or thought of as standards.

Martyn's biochemical work, on haemoglobins in human blood, produced a similar flow of seminal papers in the *British Medical Journal*, *Journal of Physiology*, *Cancer*, *Biochemical Journal*, *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine*, *Spectrochimica Acta*, *Nature* and elsewhere. An example was his study of the toxic action of sulphonamides and TNT on workers in Royal Ordnance factories which led to highly significant findings on the dynamics of red cell destruction. The abnormal pigment sulphemoglobin was found to persist in circulating or drawn blood after cessation of contact with such causative agents as sulphonamides or TNT. It appeared therefore that the red cell has no mechanism in it for the transformation of sulphemoglobin; however the sulphemoglobin disappeared from the blood of seven TNT workers in linear fashion in about 116 days after withdrawal from contact with TNT. This related to the destruction of the red cells which contained the pigment. The implication was drawn that red cells have a fixed life within small limits.⁶ Other research gave similar results for both the slope of the decay curve and the life span of red cells, for the first time demonstrating the dynamics of red cell destruction.

By 1948 Martyn and Margaret were developing research proposals, apparently favourably received by the Medical Research Council and other bodies, in what was leading to Molecular Biology and Molecular Cytology and his career path seemed clear. At this juncture, however, he received an approach from Christopher Hawkes, a long-time acquaintance and by now Professor of European Archaeology at Oxford, to see whether he might be interested in taking up a post at the Queen's University of Belfast to set up a new Department of Archaeology. The university was looking for an archaeologist who could develop the science side of the discipline and was inclined towards a medievalist who could complement the ethnographic work of E. Estyn Evans in the Geography Department at Queen's and continue the pioneering work of Oliver Davies in the

⁵E. M. Jope and R. I. Threlfall, 'The twelfth-century castle at Ascott Doilly, Oxfordshire', *The Antiquaries Journal*, 39 (1959), 219–73.

⁶E. M. Jope, 'Disappearance of Sulphemoglobin from the blood of TNT workers in relation to the dynamics of red cell destruction', *British Journal of Industrial Medicine*, 3.3 (1946), 136–42.

medieval to seventeenth century field in Ulster. Martyn, after much heart searching, applied, was offered the post and he and Margaret changed career.

The newly created post at Queen's was a joint university and Northern Ireland Government appointment. This presented opportunities for collaboration between the State, with responsibilities for conservation and presentation of the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Ulster, and the university, with its role in researching and understanding the meaning of the province's prehistoric and historic monuments. Martyn's work therefore rapidly fell into two parts—or more precisely into three, for he and Margaret maintained their home at Oxford, returning there religiously every university vacation for the whole of their thirty-two years at Belfast, thus maintaining English research interests and contacts.

In Northern Ireland the Ministry of Finance was responsible for ancient monuments and he worked there with a senior, Claude Blake Whelan, himself a progressive amateur Stone Age archaeologist, under an enlightened Minister of Finance, Major John Sinclair. Within a year the Archaeological Survey of Northern Ireland had been set up, two inspectors—Dudley Waterman and A. E. P. (Pat) Collins, old acquaintances—had been hand-picked and head-hunted by Martyn and work on the Archaeological Survey of County Down had begun along lines that he had encountered in his work for the Welsh Royal Commission but without the irksome constraints that had contributed to his leaving it. After a massive campaign of investigation, excavation and fieldwork the volume appeared under Martyn's editorship in 1966, the first of its kind for any Irish county, and relatively quickly for a work of this sort.⁷ The survey continued into other counties but the next volume, on County Armagh, did not appear until 2009, forty-three years later and decades after Martyn's involvement had come to an end.

There were equal opportunities in the Queen's University. The new department was to be one of very few in the United Kingdom which at that time offered undergraduate teaching in archaeology and Martyn was determined that it should find a place in both the Science Faculty and in the Humanities. The former, which he achieved through the good offices of the Professors of Biochemistry and Physical Chemistry, both old friends from Oxford, ensured that the new department was funded in the order of a science department, and set a new pattern for archaeology in British universities. Estyn Evans had envisaged the new archaeology initia-

⁷E. M. Jope (ed.), *An Archaeological Survey of County Down* (Belfast, 1966).

tive as being within his Department of Geography but Martyn, with the support of the Vice-Chancellor, Sir David Lindsey Keir, and his science departments allies, ensured its independence—long a source of tension with the geographers. Appointed as a Lecturer, Martyn became a Reader in 1954 and Professor in 1963 during which time he built the department into a small but effective team—largely left to run its own affairs as Martyn would have expected of the kind of staff he sought—that offered an introduction to archaeology to large numbers of first and second year students, and latterly a full Honours course for more committed archaeologists. Its graduates went on between them to occupy many of the significant posts in archaeology in the Province and elsewhere in Ireland and Britain for a generation. Jope had a genius for identifying potential in those he appointed as research assistants and colleagues, many going on to make important contributions in their various fields. His research assistant Brian Davidson, for example, went to the English Department of the Environment, later English Heritage, where for many years he led medieval research initiatives and developed the castle studies he began under Jope's stimulus in Belfast. Peter Addyman as a medievalist and Arthur ApSimon as a prehistorian were to become founding staff at the new Department of Archaeology in Southampton in 1972. Tom McNeill remained in Belfast to set Irish castle studies on a new course while several of Jope's archaeological science appointees achieved pre-eminence in their various fields—some openly recognising their debt to the stimulus of their contact with Martyn, the interest he took in their work and his subtle influence upon its direction. Others though, because Jope was a very difficult person to work for, were less ready to do so. He was a jealous guardian of his time, often difficult to contact, the despair of university administrators—and never in Belfast after the end of term. His and Margaret's moves back and forth between Belfast and Oxford became legendary, their camper van, packed to the roof with books, files and personal effects, with cats peering out through a forest of ferns and potted plants, a regular thing of wonder in the Belfast or Heysham docks. Frustrating though these absences were for his Belfast staff, the regular returns to Oxford enabled him to continue his archaeological researches in Southern England, maintain contact with English colleagues and use research resources simply not available in Belfast.

Martyn and Margaret came to Belfast with a vision to develop what eventually became known as palaeoecology as a discipline complementary to more conventional archaeology. To this end he obtained a Nuffield Foundation grant which enabled a Nuffield Quaternary Research Unit to

be set up with a team of four, botanists Alan Smith, subsequently Professor of Botany at Cardiff University, and Michael Morrison, soils specialist V. B. Proudfoot, subsequently Professor of Geography at St Andrews, and Margaret Jope, who by now had made herself a national expert on faunal remains in archaeology, especially birds. This small cross-departmental team addressed itself amongst other things to the potential provided by the peats and tree remains in Irish bogs for the study of climate history. Radiocarbon dating, then a relatively new technique, provided a means to date the enormously long sequences of pollen data, though far greater precision was required than ^{14}C dating could then provide. Martyn and his team made the case for the establishment of a radiocarbon laboratory in Queen's that would address itself to precision dating—ultimately achieved through the dating of the long tree ring sequences obtained from trees from Irish bogs and elsewhere. Grants were obtained and a small but serviceable laboratory was set up—incongruously in garages behind the Department of Archaeology, the university then being very pressed for space and the available funds being limited. Under Gordon Pearson, formerly a senior technician at Windscale, exhaustive preparation and evaluation of every possible source of error or uncertainty took place and standards of precision were obtained equal to those of the best ^{14}C laboratories in the world. For a time Belfast and Minze Stuiver's Seattle laboratory stood as the world leaders in precision dating and Martyn developed close international friendships with Hans Suess and others working on the calibration of radiocarbon dates. Work stemming from these initiatives by Jonathon Pilcher, and subsequently developed by Professor Mike Baillie, led to Belfast's pre-eminence in the field of high precision dendrochronology.

Martyn, on his arrival in Belfast in 1949, pointed out to his appointment committee that he knew 'absolutely nothing about prehistory' and similarly he had no experience whatsoever of Ireland or of Irish archaeology. With the zeal he had displayed in the previous decade in developing medieval archaeology in the Oxford region he set about putting this right. He and Margaret, in exhausting weekend sallies in their transit van, rapidly acquainted themselves with the geography and the archaeological resources of the six counties, a particular emphasis being on County Down where the Archaeological Survey began its work and where he undertook a number of field investigations on behalf of the Survey. Opportunities presented themselves at every turn and the volumes of the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, whose editorship he took over, were for twenty years full of Jope papers which between them helped to propel

Ulster archaeology up to twentieth-century standards and sometimes placed it at the forefront of new developments. Most were studies of particular artefacts or specific sites, always starting with meticulous and perceptive descriptions of the evidence often illuminated by his sensitive and perceptive drawings and figures, but then broadening into more general statements of the implications of whatever was being studied. He and Margaret even managed to find the time to carry out significant excavations, beautifully done and elegantly recorded, for example at the Ballymacash rath near Lisburn, where they wanted to provide a control study to validate the excavation recently done on the nearby Lissue rath by the German expatriate archaeologist Gerhard Bersu.⁸ Martyn seemed as at home when dealing with the Neolithic axe factory on Tievebullagh Mountain in County Antrim and its porcellanite polished stone axes, which his distribution map showed were traded throughout the British Isles, as he was with the buildings in the North of Ireland designed by John Nash four millennia later—and everything in between.

It was not quite true, as he had claimed at interview, that he knew nothing about prehistory on arrival in Ireland. In fact for several years he had been helping another expatriate German scholar, Paul Jacobsthal, to assemble illustrations for a projected volume on Early Celtic Art in the British Isles in the course of which, and in discussions and museum visits with Jacobsthal, he had acquired a wide knowledge and expertise in the study of Iron Age objects. Towards the end of his life Jacobsthal invited Martyn to become joint author of the projected work. Many of Martyn's Ulster papers, therefore, were devoted to studies of Iron Age objects from the province, including weaponry, decorated artefacts and in particular bridle bits and horse gear germane to another of his academic preoccupations, the use of draught animals and the technology of transport in the past.

His long-standing interest in the medieval castle led him to initiate investigations at Carrickfergus, the main stronghold of the twelfth-century Norman conqueror of Ulster, John de Courcy, and, working with Dudley Waterman, research was also put in train at other castles of conquest. He even investigated what he considered a misunderstood native copy of a castle, Harry Avery's Castle outside the Norman province in the wilds of County Tyrone. Another particular interest, and well before its time as a general field of study, was his work on the settlements of the Plantation of Ulster by the London companies in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries

⁸E. M. Jope and R. J. Ivens, 'The Rath at Ballymacash, County Antrim', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 98C (1998), 101–23.

with their dwellings and fortified bawns—post-medieval archaeology well before the term became current and the activity a respectable academic discipline. A paper, ‘Moyry, Charlemont, Castleraw and Richhill: from fortification to architecture in the north of Ireland’ brought archaeological study up to the modern period, demonstrating incidentally Martyn’s equal facility in the analysis, recording and interpretation of standing buildings.⁹

Martyn’s Oxford region work brought him early recognition with election as a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in 1946. Election to the British Academy came in 1965, rather to his surprise for his work in the field of scholarship representing ‘European Pre and Proto-history’ rather than as a medievalist. The same year saw him President of Section H of the British Association for the Advancement of Science when his presidential address at the Cambridge meeting addressed ‘Man’s use of natural resources’.¹⁰ His impact upon the archaeology of Ulster brought similar recognition in 1971 when he became a Member of the Royal Irish Academy. The year 1963, twenty-five years on, had found him back with the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales but this time as a Royal Commissioner sitting with old friends such as Sir Cyril Fox, Sir Goronwy Edwards, Arnold Taylor and Idris Foster and later W. F. Grimes and D. Ellis Evans, Professor of Celtic at Oxford. His discussions there he found hugely stimulating in the context of his own work on Early Celtic art. In the end he served on the commission for twenty-five years, during which time the Welsh Commission changed its focus towards the study of houses, small and large, their detailed structural analysis and their historical, social and economic contexts. This gained his warm approval as the study of vernacular architecture was another of his interests, having learned the disciplines from W. A. Pantin at Oxford, and himself having produced important papers, for example the study of Cornish houses in the Festschrift *Studies in Building History*, which he edited in honour of Bryan H. St. J. O’Neil, or the paper he produced with his old friend C. A. Raleigh Radford on the great hall of the twelfth-century Bishop’s Palace at Hereford.¹¹

Martyn’s election to the British Academy in 1965 brought to the Academy an archaeologist with a scientific background. He soon became

⁹ *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, 23 (1960), 97–123.

¹⁰ E. M. Jope, ‘Man’s use of natural resources’, *Advancement of Science*, 22 (1965–6), 1–9.

¹¹ E. M. Jope (ed.), *Studies in Building History, in Recognition of the Work of B. H. St. J. O’Neil* (London, 1961); E. M. Jope with C. A. R. Radford and J. W. Tonkin ‘The great hall of the twelfth century Bishop’s Palace at Hereford’, *Medieval Archaeology*, 17 (1973), 78–86.

a bridge between the Academy and the Royal Society, conceiving and helping to arrange joint meetings of which the first was 'The Impact of the Natural Sciences on Archaeology' in 1969. This addressed the way in which dating techniques based in the natural sciences were providing a new chronological framework for prehistoric archaeology—very much the kind of work his Belfast Palaeoecology Laboratory was by then doing. One of the sequels to this meeting was a report produced by Martyn and Derek Allen, at that time the Secretary of the Academy, which made the case for the deployment of research funding for archaeological science. The case was in due course accepted by the Science Research Council, releasing funds on a scale well in advance of those for conventional archaeological research and making possible projects which placed British work at the forefront of archaeological science. A Science-based Archaeology Committee of the Science Research Council soon came into being. The move coincided with the burgeoning of archaeological field-work occasioned by the Rescue Archaeology movement and an urgent national need for improved methods of archaeological prospecting, investigation and analysis. This in turn led to a need to expand the numbers of those trained to carry them out.

Martyn's work on the development of archaeological science brought him stimulating contact with those at the forefront in a number of fields. Amongst these was Gordon Brown, Professor of Physics at the University of Bradford. Brown had already made significant progress in developing archaeological science, using spare capacity in his Physics Department to apply nuclear methods of analysis to the study of archaeological ceramics and lithics, a subject close to Martyn's interests. Stanley Warren there was applying X-ray fluorescence analysis to the study of ancient glass and other materials. Similarly his colleague Arnold Aspinall had established a reputation in the development of geophysical prospecting. Postgraduate and undergraduate courses were already being taught. Martyn's own scientific background and by now immense archaeological experience and insight meant that he was soon persuaded to help with the development of archaeological science at Bradford and the nurturing of the young archaeological scientists for which both he and Brown saw the need. He was Visiting Professor from 1974–81, being awarded an Honorary D.Sc. by the university in 1980. Subsequent to his retirement from Belfast he became Professor Emeritus at Bradford.

Throughout his career and because of his capacity for lateral, perceptive and innovative thinking Martyn was frequently invited to take part in collaborative projects. His early interest in the use of mapping medieval

data led to an invitation from H. C. Darby to co-author the Oxfordshire chapter for the *Domesday Geography of South-east England* (Cambridge, 1962). His interest in medieval carts and transport brought an invitation from Charles Singer to contribute to the Singer, Holmyard and Hall eight-volume *History of Technology* (London, 1954–84)—eventually expanding, as other contributors failed to produce, to include essays on horse harness and vehicles; agricultural implements; and post-classical ceramics. This led him to see the history of technology as a real sub-discipline in the history of science and of archaeology. He incorporated it in his Belfast courses and supported staff in his department such as Henry Hodges, subsequently with an international reputation as lecturer in archaeological technology at the Institute of Archaeology in the University of London, in its development. His papers always saw the technological implications of whatever he was studying. A further stimulus to his thoughts on the subject also came from his contacts with Joseph Needham, another erstwhile biochemist now engaged on a magisterial and controversial interpretation of Chinese culture history in which technology was a binding theme. He was delighted when in 1996 the Academy established a broadly based ‘History of the Sciences Subject Committee’ as a forum for the encouragement of interdisciplinary interchange and activities, the history of technology specifically taking its place within that setting. He saw the committee as a ‘much needed intercommunicating link between the several (and indeed rather separated) Academy Sections’.

It was the invitation to help Paul Jacobsthal to complete his projected survey of Early Celtic Art in the British Isles, however, that changed the emphasis of Martyn’s academic work. In a sense it kept him occupied, as circumstances allowed, right to the end of his life—the two-volume book eventually being published forty-three years after Jacobsthal’s death and four years after Martyn’s. By the time it appeared in 2000 it had become very much Martyn’s own study, and Oxford University Press insisted that his name alone appeared as author. It remains the main academic achievement of his lifetime and his most substantial published work.

His involvement began very simply. Jacobsthal, having in 1944 published his well-received *Early Celtic Art* dealing with Continental material, had moved on to survey the British and was looking for help in assembling the high-quality illustrations his research methods demanded. Martyn was recommended to him as someone with archaeological know-how who, in time of war, had access to a photographic laboratory. Soon the cooperation became more profound as Martyn’s expertise in the subject grew and when, after his move to Belfast, he was himself faced

with the publication of important decorated Iron Age objects. As Jacobsthal grew infirm he invited Martyn to become joint author and on his death in 1957 left him with the task of completing the project. Quite how much Jacobsthal had achieved by this time is a matter of debate. His draft text was never found by the Jopes though it is clear that the eventual publication was very much as Jacobsthal had planned it, and recent finds of elements of the text in the Ashmolean Museum archives show that much of that survived through into the published work.

Jope, particularly concerned with the chronology of the British material, published a number of preparatory studies including his 'The beginnings of La Tène ornamental style in the British Isles' and his important 'Daggers of the early Iron Age in Britain' which posited a developmental sequence with chronological implications.¹² These papers established his eminence in Iron Age studies. He had been impressed by the work of Peter Shorer in the conservation laboratory at the British Museum in preparing electrotypes of important Early Iron Age bronzes which made it possible to see the detail of the decoration more easily—without the distraction of colour differences and corrosion effects—and of course the replicas could be more readily handled. Soon he had established a small conservation laboratory in his department at Belfast and appointed a young but brilliant conservator, Stephen Rees Jones, subsequently head of the technology department at the Courtauld Institute of Art, who had the skills to take the necessary latex moulds and the trust of the British Museum conservation staff to be allowed access to selected objects. Jope soon had a growing collection of electrotypes in Belfast that he could handle readily and study and describe at his leisure—and an encyclopaedic knowledge of the then-available British material. What he did not have, however, was a similarly extensive personal acquaintance with Continental material on which so much of the interpretation of insular art depended. At this period he hardly ever travelled abroad. When he had done so, in his early days, he had yet to develop an interest in Early Iron Age studies. This, in the eyes of colleagues both in Britain and abroad, had to constitute a weakness in his analyses.

The slow accumulation of data for *Early Celtic Art in the British Isles* (ECABI: Oxford, 2000) continued throughout Martyn's later career,

¹²E. M. Jope, 'The beginnings of the La Tène ornamental style in the British Isles', in S. S. Frère (ed.), *Problems of the Iron Age in Southern Britain* (London, 1960), pp. 69–83; E. M. Jope, 'Daggers of the early Iron Age in Britain', *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society*, 27 (1961), 307–43.

taking its place alongside his myriad other interests and projects, but consolidating his national reputation in the subject. It provided him with material for the Munro Lecture which he gave in Edinburgh in 1953, and the O'Donnell lecture in Oxford in 1968 on masterworks of Early Celtic art in Britain. In the Rhys lecture to the British Academy in 1987 he explored how 'the practice and enjoyment of the visual arts have enriched the lives of Celtic peoples through some two and a half thousand years'—ending up with a feisty analysis of a work by Augustus John.¹³ Early Celtic art also took him to Rome with Stuart Piggott and Christopher Hawkes as part of the British Academy team for the British Academy/Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei exchange lectures at the Palazzo Corsini. His paper on four British parade shields, showing the predominantly Italic background of the 'Gaulish' shield in Britain, caused as much interest for the shields themselves as for the interpretation he put on them. For Martyn it was also a chance to experience the British School at Rome where, like so many of its guests, he found the living conditions surprisingly Spartan but the atmosphere magical.

His work on the shields provided material for other papers in the 1970s and it seemed the publication of ECABI, as it became known, was imminent. Martyn certainly thought so, for he predicted it, wrongly, in his *Who's Who* entries, first as 'in press' in 1971, then in 1974 it was '1974'; for years his *Who's Who* entry had it as '1977'—misleading later obituarists—and so on. Some scholars doubted its existence and it became a joke, not least amongst his long-suffering staff in Belfast who lived with Martyn's ECABI preoccupations for more than two decades. But it did exist, in page proofs whose preface is dated 1972, and why it was not then published is a mystery.

For more than a decade ECABI was untouched but for the collection of photographs of newly discovered artefacts. It was amazing that every time a new artefact appeared there was an appropriate space on one of Jope's plates. The situation changed about 1983 when two colleagues were shown the proofs, helped to check some of the references and encouraged him towards publication. In order to update the text he decided to add an Annotated List of the illustrations—a form of catalogue that could include recent information without unduly affecting the existing text. Progress, however, was still painfully slow, in part because he allowed himself to be distracted by other Iron Age projects including the 1987

¹³This was published as E. M. Jope, 'Celtic art: expressiveness and communication through 2500 years', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 73 (1987), pp. 97–124.

Rhys lecture for the British Academy, in part because of a late-flowering burst of international travel to conferences and to see colleagues in connection with Margaret's own research on the amino acids of fossil brachiopods and their implications for phylogeny. The text was finally completed and handed over to the inordinately patient Oxford University Press a few months before Jope died in 1996. It still needed a bibliography, provided by the last of a long-suffering succession of Martyn's research assistants, R. J. Ivens, and was nursed through the press, with minimal textual revision or updating, by Ian Stead. It includes much of the 1972 text word-for-word, thus 'the newly found gold from Ipswich' discovered in 1968 and 1970. Additions include a chronological chart, maps and accompanying text and an appendix on the dating of the Battersea shield. The latter had been a crucial problem for Jope (and others) and he was overjoyed to have an 'answer' provided by scientific investigation in part carried out by one of his own students. The additions, and Annotated List, are useful but it would have been a better book if it had been published in 1972 so that a whole generation of scholars could have benefited from it.¹⁴

Jope became involved in British Iron Age studies at a time when they were dominated by his friend Christopher Hawkes, whom he greatly admired. But he quietly ignored Hawkes's ABC approach, devised more for pottery than metalwork, preferring the Continental Hallstatt C and D and La Tène I–III. He had little experience, however, of Continental antiquities other than through Jacobsthal's *Early Celtic Art* (ECA) and his main foray in that direction (the Waldalgesheim master, in the 1971 Hawkes Festschrift) was not successful.¹⁵ Jope, though, had more than enough to occupy himself with British antiquities and championed artefact studies at a time when they were being neglected by most British students.

In ECABI his descriptions are accurate and imaginative, using carefully chosen words and a technical vocabulary explained in a glossary. The book is full of fresh insights, has a wealth of hitherto unpublished information and a fine selection of photographs. He not only appreciated and described Celtic art but became increasingly confident that he could interpret it. In the Rhys lecture, for instance, he sees on the Colchester mirror a representation of the 'Tree of Life: harvest in autumn, seeding

¹⁴ E. M. Jope *Early Celtic Art in the British Isles* (2 vols., Oxford, 2000).

¹⁵ E. M. Jope, 'The Waldalgesheim master', in J. Boardman, M. A. Brown and T. G. E. Powell (eds.), *The European Community in Later Prehistory. Studies in Honour of C. F. C. Hawkes* (London, 1971), pp. 167–86.

time and renewal in spring . . . The interpretation can hardly be denied.’ Some of his descriptions are so vivid and original that the student is obliged to see through Jope’s eyes—the Great Chesterford Mirror, for instance with its ‘unsteady lurch and a leering face, with wicked eyes . . . and spidery arms like tentacles wandering crazily’. These idiosyncracies enliven his texts, but perhaps they should not be taken too seriously. The Rhys lecture is somewhat eccentric, but ECABI is an invaluable standard work that will not be superseded for a very long time.

On Martyn’s retirement from his Belfast chair in 1981 he and Margaret returned permanently to their Oxford home in Chalfont Road and to a number of years of vigorous and fruitful participation in the business of their respective research fields. He remained on the Science-based Archaeology Committee, having helped to organise various joint symposia of the Royal Society and the British Academy on ‘The Early History of Agriculture’ in 1975 and ‘The Emergence of Man’ in 1980, and to edit the subsequent publications;¹⁶ the latter included his paper ‘The emergence of man: information from protein systems’. This in part reflected Margaret’s latest research—but also harked back to his biochemical background and his undergraduate wish to pursue the molecular mechanisms behind all biological processes. His paper ‘Ancient bone and plant proteins: the molecular state of preservation’ in Hare, Hoering and King’s *Biogeochemistry of Amino Acids* (New York, 1980) shows in what direction his interests had now turned. In parallel he actively maintained his participation in the development of archaeological science at Bradford. Membership of the Ancient Monuments Board of English Heritage brought him to more conventional archaeological issues but also gave him the opportunity to champion the role of archaeological science within the national monuments service.

‘Retirement’ was a period of considerable satisfaction to Martyn and Margaret, allowing them to refresh Oxford contacts which they had never entirely given up, attend academic meetings with a frequency that had rarely been possible during the Belfast years and travel to meetings and academic contacts abroad which they had hardly ever done while at Belfast. There was more time for music, which they had both enjoyed and in their earlier days enthusiastically practised, Martyn playing the viola. Once again, as they had done several times in their lives, they began renewing their collection of recordings to take advantage of finer sound

¹⁶ Sir J. Hutchinson, G. Clarke, E. M. Jope and R. Riley (eds.), *The Early History of Agriculture* (Oxford 1977); J. Z. Young, E. M. Jope and K. P. Oakley (eds.), *The Emergence of Man: a Joint Symposium of the Royal Society and the British Academy* (London, 1981).

reproduction provided by new technology. They still cherished their collection of early water colours, one of which, a view of the Victoria and Albert Museum, they presented to the British Academy. Hitherto they had rarely taken holidays. The story is told of a day's idleness in the Glenluce sandhills, which Margaret had insisted they take on one of their regular end-of-term journeys from Belfast to Oxford. Typically Martyn's eagle eye spotted artefacts and using the picnic cutlery he rapidly excavated a medieval coin hoard: 'The day has not been completely wasted then' was his comment. Nor did he waste his retirement. Papers continued to come out throughout the 1990s, into Jope's ninth decade, on Celtic art, on radiocarbon in the archaeological and biological sciences, on molecular preservation in archaeological and geological contexts, and, with the help of his research assistant Richard Ivens, on fieldwork and research projects of long ago—excavations he had carried out at the rath at Ballymacash near Lisburn in County Antrim in 1953 and 1954 some forty years before—the report appeared posthumously—or at Deddington Castle, a project started with 17-mile bike rides from Oxford by the Jopes half a century ago and eventually taken up by Ivens. It is a credit to Martyn that he was able, unlike so many archaeologists of his generation, to publish or make provision for the publication of virtually all his research backlog. More remarkably, in a vast lifetime product there is scarcely a single paper that does not have some new insight, or perception, or original thought or invaluable record—and on a range and scope of subjects that few if any of his contemporaries could match.¹⁷

Martyn died at Oxford on 14 November 1996 aged 80. His wife, co-researcher and fiercely loyal and devoted partner Margaret died in 2004. They had no children.

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Note. Much of this memoir is based on biographical notes left by Martyn Jope at his death. I am also much indebted to Dr Ian Stead and Professor Roy Hodson for advice on his work on Iron Age matters and in particular for their notes on his publication of *Early Celtic Art in the British Isles*. Professor Bruce Proudfoot provided valuable insights into Jope's early years in Belfast and on his work as a biochemist.

¹⁷No full list of his writings has been published; a recently compiled list is available at Peter Addyman (2014) *Memoir of Martyn Jope (Bibliography)* [data-set]. York: Archaeology Data Service [distributor] (doi:10.5284/1027060).