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MADELEINE HOPE DODDS 1885-1972

MADELEINE HOPE DODDS, who died on 13th May 1972 at the age of 87, was the second daughter of Edwin Dodds and Emily Bryam Dodds (nee Mawson) of Home House, Low Fell, where she lived for most of her life. Her grandfather, M. S. Dodds, was the founder of the printing business called after him on Newcastle Quayside; her maternal grandfather, John Mawson, of Ashfield, Low Fell, was Sheriff of Newcastle when he was killed in the explosion on the Town Moor in 1867.

M. Hope Dodds was educated at Gateshead High School for Girls on the Windmill Hills. She was a student at Newnham College Cambridge from 1904 to 1906 when she passed with Second Class Honours in the History Tripos. Degrees were not then given to women at Cambridge, but many years later were conferred on all who had earned them in the past. She spent an extra year at Newnham in research and was awarded the Creighton Memorial Prize in 1909. She then worked for some years for the Victoria County History, with her college friend, Myra Curtis, who after a distinguished career in the Civil Service, eventually became Principal of Newnham.

Hope Dodds returned to Gateshead and continued to devote herself to North Country history. In 1915 the Cambridge University Press published *The Pilgrimage of Grace and The Exeter Conspiracy* which she wrote in collaboration with her younger sister, Ruth Dodds. This has recently been reprinted after more than half a century, during which it has remained the principal book on this North Country Rebellion and its sequel.

She contributed many papers to historical journals, more especially to *Archaeologia Aeliana* and to our *Proceedings*. She also wrote some brief biographies for D.N.B. Her most impressive work was the editing of Volumes XII to XV of the *Northumberland County History*. Much of the medieval history and genealogical information was her own work, the fruits of the research of many years. In addition from 1941 to 1946 she was our librarian. From 1947 she was an Honorary Member of our Society.

Hope Dodds had a delightful sense of humour which sometimes appeared even in the sober volumes of *N.C.H.* and still more in her contributions to historical periodicals. She was a great admirer of Jane Austen and the Brontës. But her chief love was for the North Country, its beauties, its people and its varied and fascinating history.

She worked for some years in her father's printing business during the First

World War. She became a Quaker and attended the Newcastle Meeting of the Society of Friends. Hope Dodds was a pacifist and a Socialist; the last political action of her life was casting a postal vote in the municipal election of May 1972, for her sight failed in old age. But she was not completely cut off from her beloved books as she had learned to read Braille and this was the great occupation of her last two years.

From their foundation, Hope Dodds was an active member of the Progressive Players, Gateshead. She produced plays for them at Westfield Hall in the early days and made dramatic adaptations of Jane Austen's *Emma* and Dickens' *Great Expectations* which they performed. It was largely due to her generosity that the Gateshead Little Theatre was built for the Players and it has become the dramatic centre of a town and district otherwise devoid of live drama. She attended all the Players' performances as long as her health permitted.

In spite of her love of drama, both amateur and professional, she never herself came into the limelight, for her nature was quiet and retiring. But all who did know her appreciated her gaiety, kindness and wisdom and her generosity of spirit. She lived a full life.

RUTH DODDS