

OBITUARIES

MISS MARGARET PILKINGTON, O.B.E., M.A., F.M.A., J.P.

The career of Margaret Pilkington, who died at the end of the 1973-74 session, epitomised aspects of Manchester life that are not always fully appreciated although they are of considerable significance for the common good. The industrial revolution generated great wealth in Manchester and the surrounding towns; this wealth enabled philanthropists to endow educational institutions, such as the University, and art galleries, such as the City Art Gallery. One of these philanthropists was Sir Joseph Whitworth, the famous machine-tool maker; and, as there is an affinity between engineering and art, it was appropriate that one of his three trustees, Robert Dunkinfield Darbishire (President in 1886) should, under the terms of the will, devote a part of the Whitworth fortune to the establishment and endowment of an art gallery. Had it not been for two world wars the income of the Whitworth Art Gallery would, no doubt, have been sufficient for its maintenance and expansion. But it proved inadequate and the original bequest had to be supplemented by the financial help and the voluntary efforts of someone else. Fortunately, Margaret Pilkington was able to come to the rescue; indeed, in the end her contributions to the Gallery equalled those of the original benefactor and his trustee.

A member of the well known glass-making family, she was born at Pendleton in 1892. After studying at the Slade School she returned to Manchester, and in 1925 became a member of Council of the Whitworth; in 1929 she was invited to join Manchester City Art Galleries Committee; and, in 1936, she became Honorary Director of the Whitworth. Although this was, at that time, a most unusual appointment for a woman, it was also a most happy one for it was through her efforts and generosity that the Gallery survived the difficulties of removal to North Wales during the war, and the financial crisis that followed the war. She donated water-colours, drawings, wood engravings and textiles to the Gallery and she organised loan exhibitions. In 1958, the corner turned, the future of the Gallery was assured when the University took over, and the Chair in the History of Art was established. Margaret Pilkington then

became Deputy Chairman of the governing committee, an office she held up to her death.

Although she will certainly be remembered for her great services to the Whitworth Art Gallery, she has a particular claim to be affectionately remembered by the Society, for she was the first lady to hold the office of President since its foundation in 1781. Her Presidential address, "The Whitworth Art Gallery, Past, Present, and Future" is both authoritative and eloquent; it was published in Volume 108 (1965—66) of the *Memoirs*. In September 1968 Council approved the formation of the Arts Section and she became its first Chairman.

Margaret Pilkington joined the Society in 1951, five years after her sister Dorothy, with whom she lived at Alderley Edge and who pre-deceased her by about two years. She was small and unassertive, but she possessed great strength of character, and personal charm. The members of the Society have every reason to be grateful for her great love and understanding of art.

DONALD GARSIDE

Donald Garside, who died after a very short illness in August 1974, was secretary of the Social Philosophy Section, an office he had held since November 1971. A Manchester graduate, he began his career by teaching in a secondary school for a few years before taking over a W.E.A. class in Salford in 1937. After war-time service in the army, he joined the Extra-Mural Department of Manchester University, and in 1949 was appointed Warden of Holly Royde College, Withington. The University had acquired this property in 1944 and it was intended that it should be developed into a unique, short-term residential college within the University. During his twenty-five years as Warden he guided the development of the College as a centre for a wide variety of adult residential courses. Such courses are now a familiar feature of adult education and extra-mural work everywhere. A special feature of Donald Garside's achievements was the three months' course for people from Scandinavian countries. For this service he was awarded the Knighthood of the Norwegian Order of St. Olav shortly before his death.

Donald Garside was a cheerful, energetic and most kindly man. He made a highly effective contribution to the Society during his all too brief membership of Council.

GEORGE M. POLANYI

George Polanyi died in London after a short illness. He was the husband of Priscilla Polanyi, a member of the Society and until 1966 Assistant Secretary. His father, Professor Michael Polanyi, F.R.S., was President 1944—46, and is now an Honorary Member. The Society has conveyed its deepest sympathy to his widow and to his father.