

# PROFESSOR WAUGH

## His Work at McGill University

To the Editor of the Manchester Guardian.

Sir,—There must be in England few people who have had the privilege of studying under the late Professor W. T. Waugh at McGill University. As one of those few, may I ask the opportunity of communicating through your columns to his many friends in Manchester some feelings about his days at McGill?

The appointment of Professor Basil Williams and Professor Waugh to the Department of History shortly after the war opened a new era in the study of history at McGill. In a short space of time the History Honours School ranked with the best schools in the Arts Faculty, with a clear claim to be considered the best among them. It became not only possible, but easy, for a keen student to obtain a first-rate undergraduate training, fitting him to rank with those coming from the best history schools in England.

In mediæval history this was due entirely to Professor Waugh. His introduction of the critical standards of the best school of mediæval history in England was of great value. As one who has been inspired to follow in his footsteps academically, I may be permitted to suggest that he was one of the few Manchester mediævalists who succeeded in making the immense critical system of the Manchester school absolutely his instrument and permitted it in no degree to be his master.

It is a commonplace that it is difficult for a man to excel in teaching as well as in writing upon an academic subject. Professor Waugh achieved this distinction. Stimulating, broad, and crystal clear as a writer, he showed identical qualities as a lecturer. And one of the best features of his work at McGill was that he was always personally accessible to his students. His time was never denied to those whom he thought could benefit by it: when he succeeded Professor Williams in the Kingsford Chair in 1925 there was no difference. And this personal association with a master, so valuable always to a student, was enhanced by Professor Waugh's personality.

In your obituary notice yesterday Professor Fiddes well described that personality. Its possibilities reached fulfilment at McGill. He was not only a great success as the central figure in the History School, but also an admirable influence throughout the university, the champion of sanity, dignity, and uncompromising honesty and fair play. In addition to this he took an important part in the intellectual and social life of Montreal, where his broad culture was of the greatest value. This part of his work was being extended of recent years throughout Canada, with the publication of his "Wolfe and Montcalm" and his lecture tour across the continent.

Professor Waugh's premature death must cause unrelieved bitterness to his friends and all who knew him. To the study of mediæval history it is a calamity.—Yours, &c.,

RUSHTON COULBORN.

5, Sussex Place, Hyde Park, London, W. 2, October 19.