

# Tribute

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I first met Ron Maudsley in 1974, when I joined the Faculty of Laws at King's College London, where he had been a Distinguished Professor of English Law for some years. His writings were already well-known to me, but I knew nothing of the man. On the first day of term he was kind enough to take me to lunch and introduce me to my colleagues and to the ways of the college. There followed a friendship and professional partnership for which I remain grateful. It was my good fortune that those areas of law in which I was interested were those in which his special expertise was a ready source of help and advice.

Ron was at that time working on the tenth edition of his book on the English law of trusts, Hanbury and Maudsley's *Modern Equity*, which he had taken over from Professor Hanbury some years before. He paid me the compliment of asking me to revise the chapters on equitable remedies, which proved an enjoyable task. Soon after this edition was published, Ron decided to live permanently in the United States, which was a great loss to King's College.

I remained in close touch with him, as we had by this time agreed that I should play a greater part in the preparation of the eleventh edition of *Modern Equity*. Much transatlantic correspondence followed as Ron divided his time between New York and San Diego. I was glad that he decided to maintain his connection with Oxford through the University of San Diego Summer Institute on International and Comparative Law, so that he was able to visit King's College every year. It was during one such visit that Ron told me of his illness diagnosed soon after his arrival in

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the United States. No one who knew him at this time could fail to have been impressed by the courage and stoic determination with which he faced his situation. I remember a meeting in Oxford with Ron and his London publisher where he coolly discussed with us his plans for the future of *Modern Equity* after his death. In a lighter vein, I recall an occasion about a year before his death when, although gravely ill, Ron agreed to join us for dinner in a London restaurant and realizing that it was the "glorious twelfth" (the date upon which the grouse shooting season begins), ordered a dish of grouse and did justice to it. And yet in spite of his physical suffering Ron succeeded in producing some of his best work during this difficult period, for example his *Modern Law of Perpetuities*, which was published a year before he died.

Meanwhile work was progressing on the new edition of *Modern Equity*. At least once a week a large package would arrive from San Diego containing the latest draft of the section he was working on, with a request for corrections and suggestions, a task not made easier by Ron's appalling handwriting. At the same time my drafts were being posted to him in the United States. At first I was taken aback by his ruthless criticisms, but soon came to realize that this was the only way, and was what he expected from me on his own writing. When the work was nearly complete I had the good fortune to be able to visit Ron in San Diego while on vacation, and watched him giving a class on Wills with undiminished enthusiasm.

Ron's last visit to England took place the following summer in 1981. He was by this time greatly disabled, and few would have made the journey in such circumstances. The last time I saw him was when he came to lunch at King's College. Although his mobility was much impaired, he negotiated the many flights of stairs down to the dining room and enjoyed seeing his former colleagues again. Unfortunately, the proposed publication date of the book was not until November 1981, and Ron was right in thinking that he would not see it in the bookshops. By the time he returned to the United States that summer the printing was finished but the binding process had not yet begun. The publishers kindly arranged to have one copy handbound and sent out to San Diego by courier. It arrived the weekend before his death, and so he was able to see it and indeed he asked to look at it several times that weekend.

When I think of Ron Maudsley today, it is with admiration for his courage and his achievements, with gratitude for the professional opportunities he gave me, and with great affection.