

**THE FOLLOWING TRIBUTES TO LORD LOWRY WERE
DELIVERED AT A SPECIAL SITTING OF THE HIGH
COURT IN THE NISI PRIUS COURT ON
MONDAY 18 JANUARY 1999.**

***TRIBUTE PAID BY THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE SIR
ROBERT CARSWELL TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE LORD LOWRY, LORD CHIEF JUSTICE OF
NORTHERN IRELAND 1971-88***

ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE, BELFAST, 18 JANUARY 1999

The court is sitting this morning to pay tribute to the memory of Robert Lynd Erskine, Baron Lowry, who died on 15 January 1999, and to express our sorrow at his loss. For most of the past three decades Lord Lowry was a pivotal part of the legal system of Northern Ireland, and it is hard to adjust our thoughts to the fact that he is no longer with us.

He was born on 30 January 1919, the only son of William Lowry, a practitioner of great flair and ability who was one of the founder members of the Bar of Northern Ireland, became a minister in the government and subsequently a High Court judge before his early death. Lord Lowry used to aver that his father was possessed of a much better intellect than his own: if that was true it put him in a very high bracket indeed.

He had the good fortune to be educated at The Royal Belfast Academical Institution, where he had a remarkably successful academic and sporting career. He won the major prizes, was Head of School, played a respectable game of rugby and for four seasons played cricket on the 1st XI, captaining it for his last two years. He won an open classical exhibition to Jesus College, Cambridge, of which he was later elected an honorary fellow, and there obtained first class honours in Parts I and II of the classical tripos.

At the outbreak of war Robert Lowry volunteered for service, but was instructed to complete his degree course. He did so in 1940 and was then called up for service in the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. In 1941 he was commissioned into the Royal Irish Fusiliers, becoming in due course adjutant of the 6th Battalion in succession to E.W. Jones. He served through the Tunisian and Italian campaigns and became Brigade Intelligence Officer of the 38th Irish Infantry Brigade. He was demobilised with the rank of major, and subsequently became Honorary Colonel of successively the 5th and 7th Battalions of the Royal Irish Fusiliers and the 5th Battalion of the Royal Irish Rangers.

Lord Lowry undertook a short but clearly effective course of legal studies - he was later known to say privately that it was possible to learn the law in a little less time than most universities allotted to their students for their law degrees - and was called to the Bar of Northern Ireland in 1947. At this time a number of returning servicemen were quickly establishing themselves as leaders of the junior Bar, among them James Brown, Ambrose McGonigal, Robbie Lowry and, pre-eminently, Teddy Jones. The Bar Library was then a much smaller body of people and they worked

with and against each other constantly and knew each other's strengths and weaknesses intimately. Facilities were rudimentary by modern standards, and earnings modest, but the pressure of life was easier, even for those with a good practice, and the survivors of that era look back on it with great affection.

Robbie Lowry became a pupil of F.A.L. Harrison (now Sir Frank), but required little formal tuition, for he seemed, like Athene, to spring into practice fully armed. He acquired a high-quality civil practice with great speed and when Frank Harrison took silk in 1948, Lowry succeeded him as junior counsel to the Attorney-General for Northern Ireland. From then until 1956, when he took silk, he was one of the foremost juniors and featured in many of the leading cases of the day. He acquired a large family of pupils, over whom he presided genially at the centre table in the Bar Library, and in whose success he always took great pleasure. In later life he amused himself by attempting to make up a family tree of his descendants in the law, but their number increased at such a speed that his genealogical efforts could not keep up with them. He was proud of the fact that for a period as Lord Chief Justice he had as colleagues on the Bench not only two former pupils, MacDermott and Nicholson, but also one "grandson", myself.

Robbie Lowry took silk in 1956 and very soon became one of the leading members of the Senior Bar. A complete advocate, whose practice covered a wide range of civil cases, he was a persistent and effective cross-examiner. His acute analytical mind fitted him particularly for appellate work and he was retained on one side or the other in almost every case which went to the House of Lords. It became increasingly clear that he was destined for the Bench, and it was no surprise to his colleagues when he was appointed a judge of the High Court in 1964 at the early age of 45. As a young judge he adopted standards of courtesy and patience which have set the pattern for succeeding judicial generations. They could be misleading: many an advocate thought that the attentive hearing which his argument had received meant that he had won his case, only to find that his opponent's submissions, equally well received and carefully probed, prevailed with the judge.

When the redoubtable Lord MacDermott retired in 1971, Robert Lowry was the natural choice as his successor as Lord Chief Justice. From an early stage he established his hegemony by the quality of his judicial work, allied with a fine diplomatic sense in his dealings with his colleagues, several of whom had been considerably senior to him in practice and on the Bench. His quiet courtesy in court was matched by an unruffled good humour off the Bench and although constantly pressed by administrative demands he always found time to give support and encouragement to younger judges finding their way in a new environment.

Sir Robert Lowry was pitchforked into a turbulent period in the affairs of the Province. Internment commenced the week after he took up office and the level of civil disturbance was at its height. Attacks upon the Security Forces and the destruction of property by bombs were incessant and the incidence of murder and maiming was distressingly high. Members of the judiciary did not escape. Five were murdered, another judge was seriously wounded and Lord Lowry himself narrowly escaped an assassination attempt when arriving to give a lecture at Queen's University (typically robust, he went ahead and gave the lecture as scheduled). For many years they lived under constant threat in siege conditions and their devotion to duty was severely tested. That they came through this period with their morale intact is very largely due to the example set by Lord Lowry and his fostering of an esprit de corps which sustained them.

Emergency legislation was introduced into Northern Ireland in 1973, when the ordinary criminal processes had come under intolerable strain, and Sir Robert Lowry and his fellow-judges had to undertake the operation of an

unfamiliar system of non-jury trial for terrorist offences. He determined that the inroads of emergency legislation into the historic edifice of the common law should be kept to a minimum, and he strove successfully with determined independence to preserve the traditional standards of justice from distortion or dilution. Under his leadership the judges preserved a reputation for impartiality and integrity by administering the potentially draconian powers entrusted to them with fairness and humanity, consistently interpreting them in a way which kept as close as possible to the long-established principles of the criminal law.

In 1975 Sir Robert Lowry was asked to become Chairman of the Northern Ireland Constitutional Convention, in which the representatives of political parties engaged in an attempt to agree upon a constitution for the Province, following the breakdown of the Assembly and Executive the previous year. The efforts proved fruitless after many months of sittings at Stormont, when the Convention broke up without agreement having been reached, in spite of Lowry's skilled and shrewd chairmanship. His fairness, patience and good humour won him the admiration and respect of a diverse range of politicians and his mastery of the procedural intricacies in a strange field was proof against the wiles of even the most astute campaigner.

In 1979 Lord Lowry became a life peer and frequently sat in appeals to the House of Lords, while carrying on with his work as Lord Chief Justice. In 1988 he was appointed a Lord of Appeal in Ordinary, and in this final phase of his career until retirement in 1994 he was engaged full-time in appeals to the House of Lords. His learning, acumen and great breadth of experience made him a valued member of a very strong court.

Throughout his long judicial life Lord Lowry produced a stream of judgments on an enormous variety of subjects, lucidly and succinctly expressed in elegant prose which owed much to his classical training. In an age in which the judicial work product has grown even longer and more diffuse, his beautifully crafted judgments were a welcome reminder that the standards set by Willes and Macnaghten a century ago could still be attained. At times his quest for perfection, together with the other calls on his time, may have delayed the production of reserved judgments rather longer than is now considered appropriate - lawyers familiar with the Book of Common Prayer were known to mutter the phrase from the *Urbs Fortitudinis* "Yea, in the way of thy judgements, O Lord, have we waited for thee" - but when they finally appeared they were so cogent in reasoning and clear in expression that little remained to be said, as tributes from the House of Lords testified.

Outside the law Lord Lowry was heavily involved with educational matters. He was a governor for 15 years of his old school, of which he was elected to the revived office of President of the Institution in 1996, the highest distinction which the school could confer upon him, and Chairman of the Board of Richmond Lodge School for 21 years. He served a term as Chairman of the Governing Bodies Association and gave valuable service as Visitor of the University of Ulster from 1989 until his death.

Sporting interests of all kinds were Lord Lowry's relaxation and safety valve in his busy life. He was an outstanding schoolboy cricketer and was selected for the Irish Schools XI. After the war he turned his energies to golf, at which he played off, and to, a low handicap for many years, with a compact, grooved swing which never seemed to vary. He was known widely as a highly competitive and effective match player, though one of the most sporting and chivalrous opponents. He was a member of the Malone Golf Club senior team which carried all before it in the 1950s and captained the team which won the Irish Senior Cup. He served as captain of that club in 1955, though how he juggled the demands of captaincy, playing on the senior team and his heavy junior practice was known only to himself and his pupils who dealt inventively with telephone calls from

solicitors seeking him like the Scarlet Pimpernel. He was President of Royal Portrush Golf Club from 1974 until his retirement in 1997, undertaking a very successful captaincy in the club's centenary year. His remarkably accurate and retentive memory made him an authority on cricket, rugby and golf history and he needed little prompting to reel off statistics from Wisden, the back line in an Irish XV of pre-war years or his own score stroke by stroke in a match played many years back. His family was devoted to showjumping, and he earlier supported them by driving a large horsebox all over the country - a labour of love, given his lack of interest in or ability with motorised transport or anything else mechanical. It was that which brought him into judging competitions. Typically, he mastered all the arcana of showjumping rules and became such an authority that he travelled the world as an international judge. Among his sporting friends, or in the company of his fellow-benchers of the Middle Temple, or our own Inn of Court, Robbie Lowry could relax the slightly austere persona which he presented to the world and revert to his own convivial self. As many of us present will well know, he greatly enjoyed such evenings, and he was never likely to be one of the first to depart.

Lord Lowry's family formed a haven and a secure background for his manifold activities in a busy life which he lived to the full. He was married in 1945 to Mary Martin, who gave him wonderful support during their long marriage until her death in 1987, and he was devoted to her and their three daughters. His marriage in 1994 to Barbara Calvert QC brought great happiness to his later years and one would wish that they could have had more time to enjoy his well-merited retirement. Our deepest sympathy goes to Barbara and to his daughters Sheila, Ann and Margie. They will of course miss him sadly. But so shall we who are present today, and so will the wider legal world. We, and they, will remember Robert Lynd Erskine Baron Lowry as a man of whom the phrase coined by Francis Bacon could most justly have been used, that integrity was his "portion and proper virtue". With him as our example we can strive to attain, in the words of Lord Coke, that other great master of the common law, "the stabilitie of fortitude and the soliditie of justice".

***TRIBUTE PAID BY BRIAN FEE Q.C. CHAIRMAN OF THE
BAR COUNCIL***

I am grateful to the Lord Chief Justice for granting me the opportunity and privilege of joining, on behalf of the Bar of Northern Ireland, in this tribute to the late Lord Lowry.

As you have already heard, Robbie Lowry was called to the Bar of Northern Ireland in 1947 following a brilliant academic career and distinguished service in the Forces during World War II. He quickly made his mark as a diligent and brilliant barrister and this was recognised in his appointment as junior Counsel for the Attorney General in 1948. In addition to those Crown duties he had a very extensive practice particularly, although not exclusively, as Defence Counsel.

He willingly gave generously of his time to act as Master to a number of pupils and indeed he was always regarded as the epitome of what a Master should be. Happily a number of those former pupils still display today the Lowry trade marks in their work in the law.

In 1956 he took Silk and over the next eight years he became one of the most eminent Senior Counsel. He took part in many of the major cases of his day and I am told by those who practised with him that he was particularly adept at the art of cross-examination and won over many a jury against the odds.

Apart from his obvious quality as an advocate, Lord Lowry was a great participant in Bar life generally. His was a rounded personality and his talents were far from restricted to the legal field.

As a golfer of very considerable ability he was at the forefront of the formation and development of the Bar Golfing Society in the early 1950's, and of course proceeded to represent the Bar in golfing competitions on many occasions. His elevation to the Bench in 1944 was greeted with universal acclaim not only because of his quality as a lawyer but because of his popularity among his colleagues.

As he rose through the judicial ranks, becoming Lord Chief Justice in 1971, his qualities of integrity and fierce independence long recognised by his colleagues at the Bar stood him in good stead. He also greatly encouraged the independence and collegiality of the Bar in its attempts to avoid the unfortunate divisions and side-effects of the religious and political climate in Northern Ireland in the darkest days of the troubles.

As barristers, our view of a judge is always going to be influenced to a considerable degree by the manner in which counsel are treated in his or her court, and in that respect Lord Lowry was never less than pleasant to practitioners and witnesses. If the sharpness of his intellect was always evident, it was combined with a sense of fairness, courtesy and modesty which ensured that one left his court satisfied that there had been a full and fair hearing. Many junior Counsel received handwritten notes of encouragement after their initial appearance in his court.

Notwithstanding the demands and pressures of Judicial Office he remained in close contact with the Bar. Even in his busiest days as Lord Chief Justice he found the time to lecture and tutor Bar students preparing for their Bar Finals, he chaired many legal committees and he rarely missed Bar social functions.

We were all proud of his appointment as a Law Lord in 1988 and he was assiduous in ensuring that his links with our Bar were maintained. Indeed he was to have been our guest at a Bar dinner later this month.

On behalf of the Bar I express our deep sympathy to his wife Barbara, his daughters Margaret, Anne and Sheila and extended family. The Bar has lost a good friend.

***TRIBUTE PAID BY ANTOINETTE CURRAN,
PAST PRESIDENT OF THE LAW SOCIETY OF
NORTHERN IRELAND***

In the unavoidable absence of our President Mrs Dixon I deem it a great privilege, to be asked to express the feelings of the Law Society on the death of Lord Lowry.

The Lord Chief Justice has comprehensively and in graphic terms outlined his outstanding career.

Our members knew Robbie Lowry - if I may be so bold - as Junior Counsel and later as Senior Counsel long before his elevation to the Bench. No solicitor could have failed both to be impressed by, and to learn, from him even at that early stage. As Puisne Judge and later as Lord Chief Justice he wore his learning lightly yet his judgments bear the hallmark of academic brilliance allied to careful crafting by a master of the English language.

In England and Wales, the Master of the Rolls admits solicitors and has general supervision over the Law Society of England and Wales. In Northern Ireland this function has been assigned to the Lord Chief Justice; when the Law Society makes new Regulations the Lord Chief Justice must concur. Lord Lowry did not simply concur with drafts submitted by the Law Society, he made many invaluable suggestions and frequently re-drafted them in a tighter and clearer form.

In official contacts with the Law Society he was both punctilious and generous with his time when the Council or an individual solicitor had an intractable problem.

It was always clear that the Bar of Northern Ireland was, and would remain, his first love, but let me acknowledge at once that he was never less than a friend to the The Law Society, even on those occasions when he differed from us on a matter of mutual concern.

“His yoke indeed was easy and his burden light”.

Solicitors instructing, on occasions, nervous Counsel in the Court of Appeal, could not help but notice the way in which Lord Lowry empathised with those struggling to present a case, to the best of their limited ability. He frequently, in those circumstances, politely enquired - “Is what you are really trying to say this” - whereupon he would transform an incoherent submission into something both felicitous in language and cogent in effect.

Outside his official duties he was a warm, intelligent, humorous, likeable and indeed loveable man.

If I might borrow two lines from Hamlet which I consider apt -

“He was a man, take him for all in all

I shall not look upon his like again”.

May I, in conclusion, on behalf of the Law Society express our deep sympathy to Lady Lowry, his daughters, family and friends.

**THE FOLLOWING TRIBUTE WAS PAID BY THE
RT. HON. SIR JOHN MACDERMOTT AT LORD LOWRY'S
FUNERAL IN CROSSGAR ON 19 JANUARY 1999.**

"ROBBIE" - CROSSGAR, JANUARY 1999

We are met to bid farewell to Robert Lynd Erskine Lowry - Lord Lowry of Crossgar: "Robbie" to everyone here today. By our presence today we seek to comfort and sustain his family in their time of sadness. We are also here to give thanks for a life of service to the community and for the manner in which he enriched the lives of all who were fortunate enough to have known him. We shall never see his like again.

We who have come from far and wide all have our shared and personal memories of this great man (and he was a great man) who has gone from among us. Even today I have much difficulty in accepting that he has gone: he was always so full of vitality, a seemingly ageless person. It was only a couple of months ago that he was attending to show-jumping business in Warsaw and Stuttgart; it is less than eight weeks since he and Barbara came to my retirement dinner in the Law Courts. On that occasion he was in great form - as sharp as ever - and, typically, he told no-one that he was to go into hospital on the following Monday. We are all sad but relieved that he has been spared the insufferable burden of prolonged ill-health. We are privileged to have been left with so many marvellous and lasting memories.

Today, within sight of his 80th birthday, we realise that in truth one man in his time can play many parts. So let us remind ourselves of some aspects of the life of this man who was both a public figure and a very private person. In him formality and informality walked hand in hand but there was always a proper time and place for each.

As we know he was a distinguished scholar at "Inst" and at Jesus College, Cambridge. After securing his "first" in both parts of the Classics Tripos, Robbie saw it to be his duty to join the army and the student soon developed into the well rounded man. His industry and intellect were identified and he became intelligence officer with the 38th Irish Brigade in North Africa. In later years he was Honorary Colonel of several Units - positions which gave him especial pleasure.

In 1944 when on leave he injured his back when riding. Part of his convalescence was spent playing chess with Eric Martin who was also convalescing but such occasions also gave Robbie the opportunity to continue his "pursuit" of Eric's sister, Mary. They became engaged and were married in 1945.

On discharge from the army Robbie had to set about getting himself qualified for call to the Bar and so follow his father into "the law". This involved living in London and taking the Bar Final course run by the well known "crammer" - Gibson and Weldon. He was, naturally, successful and was called to the Bar in 1947, entering into pupillage with Frank Harrison who, with Patricia, so much regrets not being able to be here today. Unnecessarily conscious of the limited nature of his formal legal education, Robbie would at times claim that he "knew no law". This, of course, was simply not so, and his legal knowledge and expertise rapidly developed through hard work and an instinctive "feel" for the fundamental principles of the law. Robbie had an infinite capacity for hard work: he never came to Court less than well prepared: he had the ability to define and grasp the real point in even the most complex case: he was a very well

organised and quietly effective (sometimes deadly) cross-examiner and he knew when to settle and when to fight. He was indeed a genuine all-rounder and a master of his craft.

He soon developed a substantial and broadly based practice and began to take his own pupils. We, who were his pupils, were indeed fortunate. Robbie took great care of us - he advised us and taught us by precept and example.

After our pupillage most of us continued to sit around Robbie at the Centre Table in the Bar Library. His advice and guidance were always readily available. It was a relationship which extended far beyond our shared workplace. Home hospitality was exchanged and sporting occasions enjoyed. To visit Lansdowne Road or Portmarnock, Murrayfield or Muirfield with Robbie was an enlivening experience and we were again and again reminded of the very human and very kind personality which was normally hidden behind the lawyer's reserve. Those days, and nights, of relaxation, of talk and some songs (for he could sing a bit) will long remain fresh in the memories of his many companions. Often he was last to bed but invariably he was first to breakfast, as always immaculately turned out: at times he may have come down a little more stooped than usual, but let us not forget that it was that stoop and his brisk gait which undoubtedly saved his life from the sniper's bullets.

A couple of days ago an equestrian friend told me, "Robbie taught me how to do a professional job but at the same time to have FUN". That is what he did for his pupils and many, many others.

Robbie took silk in 1956 and was appointed a High Court Judge in 1964. He was then only 45 but already well equipped for the judicial role which he discharged with such distinction for some 30 years - latterly as Lord Chief Justice of Northern Ireland, and then as a member of the Appellate Committee of the House of Lords. In the judgement of many of us, his appointment to the "Lords" came much too late in his legal career, though an earlier fulfillment of his destiny would have caused a void in the local judiciary - for he was very much our friend and leader. Life in London was, of course, a great change for him but he much enjoyed it - especially as he was so warmly embraced by the Benchers of Middle Temple.

To the Bar it was a delight to appear before him. Consideration, courtesy and patience were very much the "tools of his trade", as he sought, with the assistance of Counsel, to discover the right, the just, answer to each particular problem. At the Bar and as a Judge he was always approachable - his experience and his great common sense were readily available to all who needed help.

Robbie's judgments were always models of clarity, expressed in classically elegant language. He could deliver excellent *ex tempore* judgments, but much preferred to reserve and give further careful consideration to the cases before him. He would then craft a first class judgment, though his search for perfection might sometimes take time. Understandably, he was rarely reversed on appeal. He also had a marvellous ability to improve our draft judgments without causing the slightest offence.

We must never forget that his tenure of office as Lord Chief Justice coincided with the long years of terrorist violence. Throughout this period, he led not only his judicial colleagues, but the Bar and the Solicitors' profession, in fearlessly maintaining that the rule of law must always be upheld. Some of the excellent recent obituaries in the press have, rightly, highlighted this important aspect of his work. To him it was of fundamental importance that the independence of the Judiciary should never be compromised and that the law should be administered without fear or favour: sensibly and with understanding. And it must never be forgotten that he was a very humane Judge.

In Northern Ireland, the work of the Lord Chief Justice involves more than hearing cases and writing judgments. Much administration has to be discharged: correspondence (often complex) has to be carried on with the Lord Chancellor, with Government and with others, Dinners have to be attended, and speeches made. At times when hard pressed, Robbie would say, "Life would be easy if you had nothing to do but your own work". But it never was that way. Indeed, as so often is the case, it was this busy man who was asked to take on many additional tasks - thus he was a Governor of schools - Richmond Lodge and "Inst" - he was an active (never a token) member of many important Committees and Commissions. It is not without significance that it was Robbie who was turned to in 1975 when a Chairman was required for the Constitutional Convention which was to attempt the difficult task of deciding on the most acceptable form of Government for the Province. This was an enormously challenging task and though the Convention collapsed Robbie's work earned wide respect.

How then did Robbie manage to discharge his many and varied duties, and do so successfully and acceptably? Firstly, he was tough (really tough), both physically and mentally. He fulfilled the saying "When the going gets tough, the tough get going".

Secondly, he was able to "switch off", and to relax. Out of court and away from the law, he was refreshed by a legion of friends, and by exercise on the golf course. We know he was an excellent golfer. His well grooved swing was in the classic mode, and he was a tenacious competitor. I remember playing as his foursomes partner against distinguished opponents - on the 18th green I enquired if it would be diplomatic to miss a four foot putt, and so halve the match? "Play your own game" he growled, which I knew meant, "Don't be a fool: put it in the hole". At Malone he played with much success on Senior cup and Barton Shield teams - and that at times when such activity had to be fitted into, or around, the largest professional practice of the time. With no disrespect to the members of Malone and Royal County Down his spiritual golfing home was undoubtedly Royal Portrush - President for many years, and Captain twice, including the Club's Centenary year - an occasion long to be remembered. In his day he had been a good cricketer and greatly enjoyed his membership of the M.C.C. He had an encyclopaedic memory of sporting occasions and personalities. This was not confined to cricket - he was equally familiar with the facts and figures of rugby, golf, and show-jumping : his knowledge of the winners of the Derby once enabled him to "win" a "bookmakers" case.

For over 30 years he was deeply involved in equestrian affairs. When the girls became interested in and accomplished at show jumping, he and Mary gave them their full support and encouragement, greatly enjoying their successes. Robbie drove the horse box (a huge pantechicon), across the length and breadth of Ireland : he familiarised himself with the Statutes, Rules and Regulations of show jumping : he rapidly mastered them, and later revised and translated them. He was deeply involved in the affairs of the International Equestrian Federation, being latterly Chairman of the Judicial Committee. He was an official International Judge, and on the Jury of Appeal at the Olympics in Atlanta. His activities on the Irish scene were equally important. Not only did he judge at all levels, but he worked ceaselessly to preserve amity among all branches of show-jumping in Ireland. I must confess that this aspect of his life was largely unknown to me, but it highlights how great was his capacity to master fresh challenges and form new and lasting friendships.

Thirdly, and most importantly, Mary, Sheila, Anne and Margie provided him with a home where he could relax in peace surrounded by their love and affection. In turn he was devoted to his family and took much pleasure at the arrival of his grandchildren and their development into his friends. From this secure base he could enjoy the activities that went on and the

company of the many people who came about the house - including his faithful police escorts. But, of course, by the end of each day the study reclaimed him.

In 1994 Barbara joined the family and devoted her many talents to looking after Robbie and guiding him into retirement. Over the past weeks hers has been a heavy burden - sustaining and comforting him as he lay seriously ill, yet able to produce the answer to some obscure clue in the Times crossword which was baffling his visitors. She encouraged him to fight towards recovery, which, of course, he did but in the end though the spirit remained strong the flesh became too weak and he died peacefully, early on Friday, 15 January in his 80th year. We grieve with and for his family and trust that at this time of much sadness they may be sustained and comforted.

I would end, by unashamedly repeating the words used by Robbie when concluding his tribute to my father, his predecessor as Lord Chief Justice. They apply in full measure to Robbie:

“Here was a man who could say with David “Judge me O Lord, for I have walked in mine integrity”. He was also a man whose example will shine before us, and whose memory we will treasure all our lives.