

OBITUARY

MR. C. P. SMALLWOOD

10 APR 1963

Mr. Clement Philip Smallwood, Editor of the *Birmingham Evening Mail and Despatch*, collapsed and died as he arrived at the office yesterday. Aged 61, he had been Editor of *The Birmingham Mail* since January, his appointment crowning a distinguished life as a journalist, 38 years of which had been spent with this company.

His death has brought a deep sense of personal loss to his colleagues, in whatever degree they serve *The Birmingham Post & Mail Ltd.* He wore authority with a charm and humanity that made him the most approachable of men, and many who were junior to him in years and ability as newspapermen have cause to remember his advice and guidance.

A serenity born of deeply-held religious convictions irradiated his whole personality, but his recognisable piety was never obtrusive. In his spiritual life, he was a cheerful giver and in the less rarefied atmosphere of a newspaper office he stood out as one of high moral principles and shining integrity.

As a Roman Catholic journalist in London in the 1930s, he came inevitably in contact with the literary school of Chesterton and Belloc, and was a member of the editorial board and an honorary leader writer of *G.K.'s Weekly* from 1931-36. In later years he lectured widely on Chesterton, on whose writings he was an authority.

Conversationalist

Music was another of Mr. Smallwood's loves. He was an enthusiastic attendee at C.B.S.O. concerts and never missed its visits to Sutton Coldfield Philharmonic Society. He was a great conversationalist, with a store of literary anecdotes expressing a full, widely-read, but, now lamentably shortened life.

Born at Bloxwich Clement



Mr. C. P. Smallwood

Smallwood was educated at the Catholic Institute in Liverpool, and from 1920 to 1925 was on the staff of *The Liverpool Courier*, at the same time as Arthur Christiansen, who became editor of the *Daily Express*, and Lord Francis-Williams.

He joined the staff of *The Birmingham Mail* in 1925, and from 1929 to 1936 was its London correspondent. He was appointed Assistant Editor in 1936 and from 1943 until the end of last year was Deputy Editor. He was a member of the council of the Institute of Journalists.

His quietly energetic support of charitable causes found expression in many forms in the Roman Catholic diocese, and also in *The Birmingham Mail* Christmas Tree Fund, of the central committee of which he was vice-chairman, having previously been joint honorary secretary and executive committee chairman.

Mr. Smallwood, whose home

was in Mayfield Road, Sutton Coldfield, attended St. Nicholas Church, Boldmere. He was a member of Circle 64 of the Catenian Association, an organisation of Roman Catholic business and professional men.

He leaves a widow, one son and one daughter.

The Archbishop of Birmingham, Dr. Francis Grimshaw, one of many public figures in Birmingham to pay tribute to Mr. Smallwood in the *Birmingham Evening Mail and Despatch*, yesterday, said that all who knew him would miss him sorely.

"Those of his profession have known him as a zealous upholder of all that is best in journalism," he said. "He was a respected member of the profession and spent his life in its service."

The Rector of Erdington Abbey, the Very Rev. Christopher Harris, said: "There are many who have cause to appreciate his sincerity. He showed it by visits to help the sick, quietly and in true charity."

A colleague writes:

All who knew "Clem" Smallwood—and his friends were legion—will be shocked at the news of his untimely death. He was a loyal and understanding colleague and exemplified, while tirelessly upholding, the integrity of his profession. To young journalists, especially the raw recruits, he was unfailingly helpful.

There was about him an abiding goodness, which commanded general recognition and respect. His gentleness of manner expressed a kindly and generous personality; yet he was strong and resolute of purpose. The journalistic standards he observed and defended were high and he brought to his work a mind at once lively and well disciplined, enriched by varied resources—particularly those drawn from studies of literature and the arts. As a critic he was perceptive and often illuminating; his judgments were based on sound values and guided by a fastidious taste.

He was a man of wide charity, deep humility and abiding faith. He enjoyed and graced the company of his fellows. He excelled in humour rather than wit, but was still a conversationalist of rare quality. Not only the newspaper over which he presided, but also the profession which he served with such distinction, have suffered irreparable loss.

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TRIBUTES TO MR. C. P. SMALLWOOD

THE news of the sudden death today of Mr. C. P. Smallwood, Editor of the *"Birmingham Evening Mail and Despatch"*, brought tributes from civic, political and religious leaders.

They have come not only from the Midlands but also from journalists and political leaders in London, who knew him before the war as the London correspondent of *"The Birmingham Mail"*.

These are some of the tributes received:

The Lord Mayor of Birmingham (Alderman Ernest W. Horton): "The Lady Mayoress joins with me in expressing our great sense of loss at this tragic end to a most distinguished career. Mr. Smallwood was known personally to me, especially through the work of the Christmas Tree Fund."

"I had looked forward to his co-operation as Editor in the same way that I had had the willing co-operation of his predecessor in that office."

"Our sense of loss will be shared, I know, by all members of the City Council, and I should like to send my condolences to his widow and family to whom his sudden passing must come as a tremendous shock."

GREAT TRAGEDY

Alderman J. B. Balmer, Chairman of "The Birmingham Mail" Christmas Tree Fund: "My close acquaintance with Mr. Smallwood was as a member of the General Committee of the Fund when he was chairman of the Executive Committee."

"It gave him immense pleasure to give his time and energies to ensure the maximum amount was collected each year to enable the Fund to help, each Christmas, the old and the young who were in need."

"We were all delighted when he was appointed Editor, and it is a great tragedy that his sudden death has cut short what I am sure would have been a brilliant career as Editor."

"Mr. Smallwood was a quiet, unassuming gentleman and all the more lovable for that."

Alderman Sir Theodore Pritchett, leader of the Conservative group on Birmingham City Council: "The tragic news of Mr. Smallwood will come as a great shock to those who, like myself, enjoyed his pleasant and helpful nature for many years. I recall his enthusiasm for the Lord Mayor's War Relief Fund in 1939 and onwards when, as a member of the committee, he used his influence with the local press so successfully to foster its activities among the war distressed."

"The intervening years have been given very largely in the same direction, sponsoring and assisting causes to improve the lot of the unfortunate and infirm among us."

"His recent promotion to the Editorship was a well-merited reward. To say it is a great pity he has not been spared longer to enjoy and make use of this important office is to understate a feeling

which will be held very generally."

The Archbishop of Birmingham (the Most Reverend Francis Grimshaw D. D.): "News of Clem Smallwood's sudden death came as a great shock to all of us. All who knew him will miss him sorely."

"Those of his profession have known him as a zealous upholder of all that is best in journalism. He was a respected member of the profession and spent his life in its service."

"All our sympathy goes to his widow and family and relatives. They can be assured of the many prayers of the Catholic clergy and laity throughout the city."

The Rector of Erdington Abbey (the Very Rev. Christopher Harris): "All who knew Mr. Smallwood were impressed by his sincerity and knew that he was a gentleman. He was a great worker for the Church and preferred to serve quietly, without ostentation. He will be remembered for his charity, unselfishness and understanding."

"There are many who have cause to appreciate his sincerity. He showed it by visits to help the sick, quietly and in true charity."

Mr. R. F. Farmer, General Secretary, on behalf of the Institute of Journalists: "Clement Smallwood's sudden and untimely death will shock not only those journalists who were his colleagues on the newspaper, but the much larger number who were his fellow members of the Institute of Journalists."

"The affection he had won during the 14 years that he was a member were marked by the award of the fellowship to him in 1959."

Clem Smallwood exemplified the finest type of provincial journalist. The news of his death is made doubly tragic by coming so shortly after his promotion to the Editorship of the paper he had served so well for 38 years.

GENTLE MAN

Mr. Denis Morris, present Head of the Light Programme of the B.B.C., and who was for 17 years Head of Programmes and Programme Director at the B.B.C., Midlands: "In Clem Smallwood's death English journalism has lost one of its most accomplished professionals, the Midlands a man whose Christian outlook tempered and enlightened his judgment, and his friends the companionship of a gentle man."

"His faith, and his personal admiration of the life of St. Francis of Assisi, gave him a deep understanding of the problems of others, and a sympathy which was sincere as it was steadfast."

"Those who mourn his sudden death will forget class, religion and calling, and they will be many."