

## **ELIZABETH OLIVE LESLIE (nee Weir), d. 2011**

If to be born British was to win the lottery of life, then to be born Anglo-Irish in the South of Ireland, towards the beginning of the last century, was to enter a lottery of a different kind. A childhood replete with pastoral scenes and old homes was counterbalanced by fear and alarm. The 'Troubles' found her watching her father, a Canon in the Church of Ireland, dig his grave in front of an IRA firing squad, to be reprieved at the last moment.

Tuberculosis nearly took her. But, blessed with a thirst for knowledge and a sharp intellect, she survived and graduated in English at Trinity College, Dublin. She married Graham Leslie, a senior civil servant and, in due course, they moved to England, there to join much of the rest of her family. She became headmistress of Hampden House and then St Mary's Hall, Brighton, now conflated with Roedean. Of many awards, she particularly valued her time in America on a Walter Hines Page scholarship.

Moving to Deddington in retirement, she engaged with the Church and the community there, as she had always done, and became an inspiring Chairman of the Oxford English Speaking Union. She loved her time in Deddington, and the people of Deddington more than repaid any debt of gratitude, when she went blind through a medical mishap.

A gracious lady, she gave and received much love. She is survived by her son, a physician, and two grandsons, a banker and a barrister.

*Professor David Leslie*