

## Professor Richard Mervyn Hare – moral philosopher

Died on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2002 after suffering several strokes. He married in 1947 Catherine nee Verney and they had one son and three daughters. They bought Saffron House from the Rowse family, living there for many years before downsizing to 'Bywater' in The Street. Catherine shared her husband's love of music and of Ewelme, they were active members of the church and many will remember Catherine's skill in the ladies tapestry/embroidery group.



Richard Hare was born in Somerset in 1919 educated at Rugby and Balliol and became well known as one of the most influential moral philosophers of the post war era. His first book, *The Language of Morals*, published in 1952 virtually set the agenda for the subject in the English-speaking world for at least a generation.

He was a Tutor in Philosophy, Balliol College, Oxford 1947-66 (Honorary Fellow 1974-2002); Wilde Lecturer in Natural Religion, Oxford University 1963-66, White's Professor of Moral Philosophy 1966-83; FBA 1964; Fellow, Corpus Christi College, Oxford 1966-83 (Emeritus); Graduate Research Professor of Philosophy, University of Florida at Gainesville 1983-94.

During the war he volunteered for service in the Royal Artillery but was captured by the Japanese after the fall of Singapore in 1942 and a prisoner to the end of the war. A part of his philosophical method was his ability to imagine himself in another person's position. To his critics who doubted that feat he replied "*I can perfectly well imagine being a Burmese coolie; I actually was one for a time*".

He wrote two other major books *Freedom and Reason* (1963) and *Moral Thinking* (1981) and many articles. His election to the Oxford Chair in 1966 took him from Balliol to Corpus, where he remained a Fellow to his retirement in 1983. From Oxford he divided his time between America and Ewelme as he held for some years a Research Professorship at the University of Florida at Gainesville, dividing the year between Florida and Ewelme and lecturing in the United States and Europe.