WHO WAS WHO IN PLYMOUTH HISTORY

Sir LESLIE PATRICK ABERCROMBIE (1879-1957)

Leslie Patrick Abercrombie was invited by the Lord Mayor of Plymouth, Lord Astor, to work with the Plymouth City Engineer, James Paton Watson, on drawing up a reconstruction plan for the blitzed City after the Second World War. The result was "The Plan for Plymouth", published in 1943, two years before the war came to an end. The Plan became the basis for all the post-war reconstruction up until 1962.

Born at Ashton-under-Mersey in 1879, he was already a lecturer in the Department of Architecture at Liverpool University when, in 1909, the then Lord Leverhulme donated funds to establish a new Department of Civic Design. He transferred to the new Department and became the founding editor of the new journal "Town Planning Review". In 1915 he was appointed Lever Professor of Civic Design, a position he held for the next twenty years.

Patrick Abercrombie was a pioneer from the start. When plans were being developed to build thousands of "Homes for Heroes" after the Great War, it was he who suggested that the new housing estates should be planned with transport links, shops and schools. This, he said, would be achieved by regional plans.

Then in 1935 came a move to University College, London. It was here, after the Second World War, that he produced "The County of London Plan" (1943) and "The Greater London Plan" (1944). It was these plans that brought about the term "Green Belts".

In 1945 he was awarded a Knighthood in recognition of his services to civic planning and the following year he was awarded the Royal Institute of British Architects' Gold Medal.

As well as his work in Plymouth, he was also involved in the reconstruction of Bath, Edinburgh, Hull and the Clyde region.

Sir Leslie Patrick Abercrombie died at Aston Tirrold in Berkshire in 1957.

Sources recorded.