

WILLIAM HENRY KNOWLES

The death of William Henry Knowles on the 18th January, 1943, calls for some notice of one who, although not closely associated with the Institute during the later years of his long life, had been a member of it for little less than half a century and had done it sterling service in the past. Successful as a practising architect, his interest in archaeology was more than a recreation and provided him, after his retirement from business, with an absorbing occupation for a keen and active mind which was always ready to apply the fruits of professional experience to the study of architectural monuments of the past. Articled at an early age to Mr. W. L. Newcombe of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, he practised there for thirty-eight years, from 1884 to 1922, independently and at times in partnership, being admitted F.R.I.B.A. in 1891. As an architect, his reputation was deservedly high, and he has left his mark upon many buildings in Newcastle and the county of Northumberland, of which the most conspicuous is the main building, together with the gateway, School of Art and other departments of Armstrong (now King's) College at Newcastle.

Throughout this period he was an active member of the Newcastle Society of Antiquaries. His contributions to *Archaeologia Aeliana* began in 1889 with a description of excavations on the site of the Newcastle Whitefriars and were continued at intervals until 1922. In 1890 his intimate affection for Newcastle and his ability as a draughtsman were well illustrated in *Vestiges of Old Newcastle and Gateshead*, a work undertaken in collaboration with J. R. Boyle. His interests covered a wide field, but it is in two directions that his archaeological work in the North of England will be specially remembered, first in the excavations which he conducted with R. H. Forster on the site of Corstopitum between 1907 and 1914, and secondly in the long series of architectural descriptions and plans of buildings contributed to the *Northumberland County History* from the sixth volume onwards.

Meanwhile, shortly after the appearance of his paper on Aydon Castle in vol. lvi of *Archaeologia*, an account of a house of great historic interest illustrated by characteristically lucid plans, he was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries. This was in 1899, and in this year he acted as Honorary Secretary to the summer meeting of the Institute at Ipswich. Nine years later, in 1908, he served the Institute in the same way on his own ground at the Durham meeting. He served on the Council of the Institute for several terms of office, and his contributions to our *Journal* include, among others, two papers of great value, one on the Abbey of Blanchland in vol. lix, and another on the Priory of Tynemouth in vol. lxxvii.

On his retirement from practice in 1922, he went to live at Cheltenham, where, and afterwards at Malvern, he threw himself willingly into the activities of the neighbouring archaeological societies. For some time he was in charge of excavations at the Roman baths at Bath, the results of which were communicated to *Archaeologia* in 1924. In 1927 an account of his important researches at the Saxon priory church of Deerhurst appeared in *Archaeologia* and in the *Transactions* of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society. To this latter periodical his contributions between 1926 and 1933 were numerous, chief among them a paper on *The Development of Architecture in Gloucestershire to the close of the twelfth century*, published in 1928. In 1930 he was elected President of the Society for the current year. It is seldom that an antiquary who for most of his life has been closely associated with one particular district makes himself so easily at home in another ; but it may be claimed for Knowles

that his work for archaeology in Gloucestershire and the adjacent counties was as distinguished and as gratefully recognised as his previous work in Northumberland and Durham.

Knowles will be long remembered by archaeologists as an able expositor of historic sites and buildings. His practical judgment towards the end of his life was of great service to such bodies as the Bishop of Worcester's Advisory Committee, which he represented on the Central Council for the Care of Churches, and the Councils of the Friends of Gloucester Cathedral and Tewkesbury Abbey. His cheerful and kindly disposition, always ready to recognise genuine ability in his juniors and to foster it to the best of his power, earned him the lasting affection of his friends. He played his part as a prominent member of a generation of architect-antiquaries to which the Institute owes a heavy debt, and few, in a life of nearly eighty-six years, have exercised such talents as his with so consistent a devotion and an energy so fruitful.

A.H.T.