



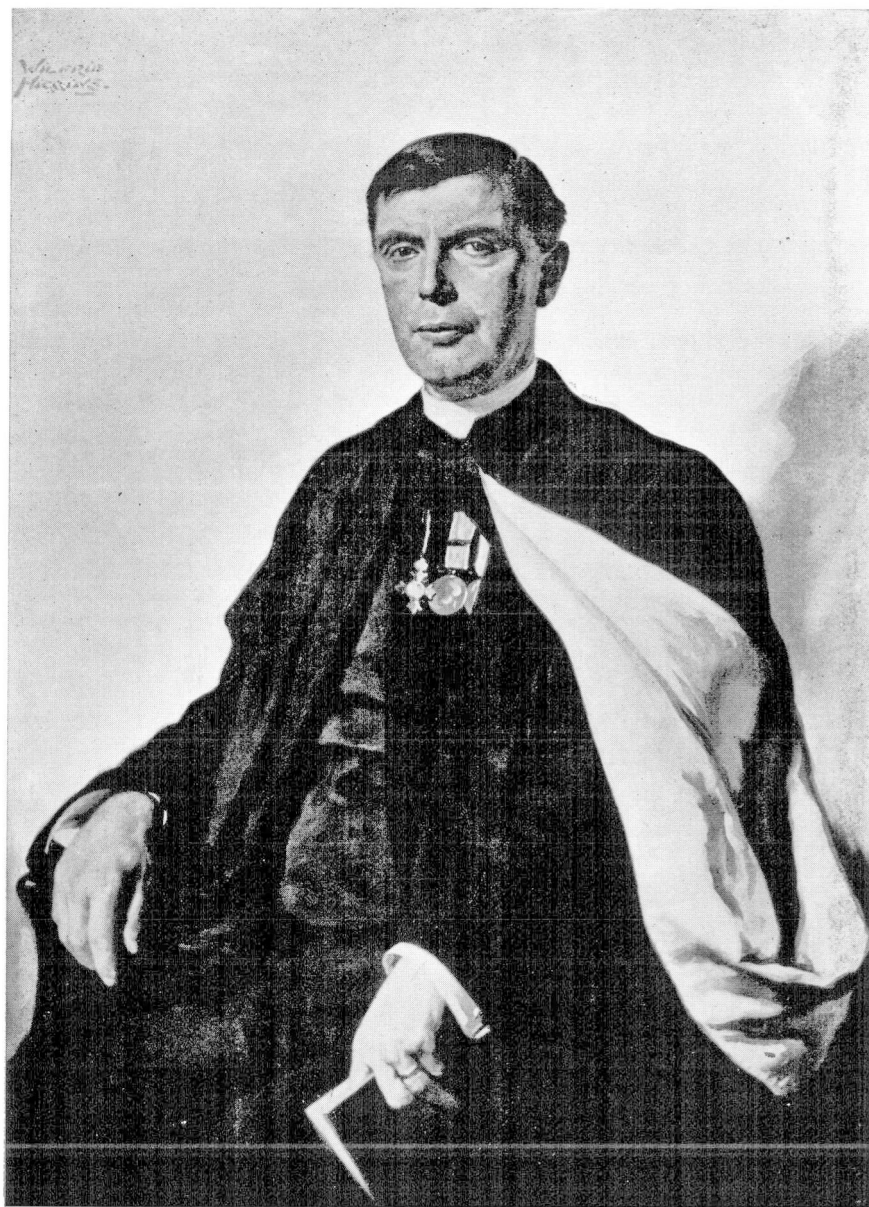
Obituary

THE REV. CANON R. A. THOMAS, O.B.E., F.S.A., M.A.,
31st July, 1943.

By the death of Canon Thomas, at the end of July, 1943, the Archæological Society lost an honoured member and past Chairman who had served it well and long. It is the more necessary to record his services here, since he wrote little, and future readers will not gather his merits and his distinction from the part that he plays in the written records of the Society.

Richard Albert Thomas was born at Bagillt. At the King's School, Chester, he was one of the notable group of pupils of the late Rev. Daniel Falle who distinguished themselves in Mathematics. In 1891, he won a Mathematical Scholarship to Trinity Hall, Cambridge: in due course he became Senior Optime, and a year later he took the Natural Science Tripos. He was ordained successively deacon and priest, both at Chester, and thenceforward, until his retirement in 1935, his life was devoted to the Chester Training College, with only two breaks: first, when he spent five years as Vice-Principal of the Church Training College at Winchester, and later when he served as Temporary Chaplain to the Forces from 1916 to 1919. His adaptability is shown by the distinction which he gained in this service, for he was mentioned in dispatches and was awarded the O.B.E.

It is common knowledge how much the College in Chester, and Church Training Colleges in general, owe to his guidance. In the crisis that arose in his later years in Chester, he fought almost single-handed a great battle against what appeared impossible odds, and won.



[From the Portrait by Wilfrid Higgins]

CANON R. A. THOMAS, O.B.E., M.A., F.S.A.

He retired in 1935, to go first as Vicar to Gazeley, near Newmarket, and later, when his health made parish work impossible, to Waterbeach, near Cambridge. Here he remained, in frail health but courageously cheerful, until his death.

From the Society's point of view, his great service was his Chairmanship of Council from 1929 to 1936, a period which coincided both with the eventful history of the Amphitheatre negotiations and with the height of the Training College controversy. Most of his lectures to the Society were also given during this period. His detached and precise scholarship came almost as a surprise to those who knew how deeply he was concerned with current problems, and how much time he devoted to the College and its affairs. He showed a profound knowledge of some sides of mediæval monasticism: his study of the order of Savigny in connexion with Basingwerk Abbey, for instance, was the work of a patient and scrupulous historian: and no less was his account of Cluny, given a few years later. But Canon Thomas's own personality and character, his patient thoroughness and his friendly counsels, were more even than his learning, and the Society owes much to his guiding, and, on occasion, his restraining hand.

C. W. B.

MR. W. H. EVANS,
23rd December, 1944.

It is with deep regret that we record the death of Mr. William Henry Evans, Honorary Treasurer during the last thirteen years. He had been very unwell for some time and was about to retire to the uplands of his native country in the hope of being restored to health and strength. But it was not to be. He passed away quite unexpectedly at the age of 62.

Mr. Evans commenced his banking career as a junior at the "Old Bank", Chester, in 1899, about the time of the amalgamation with Lloyds. Here he remained till his pro-

motion to an assistant managership at Altrincham in 1913. He enlisted in the Artists Rifles at the outbreak of the first world war and was commissioned in the Royal Welch Fusiliers, serving in France and Palestine. From 1920 to 1930 he was manager of the branch at Scarborough, when he returned to Chester and succeeded our old member Mr. Alfred Ayrton, as manager.

Having a taste for historical and antiquarian lore, particularly in relation to Wales and the Border Counties, Mr. Evans became a member of our Society and readily undertook the duties of Hon. Treasurer when Mr. H. W. Loader left Chester in 1932. He actively co-operated in the promotion of archæological research and the publication of our Journal and carefully husbanded our limited resources.

In the Spring of 1944 his only son, Lieut. R. C. Evans of the 17/21st Lancers, who had distinguished himself in Economics at Cambridge, was mortally wounded in Italy, and this blow probably accelerated the heart affection to which he succumbed. The deepest sympathy goes out to his widow in her dual bereavement. P. H. L.

