

**OBITUARY**  
**GEOFFREY NOBLE BARRETT, B.E.M. (1906–2001)**

President 1980–1983  
Vice-President 1983–2001

It was with regret that the Society's Council received the news of the death, on 18th February 2001, of Geoffrey Barrett. He had been a member of the Council since 1969.

Geoffrey was born in 1906 and was educated at the City of Norwich School, followed by the Northampton Footwear Technology College, and later trained for two years in accountancy. He joined Shorten and Armes in 1925 and became Managing Director in 1938. He was elected an Associate of the British Boot and Shoe Institution in 1928, and was Chairman of that Institute from 1950 to 1954 and its Treasurer from 1950 to 1969. He was President of the Norwich Footwear Manufacturing Association for many years and of the British Footwear Manufacturers Federation from 1958 to 1960. He also served as Vice-President of the British Boot and Shoe Institution and the Shoe and Allied Trade Research Association, and on the Council of the Boot Trade Benevolent Society. He was admitted to the Worshipful Company of Cordwainers in 1954, became a Livery man of the Company in 1957 and served in important capacities, becoming Master of the Company in 1989–90.

In addition to this active and successful business career, Geoffrey served in the Auxiliary Fire Service during the Second World War and was awarded the British Empire Medal in 1942. In later years he could, without difficulty, recall striking incidents during the bombing of Norwich.

In Norwich and Norfolk he gave of his time to be Governor of Norwich City College, Norwich School and the Hewitt School, and also to the Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society, serving as President from 1980 to 1983 and continuing as an active member until the last days of his life. Apart from his continued regular attendance at Council meetings, at which he rarely failed to make some contribution, he was also an enthusiastic member of the annual Archaeological Society weekend parties which visit selected parts of the country and, on occasion, the Continent. To the very last Geoffrey, camera in hand, would be present at each site visited; we have a clear memory of him three years ago, climbing the exposed wooden steps to the tower of Scarborough Castle in the teeth of a very strong wind — a feat not attempted by all his younger companions. He served the Council of the Norfolk Archaeological Trust with enthusiasm, and reported on their activities at Council meetings of this Society. He was also a Council member of the Friends of Norwich Cathedral, a member of Norwich Rotary Club and a past member of the Strangers Club.

It should be noted that, in addition to all these things, he became very knowledgeable on the subject of silver, particularly that of Norwich, although he also catalogued the collection of the Worshipful Company of Cordwainers. He wrote short articles on Norwich silver and gold for *Norfolk Archaeology*. 'The Haslewood Family of Norwich Goldsmiths' appeared in 1965 (Vol. 33), 'A Norwich Silver Problem Solved?' in 1986 (Vol. 39) and 'A Norwich Silver Document' in 1993 (Vol. 41). In 1981 he published 'Norwich Silver and its Marks, 1565–1702; The Goldsmiths of Norwich, 1141–1750'.

His interest in silver and his long membership of this Society prompted his generous commissioning of the President's Badge for the Society. This fine silver badge, with a stylised Icení coin engraved in the centre, is now worn by our President on formal occasions and serves

as an appropriate memorial to this remarkable man. It was fitting that his final contribution to our journal was 'Barnabas Barrett, 1810–1883: Norwich Monumental Mason', an account of the life and works of his ancestor, an article which he was able to see in print just before his death.

Geoffrey will be long remembered with affection, by the Society as a whole and by the many friends he made.

A.J.D.