

cause. He attended our Council meetings and the more public meetings of our Society with commendable regularity, and every year at an annual gathering gave us the benefit of his latest researches into Roman Middlesex or Middlesex in Domesday Book. He was successful in getting a memorial erected in Brentford to commemorate the crossing of the Thames by Julius Cæsar. Lady Sharp has generously given to our Society a valuable selection from Sir Montagu's library, and a number of copies of his volume on *Middlesex in British, Roman and Saxon Times*.

WALTER GEORGE BELL

SOMEONE once suggested that the safest way to be remembered is to write an authoritative book about London, or to leave behind a collection of drawings of the great metropolis. Well, as long as folk are interested in seventeenth-century London, they will rely on Walter Bell's magnificent researches into the story of the *Great Plague* and of the *Great Fire*. It does not seem an exaggeration to prophesy that his histories of these two epoch-making disasters will never be out-dated. Here is a great triumph; but Walter Bell's researches extended still farther, and his story of *Fleet Street*, where he spent so many years of his literary life in the service of the *Daily Telegraph*, is also a masterpiece.

Other books, less scholarly, perhaps, but equally accurate and informative, were *Unknown London*, and *More about Unknown London*, in which he tells us about forgotten heroes or unvisited shrines. One of his best papers is that on Smithfield, where he commemorates very sympathetically the martyrs who met their fate by burning under the Tudor régime, especially during the reign of Mary, which he calls "the most hideous reign" in English history. *London Discoveries* revealed many historic dramas, of which we needed to be reminded; and some of London's outer ring of suburbs had their historic background depicted in *When London Sleeps*.

Walter Bell was a most generous scholar of London history, and was always ready to place his vast erudition at the disposal of less experienced researchers. You only had to ask and his help was immediately available, without the slightest sense of patronage or superiority. He had all the humility of the real scholar.

He retired from the *Daily Telegraph* a few years before the second World War, when he was 67, and in reply to a letter enquiring how he got on in his retirement, he wrote "I find life quite good. You, too, will, after the first change, like retirement, so long as you have things to occupy you. The miserable people I know are the fairly well-off 'do-nothings'." He certainly lived up to his advice, and was busy up to the last with research. A second version of his *Tower of London* story is about his latest contribution to London's tale, and in it he abandons some position which he had previously maintained.

As Chairman of Council of our Society he was assiduous in attendance when health permitted, and he gave the Society an admirable address on John Stow at one of the annual celebrations a few years before the War.

MISS E. J. DAVIS

MISS ELIZA JEFFRIES DAVIS, M.A., F.S.A., Fellow of University College, London, and formerly Reader in London History in the University of London, and one of our Vice-Presidents, died at Droitwich on 30th October, 1943, at the age of 68. After holding several teaching posts in London schools and colleges, she joined the history staff of University College, London, under Professor A. F. Pollard in 1914, and seven years later she was appointed the first University Reader in London History.

Her earliest published work was contained in the London volumes of the *Victoria Counties History*, and the results of her later researches are mainly to be found in historical journals and learned transactions. She was from 1922 to 1934 Editor of *History*, the journal of the Historical Association. The library of London History at University College is largely due to her enthusiasm; and she put in a great deal of hard work in the founding and organisation of the Institute of Historical Research. One of her war-time activities was to act as Secretary of the Institute, but in 1940 she found it necessary to retire from all her London occupations, and then devoted the remainder of her life to the prisoners' of war branch of the Red Cross libraries organisation at Oxford.