

OBITUARIES

Dr ROBERT HAGERTY 1916–1999



Robert Paterson Hagerty was born in 1916. From King Edward's School, Bath, he moved to Bristol University where he achieved a B.Sc. and Ph.D. in Chemistry. The war found him at Porton Down where he joined the RAF and worked at the Ministry of Aircraft Production until demobilised, when he moved to Bucks and the Rocket Propulsion Department at Westcott; here he remained for nineteen years, working particularly on the development of the Blue Streak. In 1967 he was invited to join the scientific side of NATO. His final appointment was in the United States where he worked from our Embassy with the American Navy on the Polaris project. He retired at 60 and returned to Bucks.

He had an early interest in archaeology, especially of the Roman period, and his spell with NATO gave him the opportunity to visit many sites. On his retirement he attended a three-year archaeology external course at Oxford and was soon an active member of our Society, so that when Max

Davies resigned as Hon. Secretary in 1984 he was the obvious choice as his successor.

As Secretary Bob was outstanding, guiding the Society through the difficult years of the Museum's closure, reintroducing the winter lectures, never missing an outing and dealing with a steady stream of correspondence on planning and conservation matters. As Editor of the *Newsletter*, too he was outstanding; much as he lamented the lack of suitable contributions from members, the Society was the gainer, for what he wrote himself (which often was the bulk of it) was always learned and witty.

He made several contributions of value to *Records*. They were:

Three Buckinghamshire Saints Reconsidered

St Firmin of North Crawley, 27, 65

St Osyth and St Edith of Aylesbury, 29, 125

St Rumwold (Rumbold) of Buckingham, 30, 103

The Turvilles and the Castle of Weston Turville, 28, 179

Peter de Wintonia, Parson of Crawley, 31, 93

The Puzzle of the Priestly Effigy in Ivinghoe Church, 32, 105

Outdoors his appearance always made me think of the traditional Sherlock Holmes – tall, deer-stalker hat, usually smoking. His authoritative and sometimes sardonic remarks were in keeping but did not mask the fact that he was a man of great kindness. Increasing deafness brought about his resignation as Secretary in 1997 after thirteen years. On his eightieth birthday he had been elected an Honorary Member – only the third in the Society's

history. This was followed by a Vice-Presidency in 1997.

Throughout his working life Bob was supported by Kathleen who became effectively an unofficial assistant secretary of the Society.

He died, after a short illness, on 18 May 1999. The affection and esteem in which he was held were apparent in an overflowing congregation for his memorial service at St. Mary's, Aylesbury, where they heard an admirable and deeply-felt tribute from Michael Farley.

EV

DAVID KESSLER OBE

David Kessler, who died on 24 November 1999 aged 93, was a member for many years and served two terms on the Society's Council. For over fifty years he was the proprietor of the *Jewish Chronicle*, and, by his wise choice of Editors, whose independence he guaranteed, raised that newspaper to heights of influence it had not enjoyed when, aged 30, he took it over from his father. He lived at Stoke

Hammond and became keenly interested in local history after war service with the Royal Artillery. In 1982 he published *The Falashas: the Forgotten Jews of Ethiopia*. On his 90th birthday in 1996 he was appointed OBE and in the same year he published a short book on *The Rothschilds and Disraeli in Buckinghamshire*.

JOHN BROADBENT

John Broadbent of Penn was an architect who devoted much of his later life to conservation matters in South Bucks; he was chairman of the influential Penn Branch of the Council for the

Protection of Rural England and served on our Society's Council and the Bucks Historic Buildings Trust.

The Society also recorded with regret in 1998-99 the deaths of H. D. Hussey, Dr C. A. Padgham, E. Sammes, A. M. Thomas, T. A.

Thomson, L. Timms, M. Waghorn and A. Kerry, a long-serving American member. An obituary of Ted Sammes was published in *Records*, 39.