

Obituary Notice

PHILIP NORMAN (died 17th May 1931), the fifth son of George Warde Norman, of Bromley Common, was born in 1842, being in his eighty-ninth year at the time of his death. He was elected a Fellow of the Society in 1886, served on the Council and held the office of Treasurer from 1897 to 1913, and of Vice-President from 1913 to 1917. Both before and during his Treasurership he read a number of papers to the Society dealing with individual sites and buildings in London, and also collective reports on the excavation of Roman and later remains in and near the City. Archaeologically, London was his first and remained his abiding interest. His tall form was familiar to the high and the low in nearly every corner of the City, and he made it his especial care that no fragment of antiquity disappeared from view before it had been entered in his notes or recorded by his pencil. His very considerable skill as a water-colourist was in this connexion of the utmost value to him and to posterity, for his extensive collection of topographical drawings of vanished London have now found a permanent home in the Victoria and Albert and London Museums. As an author he produced a number of books on various aspects of London antiquities, all illustrated by his own drawings. The activities of his later years were restricted by his gradually failing health, but this did not prevent him from devoting some of them to producing a history of the Eton Ramblers. As an ardent Etonian, and as an equally ardent cricketer, he was well qualified for this, his final task, and he accomplished it with that meticulous grace of diction which distinguished the literature of his generation and which he took such pains to preserve. His prose and his sketches alike illustrate the loving care of a less hurried age, an age which was content to achieve its results by an infinity of labour, and which, whatever its faults, was neither slipshod nor perverse.

It was, however, not so much as an antiquary or as an artist that Philip Norman will be best remembered, but rather as a personality. He had a gracious figure and a very gracious mind; his manner had a touch of aristocratic aloofness, which did not conceal but rather enhanced the unflinching courtesy and kindness which lay behind. During his long life, passed largely in contact with the literary and artistic characters of the Victorian age, he seemed to have acquired all its more amiable, while discarding its unattractive, traits, and with him passes one of the last representatives of a great age and a great tradition. A. C.