

OBITUARIES

ROBERT HEATH HISCOCK, LL.B., F.S.A.

Robert Hiscock died on the 12 February 2012 having been unwell for some time. He was born on 18 August 1920 in Northfleet. His father was a Civil Engineer at Blue Circle. Aged 4 he travelled by tram to a Convent School in Gravesend. He then attended what is now the Grammar School of which he was to become Chairman of Governors fifty years later. In 1932 he went to the Kings School, Rochester. In about 1938 he became articled to Francis Tolhurst, solicitor in New Road, Gravesend. In 1939 he volunteered for the Army but was rejected on grounds of a weak heart (time has shown this to have been a dubious diagnosis). He sat the Law exams in 1940 and passed, including one paper in Latin.

He was a Sergeant in the Home Guard teaching map reading. He qualified as a solicitor in 1942, becoming a Partner in 'Tolhurst & Hiscock' later by amalgamation, 'Martin Tolhurst' then Martin Tolhurst, Allen & Hiscock, retiring as Senior Partner in about 1985, remaining as a Consultant for five further years. He was Secretary of the local Law Society, a Commissioner of Oaths and a Notary Public.

He met his wife, Kathleen Patricia, in 1946 and they were married in the following year. She was the widow of Squadron Leader Tong, killed flying back from operations over Germany. Robert became active in many facets of local affairs in Gravesend, for example, the Erasmus Wilson Lodge for over 60 years (of which he wrote a History) and later, the Old Roffensian Lodge. He was a member of the local Round Table. He joined the Gravesend Historical Society in 1944 and later was Chairman for some 30 years. He was Chairman of the Varchell Charity and a Director of the *Gravesend & Dartford Reporter* until its sale.

He joined the KAS in 1951 and made a very substantial contribution to its work being a Council Member from 1957 to 1993, occasionally acting as Chairman. He was particularly active on the Buildings Committee of which he became Vice Chairman. He was a Vice President from 1994 to 2001 then a Patron from 2002.

Both in the KAS and in the Gravesend Society his wide range of local studies invariably placed great emphasis on academic rigour. His publications include *The History of Ifield & Singlewell, 1957*; *A History*

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of Gravesend, 1976; *Around Gravesend in Old Photographs*, 1988; *Gravesend & Northfleet Revisited*, 1998; and *A History of the Parish Churches of Gravesend & the Burial Place of the Princess Pocahontas*, undated. His contributions to *Archaeologia Cantiana* include 'The Proprietary Chapel of St. John, Gravesend', xciii (1977); 'Boormans Mill, Northfleet', c (1984); 'Some Notes on the Bells of St. George's Church, Gravesend', cii (1985); and 'King John's Palace, Gravesend', cvii (1989).

Robert Hiscock was a devoted family man and thanks are due to his brother, son, daughter and stepson, and to Sandra Soder (Gravesend Historical Society) and others, for their contributions to this notice.

PETER DRAPER