

Obituary.

MR. L. M. BIDEN.

The announcement of the death of Mr. Biden on October 21st, 1926, came as a very great shock to his many friends of the Kent Archæological Society and Records Branch. Few of them even knew that he had been suffering from a feverish chill and none of them realised that the illness was of a serious nature.

Born at Southsea in 1857, Lewis Marks Biden was the son of Wm. M. Biden, an engineer in the Navy, who erected the distilling establishment on the arid island of Ascension for supplying ships with drinking water. As a boy he was educated at the Greenwich Proprietary School, where he won the silver medal for Mathematics. Afternoons spent in the chalk pits at Charlton led him to study geology. Then, when he was articled to a firm of solicitors in Bush Lane, he was attracted to archæological subjects by evidences of Roman occupation and by various relics of old London. His interest was further excited during a walking tour in Cornwall by his coming upon the ruined walls of the old chapel of St. Piran embedded in the sand-dunes by Perranporth, and also by many visits to the old churches of Suffolk. He contributed at one time to the *East Anglican Notes and Queries*. He was a Freeman of the City of London, but his life was passed in West Kent and his connection with K.A.S. dates from 1903; by 1905 he had been appointed local Secretary for the Bromley district, a post which he held till his death. He was always keenly interested in historical records and, as is well-known, was mainly responsible for inaugurating the Records Branch in 1913, becoming its first Secretary. Then in 1915 he was elected to fill a vacancy on the Council of K.A.S.



LEWIS MARKS BIDEN.

Guild history was another subject that always interested him, and his study of the ancient Guilds of Norfolk resulted in his taking up Freemasonry. He became a member of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge, the members of which are specially interested in historical questions. Photography figured among the pursuits of his earlier years; he worked hard at it, taking a teaching class at Toynbee Hall, where his enthusiasm and help in this and other subjects is gratefully remembered. He was for long a member of the Royal Photographic Society.

All who knew him will ever remember with pleasure his kind-heartedness, his infinite patience in unravelling legal points whether professionally or from a social point of view, and his keen interest in the Society, perhaps more particularly in the Records Branch, in the service of which he worked indefatigably. As has been said elsewhere, the measure of success that has attended the efforts of the Records Branch, despite adverse circumstances, is mainly the result of the wisdom of its founders in starting it along the right lines, and in this work Mr. Biden was one of the prime movers. His perseverance, where others would have been daunted by the difficulties, met with its reward and his achievement must always remain an encouragement to his successors.

The sympathy of all goes out to his wife and son.

I. J. C.

MR. A. S. LAMPREY.

Arthur Sidney Lamprey, born 1868, died 1927. M.A. Cantab. Open Classical Scholar of Corpus Christi, Cantab., 1887. Foundation Scholar, *ibid*, 1888. Prizeman in English Literature, English Essay of Classics, 1888, 1889, 1890. B.A. 2nd Class Tripos, 1890.

Such is the well-filled list of University successes with which our friend started his professional life as a school-master, having taken the open scholarship from St. Olave's and St. Saviour's Grammar School, Southwark. After serving as assistant master in private schools, he was appointed to Inverness College, N.B., 1894. Three years



ARTHUR SYDNEY LAMPREY, M.A., F.S.A.

later he went to Maidstone Grammar School and in 1909 he came to Ashford as Headmaster of the Grammar School, which he raised to a point of great success both in numbers, keenness and character. With his work as a volunteer, O.T.C. officer and in all athletic matters we are hardly concerned, but he was singularly successful in all that he undertook. As an Antiquary we are more concerned with his work. Here, like all he did, the energetic, kindly, virile man stood out. He did much towards the preservation of the Archbishop's Manor at Maidstone, and it was largely through his efforts that the ancient tithebarn in the same place was purchased. He wrote the book for Maidstone Pageant, in 1906, and edited the Corporation Guides for the same town. Papers on Wm. Woollett, the Kentish engraver, and on many other county antiquarian subjects. When he came to Ashford he took up with active interest the preservation of the Old Grammar School big room, which was purchased as a Memorial Hall to the late Dr. Wilkes, of Ashford.

But his chief work of late years was the collection, sorting and indexing the Place Names of Kent. To this he devoted all the time that his fully-occupied life permitted, and quite recently he told the writer that the completion of what must have been a tedious task was in sight. It was on this work chiefly, although his other researches were well-known, that he was elected unanimously a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries. These other lines of work were connected with mediæval timber buildings and general research. He wrote both for the English and American antiquarian world. He was a member of our own and of the South Kent Antiquarian Societies, and was elected on to the Council of the former some few years ago.

Of the man himself it is easy to speak. Big, hearty, cheerful, he was an asset in any company, and in any company he could converse easily, as his store of knowledge was large and freely imparted. His influence was always good and the character he implanted in his scholars was of the best, so that, whilst under him, they respected him, and in after years developed an affection for the man, which was thoroughly

deserved. He was buried in Mersham Churchyard, a place for which he had much liking, as Sir Norton Knatchbull of Mersham Hatch was the founder of the Ashford Grammar School. The sympathies of the K.A.S., and more particularly of his fellow members of the Council, will be felt for Mrs. Lamprey and family in their loss. *Ante diem periiit, sed non sine honore.*

F.W.C.