

OBITUARIES

THE REV. CANON A. O. STANDEN, M.A.

It is with deepest regret we record the death of the Rev. Canon Aubrey Owen Standen, M.A., Canon Residentiary of Canterbury Cathedral since 1946, who died on a train near Canterbury on 27th October, 1961, aged 63.

He was educated at Merchant Taylors' School, London, and St. John's College, Oxford. When a lieutenant in the R.F.A. during the first world war, he was taken prisoner. At Oxford he was Exhibitioner and Prizeman, and Pusey and Ellerton Scholar in 1920. In 1924 he was Senior Fish Exhibitioner, and took degrees in Theology and Oriental languages. He was Houghton Syriac Prizeman in 1925, and after he became M.A. he was lecturer in Hebrew at Cuddesdon. He was a curate at St. Margaret's, Rochester, in 1925, and in 1929 was Rector of Chatham. He was a Sub-warden of Lincoln Theological College until 1935, when he became the Vicar of Maidstone and Rural Dean of Sutton. He was also the examining Chaplain to the Bishops of Lincoln and Rochester, and to Dr. Fisher when Archbishop of Canterbury.

He was a brilliant scholar and preacher, and was untiring in his work for the Kent Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society, of which he was a Vice-President for over 25 years, and later, Chairman.

Serving as a Council Member of the Kent Archaeological Society since 1945, and as Vice-President of the Friends of Old Maidstone, he took a lively interest in the work of both societies, and while a member of the Rotary Club of Maidstone he was greatly respected and loved by all the members, who elected him as their President in 1939. He always found time to advise anyone who asked his help, and his unflinching understanding and kindness will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

J.W.B.

GORDON REGINALD WARD, M.D., F.S.A.

Dr. Gordon Ward died suddenly at his home at Sevenoaks on 10th July, 1962, at the age of 77. Only a week earlier he had been walking in the town, so that his sudden illness and untimely death came as a great shock to his many friends.

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He was born on 23rd February, 1885, and educated at Epsom College, where he spent some of his happiest days, and University College, London. He qualified as an M.B. at Westminster Hospital and proceeded to his M.D.

During the first world war, as a Reservist, he was called up and served gallantly as an officer of the R.A.M.C. in many battle zones, including Mons, the Somme and Salonika.

Later he lived and practised at Sevenoaks and also did valuable work at Sevenoaks Hospital. When he built his new home, Oastfield House, he was able to arrange in a fitting setting in his library, his collection of Kentish books and manuscripts, and maps. He rejoiced when he was able to retire and to devote himself to his two great interests, Kentish history and philately.

He became a member of the K.A.S. in 1927 and his first contribution to *Archæologia Cantiana*, "The De Aldehams", appeared the following year in Volume XL. Thereafter for over thirty years, he was a constant contributor, and his articles not only reflected his untiring energy and his painstaking work, but also the wide range of his interests, from Saxon charters, manorial records, the Wealden dens, the Yokes, Hengest and Horsa, the Vikings, horseshoes, topography to place-names. He was elected a member of Council in 1931 and an Honorary Life Member in 1954 in recognition of his services to the Society.

His varied studies reflected his remarkable ability to undertake some entirely new interest of which he would become not only a master but would pursue the subject to an even greater degree than others might have done. This was revealed markedly in his philatelic work, for he was regarded as one of Britain's outstanding philatelists, and had a profound knowledge of the production of stamps by typography and photogravure. As the philatelic correspondent to *The Times* wrote: "His research into the printing flaws of the King George V portrait stamps of Australia and the Egyptian and South African photogravure issues was outstanding. His extensive contributions to the philatelic periodical press displayed an ability to simplify advanced technical matter for the benefit of less erudite philatelists."

His friendship with the late Captain Herbert Knocker led to an equally deep interest in local history at all levels. He was one of the original members of the Kent County Local History Committee when it was formed in 1935, and he later succeeded Sir Anton Bertram as its Chairman. In these pioneer years he was much in demand as a lecturer and laid the foundations of many of the local history societies. On archæological or historical excursions one could not wish a more entertaining companion, with his store of information, his inquisitive mind, and his wry sense of humour.

In his published writings he was often unorthodox and even contro-

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versial, and in committee, he took an impish delight in contradiction, often aimed solely at stimulating discussion.

Over a long period of years, Dr. Ward accumulated a vast and diverse collection of manuscripts, acquired from towns, parishes, business houses, private individuals, solicitors' offices and in this work undoubtedly preserved for posterity a considerable quantity of documentary evidence of outstanding historical importance, which would otherwise have been destroyed in the normal process of clearing out unwanted papers, and the war-time salvage drives. His immense services to other historians in collecting, classifying and preserving these documents relating to Kent will long be remembered.

Members of the Society owe him a special debt of gratitude not only for having saved papers of such value and interest, but for his gifts to the Society from 1935 onwards, and in particular, his last gift of over sixty boxes, containing collected material relating to the history of various Kent villages. Local historians too will be grateful for his benefactions to the Kent County Archives Office and to the Sevenoaks Public Library, where the "Gordon Ward Papers" will be for many generations a fitting memorial to his kindly and generous personality.

A.R.