

## Obituary Notices.

THE LATE RIGHT HONORABLE SIR HARRY VERNEY, BART.

SIR HARRY VERNEY, whose death during the present year we have to lament as a Society, occupied so conspicuous a position, socially and politically, and pre-eminently, as the venerable country Squire of his own County, that few words need be added to those which appeared in the press at the time of his death, and told of his worth, and of the high esteem in which he was held by his fellow-countrymen. Yet it would not be out of place in this publication to remind the Members of our Society that Sir Harry Verney's association with the history and archæology of Buckinghamshire merits our special attention. As an evidence of this, we may recall the fact that for nearly forty years he was a Member of this Society, his name first appearing in the list of Members in the year 1855, in which year he was elected a Vice-President.

It was fortunate that he should have become possessor of so historic a house as Claydon, and should have been the custodian of the collection of MSS. which Mr. S. R. Gardiner refers to as of "extraordinary value." Lady Verney's two volumes of Memoirs of the Verney family during the Civil Wars, only published in 1892, the result of the resources at her command, strikingly illustrate what valuable contributions to history can be presented to the reader by those who are gifted by education, and can claim sympathy with a bygone century such as Lady Verney possessed. Writing of her volumes, Mr. Gardiner says, "Her husband, Sir Harry Verney, cheered her by his constant interest in and sympathy with her work." That work was the bringing to light the letters—using Lady Verney's own words—of the entire collection, which "related to the private concerns of the Verneys, who owned the Manor

of Claydon for fourteen generations, beginning with Sir Ralph, Lord Mayor of London in 1465, and M.P. for London in 1472, and going down to Mary Verney, created Baroness Fermanagh, who died unmarried in 1810. These years include the most stirring periods of English history."

To become intimate with those who occupied a position of honour and eminence, without being leaders of men, from a close examination of their correspondence, will perhaps give us the truest insight into the spirit of the times in which they lived. The Memoirs abundantly show how the tastes of the owner of Claydon and Lady Verney harmonized with their surroundings, and how much of literary enjoyment they must have realized, as long-forgotten family portraits were identified, and the numerous letters unfolded the checkered lives of those who were passing through the troublous times in which these letters were penned.

Another striking instance of Sir Harry Verney's association with the history and archæology of this county, confining ourselves, as will be seen, to this feature of his life, is the active part he took shortly before his death, in endeavouring to organize a County Museum. The circular issued in his name and that of Mr. Cocks, in October, 1891, clearly and forcibly explains the many advantages such a Museum would confer on all classes in Buckinghamshire. Certain it is, that could Sir Harry Verney's proposals be carried out, our Society would be greatly benefited, for the pressing want of a central home, such as a County Museum worthy of the name would afford, is recognized by all archæologists in this locality.

It will be remembered that in 1885 Sir Harry Verney entertained the Society at Claydon House, when the Members had the opportunity of seeing the home of the Verneys, and of hearing Lady Verney's history of the house in a clear and concise paper which was afterwards published in these pages.\* Of course the paper very briefly referred to the subject, but the Memoirs disclose, with ungrudging toil and fidelity, all that quickens into life the treasures with which Claydon is associated.

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\* THE RECORDS OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, Vol. V., p. 419, *et seq.*

These treasures, it should be remembered, were added to by Ralph, the second Earl Verney, whose ambition was that his mansion should rival Stowe, and though his successor in title, Lady Fermanagh, pulled down the great central hall and the ball-room, yet still was left a very large house, embellished with choice works of Italian art, and possessing a library of rare volumes, collected by one whom Lady Verney characterizes as "a man of magnificent instincts, a great deal of taste and knowledge, and boundless extravagance." The pleasant recollection of the welcome which the Society received at this most interesting seat of an ancient family will long be remembered by those of the Members who were present on the occasion referred to.

It may be truly said that the establishment of a County Museum would have been to Sir Harry Verney a fitting close to an unusually protracted life, devoted to the highest interests of the community. Our Society is conscious of the loss of one who so appropriately filled the office of a Vice-president, and whose honoured memory it is a privilege to recall.—ED.

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#### THE LATE SAMUEL SANDARS, ESQ.

MR. SAMUEL SANDARS, of The Grove, Chalfont St. Giles, in this county, a Member of this Society, died on June 15th, 1894, in the 58th year of his age.

He was the only son of the late George Sandars, Esq., M.P. for Wakefield, descended from a junior branch of the Sanders of Ireton, Co. Derby. He was educated at Harrow School, and subsequently at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he graduated as B.A. in 1860, and in due course as M.A., being subsequently called to the Bar as a member of the Inner Temple.

In 1863 he married Elizabeth Maria, eldest daughter of the late Francis Russell, Esq., M.P. for Limerick, in Ireland. He leaves three sons (George Russell, in holy orders, Francis Samuel Hervey, and Edward Carew) and four daughters (Mary Frances, Eleanor Stokes, Alys Georgina, Dorothy Kathleen) of whom the eldest son, the Rev. George Russell Sandars, succeeds to the estate of The Grove,

Mr. Sandars purchased the estate of The Grove in this county in 1882, or as it was formerly known "Grove Place," which at one time belonged to the old Buckinghamshire family of Grove. He subsequently became a J.P. for Bucks, and filled the office of High Sheriff in the year of his death.

His interest in all matters connected with archæology, and especially architecture, was very great.

This interest was more especially centred in his old university of Cambridge, to which he was a great benefactor, and he spent large sums of money towards various works of restoration there, more especially on his own college of Trinity, and on the church of Great St. Mary's. His attachment to this church was so marked that he published an historical and architectural account of it in 1869, himself undertaking the historical part, and Canon Venables the architectural.

He was a great lover of old books, of which he had a very valuable collection, including some beautiful missals and early printed books, most of which he has bequeathed to Cambridge. He took, from the outset, a great interest in the Milton Museum at Chalfont St. Giles, and was a considerable supporter and donor to it. It will, perhaps, be remembered that it was chiefly from notes collected by Mr. Sandars that Mr. Phipps compiled his account of the parish and church of Chalfont St. Giles which appeared a few years ago in the RECORDS. It will be remembered that, in 1887, the Society visited Chalfont St. Giles, and were received by Mr. Sandars with much cordiality at The Grove, where his library of rare and valuable books and manuscripts before referred to were greatly admired by the Members.—R. H. RUSSELL.

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NOTE.—*It will be understood that the Editor is not responsible for the views expressed in the articles appearing in this Number, each of which, however, the Members of the Society will recognize as a valuable contribution to the Records of Buckinghamshire.*

*The Members are reminded that notice of any objects of interest discovered should be communicated to Mr. Parker, one of the Honorary Secretaries, addressed to Desborough House, High Wycombe.*