OBITUARIES

H. H. KING

HOrace herbert king, whose death occurred on 30 June 1976 at the age of eighty-six, was the senior Member of the Society to which he was elected in 1909. He was born on 5 March 1890 and was educated at Aldenham and King’s College, Cambridge, where he took a degree in law. Inevitably as ‘King of King’s’ he was nick-named at Cambridge ‘God’. He lived at first in the Temple but, on the outbreak of the First World War, enlisted in the army which he left with the rank of Major. On his return to civilian life he joined his father’s publishing business in Westminster and when, eventually, this was sold, he retired to Northchapel in Sussex where he lived with his widowed mother. Somewhat late in life he married but within nine years his wife had died. He then sold the house at Northchapel and went to live at Undershaw Hotel at Hindhead where he remained until relatively shortly before his death and where many members will have written to him or visited him.

His services to the Society were considerable: editor of the Journal from 1952 to 1968 and President from 1955 to 1958. In recognition of these services and of his writings, he was elected an Honorary Member in 1960, and was awarded the Sandford Saltus Medal in 1962. On his retiring from the editorship, volume 38 of the Journal was dedicated to him and contains a characteristically delightful photograph of him.

As a Sussex resident, his particular interest lay in coins of the Sussex mints of which he made an extensive collection. He wrote on the Steyning mint in volume 24 of the Journal, and on two numismatic journeys to Scandinavia in volume 27. His main contribution, however, was a detailed study of the Sussex mints published in three parts in volume 28, followed by small supplements in volumes 29, 30, and 33.

Mr. King was a keen motorist and it was his ambition—and one that I believe he fulfilled—to have driven over all the major road passes across the Alps. For many years he suffered from Parkinson’s disease which made writing difficult, but he was fortunately able to manage a typewriter. I had the privilege of working with him as co-editor of the Journal for sixteen years and so had ample opportunity of seeing the many endearing qualities of a man who quietly, almost diffidently, gave so much to the Society. Typically, he left the Society a bequest in his will and he enriched the British Museum by giving it, shortly before his death, such of his coins of which it did not possess die duplicates.

C. E. B.

D. F. ALLEN, 1910–1975

Professor Eric Turner has written a full biography of Derek Fortrose Allen for the Proceedings of the British Academy and Mr. R. H. Thompson has published in the Numismatic Chronicle a bibliography of his writings¹ to which is appended a list of

what Allen had in hand at the time of his death, which took place unexpectedly and suddenly on 13 June 1975. Professor Turner, who has been so kind as to let me see the work in draft, besides giving a brilliant account of Allen's varied interests—from music, an early love, to the Civil Service and to archaeology and numismatics—has made a scholarly assessment of his achievements in the field of Celtic coins, both Continental and British. The present notice will therefore be concerned primarily with his work in other fields of numismatics and with what he did for this Society.

Derek Allen joined the staff of the Coin Room at the British Museum in 1935 as an Assistant Keeper under John Allan, in replacement of Dr. G. C. Brooke whose premature death we still mourn. Till then, though he had taken part in excavations under the Wheelers and had even shared the discovery of a buried hoard of Roman gold coins, he would have been the first to admit that his knowledge of numismatics was minimal. He learnt the hard way. His responsibilities, he tells us, covered the entire British series, the medieval and modern continental coinages, and the whole collection of medals, and on these he was expected to give advice to the public, to select, register and incorporate new acquisitions and to record Treasure Trove. A hoard of gold coins of James I and Charles I was actually awaiting his arrival, and shortly after came the Boyton hoard of coins of Edward I and II. His report on this hoard in N.C. 1936 demonstrated both the thoroughness of his approach to the subject and the speed with which he was learning. It was a hoard of over 4,000 coins deposited in the early 1320s, the great majority of them English pennies but including a noticeable number of Scottish and Irish pennies and of Continental sterlings. It was when he came to attempt to record the Irish coins that he found himself faced with the problem that no classification analogous to Burns's of the Scottish series existed. He therefore set to work and devised a classification of his own for the purpose of the report, a classification that was described by Dolley and Seaby as 'the next serious contribution to the subject'. A brave effort for a numismatic neophyte. What, Allen has said, did most for his numismatic education was being faced with the task of selecting, recording, and incorporating the coins from the 30,000-strong collection formed by Clarke-Thornhill who had left to the British Museum the right to select any that were not die-duplicates of those already in the collection. In this way no less than 12,000 coins were acquired spread across the English, Scottish, Irish, Colonial, and North European series. Clarke-Thornhill had died in 1934 so that this must have been one of the first tasks to face the new Assistant Keeper. He was fortunate in his colleagues whom he describes as 'congenial (and often distinguished)' and there can be little doubt that they helped him generously in this daunting task.

Up to the outbreak of war Allen's publications followed the conventional pattern of the professional numismatist at the British Museum: hoard reports, reports on coins from excavations, new discoveries and papers on subjects which for one reason or another had aroused his interest. His artistic sensibility, never far below the surface in his life, finds expression in a study he published in 1939 for the Walpole Society on Thomas Simon's Sketch Book.

1 I quote here, and elsewhere, from a biographical lecture entitled 'The Pursuit of the Root of all Evil' that he gave to the Birmingham Archaeological Society in 1975. The lecture has not been published but Mrs. Allen has very kindly provided me with a copy of it.

2 Beyond a footnote, a valuable one however, in his Coinage of Scotland, i. p. 218.

3 SCBI, Ulster Museum, Belfast. i, p. xliv.
Allen had been told by the Keeper on his very first day at the Museum that it would be his duty to catalogue the Ancient British coins there. Brooke had made a start on this but it soon became apparent that there was still a great deal to do. His first published contribution to the subject was a paper to the International Numismatic Congress in 1936. This is followed in 1939 by a short note on the La Marquandarie hoard, but it is not until 1944 that his first major contribution to the subject was published in *Archaeologia*, and from 1954 onwards it is apparent where his interests increasingly lay. This aspect of his work has, as has been said, been considered in detail by Prof. Turner. Suffice it to say here that Derek Allen became accepted as the leading authority on Ancient British coins and as one of the leading authorities in the world on the corresponding issues on the Continent. The year 1951 saw the publication of his *Catalogue of Cross-and-Crosslets coins of Henry II in the British Museum*, a volume that was only the fifth in the series of catalogues of the English coins that had started in 1887. Anyone familiar with this series will readily appreciate the difficulties he had to face. The coins are almost invariably more or less badly struck and it is usually necessary to be able to see several specimens from the same dies before full readings can be obtained. In the event he produced not only a corpus of the surviving material both in the British Museum and elsewhere, but a critical study of the operation of the mint and the exchanges at this time. The work, begun in 1939, had to be broken off in 1940 when Allen went on war service, but was resumed in 1945 (when he was no longer at the British Museum) and more or less completed by 1947. His duties then took him to the Far East and the task of finishing it off had to be undertaken away from libraries and collections. All this must be taken into account in assessing his remarkable achievement in this work.

Derek Allen joined the British Numismatic Society in 1935, was Secretary 1938–41, and Editor of volumes XXII and XXIII of the *Journal*, and President 1959 to 1963. He was awarded the Sanford Saltus medal in 1953, and was elected an Honorary Member in 1971. Of the Royal Numismatic Society he was President from 1966 to 1970 and was awarded that Society’s medal in 1967.

He finished a distinguished academic career as Secretary then Treasurer of the British Academy. His family have generously established with the Academy a prize in his memory for outstanding published work in Musicology, Celtic Studies, and Numismatics.

I would like if I may to end this review on a personal note. Derek Allen was friend of 40 years standing and I am indebted to him for very many kindnesses. One that particularly lives in my memory is the generous introduction he wrote to Volume 42 of this *Journal*.

C. E. B.