

## *Obituary Notice*

HUGH SADLER KINGSFORD. 1878–1944

Hugh Sadler Kingsford was appointed Assistant Secretary to the Society in 1910. Having held a secretarial post in the Royal Anthropological Institute for some years, he was not without experience of the routine work involved, but the fact that he was to succeed Sir William Hope, who had for no less than twenty-five years held this office with great distinction, would have daunted the most self-confident. Kingsford was anything but that. Modest and unassuming, he set himself to master his complicated duties with thoroughness and patience, his equable temper carrying him through the constant interruptions which fall to the lot of the one officer of the Society who is always in attendance at Burlington House and at the beck and call of everyone. But the mark of a good Assistant Secretary is not so much his capability to suffer Fellows gladly as his power of organizing his own work outside the routine of correspondence, committees, and publications. The Society's collections are for ever, if slowly, on the increase, and being necessarily of a miscellaneous character, do not lend themselves to systematic arrangement and exhibition, so that objects of considerable interest are liable to be put away and forgotten, even to the extent of being undiscoverable when wanted for reference. Now and again one of our Fellows may devote his time to the arrangement of some part of the Society's belongings; it may suffice to mention the shining example of Mill Stephenson and the collection of brass-rubbings: but if continuous progress is to be made, the Assistant Secretary must give to it as much of his time as he can spare. At the date of his appointment Kingsford had no special archaeological experience, but the surroundings in which he thenceforward found himself awakened his interest, and he took up the task of bringing into order the large and miscellaneous collection of seal impressions which had been accumulating for many years. To do this with effect an acquaintance with heraldry, genealogy, and the development of medieval art was necessary, and grew as the work proceeded; and in the result the Society was indebted to him for not a few notes and communications on the subject of his choice. It so happened that twice during the term of his office the Society's normal activities were interrupted by war, between 1914 and 1919, and from 1939 onwards, and in the first period Kingsford found work at the Admiralty. In his later years signs of illness became more and more evident, and at last after thirty-three years of service it became inevitable that he should resign. His resignation took place on 13th October 1943, to the general regret. In his last Presidential Address Sir Alfred Clapham summed up his record thus: 'His continuity of service, his intimate acquaintance with the traditions and procedure of the Society, and his faithful performance of the duties of the office he held, had secured for him the high respect and unswerving affection of most of our fellowship.' It was hoped that release from work would lead to recovery, but this was not to be; and he gradually lost ground, and died on 29th November 1944, aged 66.

C. P



Hugh Sadler Kingsford