

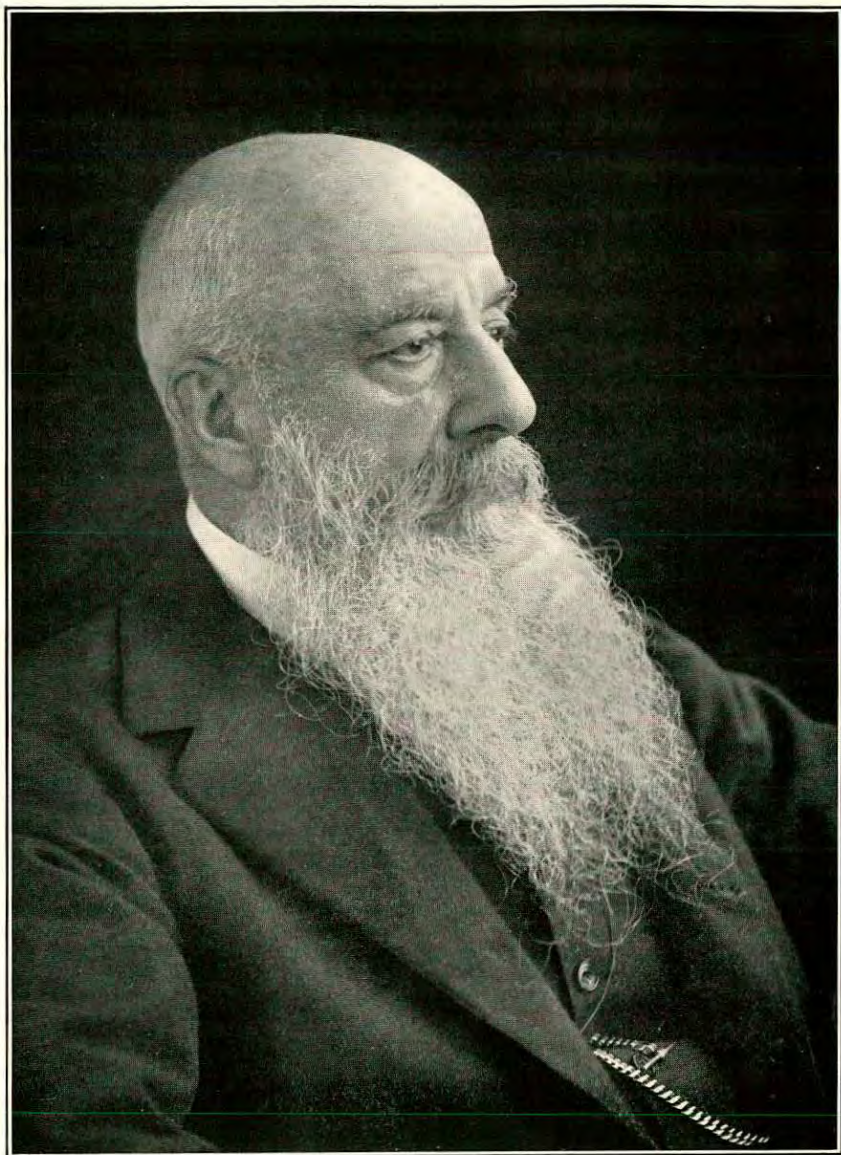
Ernest Edward Baker, F.S.A.

ERNEST EDWARD BAKER, F.S.A., solicitor and notary public of The Glebe House, Weston-super-Mare, died on 27 March 1931 at the age of 76. He represented the fourth generation of a family of Butcombe solicitors, and was admitted in 1876, ninety-nine years after the admission of Samuel Baker the founder of the firm. He became a member of this Society in 1883 and was President in 1929. At the conclusion of his presidential address he presented to the Society six volumes of valuable manuscript records relating to the Bishopric of Bath and Wells, the earliest dating from the time of Edward III. He was also a very active member of the Weston-super-Mare and Axbridge District Branch of the Society and was Honorary Secretary from 1898 to 1908 and President from 1924 until his death.

Mr. Baker gave much time and labour to the investigation of the early history of Weston-super-Mare, both recorded and traditional, and in 1928 the results of his researches over a long period of years (which had been published in sections from time to time in the *Weston Mercury*) were collected in a privately printed and circulated volume with the title, *The Village of Weston-super-Mare: Historical Notes*. His long and extensive practice as a solicitor brought him into close relation with many owners of property and he was always on the alert for any opportunity of securing the preservation of anything of antiquarian or historic importance. One of his most notable successes in this direction was the rescue and restoration of the original carved screen of Blagdon Church which he and Mrs. Baker gave to the church at Butcombe, where it now is, in memory of their sons Aubrey Baker and Neville Baker who were killed in action in the Great War.

In addition to his professional and archaeological work, Mr. Baker found time to render valuable public services, especially to the Weston-super-Mare Hospital, with which his name will always be associated: he was Honorary Secretary for some twenty-five years and he was also President for a time.

Finally, Mr. Baker had in the highest degree the faculty of



REV. WILLIAM HUNT, D.LITT.

From a Photograph by Elliott & Fry

securing the respect and regard of all those with whom he came into contact. He had a quick sense of humour, and the less common power of stating commonplace facts in a humorous, and often very effective way. His invariable courtesy, kindness, and unselfish helpfulness will keep his memory green amongst all who knew him.

C. H. BOTHAMLEY.

The Rev. William Hunt, D.Litt. Dron.

(Plate XXIV)

By the passing of the Rev. Dr. Hunt on 14 June 1931, at his London residence, another link with our Society's past has been severed.

For the long period of sixty-five years Dr. Hunt had been a valued member, and from 1872 to 1879 was an honorary general secretary, and for some years he also acted as a local secretary.

Joining the Society as a young man in 1866, he was at the time of his decease the honoured 'father' of the Society, having outlived all his contemporaries of the sixties of the last century. A son of Prebendary Hunt, Vicar of Holy Trinity, Weston-super-Mare, he was born 3 March 1842, and went to Harrow where he was in Dr. Vaughan's House. From 1861 to 1865 he was at Trinity College, Oxford, of which, later, he became an honorary fellow. He was ordained in 1865, and served as his father's curate. He became Vicar of Congresbury in 1867, and set to work to restore the interesting church, and built a new day school there. At the same time he was history examiner at Oxford. In 1882 he resigned his first, and only, benefice, and removed to London, to devote the remainder of his long life entirely to his favourite study of history and biography, in which fields he acquired a well-nigh national reputation.

He became a contributor to the *Saturday Review* and the *Dictionary of National Biography*, for which he wrote articles on most of the English divines. Dr. Hunt wrote various papers for the Somerset Archaeological Society, and in 1893 he produced for the Somerset Record Society—of which he was one of the founders and original members—a volume on *Two Chartularies of Bath Priory*. He was a voluminous writer, and he collaborated with such eminent scholars as Professor E. A. Freeman, Dr. Stephens, then Dean of

Winchester, Dr. Lane Poole and others, particularly in the 'Historic Towns' series (in which the volume on *Bristol* was written by Dr. Hunt), the 'Historical Course for Schools' (*Italy* being by Dr. Hunt), whilst the first volume of *A History of the English Church*, and the tenth volume of *The Political History of England* were also by Dr. Hunt. In 1885 appeared his *History of the Diocese of Bath and Wells*, and in 1888 *The English Church in the Middle Ages. Norman Britain*, in the 'Early Britain' series, was also written by him.

The County of Somerset, and our Society, may well be proud of Dr. Hunt's services to literature, marked throughout by thorough accuracy and carefulness, and couched in the purest English.

An honour he much prized was the presidency of the Royal Historical Society (1905 to 1909). His portrait is on the walls of the Society in Russell Square. His valuable library of some 2,500 volumes has been presented by his widow, in memory of him, to the new library of Trinity College, Oxford, which has been built as a Memorial to the men of Trinity who fell in the Great War.

Dr. Hunt won a place among the great Victorian writers of eminence and distinction. He died in his ninetieth year, and his body rests in Kensington Cemetery.

T. G. SIMMONDS.