

Obituary

THOMAS HENRY, MARQUESS OF BATH, K.G.

Lord Lieutenant and Custos Rotulorum of the County of Somerset

(See *Frontispiece*)

LORD BATH died at Longleat on Sunday, 9 June 1946, in his eighty-fourth year. He had been Patron of the Somerset Archæological Society since 1923, and had been President in 1908, the year of the Society's Diamond Jubilee.

Throughout his life Lord Bath devoted himself to public service, and upheld the distinguished tradition of his family. The estates in Somerset and Wiltshire, inherited on the death of his father in 1896, brought him responsibilities and interests in both counties which were to him a source of pleasure. Thus came the opportunity for the exercise of those special gifts of administration and right dealing, of sound judgment of men and affairs, his in the beginning by intuition, and which were to be gradually developed by long experience. It is no exaggeration to say that his personality inspired admiration in everyone who worked with him.

Lord Bath loved Longleat—the great park rising to the hill called 'Heaven's Gate', and the Italianate house, built by his ancestor, Sir John Thynne, in the mid-sixteenth century. To few men who have lived into this generation has it been given to dominate easily such a scene. He was one of the last *grands seigneurs*—a superb figure as he appeared in Wells Cathedral in the rose-red of a Victorian Lord Lieutenant's uniform, or in the sunlight outside St. George's Chapel, Windsor, in the blue velvet mantle of the Garter.

During the many years in which he was Patron of the Somerset Archæological Society, he was always ready to further the Society's interests in any way lying within his power, and on several occasions of doubt and difficulty gave wise and valuable advice. He took a personal interest in certain aspects of archæology, and in the care of the rich collection of family treasures—the pictures, the furniture, the works of art, and the rare series of documents—which had descended to him.

The memory of Lord Bath in the capacity of 'His Majesty's Lieutenant for Somerset'—(this he always insisted was the correct style of his office)—will be held in honour as long as any survive who remember his work for the benefit of this county.

A. W. V-N.