

OBITUARY

BERTRAM BENJAMIN BARON BENAS

1880-1968

BERTRAM BENAS, C.B.E., B.A., LL.M., J.P., a Vice-President of the Society, died aged eighty-eight on 7 December 1968 after a few days illness.

He joined the Society in 1915 and was a Council member from 1928 to 1942 when he was elected a Vice-President; he was President in 1963. Baron Louis Benas, his father, a member from 1864 to his death in 1914, also served on the Council for many years. Bertram, his only child, was born in Toxteth and received his early education at Liverpool College (Upper School) of which he later became a Life Governor. Following graduation at the Universities of Liverpool and Manchester he was called to the bar of the Middle Temple in 1906, became a bencher in 1953 and in July 1968 was elected Autumn Reader, an event which he regarded as the highlight of his professional career.

His literary work included *The New Law of Property Explained* in which he collaborated with the late Lord Scott, and, with the late Judge Essenhig, *Precedents of Pleading*. He contributed articles on the Law of Property and Conveyancing to the *Encyclopaedia of the Laws of England* and *Halsbury's Laws of England* and he contributed frequently to *The Law Journal*, *The Conveyancer* and legal quarterlies and annuals. He was a member of the Court of Governors of the University of Liverpool. In 1922, 1951 and 1961 he was President of the Liverpool Literary and Philosophical Society and contributed to the Society's *Proceedings*. His membership of the Liverpool Athenaeum began in 1900; he was President in 1938. The Merseyside Civic Society received his active support.

Of distinguished Jewish descent, it was natural that the history and problems of Jewry should absorb much of his spare time, and he was elected to high office in several Jewish societies, national and local. For his services to British Jewry he was awarded the C.B.E. in 1954. He was a talented organist

and occupied the chair of the Liverpool Music Guild, the Merseyside Music Council and the St George's Hall Organ Club. Annual visits to the Three Choirs Festival constituted his principal holidays, but not so many years ago his holiday companions, the Anglican Vicar of St Paul's, Princes Park, and the Abbot of Downside, were evidential of his broad liberality of outlook. His scholarship and gentle wit, eloquently displayed with modesty and charm in precise and restful speech, made him a most pleasant companion; with a questing mind and innate courtesy he was a ready and attentive listener.

Bertram Benas contributed rarely to *Transactions*, but his services in debate and in the chair at Council and ordinary meetings were of a high order, as was his advice when legal matters were under consideration. He contributed the following papers:

- Vol. 80 'Later Records of the Jews in Liverpool' (in continuation of a paper by his father).
- Vol. 95 'A History of Orchestral Music in Liverpool'.
- Vol. 100 (Supplement) 'Centenary of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire'.

STANLEY HARRIS

