

Obituary Notice

Lt.-Col. William Hawley, elected 5th June 1902, died 7th April 1941. William Hawley will always be associated in our minds with what in the now lengthening perspective of years may be called the second period of the Society's field work, comprising the excavation of Old Sarum and of Stonehenge. The first period covers the twenty years from 1888 to 1908, and was devoted to the systematic clearing of the site of the Roman town of Silchester, with which the names of Hope, Stephenson, and Fox will ever be connected. It was in its time a great work; to say that it would be done differently to-day is only to emphasize the progress in the technique of excavation which we have lived to see. When in 1909 a beginning was made at Old Sarum, Hawley was put in charge and proved an ideal man for the post. His training in the Royal Engineers had developed the orderly and accurate habits of mind with which nature had endowed him, and with many years of experience already behind him, he took up his work for the Society with such competence and thoroughness that Old Sarum, in spite of its predominantly medieval aspect, became a meeting-place for excavators of all kinds. For those who were privileged to take a share in the work the wooden excavation hut at Old Sarum will ever be a pleasant memory. Hawley was the most modest and self-effacing of men, generous to a fault and greatly appreciative of competence in others, being himself skilled in all manner of ways. From the workshop at his home at Figcheldean came a series of neatly made 'gadgets' which he was wont to present to his friends and fellow workers; his own excavating tools were as ingenious, neat, and clean as their owner. Even the iron bar he used for sounding seemed to have special qualities, so that his colleagues would credit it with the power of distinguishing between a silver and a bronze coin, buried a yard in the ground. At Old Sarum the excavation triumvirate was Hawley, Hope, and Montgomerie, but when in 1919 work shifted to Stonehenge Hawley was entirely responsible for the conduct of operations and so continued till 1926, when about half the area of the great monument had been explored, the rest being purposely left for the investigators of a later generation. It is not too much to say that in his seven years' work at Stonehenge Hawley revolutionized our knowledge of this famous monument, which has been the subject of so many confident and mutually destructive theories. He has contributed a mass of careful and accurate observations, set down with characteristic clearness and absence of dogmatism, which will be a guide to all who may in future take up the work where he has left it. The summary of his observations is set down in the *Antiquaries Journal* for April 1928, pp. 173-6, and ends with a simple sentence which brings our old friend before us so fully and piquantly that it may serve to end this record: 'What I say is merely conjecture, and it is to be hoped that future excavators will be able to throw more light on [Stonehenge] than I have done.'

C. P.