

OBITUARIES

Sir Henry Butler Blackall, QC, LL.D., who died on 1st November, 1981, at the age of 92, was a member of the Society for over 40 years, and a Fellow and Vice-President. He first contributed to the Journal in 1941, but it was after his retirement ten years later that he began to take a close interest in our affairs. His distinguished career in the Colonial Legal Service is described in his obituary notice in *The Times*. Here we are concerned with his work as a genealogist and for this Society.

In *The Irish Genealogist* he published 'Abstracts from Blackall Family Records' (1941), 'The Blackneys of Ballyellen' (1957), 'The Galbraiths of Cappard' (1968), 'The Burnells and the Penal Laws' (1969), and he wrote the obituary notices on T. Blake Butler (1965) and Lord Ormonde and Basil O'Connell (1971). Other major contributions to Irish genealogy were 'The Butlers of Co. Clare' in *The North Munster Antiquarian Journal*, 1952-55, 'The Butlers of Cregg' in the *Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society*, 1958-59, and 'The Galweys of Munster' in the *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, 1966-69. Sir Henry was a contributor to several other antiquarian and historical periodicals, notably *The Journal of the Butler Society* and *The Irish Sword*. He was a careful and thorough researcher with a very sound knowledge of the historical background to Irish genealogy.

Having settled in Cyprus, the homeland of his wife, on retirement in 1951, Sir Henry was at a disadvantage for research purposes. He overcame this handicap to a considerable extent by his almost annual visit to Dublin during the 1950s and 1960s, when he went to the Public Record Office every day, and by keeping up a lively correspondence with other genealogists, including the present writer, who supplied him with the raw material of which he made good use. As a genealogist he had two limitations. He only worked on families to which he was related and he was reluctant to express doubt by using such words as 'probably' or 'possibly', or such expressions as 'may have been'. He preferred to give a judicial verdict on the evidence available. This legal approach sometimes let him down when fresh facts later came to light.

Besides his contributions to our journal Sir Henry helped the Society in other ways. He often took the Chair at the Annual General Meeting when the late Lord Ormonde, through deafness, felt unable to do so; he drew up Rules for the Society which were in force for about ten years until their recent revision, and he presided at the meeting which elected our present President, Lord Dunboyne.

To end on a personal note, he was most exact and exacting in his correspondence. "You have not yet answered the query in the 3rd para. of my letter of 3-10-63" is typical of the admonitions often received during our 30 years of genealogical correspondence. Finally, he had a word of advice for those who may be reluctant to publish anything that is not perfectly researched, with the result that nothing ever appears. To them he liked to quote the adage 'The best is the greatest enemy of the good'.
H.D.G.

Sir Gerald FitzMaurice, GCMG, QC, Judge of the International Court of Justice in The Hague from 1960 to 1973 and of the European Court of Human Rights at Strasbourg from 1974 to 1980, died on September 7 last at the age of 80. He was a long-standing member of our Society and a Vice-President since 1958. He did not play an active part in our affairs, but we were honoured to have such a distinguished man as a Vice-President.
H.D.G.

NOTICES

1. The next annual general meeting of the Society will be held at the Challoner Club, Pont Street, London SW1 on Saturday, 18 June 1983.
2. Members resident in the Irish Republic need not convert to sterling, but are advised to pay as their annual subscription £6 Irish into the Society's account (No. 41516056) at the Allied Irish Banks Ltd., 100 Grafton Street, Dublin 2.
3. Our attention has been drawn to the appearance this year of 'The Prestons of Smithfield and Greenfield in Virginia', by J. F. Dorman, published by the Filson Club, Inc., Louisville,