

## Obituary

PHILIP BERTRAM MURRAY ALLAN,  
M.B.E., M.A., F.S.A., F.R.E.S.

The death occurred on 31st December 1973 at the age of 89, of Mr P. B. M. Allan well-known to readers of *The Entomologist's Record* as a contributor for many years under his own name and under the nom de plume 'An Old Moth-Hunter', or over the initials 'O.M.H.'

In 1950 when the future of the *Record* was uncertain and in danger of ceasing publication through lack of support Allan took over the management and publication, a task he was well-fitted to undertake having been a London publisher and author since the first world war.

Under its new management and an active Editor and Editorial Board, the *Record* soon started to revive and was improved in many ways. 'Features' which had proved popular under Tutt's management were revived, many of them being written each month by Allan himself. Some of the foremost entomologists generously supported the new regime, the circulation thence rising to a satisfactory figure within a year. For the June 1951 issue Allan designed a new cover and this has been the outward manifestation of the *Record* ever since.

Having seen the magazine, for which he had a great affection, well-established once more on a sound financial basis, Allan brought his period of management of *The Entomologist's Record* to an end but he continued to contribute notes and articles from time to time.

Philip Allan was the author of three books, *A Moth-Hunter's Gossip*, *Talking of Moths* and *Moths and Memories*, all written in lighter vein but still with the intention of stimulating deep thought into the many interesting problems presented by the Lepidoptera, for his early training in medicine and biology had provided him with a penetrating mind and his country upbringing in Berkshire had engendered keen powers of observation. No doubt he owed his very early interest in the Lepidoptera to his father's tutelage, for he was also a 'moth-hunter' and a most painstaking observer of nature.

Philip Allan was educated at Charterhouse and Clare College, Cambridge, where he took his M.A. degree in science, but he soon decided that a medical career was not for him and entered the publishing world where his love of books found full play. About 1912, having become interested in the sources of mediaeval history while at Cambridge, he became a contributor to a dictionary of Mediaeval Latin, for which researches he was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in 1921.

After service in the London Scottish and in Military Intelligence during the first war, he returned to publishing and, at the request of the Home Office, founded *The Police Journal*, which he continued to edit and publish for 30 years. In 1937 he also founded *The Journal of Criminal Law* which he ran until late in 1972.

Between the wars, Allan found time to indulge his love of entomology again to the full, living as he then was on the borders of Hertfordshire and Essex, and in 1935 he was a co-founder of the Bishop's Stortford and District Natural History Society. Shortly after the second war he was appointed a member of a local National Trust committee charged with the care of Hatfield Forest.

So, the Old Moth-Hunter is no more! But though his pen is now laid aside, perhaps through his writings he will continue to recall, for others, happy days in the fields and woodland glades in pursuit of their mutual interest in entomology.

I.A.



## O.M.H.

The auto-obituary of the late P. B. M. Allan appears here-  
under having just come to light from beneath a collection of  
dry leaves eminently suitable for pupation.

BENEATH THIS TREE LIE

THE EXUVIAE

OF

AN OLD MOTH-HUNTER

WHO WENT TO EARTH

The 31st Day of December 1973.

From earthly *cage* by *Atropos* set free  
His hope is *pinned* to Immortality;  
*Mors pallida* Hor. caught him in her *net* ;  
The *bush* no more he'll *beat*; for here he's *set*.  
His nights with *sugar*, *lamp*, and *sheet* all past,  
Now, *box'd securely*, lies *relaxed* at last.

READER!

DIG NOT HERE

BUT PONDER ON THE

METAMORPHOSIS

THAT AWAITS YOU

