

Local History Recording Scheme : Berkshire Branch.

THIRTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT.

THE thirteenth Annual Report of the Committee of the Berkshire Branch of the Local History Recording Scheme covers the period from January 1st to December 31st, 1936. From our Local Correspondents, up to the end of 1936, a total of 479 approved records has been received relating to 132 Parishes in the County. Twenty-three records were received during the year. The Local Correspondents now number 278, representing 196 Parishes. We regret to report the loss of several valued Correspondents during the year, but trust that many more helpers will shortly be enrolled, as active assistance is urgently required in all parts of the County.

The Berkshire Branch of the Local History Recording Scheme continues to make steady progress; general interest is well maintained, and appears to be increasing. During the year the Committee have had under consideration various plans for extending the activities of the Scheme, including the formation of a panel of lecturers willing to speak on the aims of the Recording Scheme and on local history generally. The need is felt very strongly of some central body which will turn the growing interest in local history into right and useful channels, more particularly in connexion with the recording of unpublished material; the Committee are certain that lectures on the history of some particular district will be of great service in stimulating interest among those living in the place who have unique opportunities for collecting valuable local information.

On February 25th, the Honorary Director gave a lecture on the Scheme to the Woodcote Womens' Guild.

Valuable work in the recording of Churchyard Inscriptions has again been carried out during the year, principally by Mr. L. H. Chambers and Mr. W. H. Hallam, transcriptions of the Memorials in 11 Parishes having been sent in. The Committee

again wishes to take this opportunity of thanking these extremely keen workers for all their efforts on behalf of the Scheme. It is hoped that more local Correspondents will assist in this very useful and necessary work, for while 108 lists of Inscriptions have now been received or promised, there are still about two hundred burial grounds in the County in which the memorials have not yet been copied.

In addition to the copying of Inscriptions, it is hoped that Correspondents will endeavour to obtain photographs, or other reliable illustrations, of 17th and 18th century tombstones or headstones, beautiful examples of which still exist in a number of Berkshire churchyards, but which are now, in many cases, fast crumbling away.

With regard to finance, the Hon. Treasurer reports that there was, at the end of the year, a balance in hand of £6 8s. 11d.

The thanks of the Committee are again due to the various affiliated Societies for their constant interest and support in the working of the Local History Recording Scheme; the Committee would also wish to thank the Chairman, the Hon. Director, the Hon. Secretary and the Hon. Treasurer for their work in connexion with the Scheme, and to express their gratitude to the various Correspondents who have sent in Records during the past year.

M.S.