



Berkshire Archæological Society.

ANNUAL MEETING AND REPORT.

THE annual meeting of the Berkshire Archæological Society was held on May 2nd at the Abbey Gateway, Reading, the chair being taken by Mr. C. E. KEYSER, F.S.A. The attendance included Sir Edward Barry, Bart., Miss Barry, Mr. J. T. Strange, Mr. Margrett, Mr. Ll. Treacher, the Rev. G. H. Gwilliam, Mr. Duff, Dr. Fairbank, Mr. Radford, the Rev. R. P. Newhouse, the Rev. P. H. Ditchfield (hon. secretary), Mrs. Ditchfield, Mr. Ernest Ravenscroft (hon. treasurer), Mr. J. Hautenville Cope, and other members.

The President said that all arrangements had been made for the two-day excursion to Warwick on the 23rd and 24th of June. The places to be visited would include Warwick Castle, the Church of St. Mary (Warwick), Guy's Cliff, Stoneleigh Abbey, Kenilworth Castle, and the Mayor had promised to welcome the Society to Warwick. Regarding the excursions in their own County it was proposed to visit Hanney, Charney-Bassett, Lyford and Denchworth, these being the places he had described to the Society in a recent lecture. Probably a further excursion would be arranged.

The next matter was the reading of the annual report, Mr. Ditchfield remarking that he had always written it before, but as it so happened that just at this time of the year he had a great deal to do, he had asked his friend Mr. J. H. Cope to do this, and that gentleman had kindly done so, and he would ask him to read it. Mr. Keyser, F.S.A. was unanimously re-elected President and the Vice-Presidents were all re-elected. The Committee chosen are the same as last year. Mr. Ditchfield was again elected as Hon. Secretary, the applause which greeted his name showing how greatly the subscribers venerate his work. Mr. Ravenscroft and the Rev. M. Williams were respectively re-elected as Treasurer and Librarian.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

After which Mr. Ditchfield read a very interesting paper on the "Inns of Court and Chancery." He showed how these places were

first founded, and how they eventually came into the hands of the lawyers, in whose possession they still remain. Also he told of the many illustrious men with whose names the Inns of Courts are connected—names of men who in their day (many of them) played an important part in the history of their country—Lord Chancellors, Judges of the Realm, law officers of the Crown, and other legal luminaries now dead and gone; but perhaps the most interesting portion of the paper was the part in which was told the story of those Inns which have disappeared to make room for the various improvements that have been carried out in recent years in “vanishing London.”

ANNUAL REPORT 1912-13.

Your Committee has the honour to present the Report for the past year.

LECTURES AND EXCURSIONS.

During the period under review the Society has as usual held a winter session, when lectures dealing with subjects of Archæological interest have been given.

(A) LECTURES.

On April 19th, 1912, following the Annual Meeting, Mr. Macartney, F.S.A. gave a lecture on the interesting subject of “Old Gardens.”

The first lecture of the Winter Session was given by Miss Swan (President of the Oxford Ladies' Brass Rubbing Society) on “English Dress for a Thousand Years.” This lady, who is the authoress of “The Pageant of English Literature,” is a recognised authority on dress and the Society is much indebted to her for this lecture.

On November 29th Mr. W. H. Ward (lecturer at University College, London, member of the Architectural Society) gave a most clever and instructive lecture on “The Evolution of The Typical French Château and Hôtel of the XVIth and XVIIth centuries and of the XVth century Castle and Townhouse,”

The third lecture on February 4th was by Mr. Anderson, Secretary to the Berkshire Education Committee, on “The Balkans,” in which country he has extensively travelled, and has visited those parts of the Balkan Peninsular not generally frequented by tourists, though this lecture was not in the technical sense an archæological one, it was greatly appreciated by those who heard it, as it explained

many points connected with the war, which is now being waged in that part of Europe.

On February 25th Mr. J. Hautenville Cope lectured on "Eversley and Bramshill," an interesting subject, as Eversley is frequently visited by people from all parts, on account of its connection with Charles Kingsley, also Bramshill House is within that parish.

On March 11th Mr. James Townsend, author of "The History of Abingdon," gave a most delightful lecture on the history of that borough; which at one time was the "County Town" of Berkshire. Abingdon has an interesting history and the Society is much indebted to the lecturer for telling so much about it. It is much to be hoped that during the next winter session other members of the Society will give lectures, dealing with the history of our locality.

On April 4th the members of the Berkshire Archæological Society had the pleasure of listening to a most charming lecture from their president, on "Hanney, Lyford, Charney-Bassett and Denchworth." The manner, in which this lecture was appreciated, was shown by the very large number of members and their friends. The lantern slides used to illustrate this lecture, were from photographs specially taken by Messrs. Walton Adams, of Reading.

The members of the Society take this opportunity of thanking those, who, so kindly gave lectures, during the past session. Their services have been highly appreciated. Gratitude must also be given to those ladies and gentlemen, who provided tea for the audiences after each lecture, viz. the President and Mrs. Keyser, Sir Edward and Lady Barry, Miss Waldron, Mr. and Mrs. Petrocokino and others.

(B) EXCURSIONS.

Following the precedent of last year, the Society made another "two-day excursion," this time to Gloucester, on the 14th and 15th of June. That this form of excursion is popular, is clearly shown by the very large number who took part in it, viz. 54, but how far the Society is justified in going out of the County, is a matter of opinion.

A local Archæological Society exists "prima facie" for the study and advancement of matters archæological within its own proper area and respective district; by no means can our Society be said to have exhausted its own area, (this matter will be referred to again under "Work of the Society.")

While at Gloucester the "headquarters" of the Berkshire visitors were at the Bell Hotel. On the first day (June 14th,) the Cathedral was visited; the Dean (the very Rev. E. D. Spence-Jones, D.D.)

conducted the party round the building and explained the various points of interest. After leaving the Cathedral, the Church of St. Nicholas was visited, where an old Reading friend, Mr. Roland Austin, now librarian of the Gloucester Free Library ; but formerly assistant librarian of the Reading Free Library ; received the Society and described the building. The Church of St. Mary de Cript was next seen, whence a move was made to the Bishop's Palace, here the Society was most hospitably entertained to tea by the Bishop (the Right Rev. Edgar Charles Sumner Gibson, D.D.) and Mrs. Gibson. Tea finished, his lordship gave an address on the history of the Palace and conducted his guests over the house, also under the Bishop's guidance the cloisters and the chapter-house were seen. From the Palace the party went to the Church of St. Mary de Lode, whose architectural details were so ably explained by Mr. Keyser. In the evening the Mayor (Councillor Vaughan-Jackson) and the Mayoress welcomed the Society to a reception, at which the Town Clerk (Mr. G. S. Blakeway) exhibited the Corporation plate, the insignia and the city records, and gave a most interesting description of these "exhibits." On the following morning, the party went by steamer to Tewkesbury, halting "en route" to inspect Deerhurst Church and the curious old Saxon Chapel close to the Church. Mr. Keyser pointed out the chief objects of interest of both these buildings. At Tewkesbury a visit was paid to the fine old Abbey Church, where the Vicar (the Rev. Canon O. P. Wardell-Verburgh) kindly read a paper dealing with the history of the Church. To all those, who entertained the Society and assisted in making this excursion so very pleasant, most grateful thanks are accorded.

On July 31st the second summer excursion took place, when under the President's able guidance, the Churches of Didcot, East-Hagbourne, Blewbury Upton, Harwell and Steventon were seen. Unfortunately Mr. Ditchfield could not be present on this occasion, having met with an accident that morning.

The third and last expedition was on September 6th, Sonning and Hambledon being the places selected. At the former, the President conducted the Society round the excavations, which he is making, of the site of the ancient palace of the bishops of Salisbury at Sonning. At Hambledon, a tour of the recently excavated Roman Villa was made. Mr. Heneage Cocks, who has carried out the excavations, explained the details, etc.

ANNUAL MEETING.

The Annual Meeting was held on April 19th, 1912, at the Abbey Gateway, Reading. The Annual Report and the Treasurer's statement were both adopted. The various officers were elected for the ensuing year. The Committee was chosen, with the addition of the following gentlemen; Messrs. S. G. Collier, J. Hautenville Cope, M. Macartney, F.S.A. and A. W. Sutton. Mr. Keyser was unanimously re-elected President. To their President, the Society is very much indebted, for the time he has devoted to it and the manner in which he has advanced its interests. During the period, the Society has had the honour of Mr. Keyser as President, scarcely a meeting has been held at which he has not been present, also in the arrangements for the "two-day excursions," he has personally visited, previous to the meeting, the place selected, to see that everything should be in proper readiness for the Society. The beautiful pictures of Berkshire Churches, which have been appearing in recent numbers of the Journal, are his gifts.

PUBLICATIONS.

The Berks, Bucks and Oxon Archæological Journal has now arrived at its nineteenth year of publication. During the past year the President has continued his learned architectural descriptions of Berkshire Churches, the letterpress, as before stated, being illustrated by plates, which he, as in former years, has so generously presented.

To the October number (1912) Mr. J. Horace Round, L.L.D. contributed a brilliant article on the "Manorial History of Frilsham." Mr. Round is one of the greatest living authorities on such matters and the thanks of the Editor and the readers of the Journal are but due to him for his kindness. The Rev. F. T. Wethered has published in the same periodical, his transcriptions of deeds dealing with the history of Hurley Priory, of which place he has such a vast knowledge and in which he takes so deep an interest. Mr. J. W. Dodgson has written on the history of the Church and parish of Blewbury, a large portion of his work being taken from original documents. Mrs. Cope has written on "Eversley and its Registers;" Mrs. Climenson on "Old Time Remedies" and the Rev. J. E. Field has begun his notes "On the Topography of North Morton." Also the "Notes and Queries" part of the Journal has not only been continued but enlarged; but it must be pointed out that several queries have as yet not been answered; the editors are hoping to enlarge the

question section of the Journal and would remind readers that their help would be of the greatest assistance in solving difficulties.

Those interested in the history of the County will be pleased to learn that the third volume of the "Victoria County History of Berkshire" is nearing completion. The proofs of the hundreds of Charlton, Compton, Faircross, Reading, Theale and Sonning have already been sent to Mr. Ditchfield and Mr. J. Hautenville Cope for supervision.

During the past year the following works dealing with places within the County have been published. Miss Sharp, who is so well known as the authoress of the "History of Ufton Court," has in conjunction with the Rev. W. O. Clinton, rector of Padworth, published a history of that village. This work was noticed in the October number of the Berks Archæological Journal.

Mr. Dormer published an account of "Earley and its Owners," a painstaking work, a review of which appeared in the April Journal (1912).

During the past year the Rev. J. E. Field issued a work entitled "The Myth of the Pent Cuckoo." This book will be welcomed by all students of folklore, especially by those who take an interest in Berkshire folklore, of which as yet, little has been published.

PRESENTATION TO THE REV. P. H. DITCHFIELD.

Early in the year, it was felt by the members that some recognition should be taken of the work which Mr. Ditchfield had done for the Society. A letter from the President was sent to all the members, pointing out that Mr. Ditchfield had been the Secretary for nearly a quarter of a century and how during all that long time he had so ungrudgingly given up his time to advance the interests of the Society. This appeal met with ready response, there were 86 subscribers; from the amount collected a silver centrepiece together with an illuminated address was presented to Mr. Ditchfield at the meeting at Gloucester, while Mrs. Ditchfield was also the recipient of a diamond pendant. The text of the address will be found in the July Journal (1912). Mr. Ditchfield's letter of thanks, together with the names of the subscribers, is printed in the January Journal (1913). Had it not been for the way in which the Secretary had worked for the Society in past years, it is more than doubtful if it would now be in existence; thanks to the manner in which he steered it during the past—some years ago,—when it was at a low ebb; it has now arrived at its prosperous condition. It is the hope

and wish of all members that Mr. Ditchfield may be spared to be the secretary for many years to come.

THE WORK OF THE SOCIETY.

So far this report has contained but a bare account of the Society for the year last past : but the question may well be asked, what has the Society done as an Archæological and Antiquarian Society to forward archæological research and how as a Society does it stand and compare with other similar societies ?

(A) NUMBERS.

At the last Annual Meeting attention was drawn to the small number of its membership in comparison with other associations of the same kind ; such as the Gloucestershire Society, which comprises about 560 members, while the Berkshire has but 154 subscribers.

That a county like Berkshire, which contains a large number of what may be called well-to-do folk should have so small a Society calls for some comment. To those who think on this matter, two thoughts must occur ; do the residents of this County take such a small interest in its general history that they will not support the Society, or is it that the present number of members do not bestir themselves to obtain new ones ? If each member would but try and get one new annual subscriber, the membership of the Society would be very speedily raised. Again whether the interests of archæology would not be better served by one county society than by two is a question that may be very properly asked ? Perhaps ere long it may be thought advisable to lift this matter above the limits of "academical debate." Larger counties than Berkshire have but one Society engaged in archæological work.

(B) RESEARCH WORK.

In the annual report for 1911-12 the Secretary wrote, "we should like to have to record some work of excavation undertaken by the Society, or some transcriptions of ancient monastic charters and documents," so far this appeal has been in vain ; here again the Society lags behind other bodies of the same description. If others can do the same sort of work, it appears to be strange that the Berkshire Society cannot do the same. Let a few examples from the labours of other societies be quoted. In the adjacent County of Surrey, the Surrey Archæological Society is publishing "A list of local antiquities." In another neighbouring county, Hampshire, the Hampshire Field Club is engaged on the task of producing a map of the earthworks of that county.

(C) PRESERVATION OF ANCIENT MONUMENTS.

A few years ago the Government appointed a Royal Commission to report on what ancient monuments should be scheduled as worthy of preservation. So far in this county (Berkshire) nothing has as yet been done ; but the time has now arrived, when the Society should take steps to draw up such a list in conjunction with the County Council, similar to work that is being performed in other counties in England. That the County of Berkshire will before long come within the region and scope of the Commission's enquiry does not allow a doubt and it must be patent to all that it is the duty of a local archæological to undertake such a task as that to which reference has been made. For fuller information on this subject see the reports already published by this Commission, also the last report of the " Committee on Ancient Earthworks and Fortified Enclosures," presented to the Congress of Archæological Societies (1912).

(D) LOCAL COMMITTEES.

In the last report the Secretary very ably pleaded for the establishment of " local committees " at various centres throughout the County, whose duties, amongst other matters, should be to report on discoveries of antiquarian interest, etc., within their respective districts. So far nothing has been done, but it is sincerely hoped that at the Annual Meeting at which this report will be presented the members will rise to the occasion and grant the establishment of such committees, which Mr. Ditchfield so earnestly desires to see started. Furthermore the Society is most seriously asked to consider the suggestions which have been made for its developement on lines similar to other County Archæological Societies and at the ensuing Annual Meeting to most thoroughly discuss these plans. It must ever be borne in mind, that a Society, such as this, is judged by what it does, by what it puts forth in the interest of archæological study and research. If members would but realise this fact, the thought may be expressed that more might be done to raise the Society to a higher state of efficiency.

GIFTS TO THE SOCIETY.

Miss Wroughton, who some years ago, made sketches of the Church plate in some of our Berkshire Churches, has recently presented these drawings to the Society. This generous gift is greatly prized and the opportunity is taken to thank this lady for her kindness. An account of this collection will be given in the July number of the Journal.*

* Held over till October for want of space.

OBITUARY.

Year by year, the record has to be made of old friends and supporters, whom death has called away. This year the death-roll contains the names of Mr. James Parker, F.G.S. ; to the January Journal Mr. Percy Manning, F.S.A. contributed a special obituary notice of this gentleman, in which he described the world-wide reputation enjoyed by Mr. Parker not only as an antiquary, but also as a geologist and an expert in liturgical matters. Four other members of the Society must also, alas be included in the "death-roll," Mr. G. Bird, Mr. Wells, Mr. Samuel Wheeler and Mrs. H. B. Blandy who all took an interest in the welfare of the Society, by being present at the lectures held during the winter session, or by taking part in the summer excursions.

FINANCE.

Appended to this report is the Treasurer's Annual Statement of accounts. Mr. Ravenscroft reports that it would save a great deal of time and a vast amount of correspondence, if members would, without being reminded, forward their subscriptions as soon as such fall due. It must be remembered that the rent and rates payable for the Society's meeting place—the Abbey Gateway—are heavy items in the expenditure, which have to be met with prompt regularity. In addition the charges for lighting, fuel and for the hire of the lantern, all have to be paid when due, consequently if subscriptions are allowed to fall into arrear, the funds suffer and there is not always the requisite amount in hand to meet the bills. It may be pointed out that for the present year (1913) there are £40 10s. od. still unpaid, which the treasurer most earnestly asks may be paid with as little delay as possible.

With this the report closes ; but the request is made to each member of the Society to do all that lies within their power to forward and advance the usefulness of The Berkshire Archæological Society.



Treasurer's Report for Annual Meeting, May 2nd, 1913.

CASH STATEMENT FOR YEAR 1912.

Receipts.		Expenses.	
1912.	£ s. d.	1912.	£ s. d.
Cash in hand, January 1st, 1912	... 0 10 0	Paid Caretaker	... 9 7 3½
By Subscriptions for 1909	... 2 5 6	Wood, Coal and Gas Accounts	... 9 8 2
" " 1910	... 11 5 6	Rents, Rates, Taxes	... 31 12 8
" " 1911	... 47 4 6	Cost of Lectures, Lanterns, etc.	... 5 11 10
" " 1912	... 0 5 0	Postage, Carriage of Parcels, Telegrams, etc.	... 4 12 5
" " 1913	... 61 10 6	Printing, Advertising and Treasurer's Exps.	... 15 2 0
Hire of Rooms for 1911	... 3 7 0	Three years' Subscriptions to 1912 to Congress of Archæological Societies	... 3 0 0
" " 1912	... 15 13 0	Three years' Reports on "Earth Works"	... 0 15 0
Profit on Excursions	... 19 0 0	Reprints of Report	... 4 0 0
	... 7 9 9	Cash in hand, December 31st, 1912	... 5 12 2
	<u>£89 1 6½</u>		<u>£89 1 6½</u>

ERNEST RAVENSCROFT,

Hon. Treasurer,

22, The Forbury, Reading.

Audited and found Correct

W. R. MORRIS,

Shinfield Road, Reading.