

# The Berks, Bucks and Oxon Archæological Journal

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## Berkshire Archæological Society

THE Annual Meeting of the Society was held in the History Room of University College, Reading, on Saturday, April 26th, when the President, Mr. Charles E. Keyser, F.S.A., presided, and a large number of members and their friends were present. After the reading of the minutes the following Report of the Hon. Secretary of the year's work was read by the Rev. P. H. Ditchfield:

On behalf of the Council your Hon. Secretary has the honour of presenting the Report of the Society's work during the past year.

In spite of many social and political changes the Society has endeavoured to carry on its usual activities and to promote the objects for which it was founded more than half a century ago. It must be remembered that the work of our Society embraces three distinct aims, which may be thus classified: (1) Experimental acquaintance with historic buildings, churches and sites, by personal inspection, (2) the investigation of all that concerns the history and archæology of the county, the encouragement of architectural and historical study, and contributory help towards the restoration of public buildings of national interest, and (3) an educative function by lectures and the publication of articles in the Journal and elsewhere giving the results of original investigation and enquiry.

During the past year we have to notice the publication of a work of considerable importance in elucidating the history of the county and that Volume III of the Victoria County History of Berkshire has been issued, which is due to the untiring energy of the General Editor of the series, Mr. William Page, F.S.A.

It will be remembered that the incident of the Great War occurred just when Volumes III. and IV. were on the eve of publication and were both in type. The war came; wealthy supporters were obliged to withdraw their financial assistance; everybody's energies were transferred to the paramount duty of carrying on the war and saving England, and the offices were closed down. In spite of a severe illness, Mr. Page has succeeded in reviving the work. At his new residence he built a large room for the housing of the mass of papers and literature upon which the history is founded, and has now been able to issue the third volume, which contains the topography of ten Hundreds, and if sufficient support is given to this volume, Volume IV. will be proceeded with immediately. The cost of the book is three guineas, and it is issued by the St. Catherine's Press, Stanford Street, Waterloo. I regret to say that about half the members of the original committee have died since I first drew it up, and new supporters are urgently needed.

Your Secretary regrets that owing to two unfortunate accidents in the past year his activities were somewhat curtailed; but the work was ably carried on by Mr. Morley and Mr. Cope and did not suffer appreciably by his absence. He is grateful to the members for their sympathy in his misfortunes.

#### EXCURSIONS.

At the earnest request of several members a two-days' excursion was made to London on July 26th and 27th, which entailed a vast amount of preparaton on your Secretary and Treasurer. We were fortunate in securing the services of Mr. A. H. Blake, whose knowledge of London is extraordinarily extensive. The party visited St. Bartholomew's, Smithfield, and were shown all the newly-discovered cloisters, the Charterhouse described by your Secretary, Ely Place, the Guildhall, Royal Exchange, Mercer's Hall (where we were entertained to tea by the Mercers' Company), Westminster (described by Mr. Blake), the Tower, All Hallows Church (Barking), St. Olave's (Hart Street), Great St. Helen's, and other places of interest in the City.

A second excursion was made to Western Berkshire, which was largely attended. The President described the churches, including Enborne, Hampstead Marshall, Inkpen, Avington. Your Secretary told the story of Hampstead Marshall House

and of Hungerford, where the Town Clerk welcomed the Society in the name of the Constable, who in the unreformed corporation occupies the usual position of Mayor. Tea was served in the Town Hall, and as it was the birthday of the President his health was cordially proposed.

#### LECTURES.

During the Winter Session seven lectures have been delivered.

At the last annual meeting on April 14th a paper was read by Mr. Petrocokino, written by his friend Mr. Hallam, on 'The Home of Horace.'

On *October 23rd*, the President gave a lecture, 'Architectural Notes on the Churches of Bucklebury, Farnborough, Stanford Dingley and Chaddleworth,' illustrated by a large number of very beautiful slides specially prepared for the occasion.

On *November 24th*, Mr. P. Williams gave a lecture on 'Roman Roads in Berkshire,' upon the preparation of which he had expended much time and labour. It was illustrated by several lantern slides.

On *December 15th* a meeting was held in conjunction with the Reading Society of Architects, when Mr. Wing lectured on Caversham and its history.

On *January 23rd*, 1924, Professor Stenton delivered an important lecture on 'Recent Work on English Place Names.'

On *February 23rd*, the Rev. W. Fothergill Robinson was to have lectured on 'Some Archaeological Discoveries in Italy,' but was prevented by ill-health and his departure from Reading. His place was kindly taken by the President, who gave a lecture on the Church of Burford, illustrated by slides.

On *March 29th*, Mr. Arthur L. Humphreys, F.S.A., delivered a learned lecture on 'Elias Ashmole, the First Berkshire Historian.'

The thanks of the Society are due to these gentlemen for their valuable and interesting lectures, and also to the ladies and gentlemen who have entertained the members to tea at the close of the proceedings. Their names are: The President and Mrs. Keyser, Mr. and Mrs. F. N. A. Garry of Yattendon, Sir

Rickman and Lady Godlee, Mr. Galt-Miller and Mr. W. Wing, Mrs. Beach, Mrs. Wedderburn and Mrs. Jenkins, Mrs. Holden and Miss Walter, and at this annual meeting Mr. and Mrs. Garry have again invited the members. The hospitality of the Worshipful Company of Mercers of London, the premier City Company, will not be forgotten.

The two branches of the Society, at Abingdon and South-east Berkshire, have been active and doing good work. At Abingdon, under the management of Mr. d'Almaine, Mr. Preston, and Mr. Hyde-Parker, lectures have been delivered and excursions made, and the great work of excavating the foundations of the Abbey has been carried out. Mr. d'Almaine has with much perseverance succeeded in securing that Wayland's Smithy should be declared a national monument, so that its preservation is assured. Some important lectures have been arranged by the South-eastern Branch under the direction of Mr. and Mrs. Cope. About 80 members were added to our list, and a closer association between the Branch and the parent Society has been determined.

#### UNIVERSITY COLLEGE.

The Society owes gratitude to the University College, Reading, for the hospitality the authorities afford us in permitting us to hold our meetings at the College. They grant to us every privilege and convenience. The College is making strenuous efforts this year to obtain a charter for the founding of a University of Reading. The Society wishes the Principal and Governors every success in attaining the results of their zealous labours.

In addition to other privileges afforded to the Society, the College consented to find space for the housing of our Library. Owing to lack of room it has hitherto been placed in a somewhat dark corner of a passage; but during the present vacation the bookcases have been removed to the magnificent new library buildings which have recently been erected. The College should be congratulated upon the possession of this noble building, the gift of the late Mr. George W. Palmer. It is planned upon the most approved principles, and both architecturally and for utility it is an immense gain to the College. The architects, Messrs. Chas. Smith and Son, are to be heartily con-

gratulated upon their achievement. The Librarian has kindly arranged for the removal of our books to their new quarters without any cost to the Society, and for this service we owe to him and the College our thanks. The books will now be open to the members who will doubtless make frequent use of them.

#### LOCAL HISTORY RECORDS SCHEME.

This scheme owes its initiation to the energy of Mr. Charles Willcocks, F.R.I.B.A. After much preliminary work it was finally launched in March, and has been exceptionally well received. Already over a hundred Local Correspondents have been enrolled in about sixty parishes, and it is hoped that ere long every parish will have its Local Correspondent. The records already received are most interesting, containing particulars of the discovery of Roman remains, old camps, tumuli, place-names, heraldry, bells, brasses, local worthies and ghosts.

The Berkshire Records are to be kept in loose-leaf ledgers at the Reading Central Reference Library. They will be filed under parishes and indexed under subjects, and be available at any time for inspection. Miss Maslen, the Hon. Secretary, will gladly welcome inquiries. Preliminary arrangements are now being made with regard to the London headquarters, where duplicate copies of the Records are to be housed. Arrangements are also being made to extend the scheme to Oxfordshire, and enquiries with regard to it have been received from other counties, and a considerable development appears probable.

Your Council has voted a sum of money to the National Trust for the preservation and acquiring by the of Trust the Roman Villa of Chadworth in Gloucestershire, one of the most perfect in the kingdom, and other donations would be welcome. The Council has also voted the sum of three guineas to architectural students as prizes for measured drawings of ancient buildings in an annual competition arranged by the Reading Society of Architects.

The *Berks, Bucks and Oxon Archaeological Journal* continues to be published, and is delivered free to members subscribing 10s. per annum. With increased income it may be possible to increase its size. The Editors would be glad to re-

ceive contributions of notes and articles from the members. Dr. Grundy, of Oxford, is contributing valuable articles on Berkshire Charters, and the President's next article, abundantly illustrated, is awaited. It should be realised that the value of the contents of the *Journal* must depend upon the zeal and industry of the members. If they do not read and study and engage in research work, and send their contributions to the Editor, they must not complain if the contents of the *Journal* are inadequate and its pages dull.

An index of the contents of the *Berks, Bucks and Oxon Archæological Journal*, and of its predecessor, the *Journal of the Berks Archæological Society*, has long been wanted. It has been decided to issue this index, which has been made by Mr. Bunce, of the Reading Library, as the next Part of the first-mentioned *Journal*.

#### BERKSHIRE BOOKS AND RESEARCH.

In addition to the publication of the Victoria County History, several works are in progress of completion. First and foremost is the great work on the Church Plate of Berkshire which Dr. Walker, F.S.A., is so carefully and perseveringly compiling. He has already traversed a large part of Berkshire, in conjunction with his daughter, and is about to resume his quest. His advent to Berkshire is a great gain to our work, though I fear his heart is still in his old county, Yorkshire, where last year he was engaged in very important excavation work among the abbeys of that great shire.

Lord Wyfold's book we welcome cordially, though he is anxious to change the name of the White Horse Hill into that of the Hill of the White Dragon. We are awaiting the early publication of our Treasurer, Mr. Morley, on Berkshire Memorial Brasses, which is nearing completion. He has bestowed immense pains on the work, and has honoured our Society by dedicating his book to us.

Mrs. Cope is engaged upon a great work on a Dictionary of Heraldry, which promises to be most useful. Professor Stenton and Major Laffan are still working hard on the study of Berkshire Place Names; the lecture to which we listened recently shows how diligently Mr. P. Williams has been studying

Roman Roads in the county by personal exploration; and there may be many others who are engaged upon particular studies whose fame has not reached us.

As I have often reminded you in these reports, the real object of membership in an archæological society is not merely to attend lectures and enjoy excursions of a 'picnic' variety flavoured with expositions of antiquarian or architectural information, but to endeavour to increase the knowledge of archæology throughout the county, to undertake some research work, to support by one's influence those who are really engaged in endeavouring to advance knowledge, and to preserve and hand down to posterity those relics of antiquity which remain as our priceless heritage, and to maintain, support and uphold those principles which have made Britain great and beautiful such as our forefathers cherished.

Mr. Morley then presented his financial statement, which showed that the Society was in a flourishing condition. The number of members was nearly 400, and there was a good balance in hand.

These reports were received and adopted and ordered to be printed in the *Journal*, and thanks were expressed to the authors.

Principal Childs' name was added to the list of Vice-Patrons, Sir Rickman Godlee, Bart., was elected Vice-President, and Major Laffan and Mr. F. N. A. Garry to the Council. Mr. Charles E. Keyser, F.S.A., was again re-elected President, on the proposition of Mr. Ditchfield, who said how fortunate the Society was in having one who was so keenly interested in archæology and architecture to preside over them. Mr. Ditchfield was re-elected Hon. Secretary, a position he has filled for many years, and Mr. Morley as Treasurer, who so ably managed the affairs of the Society. He has also accepted the office of Excursion Secretary.

At the conclusion of 'business,' Mr. F. Leigh Martineau gave an interesting lecture on 'The Search for Roman Roads,' illustrated by lantern slides, a subject to which he has devoted many years of study. A vote of thanks was accorded to him, and also to Mr. and Mrs. F. N. A. Garry, of Yattendon, who kindly entertained the members to tea at the close of the proceedings.

