

Oxford Ladies' Archæological and Brass-Rubbing Society.

YEARS 1924—1925.

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Miss SWANN, Walton Manor.

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The Society this year completed its 30th year. It continues to flourish, and some very pleasant meetings have been held. The first of these was on November 7th, 1924, when the Rev. Professor Sayce gave an account of 'A drive to Bagdad.' His graphic description of the dangers and privations of the journey was most thrilling. On May 15th Professor Sayce again most kindly gave a lecture to the Society on 'Morocco as it is.' There was a large attendance of members and friends, and after a hearty vote of thanks to Professor Sayce for his kindness in so often coming to give such interesting information to the Society, very sincere congratulations were offered to him on the honour which had just been conferred on him by the Royal Asiatic Society in the presentation of the Triennial Gold Medal. This medal was founded in 1897 'for the purpose of recognizing distinguished services in Oriental research.' The following extract from *The Times* of May 8th, 1925, will show how greatly deserving is Professor Sayce of the award :

'The award to Dr. Sayce is based, in the first place, on the great length of his services to Oriental and Assyrian

research. His first work, an Assyrian grammar, was published 53 years ago. His important contributions to cuneiform studies cover both the earliest and the latest stages. A second consideration is that of the extraordinary variety of the work of one of the few survivors of the Old Testament revision group. Vannic, Hittite, Cappadocian cuneiform, and Anatolian languages have been studied and illumined, side by side with Assyrian and Babylonian literature. Moreover, Dr. Sayce has given a great stimulus to interest in these subjects, not only by his scholarly works, but also by his lectures and popular handbooks and his ready help to younger men.'

On June 2nd, the Rev. Canon Moore gave a paper on 'Roman Britain and its Civilisation,' with local references. Very beautiful lantern slides illustrated the lecture, and Canon Moore's views of places in the neighbourhood of Oxford connected with the Romans' occupation of Britain, and his learned remarks on their evidence of the great civilisation attained by the Romans, were most instructive. The meeting took place at Hannington Hall, and after the lecture Miss Hulbert most kindly entertained the large party to tea in the library.

On July 10th an excursion took place to Stanton Harcourt and Southleigh. A large party of members and friends went by char-a-banc, motors and bicycle. The first stop was at Stanton Harcourt, where by the courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. Hunt the party were permitted to visit Pope's Tower and the old kitchen, built (according to Mr. J. H. Parker) probably about the reign of Edward IV. It is in good repair, and bears some resemblance to the Abbot's Kitchen at Glastonbury, but it is square instead of octagonal and is larger than the one at Glastonbury.

Pope's Tower has three chambers, one above the other, each 13 ft. square. The upper one is called 'Pope's Study,' and on a pane of red stained glass was this inscription, supposed to have been written by him: 'In the year 1718 Alexander Pope finished here the fifth volume of Homer.' This pane was removed and taken to the Harcourts' seat at Nuneham Courtenay, to be preserved as a valuable relique.

After leaving Pope's Tower, many of the party visited the beautifully-kept grounds surrounding it and the old 'stew

ponds,' where fish for fast days were kept by monks of the olden times. They then proceeded to the church, where the Vicar, the Rev. Mr. Farrer, kindly met them and gave them some account of the church and the monuments in it. The Church of St. Michael has a twelfth century nave, transepts and tower arches of the thirteenth, and upper part of the tower fifteenth century. On the south side of the chancel is the Harcourt Chapel, containing monuments to the Harcourt family. One of these dates from the fourteenth century. There is a good Perpendicular octagonal font. It was originally carved with IHC and emblems of the Passion, but these carvings have been replaced, in 1833, by copies, and the original carvings are carefully preserved in a case under the west window. The oak rood screen is in good repair; it is said to be the earliest as yet noted in England.

After thanking the Vicar for his kindness, the party went to the Harcourt Arms, where a most bounteous and very welcome tea was provided by Mrs. Wright, under the trees in her pretty garden. After full justice had been done to it, the party proceeded to Southleigh Church. This has some Norman remains, but it is principally of Perpendicular work. The church is noted for being the one in which John Wesley preached his first sermon. The church has some very good glass, but its most striking feature is its frescoes. Those representing the Last Judgment are weird in the extreme. It is probable that the frescoes date from near the close of the fifteenth century. Unfortunately some of them have been injured by damp, and it is to be hoped that attention will be given to their condition.

After leaving Southleigh the party returned to Oxford after a most pleasant excursion, the arrangements for which had been made by Mrs. Whitmarsh, to whom a hearty vote of thanks was given.