

## Local History Recording Scheme : Berkshire Branch.

### TENTH ANNUAL REPORT.

THE tenth Annual Report of the Committee of the Berkshire Branch of the Local History Recording Scheme covers the period from January 1st to December 31st, 1933.

From our Local Correspondents, up to the end of last year, 388 approved records had been received relating to 111 Parishes in the County. During the year, 20 new Local Correspondents were enrolled, and the total number of Correspondents at the end of December was 289, representing 200 Parishes, as compared with 287 Correspondents, representing 198 Parishes at the end of 1932.

Several of our Local Correspondents have died during the year, and others have resigned owing to their having left the County; but the vacancies thus caused are being gradually filled, and at the end of the year three only of the 203 Parishes into which the County is divided for Record purposes were entirely without a representative. The Committee much regrets the death of Mr. C. J. Soltau, the President of the Windsor and Eton Scientific and Archaeological Society, who ably represented that body on our Committee.

The Berkshire Branch of the Local History Recording Scheme continues to make steady progress in its endeavour to save as much as possible of the fast disappearing store of local fact and legend, and a considerable amount of solid work has been accomplished during the year. Active help in the work of the Scheme is, however, urgently required in all parts of the County, and the Committee would earnestly appeal to all interested in local history to assist, as there are many Parishes in the County concerning which very little recorded history exists.

Local Correspondents wishing to do some definite work in connection with the Scheme who do not find material in their

own district, are asked to communicate with the Hon. Secretary, as help is needed in various lines of research, etc., which the Committee will be glad to indicate to those willing to assist.

An important feature of the year's work has been the loan to the Scheme, by various Local Correspondents, of interesting MSS., deeds, etc., in their custody. In cases where the loan was for a limited period only, full notes and descriptions of each item were made before its return, and in this manner a useful collection of information will gradually be amassed with the co-operation of Local Correspondents and others. During the past year much unrecorded information relating particularly to the Brightwell and Brightwalton districts has been collected in this manner, and included in such deposits is the MS. Commonplace Book of William Savory, a well known worthy of the Brightwalton district in the 18th century. Our thanks are due to the Hon. Director for having arranged these loans. An interesting donation to the Scheme during the year was made by Mr. R. T. Freeman, and consists of a set of newspaper-cutting books relating to Berkshire, compiled between 1884 and 1932 by Mr. William Tosland.

Very valuable work in the recording of Churchyard Inscriptions has again been carried out during the year, principally by Mr. L. H. Chambers and by Mr. W. H. Hallam, who have each contributed complete transcriptions of the Memorials in several Parishes. The Committee wish to take this opportunity of paying a very warm tribute to these most careful and indefatigable workers, and to ask other Local Correspondents to assist in this very useful and necessary work. The inscriptions in some 95 churchyards have now been received or promised, but, in the meantime, the inscriptions on the tombstones in many churchyards are rapidly becoming obliterated, and, it is feared, will soon become entirely indecipherable, so that a special effort must be made to transcribe them without delay. Will all Correspondents who have time to devote to this work in their own or neighbouring Parishes kindly communicate at once with the Hon. Secretary, who will be glad to inform them whether the memorials in any particular Parish have already been transcribed, or to allot a

Parish in their district which urgently needs attention. 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 many of our churchyards, but which are, unfortunately, in many cases crumbling away.

With regard to the finances of the Scheme, there was at the end of the year a balance in hand of £1 7s., compared with the balance in hand of £2 14s. 9d. at the end of the previous year.

Our thanks are once again due to the Chairman, Hon. Director, Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer for all the work they have done during the past year to ensure the continued success of the Scheme.