

Local History Recording Scheme : Berkshire Branch.

TWENTY-SECOND ANNUAL REPORT.
January 1st to December 31st, 1945.

FROM our Local Correspondents during the year 15 records have been received, and, up to the end of 1945, 652 approved records had been sent in relating to 149 parishes in the county. Two new Local Correspondents were enrolled during the year, and our Correspondents now number 181, representing 167 parishes. We much regret to report the deaths of several Correspondents during the year. Others, serving in H.M. Forces, or otherwise engaged, have not been able to give us active assistance. In spite of all difficulties, however, interest in the Scheme has been maintained and records have been sent in regularly each quarter. The result is that important series of Local History Records are being built up which are proving of much value to students of local history. It might be noted that Berkshire apparently is the only county in which such records are being regularly compiled, with the result that we now have a collection of Local History Records such as is possessed by no other county.

For the past five years the Committee has stressed the importance of collecting local annals of the present as well as of the past. The Committee would urge Correspondents once again to collect without delay all possible information on the effects of the war on the different parishes in the county. As has been pointed out, notes on such matters as the ploughing up of grass lands, war service, the effects of enemy action, evacuation, billeting, and the work of various war-time organisations, if carefully collected now while the information is still obtainable, will form a most valuable series of records for future reference in the days when such material will be impossible to procure.

At the present time there is a definite awakening of interest in all matters relating to local history and the importance of its study and the use and value of the Local Survey are becoming increasingly recognised. The history of their own village, town or district is of great interest to many people, but for such histories to be made generally available all qualified must assist in the compilation of the records.

With this aim in view the Committee wishes to take this opportunity of asking Local Correspondents and members of Affiliated Societies to make a special endeavour to spread knowledge of the Scheme and its aims among those who are interested in local history and to enlist their help in this very necessary and important work.

Now that the war is over it is hoped to extend very considerably

the activities of the Scheme, but in order to do this much more help will be required in all parts of the county. Those interested in local history are reminded that the Notes for Local Correspondents, published by the Berkshire Branch of the Scheme, and sent to all willing to assist, give full particulars of the kind of information to be collected.

With reference to finance ; at the end of 1945 the balance in hand was £7 18s. 2d.

The Committee wishes to thank again the various Affiliated Societies for their interest and support, and also to record its appreciation of the work of the Chairman, the Hon. Director, the Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer, and to express its gratitude to the various Correspondents who have sent in records during the year and in other ways have helped to further the work of the Scheme.