

## Local History Recording Scheme : Berkshire Branch.

### TWELFTH ANNUAL REPORT.

THE Twelfth Annual Report of the Committee of the Berkshire Branch of the Local History Recording Scheme covers the period from January 1st to December 31st, 1935. Our Local Correspondents now number 280, representing 197 Parishes, and from these Correspondents 456 approved Records have been received, relating to 126 Parishes in the county ; 26 Records have been received this year.

We regret to report that we have suffered the loss of several valued Correspondents during the year, among them being Mr. W. F. Spikes, who was keenly interested in local history, and was a member of the Committee of the Berkshire Branch of the Recording Scheme. Other Correspondents have left the district during the year, and are no longer able to give us active help. On this account, therefore, the Committee wish to take this opportunity of urging all Local Correspondents and members of affiliated Societies to make every endeavour to spread knowledge of the Scheme and of its aims amongst those known to them who are interested, or likely to take an interest, in local history.

The Berkshire Branch of the Scheme continues to make steady progress in its attempt to preserve valuable facts of local history which might otherwise be lost either owing to their being previously unrecorded, or to existing records being lost sight of or forgotten. In the past, old legends, traditions, and fragments of local lore were handed down from father to son. Now, owing to changing social conditions and habits in the life and work of the countryside, much of the traditional knowledge which has come down to us through the ages will be lost with the passing of the present generation. The Committee would, therefore, bring this aim of the Scheme more particularly to the notice of Correspondents, and would urge them to collect and record information relating to local customs and other elements of our Berkshire folk-lore before it is too late.

With regard to Monumental Inscriptions, work on the Memorials in several additional Parishes has been undertaken during the year, and in all, Inscriptions in 104 Parishes have now been received or promised. Mr. L. G. Chambers, Mr. W. H. Hallam, Dr. C. J. Girling and Miss M. Goodey continue their useful work in this connection. As the Committee have pointed out on other occasions, the inscriptions on many tombstones are rapidly becoming obliterated, and it is therefore urgent that they should be copied at the earliest possible moment.

The Committee would again take the opportunity of reminding the owners of old deeds and documents relating to Berkshire that these may be deposited under the Scheme. Those already received, now calendared and listed under Parishes, are proving of great service to students of local history and to those engaged in studying the records of old Berkshire families; in private hands such collections of old deeds are seldom of practical use. Among others received during the year is a particularly interesting deed from Mr. Wilfred J. Jeffery, of the British Museum, chiefly notable for much curious writing on the back in the hand of some bygone Lambourn worthy.

On March 2nd, the Honorary Director gave a lecture on the Scheme to the Caversham Literary and Debating Society.

With regard to finance, the Hon. Treasurer reports that there was at the end of the year a balance in hand of £5 3s. 8d.

The thanks of the Committee are due to the various affiliated Societies for their continued encouragement and support in the working of the Berkshire Branch of the Recording Scheme; the Committee would also wish to thank the Chairman, the Hon. Director, the Hon. Secretary and the Hon. Treasurer, for the work they have done during the past year to promote the interests of the Scheme, and also the different Correspondents who have sent in Records during the year.

M.S.