

## THE BERKSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

### Report of the Council for 1976

1. THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Society was held at Reading University on 1st May, 1976. Dr C. F. Slade took the chair and proposed the adoption of the Annual Report and Accounts for 1975, which with the Minutes of the A.G.M. of 26th April, 1975, were accepted. Dr Slade was elected President for a further term as were the Vice-Presidents. Mr L. J. Over was elected Hon. Secretary in place of Mr Underhill, who was retiring on account of ill health. Mr Underhill was proposed for the new position of Hon. Architectural Officer. Mr Gwatkin resigned from the Editorial Committee and as Field Work Officer. The remaining Honorary Officers, including Mr Gafford as Hon. Treasurer and Mr Wilson as Deputy Secretary were re-elected. Mr Hayward was re-elected Hon. Auditor.

In accordance with Rule 5 the following Council members retired and offered themselves for re-election: Dr H. Pike, Miss A. Green, and Mr C. C. Stanley, representing the Middle Thames Archaeological Society. Dr Fletcher, Dr Dumbleton and Mr W. J. Smith resigned from Council. The following were elected to fill Council vacancies: Mr Grenville Astill, Mr Leslie Cram and Mr Gareth Thomas.

There being no other business Dr Slade then delivered his Presidential Address on *Norman Churches in Sicily*.

#### 2. MEMBERSHIP

Hon.	Corporate	Ordinary	Deaths	Total
7	21	428	7	463

Eighteen new members joined during the year. It is with regret that the following deaths are recorded: Mr P. S. Spokes (1932), Mr F. Sharpe (1938), Mr R. H. Tozer (1951), Mrs H. Mole (1935), Mr L. King (1938), The Hon. David Smith (1961), Miss D. Mason (1966). Obituaries on these members have been provided by Mr Underhill.

3. THE SOCIETY. All meetings were well supported. A five-day excursion to Kent in co-operation with members of the Newbury District Field Club was a great success. The Industrial Archaeology Group arranged three excursions during the summer months which were joined by our members.

4. OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY. It was with regret that the Society accepted the resignation of Mr Underhill as Hon. Secretary due to ill health. He had held the

position since 1948, and through his drive and enthusiasm the Society had grown from strength-to-strength during his period of office. The position of Hon. Secretary was filled by Mr L. J. Over, but such was the work load that it was necessary to appoint an Hon. Programmes Secretary to deal with lectures and the smooth running of the meetings. This position was filled by Council Member, Mr C. L. Cram, who has been of great assistance during the year. Meanwhile Mr Underhill continues to assist wherever possible, and has taken on the Honorary position of Architectural Officer. Mr I. J. Lewis, the Reading Borough Librarian and Hon. Librarian for the Society, vacated both positions during the year, and his successor, Mr M. Curtis, kindly agreed to take on the Hon. Librarianship.

5. FIELDWORK AND EXCAVATION. The chief activities in the county were carried out by the Berkshire Archaeological Unit supported by the Department of Environment (see separate report). The Maidenhead Archaeological and Historical Society carried out excavations at their site at Heywood's Farm, White Waltham, and made considerable progress in their survey of White Waltham Parish. They also set up a store and workshop for post-excavation work. All these activities come under member Mr R. F. Weng.

Mr C. C. Stanley of the Middle Thames Society continued his extensive aerial survey work of the South of England and local sites. Besides throwing some new light on Silchester Roman town, he discovered several new sites on the Devils Highway, and a new Roman villa at Manor Farm, Streatley. At Cippenham he located several ring ditches near the moated site of Little Chapels which he also proved to be originally a circular earthwork.

Excavation at Reading Abbey stables, directed by Dr C. F. Slade, was begun under the auspices of the Berkshire Archaeological Unit and was continued independently.

6. THE BERKSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMMITTEE. The Committee met for consultation six times during the year, and is mainly responsible for the administration of the Berkshire Archaeological Unit. The Society is well represented on this Committee including Dr C. F. Slade as Chairman, Mr C. L. Cram as Secretary, Mr J. G. Gafford as Treasurer, and Mr G. Astill as Director of the Unit.

## THE BERKSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

### 7. BERKSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

1. *Liaison work:* The Unit has continued to provide information to both the District and County Planning Offices to make sure that archaeological considerations are taken into account in short and long-term planning. In addition the Unit Staff have offered advice and encouragement to local groups, and have attempted to interest more people in archaeology by giving day schools and evening lecture-courses.

2. *Survey work:* Most of the Unit's time has been taken up with survey work in an attempt to provide priorities for future archaeological work. The setting up and servicing of a county Sites and Monuments Record has been fundamental in this respect. Following the publication of the Middle Thames Valley river gravels report, surveys of the Chalk Downland and the Plateau Gravels are well under way. These have entailed much fieldwork, and many new sites of all periods have been discovered. A report on the historic towns in the county is also nearing completion. Reports of all three will be published by the end of 1977.

3. *Excavation:* The most outstanding achievement of the short-term excavation programme has been the vast amount of new information gained about the Bronze Age settlements, hitherto unrecognised in the county—Knights Farm, Beedon and Aldermaston Wharf, (the latter being excavated by Reading University). In addition salvage work and watching briefs have been carried out at Sheffield Bottom (ring ditch), Brimpton (Bronze Age enclosure under Roman road) and Lambourn (Roman) and in the medieval centres of Newbury and Thatcham. The reports for Brimpton and Upper Lambourn are ready for publication.

The year 1977 will see the start of the large-scale excavations at Pingewood, Reading, financed by Hoveringham, and the beginning of an excavation programme on the Downs and in the urban centres.

8. **BERKSHIRE FIELD RESEARCH GROUP.** The group has undergone something of a revival this year. Three successful meetings were held to discuss the group's activities, and members lent a valuable hand with the Bronze Age/Roman Site at Brimpton.

It is envisaged that in future the group will be involved in (a) Excavation, (b) A parish survey which would involve extensive field work and (c) Processing material from previous excavations, and attempting to deal with the county's publication backlog.

9. **THE BERKSHIRE INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP.** The Berkshire Industrial Archaeology Group held trips last summer to the Ironbridge Gorge Museum, Cheddleton Flint Mill and the Gladstone Pottery Museum, Sharpness and the Thames and Severn Canal.

Courses were held with the co-operation of the University Department of Extramural Studies in Industrial Archaeology and in Fieldwork in Local

History. These were well attended and the classes will continue next Autumn.

Work has continued on the horse-wheel at Greys Court. The initial stages of rescue have begun on a horse-wheel, water-wheel and pump unit at Wareside in Hertfordshire. The horse-wheel rescued by the Group in 1966 and held in store has now been re-erected in the Acton Scott Museum in Shropshire. It is a pity that this piece of our Berkshire heritage from Swallowfield has had to go out of the county for its preservation!

10. **READING MUSEUM.** Mr T. L. Gwatkin retired as Director of the Museum in April, 1976 and Mr B. Baker has taken the position of acting-Director.

Mr C. L. Cram and Miss S. Read, two Society members working as archaeologists in the Museum report that they have received a collection of stone capitals from Reading Abbey for storage and study. They have also taken in the "Palmer Collection", a miscellanea of items illustrating the history of Huntley & Palmers. Documentary evidence allied to this has been received at Reading University.

11. **BERKSHIRE RECORD OFFICE.** Miss A. Green reported that the office continued to receive deposits of records, both private and official, throughout the year. Further parish records were received from several churches, including Windsor. Increased use of the Search Room has been made by members of the public. The office has continued to be represented on the Committee of the Berkshire Local History Association.

12. **PERSONAL.** Two members received M.B.E.'s in the New Year's Honours List. The first, Miss Doris Mellor, M.A. has campaigned for many years to save buildings at Windsor, her greatest triumph being a High Court case, when Bachelor's Acre, far too long a car park, became officially declared as a Town Green at Windsor. The second is Mr F. C. Padley our most excellent and venerable projectionist who received the award for services to education and Reading University. Mr Padley is a local historian and author.

Vice-President J. Kenneth Major has been appointed to the Committee of the Wind and Watermill section of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings; Mr J. Smith, another Vice-President, has accepted the Presidency of the Berkshire branch of the Council for the Protection of Rural England in succession to the late Hon. David Smith. Mr L. J. Over has been appointed a Berkshire representative on the Committee of the Hampshire, Surrey & Berkshire Ceramic Research Group. Mr G. G. Cullingham has prepared an Illustrated Handbook of the Windsor Tapestries and has been involved in two publications on Windsor, "The Changing Face of Windsor" and "The Book of Windsor".

### 13. LECTURES

17th January

Mr Henry Blyth on *The Practicality of Bronze Armour.*

## THE BERKSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

21st February

Mr Gordon Cullingham on *The Royal Windsor Tapestry Manufactory 1876-1890*.

20th March

Mr Kenneth Major on *The Industrial Landscape*.

1st May

(Annual General Meeting) Dr C. F. Slade on *Norman Churches in Sicily*.

16th October

Mr Michael Bayley on *Ghosts in the Thames Valley*.

13th November

Mr Grenville Astill on *Rescue Archaeology in Berkshire*.

11th December

Dr Myra Shackley on *Geo-Archaeology: Some Projects and Problems*.

### 14. EXCURSIONS

20th-24th April

A combined visit with members of the Newbury District Field Club to places of interest in Kent. Researched by Mr Underhill and Mr Wilson. Excursion led by Mr G. Cullingham.

By arrangement with the Industrial Archaeology Group, members joined them in three excursions:

24th April

To Trowbridge.

22nd May

To the Potteries.

10th July

To the Thames and Severn Canal System.

15. FINANCE. The Society's income increased marginally over that of the previous year although subscriptions and profit from excursions were less. Members' generous donations showed an increase and the punctual payment of subscriptions early in the year enabled the maximum advantage to be taken of favourable investment rates. Despite exercising the strictest economy, our expenses continued to rise, notably rent and hire of the lecture room. Nevertheless, it has been possible to maintain the annual subscriptions unchanged for a further year.

16. ACCOMMODATION. Ordinary Meetings have continued in Lecture Theatre No. 3, Reading University, London Road. It has still not been possible to provide refreshments after the meetings, but the Council intend to look further into this matter, and into the possibility of meeting elsewhere where facilities for making refreshments are available.

We are again indebted to the Director of Reading Museum for providing a room for additional Council Meetings.

### 17. OBITUARIES

*Peter Spencer Spokes, B.Sc., M.A., F.S.A.*, died at his Oxford home on 22nd January, aged 82. He had joined the Society in 1932, his family having long associations with Berkshire; there are family memorials in St. Mary's Church, Wallingford where his great-grandfather had been in business. His grandfather, Sir Peter Spokes, was a Reading councillor, being Mayor of the town 1869-71. Sir Peter's daughter, Miss Margarete Spokes was one of the founders of the Society in 1872, remaining a member all her life until her death in 1955 at the advanced age of 97. Peter Spencer took a very active interest in all matters relating to local history; for many years he was Chairman of our Council and a Vice-President. He assumed the editorship of our Journal at short notice on the outbreak of War in 1939 and it was due to his untiring efforts that publication continued without a break throughout hostilities, and he remained a member of our Editorial Committee until shortly before his decease. He contributed many articles to learned journals including a very valuable series on Coats of Arms in Berkshire Churches which were serialised over many years, (*Berks. Arch. J.*, Vols. 35-45); we also published "Notes on Domestic Architecture in Wallingford" (Vol. 50) and "Domestic Architecture in Abingdon" (Vol. 58). He was associated with the taking and collecting of photographs of Berkshire and Oxfordshire buildings for the National Monuments Record and in this, and in the illustration of armorials he was ably assisted by Mrs Spokes. He was elected F.S.A. in 1937.

*Frederick Sharpe, F.S.A.*, the campanologist died suddenly at his home in Launton on 7th February, aged 70. A historian of bells he was introduced to the Society by Mr H. B. Walters of the British Museum in 1938. He had already written a number of important articles on the subject including "Bells in the Deanery of Bicester" (1932). Mr Sharpe was soon persuaded to undertake a complete new survey of Berkshire Bells, which was serialised in our Journal from Volumes 43 to 61. The complete work was republished in book form in 1970. Meanwhile other counties were dealt with in the same manner; Radnorshire (1946-47), Oxfordshire (1949-52), Guernsey, Alderney and Sark (1964), and Herefordshire (1966-75). A survey of Gloucestershire Bells had commenced at the time of his decease. As a building contractor and engineer as well as being an accomplished musician, Mr Sharpe brought unusual qualifications to his bell expertise. To accompany him on a bell sortie was a rare experience which would include practised agility in climbing difficult steeples, technical comments on building structures and bell frames, the musical qualities of each bell as well as expert photography in often very difficult circumstances. Mr Sharpe was the first campanologist to make detailed photographs of bells and their inscriptions in belfries. He was constantly increasing his acquaintance with bells by excursions both at home and abroad. This writer accompanied him on many occasions, including an extensive tour in Belgium and Holland. With his daughter Elizabeth, Mr Sharpe

## THE BERKSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

visited France and also the northern Scottish Isles. He collected a most valuable library which, with his own MS notes and photographic negatives, survives; it is to be hoped that this will be kept intact and made available as source material for future research in the field.

*The Hon. David Smith, C.B.E.*, former Lord Lieutenant of Berkshire and High Steward of Wallingford, joined the Society in 1961 and later became a Vice-President. A younger brother of the 3rd Viscount Hambleden he became Chairman of the well-known stationery and bookselling firm of W. H. Smith & Son. He took a very active interest in county affairs including those of our Society, and received an honorary Doctorate from Reading University in 1973.

*Miss Dora Mason, M.A.*, died after a long illness on 7th June. She had joined the Society in 1966 to further her research in local history although her main interests were ornithological. Miss Mason was a valued member of our Council for many years and had undertaken the position of Assistant Hon. Secretary in 1974 when she was unfortunately struck down by illness. She left a legacy to the Society in her will.

*Leslie King* of Winnersh joined the Society in 1938 on the introduction of our former Vice-President Miss Annie Baily. He was interested in the history of Binfield, and with his wife promoted many of our activities, including excursions which he always attended.

*Mrs Hannah Mole* of Ashford Hill died on 21st May. She had joined the Society in 1935 and for many years was a regular attender at meetings and excursions, as well as corresponding with our Hon. Secretary on matters of Berkshire interest.

*Richard H. Tozer*, a Freeman of the Royal Borough of New Windsor and three times Mayor died on the 17th May. He was for very many years a most active member and Alderman on Windsor Town Council and promoted the restoration of the town's seventeenth century Guildhall in 1951 as a contribution to the Festival of Britain. A permanent local history exhibition was arranged in that Wren-type building which still continues. Mr Tozer joined our Society in 1951 and was keenly interested in our affairs for over 25 years.

BERKSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st December, 1976

EXPENDITURE		INCOME	
1975	£	1975	£
			£.p
53	Printing and Stationery ... ..	537	Subscriptions ... ..
72	Postages and Telephones ... ..	50	Donations ... ..
16	Purchase of Publications ... ..	265	Bank Interest ... ..
	<i>Subscriptions paid:</i>	90	Profit on Excursion, transferred from
	S.P.A.B. ... ..		Excursion Account ... ..
	Friends of St. George's ... ..	—	Sale of Publications other than Journals ... ..
	Friends of Reading University ... ..	—	Legacy ... ..
	C.B.A. ... ..		
	English Place Name Society ... ..		
27			45.78
			0.56
			50.00
1	Lecturers' Expenses ... ..		
			30.85
50	Rent of Room—Watlington House ... ..		3.00
42	Rent of Lecture Room, Reading University ... ..		75.00
10	Insurance ... ..		72.00
1	Gratuity ... ..		9.80
5	Auditor's Honorarium ... ..		—
13	Bank Charges ... ..		5.00
—	Travelling Expenses ... ..		12.37
—	Presentation—Mr T. L. Gwatkin ... ..		3.27
652	Balance Carried Down ... ..		5.00
			624.48
		£942	£960.41
25	<i>Reserves approved by Council:</i>		
25	Berkshire Historic Buildings Fund ... ..	652	Balance brought down ... ..
	Excavation Fund ... ..		
	Printing Cost—Vol. 68 Journal (Reserve) ... ..		
	Balance being excess of Income over Expenditure and Reserves ... ..		
			624.48
		£652	£624.48

Excavation Fund Account

	£ p		£ p
Grants:		Balance of Fund at 1st January, 1976	195.87
Aldermaston Wharf	30.00	Transfer from Income and Expenditure Account ...	20.00
Reading Abbey	25.00		
Balance of Fund at 31st December, 1976	160.87		
	<u>£215.87</u>		<u>£215.87</u>

Excursion Account

	£ p		£ p
Printing and Stationery	8.67	Profit on Excursion—Kent	61.49
Postages and Telephones	7.04		
Profit transferred to General Account	45.78		
	<u>£61.49</u>		<u>£61.49</u>

Journal Account

	£ p		£ p
Printing Volume 67	1547.70	Balance of Fund at 1st January, 1976	2243.66
Balance of Fund at 31st December, 1976	1411.93	Sale of Journals	115.97
	<u>£2959.63</u>	Provision for printing Volume 68	600.00
			<u>£2959.63</u>

Berkshire Historic Buildings Fund

Grant: St. Peters, Wallingford	...	5.00	Balance of Fund at 1st January, 1976	...	319.73
Balance of Fund at 31st December, 1976	...	340.23	Bank Interest Received	...	25.50
		<u>£345.23</u>			<u>£345.23</u>

Berkshire Field Research Group

Stationery	...	1.98	Balance at 1st January, 1976	...	33.12
Postages and Telephones	...	9.79	Subscriptions	...	13.50
Subscription C.B.A. 1975 and 1976	...	8.00			
Balance of Fund at 31st December, 1976	...	26.85			
		<u>£46.62</u>			<u>£46.62</u>

Silchester Excavation Committee Account

Balance of Account at 31st December, 1976	...	466.08	Balance at 1st January, 1976	...	431.58
		<u>£466.08</u>	Bank Interest Received	...	34.50
					<u>£466.08</u>

Balance Sheet as at 31st December, 1976

1975 £	£	£	1975 £	£	£
	<i>General Fund:</i>				
	Balance as at 1st January, 1976	2250.36			
2250	Add: Excess of Income over Expenditure and Reserves ...	4.48			26.73
		2254.84			1701.75
	<i>Other Funds:</i>				
196	Excavation ...	160.87	109	Trustee Savings Bank Current Account ...	42.81
320	Berks. Historic Buildings ...	340.23	600	Trustee Savings Bank Term Deposit 26.2.77 ...	300.00
2244	Journal (Reserve) ...	1411.93	2500	Trustee Savings Bank Term Deposit 12.8.77 ...	2500.00
33	Berks. Field Research Group ...	26.85		Barclays Bank Ltd. Current Account ...	12.66
431	Silchester Excavation Com. ...	466.08	41	National Westminster Bank Ltd. Current Account ...	25.49
169	Excursion Account—Deposits paid in advance ...	—	30		
		2495.96			
				<i>Cash in Hand:</i>	4609.44
			3	Berks. Field Research Group ...	1.36
			—	Honorary Secretary ...	50.00
		£4660.80			51.36
					£4660.80
		£5643			

We have audited the foregoing Accounts and CERTIFY that they are correctly in accordance with the books and records of the Berkshire Archaeological Society.

26 CROSS STREET, READING, BERKS.  
23rd March, 1977

C. J. HAYWARD AND COMPANY  
Chartered Accountants