

ART. I.—*Notes on the Early History of the Society.* By
the late JOHN FLAVEL CURWEN, F.S.A., F.R.I.B.A.*

ON Tuesday, the 11th day of September, 1866, at the Crown Hotel, Penrith, a meeting of those interested in the study of Archaeology was held for the purpose of establishing an Association embracing the two counties of Cumberland and Westmorland. The meeting was called by a circular signed by Mr. G. G. Mounsey, Carlisle; Rev. James Simpson, Kirkby Stephen; Mr. Robert Ferguson, Morton; Rev. A. F. Curwen, Harrington and Mr. John Whitwell of Kendal.

Mr. William Brown of Tallentire Hall, Cockermouth, occupied the chair, and he was further supported by the Rev. W. J. Greenwell, F.S.A., of Durham; Mr. Richard S. Ferguson of Lincoln's Inn; Dr. Richard Taylor of Penrith; Mr. William Nanson, Town Clerk of Carlisle; the Rev. H. Ware, vicar of Kirkby Lonsdale; and about fifty other gentlemen and ladies.

The first resolution set forth that the Society should be called the "Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society," formed "for the purpose of investigating, describing and preserving the antiquities" of the two counties, meeting at different places, to give the public, either in the shape of written papers or printed pamphlets, the result of their explorations and discoveries, thus contributing to our county history.

* Mr. Curwen was anxious that the more memorable incidents in the early history of our Society should be placed on record while they were still remembered. He accordingly began to put together some account of that history, chiefly from his own memory of the events; and he had sent the manuscript of this article to the Editors some time before his death, not proposing that it should be published, but hoping that the narrative begun by him might be continued by others. The Editors, however, feel that the only tribute they can pay to the memory of their friend and colleague is to print it as it stands.—Edd.

William, 2nd Earl of Lonsdale, was elected President; Lord Kenlis, the Hon. C. W. G. Howard and the Hon. Percy S. Wyndham, vice-presidents; Hubert Rawson of Carlisle, treasurer; and the Rev. Alfred Curwen of Harrington, Charles Wilkinson of Kendal and Charles J. Ferguson of Carlisle were elected as Secretaries.

The Rev. James Simpson was elected Chairman of the Council, and he moved the 5th resolution that Sir James Simpson, Dr. Guest of Caius College, the Rev. W. J. Greenwell of Durham and Dr. Bruce of Newcastle, each being eminent for antiquarian knowledge in his own way, should be elected as honorary members. From this day of earnest hopes and endeavour our Society has never gone backward.

On 18 August, 1870, Mr. Titus Wilson, as publisher, announced that the first part of what we now know as o.s. Vol. 1, consisting of 80 pages giving the *Transactions* for the year 1866-7, and edited by the Rev. James Simpson was ready for the subscribers. In 1868, Mr. Richard S. Ferguson was elected as Editor; on 12 July, 1871, Mr. Titus Wilson was elected as Hon. Secretary, and at the close of 1873, part two of the first volume of *Transactions* was completed.

We now enter upon the second stage of our history, with Henry, 3rd Earl of Lonsdale as President, the Rev. James Simpson as Chairman and Mr. Richard S. Ferguson as Editor. On 21 June, 1877, St. George, 4th Earl of Lonsdale was chosen President after the death of his father, and on his death in 1882 the Rev. James Simpson was unanimously elected as President.

The first contact of any now living member with the work of the Society was in 1881, when the present writer, while a draughtsman in a Whitehaven architectural office, drew the plans and details for Mr. T. Lewis Banks' article on the Parish Church of Egremont (o.s. vi, 163), and for Mr. William Jackson's article on Walls Castle (*ibid.*, 216).

These were later, at Mr. Augustus Helder's request, re-drawn in sketch form by the "Graphic" and lent to the Society for reproduction.

The Summer Meeting for the year 1882 was one of unusual importance and duration, being held at Carlisle from the first to the ninth day of August, in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the Royal Archaeological Institute. A full report of the Proceedings appeared in the Institute's *Journal*, vol. xxxix, pp. 427 to 471, and it was reproduced in a separate and accessible form. The first day was devoted to a formal reception by the Mayor and Corporation, during which our Society presented an Address to the Rt. Hon. Lord Talbot de Malahide, the President, and to the Members of the Royal Archaeological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland. Upwards of 22 years had elapsed since the last visit of the Institute to Carlisle in 1859 and there is good reason to believe that that visit was one of the chief causes of the formation of our own local Society.

Dr. John Evans led a party of some 230 members to Long Meg and Mayborough on Wednesday the 2nd day. On the following day the Cathedral and Castle were visited in the morning and Dalston Hall and Rose Castle in the afternoon. On Friday the 4th day Birdoswald was visited under the guidance of Dr. Bruce, and then Lanercost and Naworth Castle were described by Mr. C. J. Ferguson. Excursions to Hexham, Abbotsford, Melrose and Dryburgh abbeys filled the remaining days.

On 28 June, 1883, our late President Mr. T. Hesketh Hodgson, Mr. R. J. Whitwell, Mr. Edward Conder, the Rev. H. D. Rawnsley and Mr. North North were amongst those elected as members of the Society.

On the 9th of March, 1886, the Rev. James Simpson, LL.D., F.S.A., passed away. He was one of the Founders of the Society and Chairman of the Council from the beginning until his appointment as President in 1882.

To his boundless energy, wisdom and sound antiquarian knowledge the Society owed its stability and progress. He occupied the chair at the meeting held on 22 September, 1885, and was helpful to the Editor up to a few weeks before his death.

Three months later, under the cloud of this overwhelming loss, the Society made its first Pilgrimage along the Roman Wall. The Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-upon-Tyne had made a Pilgrimage in the year 1849, but this was the first occasion in which the two Societies joined forces. The meeting took place from Saturday, 26 June, to Saturday, 3 July, 1886. Dr. Bruce was the Chief Pilgrim and he was supported by the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Ravensworth, Prof. Clark of Cambridge, Prof. Hulsebos of Utrecht, Dr. Hodgkin, Robert Blair, C. J. Bates and many other eminent antiquaries beside our own members. The distinguishing badge was a scallop shell in silver.

At the autumn meeting held on 8 and 9 September, 1886, Mr. Richard S. Ferguson was elected President and Mr. H. Swainson Cowper was elected a member and read a paper on the Prehistoric Remains near Coniston.

The present writer was elected a member on 7 July, and our President Mr. W. G. Collingwood on 13 September, 1887. The former read his first paper on Sizergh Hall in July, 1888, and the latter on Some Manx Names in Cumbria, at Douglas in September, 1894. In July, 1888, Mr. Cowper was elected on to the Council and in June, 1891, Mr. T. Hesketh Hodgson joined that august body.

On 18 September, 1890, the President reported that the Society had joined the "Societies in Union with the Society of Antiquaries of London" and it was resolved that an annual subscription should be contributed towards the expenses of the Union. On 5 August, 1892, the Society visited Middleham castle and Coverham and Jervaulx abbeys under the leadership of Mr. St. John

Hope and Mr. J. T. Micklethwaite, both of the Society of Antiquaries and Mr. Robert Blair of Newcastle.

On 13 July, 1894, Dr. Francis Haswell was elected on to the Council.

Between 24 and 28 September, 1894, some fifty of our members visited the Isle of Man, and were cordially welcomed by his Honour Deemster Gill and Mr. P. M. C. Kermode. Throughout the three days of excursion to Castletown, Rushen Abbey, Malew, Arbory, Kirk Braddan, Tynwald Hill, Peel Castle, Kirk Michael, Kirk Onchan, Sulby Glen, Ramsey and Kirk Maughold, Mr. Kermode's masterly exposition of the Manx Crosses and early churches was not only a great education but a delightful pleasure to the visiting Society.

On 8 and 9 August, 1895, the President and Mr. F. Haverfield conducted the members over the Cumberland portion of the Roman Wall. Prof. Pelham read a paper on the Roman Frontier System, and Sir James Ramsay followed with a paper upon Who built the Wall. At the autumn meeting of this year, Mr. St. John Hope conducted a large party over Furness abbey and Piel Castle.

We now come to the second Pilgrimage along the Roman Wall in which our Society joined. On this occasion the pilgrimage was from west to east, the party meeting at Carlisle on 22 June and dispersing on 27 June, 1896, at Newcastle. The President assisted by Mr. T. H. Hodgson led the party as far as the Poltross Burn, marking out the Stone wall by red flags, the vallum by yellow, the roads by white and the camps by red and white flags. From Poltross Burn Mr. Robert Blair took over the leadership.

At the autumn meeting of this year Mr. W. G. Collingwood joined the Council, and on 24 August, 1898, the present writer was elected Assistant Secretary with a seat on the Council.

On Saturday, 3 March, 1900, our second President,

revered by all, passed away. Richard S. Ferguson "was the heart and soul of the Society; by his energy keeping it in life and health, and by his influence and forethought fostering its prosperity, overcoming its difficulties, and controlling its activity to the success of which we have such good reason to be proud." After 12 years at Lincoln's Inn he settled down at Carlisle in 1874, and thenceforward interested himself almost exclusively in local affairs and antiquarian research.

We now enter the third stage of our history with Henry Ware, Bishop of Barrow, as President, Mr. T. Hesketh Hodgson as Chairman of Council, and, above all, with Mr. W. G. Collingwood as editor of the *Transactions*.