

◆ Celebrating the 150th volume of *Sussex Archaeological Collections*

John H. Farrant

Research and dissemination, to use 21st-century terminology, were at the core of the project which spawned 20 or so county archaeological societies between the late 1830s and the mid 1850s. The leaders of the new national societies, the British Archaeological Association and the Archaeological Institute, hoped to create a history of Britain by linking together local studies. The goal of a local society was to compile a county history, from the arrival of the earliest inhabitants to the present, drawing on legend, documents and material evidence. Thus W. H. Blaauw (Fig. 1), active in national societies and founding secretary of the Sussex Archaeological Society, addressing its second general meeting in September 1846, reviewed the published literature, concluded that ‘much remains to be done in full elucidation of the civil and ecclesiastical history, topography and ancient buildings within the county’, and invited his audience to form local committees and allocate to each member some task, ‘until in a few years a complete body of information might be collected, enabling some future antiquary to complete in a worthy spirit the history of the county.’

The resolution passed at the society’s founding meeting spoke of forming collections of the memorials of past ages, to be preserved and made available by publication or other means. The society’s committee resolved in January 1847 ‘to prepare and print occasional papers for distribution among the Members ..., to consist of such communications as have been brought before the Society.’ In November, the title *Sussex Archaeological Collections* (hereafter SAC) was agreed

– a novel form, *Journal, Proceedings or Transactions* being customary, perhaps reflecting the earlier resolution.¹ The committee’s aim to distribute the first volume before the year’s end was disappointed for reasons now all too familiar to editors: ‘... delays incidental to the preparation of illustrations, and to the proper revision of the papers by the various authors’, while ‘the expenses of publication have been very considerable, and have been made in reliance upon the continued support of the members’ which may enable the committee, ‘with the economy they have hitherto exercised, to renew the publication from time to time.’²

We may have less confidence that there can ever be a complete history of Sussex and happily J. C. Bruce’s prediction on receiving the 1857 volume, ‘If you go on at this rate you will soon have swept Sussex clean of any subject of antiquarian investigation’, has proved wide of the mark.³ Publication has been renewed often enough for us now to have one hundred and fifty volumes presenting a great wealth of research on the county’s history and archaeology. SAC stands third for number of volumes among the English county serials and has appeared almost annually, with only five years missed since 1898.⁴ Volumes shrank in length in the 1960s, the nadir reached by **108** (1970). But the enlightened use to which the council put Ivan D. Margary’s legacy, combined with the economies of scale in printing yielded by the society’s large membership, have ensured substantial and handsome volumes over the last 40 years. The large print run has ensured a ready supply of second-hand copies, and use of the volumes had undoubtedly been enhanced by,

Table 1. The editors of SAC.

Date	Editor	Biography
1847–1858	William Henry Blaauw (1793–1870)	SAC 22 (1870), ix–xi; ODNB ⁶
1859–1865	William Durrant Cooper (1812–75)	SAC 27 (1877), 117–32; ODNB
1865–1870	Mark Antony Lower (1813–76)	SAC 27 (1877), 132–51; ODNB
1870–1871	The Revd Edward Turner (1794–1872)	SAC 25 (1873), 213–19
1872–1876	The Revd William de St Croix (1819–77)	
1876–1880	Charles Francis Trower (1818–91)	
1880–1884	[Editorial Committee]	
1885–1895	Henry Griffith (1849–1904)	
1895–1904	Henry Michell Whitley (1845–1928)	<i>Journal of the Royal Institution of Cornwall</i> 23 (1929–32), 16
1899–1909	The Revd William Hudson (1837–1931)	
1909–1958	Louis Francis Salzman (1878–1971)	SAC 109 (1971), 1–3; ODNB
1959–1973	Francis William Steer (1912–78)	SAC 118 (1980), 359–61; ODNB
1974–1978	Peter Frank Brandon (1927–2011)	SAC 150 (2012), 193–207
1979–1983	Owen Bedwin	
1984–1987	Timothy P. Hudson	
1988–1992	Brian M. Short	
1993	John Mills	
1994–1999	Gwen Jones	
2000–2001	Sue Hamilton	
2002	Malcolm J. Kitch	
2003	John Manley	
2004	Malcolm J. Kitch and Luke Barber	
2005–2012	Luke Barber	

among archaeological journals, an unparalleled record in publishing cumulative indexes for each 25 volumes.

These 150 volumes contain some 1840 main articles by about 660 different first-named authors. The short articles, notes, queries, etc., of a scholarly nature which have appeared at the end of most volumes number around 1300, to which should be added some 850 in *Sussex Notes and Queries* **1–17** (1926–71) and perhaps 300 in *Sussex Past & Present* and its predecessors since 1970. Occasional Papers **1–14** (1970–95), an edition of Doomsday Book for Sussex (1886) and guides to the society's properties complete its printed scholarly output. The first four editors still dominate the ranking of most prolific authors of main articles: M. A. Lower (55), Edward Turner (45), W. D. Cooper (35) and W. H. Blaauw (34), but they have been joined by a later editor, L. F. Salzman (38 in 1906–62), in fourth place and W. H. Godfrey (27 in 1924–60) in sixth, followed by Eliot Curwen (24 in 1915–45). In recent times the most frequent contributors have been Owen Bedwin (16 in 1975–95), Mark Gardiner (15 in 1984–98) and Fred Aldsworth (14 in 1979–2007).⁵

In the society's centenary year Salzman commemorated the editors preceding him, going on himself to complete 50 years in office. He was the first to be a professional historian, archaeologist or archivist, as have been all but one of his successors. Most served while in full-time employment, a factor contributing to the high turnover and, since 2005, to the Society's Research Officer acting as editor as part of his duties. An editorial board, chaired by the editor, was established in 1979, to provide support and improve accountability to the council. The board became advisory on the editor becoming a staff member responsible through the society's line management. Most editors have made a conspicuous innovation. For example, Steer issued the first notes for contributors, bringing some uniformity to text style and to referencing. Brandon changed the page size to align with most national archaeological journals and also struggled with the much increased page run allowed by more generous funding. Bedwin started systematic anonymous refereeing. Hudson's introduction of an illustrated card cover acknowledged that to be the standard binding, SAC having since 1953 been



Fig. 1. W. H. Blaauw, founding editor of *Sussex Archaeological Collections* (SAC 22 (1870), frontispiece).

nominally issued 'unbound', unless a member paid extra. Jones presided over the complete revamp of design, and Barber has achieved colour printing throughout - and almost consistently publication in the year on the cover!

For most of the *Collections'* life, the technology of production for editors and authors was little changed. Photographic reproduction for illustrations was introduced in 1887, and doubtless the typewriter improved the clarity of copy from around 1900. But the routine of the printer typesetting from author's copy, of galleys and page proofs was unvarying until the early 1990s when articles began going to the printer on disc. The switch to electronic submission and page make-up was completed with the 1994 volume. A design specifically for *SAC* was commissioned and, building on the experience of the national journal *Antiquity*, copy has since then been sent in digital

form to a specialist sub-editor in Cambridge for page make-up. Under pressure from those funding rescue archaeology, microfiche was used from 1984 to 2000 for supplementary material to excavation reports. Ours was the first county society to place such material on the Archaeology Data Service website, with the entire contents of *SAC* since 1999 accessible two years after publication, though followed only by our Surrey neighbours. Today's pressing question is for how long a print-on-paper volume will continue.

But whatever the means of its communication, those researching the history and archaeology of Sussex, and anyone interested in using or enjoying such work, can rest assured that the society is committed to the maintenance of *Sussex Archaeological Collections* as a repository of information worthy of its authors, of the society and of the county which it serves.

Author: John H. Farrant, 200 High Street, Lewes, BN7 2NS.

NOTES

- ¹ A. B. Van Riper, *Men among the mammoths: Victorian science and the discovery of human prehistory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 15–28. P. Levine, *The amateur and the professional: antiquarians, historians and archaeologists in Victorian England, 1838–1886* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 45–52. W. H. Blaauw, 'On Sussex archaeology', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* (hereafter SAC) **1** (1848), 5, 12. L. F. Salzman, 'A history of the Sussex Archaeological Society', *SAC* **85** (1946), 6, 55.
- ² 'Report', *SAC* **1** (1848), xi–xii.
- ³ Salzman, 'History', 65.
- ⁴ Lancashire and Cheshire has reached **160** (2011) and Somerset **153** (2010).
- ⁵ Data from Mike Snatt's heroic analysis of *SAC* **1–139** and West Sussex Record Office's listing of SNQ augmented and edited by me. Dates generally are of the year on relevant volumes, though an editor may have been in office earlier and/or later.
- ⁶ *Oxford dictionary of national biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).
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