

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY.

'If our attention be only directed to collecting books and trifling curiosities the Society will either die in its infancy or at best draw out a feeble and rickety existence.'—'On the Study of Antiquities,' by the Rev. JOHN HODGSON.

The many and various activities of our society, related in these pages, show how far it was from neglecting this warning of the historian of Northumberland in the first paper printed in the first volume of *Archaeologia Aeliana*.

Its founders, however, realised that a library of books, upon archaeological, historical and kindred subjects, was an indispensable handmaid to their studies, and the formation of a library was at once begun. The earliest rule for its governance, made in 1816, ordains that all books are to be on the shelves during the monthly meetings 'to be ready for the use of members.' This rule, repeatedly re-enacted and stringently enforced in the earlier years of our Society, brings vividly before us the informal, conversational nature of these meetings; members gathering together, not so much to hear written papers read, but rather to discuss archaeological subjects and appealing to the authority of the books around them to maintain or to strengthen disputed points.

There is no record of exactly how or where the books were housed in the first three homes of the Society, though a room was set apart for them, as the first catalogue speaks definitely of 'the library.' This catalogue, printed in 1816, was prepared by John Adamson, then one of the secretaries. It contains a list of about 140 books; a supplement to it, prepared by the same hand, and containing about 130 volumes, was issued soon afterwards, and a second supplement, printed in 1822, enumerated about 76 additional volumes.

When our Society was about to move, in 1824, into the rooms set apart for it in the new building of the Literary and Philosophical Society, the members were invited to subscribe towards the expense of fitting up the shelves and providing the furniture required for the new library. The report of that year speaks of the books as being 'already valuable and rapidly increasing in number.' Here the library remained till 1848 when it was removed to the room below the great hall in the keep of the castle, henceforth known, for more than sixty years, as 'the library.'

The first catalogue, printed in book form, was issued in 1839; it contains approximately 1,500 books, with MSS., maps, plans, drawings, etc. The great development of the library in succeeding years appears to have caused some dissatisfaction, as in 1856, the Rev. James Raine complained that members in Newcastle bought books with the Society's funds and country members received little in exchange for their money. This protest does not seem to have been very effective, for it was found needful, in 1863, to allot all the space in 'the library' to books, and the report of 1864 records with pride that 'the library is of considerable value superior in all probability to that of any provincial archaeological association in the kingdom.' The third catalogue, prepared and printed by William Dodd, was issued in 1863.

The report of 1864 makes the rather melancholy reflection that 'the only event to signalise the fiftieth year of the Society's existence' was the publication of this catalogue. The difficulty of finding adequate space for the books again faced the Society in 1883, when a suggestion to remove them to the Black Gate was decisively negated. The continual enlargement of the library in the following years made a new catalogue a necessity, and in 1892 it was resolved to have a shelf register and a card catalogue prepared from which, in 1896, the fourth and now current,

catalogue was printed under the superintendence of Matthew Mackey, then librarian.

As years passed on the difficulty of finding storage room became greater, and in addition the unsuitability of 'the library' for its purpose, owing to the lack of light and warmth became increasingly felt. It was therefore resolved, in 1909, to remove the books to the top room of the Black Gate, and to fit it up with the requirements of a modern library. The cost, about 300*l.*, was raised by subscription, and early in 1910, the books were placed in their new home.

From its foundation the library has been enriched by many valuable gifts of manuscripts and printed books. In the long list of its benefactors appears such well-known names as those of Sir Walter Scott, Robert Surtees, Ralph Spearman, John Hodgson, John Adamson, John Bell, Sir Walter Calverley Trevelyan, John Hodgson Hinde, Sir Cuthbert Sharp, James Raine, John Trotter Brockett, Rev. William Turner, John Collingwood Bruce, George Bouchier Richardson, and his father, Moses Aaron Richardson and many others, whose names and gifts are recorded at length in the *Proceedings* of our Society. A few of the more important, gleaned from these records, may, perhaps, with advantage to the library, be named here.

John Bell, the founder of the Society, may also claim to be the founder of its library. On 3 March, 1813, he gave two books, which as they are the beginnings of our present large collection, may well be recorded at length :

Two Dissertations upon the Mint and Coins of the Episcopal Palatine of Durham, by Mark Noble, 1780.

An Historical Account of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, by William Smellie, 1780-82.

John Adamson, one of the Society's first secretaries, had the welfare of the library much at heart. He compiled its first catalogue and gave many printed books in addition to a large collection of manuscripts relating to local occurrences of note,

and to the history and topography of Newcastle, Gateshead and Northumberland. The report of 1855 gratefully records his generosity, and remarks that, by his great influence among archaeologists, he had secured 'many important works of value for the Society's library.'

Sir Walter Calverley Trevelyan began, in 1822, the munificent series of gifts which, continuing till his death in 1852, greatly enriched the library in many sections, more particularly in that of Scandinavian antiquities. This department, founded by his liberality and increased in later years by the publications of the Royal Society of Norway, the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries of Copenhagen, and those of the Royal Academy of History and Antiquities of Sweden, now forms one of the most important parts of the library. The Reports of 1825 and 1826 record 'the great indebtedness and peculiar obligation' of the Society to Sir W. C. Trevelyan for his many gifts.

For more than fifty years the name of Hodgson is one of the most familiar in the roll of our benefactors. In 1816 John Hodgson presented many volumes of the public records of Scotland and other books of more local interest. John Hodgson Hinde began, in 1828, the long series of gifts which ended only in 1870, when his representatives presented his manuscript collections on the history, topography and family history of the northern county, now bound in eight volumes, labelled 'Hodgson Hinde MSS.'

A series of autograph letters from John Brand, the historian of Newcastle, to Ralph Beilby were presented to the library, in 1824, by Mrs. Beilby. A further considerable number of his letters relating to the history of Newcastle and a collection of his general correspondence, private memoranda, etc., were added by purchase in 1885.

During these years (1825-30) many well-known local publishers, Charnley, Sykes, Fordyce and others appear as donors

of their various local publications, whilst a little later (1840-41) John Fenwick presents copies of his printed tracts, and later again (1843-49) Moses Aaron Richardson gives the volumes of his *Reprints of Rare Tracts* as they issued from the press.

In 1861 the Society received from the family of Thomas Bell, the bibliophile, brother of John Bell, a considerable number (about 100) of books and manuscripts from his library 'as a memorial of the late collector's interest in the Society from its foundation to his death.' They illustrate local history, particularly that of the Town Moor, and of the parishes of St. Nicholas and St. John.

The Society's sections of MSS. relating to local family history was increased, in 1888, by a large and important number of papers and books belonging to the Delaval family, discovered at Seaton Sluice by John Robinson, who gave them to the library. A few of the more interesting have been bound in a separate volume labelled 'The Delaval Papers.'

In more recent years one of the most important accessions to the library was the valuable collection of portraits, autograph letters and autographs presented, in 1894, by John Crosse Brooks. These are now bound in 26 folio and quarto volumes, labelled 'The Brooks Collection of Autographs.'

Another great accession to the manuscript department was made in 1896, when Miss Woodman gave the valuable collection of MSS., charters, printed books and tracts made by her father, William Woodman, of Morpeth. They relate to and illustrate the history of Northumberland, but more particularly that of Morpeth and its neighbouring lands. These with previous gifts from William Woodman are now kept in a separate case labelled 'Woodman Collection.' The local charters were further augmented in 1901, when Messrs. Francis and John Brumell deposited in the library a number of deeds belonging to their late father, Francis Brumell of Morpeth.

The section of the library devoted to Roman archaeology is an important one, and has at various times received many gifts of valuable books, prominent amongst the names appears, as one would expect, that of John Collingwood Bruce, and later that of Sir Gainsford Bruce, who, in 1893, presented many charts, plans, maps, etc., relating to the Roman wall district of Northumberland. This section also received, in 1896, from Sir A. Wollaston Franks, the great accession of 25 volumes of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* and 4 volumes of Gruter's *Corpus Inscriptionum*.

The section containing plans, maps, drawings, etc., appears also to owe its beginning to John Bell, who, in 1822, presented surveys of the Milbanke estates in Durham. It was further augmented in 1829, when the Duke of Cumberland presented plans of the estates of Beaufront, Close House, Hermitage, and Elswick in 1795. In 1838 the Commissioners of Greenwich Hospital gave plans of their estates in the north.

Perhaps the most interesting of our possessions in this department are the three large volumes of sketches and water colour drawings by George Bouchier Richardson presented by him to the library in 1854. They contain upwards of six hundred drawings of places of historic and architectural interest in Newcastle and Gateshead, and in the counties of Northumberland and Durham. They were mostly done in the years 1840-45, before modern alterations had entirely changed the picturesque old town, and are an invaluable guide to our knowledge of its medieval buildings, as well as to the architecture and condition of the castles, churches, peel towers, and mansions of the two northern counties at that time. The great local industry of coal mining is represented by plans of the collieries on Tyne and Wear, by John Gibson, in 1788, and by four very interesting and valuable volumes of maps, plans, records, etc., of estates and collieries in Northumberland and Durham which were presented

to the library in 1856 by Dixon Dixon, from the collection of his grandfather, William Brown, of Willington-on-Tyne, who died in 1782.

In recent years the library has received many gifts for this section, amongst them a large number of plans and maps of Newcastle and Gateshead from Thomas Oliver. In 1904, L. W. Adamson gave numerous plans, drawings, and sections of old Tyne Bridge collected by John Bell. These supplemented the MS. volume of reports and drawings of the same bridge presented by Miss Harvey in 1840.

The earlier commercial and industrial life of our city is represented in the library by many of the records of the trading companies. It possesses the 'Minute Book of the Company of Printers,' presented by Christopher Seymour Bell; 'Documents of the Hostmen's Company,' given by R. Y. Green; the 'Minute Book of the Fullers and Dyers,' from Brodrick Dale. It has also papers relating to the 'Wax Tallow Chandlers,' and the books of the 'Barber Surgeons Company' have been placed in the library for their safe custody.

The library owes to the labours of George Bouchier Richardson in this department a copy of the 'Records of the Corporation of Master Pilots and Seamen of the Trinity House of Newcastle,' and extracts from the books of the Master Mariners of the same House. It also owes to him a book of extracts from the records of the 'Incorporated Company of Ropers of Newcastle,' and a similar book from the records of the 'Company of Goldsmiths of Newcastle.' His indefatigable industry has also enriched the library with copies of the Registers of the old parish churches of the town, St. Nicholas, St. John, St. Andrew, and All Saints, and to him we also owe a valuable list of the sepulchral and other monuments in the old church of All Hallows. Transcripts of the epitaphs in the other churchyards and churches in the city are also in our possession; those of St. Nicholas,

transcribed by Sir Cuthbert Sharp, of St. John's by John Bell, and of St. Andrew's by the Rev. W. Bernard East.

The Society early realized the importance of making a collection of old newspapers, particularly local ones, and in 1837 it resolved to begin such a collection. In that year and again in 1839 and 1841 gifts of a very considerable number of volumes of these publications were received, and the collection was again augmented in 1860 by a number of volumes presented by John Hodgson Hinde.

Of late years, the library has increased most largely in the section containing the publications of kindred learned societies. Its foundation was laid in 1824, when the Society of Antiquaries of London presented a set of all their publications issued up to that date; the report of 1825 records thanks 'for this splendid gift whereby our library has been so considerably enriched.' This section is now a large one and contains sets of the publications of most of the more important archaeological societies both British and foreign.

In the department of music the library possesses an excellent collection of the old music of Northumberland and the Border counties. For this we are chiefly indebted to the labours of a committee, called the 'Melodies Committee,' appointed in 1855, of which William Kell was chairman, and Robert White an energetic member. They were greatly helped in their work by Algernon, fourth duke of Northumberland, then patron of the Society, who, in 1856, offered prizes for the best and second best collection of ancient Border tunes. In 1857 the Duchess of Northumberland presented to the Society a manuscript volume of fifty Border tunes, collected from Teviotdale, Redesdale and North Tynedale.

In 1862 John Stokoe made a copy for the library, of all the tunes of merit from well-known collections. After William Kell's death in 1863 the Society received from his repre-

sentatives Peacock's rare volume of *Tunes for the Northumbrian Small Pipes*; Topliffe's *Melodies of the Tyne and Wear*, all the papers of the committee of which he had been chairman, together with the results of their labours contained in two MS. volumes of collected tunes. The 'Melodies Committee' still remained in being, and continued its researches for further tunes. The report of 1878 rejoices that the Society's long labours in this respect 'are now bearing fruit for considerable attention has of late been paid to the simple but stirring and peculiar music . . . of Northumbria.' Finally in 1882 the work of nearly thirty years was crowned by the publication by the Society of a volume of Border tunes under the title of *Northumbrian Minstrelsy*, edited by Dr. Bruce and John Stokoe. The work done for so long by our Society was soon afterwards undertaken by the 'Northumberland Small Pipes Society,' now unfortunately extinct.

The first librarian was John Bell, who, from 1816 till shortly before his death, in 1864, fulfilled the duties of the office. For the succeeding twenty-four years the office was not filled, and the duties were discharged by John Gibson, the castle warden.

In 1888 William Lyall was appointed and held the office till 1890: In that year by Statute III. then passed, an honorary librarian became an officer of the Society. In 1894 this statute was amended and this officer became, *ex officio*, a member of the Council. Since 1890 the honorary librarians have been :

William Weaver Tomlinson	...	...	1890-93
Matthew Mackey	...	...	1894-99
Joseph Oswald	...	...	1900-03
Charles Hunter Blair	...	...	1904-