

THE MUSEUM

GENERAL

During each of the last two years, more than 15,000 people have visited the Museum. This continues the steady increase of recent years, and, of course, the growing interest has meant many more inquiries for information and identification. The number of accessions too has increased, so much that it is not possible to list everything—more than 300 items have been given or lent since the last number of the *Records* was published.

Considerable additions to the folk material have come in and these include numerous costume specimens from the Earl of Buckinghamshire and from Miss W. Robertson.

Seventeenth-century panelling from Town Farm, Little Missenden, was presented by Mr. E. C. Rouse, who also gave archæological material from the

Hedgerley and Fulmer kilns. Notes, drawings and photographs connected with the Latimer Villa excavations have been handed to the museum by Dr. K. Oakley and Mr. Shepard Frere.

Amongst the geological accessions are some plesiosaurus bones from Bletchley, which were brought in by two Water Eaton schoolboys; and ichthyosaur vertebræ from Weedon, where it is thought a complete fossilised skeleton may be.

It is gratifying to note that the Art Gallery is now attracting attention. Since its opening after the completion of the extensions, the "Recording Britain" water-colours have formed the basic collection. Recently, a number of paintings have been acquired. The Earl of Buckinghamshire has lent six pictures, which include two of the Canaletto school, and a portrait of Griffith Hampden who entertained Elizabeth I at Hampden.

Viscount Malden has deposited on permanent loan an 1889 painting of Whaddon Chase Hunt, in which every figure is an actual portrait.

Ten paintings of Hartwell House and grounds, part of the Ernest E. Cook Collection, were allocated to this museum by the National Art Collection Fund. Nine of these are eighteenth-century works by Belthazar Nebot (c. 1734).

FOSCOTT COIN HOARD

198 silver coins and fragments of an English Delft drug jar were found at Foscott by two schoolboys, and at a coroner's inquest held at Buckingham on 22nd December, 1955, the hoard was declared to be treasure trove and therefore the property of the Crown. Our President, Sir Alan Barlow, as soon as this was known, kindly bought the collection and presented it to the County Museum. There were 198 coins which ranged from Edward VI to Charles I and consisted mainly of shillings and sixpences. The pot was reconstructed by the Department of Medieval and British Antiquities in the British Museum, and it, too, has now been given to the County Museum, Aylesbury.

Roman material was uncovered when road works were in progress near the Shardeloes estate, Amersham. This consisted of pottery and coins.

A large number of Roman coins have also come from the excavation area at Fenny Stratford.

Red deer and bison bones were discovered at Langley on the site of the new Secondary Modern School.

NEW CASES

Four new museum cases have now been delivered. This completed the expenditure of the £750 grant by the Carnegie Trustees. The condition of this grant was, as members know, that the Society should add £100 to the above amount and this has been done.

EXHIBITIONS

Since August, 1954, the following temporary exhibitions have been arranged.

- (1) Photographs of the Mount Everest Reconnaissance Exhibition.
- (2) Old Musical Instruments.
- (3) Elections in Buckinghamshire.
- (4) Gothic Art.
- (5) Modern Trends in Water Colour.
- (6) British Prehistoric Pottery.
- (7) French Cave Paintings.

The "Elections" display consisted entirely of local material drawn from the

Museum and the County Records Office. The Curator has begun collecting contemporary election material and would be pleased to hear of any cards, posters, letters, etc., relating to the first half of this century.

RECORDING OF ARCHÆOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL FINDS

The Curator is Archæological Correspondent for the County and holds a complete set of 6-in. ordnance maps for Buckinghamshire. Every known find is recorded on these maps, which are periodically sent up to the Ordnance Survey Office. Information is then transferred to national maps and this forms the basis of the production of the Roman Britain and other maps which the Archæological Division of the Ordnance Survey prints.

Members can perform a very valuable service by reporting any finds, and letting the Curator know when there is any building or other activity near recognised sites or historic monuments.

THE HAMBLEDEN MUSEUM

This private museum was built by the second Viscount Hambleden in 1913 to house the finds from the Roman Villa at Yewden, Hambleden. The building is now required for other purposes by his grandson, the present Viscount, who has agreed to deposit on permanent loan the bulk of the contents. At the time of going to press the transfer has just taken place. For many years now this collection has had the meticulous care and attention of Mr. F. M. Underhill, F.S.A. (Hon. Secretary of the Berkshire Archæological Society and one of our own members), and it is to him that we are indebted for the preservation of the material from the very early days of the Museum. As soon as possible, this collection will be sorted, arranged and displayed in the County Museum.