

RECORDS OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE,

OR PAPERS AND NOTES ON THE

HISTORY, ANTIQUITIES, AND ARCHITECTURE
OF THE COUNTY.

TOGETHER WITH TRANSACTIONS OF THE

Architectural and Archæological Society

FOR THE

COUNTY OF BUCKINGHAM.

PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY.

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PREFACE.

THE commencement of the fifth Volume of the "RECORDS OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE" calls for a few remarks from me, as your Honorary Secretary. It is desirable that I should give the members a brief statement of the *work, progress, and present position* of the Society. I confidently rely on your kind and indulgent acceptance of my endeavour to give a true and faithful report.

The object for which the Society was originally formed has been steadily kept in view, and during its existence it has accomplished much useful *work* in collecting such materials, and promoting such measures, as may assist in the compilation or illustration of a history of the County, and in diffusing a taste for the revival of architectural and ecclesiastical art. Before its foundation, in the year 1847, many discoveries of relics, illustrative of art or domestic life in times past, had been made, some of which, being but of small or purely local interest, were soon forgotten; whilst others of greater interest excited wonder for a slightly longer period, and then in their turn were forgotten. A record of such discoveries is of permanent value and great local interest, and may serve to enrich the pages of some future historian of the County. The Society, therefore, has been of eminent service, not only in collecting as accurate a list of these as possible, but in exploring the past, and preserving what is passing in the present, for future inquirers. And

this is especially necessary in this age of swift transition, when the general enclosure and cultivation of waste lands, the formation of railways, and other circumstances, have a great tendency to sweep away all memorials of the past.

The *work* of the Society has also been devoted to the promotion of the restoration of churches. It would be impossible for any one to traverse the County without being sensible of the increasing attention bestowed on its ancient architectural remains, and the greatly improved aspect and ecclesiastical character of the restored and newly-built churches. The Society has made annual excursions in the County which may prove gratifying reminiscences in future times to those who attended them; and whether the visits were made to a large town or small village, they have been attended with most beneficial results; and hence many, who had never known anything of their own parish church, nor ever seen much to admire in it, have been led to examine it more closely, and to value it more highly as the House of God.

The *progress* made by the Society since its formation has been very satisfactory. It has steadily increased in numbers and usefulness. The roll of members during the first year of its existence contained only 55 names, whereas now it contains 245. Although various circumstances hindered its rapid progress the first few years, it still exercised some of its most useful functions with the prospect of a speedy prosperity and usefulness. In the year 1854 it was thought desirable, in order to preserve a record of the fruits of its labours, to publish a Journal, which should contain papers and notes illustrative of the history, antiquities, and architecture of the County, as well as a record of the Society's transactions. These Journals, now forming four volumes, have from time to time been issued free to the members. In the year 1862

the Society, having received many donations to its library and small collection of vestigia, secured a convenient and appropriate room in Church Street, Aylesbury, and fitted it up as a depository for its property, where the members might have an opportunity of reading and borrowing the books. The Society has lost no opportunity which presented itself of increasing the stores both of its museum and library. Amongst its greatest benefactors I may mention the Very Rev. the Dean of Lichfield, Z. D. Hunt, Esq., the Rev. A. Isham, and the Misses Hamilton. I trust I may be excused if I appeal to the members and the County generally for further donations in aid of the work which has progressed thus far so satisfactorily.

With regard to the *present position* of the Society, I have much satisfaction in stating that it has now acquired by its publications, as compared with other local, historical, and topographical works, a status in the County, and holds no mean place in the goodly number of kindred institutions throughout the provinces. I hope it will continue to maintain its reputation in the archæological, architectural, and historical notes and papers which it publishes, in the account it gives of its proceedings, as well as in its letter-press and illustrations.

The Society has published several valuable papers and accounts of many interesting memorials and local details of the past, which have contributed to England's long and glorious history, and to the building up of the English kingdom and nation. Many are the historic associations connected with our inland County, which has been successively inhabited by Briton and Roman, Saxon and Dane. The traveller by railway through the peaceful and fertile vale of Aylesbury, gliding along at the foot of the Chiltern Hills, will observe the prominent White Leaf Cross, and meditate on the associations connected with it; he will notice the long range of beech

woods on the hills, which were formerly infested with bands of freebooters, and will call to mind the acceptance of the Royal Appointment of the stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds by a member of the Lower House of Parliament for the protection of the country, but which is now a sinecure; he will think of the British trackway called the Icknield Way; the great territorial boundary of Grimsdyke running from the hills in Oxfordshire across the Chilterns on to Berkhamsted Common in the adjoining county of Hertfordshire; the numerous barrows, or sepulchral tumuli; the sites of camps and fortifications, as Kimble Castle, the reputed residence of the British King Cunobeline, or Cymbeline; and the monuments of the long period of the Middle Ages, as the religious house of the Monks of Risborough, and the castle of the chivalrous Black Prince at Princes Risborough, erected probably for the purpose of hunting on the Chilterns. Or as he passes along the tracks of the Roman roads, which run across the County from Tring to Bicester, and from Dunstable to Daventry, he will call to mind what Britain was formerly, and endeavour to realise the scenes and men the neighbourhood witnessed since that distant day. For instance, out of that long list, the British Chief Cunobeline, whose coins were found in hundreds in Whaddon Chase in the year 1849, some of which the members can see in our County Museum; the Roman Emperor Claudius, with his legionary cohorts and elephants tramping along to the astonishment of the inhabitants, taking possession of the country; the great heroine Queen Boadicea and her Iceni sweeping down with dire revenge, for fearful wrongs, the Roman Colonies and all who opposed her; the great struggles which existed both at and before the Norman Conquest; and the conflicts which raged between King and Parliament, Cavalier and Roundhead.

All these and a variety of other scenes and thoughts

will be present to the mind of the traveller, versed in our local history, as he traverses the County. He will be compelled to confess that a Society which has collected such a store of information, has not existed in vain.

Neither has the work of the restoration of churches been standing still in our archdeaconry of Buckingham, but has been pushed forward so rapidly during the last few years, that there are comparatively few churches which have not been more or less in the hands of the architect or builder. Indeed so much has been done that it has come within the province of our Society to urge the preservation of every part, even that which was apparently of no particular use, of the ancient work, which will serve as illustrations of observances, now perhaps obsolete, or of customs long since disused. Every part is of great value to the student of history and manners in times when the customs of religion were most strictly adhered to. The Society has published a report of the restoration of some churches, but it has not been able to do so in every case.

I would also notice the advance in domestic architecture in the many new buildings erected in the County for private or public purposes. They are in a more pleasing style than that previously adopted, and claim attention from their imposing elevations and artistic treatment.

Although the Society has attained a position of great usefulness, it still requires the patronage and assistance of the generous and enlightened minds of the nobility, gentry, and clergy of the County, who must all acknowledge that there is a great dignity as well as pleasure in the pursuit of the study of archæology and architecture, and especially in the search of historic truth. I would bespeak the aid and co-operation of all the members of the Society in exerting their influence for the preservation of any antiquities that may be brought to light in

the County, and in encouraging the sending of them to the Museum in Aylesbury as a central depôt where all students may see them for the purpose of comparison or for making drawings. Something may be done by all, much by many, to further the interests of the Society, and to add to the attractions and usefulness of its proceedings. With such help, the Society will doubtless attain a *position* of still greater prosperity and usefulness, give satisfaction to its promoters and supporters, and assist in throwing light, by its investigations, on the history of human progress.

CHARLES LOWNDES.

HARTWELL RECTORY, *January*, 1878.