

RECORDS
OF
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE,
OR PAPERS AND NOTES ON THE
HISTORY, ANTIQUITIES, AND ARCHITECTURE
OF THE COUNTY;
TOGETHER WITH THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
Architectural and Archaeological Society
FOR THE
COUNTY OF BUCKINGHAM.

PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY.

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RECORDS OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

PREFACE.

As the chief work of the Bucks Architectural and Archaeological Society is the issuing of the papers read before the members at the meetings of the Society, it is worthy of notice, as an evidence of what has recently been accomplished, and of the increasing energy of the Society from a literary point of view, that in comparing Volumes V. and VI. of the RECORDS, the period taken in collecting together the former volume occupied from the year 1879 to 1885, whilst the latter volume is the result of the Society's publications from 1836 to 1890. This last volume reminds us of the losses the Society has sustained by the death of its distinguished President, the Duke of Buckingham; of an old and valued friend and contributor to the RECORDS, the Rev. Bryant Burgess; and of its former indefatigable Secretary, the Rev. Charles Lowndes. In its pages will be found fitting tributes to the memory of these prominent members, of whom the Society has been deprived. As the ranks have been filled up it is gratifying to have, as the succeeding President, the Bishop of Oxford, whose suitability to the position, in every sense, will be at once recognized, and who, we may hope, will at some future time give the Society the advantage of his great historical and archaeological experience.

In again referring to the volume completed during the past year, it will be found that all the papers contributed

are essentially on archæological or historical subjects in connection with Buckinghamshire, and that the writers may be said to have had the special purpose of carrying out the main objects of the Society—namely, the adding to the knowledge already acquired, which must ultimately result in an accurate and comprehensive county history. The papers which have been published have, as a rule, been previously read before the Members at the Church or Manor House, or other place of interest of which they treat. This, of course, is the usual practice with kindred societies, and is the one most suitable and the most conducive to intelligent investigation, and the most likely to lead to still further research—and it is a practice which will certainly be pursued in the future, with the earnest hope that an interest for archæology will be found to exist in every part of a county so well worthy of the attention of those who have made the subject their study.

In 1890 the *Bibliotheca Buckinghamiensis* was completed by our member, Mr. Henry Gough, and collected into a volume, with an excellent index. It is a publication which every library in the county should possess, and which will be found of great service to the student who is pursuing his investigations, whether in the county at large or in any separate parish. It is only to be hoped that some other member will follow in Mr. Gough's steps, and undertake a like independent and useful work in connection with the Society.

Two of the members of the Society are engaged on important subjects, the mention of which should not be omitted. Mr. A. H. Cocks is bringing out a volume on "The Church Bells of Buckinghamshire." The work had its origin, it will be remembered, in a former volume of the *RECORDS*, where a very interesting account of the bells in the Hundred of Desborough is given. Our junior Secretary, Mr. John L. Myres, with the sanction

of the Bishop, is obtaining a return of the church plate in the Archdeaconry of Buckingham; the information gained by this return, we may hope, will result in a volume on the church plate of Bucks—a subject which is being separately treated in other counties with unquestionable utility and advantage.

The discovery, in 1888, of British pottery from a barrow on an elevation above Wycombe Marsh, referred to at page 259 of Vol. VI., is one of those finds to which attention should again be called, from the fact of this being probably an isolated example of very early pottery found in Bucks and preserved.

Perhaps the most important work the Society could now undertake would be an archæological map of the county, and as the Society of Antiquaries offers to publish such a map at its own expense, and to facilitate the supply of copies to local societies, a very opportune time is afforded for the work. This work might be shared by a few members, each taking in hand some special branch. The foundation of the undertaking would be a bibliography, collected by one well acquainted with the literature of the county; Mr. Gough's labours, already alluded to, would be of invaluable assistance, and would render the collection comparatively easy. When the objects of interest thus recorded in the sources of information indicated are grasped, and this is really the task which requires thoroughly mastering, then the map may be commenced. Let us consider the special objects of archæological interest Buckinghamshire affords us. It cannot boast of considerable Roman remains, it is not specially famed for walled towns or castra within its borders, but it has a very early history. Take, for instance, the Chiltern district, the country of the Cattienchlanii, or Cassii, as Dr. Guest remarks in his "*Origines Celticæ*," "the country of the great tribe which for nearly two centuries predominated in Britain," a tribe that also occupied

Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire. This district is traversed on the crest of its hills by the Icknield way, one of the most important track-ways in England, and along either side of its course are the remains of considerable earth-works, camps, and numerous tumuli, indicating the presence of an active bygone race. Overlooking this great trackway, too, and the Vale of Aylesbury, are the well-known White Leaf Cross above Princes Risborough and the Bledlow Cross. Then there is the remarkable ditch still bearing the name of the Grimsdyke, which traverses the edge of the Chilterns from Berkhamsted to Princes Risborough, and which Dr. Guest considers was adopted by the West Saxe as the western boundary of their conquest, when, as he says, "they swept the valleys of the Ouse and Thame, or the districts dependent on the burghs of Lenborough and Aylesbury, by the union of which with the woodlands of the Chilterns the modern County of Buckingham has been formed." To mark with precision such objects as are thus indicated in the Chiltern district on a county map is a work of no little importance. When we call to mind that two of the four great British strongholds that held out against the Saxon invaders—Lenborough and Aylesbury—are situate in the County, we realize that there is much of our early history still to be unravelled that is centred in the locality; and, whilst on the subject, it should be remarked that it may be of no slight consequence to accurately indicate the position of tribal settlements, as an aid to future historical investigation.

In these introductory remarks it is obviously not the intention to take a survey of the archæological resources of the entire county, but by calling attention to one particular district, it may be shown what can be done if a map on the lines I am pointing out is undertaken.

Mr. George Payne, F.S.A., in his archæological map of Kent, published in the "Archæologia" (see Vol. 51,

p. 447, *et seq.*) has three distinct colourings, with distinguishing marks—one for objects pre-Roman, another for Roman objects, and the third for Anglo-Saxon objects. Taking a Buckinghamshire map, and regarding these divisions and the remains that are peculiar to the county, we should distinguish each of the following pre-Roman objects by separate marks, viz. : trackways, earthworks, settlements, camps, interments, drift implements, weapons and ornaments, coins. The following Roman objects would be separately marked : foundation of buildings and flooring, etc., of villas, Roman roads, probable Roman roads, interments, potteries, coins. Of Anglo-Saxon objects the following would be separately marked : interments, hill crosses, weapons, potteries, coins. In the list of pre-Roman objects, it should be remarked that neolithic implements are not mentioned, simply for the reason that they are to be found wherever traces are discovered of early man. We have only to bear in mind the different races that have occupied the county in remote times, to recognize that the objects of archaeological interest that have been discovered naturally take a wide range. Watling Street passes through the north of the county; the fruitful vales of Buckingham and Aylesbury attracted a primitive population. We need not be again reminded of the Chiltern district; the Thames Valley, however, is a locality of special interest not to be left unnoticed when we are reminded of it as the haunt of pre-historic man, and where the palæolithic implements he formed are frequently found in the river-drift gravels, and as associated with the great waterway for the early inhabitants of this country. The only other point to be remarked on in reference to an archaeological map is the necessity of a topographical index to accompany it, which would classify the locality where an object has been discovered, the period to which it is to be referred, the nature of the discovery, and the authorities

treating of or recording it. Sir John Evans, the late President of the Society of Antiquaries, read a paper before that Society at the close of last year, on an archæological survey of Hertfordshire, illustrated by a carefully prepared map. This survey of a neighbouring county, the second of the series communicated to the Antiquaries, should be an incentive to some of the members of our local Society to make a similar survey for this county.

The greatest difficulty, perhaps, archæologists have to encounter in Buckinghamshire is its geographical position, and the inconvenient railway communications between one extremity of the county and the other; the consequence of which is that the members in the north or south find it almost impracticable to join each other at meetings, unless they are held in some comparatively central parish. This, probably, is the strongest argument in favour of a really well-established institution worthy of the name of a County Museum. As I am reminded by one of our members, the small Museum at Aylesbury was established by our Society, more than forty years ago, the only institution of the kind in the county, mainly indebted for its existence for many years to the disinterested zeal of our late Secretary, Mr. Lowndes; but it is quite inadequate to meet the requirements embraced in the term, a "County Museum," at the present day. Now we want all that can remind us of the history of the county, and much of our own country itself, in such a Museum; and a wider range even than this is expected of it. It should also be the means of promoting scientific knowledge, in the general acceptation of the term. Yet take the subject of the archæology of this county alone, from the hints already given of its early peoples, and there will be abundant resources from which there might be collected objects from time to time, that will elucidate the traces of prehistoric man from his palæolithic implements discovered

in the Thames Valley. The later stone age, the bronze and iron ages, will also be represented by the implements, weapons, and pottery found in barrows or elsewhere. Of the Roman occupation there must be interesting relics that might be brought together. As an instance, the pavements of a Roman villa at Wycombe have been in recent years opened out, and again buried, in which condition they still remain; the pavement of one of the compartments was found to be of fine workmanship and of interesting design, and is still believed to be fairly preserved.

The mediæval history of Buckinghamshire might be represented by careful illustrations of its many interesting churches, or of special features, such as, amongst others, fonts, or sedilia, or tombs. Rubbings from brasses, too, would obviously be another of the features of interest, and many more might be suggested as familiar ones to represent the Middle Ages in a well-arranged Museum.

The county is rich in the possession of historic houses, and this may be said to be its special and legitimate boast. We have only to recall to the mind in the most general way — Stowe, Claydon House, Hampden-Chequers, or Cliefden—to be convinced of the association of seats such as these with the most important events in the past history of this country, and with the memory of some of its most eminent statesmen. We could not expect the treasures from our great houses to be permanently transferred to a Museum; there might, however, be a possibility of the loan of collections which would illustrate periods of our history, and it would be difficult to mention any other three houses in England than three of those named, which could afford more valuable reminiscences of the great civil war.

Returning to the subject of scientific knowledge, in the wider sense, a space set apart for specimens of the

geological formations in the county would be requisite and of great assistance to the student.

A County Museum might have far more extended operations than those indicated; it might be the centre, for instance, of the system of technical education. But to dwell on this would be travelling from our subject. Naturally, our Society would watch with no ordinary interest the establishment of a County Museum, which it would consider as its home and the centre of its life; and it only remains to be seen whether sufficient interest can be aroused to found and establish such an institution on a permanent footing. Sir Harry Verney has originated the movement in a public-spirited manner which must arouse admiration, and at the same time gratitude, and his example may well stimulate others to follow his lead. The success of the movement, however, must depend on the scheme being framed on an enlightened basis, such as cannot fail to commend itself to the county at large.

Before closing these introductory remarks, the Editor of the RECORDS wishes to thank those, and amongst them friends of the Society whose names have been long familiar, who have contributed papers to the past volume—papers which in different ways display considerable ability and research. Undoubtedly the writers to the Society's publication are its mainstay; and whilst we deplore our losses, in the ranks of our younger members may be found an enthusiasm for archæology, which, amid acknowledged difficulties already pointed out, gives a promise for the Society's future, full of encouragement.

JOHN PARKER.

DESBOROUGH HOUSE, HIGH WYCOMBE.

May 14, 1892.