

Berkshire Architectural Records Committee.

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT.

THIS first Annual Report of the Berkshire Architectural Records Committee covers the period from the 10th of December, 1940—the date of the founding of the Committee—to the 31st of December, 1941.

The Committee was formed to obtain photographic records and drawings, etc., of buildings of interest in Berkshire, so that in the event of their damage by enemy action, or from other cause, information will be available which will be of use if the buildings are repaired, or reconstructed. The records also will be of considerable archaeological and historical interest.

In January, 1941, the National Buildings Record was inaugurated to deal with the graphic recording of buildings throughout the country and since the formation of that body the Berkshire Committee has worked in close co-operation with it and also with the Central Council for the Care of Churches, which is forming a national collection of photographs of ecclesiastical buildings.

During the period covered by this Report the Executive Committee held 11 meetings and up to the end of last year the following records had been obtained :—

<i>Ecclesiastical Buildings.</i>	<i>No. of different views, etc.</i>	<i>Total No. of prints, etc.</i>
Photographs	1312	2459
Reproductions of photographs in the Berks Archaeological Society's Journal	678	1356
Church guides and histories	16	21
Measured drawings	12	24
<i>Secular Buildings.</i>	2018	3860
Photographs	83	166
Reproductions of photographs in the Berks Archaeological Society's Journal	29	58
Totals ..	2130	4084

The following negatives have been given to the Committee :—
The Taunt Collection of photographs of Berkshire 1350 (approx.)

(These negatives have not yet all been counted and indexed)

Dr. Cole's Collection	216
Mr. Dodgson's Collection	122
Other negatives	136

Total .. 1824 (approx.)

Fourteen of Dr. Cole's negatives, which were of Oxfordshire churches, have been given to the Oxfordshire Committee.

Since the formation of the Committee 52 helpers have undertaken to take photographs, or otherwise assist in obtaining records, but 9 have had to resign, owing to their having joined H.M. Forces or left the district, and at the end of last year the helpers numbered 43. Additional photographic helpers are urgently required and it is hoped that all who can will assist the Committee in its work, as much remains to be done. To complete the recording of the ecclesiastical buildings alone some 4,000 more views will be required.

It will be noted that comparatively few photographs of secular buildings have been received and it is hoped that special attention will be given to this side of the work in 1942. If owners of interesting buildings will have them photographically surveyed and send the Committee duplicate prints of the photos, it will help greatly. The National Buildings Record is anxious to obtain, among other records of secular work, adequate records of 18th and early 19th century buildings in country towns and villages. The importance of this side of the work will be realized when it is remembered that considerably more secular than ecclesiastical buildings are destroyed from time to time.

If a helper will undertake to organize the work in each rural deanery, it will be of much assistance. In two deaneries very valuable help has been given in this way.

The Berkshire Committee has issued notes for the guidance of its photographic helpers and arrangements have been made by the National Buildings Record whereby materials are available for the use of recognized Architectural Records Committees.

A Committee has been formed in Abingdon, under the auspices of the Borough Council, to arrange for the photographing of the many interesting buildings in the town, which Committee is working in co-operation with the Berkshire Committee.

Mr. E. A. Ketteringham has made a photographic record of Bucklebury Church to show how such records should be produced. For this purpose he took some 50 views of the building and subsequently made lantern slides from the photos. These slides he will be pleased to lend to any society, or individual, who would like to use them for lecture purposes.

Mr. F. M. Underhill is photographing the chief monuments in Berkshire churches. Up to the end of last December he had taken some 400 photographs of 687 monuments in 122 churches and anticipates completing the work shortly. The Committee has obtained prints of a few of these photos and hopes to be able to acquire copies of the remainder in due course.

With regard to the depositories to which the photos of ecclesiastical buildings are sent. As the Diocesan Registry has not accommodation, or staff, to deal with the records, it has been arranged

to keep them at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, where the Oxfordshire ecclesiastical records also are kept. The second copies are sent to the Central Council for the Care of Churches and it is understood that Berkshire is now better represented than any other county in the Central Council's national collection.

Photos of secular buildings are sent to the record depository at the Shire Hall, Reading, and duplicate copies to the Courtauld Institute of Art.

In conjunction with the National Buildings Record arrangements have been made to keep a card index of illustrations of noteworthy local buildings. Mr. Underhill, Miss Swadling and Mr. Clarke have kindly undertaken to keep this index.

With reference to finance, the sum of £37 6s. 1d. has been received in donations, etc., and £35 19s. 9d. paid in expenses and so at the end of the year there was a balance of £1 6s. 4d. As, however, rather more than this amount was owing, the donations received were not quite enough to cover the year's expenses. It is hoped that the Committee will receive sufficient funds this year to enable it to carry on adequately the important work it has undertaken.

The Committee would like to take this opportunity of thanking the different Societies and helpers to whose assistance in various ways the successful work of the Committee is due :—

The Berkshire Archaeological Society for its generous gift of back numbers of Journals which has helped greatly with the surveys of a number of churches,

Miss Beach, for the untiring help she has given in looking out the Journals and negatives in the Archaeological Society's Collection,

The Oxford City Library for its gift of the Taunt Collection of Berkshire negatives and Mr. Padley for indexing them,

Professor Cole and Mr. Dodgson for their valuable Collections of negatives,

Mr. Etchells and Mr. Shewell for organizing the work in the Wantage and Vale of the White Horse Deaneries and

The Chairman, Hon. Secretary and members of the Executive Committee.

The Committee also wishes to express its gratitude to all the helpers who have taken photographs, or in other ways furthered the work, and so ensured such a satisfactory result.