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ANNUAL REPORT

AND

ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR 1946.

The
Kent Archaeological Society

REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1946.

THE Council present their eighty-eighth Report, with the Accounts for 1946.

It is satisfactory to be able to report not only a marked but a steady increase in the Society's membership since the end of the war.

During the year under review as many as 107 new members were admitted, a figure which brings our present membership total to 888 as at 31st December, 1946. This gratifying result is due largely to the response to the request made last year by the Council, when members were asked to do their best to interest their friends in the aims of the Society with a view to their joining; and if such activities can be continued for another year or two, it is felt that even our large pre-war membership may soon be exceeded.

The Council express their sincere appreciation of the action of well over 100 members in being willing to sign undertakings to continue payment of their subscriptions for a period of seven years, it being understood that such undertakings automatically lapse in the event of death.

The effect of this method of payment is that it enables the Society to reclaim Income Tax paid on a gross sum equivalent to the net amount of the subscription, without adding anything to the amount paid by the members concerned.

New undertakings may be entered into by members at any time on forms obtainable from the Hon. General Secretary, and the Council sincerely trust that many more members will decide to pay their subscriptions in this way.

The Council would stress the importance to the Society from a financial point of view, of members being willing to sign such undertakings, especially in these days of high prices, when, for instance, the cost of the annual volume is more than double that of a pre-war issue of comparable content; as in this way the finances are benefited without any additional cost to members, as would be the case with an increased annual subscription.

The death of Sir Charles Marston, F.S.A., a Vice-President of the Society, has been noted with regret, as has the resignation from the Council of Mr. Bryan Keith Lucas on his leaving the county. Lt.-Colonel S. H. Page has been compelled by private circumstances to give up the Hon. Excursion Secretaryship for East Kent, and Mr. A. H. Taylor has resigned his office as Collector. Mr. C. E. Fisher, the Society's Curator, has also resigned on obtaining an appointment in Yorkshire. To all these gentlemen the thanks of the Society are due for services in their several offices.

Mr. F. C. Elliston Erwood, the Hon. Excursion Secretary for West Kent, has agreed to take over the work of organizing the excursions for East Kent also, and will in future cover the whole of the county.

The successor to Mr. Taylor is Mr. C. W. Hopper, 14 Nunnery Road, Canterbury, to whom subscriptions should be paid.

A new Curator has not yet been appointed.

Members will be both interested and gratified to hear that Mr. Winston Spencer Churchill, O.M., C.H., M.P., Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, has honoured the Society by consenting to become an honorary member and one of its Vice-Presidents. The Society may indeed count itself fortunate in having the support of such a distinguished historian and man of letters, and feel proud that the name of the greatest Englishman of the age is now inscribed on its roll of members.

Sir Thomas C. Colyer-Fergusson, Bart., after many years' service on the Council, has been made a Vice-President. The great work he has done in copying and setting in order the ancient Registers of well over fifty parishes in the Rochester Diocese will prove of invaluable help to genealogists and others in tracing family history.

Mr. B. H. St. J. O'Neil, Chief Inspector of Ancient Monuments and a Vice-President of the Society of Antiquaries, has also accepted the office of a Vice-President of the Society, and Mr. R. H. D'Elboux, F.S.A., has been elected a Member of the Council in place of Mr. Keith Lucas.

Kentish antiquaries, one and all, owe a deep debt of gratitude to Lt.-Colonel Sir Albert Stern, K.B.E., C.M.G., late High Sheriff of Kent, through whose generosity an original Charter of Wihtrud, King of Kent, A.D. 699, has been secured for the County Archives. It is intended to publish, in the Society's volume for 1947, a full account of this interesting document.

An event of 1946 that should not pass without notice was the centenary meeting at Lewes in June of the Sussex Archaeological Society, a neighbour and an elder sister of the Kent Society, on whose rules our own first rules were based. The centenary celebrations included the opening to guests of the Sussex Society's Museums, a lunch and tea, a reception by the Mayor of Lewes and the Right Hon. Earl Winterton, President, and Dr. Eliot Curwen, Chairman of the Council of the Society, followed by addresses on the early history of Lewes Castle and visits to its ruins and precincts. The Kent Archaeological Society was represented by its Hon. General Secretary, who was present by invitation, and conveyed on behalf of members suitable congratulations on the occasion and best wishes for the future.

The President took the chair at the General Meeting on 30th April, when the members present reached the high level of about 50 in the morning and 120 in the afternoon. He reviewed the events of the year as set out in the Report for 1945, particular attention being drawn to the "Seven-Year Covenants", the adoption of which by members, if widespread, would, he said, greatly help the finances of the Society. He also offered Mr. Charles Stokes the congratulations and the thanks of the Society on the completion of twenty-one years' service as Hon. Treasurer, with a special tribute to his skill and accuracy in keeping the accounts during that period. The usual formal business, including the elections to the Council, the re-election of officers and the admission of new members followed.

After lunch, Mrs. Audrey Williams, F.S.A., delivered a lecture, well illustrated by lantern slides, on *Roman Canterbury, Excavations 1944-5*, detailing the progress so far made in the unfolding of the early history of the City. Dr. Gordon Ward having been prevented from giving his address, Miss Anne Roper, M.B.E., stepped into the breach and in a last-moment effort charmed her audience with an instructive and entertaining

talk on *Some Church Customs in Kent*. Both lecturers received the hearty thanks of the meeting.

Gifts for the year ending 31st December, 1946, to the Library and Collections include the following:

St. William of Perth; His Story. Donor, the Author, the Rev. Canon S. W. Wheatley; *All Saints Church, Birchington; Some notes concerning*. Donor, the Author, Cyril A. G. Coles; Davis: *MSS. Notebooks*. Donor, B. F. Davis; *Fairer by Time, Dartford*. Donor, the Author, Harold Mair; *East Farleigh; Parish Magazine of*. Donor, the Rev. E. R. Ridley Day; *Collection of MSS. and Drawings relating to Kent Brasses* by H. G. Belcher, *Kentish Brasses, Vol. I, 1888, and Vol. II, 1905*, by W. D. Belcher, *Monumental Brasses in Kent*, by Ralph Griffin and Mill Stephenson, *Monumental Brasses 1891*, by H. W. Macklin. Donor, T. Edward Belcher (five items); *Records of Bucks., Vol. XIV, Pts. 1 and 2*. Donor, the Author, Christopher Hohler; *Fantasies of St. Mary Cray*. Donor, the Author, the Rev. Ray F. Galer.

The Council have expressed to the respective donors the thanks of the Society for these gifts.

As will be seen, the Accounts show an excess of expenditure over receipts of £86. This result is due to a decision of the Council to publish a somewhat larger volume, even at the cost of drawing a little on the accumulated balances of several of the war years when the paper shortage was most acute and outlay on book-making was severely limited by circumstances. The Council hope that this action will be approved by members of the Society, and that they will welcome the greater content of the volume which but for the delay caused by the restrictions in the use of electric power, would have been issued earlier this year. The early completion of the accounts has also been prevented, and in the circumstances they are being circulated among members in advance of the audit.

During the year, Part IX of the *Register of Hamo Hethe* was published by the Canterbury and York Society in conjunction with the Records Branch. It is expected that the next Part will be the last, thus bringing to a close a publication which was embarked upon many years ago. Good progress is being made with the preparation for publication of a further part of *Kent Feet of Fines*.

The Records Committee look forward to collaborating in the important work of the new National Register of Archives in the listing of records of actual or potential historical value.

A fine collection of records, mainly relating to West Wickham, has been presented to the Records Branch through the kindness of our member, Miss Lennard, of Roughetts, Hildenborough.

In their Report for 1945 the Council referred to the attempt that was made, without success, to revive the Excursion Meetings of normal times. With the gradual diminution of transport difficulties and the selection for a visit of places easy of access it was found possible to organize both a summer and an autumn excursion in 1946. A two-day excursion on 26th and 27th June included Old Maidstone, with a civic welcome from the Mayor at the Town Hall, and All Saints Church, Allington Castle, Boxley Abbey and Bradbourne. About 200 tickets had been taken and the numbers attending each day testified to the interest and pleasure felt at the resumption, after the war, of these attractive summer meetings. Those present were most cordially received at all the places visited, whilst the welcome at Bradbourne, with the entertainment to tea of the whole party, in these lean days, was almost overwhelming. The Hon. Mrs.

Horsfield and Mr. Horsfield very kindly described Allington Castle and told its history, Mr. Elliston Erwood lectured at Boxley Abbey, and Dr. R. G. Hatton and members of his staff spoke at Bradbourne, of the house, the fine old buildings, the grounds, and the portraits bequeathed to the Society, all of which were seen to great advantage in a series of conducted tours. Mr. Erwood received much praise for his skilful organization of one of the most enjoyable excursions within the memory of those who took part.

The autumn excursion, held in October, owing to the breakdown of the original proposals, was spent wholly in the City of Canterbury, where, thanks to the excellent organization of a full programme, the large number of members and friends present were able to visit in comfort under expert guidance not only the Cathedral and its precincts but also the ruins of St. Augustine's Abbey and other buildings less well known to the majority of visitors to the Cathedral City, as well as the Roman excavations.

Owing to an unfortunate mistake made by the printers in the issue of *Archæologia Cantiana*, Vol. LVIII (1945), certain new members who had joined the Society in 1946 received a copy to which they were not entitled under the Rules, while certain Societies that were entitled to a copy did not receive one. As the stock in hand is substantially exhausted the Council will appreciate the action of *any members who no longer need Vol. LVIII* in returning it to the Hon. Librarian at Maidstone. Payment, at the rate of 2s. 6d. a volume, will be made, *if asked for*, for any volumes so returned, up to a limit of forty volumes.

A welcome revival of archaeological activity in several districts is evident from the reports of local societies and secretaries. The Council invite the hon. local secretaries for districts where activity has not been resumed to do their best to encourage such revival in the coming year, and to report, in due course, any local discoveries.

Mrs. Gardiner reports: The Canterbury Archaeological Society, though it has been able to some extent to carry on activities throughout the war, has now entered with fresh zest and many new members on enlarged summer and winter programmes. The excursions were for the first time arranged each one by a different member of the Committee; this innovation proved a great success, and all but one of the outings were well attended. It was a delight to all to be back in the Kent countryside and to visit its historic sites in peace. The winter programme has proved attractive to good audiences on each occasion.

Several reports received from hon. local secretaries and others are too lengthy for this Report and merit fuller notices in *Archæologia Cantiana*. They are being held over accordingly.

The reports referred to are by Mr. William Urry on finds in Canterbury, including a collection of administrative archives of the City, by Mr. R. F. Jessup on excavations at Dover, by Mr. Elliston Erwood on Romano-British pottery from the neighbourhood of Woolwich, and by Mr. A. Eldridge on finds of pottery and coins in Orpington district.

Full reports of the excavations undertaken to elucidate the Roman history of Canterbury and Dover are appearing in the body of *Archæologia Cantiana*. The 1946 programmes were carried out under the supervision of Mr. Sheppard Frere (Canterbury) and Mrs. Murray Threipland (Dover).

Major F. W. Tomlinson has supplied the following brief preliminary report of the work at Canterbury in 1946:

A Roman building with tessellated pavement was partially uncovered in the yard of the Rose Hotel; a well-built conduit (with tile floor about 18 inches wide and stone sides with tile courses) was found at both sides

of and running under Rose Lane—sloping from west to east ; post-holes and practically unmixed Belgic pottery, at two points, pointed unmistakably to pre-Roman occupation—hitherto doubted and at any rate unproven. For the first time since excavating began in September 1944, a fragment of Saxon pottery was found (a sherd c. A.D. 400) in a late Roman layer.

Since Easter 1946 a small party of local volunteers, organized by Mr. John Boyle (Town Clerk of Canterbury) has done excellent work in Burgate Street in a basement immediately adjoining and west of the old covered market ; here traces of Roman and mediæval buildings have been found, in close and complicated inter-relation ; coins, metal objects and interesting mediæval pottery.

The Dartford District Antiquarian Society has carried out visits to places of interest and has also arranged a programme of winter lectures. In pre-war years this Society usually published its transactions, and this practice may perhaps be resumed when circumstances permit.

Once more the Council ask members to remit their subscriptions promptly to the Collector (Mr. C. W. Hopper, 14 Nunnery Road, Canterbury), and also to be active in enrolling new members.

By Order of the Council,

EDWARD HARRISON,

Hon. General Secretary.

19th March, 1947.