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ANNUAL REPORT

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1983

Council presents its one hundred and twenty-fifth Report and Statement of Accounts for 1982.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting was held at Sevenoaks on Saturday, 21st May, when Council's Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for 1982 were accepted. Messrs. Hoby Pollock and Bell were re-appointed as Auditors of the Society. On the proposal of Sir John Winnifrith, K.C.B., seconded by Mr. J.D. Noble, the revised draft Rules were accepted *nem. con.* in place of the existing Rules of the Society. The Rules Committee was re-appointed to report to the next A.G.M. whether any further changes should be considered.

OFFICERS

The President, Vice-Presidents, Hon. Editor, Hon. Treasurer, Hon. Membership Secretary, Hon. Excursions Secretary and Hon. Curator were re-elected unopposed and the Hon. General Secretary and Hon. Librarian after a ballot. In addition, the following were elected Vice-Presidents as persons of distinction associated with the County of Kent:

Mr. Robin Leigh Pemberton, M.A., D.L., Lord Lieutenant of Kent; The Rt. Hon. Lord Northbourne, M.A.

COUNCIL

The following were elected members of Council after a ballot: Mr. P. Bennett, Mrs. N. Caiger, Mr. J. Cruse, B.Sc., Mr. R.F. Le Gear, Mr. E.W. Parkin* and Mrs. P. Winzar*. In addition, Mr. S.R. Harker was elected for a period of one year to fill the vacancy caused by Mr. M.A. Ocock's resignation.

* Retiring member of Council.

NEWSLETTER

Material for the Newsletter should reach Mr. E.P. Connell by March 1st, September 1st and December 1st for inclusion in each issue.

FINANCE

A glance at the Income and Expenditure Account shows that

members get a very good bargain for their subscriptions which do not cover the cost of *Archaeologia Cantiana*. The least they can do is to pay their subscriptions at the new rates and, by covenanting their subscriptions, make them about a third more valuable to the Society at no cost to themselves. If a substantial number of members covenanted a further increase in subscription rates could be postponed.

Subscription rates are now:

Institutional Members	£10.00
Individuals and Affiliated Societies	£ 7.00
Joint Members	£ 9.00
Junior Members	£ 3.00

PUBLICATIONS

Volume XCVIII was published in 1983. The volume maintains its high standard under the editorship of Mr. A.P. Detsicas, B.A., M.A., F.S.A., F.S.A.Scot., and its contents cover a wide field of Archaeology and History.

Excavations in the St. George's Street and Burgate Street Areas, by Professor S.S. Frere and Sally Stow, Volume VII of *The Archaeology of Canterbury* series, published in conjunction with the Canterbury Archaeological Trust, was issued in July 1983.

Studies in Modern Kentish History, a volume of essays in honour of Dr. F. Hull and Miss E. Melling, edited by Alec Detsicas and Nigel Yates, was also issued in July 1983.

The New Gaol Order Book, 1805-23, by C.W. Chalklin, and *Kentish Visitations of Archbishop William Warham and his Deputies, 1511-1512*, edited by K.L. Wood-Legh, two volumes in the Society's *Records* series, will be published in July 1984.

In 1985, *Archaeologia Cantiana* will reach its 100th volume and to celebrate the occasion, Council has agreed to the publication of a volume additional to the annual one; it is hoped that this special volume will be issued to members together with volume 101 for 1984. A large number of papers, covering the archaeology and history of the County, have already been offered for this celebration volume.

EXCURSIONS

The Society is most grateful to Mr. M.A. Crane, B.A., for taking on the onerous task of organisation at very short notice, in spite of which three successful excursions took place during 1983.

Dover, 7th May. Visits were made to Dover Castle and the Pharos during the morning and to the Painted House and the current

excavations in the afternoon. Special thanks are due to Mr. B.J. Philp for his assistance.

Orpington and Bexley, 25th June. Visits were made to the site of the Roman bath and the Museum during the morning under the guidance of the Curator and Mr. A.J.J. Parsons. In the afternoon we visited Hall Palace, Bexley, where Mr. P.J. Tester gave us a guided tour of the house and grounds.

City of London, 17th September. This was intended as a follow-up to Mr. Schofield's lecture to the Canterbury Archaeological Society on the Billingsgate excavation. Owing to a misunderstanding, Mr. Schofield was not available, but the party were given a most exhilarating and unusual lecture tour by the Warden of Charlton House. After a visit to the London Museum, we spent a most enjoyable and instructive one and a half hours at the sites being worked by the Southwark Archaeological Society in the area of The Clink and the Palace of the Bishop of Winchester.

The Hon. Excursions Secretary would like to express his personal thanks to all those mentioned above for making these visits so successful and to all those members who continue to support the excursions.

The following visits are planned for 1984: on 26th May, an all-day excursion to Lydd; in the summer, an all-day excursion in the Smallhythe area and, in the autumn, to Bayham.

FIELDWORK COMMITTEE

Grants were made during 1983 to assist the following undertakings:

- (1) Mr. Hugh Thompson's continuing excavations at Oldbury Hill-fort, Ightham, received £150.
- (2) Mr. N. MacPherson-Grant requested financial assistance towards the cost of preparing an illustrated report on the medieval pottery recovered in excavations at Stonar, near Sandwich, and the Society donated £100 for this purpose.

Applications for grants in 1985 should be made to the Honorary General Secretary not later than 1st October, 1984.

The intended excavation sponsored by the K.A.S. at Sarre has had to be postponed. Due to weather conditions in the early part of 1983, the farmer had to change his cropping plans so that the area was not available for archaeological excavation during the summer.

KENT HISTORIC BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

The main, but by no means the only function of this Committee, is to comment on planning applications affecting listed buildings, more

especially where an element of demolition is involved. It consists of members nominated by Council together with members nominated by the Kent Branch of the Council for the Protection of Rural England. The two organisations share the operating costs of the Committee, which operates from the CPRE's room in the offices of the Kent Voluntary Services Council at 15 Manor Road, Folkestone. The Committee acts as the agent for Kent of the Council for British Archaeology in fulfilling its statutory obligations under the Town and Country Planning Act, 1971. This duty means that the Committee is in constant operation, throughout the year, members holding themselves available at all times to visit buildings and inspect plans as occasion demands. Over two hundred applications a year are received and all are considered.

In some cases outright objection is expressed while in others it is possible to make suggestions regarding materials, design proportions or give other practical advice. Often the owner learns about the architectural history of his property in the course of discussion.

The opinions expressed in its comments are respected by the Planning Authorities whose co-operation is witnessed by the nomination of members of the Kent Planning Officers Group to sit on the Committee in a consultative capacity.

During the year the neglect of listed buildings has been a matter of special concern, the Water Authority's buildings in the Broad Oak valley being an example. Conflict of interest between preservation and commercial expediency is a constant problem; for instance, at Bushy Ruff House, Alkhan, or 4, Old High Street, Folkestone. The future of the buildings at Chatham Dockyard seems to be progressing satisfactorily. Several important buildings and their curtilages have been affected by planning applications, such as The Salutation, Sandwich, Westenhanger Manor and Mereworth Castle, but many smaller buildings, including barns and summer-houses have equal impact on the architectural heritage it is our desire to preserve.

The Farm Buildings Survey organised by the Committee continues to expand, though it must be admitted not as extensively as was envisaged at the outset. The efforts of those taking part are very much appreciated.

Five plaques have been issued under the 'Historic Building of Kent' scheme operated by the Committee. Applications are invited from owners of houses which are good examples of their period and the period of any alterations. Listing revision is in progress in some areas in the County. The Committee would be pleased to receive recommendations of buildings considered desirable to be added to the Scheduled Lists, with as much detail as possible.

LIBRARY AND MUNIMENTS COMMITTEE

The Library has enjoyed a year of quiet consolidation and development. The task of filling the substantial gaps, which re-cataloguing has revealed, is continuing, albeit in a selective manner due to cost and, especially, the restriction of space. Policy is to concentrate on British local history and subject specialist material as well as a careful selection of volumes relating directly to Kent. In addition to journals, some 90 items have been purchased and the gift of 17 items detailed below.

It is also heartening to acquire a steady stream of works by members such as Dr. A. Ashbee (*Snodland Church*), Mrs. Z. Bamping (*West Kingsdown*), Mr. J.M. Carley (*Meopham*, etc.), Mr. A.P. Detsicas (*The Cantiaci*), Mrs. J. Eddison (*Geography of Dungeness*), Mr. A.D. Stoyel (*Architecture in Sevenoaks*) and Mr. T.W.T. Tatton-Brown (*Chronological Maps of Canterbury*).

In addition to the above, gifts of material are gratefully acknowledged from Mrs. W.F. Bergess, Dr. P. Draper, Mr. K.W.E. Gravett, Mr. L.R.A. Grove, Dr. N.P. Hudd, Mrs. C. Noble, Miss M. Waite and the Francis Coales Foundation.

It is, however, a matter of regret that many affiliated Societies continue to overlook the commitment under Rule 44 to send copies of their publications and, as a result, the sets of these are often very incomplete. Any help in this respect would be welcomed.

Finally, especial mention must be made of the gift of a magnificent oval table by B.P. Oil (Kent) Refinery. This has been through the good offices of our Member, Mr. John Cruse, and Mr. C. Maddox. The table has been re-furnished by Mr. R.A. Goodhew and virtually completes the furnishing of our Library. This now constitutes a most worthy centre for the Society where we continue to be indebted to Maidstone Corporation and the Museum staff for their co-operation.

PUBLICITY AND MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

The Membership and Publicity Committee has continued to seek further ways to improve the benefits available to members, as well as to bring the Society to the notice of potential members.

At the A.G.M., held at Sevenoaks, several local groups exhibited results of their recent researches ranging from aerial photography to spelaeology. The afternoon was devoted to Dr. Peter Reynolds' fascinating account of the Butser Ancient Farm Research Project.

In June a social evening combined with a private visit to the Whitbread Hop Farm was attended by ninety members.

A seminar on practical archaeology and local history entitled 'Archaeology at Work' was held at New Ash Green in September.

Over three hundred people participated during the day, and circulated among the displays. Its informal nature proved popular and instructive, with several experts in attendance to illustrate various facets of practical work. These included surveys of farm buildings, church architecture, and the parish of West Wickham, together with classification of clay pipes. Members of the Kent Archives Office drew attention to the vast collection of material (including documents lodged by the Society) available to researchers at Maidstone. The extensive K.A.S. bookstall was a popular attraction at this and many other functions throughout the County during the year.

CHURCHES COMMITTEE

The Committee is concerned that, in spite of the very generous grants now available from the State, an ever-growing number of historic churches seem to be faced with the threat of redundancy. The Committee does what it can to resist this movement, and during the year has offered encouragement and a grant of £100 in each case to those attempting to save St. Mary's, Higham, and St. Mary Magdalene, Stockbury.

Both Holy Trinity and St. Peter's, Maidstone, have already been declared redundant. In the case of the former a grant of £300 and a loan of £700 have been made towards the cost of restoration and conversion to a Concert Hall and, although there is still much work to be done, the Hall is now in use. St. Peter's is to be converted to a funeral parlour, but it is understood that it will be possible for members of the public to visit the chancel.

A grant of £100 was offered towards the restoration of the Rampston Monument in St. Clement, Sandwich, and negotiations were in progress for repairing and rebuilding the churchyard wall at Murston Old Church.

By the end of the year the Romney Marsh Historic Churches Trust had raised about £50,000 and agreement had been reached for it to take over responsibility for Snave Church which had been declared redundant.

The Committee was concerned to find that the medieval timber sub-bellframe had been removed from High Halstow Church and was hoping to ensure that at least part of it was restored and put back in the church.

RECORDS COMMITTEE

Since its revival in 1981, the Records Committee has concentrated on resuming the publication of indexes to the Kent testamentary records, which has lapsed for 60 years. Ten classes are to be encom-

passed in one index, beginning with the Archdeaconry Court of Canterbury, 1577-1639. This project has the unqualified support of the nation's most eminent historians, including the Keeper of Public Records and the Director of the Institute of Historical Research, who says that testamentary records 'are extremely important for historical research and the Kentish holdings are probably second only to the Prerogative Court of Canterbury itself.' It is estimated that ten further volumes will be needed, entailing the writing of close on 1,000,000 slips. It is hoped to start the slip-writing for the first volume in March, 1984, but the work will cost several thousand pounds, only part of which has been found. Strenuous efforts are being made to arrange the funding necessary for the whole project. The Committee hopes also to secure the publication in the near future of full abstracts of the Cranbrook wills from the beginning to 1640. They are expected to make a volume of about 325 pages.

KENT DEFENCE RESEARCH GROUP

Due to the efforts of its editor, Mr. D.H. Bennett, the group's magazine 'Ravelin' now appears on a regular basis. This has been a significant factor in the gradual increase in membership of the group during 1983.

Mr. V.T.C. Smith reports that, within the Thames Branch area, 1983 saw the start of a project for the restoration of Coalhouse Fort at East Tilbury. The group has taken a leading part in this restoration initiative and provides two members of the Coalhouse Fort Steering Group which manages the project. Initial work has been undertaken by a volunteer Conservation Corps but this body will be reinforced in 1984 by a large contingent of workers under the Community Programme.

Restoration of the New Tavern Fort at Gravesend continues at an accelerated pace, and it is hoped to achieve full-time opening of the magazines to the public by the summer of 1984.

Within the Medway area, the Medway Military Research Group, which operates instead of a K.D.R.G. branch there, continues with its most valuable work at Fort Amherst.

Mr. J. Guy reports that the main activity occupying the attention of the Dover Branch has been their continuing action against the Kent County Council's Eyesore Clearance Programme. The main magazine at South Foreland Battery is to be saved from demolition and a commemorative plaque is to be mounted upon it. The Branch continue to be involved in the plan by the National Trust to restore one of the fire-control buildings at Great Farthingloe and have given the Trust the text of an explanatory leaflet in publication.

Crabwell Publications have published a book by Col. B.E. Arnold, Chairman of the Group, entitled *Conflict Across the Strait* concerning the Dover area defences during the Second World War. The Group itself has published a research report on the fortifications of London during the English Civil War.

Members of the Group have undertaken survey work on the Firth of Forth defences in Scotland on which a major report is being written.

The K.D.R.G. also mounted a display on English fort restoration projects at a conference on fortifications at Cherbourg in October 1983.

A paper on the development of British land defence systems was also presented at the conference.

KENT UNDERGROUND RESEARCH GROUP

Throughout the year members have continued to record underground sites and pursue research projects across the County.

A grant of £300, which was gratefully received from the K.A.S., was used to assist in the purchase of underground surveying instruments and specialist climbing equipment that is necessary for the safe examination of deep shafts, etc.

In June 1983, a field trip was held to the commercial show caves at Chislehurst. Some twenty-seven members and friends were taken on a private tour of the extensive network of caves which are the result of the underground amalgamation of three chalk mines. The excavated chalk was used for lime-burning and was also sold to local farmers as a top dressing. Most of the galleries appear to have been dug in the early to mid-nineteenth century. The mines were abandoned in the 1860s when flooding caused a number of serious roof falls. The mines are now a popular attraction in the area with tales of Druid's altars, haunted pools, etc.

Three of the Group's surveyors, Messrs. R. Le Gear, H. Pearman and T. Reeve, have made a detailed plan of a sand mine located in the rear garden of a private residence at Chipstead, near Sevenoaks. The survey was made using instruments obtained as a result of the K.A.S. grant. The tunnels were cut in the Folkestone Beds of the Upper Greensand to provide material for a 'whitening' works which once stood near the entrance. A full report is in preparation.

BUILDING RECORDERS

The twentieth conference of Building Recorders was held on Saturday, 8th October, 1983 in the Church Hall at Charing. Mr. R.H. Hiscock took the chair and some forty members attended.

The first speaker, Mr. T.W.T. Tatton-Brown described some of a series of fourteenth-century timber roofs in Canterbury. Those at the Poor Priest's Hospital, St. Augustine's and in the Bakehouse in the Precincts have king-struts and collar purlins and were compared with examples from Chichester and Hampshire. The crown-strut roof without purlins at Blackfriars was also discussed. He was followed by Mr. A. Dell of Edenbridge, who described a timber-framed building at right angles to the road in the market area of the town of Edenbridge. Apparently, it was unheated, with a single room downstairs and a more prosperous room above, and this gave rise to the idea that it might have been a market house or have some similar guild or civic function.

To contrast with the roofs described by Mr. Tatton-Brown, Mr. K.W.E. Gravett showed slides of seventeenth- to nineteenth-century king-post roofs, demonstrating that the difference was that in the later period the king-post was in tension, giving a more efficient design, using less timber, which was progressively increasing in price.

Mrs. M. Lawrence discussed early estate agents 'particulars' and showed how much could be learned from them. Finally, Mr. P. Tester showed some slides of the re-erection of the eighteenth-century Lych Gate at Bexley and its rescue from decay.

Mr. Hiscock, the Chairman, thanked the speakers, Mr. P. Lambert for his operation of the projector and Mr. and Mrs. Winzar for their help with the arrangements.

1st January, 1984

By order of the Council
A.C. HARRISON
Hon. General Secretary