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# ANNUAL REPORT

# ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1984

Council presents its one hundred and twenty-sixth Report and Statement of Accounts for 1983.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting was held at Ashford on Saturday, 19th May, when Council's Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for 1983 were accepted. Messrs. Hoby, Pollock and Bell were re-appointed as Auditors of the Society. The amendments to Rules 12, 16 and 29 proposed by the Rules Committee were agreed, but the proposal to introduce proxy voting at meetings was defeated.

## PATRONS

The following were elected Patrons of the Society as being persons of distinction associated with the County of Kent

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, P.C., D.D.; The Viscount de L'Isle, V.C., K.G.; The Lord Brabourne; Major H.R. Pratt Boorman, C.B.E., M.A., D.L.; The Rt. Hon. W.F. Deedes, M.C., D.L.; Dr. Felix Hull, B.A., Ph.D., D.Litt., F.R.Hist.S.; Mr. Robin Leigh Pemberton, M.A., D.L.

## OFFICERS

The following were elected as Officers of the Society:

The President, Rev. Canon D. Ingram Hill, M.A., D.D., F.S.A.; Vice-Presidents: Mr. C.W. Chalkling, M.A., B.Litt.; Mr. C.R. Councer, F.S.A.; Mr. L.R.A. Grove, B.A., F.S.A., F.M.A.; Mr. R.F. Jessup, F.S.A.; Lt.-Col. G.W. Meates, F.S.A.; Miss E. Melling, B.A.; Lord Northbourne, M.A.; Miss Anne Roper, M.B.E., J.P., M.A., F.S.A.; and Dr. J. Whyman, B.Sc., Ph.D.; Hon. Editor, Mr. A.P. Detsicas, M.A., F.S.A.; Hon. General Secretary, Mr. A.C. Harrison, B.A., F.S.A.; Hon. Treasurer, Mr. L.D. Lyle, M.A.; Hon. Membership Secretary, Mrs. M. Lawrence; Hon. Excursions Secretary, Mr. M.A. Crane, B.A.; Hon. Curator, Mr. D.B. Kelly, B.A., F.S.A., A.M.A.; Hon. Librarian, Dr. P.H.G. Draper, B.Sc., Ph.D.

## COUNCIL

The following were elected members of Council after a ballot:

Mr. J. Bradshaw, Dr. H. Cragg,\* Mr. K.W.E. Gravett,\* Mr. R.H. Hiscock,\* Mrs. J.M. Saynor and Mr. C.G.W. Simmons. In addition, Mr. J. Owen was elected for a period of one year to fill the vacancy caused by Mr. Tatton-Brown's resignation.

\* Retiring members of Council.

## SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS

Two very well attended Special General Meetings of the Society were held on 15th December at Maidstone. At the first called by 20 members under Rule 13(a)3, the resolution, proposed by Mr. B.J. Philp and seconded by Mr. S.W. Burden, that an enquiry should be carried out into the conduct and management of the Society's affairs was defeated by 184 votes to 46 with one abstention.

At the second meeting called by the President and the Hon. General Secretary under Rule 13(a)1, the resolution deploring the unfounded attacks upon the Society's Council and Officers and expressing entire confidence in them, proposed by Mr. F.H.C. Tatham and seconded by Mr. M.L.M. Clinch was carried by 174 votes to 35 with 22 abstentions.

## NEWSLETTER

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

## PUBLICATIONS

Volume XCIX was published in 1984. 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.

*Kentish Visitations of Archbishop Warham and his Deputies, 1511-12*, edited by K.L. Wood-Legh (*Kent Records*, volume XXIV), and *New Maidstone Gaol Order Book, 1805-23*, edited by C.W. Chalklin (*Kent Records*, volume XXIII), were issued in December 1984.

In 1985, Volume C will be a special celebration volume and will be issued to members at the same time as Volume CI in June. Later in the year, *Watermills*, by M.J. Fuller and R.J. Spain, will be published in the Society's Monograph Series; it is also hoped to publish Volume VIII of *The Archaeology of Canterbury* series and *The Lullingstone Roman Villa, II*, dealing with finds of the excavation. Other volumes

to be published in the near future include the reports on the excavations at Finglesham, by Mrs. S.C. Hawkes, and at Stonar, by Mr. N.C. Macpherson-Grant.

#### FINANCE

Thanks to the efforts of our Hon. Membership Secretary most members are now paying their annual subscription at the correct rates which are:

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

If more members were prepared to covenant their subscriptions, the Society would be able to postpone an increase in annual subscription rates. Forms may be obtained from the Hon. General Secretary, the Hon. Treasurer or the Hon. Membership Secretary. The Finance and Investment Committee is most grateful for the advice of Mr. Michael Nightingale, who resigned during the year, and welcomes Mr. G.C.B. Gidley-Kitchin and Mr. J. Owen to its deliberations.

Two items of expenditure exceeded £2500:

1. £7464.00 was spent on publishing *Archaeologia Cantiana*, XCIX.
2. The cost of printing *Kentish Visitations of Archbishop William Warham and his Deputies, 1511-1512*, edited by Dr. K.L. Wood-Legh, was £5222.20. An interest-free loan of £4403 was received from the Pilgrim Trust and three grants amounting to £1500 for this 24th volume in our Records Series.

#### EXCURSIONS

It was proposed to have three meetings to places of historic interest this year, but in the event two were undertaken.

*One Day Visit to Lydd Area.* In June the Society visited Lydd at the invitation of the newly formed Friends of Lydd Society. In the morning, a coach party from Bexley, Maidstone and Ashford totalling 26 people were shown over New Romney Church. In the afternoon, after paying our respects to the most recently established local history museum, the group divided into small parties. They were then invited into some of the homes recently restored by members of the Friends of Lydd Society. After a tour of Lydd Church our group was entertained to tea in Lydd Village Hall.

*Lesnes Abbey and Roman London.* The Autumn visit on the 6th October was the second of what we hope will become our annual visit

to London. The morning was spent at Lesnes Abbey where we were shown the remains and the results of twentieth-century excavation. In the afternoon we took part in a most enjoyable and at the same time erudite tour of the Roman sites within the City, keeping the group on their toes (and feet) for three hours – we visited areas not normally accessible to the general public.

Next year we have planned three worthwhile excursions. The first on Saturday, 15th June, is a whole day opportunity to tour inside the Woolwich Arsenal, the new museums, Rotunda and eighteenth-century Mess Hall. On 13th July, we are making a tour of some east Kent barns and in the Autumn; on 14th September, our annual visit to London will be preceded by a lecture tour of the Ranger's House, Blackheath.

In 1986, I would be happy to take a party abroad to Arnhem to visit not only the war sites but also some of the many folk museums. The visit would be in the nature of a three-day tour. If you are interested, please contact me and look out for details in the *Newsletter*.

#### FIELDWORK COMMITTEE

Grants were made during 1983–84 to assist the following projects:

Kent Underground Research Group (Mr. R. LeGear)	£355
Fawkham and Ash Archaeological Group (Mr. R.A. Cockett)	£350
Field walking survey of Neolithic sites (Mr. N. Barton)	£200
Romney Marsh research (Mrs. J. Eddison)	£300
Maidstone Area Archaeological Group (Mr. A.J. Daniels)	£200
Gravesend Historical Society	£150
Tenterden Area Archaeological Group (Mr. A. Miles)	£150
Oldbury excavations (Mr. F.H. Thompson)	£150
Dartford and District Archaeological Group (Mr. C. Baker)	£100
Neolithic axe survey (Mrs. J.C. Annetts)	£100
Ashford Archaeological and Historical Society (Mr. W.R. Briscall)	£ 50

Applications for grants by the Society should be made to the Hon. General Secretary by 1st October, 1985.

It is proposed to arrange a training excavation on the Anglo-Saxon cemetery site at Sarre during the coming summer. This project, which was originally planned for 1983, will be sponsored by the K.A.S. and directed by Mr. T.W.T. Tatton-Brown.

In December 1984, the membership of the committee was reviewed by Council. Mr. R.F. Jessup and Mr. P.J. Tester, who both joined the committee in 1957, took this opportunity to retire from membership. The Society is indebted to both for their contribution and in particular to Mr. Tester who has been Convener since 1969.

#### KENT HISTORIC BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

This Committee, which is a joint committee with the Kent Branch of the Council for the Protection of Rural England, has as usual met quarterly during the year. An effort has been made to make the committee more representative by co-option of additional members with a view to having at least one representative in the area of each district council who can visit the planning office when required and inspect plans of proposed alterations to listed buildings and report to the Secretary and committee. In the larger areas this is on a parish, or group of parishes, basis but there are areas which are still uncovered in Ashford, Shepway (Romney Marsh) and Tonbridge and Malling. There is now a total of 26 members on the Committee.

One recurring problem that the Committee has had before it this year has been the conversion of barns to dwelling-houses. Whilst this may in some cases be preferable to demolition, the Committee feel that every effort should be made to retain them in agricultural or industrial use and particularly when they form part of a farm complex.

The question of plaques has again been under consideration and the Committee will have to decide whether or not to continue the scheme when the present supply of plaques is exhausted. The fact that the plaques are only awarded on the application of an owner who is willing to pay for one has always been a drawback to the scheme.

The vandalism and increasing decay of Cobham Mausoleum has continued to cause concern to the Committee who have supported two schemes to convert it into a dwelling-house, with certain reservations, as the only prospect of saving it from further damage due to its isolated position.

Another successful Building Records Conference was held at Charing in October under our Vice-Chairman, Mr. K.W.E. Gravett, who has organized these conferences for the last twenty-years.

Sadly, Mr. Gerald Winzar who has been the Committee's Secretary for a number of years has decided to retire and the Committee wishes to express its great appreciation for all the work he has done.

#### CHURCHES COMMITTEE

The Committee has supported the proposal to establish a Trust to

retain the church of Goodnestone-next-Faversham as a chapel of ease, and it appears likely that this scheme will come to fruition shortly. Work is proceeding on preserving the medieval timbers from the sub-bellframe at High Halstow, and a grant has been offered to assist the parish in the task of reconstruction of the frame in the church. The careful rebuilding of the churchyard wall at Murston Old Church is continuing.

The Committee has kept a watchful eye on threatened churches throughout the county, and is concerned that St. Stephen's, Tovil – an early-Victorian building by the local architect Whichcord – is likely to be demolished.

#### MEMBERSHIP AND PUBLICITY

The committee has continued to examine ways of encouraging active participation in the archaeology of Kent and promoting the recruitment of new members. Mrs. M. Lawrence, Hon. Membership Secretary, has undertaken the major task of completely reorganising the Society's membership records, and Council has authorised the purchase of microcomputer soft-ware which will provide information on subscriptions, etc., and assist local secretaries by updating membership lists.

A highly successful symposium on Roman pottery was held at Dartford in January with participation by experts from other counties.

In September, some 300 members took part in the Society's second one-day conference entitled 'Archaeology at Work'. The venue was Faversham and the programme included talks and demonstrations on a variety of practical topics including heraldry, palaeography and churchyard surveys, as well as displays by several affiliated societies.

The K.A.S bookstall continues to provide a useful service at meetings throughout Kent in addition to its primary function of presenting a range of modern guides, text-books and booklets to members.

#### RECORDS COMMITTEE

During the year the Records Committee continued its efforts to revive after 60 years the indexing of Kent's unique series of testamentary records; and through the agency of a new body, Kent Records Collections, and of the Manpower Services Commission, it was fortunate to be able to engage for that purpose two slip-writers, both honours graduates and qualified archivists. They started work on 19th November, one on each of the two courts of the diocese of Canterbury for the period 1577–1639. Indexes of the wills and

administrations up to 1577 and for 1640–50 have already been printed, but seven more classes of testamentary records that in Kent are superior to any similar classes held elsewhere are being incorporated into the new indexes, which, if successfully completed, should be the finest of their kind in print. The importance of the project has been acknowledged by some of the most eminent historians in the country, including the Keeper of Public Records and the Director of the Institute of Historical Research. Yet, paradoxically, the greater part of the money needed to start it was subscribed by the New England Historic Genealogical Society, of Boston, Mass., from their John Brooks Threlfall Fund, a contribution for which the Committee is profoundly grateful. It is no less grateful to the West Malling Key Scheme Community Programme of the Manpower Services Commission for making possible the engagement of the second slip-writer, thus enabling both courts of the diocese of Canterbury to be indexed simultaneously. The Committee would also like to thank the Kent County Archivist for making the records available for indexing while the reconstruction of the Archives Office is in progress.

The Committee was instrumental in obtaining another substantial grant from the Threlfall Fund, which made it possible for Kent Record Collections to publish jointly with the Kent Archaeological Trust *Cranbrook Kent Will Abstracts 1396–1640* by J. de Launay. The Committee has further publications in mind, but its greatest concern and anxiety are financing the testamentary index project, which at present costs not less than £13,000 a year and to complete it to 1858 will take at least five years at this rate. A serious attempt is to be made to obtain a sponsor, or sponsors, since a substantial sum is still needed to carry the work to the end of 1985.

#### KENT DEFENCE RESEARCH GROUP

Within the Thames area, restoration of Coalhouse Fort has progressed at an accelerated rate and numerous gun-mountings have been obtained for display. There have been several well-attended open days. Research is now under way to produce specifications for the more detailed work of restoration. Application has been made for the scheduling of all the other defensive structures at East Tilbury.

At New Tavern Fort, Gravesend, further weaponry has been received for display. Public opening has been very successful and restoration and interpretation works are being extended.

In Medway, the major restoration project at Fort Amherst continues and the Medway Military Research Group have produced a detailed report proposing the restoration of Fort Darnet, a Victorian river defence work. The K.C.C. is considering the disposal of Fort

Luton at Chatham. The K.D.R.G. are keeping in touch with developments.

At Dover, the eighteenth-century Grand Shaft has, with K.D.R.G. involvement, been opened to the public during the summer months of 1984. It is understood that English Heritage are considering the future historical development in the castle area as well as again looking at the possibility of restoring the important Victorian Dover Turret. The K.D.R.G. have submitted to English Heritage proposals for the restoration of the Fire Command Post and Port War Signal Station at Dover Castle. The Group have maintained an input to the National Trust scheme for the restoration of the Second World War fire control buildings at Great Farthingloe.

More generally, the Group will soon be considering producing a revision of the *Handbook of Kent's Defences*. The K.D.R.G. now provides two representatives to the International Fortress Study Group with responsibility for the defences of London, Kent and East Sussex.

#### KENT UNDERGROUND RESEARCH GROUP

During the year, in addition to our research and recording activities, the Group has put on displays of its work at various meetings and exhibitions in the County, including the very successful K.A.S. 'Archaeology at Work' meeting, and the Gravesend Historical Society's local history exhibition at Gravesend. The latter event, which lasted three days, was to mark the society's one-hundredth anniversary. The Group has published a booklet – *Deneholes in the Gravesend Area*, which was written by the secretary and produced to be available at the exhibition. Further publications of a similar nature are planned.

In lieu of the usual yearly field trip, the Group participated in a weekend meeting centred at Dover. 'Subterranea Britannica', a national society whose aims and interests are similar to those of the K.U.R.G., holds study weekends each year at varying locations across the country. This year two Group members organised the weekend on behalf of 'Subterranea Britannica' and several other members attended. The event was very successful and enabled researchers from other counties to visit and study a variety of Kent sites.

A paper on agricultural chalk mines was published in *Arch. Cant.*, xcix (1983), and features work done by Group members. Other papers are in preparation.

## ROMNEY MARSH WORKSHOP

A Romney Marsh Workshop was held at Tenterden on 20th October. Mr. Hugh Roberts was in the Chair and some 60 people attended. The speakers were Mrs. Jill Eddison on the geology of the Marsh, Mr. Hugh Roberts on the development and decline of Smallhythe, Miss Eleanor Vollans on the port of Romney and the lower Rother, Miss Beryl Campbell on the government of Lydd in Elizabethan times and Mr. Tim Tatton-Brown on the archaeology of the Marsh. Numerous and wide-ranging questions proved the great interest of the audience and the organisers are to be congratulated on a most successful project.

## BUILDING RECORDERS

The twenty-first annual conference of Building Recorders was held in the Church Hall at Charing on Saturday, 6th October, 1984, and was attended by some 35 members.

The first speaker, Mr. Walter Briscall, described 'The Cage', a timber-framed building within the old market area at Ashford. Recent restoration had disclosed a very fine traceried window on the first floor and this indicated a fourteenth-century date. It would appear that it was some form of market house and had a cellar, the use of which as a lock-up had given rise to its name. Later alterations included heightening, lengthening and pargetting of the front.

Mr. Robin Thomas spoke about 112-14 High Street, Rainham, which retained the hall of a 'Wealden' house, with many features of the highest quality, including a moulded cornice, at eaves level, continued around the ends of the hall. Fortunately, he had recorded the house for the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, as shortly after, it suffered vandalism and was demolished.

Finally, Mr. E.W. Parkin spoke of his recent discoveries, including a medieval cellar at Wye and an aisled hall at Crundale. Mr. Parkin was one of the speakers at the first conference of Building Recorders in 1964 and his several contributions have reflected his work in Kent over many years.

The Chairman, Mr. K.W.E. Gravett, thanked the speakers for their papers and also Mr. and Mrs. Winzar for their help with the arrangements and Mr. Lambert for generously providing and working the projector.

## LIBRARY AND MUNIMENTS COMMITTEE

It is a pleasure to record the increasing use being made of our Library for study and meetings during 1984.

The programme of purchasing has continued steadily and selectively for both older works and from the spate of current publications on Kentish matters. Apart from journals, where a subscription to *Southern History* is the only addition, some 22 gifts and 67 purchases of volumes have been made. Advantage was taken of a special offer to complete (except for the 1961 and 1965 issues) the Society's set of the *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society*.

Rebinding and conservation of numerous rarer, more valuable works has been completed by the County Archives Office, and this programme will now pass on to journals.

The Hon. Librarian wishes to record his indebtedness to Mrs. W.F. Bergess, F.L.A., for her continuing and invaluable assistance.

Gifts are acknowledged from the following: J. Buckle, J. Cruse, A.P. Detsicas, P.H.G. Draper, E.R. Green, R.F. LeGear, H.B. von der Poel, Miss K.M. Roome, E.J. Russell, A.G. Sadler, L.A. Smith, W.N. Yates, and the Kent Voluntary Services Council.

Publications of members added include J. Boyle, *Hasted*; C.R. Chalklin (Ed.), *New Maidstone Gaol Order Book*; B. Cunliffe, *Danebury Iron Age Hillfort*, R.F. LeGear, *Deneholes, Gravesend*, E.R. Green, *Hearth Tax, Apprentices 1636-1834, Inns and Taverns*, all of Gravesend; K.M. Roome, *Seventeenth Century Wilmington*; Sir J. Winnifrith, *Appledore*; and W.N. Yates, *Kent and the Oxford Movement*.

The Society's considerable thanks are also due to the County Library Service for allowing the log-term storage of stocks of our own publications, free of charge, at its Malling airfield premises. However, the pressure on space in the Library itself is now becoming acute and a policy for easily accessible accommodation elsewhere of some parts of the book collections must now be evolved.

1st January, 1985

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

