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# ANNUAL REPORT

## ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1988

Council presents its one hundred and thirtieth Report and Statement of Accounts for 1987.

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting was held at Canterbury on Saturday, 21st May 1988, when Council's Annual Report and Accounts for 1987 were accepted. Messrs Robson, Rhodes were appointed as Auditors of the Society.

### OFFICERS

The following were elected as Officers of the Society:

The President	Mr K. W. E. Gravett, M.Sc.(Eng.), F.S.A.
Vice-President	Mr L. R. A. Grove, B.A., F.S.A., F.M.A.
The Hon. Editor	Dr A. P. Detsicas, B.A., M.A., D.Litt., F.S.A., F.S.A.Scot.
The Hon. Treasurer	Mr A. G. Webster, F.C.A.
The Hon. General Secretary	Mr A. C. Harrison, B.A., F.S.A.
The Hon. Membership Secretary	Mrs. M. Lawrence
The Hon. Excursions Secretary	Mr M. A. Crane, B.A.
The Hon. Curator	Mr D. B. Kelly, B.A., F.S.A., A.M.A.
The Hon. Librarian	Dr P. H. G. Draper, B.Sc., Ph.D.

### COUNCIL

The following were elected members of Council:

Mr J. Bradshaw\*, Mr P. Bennett, B.A., Mr R. H. Hiscock. L.L.B., F.S.A.,\* Mr J. H. Money, M.A., F.S.A., Mrs J. M. Saynor, M.A,\* and Miss M. Waite, B.A., Dip.Ed.

\* Retiring member of Council

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### PUBLICATIONS

Volume CIV of *Archaeologia Cantiana* was published in 1988. The volume maintains its high standard under the editorship of Dr A.P. Detsicas, B.A., M.A., D.Litt., F.S.A., F.S.A.Scot., and its contents cover a wide field of Archaeology and History. Because of the amount of material available and accepted for publication, Council has agreed to issue two volumes, CV and CVI, of *Archaeologia Cantiana* to members in 1989.

Volumes IV and V of the Society's Monograph Series, *St. Augustine's Abbey: Report on Excavations, 1960-78*, by D. Sherlock, B.A., F.S.A., and H. Woods, B.A., and *The Roman Pottery of Kent*, by R. J. Pollard, B.A., Ph.D., M.I.F.A., respectively, were published in 1988.

*Sevenoaks Wills and Inventories in the Reign of Charles II*, by (Ed.) H.C.F. Lansberry, *Kent Records* xxv, was also published in 1988.

Council has agreed to a recommendation of the Publications Committee to embark on the publication of a series of Records volumes in a different format and at a lower cost. It is hoped to publish the first two of these volumes in the course of 1989 and offer them to members either on a subscription basis or separate purchase. Council has also agreed to reserve the right to consider for future publication in the present format of *Kent Records* volumes material not suitable for this new series.

Publications are now being sold via Wealden Books, of Maidstone, or Meresborough Books, of Rainham. However, orders for current publications should be sent by members, with a remittance payable to the Society, to the Hon. Editor.

### EXCURSIONS

1988 was a most successful year. Members were offered four excursions and they took advantage of all of them, thus no visits had to be cancelled. This was most encouraging for the organiser, although many of those participating were members of affiliated societies. The first of the local visits was a half day spent in Wingham where we were met by Dr David Eaves who guided us around the church and followed this up by a most interesting walk viewing the timber-framed houses along the High Street. The afternoon ended with a strawberry and cream tea at Dane Court Barn by courtesy of Mrs Crane. The second excursion was a whole day visit to Winchester where medieval architecture was viewed and explained by our guide and president, Mr Gravett. Our third visit was to Tenterden and once again our thanks went to our president, Mr Gravett, who took us round Hales Place, the church and the main buildings of the town.

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The five-day Continental visit this year took us to Belgium. Good weather, superb guides, particularly around Waterloo battlefield, and excellent accommodation with five very full days (we even had a tour of Bruges on the first day!) made for a first-class holiday. Antwerp, Ghent, Liège, the Ardennes and Louvain all received ample viewing time in spite of a tight schedule, and the coach party of some forty members agreed it was excellent value and the majority have indicated their preference for a similar tour in 1989.

### MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the Society at December 31st was 1,470, being a loss of 51 members on last year's membership of 1,521. The loss was accounted for by 62 resignations, which included 6 Institutional members some of whom were affected by the dollar crisis and other financial restrictions; 7 members moved from the County and another group resigned because of age or bad health; the decease of ten members was reported and a further 19 members were removed from the list on account of unpaid subscriptions of two years' standing. Although 40 new members were elected the losses were not balanced.

Members have continued to support the Society by the covenant scheme and this year it has benefited by the record sum of £1,324. Details of the scheme can be obtained from the Hon. Membership Secretary or the Hon. General Secretary, whose addresses are at the front of the volume.

Three members have achieved fifty years of membership and letters of appreciation for their support and interest have been sent to them. They are Mr F. R. Horton of Herne Bay, Mr J. A. Levett of Rochester, both life members, and Miss M. Sharp of Hythe.

### RECORDS COMMITTEE

As members of the Society will be aware, the main business of the Records Committee is to find manuscripts on Kentish history and institutions with a view to their being published. This is not easy, but two items have come to hand. The first, which is being specially prepared with the Society's interests in mind, is by Dr Wilfred Duncombe, on *The Yeoman of the Darenth Valley in the 17th Century* and it will show the value of various classes of probate records as sources of information. The second work is the *Diary of Sir Edward Dering, 2nd Bt. 1656-1662*, of which a xerox copy is now being examined by Dr Lansberry. This diary is mentioned by the late Maurice Bond on p. 158 of his account of Sir Edward's diaries and papers which was published by H.M.S.O. in 1976, but not having

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access to this diary he could do no more than quote from the entry concerning it in Sotheby's catalogue for their sale on 26th June, 1974. The manuscript is now in the possession of an Institutional member of the Society in California, whose permission to publish is being sought. It is to be hoped that this will be granted inasmuch as this diary is the only one of Dering's known works of a personal nature that has not at least been calendared.

### CHURCHES COMMITTEE

The Committee noted with pleasure the enthusiastic and efficient way in which so many parishes dealt with the damage caused by the terrible storm on the night of 16th October, 1987. Special praise must go to New Romney, which suffered roof damage quite beyond the financial capacity of the parish, but a group of some forty parishioners formed themselves into teams who carried out much of the repair work themselves. If more parishes followed this example generally, many of the financial crises facing parishes in coping with repairs would be greatly ameliorated.

Maidstone Borough Council attempted to obtain listed building consent to demolish the early nineteenth-century Friends Meeting House in Union Street, Maidstone. This was strongly opposed by the Committee, and it is pleasing to record that the Secretary of State refused consent.

The Committee, along with the Victorian Society and the Faversham Society, supported Faversham Town Council in its efforts to obtain restoration of the Civic Pews designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott in 1873 in the Parish Church which had been removed without Faculty in 1974. A case was heard before the Commissary General who ordered restoration.

The Committee opposed schemes before the Church Commissioners to demolish Christ Church, Tunbridge Wells, and to declare redundant St. Margaret's, Hucking. Christ Church, a Romanesque building constructed 1836-41 by the architect Robert Palmer Brown provides an important contribution to the street scene, and has a Morris window designed by Burne-Jones, 1878. Hucking was much restored in the same year, but has some interesting Early Norman features with round headed tufa arches. The outcome of either scheme is not yet known.

Plans were being made in collaboration with English Heritage and the Romney Marsh Historic Churches Trust to arrange for first-aid repairs to the ruined marsh churches at Eastbridge, Midley and Hope in an attempt to prevent further collapse.

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### KENT UNDERGROUND RESEARCH GROUP

In March 1988, the 6th South East Regional Industrial Archaeology Conference (SERIAC 88) was held at the University of Surrey on the theme of Extractive Industries. The K.U.R.G. was involved and provided two of the speakers at this very successful event. Our Secretary, R.F. LeGear, spoke on chalk and sand mining, and our member P. Sowan talked on underground stone quarrying. Throughout the year lectures and talks have been given to various local groups by our members on underground and associated subjects. As well as promoting the work of the Group these talks are a useful source of information from the audience on sites that we may not have recorded. A number of denehole/chalkwells and other sites were recorded by our members and field officers during the year, and the research project at Archer Wood in East Sussex is continuing.

The Group is concerned that the number of examples of types of underground sites in the County is diminishing fast. We are, therefore, compiling a list of sites we feel are important and should be scheduled. It would, of course, be impossible to protect every site, so extant examples of different types of sites from all ages are being listed.

The proposed British Rail High Speed Rail Link (Route 1) will pass through the middle of Baldwyn's Park, Bexley. This small residential road was built on the site of Stankey Wood which contained at least 50 deneholes. These medieval chalk mines were the subject of a paper by R. LeGear in 1976 (*Arch. Cant.*, xcii, 137). Most of the 60 ft. deep entrance shafts have been stopped up in the past and now lay under the gardens of Baldwyn's Park. The proposed rail link will destroy at least five of the mines and members of the Group are worried that vibration from the construction work will cause structural failure in other chambers leading to serious surface subsidence. The field to the west of Baldwyn's Park has been shown, by aerial photographs, to contain a complex set of crop marks, which will also be damaged by the rail works. Our secretary has written to the various authorities to express our deep concern over the possible destruction of an almost unique group of medieval deneholes and an archaeological site of as yet unknown importance.

The Group would like to point out that, as a subject branch of the K.A.S., our activities, meetings and field trips are open to any K.A.S. member who is interested. Details of meetings, etc., can be obtained from the Secretary, R.F. LeGear. In the future it is hoped to include a list of forthcoming activities in the K.A.S. newsletter.

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### BUILDING RECORDERS

The twenty-fifth annual Conference of Building Recorders was held at Charing Village Hall on Saturday, October 15th, and was attended by some sixty members. The first speaker, Miss Sarah Pearson, described the work done by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments and the University of Nottingham on the dating of buildings by dendrochronology, using the pattern of annual growth rings in the timber. Some buildings had proved difficult, due to insufficient rings being visible, but firm dates had been found for a dozen buildings. These showed a greater diversity than had been expected, including later dates for some archaic forms and side-purlin roofs as early as the end of the fifteenth century.

Next, Mr Alan Dell described Paul's Farm at Leigh, which had a medieval cross-wing and a sixteenth-century main block of high quality, with fine mouldings. He was followed by Mrs Joy Saynor, who was deputising for Mr Ian Harper, who had restored her house at Shoreham. She showed that what had appeared to be three eighteenth-century cottages was earlier and timber-framed.

Finally, Mr Kenneth Gravett demonstrated the difference between scissor braces, as in the roof of the Pentice at Canterbury, and long braces, parallel to the rafters, as at Cogan House. The first three speakers each produced an exhibit of photographs and measured drawings and Miss Pearson kindly provided a projector and screen for the meeting. After the meeting tea was arranged and there was a short celebration of the twenty-five conferences. Mr Gravett was thanked for convening them.

### KENT DEFENCE RESEARCH GROUP

The idea that Kent's fortifications were part of a national scheme of defence and should be seen as such is very much the developing tone of research by members of the group: Mr John Guy is playing a significant part in a national compilation of twentieth-century U.K. artillery defences, whilst Mr David Burrige is researching for a book on the Royal Commission defences of the 1860s of which significant numbers were in Kent.

Victor Smith has begun a book on the artillery defences of Kent, south Essex and East Sussex. This will incorporate a historical narrative and a glossary of sites which may be visited.

In the Thames, the restoration of New Tavern and Coalhouse Forts continues to progress well, with more armaments having been added to both places. At New Tavern Fort, the main cartridge store has been re-equipped with its timber skidding for cartridge cylinders and barrels, thanks to the dedicated and skilled efforts of Messrs.



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C.G. Haysom and W. Calver. It is believed that this is the first time that this form of skidding has been reinstated in a U.K. restoration project. In the Medway area, the main concern has been an apparent threat to Fort Luton at Chatham arising from a proposal to infill its ditch and thereby destroy part of the visual integrity of the fort. Objections were raised to the local authority by the group and it is understood that approval for infilling was not granted.

In the Dover area, Mr John Guy continues to liaise with English Heritage on matters of concern and interest to the group. Such is the importance of the Dover defences that the International Fortress Study Group will be making this locality the focus of its 1989 conference in September.

Victor Smith is to become General Manager of the Brimstone Hill Fortress in St. Kitts for six months and hopes to undertake archaeological investigations there in addition to his other duties.

The sixteenth issue of the group's newsletter was issued in January, 1989. It is hoped that the group will be able to mount a display panel on its activities for a future meeting of the K.A.S.

1st January, 1989

By Order of the Council

A.C. Harrison

*Hon. General Secretary*