

PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
SOMERSETSHIRE ARCHÆOLOGICAL AND  
NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY  
DURING THE YEAR  
1904.

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THE fifty-sixth annual meeting of the Somersetshire Archæological and Natural History Society was held at Gillingham, on Tuesday, July 19th.

The Rev. E. H. BATES, on taking the chair, said he was presiding temporarily in the absence of the retiring President, Mr. Francis J. Fry, and he would only stay in the chair long enough to introduce the new President, Mr. T. H. M. Bailward.

Mr. Bailward then took the chair.

The Rev. F. W. WEAVER read letters of regret for inability to be present, from the Bishop of Bath and Wells, the Right Hon. Henry Hobhouse, M.P., and the Rev. L. R. M. Leir. Lieut.-Col. Bramble, F.S.A. had asked him to apologise to the President for being unable to be present. He was sorry to say that Col. Bramble had broken his arm.

The Rev. F. W. WEAVER, F.S.A., in the absence of Lieut.-Col. Bramble, read

### **The Annual Report,**

which was as follows :—

“Your Committee present their fifty-sixth annual report. Since their last report forty-eight new names have been added to the list of members. The loss by deaths and resignations has been only nineteen. Altogether the net gain has been twenty-nine. The total membership of the Society at date is 641.

“The balance of your Society’s general account at the end of 1902 (your accounts being made up in each year to December 31st) was £192 4s. 2d. against the Society. At the close of 1903 there was a balance of £171 17s. 8d. against the Society. In neither case was the liability for the cost of the volume for the year then expired, or on the other hand any unpaid subscriptions, taken into account. The total cost of Vol. XLIX (for 1903), including printing, illustrations, and delivery, has been £127 10s. 6d. The thanks of the Society are due to Col. Bramble, Mr. F. Bligh Bond, and Mr. E. A. Fry, for their kind presents of illustrations; also to Dr. F. J. Allen, Mr. H. St. G. Gray and Mr. J. R. H. Weaver for their excellent photographs.

“Since your last meeting your Museum has been enriched by several donations. Amongst other donors should be mentioned Mr. C. Tite, Mr. H. Franklin, Miss Anderson, Mr. J. E. Pritchard, Mr. C. H. Spencer Perceval, Col. Bramble, Rev. F. W. Weaver, the Archdeacon of Taunton, Rev. C. H. Heale, Mr. W. de C. Prideaux, Rev. R. B. Poole, Mrs. Patton, Mrs. C. Tite, Mr. E. Sloper, Mr. W. H. Fisher, Mr. J. Darby and Mr. H. Hawkins. Mr. Tite has kindly presented to the Museum his collection of 268 Somerset Trade Checks, which, together with fifty-six tokens of this nature exhibited in the Museum previously, now form a series in the Keep of the Castle. Amongst other things presented by Mr. Tite is a handsome leather model of the tower of St. James’ Church, Taunton. Mr. Pritchard has sent a collection of

eighteen palæolithic implements collected by himself in the Knowle gravel pit, Savernake. Mr. Franklin has presented several objects, and has deposited many important pieces of pottery, some of local interest. One of the most interesting deposits is a XVI Century helmet, for many years associated with Barrington Court.

"In respect to the re-arrangement of the Museum, the Curator's attention has been chiefly devoted to the collections in the Norman Keep, and the following series have been dealt with in some detail :--"Local Archæological remains from Somerset," "Miscellaneous Archæological remains," "Relics from Churches, chiefly Somerset," "Mediæval Encaustic Tiles," "Glass and other vessels exclusive of pottery," "Local and British Arms and Armour and Sporting Appliances," "The Monmouth Relics," "English Keys," and "Lamps and Lighting Appliances." The objects found during the excavations at Castle Neroche last year have been presented to the Museum by Viscount Portman, and have been exhibited in a special case.

"Your Library is steadily growing. H.M. Public Record Office has recently presented seven Vols. of *Patent and Close Rolls*, and from Col. Bramble, Vol. XLVIII of *Archæologia* has been received. The donors to your Library this year include, Rev. S. J. M. Price, Rev. F. W. Weaver, the Society of Antiquaries of London, Mr. C. H. Spencer Perceval, and Mr. F. Coombs. A MS. catalogue of the Surtees Library has been prepared.

"Since the last annual meeting, when the matter was brought before you, the heating apparatus, which formerly existed in the Great Hall of the Castle only, has been extended to all the other portions of the building used for Museum purposes and for the storage of your Library. The results of this work have been found to be quite satisfactory, and the apparatus was properly tested. The cost was £103 15s. 8d.

“The necessity of making a special appeal to the members of your Society to enable the Committee to clear off outstanding liabilities and to do some necessary work, was also brought forward at the last annual meeting. In February last an appeal was issued for this purpose, with the result that the contributions received up to June 14th have amounted to £242 7s. 0d., leaving £357 13s. 0d. still to be raised. A second appeal has recently been sent out, which has been responded to to the extent of £42 8s. 6d., leaving £315 4s. 6d. before the £600 required will be realized. Your Secretaries trust that those who have not already subscribed will endeavour to make this effort a success.

“Your Committee have observed strict economy, and no furniture has been purchased for the Museum during the current year. At the present time the repainting of the Committee Room is badly needed, the Staircase requires painting and decorating, and it is quite essential that five new oval windows should almost immediately replace those in the south wall of the Great Hall.

“Since your meeting in July, 1903, an important branch to the Parent Society has been formed at Bath, called the “Bath and District Branch of the Somersetshire Archæological Society,” with Lord Hylton as President, and Col. Clayton and Mr. T. S. Bush as Hon. Secretaries. More recently the Shepton Mallet Natural History Society has become affiliated to your Society.

“Your Curator was granted three weeks’ leave-of-absence in May for the purpose of continuing the excavations at the Glastonbury Lake Village jointly with Mr. Arthur Bulleid. The completion of these excavations will take two more years at least, during which time the investigators will deal with all the relics and with the structure of the village for final publication. Excavations have also taken place in your county this year, at Small Down Camp, near Evercreech. They were in the charge of Mr. H. St. George Gray, and were visited by

several members of your Society. The relics found have been presented to your Museum.

“ Your Museum was visited by 6,844 persons during 1903, including 1,118 visits from members. This is the largest total that has been reached, and is two per cent more than the total attained in Coronation Year (1902). The total number of visitors for the first six months of the present year has exceeded the number during the corresponding period of 1903 by thirty-three per cent.

“ Mr. H. St. George Gray, the Curator and Assistant Secretary of your Society, having held office for a period of three years in April last, your Committee unanimously agreed to increase his salary by £30 a year, and expressed their cordial appreciation of his services and of his zealous endeavours on behalf of your Society during the past three years.

“ In the first place we deplore the loss of our Patron, the Right Hon. the Earl of Cork and Orrery, K.P., who died on June 22nd last. He was President of the Society at the Frome meeting in 1875, and as Patron formally opened the Walter Collection at Taunton Castle on May 21st, 1902. The vacancy caused by his death in the office of Patron should be filled at the annual meeting ; under Rule 2 the election is for life.

“ The Society has sustained the following losses by death since the last annual meeting :—

“ The Right Rev. Edmund Hobhouse, D.D., formerly Bishop of Nelson, N.Z., a Vice-President of your Society. He was one of the Founders of the Somerset Record Society, and was a great authority on all matters connected with the antiquities of his native county ; Dr. W. W. Walter, an Honorary Member of your Society, and the generous donor of the collection which bears his name ; the Rev. Prebendary W. E. Buller, a member since 1877, and a regular attendant at the meetings of your Committee ; the Rev. Prebendary A. W. Grafton, elected in 1873 : both these last, as well as the Rev.

Archer Thompson, formerly rector of Brympton, were at one time regular attendants at the annual meetings; Mr. G. D. Warry, K.C., a Bencher of the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn; Mr. F. A. Wood, author of the *History of Chero Magna* and at one time President of the Northern Branch of your Society; Mr. Wilfred G. Marshall; Mr. H. W. Hoskyns, a member since 1859, and the donor of Romano-British remains found at North Perrott; and the Rev. Arundel St. John Mildmay."

Lieut.-Col. J. F. CHISHOLM-BATTEN moved the adoption of the report.

The Rev. Preb. W. E. DANIEL seconded, and remarked that it would be much more satisfactory if the Society's deficit could be cleared off. He would like to ascertain whether the Catalogue of the Surtees Library could not be put into their hands instead of having it in manuscript at the Castle. He thought it would be very desirable to have it embodied in their *Proceedings* for the benefit of all the members.

The adoption of the report was then put to the meeting and carried.

### **Finances.**

The Rev. E. H. BATES, in the absence of the Hon. Treasurer (Mr. H. J. Badcock), presented the annual statement of accounts.



Mr. C. TITE moved that the accounts be received and adopted. He could not but follow in the same lines as the Rev. Preb. W. E. Daniel, in hoping that some effort would be made to clear off the deficit, or, at any rate, to do something towards that result. A great deal, of course, had already been done, but those who knew anything about the inner working of the Society knew how carefully the Society's income was spent. Already there had been good results from the "Appeal" made during the past six months, but it was hoped that many other members would yet subscribe to this special fund. It was a great pity that they should have to pay interest on their overdrawn accounts year after year. A debt of this kind hung over a Society like theirs as a kind of nightmare. Mr. Gray's hands were tied in many directions. He could not even get new cases to display the things which they had, and the idea of extending the Museum was not practicable at present, although the Society's collections were still greatly crowded. He wished that members would visit the Castle oftener and see what had been done during the last few years, and how the Museum had grown. He thought that there was no better way of appealing for funds than at the Annual Meeting, and he hoped that out of this meeting would come a distinct and determined effort to clear off a large portion of the deficit which still remained.

The Rev. C. H. HEALE seconded the proposition, and remarked that it would have been much pleasanter if they could have received and adopted the Treasurer's accounts with a balance in hand. He did not think the members individually exercised their influence and position sufficiently in getting new members from time to time. He thought that throughout the county there were many influential people who would take an interest in the Society if the subject were only properly placed before them. If they could increase the number of their members considerably, a deficiency would seldom, if ever, have to be recorded.

The adoption of the accounts was carried.

### **Election of Officers.**

The PRESIDENT moved that Viscount Portman be elected Patron of the Society, as he had kindly consented to act. They all felt deeply the loss sustained by the Society by the death of their late Patron, the Earl of Cork and Orrery, K.P. Notwithstanding his numerous engagements he had always been ready to give his valuable help to the Society, when that aid was needed ; and gave it, not from a mere perfunctory sense of duty, but from the keen interest he took in the antiquities and objects of interest of the county for which he so long acted as Lord Lieutenant. He was sure that they could not have a better successor than Lord Portman. The long historical connection of the Portman family with the county of Somerset, and the position which Lord Portman occupied, both in Somerset and Dorset, made him, of all men, the one they would most wish to have as their Patron. He had shown by his recent gift of the "finds" lately made at Castle Neroche, that he took a real interest in the Society, and he (the President) was sure they would all, most unanimously, elect Lord Portman, and think themselves very fortunate in having so good a Patron.

The Rev. F. W. WEAVER seconded the proposition. It was true that Lord Portman lived in Dorset, but he had a great deal of land in Somerset ; he thought they were to be congratulated in having him as their Patron.

The proposition was carried.

Mr. T. S. BUSH, in proposing the re-election of the officers of the Society, with the addition of the names of Mr. A. E. Eastwood and the Rev. S. J. M. Price to the Committee, and Mr. Arthur Bulleid, F.S.A. and the Rev. C. H. Heale as Local Secretaries for Midsomer Norton and Watchet respectively, tendered a hearty vote of thanks to the Secretaries and the Council for their work during the past year.

Mr. F. WERE seconded, and the motion was cordially carried.

The Rev. D. P. ALFORD, in moving the election of forty-eight new members, said the losses they had sustained by death, and their present financial position, made them the more pleased to welcome new members. They wanted to be set free from debt, to elect new members, and to get the appeal for donations towards the Society's deficit more largely responded to.

Mr. H. C. WARRY seconded, and the motion was carried.

### **Somerset Record Society.**

The Rev. E. H. BATES, Hon. Secretary of the Somerset Record Society, made a statement as to its position. He said that they issued a second volume of *Somerset Wills* in January. They had hoped to bring the publication down to 1558, when the Rev. F. Brown's collection took up the running, but it was found that the collection got so much richer that they could not manage to get beyond 1530. What was lacking in one direction was made up by going one step back, and by printing those preserved in the *Lambeth Registers* (1363-1491), to include every will of the Mediæval period. That left them enough wills to make a volume for a future year. They had got an entirely new feature in the volume for 1904. It was being edited by Mr. Green, than whom no one was more capable, and it contained an account of the Muster Rolls of the county in the time of Elizabeth, including every means taken for its defence against its enemies; the names of men taken out of each parish, and the weapons they had. The editor was going to add a preface, giving an account of the whole system of self-defence. When they read through that preface they would find that they had made singularly little advance in the matter of defence. In 1905 the Society proposed to conclude the series of wills. The foundations of county history must rest on these records of change of property. There is no reason to anticipate any speedy demise of the

Society. He reported last year that the County Council had appointed a committee to consider the question of the local records preserved in the Shire Hall, Taunton. He was happy to say that not only had the committee reported, but that the County Council actually agreed to find the money, which was still more to the point, and for the last three months an expert from London had been busily engaged in dusting, ticketing, and cataloguing the whole of the records now in the cellars of the Shire Hall, at Taunton. The records were even more interesting than might have been supposed. They were of practically all classes, going back to the very beginning of the XVII Century. This was the first step towards making these a little better known, and he hoped the County Council would, before long, be prepared to vote another sum of money to bring out a volume of what would be the most valuable local records they had ever published. This would be following the good example of Middlesex and Hertford, and several other County Councils, not only in putting the records in order, but also in making their contents a little more accessible.

Replying to Mr. Daniel's remarks as to the Surtees Library, the speaker said that Mr. W. E. Surtees' widow, Lady Chapman, left the Society his large collection of books, some fourteen years ago. The Society had just printed a library catalogue when this collection was handed over, and that catalogue therefore, before it was actually circulated, was out of date. Since that time they had not found it possible to bring out a catalogue of the united collections. A valuable MS. catalogue of the Surtees Library, drawn up by the Curator, was kept in the reading room for the use of members. During the last year a small sub-committee had been appointed to examine the books in the library. He thought they might very well get rid of one-third of the volumes, and expressed the opinion that they should be given the power to destroy useless books and papers; such power being already possessed by the Public Record Office in London. To some people

a book was a book, and must not be destroyed, but it was hard on the Society to have this huge collection without the power of using a lethal chamber.