

SOMERSET ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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COUNCIL OF THE SOCIETY 1977

Ex-officio Members: The President, Vice-Presidents and the Executive Officers.

Elected Members (to retire at the Annual Meeting indicated)

- 1978 P. POYNTZ WRIGHT, C. F. CLEMENTS, B.A., P. J. GREENING
- 1979 Mrs. M. LANGDON, B.A., D. DENTON-COX, F.R.T.P.I., F.R.I.C.S., D.P.A., J. W. GARDNER, F.S.A.,
R. LEECH, M.A.
- 1980 R. J. E. BUSH, B.A., DR. R. W. DUNNING, F.S.A., N. COOK, F.S.A., W. J. WEDLAKE, F.S.A.

Committee Chairmen and Members representing Other Bodies:

C. F. CLEMENTS, B.A. (Archaeological Committee), H. L. M. PATTEN (Natural History Com-
mittee), I. P. COLLIS, F.S.A. (Publications Committee), R. W. DUNNING, PH.D., F.S.A. (Library
Committee), F. HAWTIN (Public Relations Committee), M. B. McDERMOTT, M.A. (Historic
Buildings Committee), L. A. HALDANE, M.A. (Finance and General Purposes Committee),
I. P. COLLIS, F.S.A. (County Archivist), P. A. STEVENS, M.A., F.M.A. (County Museums Officer).

TRUSTEES AND REPRESENTATIVES NOMINATED BY THE SOCIETY

Representative Trustee on the Axbridge Town Trust: Mrs. F. A. NEALE, B.A., A.K.C.

Representative on Ilchester Town Trust: L. C. HAYWARD, F.S.A.

Society's Representatives, Leigh Woods Committee of Management: Miss E. RALPH, F.S.A. and
Prof. P. V. McGrath, M.A.

Representative Trustees on the Wyndham Lecture Trusts:

Taunton Secondary: I. P. COLLIS, F.S.A. and DR. R. W. DUNNING, F.S.A.

Taunton Elementary: DR. P. C. DAVEY, M.Sc.

Yeovil Secondary: L. C. HAYWARD, B.Sc., F.S.A.

Bridgwater: E. L. KELTING, O.B.E., J.P., F.I.C.E.

Wells: DR. R. D. REID, B.Sc.

Ilminster: W. M. WIGFIELD, M.A.

Weston-super-Mare: D. C. WHIMSTER, M.A., J.P.

PROCEEDINGS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1977

At the meeting, held at the Wyndham Hall, Taunton, on Saturday 21st May, 1977, the retiring President, Prof. E. K. Tratman, O.B.E., M.D.S., F.S.A., welcomed the new President, Mrs. Olive M. Hallam, M.A., and referred to her many contributions to the Natural History activities of the Society. After responding, Mrs. Hallam took the chair and proposed that the meeting send a loyal message to the Queen in these terms: 'We, the Council and members of the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society unite to send loyal greetings. We congratulate your Majesty, our Patron, on the occasion of your Silver Jubilee, and express the hope that your reign may long continue'. This was accepted with acclaim.

Proposed Changes of Rules 44 and 59

Rule 44: Mr. S. C. Morland's motion on behalf of the Council that 'Each President on completion of office shall be elected Past President and be eligible to attend Council meetings' was opposed by an amendment from Mrs. R. A. Sixsmith, seconded by Dr. E. Neal, that 'Each retiring President shall be Vice-President for one year and ex-officio member of the Council for a second year'. The amendment was supported by a clear majority and agreed as a motion. (Subsequently, however, the Council ruled that the correct procedure had not been followed to accord with Rules 56 and 57, and declared it void. A small sub-committee was set up to re-examine the implications of the Rules.)

Election of Officers, Members of Council and Subject Committees

The meeting confirmed the Council's nominees as Executive Officers (Rule 52). Hon. Treasurer: Mr. L. A. Haldane, M.A.; Hon. Editor: Mr. M. B. McDermott, M.A.; Hon. Secretary: Dr. P. C. Davey, M.Sc.

In addition, the following Council nominations were confirmed: Hon. Librarian: Mr. D. Bromwich, M.A., A.L.A.; Hon. Auditor: Mr. J. V. Carrington, F.C.A.

After a ballot, the following members were elected to serve on the Council (Rule 26): To May 1980: Mr. R. Bush, B.A., Dr. R. W. Dunning, F.S.A., Mr. N. Cook, F.S.A., Mr. W. J. Wedlake, F.S.A.

To May 1979: Mr. R. Leech, B.A.

Subject Committees

After a ballot, the following members were declared elected: *Archaeological Committee*: Mr. C. F. Clements, B.A., Mrs. M. Langdon, B.A., Mr. F. Hawtin, Mr. M. Aston, B.A., Miss J. Peden, B.Sc., Mr. H. D. Elkington, M.A., Mr. R. G. Gilson, Mr. B. Murless, Mrs. M. Newson, B.A., Mr. C. J. Hawkes, Mr. S. C. Minnitt, B.A., Mr. W. J. Wedlake, F.S.A. Nominees to other Subject Committees were elected unopposed.

Summary of the Secretary's Report

Dr. Davey opened his report by reminding the Society of the loss, through death, of John Hunt, ex-President and Chairman, who had contributed so much to the Society over many years, and of Miss K. Wheeler, who had been an active member since 1927. The overall level of membership, however, had benefitted from a recruitment campaign: personal membership stood at 744, and the grand total (including institutional members) exceeded 900.

Turning to the activities of the *Archaeological Committee*, Dr. Davey referred to a significant trend in the running of Society events: the organizing of joint enterprises, such as a geological excursion, hedgerow-dating meetings and a programme of field

research on Steep Holm—all in conjunction with the Natural History Committee. The Steep Holm project involved a series of archaeological and Natural History surveys, each with its own director and working team, but with an inter-disciplinary approach also being encouraged. Meanwhile specialized interests had also been specifically catered for by meetings concerned with medieval pottery, animal bones in excavations, and parish surveys. The parish survey of Wambrook would be the first to be published, in the form of a booklet supported by a grant from the Maltwood Fund. The Archaeological Committee had also organized, in conjunction with the Devon Archaeological Society, the preparation of a memorandum, 'Recommendations on the Archaeology of Exmoor', for presentation to the Exmoor National Park Committee. Another initiative by the committee had led to the publication in *Proceedings* of an annual review of newly-discovered sites and finds in Somerset (this also being linked with a new watching brief scheme to assist members to watch developments involving earth-moving in any part of the county); and the committee was also encouraging the publication of reports of hitherto unpublished excavations and surveys which had taken place since the war.

Some of the activities of the *Natural History Committee* (in conjunction with the Archaeological Committee) had already been referred to, and as a result of the committee's concern with Steep Holm it was hoped to achieve representation for the Society on a management committee of the Kenneth Allsop Memorial Trust. A number of field meetings and lectures had also been organized during the past year, and contact with other societies had been maintained. The resignation from the committee of Dr. E. Neal, after thirty years' valuable service, had been a great loss.

The *Library Committee* had been working to develop the Society's library facilities, and had raised money for the purchase of new books by selling (with the approval of Council) a number of old books which were unrelated to the Society's interests. Other books had also been acquired, by purchase, donation or submission for review; and the committee would welcome suggestions for additional titles. The Library was one of the Society's great assets, and members were encouraged to make use of it—with the ready assistance of the Hon. Librarian if needed.

The *Publications Committee* had continued to support the Hon. Editor in the production of the annual volume of *Proceedings*. The cost of printing was a persistent cause of concern; and the committee was also examining Mr. Aston's proposals for a radical change in the Society's publications policy.

The activities of the *Public Relations Committee* had produced material results in the form of a new membership application form, greetings cards, a Society tie, and stands for display and sales purposes at various meetings and activities. A press release on the Society's activities had been published in the *County Gazette*; and the Committee had given assistance with the organization of various Society events.

The revived *Historic Buildings Committee* had considered a number of planning applications for permission to demolish listed buildings, and had made representations on behalf of the Society in a number of instances. Members of the committee had also recorded a number of threatened buildings; and it was as a result of an initiative by the committee that the timber-framed almshouse from St. James Street, Taunton, which had stood since 1899 in the grounds of Taunton Castle, and which had seemed likely to be permanently dismantled to make way for the Taunton Deane Borough Council's Jubilee Garden scheme, was moved intact on rollers to a new and improved position without extra expense. The committee had held a well-attended symposium on 'Vernacular Architecture in Somerset' in March, and hoped to recruit more field-workers as a result.

Leaving the work of individual committees, Dr. Davey referred to the difficulties encountered in plans to transfer the lease of the Norman Garden to the Taunton Deane Borough Council so that a public garden might be laid out: the historic remains on the site had to be safeguarded, and their future was now being considered in conjunction with the Department of the Environment. The Northern Garden, on the other hand, had been leased to the Council, and work on the Jubilee Garden scheme was well under way. Dr. Davey also referred to the planned exhibition of Chinese

pottery in the County Museum, which would provide an eagerly awaited opportunity of viewing the Society's F. E. Colthurst Bequest.

The Secretary expressed appreciation of Mr. Huntley's voluntary assistance each week to the Society's busy office staff; and also referred to the fact that a number of articles and books by Society members had been published during the year. He then concluded his report with a word of encouragement to the less active Society members to come forward and play a more prominent role.

Annual Accounts

Mr. L. A. Haldane, the Hon. Treasurer, distributed audited copies of the accounts and briefly commented on the main features of a satisfactory financial year. The adoption of the accounts was unanimously approved.

Somerset Record Society

Mrs. C. Rawlins, the Hon. Secretary, paid tribute to the late Mr. T. J. Hunt. The printing of the 17th-century Diary of John Harrington was nearly complete, and in the meantime a reprint of an earlier volume, Hopton's Narrative of the Civil War, had been published. Plans had also been made to publish the 17th-century records of the quarterly meetings of the Society of Friends in Somerset. There had been a slight but welcome increase in membership, but there had also been a steep increase in printing costs, which meant that plans for further volumes had to be made with great care.

Presidential Address

Prof. E. K. Tratman, O.B.E., M.D.S., F.S.A., the retiring President, then addressed the meeting on 'Roman Lead Mining on Mendip', illustrating the theme with excellent slides.

After the meeting, refreshments were served in the Somerset Room, where items of the Museum's Chinese Porcelain display were on view.