

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
SOMERSETSHIRE ARCHÆOLOGICAL AND
NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY
DURING THE YEAR
1940

THE Ninety-Second Annual Meeting of the Somersetshire Archæological and Natural History Society was held at Taunton Castle on Wednesday, 7 August. Owing to the international crisis it was impossible to arrange for the Annual Meeting and Excursions extending over three days away from headquarters.

Both before and after the Meeting, which was held in the Wyndham Hall, some of the members had the opportunity of seeing the improvements in the Museum, and also of walking round the garden and the Society's property. The attendance was excellent.

The chair was taken at 2.45 p.m. by the outgoing President, Mrs. Edward Clive, and she was supported by the Rt. Rev. Abbot E. Horne, F.S.A. (*President-Elect*), the Rt. Rev. the Bishop of Bath and Wells (Dr. F. Underhill), the Dean of Wells (the Very Rev. R. H. Malden), Mr. A. E. Eastwood (*Chairman of Finance*), Mr. A. W. Vivian-Neal, F.S.A., and Major F. M. E. Kennedy, C.B. (*Hon. Secretaries*), and Mr. H. St. George Gray, F.S.A. (*Asst.-Secretary, Curator and Librarian*).

Honour for the Curator

At the beginning of the meeting, Mrs. CLIVE, on behalf of the Society, congratulated Mr. St. George Gray on the recognition of his services to the cause of archæology which had been made by the University of Bristol. She quoted a portion of

the address, delivered by Professor W. Hamilton Whyte at the Degree Congregation held at Bristol on 29 June 1940, when the degree of Master of Arts *honoris causa* was conferred on Mr. Gray. After mentioning the valuable contribution made by local scientific societies to the development of archæology, anthropology and natural history, the Professor had instanced the Somerset Archæological and Natural History Society as having had a high standard of scholarship and a particularly wide range of activity during the thirty-nine years that Mr. Gray had been its secretary. He had proceeded to outline Mr. Gray's career as a specialist in prehistoric studies, referring to him as the author of many contributions to the literature of the subject, and also as an exponent of modern methods of excavation at Avebury, Maumbury Rings, the Lake Villages of Glastonbury and Meare and at other sites of archæological interest.

Mr. ST. GEORGE GRAY in reply thanked all those present, and Mrs. Clive in particular, for the kind manner in which the congratulations of the Society had been expressed. He was much gratified that the Society's work, as well as his own, had been recognized by the University.

Mr. Gray spoke of the interesting times he had had in the archæological field, not only in Somerset but in various other counties. He took the opportunity of thanking several patrons who had, by their generosity, made these researches possible; and he laid stress on the importance of a Society of their standing subscribing as liberally as possible to such work in the future, for in that field of archæology many problems of first importance offered themselves for solution.

In conclusion he was anxious that the Society should seriously consider the formation of a Folk-Lore Section at a convenient opportunity, for the subject was one of general interest, and as the 'old people' died out so the Society would be faced with decreasing chances of collecting local material worthy of record.

The Annual Report

Mr. H. ST. GEORGE GRAY, Asst.-Secretary, read the Annual Report, which was as follows:—

‘ In presenting the ninety-second annual report the Council wishes to state that since the last meeting 30 new names have been added to the list of members and associates. Losses by death alone during the same period have amounted to 40. The membership at date is over 900, but owing to War conditions it is impossible to give the exact number in this report.

‘ The Society has, during the past year, lost by death a large number of members and friends, to a large extent in consequence of the bitter wintry weather in January and February. Among those who passed away were Lord Bayford, Chairman of the County Council, who joined the Society as Mr. Robert Sanders in 1908 ; the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, who although never actually a member of the Society, acted as President at the Bath Meeting in 1928 ; Mr. Jackson Barstow, who joined in 1896 and who died at the great age of 96 years (he had kept a diary for 78 years of his long and active life) ; Mr. Gerald J. Grey (1903), who was a successful excursion secretary of the Society’s Bath Branch for a number of years ; Mr. John Coleby Morland (1916), an alderman of the County Council and chairman of the County Education Committee ; Prebendary G. L. Porcher (1916) who was much interested in the Society’s work, and died on 20 April shortly after being nominated as Archdeacon of Wells ; and Mr. John Coles (1901) who brought together a very representative Somerset library, which was dispersed at his death.

‘ The Society has also sustained the loss by death of the following members during the period under review : Miss M. J. Awdry (1922), the Rev. J. M. Bastard (1908) ; Mr. R. P. Bayly (1938), the Rev. Preb. J. F. Briscoe (1932), Mrs. R. G. Burden (1938), the Rev. Preb. J. F. Chanter, F.S.A. (1906), Mr. Eland Clatworthy (1899), Mrs. E. Clatworthy (1904), Mr. T. G. Coggan (1920), Mrs. F. S. Dodson (1935), Miss D. F. Evans (1936), Dr. F. J. Gomez (1917), Mr. C. E. Gulley (1917), Mr. A. R. Hayward, the entomologist (1917), the Rev. J. E. W. Honnywill (1898), Lady Horner (1932), Sir A. W. Lawrence, Bt. (1909), Mr. W. C. Leaker (1912), Mrs. M. A. Lovegrove (1939), the Rev. Preb. M. Y. McClean (1912), Mr. K. Maconochie (1938), Mr. Fredk. Mason (1920), Mr. W. H. Maunder (1930), the Rev. Preb. H. L. Maynard (1921), Miss M. Meade-King (1899), Sir

William Meade-King (1929), Miss A. Miller, the botanist (1934), Mr. W. R. E. Mitchelmore (1910), Dr. C. A. Palmer (1918), the Rev. S. P. H. Statham (1937), Mr. H. S. Thompson, A.L.S., the botanist (1916), Mr. H. C. Warry (1897), Mr. Howard Westlake (1928), and Miss Vera P. Wills (1936).

‘The volume of *Proceedings* for 1939 has recently been issued. It contains no less than 300 pages and twenty-seven plates of illustrations, and includes the last instalment of *Members of Parliament for the County of Somerset*, by Mrs. Rawlins (née Bates Harbin). The volume also includes a full report on the excavations conducted at Burrow Mump last year by Mr. St. George Gray, F.S.A.

‘The total cost of the new volume has reached the sum of £283 7s. 5d. This is due to some extent to increased charges and fewer gifts towards the Publication Fund.

‘The Society’s property has been kept in excellent repair, and Ina Cottage has now been put into good habitable condition.

‘H.M. Forces have been welcomed to the Museum at half the usual entrance fee. Evacuée schools have been granted free admission to the Museum provided they are carrying on their studies in conjunction with the schools under the administration of the Education Committee of the Somerset County Council.

‘The large amount of work reported last year to have been done in the Great Hall has been continued and several cases have been re-arranged. Much time has been devoted to the collections of British Birds and new accessions, and a card catalogue of the whole series, including the albino birds, has been compiled. It will be fitting to mention here that the late Arthur R. Hayward of Misterton bequeathed his card index of Somerset Lepidoptera to the Society.

‘Owing to their great difference in size the Medieval antiquities had been rather scattered in the Museum. They have now been brought together to a large extent, and catalogued.

‘Among the chief accessions in the Museum are the large collection of Nailsea glass bequeathed by the collector, the late Mrs. C. E. Challicom, of Clevedon, and a part of the collection of Somerset Club-brasses brought together by the late E.

Harold Caley—specimens which were not formerly represented in the county collection. Mr. Hugh Troyte-Bullock has deposited in the Museum nearly 300 “first brass” Roman coins, part of the large hoard found in three crocks at the east end of Hamdon Hill, 1882-3.

‘Reference to the Somerset County Museum would not be complete without mentioning the Asst.-Curator, Mr. R. R. Clarke, whose work at Taunton Castle has just terminated owing to his having been called up for military service. During the three-and-a-half years he has been on the staff his work, especially in the department of antiquities, has been most helpful.

‘Turning to the Library, mention must be made of the new book-shelving in the Exchequer which has made it possible to provide room for the Society’s books at any rate for the next year or two. Certain re-arrangement has been needed, and in this work the Librarian has been able to get the assistance of Mr. B. W. Taylor for a short time. His services were of value because he knows the Library well.

‘Mrs. Dwelly has presented a large part of the genealogical manuscript brought together by her late husband, E. Dwelly, and much of the sorting has already been carried out by Mr. Fitzroy Jones. He and Mr. H. G. Chick have presented the Library with transcripts of the Registers of Pitminster, North Cadbury, Ansford and Broadway. Several books have been bequeathed by Hugh Daniel Badcock ; others have been given by Mr. F. de F. Daniel ; and Mr. A. J. R. Wilson has presented a fine copy of Polwhele’s *History of Devon* in three vols. The Society has acquired by purchase a number of local and other books and a cabinet of cuttings, scraps and illustrations,—a part of the library of the late John Coles, who was a member of the Society for many years.

‘At the meetings of 1938 and 1939 it was reported that a joint committee representing our own Society and the Somerset Rural Community Council had been compiling lists of ancient buildings with reference to Section 17 of the Town and Country Planning Act of 1932. The county is divided into nineteen areas and it had been found that there was a lack of uniformity in the selection of some of the buildings. Steps were recently

taken to revise these lists to meet the needs of the authorities, but the work has now been suspended for the duration of the War.

‘No excavations have been undertaken by or for the Society during the year under review. The digging arranged for the further examination of the Meare Lake Village fixed for near the end of August was abandoned. However, an archæological eye is being kept on the large excavations being made by the Somerset Catchment Board and by H.M. Office of Works, and passes for visits to these large undertakings have been granted to the Curator. No doubt much is being missed owing to the use of mechanical diggers; still it is surprising that so little, apparently, has been found.

‘Dr. Eeles has just sent in a short interim report on investigations being carried out by the West Somerset Branch on certain days, on the site of the chapel of the Holy Trinity, Burcombe, commonly called Burgundy, near Minehead. A certain amount of walling, etc., have been uncovered, and it is thought that the chapel dates from the very beginning of the fifteenth century.

‘The Natural History Sections of the Society have had their indoor meetings at Taunton Castle and the Botanical Section had regular field-days last summer. The Ornithological Section produced its report for 1939, covering 40 pp. with two plates of illustrations.

‘The South-Western Group of Museums and Art Galleries, owing to the crisis, decided to hold its annual meeting in a central place, and Taunton was chosen. The meeting was held on 8 March, and the curators present expressed great satisfaction in the general display and attractiveness of the Somerset County Museum.

‘Taunton Castle was visited during 1939 by 9,353 persons, including 1,388 attendances from members. In 1938 there had been 10,450 visitors; the War was the chief cause for the decrease; 1938 had been our peak year.’

On the proposition of the Very Rev. R. H. Malden, Dean of Wells, seconded by Dr. F. C. Eeles, the adoption of the Report was carried unanimously.

Finances

LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS

TO THE SOCIETY'S

Publication and Illustration Fund

FROM 1 MARCH 1939 TO 31 DEC. 1940

	£	s.	d.
Burrow Mump Fund	1	1	6
Field, the Rev. H. E. (in two sums)	4	4	0
Glastonbury Abbey Excavation Fund		6	6
Vivian-Neal, A. W.	2	0	0

Mr. ARTHUR E. EASTWOOD, Chairman of Finance, presented the Accounts of the Society for 1939, and they were formally adopted. They have already been printed in *Proceedings*, vol lxxxv.

The Accounts for 1940 will be printed at the end of this volume.

Election of Officers

The vacancies in the list of Vice-Presidents were filled by the re-election of Dr. A. Bulleid, Sir Henry C. Maxwell Lyte, and the Rt. Rev. Dr. F. Underhill, Bishop of Bath and Wells.

Mr. A. W. Vivian-Neal, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Editor, Major F. M. E. Kennedy, Honorary Secretary, and Mr. F. L. England, Honorary Treasurer, were re-elected.

In the Council of fifteen there were five vacancies, and the following were re-elected: Colonel R. Benson, the Rt. Rev. Abbot Horne, Mr. H. S. Howard, Mr. E. E. Trotman and the Rev. C. Woodforde.

Two ordinary members were elected at this meeting, viz., Air-Commodore B. C. H. Drew, c.m.g., c.v.o., and Mr. Edward Hutton.

Somerset Record Society

The series of Bishops' Registers has been added to by the issue to subscribers during the latter part of the year 1939 of the *Registers of Bishops King and Hadrian*. Sir Henry Maxwell Lyte has given much time and thought to the preparation of the MS., and has again placed the Society under deep obligation.

The continuance of the Society's work is unusually difficult at the present time, but it is anticipated that a volume for 1940 will be issued by the end of the year.

The economic outlook is probably the reason for many resignations which it is hoped may be temporary. Seven subscribers have withdrawn their support, and four have died. The Council is glad however to welcome five new subscribers including the Bishop of the Diocese.

The Presidential Address

The PRESIDENT, the Rt. Rev. Abbot E. HORNE, F.S.A., delivered his Presidential Address, entitled 'Is an Archæological Society of any use?':

'When I was thinking over various subjects that might do for this address, I was frequently faced with the difficulty that many of them seemed so removed from the somewhat unhappy circumstances under which we are now living, that the contrast was too pronounced, and the matter would not fit into our present position at all. So I sought for a colourless subject that would not seem too much out of place with our surroundings, hence I ask the simple question whether a Society, such as ours, is of any use? I have tried to answer my question in a way that more or less falls in with life as we find it to-day.

'In our English practical way we are apt to limit the word *use* and to forget that it may have a very wide range. When something new for instance, is brought to our notice, one of the first questions we often ask about it is "Is it any use, or what is it used for?" and our estimate of the new arrival, is in proportion to the use to which it can be put. How often, when engaged in an excavation, will some well-meaning person, after looking on in silence for a short time, at last venture on a question. "May I ask, Sir, what you are looking for?" and when I answer with the one word "information" the old gentleman is obviously disappointed and puzzled. If I had said "ancient crockery or coins" he would have brightened up at once, and would have enquired further as to what "luck" I had had so far. But to dig a great trench, several feet in length and perhaps three or four in depth, merely to get at