

THE SOCIETY

THE MUMENT ROOM, 1951

For several years past it has become increasingly apparent that the resources of the Museum could not be strained indefinitely to accommodate and care for the large number of documents which were steadily accumulating; accordingly, early in 1950 the Society

approached the Bucks County Council with the request that it would consider taking over certain types of archive material from the Society's collection. This request was agreed to, and a Joint Committee was formed of certain members of the Bucks. Archaeological Society and the County Council, which produced a memorandum in May 1950, detailing the classes of archives which should in future be in the custody of the Museum and the newly-formed County Record Office respectively. The former would keep and continue to receive all manorial records (as the Society is the official repository for Bucks. recognized by the Master of the Rolls), and also most of the earlier deeds, also documents of literary, artistic, or archaeological importance, while the County Record Office would contain all official administrative material and certain other classes of archives, including family estate papers of the later centuries. Close liaison between the two bodies would facilitate research work, and the removal from the Museum of several thousand documents would enable more space to be given to the manorial material, the valuable early charters, and the Parish Registers (see note by A. V. W.).

The work of sorting and removal was begun in October 1950 and practically completed by May 1951, when the Society, for reasons of economy, ceased to employ a paid archivist. The Muniment-room now contains about 1,200 documents of various types, and manorial records for over eighty-six manors, ranging in some cases from a single surviving Court Roll, to others with a complete series from the early fourteenth century to the present day. Part-time work is given by Miss C. Baker and Mr. A. V. Woodman, as honorary archivists and advisers to enquirers, and some essential repair work has been started by Mr. R. C. Sansome, who is fully qualified to undertake this work, the lack of which has for long been one of the chief handicaps to the Society in the care of its muniments.

C. B.

PARISH REGISTERS

Early in the year 1951, the Bishop of Oxford was pleased to designate the Society's Muniment-room as the official repository in which the parochial records of the Arch-deaconry of Buckingham could properly be deposited for safe custody.

Registers of the following parishes, beginning in the years indicated, have already been received:

Aston Abbots, 1559.

Burnham, 1561.

Cheddington, 1539.

Cuddington, 1653.

Dinton, 1562.

Hitcham, 1559.

Hillesden, 1594.

Mentmore, 1685.

Slapton, 1653.

Wing, 1546.

Wingrave, 1550.

That some scheme for the preservation of these records was imperative is shown by their condition. Three of them have lost a volume—in two cases it is evident that the loss is fairly recent—and two have been seriously affected by damp. An impression prevails that adequate protection is provided if they are kept in an iron chest or safe. These, however, are often damp and always lack ventilation, and such conditions are only too likely to foster the formation of those moulds which are so injurious to ancient documents.

A. V. W.

NEGOTIATIONS WITH BUCKS. COUNTY COUNCIL

For the information of members, we print below relevant Minutes of the County Council, of the Society's Council, and of the Society's Annual General Meeting, relating to the future administration of the Museum in conjunction with the Education Department of the County Council. These speak for themselves, and are given without comment.

REPORT OF 'WORKING PARTY' APPOINTED TO CONSIDER MATTERS ARISING OUT OF THE PROPOSALS TO DEVELOP THE WORK OF THE SOCIETY IN RELATION TO THE COUNTY MUSEUM AND THE GENERAL AND SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICES OF THE MUSEUM AND THE SOCIETY

(Adopted by the Bucks. County Council, 22nd February, 1951)

I. Membership: The Rt. Hon. the Lord Cottesloe, C.B., V.D., T.D. (Lord Lieutenant and Custos Rotulorum).

Representing the Bucks. County Council: Sir Henry Aubrey-Fletcher, Bart., D.S.O., M.V.O., J.P., C.A., Mr. N. W. Gurney, J.P., C.A., Mr. H. K. Scott, J.P., C.A. (since deceased), Col. F. W. Watson, M.C., T.D., J.P., C.A., Col. G. R. Crouch, M.C., T.D. (Clerk of the Council), Mr. D. E. Cooke, M.C., M.A. (Chief Education Officer).

Representing the Bucks. Archaeological Society: Sir Alan Barlow, Bart., G.C.B., K.B.E., F.S.A. (President), Mr. E. A. L. Martyn, F.R.I.B.A. (Hon. Secretary), Mr. W. F. Serby (Hon. Treasurer), Mr. R. C. Sansome, F.S.A.Scot. (Curator).

II. The 'Working Party' has met on four occasions, viz., on 28th December, 1949, 13th January, 23rd March, and 17th May, 1950.

III. In 1944 the Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society purchased Ceely House with a view to extending the scope of the adjoining Museum. Extension would proceed by stages and the following accommodation would be successively added:

(a) Improvement and extension of exhibition space; provision of new accommodation for the Society's library and curator's laboratory; new system of heating and ventilation.

(b) Period rooms in Ceely House and additional storage.

(c) A Hall to seat about 200 persons, with retiring rooms and kitchen; a self-contained caretaker's house.

(d) Possible provision of an Art Gallery.

A grant of £5,000 has been received from the Pilgrim Trust towards the capital expenditure on the scheme, and the Society intends to proceed with work on (a) and (b) above as soon as the suggested grants towards maintenance are assured.

IV. The development of the work of the Society falls generally under the following main heads:

(a) The general archaeological work of the Society.

(b) Organization and maintenance of the County Museum.

(c) Publication of *Records of Bucks.*

(d) Preservation and care of manorial documents and others of literary, artistic, or archaeological interest.

(e) Co-operation with the Local Education Authority in the establishment and operation of a School Museum Service.

The Society is compelled to look for financial assistance in carrying on and developing its work. The main claim to assistance from public funds rests upon the general and particular educational nature of the work. Grants may be given by public authorities under the Public Libraries Acts, but such payments do not attract Government grants. Grants may also be made by Local Education Authorities in return for services rendered, and these payments, if approved by the Ministry of Education, would attract standard grant from the Government.

In order to ascertain the reactions of the Ministry of Education, a joint deputation visited the Ministry on 3rd May, 1950, and saw Mr. A. E. Miles Davies, one of the Assistant Secretaries.

Although it is the policy of the Ministry that it is not appropriate that Museums should be administered out of the Education rate, all parties agree that the ownership of the Museum and its contents should remain in the hands of the Archaeological Society, but a Joint Committee should deal with the management and maintenance of the Museum.

V. The 'Working Party' reached the following conclusions and recommend accordingly:

(1) That the development indicated in III above should proceed as it becomes possible.

(2) That there should be a joint committee of the Society and of the Education Committee (consisting of five representatives of each body, with the Chief Education Officer as Honorary Secretary, and the Honorary Treasurer of the Society as Honorary Treasurer) to provide the following educational services (other than the School Museum Service):

(a) The County Museum in Aylesbury to be maintained and kept open free of charge to the general public, with a Curator who shall be the full-time officer of the Joint Committee;

(b) periodical exhibitions to be arranged in different parts of the county;

(c) display cases of exhibits to be provided and circulated to Further Education Institutions;

(d) the services of the Curator to be made available for occasional lectures, displays, etc., in Further Education Institutions;

(e) facilities to be provided at the County Museum for meetings of teachers;

(f) facilities to be provided for programmes of public lectures.

3. That the organization and maintenance of the fabric and internal repairs and decoration of the County Museum should become the responsibility of the Joint Committee referred to above.

4. That the Joint Committee should co-operate with the Buckinghamshire Education Committee in the establishment and maintenance by the Education Committee of a School Museum Service. The cost of this service, estimated at about £1,400 a year, should be met directly by the Education Committee, who should appoint a Schools Museum Officer.

5. On the basis that the annual cost of maintaining the Museum and a Museum Service, other than the School Museum Service, through the county is estimated to be £2,000:

(a) That the Education Committee be asked to make a grant not exceeding £750 a year in recognition of the general value of the Museum and its staff in the field of Further Education, subject to the approval of the Minister of Education for purposes of Exchequer grant;

(b) that the County Council be asked to make a grant of £500 a year under the Public Libraries Acts;

(c) that the Standing Joint Committee be asked to increase their grant towards the maintenance of the Society's Muniment-room from £100 to £200 a year;

(d) that the rents receivable from all lettings of rooms, etc., at the Museum or Ceely House to outside bodies (which are estimated to produce £150 a year) be payable to the Joint Committee, including the rent of the flat at Ceely House, but that meetings of teachers and other organizations held under the auspices of the Education Committee be permitted to be held in Ceely House rent free in the same way as meetings of the Society or of its Committees;

(e) (i) that the Society shall pay to the Joint Committee the equivalent of the amount received from the Liberty Trustees (at present £50 per annum); and

(ii) that the Society shall pay to the Joint Committee an annual contribution of £300 or such less sum as shall not exceed one-half of the Society's income from Members' subscriptions, including income tax recovered thereon in any year;

(f) that the annual payments set out in (a), (b), (c), and (e) above be paid to the Museum Joint Committee by the bodies concerned by half-yearly instalments on the first of April and the first of October in each year, beginning on first April, 1951.

(6) That the arrangement provided for in this report may be terminated at any time by either the Society or the County Council, on giving not less than 12 months' notice in writing, to expire on 31st March in any year.

VI. It is hoped that the Committees concerned and the Ministry will agree to make the financial provision recommended. In the absence of such financial assistance, the Museum would have to be closed down altogether and its educational and cultural value would be lost to the county. Museums all over the country are finding it increasingly difficult, if not impossible, to maintain themselves on the basis of voluntary subscriptions alone. The advantage of the recommendations will be that the future of the Museum will be secured and with greatly increased educational functions.

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD AT THE MUSEUM ON MONDAY, 22ND JANUARY, 1951

There were present: Canon Bale (Chairman), Col. Crouch, Dr. Morley Davies, Messrs. Serby, Head, Perrins, Rouse, Woodman, Trelawny-Irving, Martyn, together with Miss Baker (Archivist), and Mr. Sansome (Curator).

Apologies for non-attendance were received from: Col. Watson, Sir Lindsay-Scott, Sir Alan Barlow, Messrs. Skilbeck and Guthrie Moir.

It was explained that the Special Meeting had been called on the instructions of the Chairman to give consideration to criticisms of, and discussions on, the 'Working Party' Report which had arisen among Members of the Council.

A final Report from the 'Working Party' had been circulated to the Members with the Notice convening the Meeting, together with the draft of an alternative scheme suggested by Mr. Sansome.

A long discussion on various points raised by these two documents took place; those contributing were Col. Crouch, Messrs. Serby, Perrins, Head, Rouse, and Trelawny-Irving.

On the proposition of Mr. Rouse, seconded by Mr. Trelawny-Irving, it was **RESOLVED** that:

'This Council is prepared to recommend to a General Meeting of Members of the Society, the adoption of the scheme set out in the "Working Party's" Report No. 39/51, subject to paragraph V (5) (e) being amended so as to read:

(i) That the Society shall pay to the Joint Committee the amount received from the Liberty Trustees (at present £50 per annum);

(ii) That the Society shall pay to the Joint Committee an annual contribution of £300 or such less sum as shall not exceed one-half of the Society's income from Members' subscriptions, including income tax recovered thereon in any year.'

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Members of the Society was held in the Lecture Room at Ceely House (adjoining the Museum) on Saturday, 26th May, 1951, when Sir Alan Barlow (President) occupied the Chair, and over forty Members were present, together with a few of their guests.

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 3rd June, 1950, were read by the Hon. Secretary and signed by the Chairman.

The Annual Reports on the year's work of the Society were read and presented to the Meeting by the Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer, Curator, and Hon. Archivist.

These reports were accepted by the Meeting. Mr Webb requested that in future the year's accounts should be circulated to all members of the Society. It was agreed that this suggestion should be considered, but that paper and printing difficulties would make it difficult.

The proposals (which had been circulated to all members) for co-operation with the Bucks. County Council in the control and maintenance of the Society's Museum were submitted to the Meeting and it was agreed that the following four paragraphs be added to the 'Working Party's' report:

1. The rights and duties of the Curator will be the same as they are at present, the sole difference being that the Joint Committee will take the place of the Council of the Society as regards the Curator's appointment, salary, and discharge, and in particular that the Curator will not be required to work under the direction of any other officer of the Joint Committee or of the County Council.

2. The respective spheres of the Curator and of the School's Museum Officer will be clearly defined, and that of the Curator will be that normally considered to be the sphere of the Curator.

3. The Council of the Society will not under the agreement lose control and may dispose at any time of any of the property contained in the Museum, either now or in the future, other than the property on loan or introduced into the Museum by the Education Committee, which shall be clearly marked and recorded as such.

4. Any Curator appointed should hold the Diploma of the Museum's Association or possess equivalent qualifications as a Curator.

After which the scheme for co-operation with the County Council was approved by the Meeting.

HON. SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR 1950-51 (at Annual General Meeting)

The Society's membership now stands at 608, together with 2 honorary members and 28 affiliated societies.

Twenty-four new members have been elected during the year, a number which has not quite balanced the losses by death, resignation, and removals from the neighbourhood.

Several prominent members have died during the year, including Col. O. Pearce-Serocold, a Vice-President of the Society; Mr. F. W. Reader, a member of the Council for many years; Dr. T. G. Parrott, for several years the Society's Hon. Treasurer; Mr. H. K. Scott, one of the County Council's representatives on the Society's Council; the Rev. H. Poole, Professor G. F. Gask, Mr. Stratford Read, and Miss A. D. Grinnell.

The Council has held six regular meetings and one special meeting during the year, and much time and attention have been given to the Society's welfare by its members.

The chief matter for consideration at these meetings has been the proposed scheme for co-operation with the Bucks. County Council, which the members will be invited to approve this afternoon.

Another matter to which careful consideration has had to be given is the continued publication of the *Records of Bucks*. Two years ago an alteration was made in the Society's Rules by which this publication was issued only to members subscribing £1 ls. per annum or more. It was then hoped that a sufficient number of guineas would be received to pay for an issue reduced in circulation. But owing to the continued rising costs of paper, printing, and publication, this result has not been achieved. The number issued during the past year has been reduced in contents, but its publication cannot yet be paid for, and it is greatly feared (unless some substantial help can be obtained) it will be found impossible to

issue a number this year, in spite of the fact that the Editors have a number of valuable contributions which await publication. That such a publication as this, which has been kept going at a high standard for nearly 100 years, and through two world wars, should have to suspend publication would be a disaster which it is hoped may be avoided, but it is feared that it cannot.

The annual summer excursion was again held last year, when Thornton Church and Stowe School were visited. The Autumn Meeting of the Society was held at Amersham, when a most interesting lecture on Norman Architecture in Bucks. was given by the Rev. H. Poole. The Natural History Section of the Society has been active, although hampered by bad weather conditions. A number of visits were paid to sites of interest, and a week-end course was arranged at the Bucks. County Council Centre for Adult Education on Natural History subjects.

In my report of last year, I stated that a visit had been paid to the Museum by representatives of the Carnegie Trustees, who were offering the Society a substantial grant for the provision of display cases. Since then further visits have been paid to the Museum by representatives of the Carnegie Trustees and the Museums Association in connexion with a proposal to establish a 'Chilterns Museum' which could contain a collection of objects illustrative of the history, culture, and crafts of the whole area included under the somewhat elastic expression 'the Chilterns'. As a result of these visits, offers have been made to the Society of further substantial grants, provided that a satisfactory scheme can be approved which will provide for the future maintenance and upkeep of the Museum and its contents.

NATURAL HISTORY SECTION

During 1951 six meetings were held, of which three were ornithological; a visit to see local craftsmen at work had to be postponed owing to bad weather.

In January there was a joint meeting with the Chiltern Club at Chesham Bois, when Lady Barlow gave a lecture, with epidiascope illustrations, on 'Charles Darwin and the Voyage of the *Beagle*', which was well attended.

In April there was a joint meeting with the Hertfordshire Natural History Society on general natural history, led by their President. All enjoyed the perfect day and the route chosen on the hills south-west of Tring.

In June a most successful meeting was held at Swyncombe Down, under the leadership of Sir Edward Salisbury, and with the kind permission of Mr. and Mrs. Christie Miller. Twenty-seven members and their friends and a large contingent from the Hertfordshire Society proceeded to walk over the down and visited Swyncombe Church and the beautiful gardens of Swyncombe House. Afterwards four members continued to Ewelme Down, on the invitation of Lord and Lady Graham. During the day, Buzzards, Stone Curlew, and Wood Larks were observed, and problems of the chalk flora were discussed.

NOTES ON RECENT ACCESSIONS

TO THE MUSEUM

Small collection of Victorian Dresses, presented by Miss F. M. Prior, Adstock.

Two early-Victorian Dresses, presented by Mrs. F. Field, Milton Keynes.

Four Coins and two Tokens, presented by Miss T. Baird, Chalfont St. Giles.

Louis XVIIIth's Bed, The Queen's Bed, The King's Prie Dieu, Sir W. Lee's Prie Dieu, all from Hartwell House, presented by Mr. E. E. Cook.

Sampler, dated 1714, presented by Miss C. C. D. Webb, Stony Stratford.

Small collection of Victorian articles, presented by Mrs. W. N. Ewer, London.

Four original pencil drawings by Fred Roe, R.I.: (a) The Dark Lantern, Aylesbury; (b) Closing Ring on door of Monks Risborough Church; (c) Drawing of Lych Gate, Chalfont St. Giles; (d) Drawing of leg of seventeenth-century Table, Milton's Cottage, also (e) Large framed painting entitled 'Country Quality'; (f) Self-portrait, presented by Mr. F. Gordon Roe, F.S.A., Princes Risborough.

Thirty water-colour drawings by the late Henry Moule, presented by the Curator, County Museum, Dorchester.

Victorian Brocade Dress and Shoes, presented by Mrs. E. B. Longmore, Haddenham.

A collection of articles formerly used in the Brewery at Rowsham, presented by Mr. G. Gurney, Rowsham.

Solitaire game, nineteenth century; eleven miniatures, nineteenth century; Shepherd's Crook, presented by Mr. A. S. Heley, Wing.

Great Wheel Lathe used in Wood-turning, Wotton Underwood, loaned by the Rev. A. M. Ross, Wotton House.

Three Bell-metal Measures, inscribed: (a) 'Henricus Septimus', (b) 'E', (c) 'E', loaned by the Borough Council, Buckingham. 1601 1601

Cell Door from Old Gaol, loaned by the Borough Council, Buckingham.

The Rhyne Horn, loaned by Mrs. Fleischmann, Chetwode Manor, Buckingham.

Pair of Badger Tongs, loaned by Mr. C. A. Turner, Bassetbury Manor, High Wycombe.

Small collection of Bygones; Inn Sign 'Green Man', c. 1741, loaned by Mr. F. S. Bly, Tring.

Helmet and Crest carried at funeral of John Hampden, loaned by the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Buckinghamshire.

Collection of Tools used by Coopers, loaned by Mr. O. Alderman, Whitchurch.

Palaeolithic hand-axe found on the surface at Gerrard's Cross, presented by Mr. E. Clive Rouse.

The following have been purchased:

Nineteenth-century Linen Press.

One Dutch Oven.

One Bread Spade.

One Pap Spoon.

One Nineteenth-century Ballot Box, Aylesbury.

One Victorian Truncheon.

One Pair of Handcuffs, Aylesbury.

School of Lace Makers' Lamps.

One Pedometer.

One Nineteenth-century Brocade Waistcoat.

One Box Chaff-cutter.

Collection of Lace-makers' Lamps.

(Ex Faraday Coll.)

TO THE LIBRARY—The Macdonald Bequest

Herts. V.C.H., vol. IV.

Roman Roads in Britain, Thos. Codrington (1905).

Sports and Pastimes of the People of England, J. Strutt (1868).

Surnames, E. Weekley (1917).

Ancient Monuments, vols. I, II, and III, Ormsby Gore (1936).

Contemporary Biographies, Herts., ed. W. T. Pike (1908).

Windmills, D. Smith (1932).

Lewis' Topographical Dictionary of Wales (1840).

Earl of Beaconsfield, J. A. Froude (1890).

Earthwork of England, A. H. Allcroft (1908).

Roman Britain, C. M. Franzero (1935).

Woburn and Thorney, Duke of Bedford (1897).

Place-names of Herts. (1938).

R. C. S.

TO THE MUNIMENT-ROOM

MANORIAL MATERIAL

- Chesham Manors, thirteenth century onwards [see note by A. V. W.].
Cholesbury, Court Rolls, 1599-1737.
Great Hampden, Court Rolls, 1553-5.
Hedsor, Court Rolls, Estreat Rolls, and Rentals, 1573-1847, including Manor of Little Marlow, 1619.
Hogshaw, Court Rolls, 1768 and 1789.
Horton, Court Rolls, 1619-1737.
Ibstone, Suit Roll, 1776.
Great Kimble, Rentals of Fennells Grove, *temp.* Hen. VIII.
Langley Marish, Court Rolls of Gibbons *alias* Grove Manor, 1662-1754.
Leckhamstead, Court Rolls, 1617 and 1638.
Great Missenden, Court Rolls, 1608, 1614.
Penn, with Chenies and Chesham Bois, Court Rolls, 1698 and 1715.
Monks Risborough, Court Rolls, 1444, 1646, 1700.
Princes Risborough, Court Roll, 1733.
Shabbington, Court Book with orders, lists of residents, etc., 1718-1756.
Taplow, Court Rolls, 1615-1680.
Wavendon, Bailiff's Account, 1428.
Wendover Borough, Court Rolls, 1642-1748; Wendover Forrens, Court Rolls, 1647-1710, with Customs of both Manors, mid-eighteenth century.
Weston Turville, with Liberty of Puttenham, Court Rolls, 1655-7.
Whitchurch, Court Rolls, 1620-1722.
Winslow, Survey of the Manor *cum membris*, 1555.
Wraysbury, Court Rolls, 1534-1724.

NON-MANORIAL MATERIAL

Twenty-four grants and quit-claims of land in Lathbury, from mid-thirteenth to late fifteenth century; some have good armorial seals, and there are many interesting names of witnesses.

Thirty grants and leases from early fourteenth to sixteenth century, of lands in Chalvey, Crawley, Datchet, Edlesborough, Newport Pagnell, Wing, and High Wycombe.

One grant of early thirteenth century of land in Burnham, made by 'Fraricus son of Roger Esprinkyn' (an early form of Fredericus).

One quit-claim of the Manor of Oving, 1580, giving an old place-name in Bucks, as the grantee is Henry Mansfeld of 'Amberden in Taplowe'. C. B.

CHESHAM COURT ROLLS: A notable addition to the Manorial records in the Society's custody are the Court-rolls of the Manors of Chesham Higham and Chesham Bury lately received from Mr. E. J. Tibbits, of Warwick.

After having been stored for many years in a damp cellar beneath the offices of a local firm of solicitors, it was decided in 1939 to destroy them as useless lumber! Fortunately, Mr. Tibbits, who recognized their great interest, was able to prevent this wanton destruction, and later, after he had succeeded in obtaining possession of them, he took measures to preserve them from further deterioration. Now, in accordance with the wishes of Lord Chesham and his son, Captain the Hon. J. C. C. Cavendish, they have been deposited with the Society.

From the first year of Edward II until the time of Elizabeth the series is fairly complete, though, as might be expected in view of the conditions under which they have been stored, many of the rolls are more or less seriously affected by damp and will need repair before they become available for research. A. V. W.

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