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THE LEICESTERSHIRE ARCHÆOLOGICAL
SOCIETY

THE 77th ANNUAL REPORT 1931 .

The Committee have pleasure in reporting that, in spite of the straitness of the times, the Society continues to prosper and to maintain its usefulness. The year began well with the re-issue, through Mr. Backus, as a handsome and well illustrated volume, of Mr. Farnham's *Charnwood Forest and its Historians and the Charnwood Manors*, with Professor Hamilton Thompson's notes on the manorial churches, Mr. Albert Herbert's maps and plans, and a valuable introduction, which had not previously appeared, by Lieut.-Colonel R. E. Martin, C.M.G. Of the hundred and fifty copies produced, one hundred and twenty, each signed by Mr. Farnham and numbered, were offered for sale at a guinea apiece. All were sold within a fortnight of the day of publication, and the only regret is that thirty or forty more copies, for which there proved to be an eager demand, were not available. The book was highly commended by several important newspapers; but we have not space to quote more than the last paragraph of a lengthy review which appeared in *The Times Literary Supplement* on the 26th of February, 1931 :—

The work of Mr. Farnham for Leicestershire local history was recently given its due praise and recognition by Professor Hamilton Thompson; and in the second part of this book Mr. Farnham proves his mastery of sources by giving in detail the history and descent of the four manors whose collected wastes made up the Forest of Charnwood. This work is based upon prolonged research in the Plea Rolls and Feet of Fines, as well as among published sources. It is arduous work, but the only sure foundation for accurate local history. On the result Mr. Farnham is to be congratulated, as well as the others concerned—Colonel Martin, Mr. Hamilton Thompson, who writes a short

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account of each church, and those responsible for the excellent maps and illustrations.

The following new members were elected in the course of the year :—

- In January :— Mrs. G. E. Rudd, Stoneygate School, Leicester
Mrs. Sydney Herbert, 111 Princess Road,
Leicester
- In February :— Miss Edith Mary Fisher, 9 Market Place,
Hinckley
Mr. Herbert Douglas Fisher, 9 Market Place,
Hinckley
Mr. John R. Graham, 16 Barrington Road,
Leicester
- In March :— Mr. R. Holt, Alliance Chambers, Horsefair
Street, Leicester
- In May :— Mrs. J. F. Sigel, Westover, Swithland Lane,
Rothley
- In June :— Mrs. Albert Herbert, Regent Road, Leicester
Mr. John Stevenson, 47 Hamilton Road,
Ealing, W.5
- In September :—Mrs. C. M. A. G. Farnham, The Heights,
Witley, Surrey
Mr. W. H. Wright, 190 London Road,
Leicester

During the year, twenty members resigned, and we have to regret the loss by death of Sir Samuel Faire, Mr. A. B. McDonald, Mr. Arthur Wakerley, Dr. Coleman, Mr. H. W. Wilshire, Mr. J. H. Brown and Mr. Edgar Reeve. The one of these who took the most active part was Mr. McDonald, of whom a memoir, written by Mr. S. H. Skillington, was printed and circulated by the Leicester College of Arts and Crafts. It will be convenient to abstract from this such portions as have a bearing upon our late member's connection with the Society :—

Alexander Brookfield McDonald, whose recent untimely death is lamented by all who knew him, was born in Sheffield

about fifty-two years ago. He received his artistic training at the Royal College of Art, South Kensington, where he attracted the special notice of Professor Lethaby, of whom he always spoke with the greatest respect. He also studied for a time under Mr. Charles Whall, the eminent artist in coloured glass, and thus acquired a sound technical knowledge of this fine traditional craft. After gaining experience in various Schools of Art, he came to Leicester in 1906.

During the next nineteen years, he did a great deal of valuable work of different kinds, and in 1925 was appointed Head of the Printing and Book Production Department of the College of Art. In the years he spent at Leicester, he served under four principals, Mr. B. J. Fletcher, Mr. Roberts, Mr. Platt and Mr. Ingles, all of whom found him a most able and loyal supporter, wholly devoted to the best interests of the College; and very many old students will always remember him with affection, because of his kindness to them and the great pains he took to enable them to make the most of their respective talents. . . .

About fifteen years ago, soon after I made Mr. McDonald's acquaintance, I happened to speak about him to the late Mr. Perkins Pick, who said that he was a very sound and capable man, and urged me to do what I could to bring him out. Being an obscure person myself, this was not easy; but I did what I could, with the most fortunate results. I persuaded him to join the Leicestershire Archæological Society, and at the earliest opportunity secured his election to the Committee of that body, of which he soon became one of the most useful members. He delivered several lectures on such medieval arts as he had specially studied, and induced a number of his colleagues at the College to give addresses of the same general character, all of which were very instructive and heartily enjoyed. He was also of great service to the editorial sub-committee, and it was largely because of his expert assistance that the Society's *Transactions*, as well as certain historical books written by members, were given the durable and correct form for which they are now noted. In 1928, the Society presented Mr. George Farnham, its leader, with two portraits of himself (one of which was to be hung in the Old Town Hall) by Mr. Pettinger, and an address in a silver-gilt casket, for which casket a fine leather case was to be pro-

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vided. Mr. McDonald's help was a most important factor in the success of this worthy enterprise, and when the time came for Mr. Farnham to express his thanks to the assembled donors, he said he was specially gratified to know that the address had been written and decorated by Mr. McDonald, of whose skill and self-sacrificing generosity he had had previous experience. Mr. McDonald was not a man to say much, or to put himself forward, at meetings; but we all knew that he could be relied upon when occasion arose, and that whatever he did would be done well and in a good spirit. I am quite sure that the sub-committee will try to maintain in their publications the standard he had enabled them to set up, and that is the kind of respect it would have pleased him to feel they would show to his memory.

Transactions

The second part of volume xiv of the Society's *Transactions* was issued to members shortly after the November meeting. Besides the Committee's report and the statement of accounts, this contains the following papers:—

- i. *The Skeffingtons of Skeffington*: (1) *Introductory Narrative*, by S. H. Skillington, and (2) *Appendix*, by G. F. Farnham, F.S.A., with photographic illustrations.
- ii. *The Chapel of St. Peter at Kirby-upon-Wreake* (Kirby Bellars), by A. Hamilton Thompson, M.A., D.Litt., F.B.A., F.S.A.
- iii. *St. Bartholomew's Church, Quorndon*: (1) *Historical Notes*, by George Farnham, M.A., F.S.A., and (2) *Architectural Notes*, by A. Hamilton Thompson, M.A., D.Litt., F.B.A., F.S.A., with plans by Albert Herbert, F.R.I.B.A., and photographic illustrations.

These articles, with their plans and illustrations, make up an excellent and agreeably diversified part, and the thanks of the Society are due to the various contributors, especially to Professor Hamilton Thompson, whose paper on the chapel at Kirby was written at a time when he had many important engagements to fulfil. There cannot be many societies whose local resources, through a long course of years, have been so generously and

learnedly augmented as ours have been by him. The interest and value of the paper on Quorndon church are greatly enhanced by the excellent plans drawn by Mr. Albert Herbert.

Lectures

The following lectures were delivered during the year :—

- 26 January :— The Excavations on the Site of Leicester Abbey, by Mr. Waller K. Bedingfield, F.R.I.B.A.
- 18 May :— Women's Crafts through the Ages, by Mrs. William Keay
- 27 July :— Address on Gaddesby Church, by Mr. Albert Herbert, F.R.I.B.A. (This was given in the church itself in the course of an afternoon excursion to Gaddesby and Ashby Folville.)
- 19 October :— The Care of Ancient Churches, by Mr. C. F. Eeles, Secretary of the Central Committee for the Care of Churches

The January, May and October meetings were held at the Church House, Leicester, and were well attended. Mr. Bedingfield, with the aid of lantern slides, explained fully and clearly the work begun by the late Mr. Thomas Fosbrooke, and continued by himself and Mr. Grundy, on the site of Leicester abbey. Mr. Eeles, who illustrated his remarks with an exceptionally fine series of slides, gave a masterly address on the proper treatment of old churches. Canon Winckley took the chair at the January meeting, and Lord Ferrers at the one addressed by Mr. Eeles. The May meeting established a precedent which may well be followed in future; both the lecturer and chairman were ladies. Mrs. Charles H. Martin presided with the good-humoured efficiency that characterises all she does, and Mrs. William Keay delighted the audience with a charming talk upon women's crafts through the ages. The following, headed by the quaint verse which she recited at the end of her address, is her own epitome of what she said :—

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I pray that, risen from the dead,
I may in glory stand,
A crown perhaps upon my head,
But a needle in my hand;
I've never learned to sing or play,
So let no harp be mine,
From birth until my dying day
Plain sewing's been my line :
Therefore, accustomed to the end
To plying useful stitches,
I'll be content if asked to mend
The little angels' breeches.

These lines, from an old sampler, express the sentiments of the true needlewoman in every age. From the dawn of history, exercising the craft of the needle has been essentially a woman's job; and this craft, as a fine art, ranks high in the æsthetic sphere. Other crafts, such as lacework, weaving, and the making of baskets and pottery, claimed her attention; but to needlework must be given the place of primary importance, and it is to this branch of women's handiwork that the present brief résumé of a lengthy paper must be confined. As for the needle, no tool has preserved its shape from primitive beginnings more consistently, or been of greater service to humanity, than this invention. It has inspired poets and other writers, and the Psalmist says :—" Upon thy right hand did stand the queen in a vesture of gold wrought about with divers colours. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework "

From the small beginnings of the Eden aprons, laboriously wrought with a needle of thorn, clumsy tendrils for thread, and leafy material, needlework reached its summit, in common with other arts, in the golden days of the thirteenth century. Beginning as purely constructive ornament, in which the arrangement of the stitches joining the several units of a garment together expressed the individual taste of the needlewoman, the art at last, under the compelling inspiration of religion, rose to a sublime height. And so it was with all the great arts, such as architecture, painting and sculpture.

Through studying their records in stone or pottery, we become acquainted with the brilliant needlework of the Baby-

lonians, Assyrians, Persians and Greeks; but little is left of the actual embroidered tent hangings, horse trappings and wearing apparel. More is known of the work of the ancient Egyptians, whose veneration for the dead produced the funeral tent of an Egyptian queen, a contemporary of king Solomon, which still exhibits the proficiency and personal insight of the craftswomen who made it.

Practising the art of embroidery was one of the most important occupations in medieval English nunneries, where it was not only a profession, but a favourite pursuit. There were schools for its teaching, and one of these is known to have existed in the neighbourhood of Ely as early as the seventh century. It was not unusual for kings and persons of rank to present or bequeath their embroidered robes to churches, for conversion into articles of ecclesiastical use. From the tenth to the thirteenth century, the needlework of this country enjoyed a European reputation for beauty, inspiration and individuality. The Syon cope, made in the thirteenth century and now at South Kensington, is perhaps the finest piece of co-operative needlework ever produced.

In the thirteenth century, the art became further developed through the establishment of heraldry. It may almost be said that a distinct class was added to needlework for secular uses by the fixed conditions that governed heraldic blazoning. The Reformation put an end to ecclesiastical work, and the needlewomen thus lost their best patrons. Not only some, but many of the skilful works of former times were either alienated or destroyed. Although excellent work was done in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the art failed to maintain, or even to approach, the level of the earlier achievements of its exponents. Some of the samplers which found favour at this period show that mere technical skill had not entirely banished good taste. Today, the needlewoman's art is reviving in most European countries and promises to bear good fruit.

Excursions

Two very pleasant summer outings were planned by the Excursions sub-committee and successfully carried out under the direction of Messrs. Walter Brand and Ralph Bedingfield,

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who on each occasion were warmly thanked for all the trouble they had taken.

On the 15th of July, thirty-six members and friends went by motor to Higham Ferrers, where they were received at the church by the Rev. B. E. Owen, and shown over it by Canon H. K. Fry, who had kindly undertaken to be their guide. When the church and the bedehouse adjacent to it had been duly inspected, an adjournment was made to the White Hart at Thrapston for lunch. Early in the afternoon, the party visited Drayton Hall, the stately and historic seat of Captain N. V. Stopford Sackville, who welcomed them in person and was very kind in every way. Returning to Thrapston, they had tea at the White Hart, and then proceeded to Lowick church, the interesting features of which were pointed out to them by the Rev. A. S. R. Hazel. They reached Leicester again about eight o'clock.

On the 27th of July, seventy members and friends joined in a half-day excursion to Gaddesby and Ashby Folville. At Gaddesby, the architectural development of the church was capably explained by Mr. Albert Herbert, who ingeniously drove home his chief points by making additional drawings, with pencils of various colours, upon a large plan fixed to a board. Towards five o'clock, the company went to Ashby, where tea was taken, and the business of the bi-monthly meeting transacted, in the Village Hall. In the early evening, they spent an hour or so in the fine and well-kept church under the guidance of the Rev. C. Turner. From the church, they went on to the Hall, which is close by, where they were most hospitably received and entertained by Mrs. H. H. Smith-Carington. Mr. Turner was as kind at the house as he had been in the church, and sociably remained with the guests until it was time for them to leave for home.

Annual Meeting

At the Annual Meeting, which was held in the Church House, Leicester, on the 30th of March, Captain C. R. Knighton was chosen to succeed Mr. George Green as Local Secretary for the Market Harborough district, and Mr. A. H. Leavesley was elected to fill the vacancy on the Committee created by the death

of Mr. A. B. McDonald. Mr. William Keay explained the steps that should be taken by people who wish historical monuments in any part of Leicestershire to be placed under the protection of the Office of Works. The first thing to do, it may be said, is to communicate with Mr. Keay himself, who is the properly appointed person to advise, and in suitable cases to act, in this important matter of the preservation of ancient buildings and other interesting survivals from the past. Canon Winckley then expressed the hope that Mr. Keay would see to the conservation *in situ* of the few remains of the collegiate church of the Newarke beneath the old house, opposite the Trinity Hospital, which has since been demolished. Canon Winckley also referred to the Jewry Wall, the western side of which, he had heard, was likely soon to be exposed. Mr. Skillington, who had made informal enquiries, said that, according to what he had been told by friends interested in property thereabouts, nothing was expected to be done in the near future. A gold touchpiece and several medals were exhibited by Mr. Hugh Goodacre, and Mr. Paul Dare showed a plan of All Saints' church, Leicester, and read some notes upon it that he had written.

The Library

In April, twenty-five volumes of the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* and a few other publications of antiquarian interest were presented to the Society by Mr. J. T. Thorp. At the May meeting, Mr. Farnham presented a copy of the fifth volume of his *Leicestershire Village Notes*, which had recently been published. In October, the Society presented a number of parts of *Transactions* to the Carnegie Public Library at Melton Mowbray.

Miscellaneous

At the April Committee meeting, a grant of two guineas was made to the fund for the preservation of Hadrian's Wall. In November, the Committee voted ten guineas to the fund for strengthening and repairing the church of St. Mary de Castro, on condition that this money should be spent upon the building itself, and not used for any secondary purpose. When the Committee met in

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April, Mr. Farnham was unanimously re-elected as chairman, and Mr. Hugh Goodacre as vice-chairman. Such minor business as came before the Committee in the course of the year was satisfactorily dealt with.

Income Tax

During the year 1930, representations were made to the Inland Revenue authorities that the income of the Society, as well as that of the Leicestershire Archæological Research Fund, was entitled to exemption from Income Tax. After the Honorary Treasurer had submitted the Society's case in writing, and had subsequently interviewed the Inspector of Taxes (Claims Branch) in London, the claim was admitted and repayment was made in respect of past years to the amount of £56 2s. 6d., of which £31 10s. 11d. belonged to the Society and £24 11s. 7d. to the Research Fund. Mr. Death wishes to acknowledge the assistance he received from Mr. Charles Squire, Mr. Walter Brand, Mr. H. Hartopp and Mr. S. H. Skillington, who helped him to define the purposes and activities of the Society. There is no doubt that Mr. Death was at great pains to prepare a full, clear and just statement for submission to the authorities, and the Society have every reason to congratulate him and themselves upon the success of his efforts.

Reports and Papers

The first part of the fortieth volume of the Associated Architectural Societies' *Reports and Papers* has been delivered to the Leicestershire subscribers by Major Freer. This contains several interesting contributions, including an illustrated paper, entitled "17th and 18th Century Domestic Architecture of Stamford", by Mr. H. F. Traylen.

**THE LEICESTERSHIRE
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT**

RECEIPTS		£	s.	d.
1931				
Dec. 31.	To Subscriptions and Donations	319	3	0
	,, Sales of <i>Transactions</i> , &c., of L.A.S.	9	13	6
	,, Interest on £101 5s. 4d. Leicester 3 per cent. Stock less Tax	2	7	0
	,, Interest on £250 0s. 0d. Leicester 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. Stock less Tax	9	4	2
	,, Interest on £150 0s. 0d. 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Conversion Loan 1961 less Tax	4	1	6
	,, Interest on £200 0s. 0d. 5 per cent. War Loan 1929/47 Gross	10	0	0
	,, Income Tax reclaimed 1923/24 to 1930/31	31	10	11
	,, Balance overdrawn	1	11	9

£387 11 10

FUNDS ACCOUNT

	£	s.	d.
General Reserve Fund (Value £606)	673	18	10
Excursion Secretaries' Account	15	12	0
Bank Overdraft	1	11	9
	<u>£691</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>7</u>

ARTHUR W. DEATH, JR., A.C.A.
Honorary Treasurer

ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY
for the Year ending 31st December 1931

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		PAYMENTS					
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1930							
Dec. 31.	By Balance overdrawn				89	18	1
1931							
Dec. 31.	„ SUBSCRIPTIONS :						
	Archæological Congress ...	1	0	0			
	British Numismatic Society	1	1	0			
	Canterbury and York Society	1	1	0			
	Lincoln Record Society ...	1	1	0			
	English Place Name Society	0	15	0			
	British Record Society ...	1	11	6			
					6	9	6
	„ DONATIONS :						
	Chesters Museum Fund ...	2	2	0			
	St. Mary de Castro—Leicester— Renovation Fund ...	10	10	0			
					12	12	0
	Associated Transactions— refund to Major Freer				2	3	0
	„ Printing <i>Transactions</i> , &c.				205	0	0
	„ Printing and Stationery ...				13	14	0
	„ Honorarium to Assistant Secretary				25	0	0
	„ Rent				11	10	0
	„ Postages and Sundry Expenses				12	2	8
	„ Lecturers' Expenses and Lantern				3	0	0
	„ Fire Insurance				1	10	0
	„ Books purchased				2	3	0
	„ Bank Interest and charges				2	9	7
					<u>£387</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>10</u>

December 31, 1931

	£	s.	d.
£101 5s. 4d. Leicester Corporation 3 per cent. Stock (value £74)	101	5	4
£250 0s. 0d. Leicester Corporation 4½ per cent. Stock, 1945/55 (value £230) ...	246	2	9
£150 0s. 0d. 3½ per cent. Conversion Loan 1961 (value £111)	121	4	9
£200 0s. 0d. 5 per cent. War Loan 1929/47 (value £191)	205	6	0
Cash at Bank	15	12	0
Hon. Treasurer's Account—Deficit	1	11	9
	<u>£691</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>7</u>

I have examined the Funds Account dated December 31, 1931, and the Receipts and Payments Account for the year ending December 31, 1931, and certify such Accounts to be in accordance with the Books and Vouchers of the Society. I have satisfied myself that the Scrip of the above Investments is in the possession of the Bank.

H. J. FRANCIS, A.C.A.
Honorary Auditor

February, 1932

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**THE LEICESTERSHIRE
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT**

	£	s.	d.
1930			
Dec. 31. To Balance at Bank	22	3	9
1931			
Dec. 31. „ Interest on £800 0s. 0d. 5 per cent. War Loan 1929/47—Gross	40	0	0
„ Interest on £400 0s. 0d. Leicester 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. Stock—less Tax	14	14	6
„ Bank Interest	1	19	1
„ Interest on Legacy— H. S. Bennett, deceased—less Tax	5	10	5
„ Income Tax reclaimed 1925/6 to 1930/31.	24	11	7
	£108	19	4

FUNDS ACCOUNT

	£	s.	d.
1931			
Dec. 31. To present balance (Value £1242)	1324	18	9
	£1324	18	9

G. F. FARNHAM }
ARTHUR W. DEATH, JR. } *Treasurers*

ARCHÆOLOGICAL RESEARCH FUND

xv.

for the Year ending December 31, 1931

1931		£	s.	d.
Dec. 31.	Balance in hand	108	19	4

£108 19 4

December 31, 1931

1931		£	s.	d.
Dec. 31.	By £800 0s. 0d. 5 per cent. War Loan			
	1929/47 (Value £766)	820	18	5
	„ £400 0s. 0d. Leicester 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent.			
	Stock 1945/1955 (value £368)	395	1	0
	„ Cash at Bank	108	19	4
		<u>£1324</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>9</u>

I have examined the Funds Account dated December 31, 1931, and the Receipts and Payments Account for the year ending December 31, 1931, and certify such Accounts to be in accordance with the Books and Vouchers of the Trustees of the Research Fund. I have satisfied myself that the Scrip of the above Investments is in the possession of the Bank.

H. J. FRANCIS, A.C.A.
Honorary Auditor

February, 1932