

Editorial

IT is now thirty-six years since the Oxford Architectural and Historical Society published its last volume of *Proceedings*. When, therefore, in May 1935 the Society decided that the time had come for a new attempt to inaugurate a periodical publication dealing with the history and antiquities of Oxford and its shire and neighbourhood, it was obviously impracticable and unnecessary to make any connexion with the past, or to revive the title of its former venture. A new title was sought, and *Oxoniensia* was born.



The *Proceedings*, good though they were in earlier years, when they served as the medium for the publication of many first-class monographs on antiquities and architectural history, had two faults which eventually sounded their death-knell. In the first place their contents were not always confined to material of local interest. They did not, in consequence, perform the main duty of a provincial periodical, that of printing matter which could not normally find a home in national journals. In the second place, much of their space was from the first taken up with accounts of the meetings and excursions of the Society, and the last few issues were entirely composed of such ephemeral matter.



It is hoped that *Oxoniensia* will have a different fate. Lest it should in time degenerate into the same sort of annual report that the *Proceedings* eventually became, the committees responsible for its inauguration have decided that accounts of the Society's meetings and excursions shall not be included in its pages. And, to prevent its falling by the wayside through lack of a direct appeal to the main body of its potential subscribers—those resident in Oxford and its neighbourhood—it has been decided that no articles shall be published except those dealing directly with local topics. If those who control its policy in future years abide by these two rules, there is no reason why *Oxoniensia* should not go from strength to strength, and attract supporters in ever-increasing numbers from the ranks of those to whom the history and antiquities of the Oxford district are a source of interest and delight.

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Moreover, if it keep to this policy *Oxoniensia* need not and will not tread upon the toes of any of its elder contemporaries. The annual volumes of the Oxford Historical Society and of the Oxfordshire Record Society are intended for the publication of texts and longer monographs on Oxford and Oxfordshire history for which *Oxoniensia* could never find space. It will, it is hoped, run in harness with them, publishing the shorter articles which they would have to reject for their very shortness. The *Reports* of the Oxfordshire Archaeological Society are more on a par with what it is intended that *Oxoniensia* shall be, but there is still no need to expect a rivalry between the two, for there is easily room for both periodicals in a county so rich in history as Oxfordshire.



Nor need its contemporaries in neighbouring counties fear that *Oxoniensia* will trespass on their preserves. It is intended that *Oxoniensia* shall spread its limits no farther than the borders of Oxfordshire itself, except in one direction, for it will include in its territory that part of NW. Berkshire which from the point of view of physical geography belongs properly to its sphere of influence. We confidently hope that our Berkshire neighbours, the Newbury Field Club and the Berkshire Archaeological Society, the one of which belongs rather to the SW. of the county and the other to the SE., will not take umbrage at this friendly invasion of an outlying part of their territory. There is room for all three in a county so large as Berkshire.



And what of the metropolitan and national periodicals? It is reputed that the editor of one of them was sorry to hear of the imminent publication of *Oxoniensia*, fearing that too much material from Oxfordshire would be diverted from the pages of his own journal in consequence. But we should be sorry for any national periodical which had to depend on local Oxfordshire material for its continued existence, and we can but hope that he was speaking more in jest than in earnest! And for the matter of that, we have always felt that it was wrong that such material had to seek publication in national periodicals. Being perforce scattered through the pages of more than one of these, it has tended to be lost and forgotten by Oxfordshire researchers: had it been collected within the covers of an *Oxoniensia* it could have been found and kept in sight with greater ease. We hope, then, for a welcome and a helping hand from all these, our elder contemporaries. *Absit invidia!*



A study of the material included in this, our first number, will give a better general idea of what our future policy is intended to be than could many pages

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of description. Original articles on any branch of local history, topography, architecture, and antiquities will be welcome. These should not normally exceed 10,000 words in length, and may be very much shorter, and illustrations should be cut down to the minimum quantity consistent with a proper presentation of the subject. The editors will be prepared occasionally to consider the publication of longer articles, such as the report of the Ditchley excavations in the present volume. They will also be glad to receive shorter communications, whether in form for publication or not, on subjects of smaller compass or import such as notices of isolated archaeological finds, or notes on minor topics of history and antiquities. It is proposed to review, or at least to notice, new books or pamphlets which deal in whole or in part with the antiquities and history of the district, and at the same time to record, however briefly, any news of local historical interest which may appear in other contemporary journals. To do all this successfully and completely will need the co-operation not only of the editorial Committee, but of readers as well, and information on any such topic will be gratefully acknowledged by the editors; these, as well as all MSS. of articles and books for review, should be addressed in the first instance to the Honorary Secretary, Oxford Architectural and Historical Society, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.



One final word. A periodical such as *Oxoniensia* cannot continue to be published in a suitable size and format unless it receive adequate financial support. Though the response to the provisional appeal for subscribers in December 1935 was sufficient to justify the publication of this first number, it was not enough to guarantee the financial stability of the venture for even one year, not to mention succeeding ones. We rely upon those who responded to the appeal to ensure the continuance of *Oxoniensia* by making its existence known as widely as possible among their friends both in Oxford and elsewhere.