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The Agreement with the Oxford Architectural and Historical Society for Mutual Exchange of Benefits

The Oxford Architectural and Historical Society, founded in 1839, and the Oxfordshire Archaeological Society, founded in 1853, have existed side by side in friendly cooperation as county archaeological societies ever since the younger was founded one hundred years ago. From time to time suggestions have been made, only to be discarded, that there was no room in one county for two sister societies and that amalgamation should take place.

The post-war stringency arising from higher costs, particularly in regard to printing, has accentuated the difficulties with which both societies were faced, and the former suggestions for amalgamation were revived in 1952. A joint sub-committee was appointed by the committees of the two societies to look into the situation and make recommendations.

After careful consideration the sub-committee once more discarded the idea of amalgamation but produced a plan which would coordinate the activities of the two societies, while allowing each society to retain its separate entity. This plan was adopted by the Annual General Meetings of the two societies in the summer of 1953 and comes into force on 1 January 1954.

The text of the agreement is:

'That there shall be an interchange of privileges as follows:

(a) Oxfordshire Archaeological Society: All members shall be entitled to attend lectures (but not excursions) arranged by the Oxford Architectural and Historical Society. Members wishing to receive the annual volume of Oxoniensia shall pay an annual subscription of £1 18s. instead of 10s.

(b) Oxford Architectural and Historical Society: All members shall be entitled to attend excursions arranged by the Oxfordshire Archaeological Society on payment of the appropriate charge, plus an annual payment of 2s. 6d. to cover the cost of notices.

(c) The Oxford Architectural and Historical Society shall receive from the Oxfordshire Archaeological Society 15s. for each copy of Oxoniensia distributed under para. 2(a) above.'

The Centenary Publication

When the Society's Report no. 87 for 1949 was published as a separate volume it had been hoped that an increase in membership could be attained which would provide sufficient funds to enable the Society to continue to print small independent annual Reports despite the rise in printing costs. But this hope has proved to have been too optimistic, and it is part of the new agreement with the Oxford Architectural and Historical Society (see above) that future Reports from 1954 onwards shall be printed in the appropriate volume of Oxoniensia, as part of the scheme for an exchange of benefits, and Oxoniensia will, from the same date, carry the sub-title 'incorporating the Report of the Oxfordshire Archaeological Society'.

Meanwhile, on the approach of the centenary year of the Society, 1953, the Officers and Committee decided that such an occasion should if possible be marked
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by the issue of a special publication. An appeal was launched in 1952 for donations from members towards a Centenary Fund and a sum of £31 19s. 6d. was collected. This sum was insufficient to finance a publication of any magnitude, but with the kind cooperation of the Committee of the Oxford Architectural and Historical Society it has been possible to use it to finance the printing and publication, within the pages of Oxoniensia, of the present Report no. 88 for the years 1950-53, so as to bring our series of Reports up to date.