

## Notes and Comments

### THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The annual conference of the Society was held at the University of Lancaster from Monday, 14 April, to Wednesday, 16 April 1969. An opening reception, provided by the University of Lancaster, was followed by a dinner at which the Society's guests were Professors P. A. Reynolds, A. H. Woolrych, and H. J. Perkins.

Papers were read by Professor F. M. L. Thompson on 'The role of the surveyor in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century agriculture'; by Professor G. E. Mingay on 'The survival of the small farmer'; and by Professor J. Oliver on 'Climate and agricultural history, with respect to variations in time, space, and farming systems'. Dr J. D. Marshall's paper, 'Some Lakeland agricultural history in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries', provided a background to an excursion to Lake Windermere, Town End, a yeoman's house at Troutbeck, and John Wilkinson's land reclamation near the Cartmel coast.

### THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Society's seventeenth AGM was held at the University of Lancaster on 15 April 1969 with Professor W. E. Minchinton, who had been re-elected chairman by the Executive Committee, in the chair. Mr G. E. Fussell, Mr C. A. Jewell, and Mr M. A. Havinden were re-elected President, Treasurer, and Secretary respectively. Professor H. P. R. Finberg, Mr G. Houston, Mr Harwood Long, and Dr W. J. Rowe were elected to the Executive Committee.

In presenting the report of the Executive Committee, Professor Minchinton noted that membership had risen from 672 to 683 and hoped that members would not slacken their efforts to increase numbers still further. The 1970 conference will be held from Monday, 6 April, to Wednesday, 8 April, in the West Midlands, while a joint conference with Dutch agricultural historians at Wageningen is proposed for April 1971.

The British Academy was thanked for its

further grant of £200 towards the publications of the Society.

The Treasurer reported that the Society's financial position was sound and the accounts were adopted.

### BANKER'S ORDERS

The Treasurer would like to stress that payment of subscriptions by Banker's Order is a great convenience, both to members and to the Society, and hopes that all members who do not yet subscribe by this means will be persuaded of the advantages it offers since it saves members from having to send cheques and the Society the expense of sending out requests and reminders.

### EXPORT OF HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS

It was reported that Mr J. Edwards, Reading University Archivist, had represented the Society at a meeting to consider the draft of the proposed Bill to control the export of historical manuscripts.

### INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL HISTORY

The University of Reading, which has for a long time acted as a focus of interest in agricultural history on account of its Museum of English Rural Life, has now set up an Institute of Agricultural History. Its staff all hold existing full-time appointments in the university and consist of three associate directors, C. A. Jewell (Keeper of the Museum), E. J. T. Collins (bibliography), and E. L. Jones (research), with some bibliographical and secretarial help. The functions of the Institute are to promote teaching and research in agricultural history within the University of Reading and to offer facilities and bibliographical assistance to other *bona fide* scholars.

Reading is ideally situated for this enterprise. The main library of Reading University is strong in agricultural and agricultural history works, including the older printed works and pamphlets. Special collections include the Overstone Library of which the nucleus originally belonged to the nineteenth-century politi-

cal economist, J. R. McCulloch. Situated within the main library is the university archive, which has a large and comprehensively catalogued collection of eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and early twentieth-century farm records. These come mainly, but not solely, from southern and eastern England. In addition to original sets of farm accounts relating to over 700 farms, copies of which have been offered to the relevant county archives, there are microfilm copies of outstanding records from other repositories, making the collection in total the biggest single body of historical farm account material in Britain. There are also collections of estate records, the papers of firms of country solicitors, the correspondence of leading agriculturists and ancillary documents. The Museum of English Rural Life, moreover, contains a big selection of material artefacts, a large body of illustrative material, and its own specialist library of books and pamphlets on rural history. Finally, Reading is fairly close to a ring of other institutions with libraries (often containing special historical collections) of interest to agricultural historians. Some of these are constituent parts of, or attached to, Reading University. They include the National Institute for Research in Dairying nearby at Shinfield, the Grasslands Research Institute at Hurley, the National College of Food Technology at Weybridge, the ICI research station at Jealott's Hill, and the Curtis Agricultural Museum at Alton. The College of Estate Management has become part of the university and will shortly be moving to Reading. Also within reach west of London are such bodies as the Milk Marketing Board at Thames Ditton and the Meteorological Office at Bracknell.

On the bibliographical side the Institute is attempting to build up an abstracting service covering publications on British agricultural history from 1967, and is starting to work back through articles in the major journals. Ultimately it is hoped to develop an information retrieval system from which subject-classified lists of references and sets of abstracts can be made available to inquirers. Beyond this, the intention is to publish as occasional papers selected and annotated bibliographies on special subjects, mainly prepared by interested

members of the academic staff at Reading. Although a lack of funds at the present moment hampers expansion, it is hoped that this enterprise will flourish.

#### THE FARMER'S JOURNAL AND MANUFACTURER'S AND TRADER'S REGISTER, 1807-09

The Brynmor Jones Library at Hull University has recently acquired volumes 1 and 2 of *The Farmer's Journal, and Manufacturer's and Trader's Register*. These two volumes contain the Saturday edition of this journal from no. 1 (Saturday, 25 April 1807) to no. 104 (Saturday, 15 April 1809). The title of the journal was changed to *Evans and Ruffey's Farmer's Journal and Manufacturer's and Trader's Register* with volume 3 (no. 105, 22 April 1809), and further changed with volume 4 (no. 205, 23 March 1811) to *Evans and Ruffey's Journal and Agricultural Advertiser*.

It appears from the *British Union Catalogue of Periodicals* and the *Union List of Serials* that no other library, either in Britain or North America, has a complete holding of these two volumes: the British Museum holdings begin with vol. 3, 1809; Rothamsted Experimental Station and the Walter Frank Perkins Agricultural Library at Southampton University have only later volumes; and the Ministry of Agriculture Library and the Agricultural Research Council have no holdings.

#### THE MUSEUM OF FARMING LIFE AT AUCHINDRAIN, ARGYLL

A Museum of Farming Life has been set up at Auchindrain, between Inverary and Lochgilphead, which is a unique project for preserving a record of past life in the Highlands of Scotland. The site is the last multiple-tenancy farm in mainland Argyll, from which the last tenant moved out as recently as 1963. The buildings were then in a relatively good state of preservation and a Trust was formed in 1964, representing the Argyll Trustees, Argyll County Council, the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh, the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland, Glasgow Museum and Art Galleries, and the Natural History and Antiquarian Society of Mid Argyll, to restore the

place and gather together household goods, tools, toys, and other material with which to furnish the buildings as they looked in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The museum has received generous assistance from the Carnegie U.K. Trust, the Highlands and Islands Development Board, and the Argyll County Council, and it is now a going concern. A society has been formed of the Friends of Auchindrain to offer support, advice, and help in acquiring and arranging museum materials. The minimum subscription is one guinea. Information and membership forms may be obtained from Miss Elizabeth Meldrum, Secretary, Friends of Auchindrain Society, 2 The University, Glasgow, W.2.

#### THE HISTORY OF THE BRITISH CLIMATE

A Group for the Study of the History of the British Climate has been formed, which meets twice a year in Oxford. Anyone who is interested in receiving the literature circulated by this group and in attending its meetings should write to Trevor Aston, Corpus Christi College, Oxford. At the last meeting a detailed discussion took place on the period 1300-45, which included the evaluation of tree-ring evidence. The next meeting is planned for January 1970 and will discuss methods and evidence used by climatologists in the study of present and future weather.

#### TOOLS AND TILLAGE

The first issue of a new journal, *Tools and Tillage*, has just appeared. It is edited jointly by Axel Steensberg, Grith Lerche, and Alexander Fenton, in English and German, and its aim

is to provide a forum for the discussion, by scholars in several disciplines, of field systems, and the methods and implements of cultivation as they have appeared and changed through the ages in all parts of the world. This deliberately specialist journal will appeal to all who take a serious interest in agrarian history. Volume 1 contains a system for classifying pre-industrial implements of cultivation by Frantisek Sach of Czechoslovakia, a study of harvesting with sickles in Iran by Grith Lerche of Denmark, notes on an international bibliography of plough literature by Ulrich Bentzien of Rostock, and fresh information, including radio-carbon dates, on a number of wooden ploughing implements from peat bogs. There are also notes, and reviews of relevant books.

Subscriptions should be placed with the publishers, G. E. C. Gad, 32 Vimmelskaftet, DK-1161 Copenhagen K, Denmark. The cost is \$3 U.S. (approx. 25s. 6d.).

#### INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT FOR RESEARCH ON THE HISTORY OF AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS

The REVIEW receives the regular newsletter sent out by the secretariat from Denmark (address: Brede Allé, 2800 Lyngby). The latest contains a report of a long trip by Axel Steensberg and the secretary to study collections of agricultural implements at Canberra, take part in an international congress in Japan, and examine prehistoric implements at Aleppo. It also includes the latest accessions to the library. The Editor will gladly lend this literature to any interested member of the B.A.H.S.