

The British Agricultural History Society

THE SOCIETY'S FIRST CONFERENCE

The inaugural conference of the Society took place at Reading University on Monday, 13 April 1953. It was attended by over a hundred people representing a very wide variety of interests and professions from all over the British Isles.

The provisional committee which had been elected by an exploratory meeting held in London the previous September had prepared a draft constitution which was discussed, amended, and ratified by the general meeting, which then elected the officers and committee for the ensuing year.

The conference was welcomed to Reading by the Vice-Chancellor of the University, Mr J. F. Wolfenden, C.B.E. Sir James Scott Watson, C.B.E., M.C., chief scientific adviser to the Ministry of Agriculture, addressed the conference on 'The Scope of Agricultural History', and Sir Frank Stenton, F.B.A., spoke on 'The Manor in English History'. Later in the day the conference had the opportunity of visiting the University's Museum of English Rural Life.

RURAL SOCIAL HISTORY COURSE

The Society participated in the running of a week's course on Rural Social History with the Association of Agriculture and Westham House, Barford, Warwick, from 8 to 15 August 1953. The course was held at Westham House and was attended by some forty people.

Five of the lectures followed a definite sequence, giving an outline of agricultural history from manorial times to the present day. The remainder dealt with a wide range of subjects related to the general theme. In addition to the lectures visits were made to Warwick, Stratford and its theatre, farms, museums, and other places of historic interest.

The full list of lectures was as follows. *Social Life of the English Manor*, Lady Stenton; *The Elizabethan Farmer*, Dr Joan

Thirsk; *The Georgian Period*, Philip Styles; *Agricultural History in the Nineteenth Century*, Andrew W. Ashby; *Modern Agricultural History*, John Green; *Country Speech and Customs*, F. H. Grisewood; *Landscape in Art*, Professor T. Bodkin, Chev. Leg. d'H.; *The History of Trees in Britain*, J. Q. Williamson, M.B.E.; *Shakespeare's England*, Captain Frank Owen; *The English Landscape Garden*, H. F. Clark; *Rural Housing at different periods*, L. F. Salzman; *Country Costume throughout the ages*, Mrs P. Risner; *The Effect of Witchcraft on Village Life*, Miss Christina Hole; *Domestic Country Crafts*, G. Ewart Evans; *The Village and the Church*, Victor Bonham-Carter; *Farmers' Tools and Implements*, J. W. Y. Higgs; *Local History Studies*, H. P. R. Finberg.

STUDIES IN REGIONAL HISTORY

A joint one-day conference with the Association of Agriculture was held in London on Saturday, 5 December 1953. It was attended by over eighty people. Members of the Association or the Society paid a conference fee of 2s. 6d., but non-members were encouraged to come, the fee for them being 5s.

An introductory paper on 'Regional Farming in England' was given by Dr W. G. Hoskins. This was followed by three short papers devoted to specific regions as follows: 'The Farming Regions of Lincolnshire' by Dr Joan Thirsk; 'The Rise of Sheep Farming with the Great Enclosures in North Wales' by Professor Alun Roberts; 'Farming Regions with special reference to Wiltshire' by Dr E. Kerridge. The Chairman of the Conference was Mr Alexander Hay.

THE NEXT ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The annual conference of the Society will be held at University College, Leicester, on 2 April 1954. Details of the conference will be circulated to members later.

CONSTITUTION OF THE SOCIETY

Approved by the First General Meeting of the Society, held at the University of Reading on Monday, 13 April 1953.

1. The Society shall be named The British Agricultural History Society.

2. The object of the Society shall be to promote the study of the history of agriculture and rural economy.

3. Membership of the Society shall be open to all persons interested. Candidates for membership shall be nominated by any member of the Society and all such nominations shall be approved by the Executive Committee.

4. The annual subscription shall be one guinea due on the 1st of February.

5. The business of the Society shall be conducted by its Officers and by the Executive Committee.

6. The Officers of the Society shall consist of a President, Chairman of the Executive, Treasurer, and Secretary. The President, Treasurer, and Secretary shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting. The Chairman of the Executive shall be elected by that committee from among its members.

7. The Executive Committee shall consist of twelve members of the Society elected by the Annual General Meeting with the addition of the Officers and the Editor who shall be *ex officio* members of the Committee. Five members of the Executive Committee shall form a quorum.

8. The President, Treasurer, and Secretary and one quarter of the ordinary members of the Executive Committee shall retire at each Annual General Meeting. The re-

tiring ordinary members shall not be eligible for immediate re-election.

9. Nominations, with the consent of the nominee, for the offices of President, Treasurer, and Secretary and for the vacancies on the Executive Committee must be received by the Secretary not less than seven days before the Annual General Meeting.

10. The Annual General Meeting shall be held as near as possible to the 1st of February. At least twenty-one and not more than twenty-eight days' notice of the Annual General Meeting shall be sent to members of the Society.

11. The Executive Committee shall appoint the Editor who shall have full discretion concerning the content of publications authorized by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee in consultation with the Editor may appoint an Editorial Board.

12. No amendments to this Constitution shall be made except by an Annual General Meeting. All proposals for the amendment of the Constitution shall be submitted in the form of a written notice of motion in time to be circulated to the members with the notice of the Annual General Meeting. No amendment shall be made except by the Annual General Meeting and members unable to attend such a meeting may vote by proxy.

13. All profits derived from publications which the Society may issue and all interest arising from investments which the Society may make shall be devoted to the furtherance of the object of the Society as set out in paragraph 2 of this Constitution.