

**SOMERSET RECORD SOCIETY. THE
REGISTERS OF WALTER GIFFARD,
BISHOP OF BATH AND WELLS, 1265-6,
AND OF HENRY BOWETT, BISHOP OF
BATH AND WELLS, 1401-7. VOL. XIII**

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Somerset Record Society. The Registers of Walter Giffard, Bishop of Bath and Wells, 1265-6, and of Henry Bowett, Bishop of Bath and Wells, 1401-7. Vol. XIII by Thomas Scott Holmes & E. H. Bates

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THOMAS SCOTT HOLMES & E. H. BATES

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Somerset Record Society.

VOL. XIII.

THE REGISTERS
OF
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AND OF

HENRY BOWETT,

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EDITED BY

THOMAS SCOTT HOLMES, M.A.,

Canon Residentiary of Wells.

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Somerset Record Society.



REPORT.

THE Secretary deeply regrets that he must appear before his audience, even though it be a limited one, in penitential garb. That the cause for this will practically have disappeared when these words are read does not diminish his liability, and he can only plaintively suggest "that it was the other boy." The time that Canon Holmes had intended to give to his share of the work, the Episcopal Registers issued in Volume XIII, was absorbed by illness, extra diocesan work, and finally the change of residence caused by his acceptance of a Residentiary canonry in Wells Cathedral. Volume XIV, for which the Secretary as editor is personally responsible, was delayed by the necessity of finding an Anglo-Saxon scholar able and willing to edit the charters in the Muchelney Chartulary. The delay, which was ended by the choice of Mr. W. H. Stevenson, cannot be said to have been altogether fruitless. Another result of the delay is that the volume contains not only the Muchelney Chartulary originally promised, but also the unique copy of the Athelney Chartulary preserved in the Phillipps Library at Cheltenham. In spite of a long search, the original, even if

still in existence, seems to have completely disappeared; and Mr. J. Batten, having examined the Phillipps's copy, was of opinion that its interest was sufficient to justify the cost of transcription. The lesser monasteries of the county have now been exploited as far as documentary evidence is concerned. There remains the Glastonbury store at Longleat, of which the late Canon Jackson held the key; and he seemed to be of opinion (Volume V, xxiv.) that it was beyond the power of a single society to deal with such a mass of documents, even if permission was given by the owner.

The Volume for 1900 is *Gerard's Survey of Somerset*, the south and west from Exmoor to Castle Cary, made about the year 1633. It is now being printed, and the Secretary-Editor hopes that it may be issued with the new century.

One cause of the delay in the production of the volumes is the late period at which they have been determined upon. This hand-to-mouth policy has been forced upon the Council by the want of funds. At the last meeting of the Council in July, 1900, it was found possible to look a little ahead. The publication for 1901 will be a volume of Wills ranging from the earliest date at which they have been preserved, 1387, down to 1500. The Rev. F. W. Weaver has kindly undertaken the editorship, and has already annotated one-third of the number. For 1902, Mr. Green will contribute another volume of "Pedes Finium," carrying on the series from 1349 to 1399. This period will cover the era of the Great Pestilence, and of the social and economic changes resulting thereon. The importance of such records is much increased in this period by the absence of any episcopal registers between those of Ralph of Shrewsbury, *ob.* 1363, and Henry Bowett, *suc.* 1401.

The publications of the Society are thus steadily supplying

first-hand information for the study of the life of the people, during that long period when quite unconsciously the English character was being differentiated, the full consequences of which are perhaps only just beginning to be felt.

The financial statement is not a real clue to the resources of the Society. After collecting all subscriptions in arrears and paying off liabilities, there was an actual cash balance of £40 in favour of the Society on 1st January, 1899. The stock of volumes is considerable, and the Secretary will be glad to hear from subscribers wishing to complete their sets. Owing to the extra cost of printing as well as transcribing, the actual balance on 1st January, 1900, will probably be rather less. The financial statement for 1900 will result in an increased balance, although the item of "subscriptions in arrear" must not be looked upon as a source of revenue any longer. In connexion with this item, the Secretary has a very unpleasant experience to record. On taking over the office, he found it necessary to dun not a few of the subscribers for unpaid guineas. The largest number paid, though a few returned the volumes on the ground that they had ceased to be members, and had given notice to that effect. Two persons, however, refused to do either one or the other, sheltering themselves under some quibble quite inexplicable to a gentleman.

In conclusion, the Secretary can only say in whatever way the subscribers may choose to punish his delinquencies, he trusts that it will not take the form of dropping their subscriptions.

E. H. BATES.

PUCKINGTON RECTORY,
ILMINSTER.

SOMERSET RECORD SOCIETY.

Account to 31st December, 1899.

	<i>£ s. d.</i>		<i>£ s. d.</i>
<i>Receipts.</i>		<i>Payments.</i>	
Balance in bank, 1st January, 1899	58 15 5	Printing, binding, and posting Vol. XII. (1898)	88 0 4
Subscriptions for 1898 (3)	3 3 0	Conveying Bishop Bowett's register to London	1 5 1
" " 1899 (3)	3 3 0	Transcribing ditto...	12 5 0
" " 1897 (18)	18 18 0	Secretary, honorarium	2 2 0
" " 1898 (39)	40 19 0	Secretary to Canon Holmes for 1898	1 1 0
" " 1899 (72)	75 11 0	Printing order forms	0 4 0
Sale of Publications (net)	17 12 3		104 17 5
	<u>£218 1 8</u>	Balance in bank, 31st December, 1899...	113 4 3
			<u>£218 1 8</u>

E. H. BATES, *Secretary.*
7th July, 1900.

Audited and found correct,
JAMES TAYLOR,
Man. Stuckey's Bank, Ilminster.