

## REPORT OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR 1974

The membership of the society at the end of 1974 was 468 members, comprising 239 ordinary, 20 family, 4 life and 1 honorary member, together with 178 libraries and 26 affiliated societies.

Meetings during the year were: January, A.G.M. followed by a talk on 'The Winchester Tour', by Miss J. Beck; February, 'The journal of the Rev. D. T. Carson' by J. Lea; March, 'Norton priory' by J. P. Greene; April, 'Cheshire in 1353' by P. H. W. Booth; September, 'Blackpool' by I. S. Bullough; October, 'Commissioners' churches in Liverpool' by A. Andrews; November, 'Some Liverpool buildings and sculptures' by T. Lloyd-Jones; December, 'Liverpool shipping and the Boer war' by M. K. Stammers (open meeting).

PHILIP ANDREWS  
*Honorary Secretary*

## REPORT OF THE HONORARY LIBRARIANS FOR THE YEAR 1974

The library continued to be well used by members for both reference and lending purposes. Works donated included *Tarporley, the history of a Cheshire village* (Tarporley local history group, 1973), and postcard views of Parkgate, Bidston and Raby Mere were given by Mrs R. Howard of Stockport. The following books were purchased: Davies, P. N. *The trade makers; Elder Dempster in West Africa 1852-1972* (1973); *The Lancashire watch company, Prescott, 1889-1910* (1973); Walsh, H. and Bird, G. *The dissenters in Standish 1600-1800* (1974); Norton, Peter. *Waterways and railways to Warrington* (1974). Exchange volumes have been received from kindred societies and added to stock.

RALPH MALBRON  
JANET SMITH  
*Honorary Librarians*

## JOHN FREDERICK SMITH 1885-1974

John Frederick Smith, M.A., F.R.S.A., F.S.A. Scot., a vice-president of the society, died on 25 March 1974.

Elected a member of the society in 1928, J. F. Smith became Assistant Librarian in 1932 and Librarian in 1934. He spent 52 years in the service of Liverpool City Libraries, culminating in his appointment as City Librarian in 1934. His collecting and cataloguing of items in the City Libraries' local collection resulted in the opening of a new section devoted to Local History in December 1930. His endeavours were crowned in 1959 when the society's library was deposited in the City Libraries, thus helping to form one great collection of material for the study of the history of Liverpool.

Although in recent years Mr Smith has not been able to attend many meetings of the society his incisive contributions to discussions in the society's council will be missed. He contributed the following paper to the *Transactions*: 'The mace of the Historic society', vol. 100 supplement.

N. CARRICK

## PROFESSOR G. W. COOPLAND

George William Coopland, Professor of Medieval History in the University of Liverpool from 1937 to 1945 and since 1945 a Vice-President of this Society, died at his home near Rye in Sussex on March 31, 1975. If he had lived until July 8, 1975 he would have celebrated his hundredth birthday and received a Festschrift volume, to which many scholars had contributed in his honour. In 1902 he married Emily Barlow, who died in 1961, and by whom he had one surviving daughter. For the last forty years of his life he was greatly helped in all his literary activities by his secretary, Miss Gertrude Winter, M.A.

Professor Coopland's life was remarkable for other features besides its length. First, he had the Victorian zest for education and self-improvement. A pupil teacher at the age of fourteen, he won one of the highly competitive Queen's Scholarships at the age of 17, and entered University College, Liverpool, in 1896. Three years later he not only graduated but gained his teacher's certificate in the same summer. From 1896 to 1913 he taught in schools as far apart as Leeds, Preston, Grimsby and Dover; he not only coped with sometimes trying situations (including at Leeds a class of 121) but made the time and opportunity to take an M.A. of Manchester and a B.Sc.(Econ.) of London, and to write a thesis for the Litt.D. degree of the University of Liverpool. The latter award, and the resulting book, *The Abbey of Saint Bertin and its neighbourhood, 900-1230*, helped to gain him his lectureship in the University of Liverpool in 1913.

Secondly, he won a great reputation as a brilliant lecturer. Here his teaching experience in different schools assisted him in immediately winning the attention of his audiences. His reputation as a lecturer gained for him several invitations to conduct lecture visits to Egypt, to the Universities of Cairo and Alexandria.

Thirdly, he set an outstanding example of continuing zest for scholarship until extreme old age. There can be few scholars who have published most of their major works after the age of seventy; it must be extremely rare for a scholar to get a substantial book accepted for the Press when he is aged ninety-eight. His mind remained very alert until the last few days, and he remained a most lively talker and raconteur until his last year; younger scholars confessed themselves both stimulated and exhausted after a long conversation with him. Though his field of scholarship and research did not lead him into the local history to which this Society is dedicated, he added to its reputation by the service and distinction of his scholarship. He grew up in Lancashire and spent most of his working life in Liverpool, and the Society may fitly remember him as a distinguished and long-standing Vice-President as well as the Grand Old Man of English Medieval Scholarship.

A. R. MYERS