

OBITUARY NOTICES.

THE LATE REV. CHARLES LOWNDES, M.A.,
F.R.A.S.

By ROBERT GIBBS, F.S.A.

OUR Society has, within the last few years, lost several of its most worthy and valuable members—some who were associated with it in its earliest years; others who gave it their earnest support from its first existence until death deprived us of their esteemed companionship.

We have now to record the loss of one to whom the Society has ever been deeply indebted—indeed, to whom at one time it owed its very existence. The Rev. Charles Lowndes, M.A., F.R.A.S., of Hartwell, died in November last, after a very short illness, at the advanced age of 82 years. Mr. Lowndes was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, became B.A. about 1830, and attained his degree as M.A. in the following year. He commenced his clerical duties at Hartwell in 1842, and became rector in 1855 on the nomination of the Royal Astronomical Society, of which he was a Fellow. Mr. Lowndes was a well-known local antiquary, and one of the earliest members of our Society, of which he was elected hon. sec. in 1858. Subsequently he became its *factotum*, undertaking all the working offices connected with it; he was not only hon. sec., but librarian, treasurer, and editorial secretary—indeed, the Society, without his aid and management, would have been as nothing. He was a constant attendant at our annual excursions, and for many years the sole conductor of them. He was a frequent contributor to the pages of these RECORDS. In the second volume is an able article of his, giving a lengthy and descriptive account of Whaddon Chase, and the finds of British gold coins in that part of the Chase

known as "Narbury." In Vol. 3, he contributed papers on Chesham and Doddershall, also on Whaddon Church. Vol. 4 contains articles from his pen on "The Manor and Abbey of Medmenham," on "Dinton Hall and Church," "Roman Relics found at Great Horwood," on "All Saints' Church, Hillesden," and a paper on "Magna Charta."

In the preface to the fifth volume he wrote cheerfully and hopefully on the work, progress, and position of our Society, contending that the objects for which it was formed had been steadily kept in view, and that it had accomplished much useful work in collecting such materials and in promoting measures as might assist in diffusing a taste for the revival of architectural art, not only in the erection of ecclesiastical but also in secular buildings.

In referring with satisfaction to the results of our annual excursions, he rightly avers that they have not only been productive of the most agreeable visits of the members amongst the nooks and corners of the county, but will probably be referred to by many, as gratifying reminiscences, in future times. Whether these journeys were made to towns, villages, or private residences, the members have ever been most cordially welcomed and the visits attended by beneficial results. Not only have they been the means of adding to the roll of members, but many residents in the places visited, who have never had their attention called to the pleasing examples of ancient ecclesiastical architecture in their parish churches, have been led to examine them more closely and to feel a greater interest in the venerable buildings and in archæological research generally. Mr. Lowndes may, indeed, have felt the greatest pleasure in referring to a publication in the compilation of which he for many years took so prominent a share. The RECORDS, as a work almost exclusively of a local character, is a valuable acquisition to the bibliotheca of the county. In its volumes there will be found an accumulation of original matter relating to subjects which otherwise would never have been published. As an archæological and historic work, it will vie with similar productions in other counties, and its value is exemplified by its scarcity, the earlier volumes not now being obtainable. The articles contributed by Mr.

Lowndes to the work, display a conscientious spirit of investigation, are full of patient care and earnestness, qualities which won for him the confidence of all who have had the pleasure of studying the volumes.

In 1878 Mr. Lowndes attended the usual gathering of the Society, when the members visited Cliefden, Wooburn, and other neighbouring localities; again in 1879, when a visit was made to St. Albans Abbey, he took the whole charge of that and subsequent excursions.

At the last meeting of the Society, in the autumn of 1890, he was present when the members visited Newport Pagnell, Gayhurst House, Olney, Clifton Reynes, and other places. To a gentleman of his years, this must have been a laborious undertaking; but such was his attachment to the Society that he could not withstand the temptation of making, once more, one of a party of his old associates in their antiquarian researches.

In 1880 he was re-elected Secretary, and again in the years '81, 2, 3, 4, making twenty-six years of service to the Society. At a general meeting in 1884, he retired from his post. At this meeting the duties were divided: the Rev. R. H. Pigott succeeded Mr. Lowndes as Secretary; Mr. John Parker, F.S.A., as Literary Secretary; Mr. John Williams as Treasurer; and Mr. Robert Gibbs, F.S.A., as Librarian. Mr. Lowndes only relinquished office when compelled to do so by failing sight.

On his retirement the members presented him with a handsome token of the esteem and the value that was attached to his labours. Mr. Lowndes was Local Secretary to the Society of Antiquaries, London. He was a descendant in a direct line from William Lowndes, of Winslow, historically and suggestively famous as "Ways and Means Lowndes;" he was also younger brother of the late Mr. William Lowndes, of the Bury, Chesham.

Mr. Lowndes leaves a widow and three sons to mourn him; he will be long remembered by all who knew his gentle goodness and the excellency of his deeds and words.

Aylesbury, 1891.

THE LATE REV. E. K. CLAY.

Since the last issue of the RECORDS, we have also lost another member, in the death of the Rev. E. K. Clay, Vicar of Great Kimble. Mr. Clay had been connected with our Society for some years, taking an interest in archæology, an active part in our proceedings, and making a practice of attending all business meetings so long as his health would permit. By his death we lose a valuable helper.

THE LATE REV. P. T. OUVRY.

Death has further deprived us of another old associate. The Rev. Peter Thos. Ouvry, late Vicar of Wing, died at East Acton, on the 2nd June, aged 79 years. Mr. Ouvry was one of the original members of our Society, and continued his connection with it until he left this neighbourhood some few years ago. The name of Ouvry has been prominently before the readers of the RECORDS for many years.