TONIGHT we celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the founding of our Society. We are in fact two days early since the inaugural meeting took place on St. Andrew's day, 30 November 1903. However, we are near enough, I think, to allow us to feel that a milestone has been reached. Three-quarters of a century is a lifetime; we have members here tonight who knew the founders of our Society and there are others here who will no doubt comment nostalgically on the past when the Society reaches its centenary in 2003.

As we are having a small party after the meeting to celebrate the occasion I shall try to keep my address fairly brief and I shall start by reporting on the year now behind us.

Membership

This year, of course, has seen a very large increase in the level of subscriptions and it was expected that some loss of membership would be unavoidable. In the event the loss has been very moderate and has been very largely offset by the addition of new members.

The total membership is now 532 compared to 535 at this time last year. Of the 532, 10 are junior members, 7 are honorary members, and the remainder are ordinary members. New members elected in the year total 20, loss of members is 23, thus giving the nett loss of 3.

While no society can regard any loss of membership with complacency I feel that under the circumstances this is not a bad outcome from the fairly drastic action we had to take in respect of subscriptions. However, I must ask all our members to lose no opportunity of introducing potential new members.

Our losses include 2 through death. We were saddened to learn of the passing of Mr. H. S. Bareford of New York who became a member in 1956 and of Mr. G. E. Chapman of Canterbury who was elected in 1969.

The Year's Programme

Attendance at meetings in the year has been most satisfactory and reflects, I think, the excellent variety and quality of the programme that was arranged for us by our Director.

It is not every year that we have a paper on an Ancient British subject and Dr. Kent's report on the Waltham St. Lawrence hoard, which he read to us in May was both scholarly and for those of us who are not closely familiar with this difficult series most interesting for the interpretive techniques used.

The Anglo-Saxon period was represented by a paper from a historian, Dr. Pauline Stafford, whose work entitled 'Some Historical Implications of regional Production of Dies under Aethelred II' was impressively innovative and original. It will no doubt provide a stimulus for much numismatic thought in the next few years. Dr. Stafford's paper had originally been intended to be given as part of a joint evening with Professor Dolley who was instrumental in arranging for Dr. Stafford to talk to us. It was with particular regret that Professor Dolley who inspired this admirable example of co-operation between numismatists and historians was unable to be present on the occasion.

The later Middle Ages were well covered in two highly specialized papers from Mr. Davis and Mr. Wood. Mr. Davis presented the results of his analytical studies on the dies of Henry III Long Cross coinage of Lawrence Classes IIIa to Ve. He demonstrated convincingly that there is much yet to be learned from this, as from many other series, by a detailed study of dies, punches, and die relationships. Mr. Wood, speaking to us in October, set before us the fruits of his study of that great mass of Edwardian sterlings of Fox Group X that numismatists for so long have found to be so intractable. His work has resolved long standing misconceptions and has carried the analysis of this important group forward to a point where acceptable
means of breaking it down and dating its elements can be seen. One feels that Dr. Lawrence and the Fox Brothers would have been excited if they could have seen how the work of Mr. Davis and Mr. Wood is refining and extending the classifications first proposed by them.

The Middle Ages also provided the subject for a paper by our Director, John Brand, entitled 'The Exchange and the Mint'. Mr. Brand is a numismatist whose interests have led him into a study of economic and administrative history. He has taken the trouble to learn how to read and interpret medieval documents and to explore these both through manuscript and printed sources. More particularly he has learned how to spot the pitfalls which lie in the path of the numismatist who tries to use historical material and to judge the real truths that lie behind the words. In his paper Mr. Brand pointed out how the scope and responsibilities of the moneyers mints and exchanges, their officers and officials, were constantly changing and he discussed these and their relationships at various stages.

A more modern period was dealt with in a paper by one of our American members, Mr. Marvin Lessen, on the subject of the Cromwell Lord Protector medal by Simon which was read for him by Mr. Linecar. Fascinating light was cast on the date of production of the medals, their survival, and the purposes for which they were presented.

Another paper on a comparatively modern subject was read to us by Mr. Dyer on the striking of proof and pattern coins in the eighteenth century. This was a joint work by Mr. Dyer and Professor Gaspar and amongst other things it very satisfactorily demonstrated that the 'fishtailing' of lettering was a result of metal flow on coins struck without a collar.

Finally, the now established practice of having an evening of short papers was repeated, this time on the subject of Tokens and Jettons. We heard notes on the subject and we shall certainly continue to have at least one such meeting on some suitable subject each year.

To all our contributors the Society offers its thanks.

Before completing this section of my report I should like to mention two other events that formed part of our programme during the year.

The first was the presentation of the Sanford Saltus Medal. As members will know it is presented once every three years to a member who is voted to have had a most important contribution to numismatic science published in the Journal. This year Mr. S. E. Rigold was chosen for his great contributions to the study of the sceatta and sterling series and it gave me the greatest pleasure to present the medal to him.

The other event of special note during the year was our joint meeting with the Société Française de Numismatique and the Royal Numismatic Society on the occasion of the French society's Journées Numismatiques at Rouen in June. The English participation amounted to no less than twenty-nine people. Several members of the visiting societies read papers and the event had a truly international flavour. Our French friends treated us with the greatest kindness and hospitality and those of us who were there all have the happiest remembrance of the week-end. We hope to have a return event in the not too distant future.

Publications of Journals

Since our last Anniversary Meeting members have received one Journal, that for the year 1976, which was sent out to members at the very end of 1977.

We are now on the point of publishing our 1977 Journal, in fact a volume is available for inspection here this evening. It is well worth having a look at, for as part of our review of the Society's financial position the Editorial Committee took a close look at production costs and, together with the Oxford University Press, considered how alternative techniques and newly available technological innovations could allow us to achieve economies without unacceptable loss of quality.

For the first time the text of the entire Journal is produced by a filmset process and the plates are reproduced photographically. The latter, of course, has been used by other numismatic publications including the Numismatic Chronicle for some years. We regret the loss of our collotype plates but the cost was heavy and I think members will agree that we have been able to maintain a standard that is in accord with our reputation and requirements.

Another innovation you will see is the introduction of advertisements at the back of the Journal. Here again we are following a practice adopted in other learned society journals some time ago and, of course, these advertisements provide us with a useful additional income that helps to defray ever increasing printing costs. We are grateful to our many friends in the numismatic trade for helping us to get off to a good start with this new feature.
I should particularly like to thank our editors for the energy and enterprise with which over the past two years they have worked with our printers to investigate, cost, and implement these changes while at the same time steadily reducing the delays in getting Journals into the hands of members.

The Financial Position

Our Treasurer has reported to you on our accounts as at October 31 1977 and I should like briefly to sketch out the general trend of development of the Society’s affairs over the past twelve months.

In my last Presidential Address I explained that it was already evident in autumn 1976 that as a result of inflation our subscription, which had last been increased with effect from 1 January 1974, had become insufficient to meet our Journal production costs and that, as a result, the Society was eating into its resources at an alarming rate. Council proposed an increase in subscription to an economic level which was approved by the members at our Anniversary Meeting last year—as soon as the rules allowed, in fact. This increase was effective from 1 January 1978 and the fact that it amounted to a doubling of the ordinary subscription from £6 to £12 was a direct reflection of inflation over a period of four years rather than any attempt to recover losses of resource that had arisen through an inadequate level of subscription.

To recover those lost resources was necessary, however, because the Society no longer had the full means to provide Journals for all the years for which it had received subscriptions. But to recover them through an increased subscription rate was impracticable because it would take too long unless the subscription was raised to a totally unacceptable level and it would also impose a burden on members in the future for a benefit received by members in the past.

Accordingly, in 1977, I made an appeal to members for donations. I was greatly impressed by the response and by the generosity of so many of our members. Rich indeed is a Society which can elicit such support. Members sent cash, coins, and books and the total sum realized was £5,025. Taking this together with the sums donated by the coin trade towards Journal costs the Society has received almost £7,000 in gifts in the last 18 months.

I now regard my Appeal as closed and I wish to thank all those who contributed so generously. We shall be publishing a list of donors in the Journal. (See p. 153.)

The Treasurer has kindly provided me with some provisional figures for the current year and I can report that as a result of the steps that have been taken—increased subscriptions, the economies of the Journal, the Appeal—we can say the Society is now, if not affluent, at least on a sound financial footing. Our resources are now sufficient to pay for the 1977 and 1978 Journals—that is to say for the Journals for which we have received subscriptions—our current subscriptions are sufficient to cover current Journal costs, and we have a useful surplus which is available as a reserve and which can be invested to yield a good return.

It is of course imperative that we maintain and build on this sound position and so long as we suffer a high rate of inflation comparatively frequent adjustments to our subscription rate will be unavoidable. However, I am pleased to say that thanks to the economies that have been made on the Journal and to the generally satisfactory way in which our membership has been sustained, Council did not feel it necessary to ask for an increase for the year commencing 1 January 1979.

The Library

I like to spend a little time on this aspect of our activities because it represents a very important service to our members and also because Mr. Robert Thompson, our Librarian, and his helpers deal with a substantial part of the correspondence of the Society. Mr. Thompson provides me with an annual report and this provides the basis of what I have to say.

The use of the library in the course of the year has increased greatly. Loans of books have risen from 414 last year to 637 in 1978. There has been a corresponding increase in requests for photocopies. In dealing with a considerable volume of correspondence from all over the world on a wide variety of numismatic subjects the Librarian has asked me particularly to acknowledge the assistance of Mr. Merson and Mr. Sealey.

Entries for the Society and its library have been provided for the International Directory of Arts, for the valuable Handbook of Scientific and Learned Societies, for the indispensable ASLIB Directory and for Library Resources in London and South East England. An entry for the Journal volume xlvii has been listed for the British Humanities Index.

Donations to the library have been particularly generous this year. They include, from members: The
South Saxons (Mr. I. Stewart), Newton’s Correspondence, volumes iv and vi (Mr. A. Merson), An Introduction to Celtic Coins by Derek Allen (Mr. A. Merson), French Countermarks on European Bronze Coins by Mr. Gavin Scott (Mr. G. Scott). From publishers we have received: Anglo-Saxon England, volumes iv–vi from the Cambridge University Press, volume ii of the great Swedish Corpus, The Tudor Coinage by Dr. Chaliss from the Manchester University Press, Taverns and Tokens of Pepys’ London from Seaby Publications Ltd., the reprinted text and plates of Zagorski’s work on Polish coins from the Polish Archaeological and Numismatic Society, The Architectural Medal: England in the Nineteenth Century by Dr. Jeremy Taylor from British Museum Publications Ltd., and 2000 Years of British Coins and Medals by Dr. J. P. C. Kent also British Museum Publications Ltd.

Our thanks are due to all these generous benefactors for without their help it would be difficult in these days of high cost publications for the library to keep up with new publications as they appear.

Finally, from our librarian’s report, we can note several important publications in the year which have not so far found their way into the library; Monnaies, médailles et jetons: catalogue of the exhibition at the Departmental Museum of Antiquities, Rouen, opened on the occasion of the Journées of the Société Française, and having an Anglo-French flavour; Monnaies gauloises de Seine-Maritime by Simone Scheers, published simultaneously; the June issue of the French Society’s Bulletin, reporting the proceedings; Coins and medals: a guide to the numismatic collections in the Ulster Museum, Belfast, by J. D. Bateson; Scripta nummaria Romana: essays presented to Humphrey Sutherland, with contributions relevant to Britain by Richard Reece, Anne Robertson, and by Ian Stewart on ‘Anglo-Saxon gold coins’; European coin-weights for English coins by Gerard Houben, a slightly misleading title since this booklet published in Roermond covers weights from England in addition to France, Germany, and the Low Countries; Money and Exchange in Europe and America, 1600–1775, a handbook by John J. McCusker (University of North Carolina Press); Coinage in medieval Scotland, proceedings of the second Oxford symposium on coinage and monetary history (British Archaeological Reports); Wiltshire XVII-century tokens by E. G. H. Kempson, published by the author and C. M. Rowe; Tavern tokens of County Dublin by Dr. Neil Todd (Colony Coin Company, Newtonville, Mass.), giving the results of much documentary work on issuers and analytical work on manufacturers; and The standard catalogue of provincial banks and banknotes by C. L. Grant (Spink and Son), a useful addition to published sources.

Coin Hoards

As has been my practice in previous years I shall briefly list the hoards which have come to light during the year. In doing this I must acknowledge my debt to Miss Archibald of the Department of Coins and Medals of the British Museum who has kindly provided me with the information. This year there are only five hoards to list:

- Beddington Park, Croydon 4 AR William I, BMC IV
- Littlington, Cambridgeshire 8 AR Henry II, Cross-crosslets
- Aberdour, Fife 277 AR English and Scottish groats half-groats, and sterlings to Robert II.
- West Wycombe, Buckinghamshire 18 AU Henry VIII to Elizabeth I
- Winsford, Cheshire 4 AU Charles II to George I

BNS Medal

You will, I am sure, be interested to hear that a medal is to be issued by the Royal Mint to commemorate our 75th Anniversary. This is an enterprise undertaken on the initiative of the Royal Mint who will market the medals. The design has been approved by the Society and on every medal sold the Society will receive a royalty. Members will be able to purchase copies of the medal through the Society on favourable terms.

A photograph and a model of the final design of the medal are available for inspection this evening and forms for ordering through the Society are available. I hope that as many as possible of our members will be willing to purchase one of these medals which as well as providing an artistic and appropriate memento of the occasion will assist the Society’s finances and should, in the way of these things, be a good investment too.

Conclusion

I now complete the first part of my address but I cannot close without acknowledging the help and support that I have received during the year from the officers of the Society and from all the other members
of Council. We now begin to see the fruits of difficult decisions taken in previous years; but we cannot relax, we must maintain our efforts to strengthen and build the Society and I have every confidence in the ability of the new Council proposed to you this evening to do this in year ahead.

(At this point two presentations were made by the Director in the absence of the President. In anticipation of performing these ceremonies himself the President had prepared the following notes which were used by the Director.)

I now come to what is undoubtedly the most agreeable part of my duties this evening. This is to make two presentations.

The first is the presentation of a special volume of the *Journal*. Council decided to continue the practice of from time to time dedicating a volume of the *Journal* to one of our more distinguished members, particularly as a way of recognizing services to British numismatics over a long period of time.

It gave me particular pleasure when your Council decided that we should dedicate volume xlvi, the 1977 *Journal*, to Mr. Francis Elmore-Jones, 'F. E. J.' to so many of us. This is because more than a quarter of a century ago it was he and Albert Baldwin who guided the first faltering numismatic footsteps of myself, as of so many others, during happy Saturday mornings at Robert Street. It was F. E. J. and Albert Baldwin, too, who in 1952 proposed and seconded me for membership of this Society as they did for so many of our members, to the great benefit both of the members and of the Society!

The occasion of this dedication is Mr. Elmore-Jones eightieth birthday which while it is not today falls into the current year. It is a great satisfaction to see Mr. Elmore-Jones amongst us this evening.

Mr. Elmore-Jones who joined the Society in 1938 has contributed much to British Numismatics. In the 1950s and 1960s there were few *Journals* which do not include his name among the list of authors and he was awarded the Sanford Saltus medal in 1956. His subjects have usually been in the field of Anglo-Saxon, Norman, and pre-1351 Plantagenet numismatics. All his publications have been marked by clarity of thought and meticulous care and scholarship. However, perhaps the quality which has always impressed those who have worked with him more than any other is his extraordinary visual memory for dies which enables him to identify the mint and moneyer of even the most battered and indecipherable Henry II cross and crosslets penny!

Mr. Elmore-Jones, F. E. J., please accept this volume as an eightieth birthday present and as an expression of this Society's respect and appreciation for all that you have so far contributed to British numismatics.

(The presentation was made by the Director to Mr. Elmore-Jones who expressed his gratification and thanks to the Society.)

The second presentation is to our most valued and esteemed Secretary Wilfrid Slayter.

Wilfrid has been our Secretary now for seventeen years and during the whole of that time has been unremittingly generous of his time and efforts for the good of the Society. I think that perhaps few of our members appreciate the burden of work involved in circulating programme cards, voting forms, and, as a result of having his address published in various places, in dealing with correspondence from innumerable sources. Wilfrid has, so far as I know, only missed one of our meetings in the last seventeen years and I cannot praise highly enough the value to this Society of his industry and constancy.

Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, a large proportion of us I think are not only numismatists but also collectors and in every collector's heart there burns that hunger for the rarity, even for the unique if it is to be had.

Wilfrid Slayter, I know, is a collector. When the idea was proposed that the Royal Mint should strike a medal to mark the Society's 75th Anniversary several members of Council said we must arrange for a special variety to be struck as a presentation to Wilfrid—perhaps in a special metal, perhaps with some special variation of the design.

When I went to the Royal Mint to approve the design I noticed that under the commemorative legend there was a leopard passant. Knowing that in these nationalistic times such an aggressively English symbol might not be entirelyacceptable to all the membership of what, after all, is a British society I asked that this should be altered to the thistle, rose, and shamrock spray that one sees on the exergue of a pre-1860 Victorian penny. I asked, however, that just one medal should be cast from the design employing the leopard so that tonight we should be able to present Wilfrid with a unique variety.

Ladies and Gentlemen, this presentation is from members of Council who have served with Wilfrid
Slayter during his long—and we hope yet to be longer—periods of secretaryship and it gives me the greatest pleasure to hand it to him on their behalf on this, the Society’s 75th birthday.

(The presentation was made by the Director to Mr. Wilfrid Slayter who expressed his pleasure and thanks to the donors.)

I had intended in this part of my address to mark our 75th Anniversary by speaking to you about the history of the British Numismatic Society from its inception to the present day. When I started to prepare my notes I realised that it would take too much time to cover the subject adequately especially in view of the social event that is to follow later this evening. I shall therefore limit myself to a brief talk about the formation and early years of our Society.

The inaugural meeting took place at 8.30 p.m. on St Andrew’s day, 30 November 1903.

The first President who was elected at the meeting was P. W. P. Carlyon Britton. On the same evening the first officers and council were also elected. L. A. Lawrence became Director; R. H. Wood, Treasurer; the Revd. H. J. Duckinfield Astley, Librarian; and W. J. Andrew became Secretary. The first Council included such names as Roth, Talbot Ready, Spink, and Lever. Vice-Presidents included Lord Grantham and G. R. Askwith.

The British Numismatic Society was born out of a schism that arose within the Numismatic Society of London (which, itself, in 1904, became the Royal Numismatic Society). The series of events that led up to the formation of our Society has been very fairly and fully described by Mr. R. A. G. Carson, President of the Royal Numismatic Society in the second in the series of his Presidential addresses which together form a history of the Royal Numismatic Society. I think, however, that it will be of interest to our members on this particular occasion if I summarize these events even though to do so inevitably involves following closely in Mr. Carson’s footsteps and, indeed, I must acknowledge my indebtedness to his investigations.

Briefly, what happened was that following the publication of ‘The Numismatic History of the Reign of Henry I’ by W. J. Andrew in NC 1901 a highly critical review of the way in which historical and documentary material had been handled was offered to the editors of NC by C. G. Crump and C. Johnson of the Public Record Office. This was explicitly presented as the work of non-numismatists, was accepted by the editors and was published in NC 1902. Andrew promptly resigned from the Society.

The next development was that Lawrence and Carlyon Britton, who were both members of the Council of the Numismatic Society of London protested that the editors of NC had acted improperly in publishing the Crump and Johnson review. They object that Crump and Johnson were not members of the Society and they argued that the rules provided that papers should be read to the Society before being published. The editors disagreed and their position was upheld when a vote was taken in Council.

Further events happened quickly. In May 1903 the names of Carlyon Britton and Lawrence were included in the list of proposed Council members for 1903/4. At about the same time Carlyon Britton and Lawrence circulated a paper signed by themselves and by nine other members of the Society proposing that the rules should be amended to provide that papers should be read to the Society before being published.

The President, Sir John Evans, pointed out that such a rule would make production of NC virtually impossible and Carlyon Britton and Lawrence were persuaded to agree that a letter should be sent to all members before the annual general meeting stating that any such alteration of the rules would have that result. It thus appeared at that stage that agreement had been reached and that Carlyon Britton and Lawrence’s names would go forward as prospective Council members.

This was the position at 21 May 1903. The breach was not to be healed, however. A group of Council members said that as Carlyon Britton had disclosed to ordinary members of the Society confidential matters that were under discussion by Council, they would not serve with them on the new Council if they were elected. Carlyon Britton and Lawrence refused to consent to the withdrawal of their names from the list of proposed Council members and when the names of two other members were adopted in their place the breach was finally made.

For what happened next I can do no better than to quote from an address given by Andrew, then President of the British Numismatic Society on 23 June 1909 on the occasion of the presentation to Mr Carlyon Britton of a portrait of himself commissioned by the Society from another member, Mr. Shirley Fox. Andrew, after describing Carlyon Britton as the Chief Founder of the Society said:

'I believe that it is exactly six years ago today (i.e. on 23 June 1903) since a momentous journey was undertaken by Mr. Carlyon Britton, Mr. [sic] Lawrence and myself; for it was on that occasion that Mr.
Carlyon Britton first propounded the then seemingly preposterous proposition “Let us have an all-British Society”. We were on our way to Winchester on one of our archaeological excursions and the proposition when it came on us seemed to us so abnormal that we hesitated and I am afraid that I for one shook my head. I told him that long ago Mr. Sharp Ogden and I had discussed the possibility of an all-British Numismatic Society, but then, all that we could see ahead of us was, perhaps, a hundred members and financially on a hundred members it would have been quite impossible to run a journal worthy of the subject. But Mr. Carlyon Britton at once replied, “Well, I am sure that I can get two hundred at least, off my own bat”, so Mr Lawrence and I undertook to act as Government—Opposition, if you like—whips to our leader. That really was the dawn of the British Numismatic Society and it was only six years ago this month.’

Andrew continued in a like vein for several Journal pages. In his reply, Carlyon Britton described himself, Andrew and Lawrence as the Triumvirate who worked together during the early days of the Society. He also adopted a distinctly conciliatory tone when talking about there being room for more than one society—no doubt indicative of a changing sentiment which made it easier for loyal and long standing fellows of the Royal Numismatic Society, such as F. A. Walters, to join the ‘British’ in 1910.

Measured by any standards the new Society was a great and immediate success. 274 members had committed themselves to membership prior to the inaugural meeting of 30 November 1903. By the time of the first Anniversary meeting on 30 November 1904 the Society had reached its then membership limit of 500 ordinary members and had a waiting list. At a time when the numismatic world was much smaller than it is today this was truly remarkable—the membership of the Royal Numismatic Society at the time was about 300. Annual subscription was one guinea (the equivalent, I believe, in purchasing power of £20-5 today—so who can complain about our present level of subscriptions!) with an entrance fee of another guinea. The Society met in rooms at 43 Bedford Square which were put at its disposal free of charge by Carlyon Britton and his partner Mr. Upton. The Journal, then as now, the major item of expense cost about £430 to print and bind including the cost of the plates.

It is without doubt due to Carlyon Britton’s energy and good connections that right from the outset the membership contained not only quantity but quality. A glance through the membership list for 1905 reveals many names of academic distinction and a strong, sprinkling of institutions. The quality was not only of an academic character, however. By that year five members of the British Royal family, including Queen Alexandra, were Royal Members and there were no less than thirteen foreign royal members. In addition the Society had nineteen honorary members of whom a large proportion were foreign ambassadors accredited to the Court of St. James. One feels that the Society had made a remarkably good job of establishing its credentials in every way.

There was one respect in which the Society failed to meet its aspirations, however. Already before the inaugural meeting an approach had been made for the granting of a Royal Charter. The Numismatic Society did likewise and was granted its charter in 1904, thus becoming the Royal Numismatic Society. The British was told, not unreasonably one may suppose, that it was not the practice to grant a Royal Charter to a Society so newly formed.

The early Journals were handsomely produced on a strictly annual basis with well over 400 pages generously laid out on high quality paper. A glance through the indexes reveals that in the first decade of its existence the Society published many papers of first importance to British Numismatics which posterity has found to be of continuing value. The names of Carlyon Britton, Lawrence, Andrew, Earle and Shirley Fox, Morrieson, Lockett, Grantley, Helen Farquar, Nelson, and Roth occur and reoccur. Papers on war medals were more frequent then but otherwise the content was generally similar to that of today.

A great benefactor of the Society in its early years was an American member, Mr. John Sanford Saltus, who on several occasions gave generous and substantial donations. The Society had established a research fund in 1909 to finance work of extracting data of numismatic importance from unpublished public records and Sanford Saltus had contributed liberally to that. In 1910 he endowed a fund to provide a gold medal to be awarded triennially by ballot of the members to the author of the paper printed in the Society’s publications which in their opinion was the best in the interests of numismatic science. As you know, this medal continues to be presented. Sanford Saltus was later and briefly to be President of the Society dying in tragic circumstances only a few days before presiding over his first meeting in 1922.

However, I have promised to restrict myself to the early years of the Society and this where I must finish. Certainly the Society got off to a fine start and it maintained a full membership, as well as the high
standards of Journal production it had set itself, up to about the start of the Great War of 1914-18. The distractions of that war, the gradual loss of older members, shortages of materials with which to publish the Journal, rising costs, and in the years between the wars, economic depression all led to a steady drop in membership and because of an unwillingness to increase subscriptions a reduced frequency of Journals. This tendency continued until the end of the 1939-45 war since which, I am pleased to say, membership has shown a steady upward trend.