

Declaring his Interests

There never seems to be an end to the descriptive titles accorded to SBG. John Appleby introduces two more in this issue's opening article, which he has kindly allowed to be reproduced from his Presidential piece in the December number of Essex Archaeology & History News. He also gave a fifteen minute broadcast that month about 'our man' on BBC Essex.

Our main feature this time is Sybil Tope's article written 25 years ago under another name and title, while farming at Chimsworthy. In her covering letter she self-deprecatingly says, "I'm sure it is too long and not of sufficient general interest to use." I hope you'll disagree! She also mentions that SBG is said to have preached his last sermon in the sitting room of her present home at Lewdown, where monthly services used to be held.

Yet further angles on SBG are the interest of the most recently joined member of the society: his ability as a linguist, his translations of Danish hymns, and his connection with the Woodard schools.

The article from Home Words, mentioned in the October editorial, makes it into this issue. The author is given as the Revd. John T. Salisbury. However, research in Crockford's only reveals a John Harrison Salisbury of the right vintage. If JHS is the right man, he was Vicar of Healey & Slaley, south-east of Hexham, when he wrote this contribution. He subsequently moved west of Hexham to Haydon Bridge. After spending the war years in the Lake District he must have found life in post-war urban Newcastle a shock to the system, since he only stayed there two years. Perhaps he became ill, since there is a two-year gap in his 'CV' before his final two year rural appointment. Retirement brought him back to the Lake District. Anyway, whether JTS or JHS, the controversial origins of the famous hymn have another airing.

One of SBG's grand-daughters, Mollie Priestley, who contributed to the last issue, shares a further delightful reminiscence, coupled with a discreet illustration.

Next month we shall print one of SBG's letters to the press concerning the social changes of his times.

DPRS.