In 1967 the British Society for Old Testament Study celebrates the Jubilee of its foundation. Since the work which the Society has tried to do for the furtherance of Old Testament research and teaching has included the fostering of international co-operation in our field, it is fitting that the present issue of VT should contain some account of its history and of its activities over the years.

The first suggestion that such a Society should be formed was made at a meeting of examiners in Hebrew to the University of Wales in the summer of 1916. Those present were W. H. BENNETT, T. WITTON DAVIES, and THEODORE H. ROBINSON. The suggestion was further discussed, and the decision to found the Society taken, at an informal meeting in Cambridge later in the same year. The foundation meeting of the Society was held at King's College, London, in January, 1917, with W. H. BENNETT as President and THEODORE ROBINSON as Secretary. It proved impracticable to convene a further meeting until the summer of 1919. Since then, with the exception of the war years 1940-5 and the winter of 1948, Winter and Summer Meetings have been held annually. These have all been held in Britain; but in April, 1952, a notable meeting was held in Rome.

Five members attended the Summer Meeting in 1919. In recent years the attendances have seldom fallen below 50 and on occasion have exceeded 100. The total membership (Honorary, Ordinary, and Associate) is now over 400. Rapid expansion in numbers has been a feature of the period since the Second World War; but it was in the two decades before 1939 that the character and traditions of the Society were formed. During that early period of its life the Society owed an immense debt to the energy and enthusiasm of THEODORE H. ROBINSON, who was sole Secretary until 1927, and to the services subsequently rendered by him and C. R. NORTH as Co-Secretaries. After the War, when ROBINSON's long tenure of the Secretaryship ended, H. H. ROWLEY was appointed Secretary, with special responsibility for correspondence with foreign scholars, and G. HENTON DAVIES became first colleague and then successor to C. R. NORTH.
with responsibility for the domestic affairs of the Society. HENTON
DAVIES later served for a short period as Foreign Secretary; NORTH
was Treasurer from 1952 until 1957; and ROWLEY edited the Society's
Book List from 1946 until 1956. It is no disparagement to the work
done by others to state that these four scholars, ROBINSON, NORTH,
ROWLEY, and HENTON DAVIES, exercised the most important influen-
ces on the development of the Society during the first half-century
of its life.

ROWLEY's tenure of office as Foreign Secretary was in large measure
responsible for the renewing and strengthening of ties with scholars
and kindred societies in other countries. This international interest
has been characteristic of the Society throughout its history. It has
found practical expression in co-operation with ZAW during the
years following the First World War, in the contact made with JAOS
as early as 1923, in the cordial relationships which have been maintain-
ed with such bodies as the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis
and the Dutch Old Testament Society, and in the election of distin-
guished foreign scholars as Honorary Members of the Society.
At each Summer Meeting a scholar from abroad is invited to contri-
bute a paper. In 1927 the Society convened an International Meeting
at Keble College, Oxford. The papers then read were subsequently
published in the volume entitled Old Testament Essays. Members of
the Society participated in the International Meeting of Old Testament
Scholars at Göttingen in 1935.

After the Second World War the Society was quick to renew its
international contacts. Three factors were of particular importance.
The first was the presentation by H. H. ROWLEY of a personal and
bibliographical bulletin relating to Old Testament scholars in Euro-
pean countries. The second was the meeting held at Cardiff in Sep-
tember, 1946, which was international in character and was attended
by 16 scholars from other countries, of whom 5 read papers (Otto
EISSFELDT, who could not be present, also contributed a paper).
The third was the Book List, which under ROWLEY's editorship was
greatly enlarged in size and scope and attained international recogni-
tion. The introduction of Associate Membership in 1949 made it
possible for foreign scholars, other than Honorary Members, to share
in most of the Society's activities.

Several members of the Society were present at the international
meeting which the Dutch Old Testament Society organized in Leiden
in 1950, which led to the establishment of the International Organiza-