THE PRESIDENT OF THE LONDON TOPOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

It is with extreme regret that we have to record the death on June 9th of the Earl Spencer, TD MA DLitt FRSA JP. He had been President of the Society since 1955 and during his presidency we enjoyed his keen interest in the work of the Society and in 1972 his hospitality at Althorp for our Annual General Meeting. We shall miss him greatly.

MILNE’S LAND USAGE MAP 1800

The publication now in hand is a reproduction in colour of Thomas Milne’s Plan of the Cities of London and Westminster, circumjacent Towns and Parishes &c, laid down from a Trigonometrical Survey taken in the Years 1795-1799, taken from the unique original in the British Library (Map Room, K Top VI 95). This map was published in 1800 and is of exceptional importance in recording by key letters and colours the results of a field-by-field survey. It is at a scale of 2 inches to one mile and covers an area of some 260 square miles, extending from Harrow Weald to Woodford and from Hampton-on-Thames to Sundridge Park. The reproduction will be on six sheets in a folder, accompanied by a full explanatory text by Dr G B G Bull, lately head of the Department of Geography and Geology and Dean of the Faculty of Arts, University of London Goldsmiths’ College. The text is based on an article which Dr Bull originally published in The Geographical Journal, Vol cxxii Part I, March 1956, and which he has revised for the London Topographical Society’s present reproduction.

This map is extremely expensive to reproduce and the Society is obtaining the best results available; it is therefore being issued for two years’ subscription, for 1975 and 1976. We could send it out in two separate parcels, half now and the other half in 1976, but this seems an unnecessary waste of postage and tubes, so it will be sent out early next year to all members who have by then paid subscriptions for both 1975 and 1976 (totalling £5). I expect we shall have to charge about £12 (members £9), plus postage, subsequently. Those who have not paid the 1976 subscription by April will receive a reminder with the AGM notice and will be sent the publication when the subscription has been remitted.

The proposed arrangement raises the problem of those who have said they wish to resign in 1975, so we will offer the following choices:

i to have other publications to equivalent value,
ii to pay the 1976 subscription (£2.50) and receive the Milne map,
iii to have their 1975 subscription (£2.50) refunded.

(Those who join in 1976 will be offered the choice of obtaining the whole map by paying the 1975 subscription as well or of receiving other publications of equivalent value.)

POSTAGE

In view of the extremely costly business of sending by post, we are looking into alternative ways of getting annual publications to at least some members. It would help if anyone with a central London address (e.g. business, club) to which the publications could be delivered would let the Hon Secretary know soon; alternatively anyone who would be willing to collect from the Bishopsgate Institute or from an office near Parliament Square or at the AGM in June would be giving welcome assistance to the Society.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1976

The Annual General Meeting will be held in the Chapter Hall, St John’s Gate, Clerkenwell, on Wednesday June 9th 1976 by kind permission of the Order of St John. Full details will be sent to members a month or so before the meeting.
FUTURE PUBLICATIONS

We intend to publish in 1978 a monograph by Dr Priscilla Metcalf on the Park Town Estate and Battersea Tangle. It will be uniform with Leybourne’s Market Plans, The London Panoramas of Barker and Girtin, and The Mid Sixteenth Century Map of London. For 1977 we would like to reproduce a map of Battersea in anticipation of the monograph. We plan a bumper number of London Topographical Record in our centenary year, 1980; this volume will include a tribute to Miss Marjorie B Honeybourne and a bibliography by Dr Philip Whitting, an account of the Society from its formation in 1880, articles by Charles Lee and David Johnson on the Railway Map of 1863 (publication no 116) and by Frank Kelsall on some early property in the Strand.

HISTORIC TOWNS ATLAS

Mr Martin Biddle will address the London Record Society on the subject of the ‘Historic Towns Atlas’ at the Institute of Historical Research, Senate House, Bloomsbury W C 1, on Tuesday December 9th at 5 o’clock. An invitation is extended to any members of the London Topographical Society who would like to attend.

THOMAS SHOTTER BOYS 1803-1874

Admirers of the twenty-five plates of London as it is will welcome James Roundell’s revealing study of Thomas Shotter Boys’ life and work *. They will discover that Thomas Shotter Boys, known almost exclusively for the justly-famed lithographs of London, was also a watercolour artist of great sensitivity and skill.

The principal formative influences were his apprenticeship in 1817 to the engraver, George Cooke, and his years in Paris, from 1822/23 till the mid-1830s, where he was working primarily in watercolour. His interest in lithographic work developed in the 1830s; his technical knowledge enabled him to refine the art of lithography which at first aimed to imitate the qualities of watercolour. He pioneered the use of separate stones for chromolithography in his series Picturesque Architecture in Paris, Ghent, Rouen, etc, which appeared in 1839. The publication of London as it is in 1842, on the other hand, represents a simplification and purification of the medium, in which the picture is produced in monochrome from two stones, one carrying the line, the other the form and masses; the colouring, by hand, is now an embellishment, thin and transparent, which leaves the monochrome printing to produce the essential tone and texture.

It is unfortunate that Thomas Shotter Boys was so far overshadowed as a watercolour artist by R P Bonington, almost exactly the same age as Boys and also working in Paris in the 1820s. With an excellent introduction by Alastair Smart on the background of Boys’ period and with copious illustrations, many in colour, this attractive book should give Thomas Shotter Boys a fairer measure of recognition.


PUBLISHERS’ LEAFLETS

Once more we are indebted to the many publishers whose contributions have almost covered the costs of sending you this news sheet; we hope you will find their leaflets of interest.

The special price for Pride without Prejudice by Jennifer Lang is also available to members of the London Topographical Society.

Issued by Stephen Marks, Hon Secretary of the London Topographical Society, 50 Grove Lane, London SE5 8ST