

# London Topographical Society

LONDON TOPOGRAPHICAL NEWS 4

May 1977

## NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Wednesday July 13th 1977

The seventy-seventh Annual General Meeting of the London Topographical Society will be held on Wednesday July 13th 1977 at Home House, 20 Portman Square, by kind permission of the Trustees of the Home House Society.

The annual meeting will follow refreshments which will be available from 5.30. *PLEASE* let the Hon Secretary (50 Grove Lane, London SE5) know by July 1st if you and any guests you may wish to bring will be attending (so that a close estimate can be made for catering) and if you wish to nominate under item 4 or raise any matter under item 5 of the agenda.

After the business meeting we shall be given a short talk and a guided tour of the house; as the tour must be in small groups and therefore will take some time, we aim to start the business meeting shortly after 6 and would be much assisted if members would come as early as possible for tea.

Those who would like to learn about this finest remaining example of the town houses erected by Robert Adam, built between about 1773 and 1776 for Elizabeth Countess of Home, are recommended to read an excellent small book, *Home House, 20 Portman Square*, by Dr Margaret Whinney (Country Life 1969), copies of which are still available at the give-away price of 50 pence at Home House. The house is now occupied by the Courtauld Institute of Art of the University of London.

Parking in the vicinity of Portman Square is extremely restricted.

## A G E N D A

- 1 To approve the minutes of the 76th Annual General Meeting 1976
- 2 To receive the 77th Annual Report of the Council for the year 1976 (herewith)
- 3 To receive the accounts for 1976 (herewith)
- 4 To elect officers and members of Council
- 5 To consider any proposals by members
- 6 Any other business

Stephen Marks Hon Secretary

*The Hon Treasurer writes:*

## ORDERS FOR PUBLICATIONS

May I remind members that they are asked not to send payment in advance. Although the thought behind the cheque is appreciated, the amount is often wrong and it does make extra work for the Hon Secretary and myself.

## STANDING ORDERS

Our bank tells me that something like 100 payments are still going to Barnet, but I have not got the information to notify members individually this time. If your order is one of these (started in 1974 or earlier) I would be very grateful if you will tell your bank to alter the payment to Midland Bank Ltd, Camden Town, sorting code 40-02-03. This will make things easier for the bank and I hope reduce bank mistakes.

Anthony Cooper

## THIS YEAR'S PUBLICATION

As its publication for 1977 the London Topographical Society is reproducing two plans of fields in Finsbury in the Corporation of London Records Office. The earlier of these is dated 1641 and is attached to the first lease of the new Artillery Ground in Bunhill Fields to the Honourable Artillery Company. This deed was assumed to have been lost with other early records of the Company as a result of the Civil War, but was rediscovered among some recently catalogued archives of the Corporation. The plan is the earliest known of this famous open space which is depicted later in the century, with the Company exercising arms thereon, in the plans of Ogilby and Morgan and Morden and Lea.

The other plan dates from 1705 and is associated with a lease of several large parcels of ground still remaining undeveloped in Finsbury at that time. Bunhill Field, the Millhill Field, the Upper and Lower Mallowfield and the Old Wrestling Field are depicted in an area which was to be substantially developed in a fine Georgian town planning scheme by George Dance the younger, Clerk of the City's Works, later in the century. Few of these open spaces, so well known to Londoners of earlier generations, now remain, with the exception of the gardens in Finsbury Square, the Bunhill Fields Burial Ground and the Artillery Ground itself.

The publication will include an historical introduction

giving the background to the making of the plans and the granting of the leases, prepared by James R Sewell, Assistant Deputy Keeper of the Records.

The work of printing is almost finished and copies will be sent out in July. Copies will be available at the AGM so that paid-up members can collect their copies and help us by saving postage and stout packing.

#### POSTING AND DELIVERY

If you are not going to the AGM but could collect from Bishopsgate Institute or from an office near Trafalgar Square, please let the Hon Secretary know before July 1st. Because the last publication was so delayed and the printer had been sent addressed labels well in advance a few of the people who offered to collect nevertheless found their copies arrive by post: please do not think we didn't appreciate these offers — with a better timetable we can do better this time!

#### NEXT YEAR

##### *The Park Town Estate and the Battersea Tangle*

The publication for 1978 will be another volume in our monograph series, uniform with *Leybourne's Plans of London Markets 1677*, *London Panoramas of Barker and Girtin*, and *The Map of Mid Sixteenth Century London*. It is entitled *The Park Town Estate and the Battersea Tangle*, and is by Dr Priscilla Metcalf who is a member of the Society and whose volume on *The Halls of the Fishmongers' Company* is noticed elsewhere in this newsletter.

This small history of a Victorian neighbourhood in South London in its formative years explains why its main thoroughfare took an odd S-shaped path and why its white-brick and red-brick houses took their differing forms — in short, why and how part of Victorian London was made. The first of three sections concerns an earnest local campaign during 1857-63 for a road between Clapham Common and the new Chelsea Bridge, against the power of two railway companies who were carving up Battersea Fields between them: the origin of the present Queenstown Road, SW8. The second part describes the private developer's struggle during the 1860s to establish the housing estate that was to pay for the road he had made: the origin of the Park Town Estate. The third part sketches further development from the 1870s on and, by means of quoting from letters, describes some of the individuals — three of them of considerable eminence in London — who brought the estate to its first cohesive stage as a community in the 1880s. This narrative is based mainly on private estate papers and other local material, as well as the surviving buildings and roads themselves, and here and there on that most ephemeral element, oral history.

#### ROCQUE & OGILBY AND MORGAN

Members may like to know that they can obtain Harry Margary's reproductions of London maps from Guildhall Library, London EC2P 2EJ, as follows:

- Rocque 26" scale map of London 1746, 26 sheets  
the set in loose sheets £10
- Rocque 5½" scale map of 10 miles round London, 1746,  
20 sheets the set in loose sheets £8.50
- Ogilby & Morgan Map of the City of London, 1676, 26 sh  
the set in loose sheets £6
- bound flat between thin card covers £9
- bound, folded and guarded between hard covers £18
- Ogilby's "Explanation" of the above (1677), including  
newly-compiled index £3.50

Postage and packing are charged extra.

#### THREE STUDIES

- 1 *The Baltic Exchange, The History of a Unique Market*  
by Hugh Barty-King Hutchinson Benham £7.50
- 2 *The Halls of the Fishmongers' Company, An Architectural History of a Riverside Site*  
by Priscilla Metcalf Phillimore £12
- 3 *Blackheath Village and Environs 1790-1970: Vol 1, The Village and Blackheath Vale*  
by Neil Rhind Bookshop Blackheath Ltd £5  
— special offer to members: £3.75 + 65p p&p, direct  
from publisher, 74 Tranquil Vale, Blackheath, London SE3

"The principal object of the Author has been to make a readable book without degenerating into gossip. ... The Author's first anxiety has been to secure perusal; and for this purpose he has thrown the volume into a new form, and endeavoured, by a continuous and smoothly-flowing narrative, to induce even those who detest the very name of topography, to bestow a favourable glance on his pages."

from the preface to *Collections for the history of Camberwell, 1841*, by Douglas Allport

If, a century and a quarter ago, Allport was worried that he was entering upon an unpopular or despised field, nowadays we have no such hesitation: in our age we are almost drowned by the steady flow of such works. Their content and their quality vary greatly, but these three volumes which have come to us for review amply illustrate that the subject need no longer be a matter for diffidence, if ever it was, and demonstrate the value of work well done. One deals with an important City trading institution which is relatively little known<sup>1</sup>, one covers an almost untouched aspect of a famous livery company, its architectural history<sup>2</sup>, the third is a new history of one of London's familiar villages<sup>3</sup>.

In *The Baltic Exchange* Mr Barty-King has given a detailed account, only partially available before in a privately-printed volume of 1927 by its secretary, James Findlay, of the complexities of rivalry, negotiation, and development from 16th c Eastland Company, 17th c Eastland Walk at the Royal Exchange, and 18th c Virginia and Baltick Coffee House, through the Baltic Exchange and London Shipping Exchange, to the Baltic Mercantile and Shipping Exchange standing in St Mary Axe today. The first formal association came in 1823 with the establishment of the Baltic Coffee House as an institution with subscribers, limitation on numbers, and rules, but the same merchants, whose business was mainly timber, tallow, and various naval supplies, brought mainly from the Baltic, had met for more than a century at taverns and coffee-houses, and before that the trade with the Baltic and Russia had been largely in the hands of chartered monopoly companies.

The sources of information available have obviously been uneven in coverage: the merging of the Baltic Exchange and the London Shipping Exchange in 1900 and the process of choosing Jeffrey Square as the site for new premises are evidently well documented and are given in fascinating detail, but the earlier history, in spite of, for example, destruction of records during a move in 1857, has also been carefully disentangled.

What Mr Barty-King has written is primarily the story of an institution emerging and changing and of the people in it, moving from one place to another. By contrast, Dr Metcalf's work on *The Halls of the Fishmongers' Company* is the biography of a site and the history of its buildings. The site is one of the few firmly-fixed reference points in the changing panorama of the Thames.

The Company has owned land on this site officially since 1444, and it has had its hall there continuously since then, with breaks in actual occupation only when the

(continued on page 4)

## 77th ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR 1976

Milne's Land Use Map of London and Environs in 1800 was issued to members shortly before the end of the year as a combined publication for 1975 and 1976. It is an extremely important map and we consider it to be one of the most valuable works undertaken by the Society: it has also been the most costly. The Society is in a position to face the bill because we have continued to be successful with our sales of past publications which have contributed £1050 this year, almost as much as our subscription income, to our funds, and the Society has also received from the estate of Miss Helen Barlow a very handsome legacy of books which have been sold for £1789.

Two newsletters were issued in May and October, which we hope members find interesting. The cost of distributing them is largely offset by contributions from publishers whose books are advertised in leaflets which are sent

out at the same time.

The 76th Annual General Meeting was held on June 9th 1976 at St John's Gate, Clerkenwell, by kind permission of the Order of St John. Over a hundred members and guests were present. All the officers were re-elected; the council was re-elected with the addition of Mr John Phillips. A small amendment to the Society's constitution, affecting the wording of Rule I which sets out its purpose, was approved to enable the Society to register as a charity. After the business meeting members heard a short talk about the Order of St John and were shown some of its rooms and treasures.

The Society's membership at the end of 1976 was 477. This figure includes 52 new members; 34 names were removed from the Society's books.

### ACCOUNTS FOR 1976

#### INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR TO 31st DECEMBER 1976

1975	Expenditure		1975	Income	
27	storage and service	20.00	1,116	subscriptions for 1976	1,187.34
30	insurance	17.54	351	for earlier years	134.41
177	printing and stationery	88.89	1,467		1,321.75
200	postage and petty cash	141.23		profit from the sale of publications	
117	A G M	98.85		sales	1,049.55
15	memorial service for Miss M B Honeybourne	-	1,762	less cost or valuation of publications sold	360.90
8	advertising	7.00	587		688.59
		371.51	1,175	sale of offprints	-
	publications		43	interest on bank deposit	436.32
	no 118/119 (1975/76) balance		169	donations	23.61
	of total cost	2,694.00	24	legacies: Mr P E Gilroy	24.53
	no 120 (1977)	5.40	-	Miss Helen Barlow (books)	1,788.68
	no 121 (1978)	20.00			1,813.21
2,013		2,719.40	61	charge for leaflet distribution	71.00
-	distribution of publication 118/119	458.29	-	provision no longer required	100.00
-	leaflet for publication 118/119	148.00	720	publication no 118/119 - undistributed copies added to stock	3,193.00
1,072	excess of income over expenditure	3,950.28	3,659		7,647.48
3,659		7,647.48			

#### BALANCE SHEET AT 31st DECEMBER 1976

<i>Accumulated fund</i>			<i>Current assets</i>		
5,585	balance brought forward	11,810.52		stock of publications as	
5,154	add surplus on revaluation of stock	-	5,046	valued by Council	
	excess of income over expenditure	<u>3,950.28</u>	5,154	balance brought forward	10,357.63
		15,760.80	25	add	
<u>1,072</u>			720	increase on revaluation	-
<u>11,811</u>			<u>10,945</u>	purchases	-
	<i>Current liabilities</i>			publication 118/119	<u>3,193.00</u>
2,000	publication 118/119	5,259.00			13,550.63
207	creditors	54.10	587	less estimated cost of	
91	subscriptions in advance	73.44	<u>10,358</u>	publications sold	<u>360.96</u>
35	M B Honeybourne memorial	<u>35.50</u>			13,189.67
<u>2,333</u>		5,422.04	3,620	bank and cash balances	
			152	bank deposit account	7,856.71
			14	bank current account	136.46
	<i>Anthony Cooper</i>		<u>3,786</u>	cash with officers	-
	<i>Hon Treasurer</i>		<u>14,144</u>		<u>7,993.17</u>
<u>14,144</u>		<u>21,182.84</u>			<u>21,182.84</u>

I report that the above Balance Sheet and attached Income and Expenditure Account have been correctly prepared from the books and records of the London Topographical Society.

Allan Tribe Chartered Accountant City Gate House, Finsbury Square, London EC2

March 28th 1977

(from page 2)

Great Fire and the building of the new London Bridge in the 1820s brought about complete rebuilding on the site. Originally it was intended to concentrate on the history of the present hall, but the wealth of documents of the Company, saved from both Great Fire and Blitz, showed that the earlier history of the site could be accurately charted as well. It is, it seems, the first full-scale architectural history of a livery company's buildings: as the author says, one such site illustrates the main stream of urban history. Dr Metcalf has performed her task meticulously and produced, into the bargain, a flowing narrative that is a pleasure to read. There is every reason to be extremely grateful to those who made the research possible, and the Society is fortunate that its next publication comes from the same pen.

In *Blackheath Village and Environs* Mr Rhind has provided a topographical encyclopaedia of Blackheath, but also much more than an encyclopaedia. It is divided into fifteen chapters on one or more streets, each with an introduction and full details of each house or building, and a final chapter on art, music, and community life. He has put together an immense amount of information from all sources, primary and printed, and made a narrative account of each element, so that it is possible to read about the general development of Blackheath in the preface and the chapter introductions and then follow it up with one's specific interest. Victorian and later parish histories tend to be full of the work of institutions and organisations, of worthy people and notable events, and rather weak on topography and architecture. *Blackheath* is the type of book which is needed to redress the balance; it is a model of its kind which makes a mass of information a pleasure to read and more than a reference book. This volume covers the Village and Blackheath Vale; a second will deal with the Heath and surrounding estates.

All three books are hard-back and well illustrated, *Blackheath* with numerous local trade advertisements as well as 71 plates. Each has an index, although that for *Blackheath* is short because volume 2 will have a full index to both volumes, and a bibliography or list of sources.

### THE STUDY OF 'TOPOGRAPHY'

The preface from which I have quoted in the preceding notice throws an interesting light on the study of 'topo-

graphy' which must, I think, be taken to mean 'local history'. Allport, in writing the first independent account of Camberwell, continues with further comment on the matter and I wonder if anyone can explain his anxiety and apologetic defence of the subject.

'The strong prejudice that exists against topography generally, arises very probably from the fact that it seldom proceeds on philosophical principles. The philosopher finds "all in all", and there is no reason why the local historian should not be a philosopher.

'History indeed, in its unlimited range, is a theme of such magnitude, that we are *compelled* to divide and apportion it; and this apportionment gives birth to local history; which cannot therefore be so insignificant and unimportant a character as many would imagine it. One great recommendation of topographical researches is, that they deal so much with *facts*. We take them for our nucleus; and if the gems of exuberant fancy will cling and crystallize around them, we are still on much safer ground than the learned Frenchman, who having elaborated a brilliant theory, on being told that facts were all against him, exclaimed with greatest *sang froid*, "Eh bien! — Vae well! so moche de vors for de facts!"

'The time is gone by when men might shut themselves up in the study to compose truth, or invent certainties. ... By a mere chronological arrangement of ... memorials, he will have before him a series of documents, illustrative not only of the annals of his parish, but of British History generally. ... For almost every parish church is a documentary History of England, and supplies us with information equally valuable for its interest and integrity. ...

'Nor does he, by such personal investigations, arrive at a knowledge of the facts alone; the principles and deductions which these furnish are of more extended application, and independently of the mere interest they possess as matters of curiosity, may be laid up with great advantage for future use.'

### OUT-OF-PRINT PUBLICATIONS

During the last year the Society has acquired a small stock of out-of-print publications; these include many of the earliest items. It is proposed to have them available for sale at the AGM. So check the gaps in your collections and bring your cheque books with you.

### NOTES AND QUERIES

*Our newsletter is issued twice a year. Space is available for you to ask any questions relating to London topography or if you have short items of interest to members or information about research in progress. Please write to the Hon Secretary, 50 Grove Lane, London SE5.*

#### FREDERICK CRACE AND JOHN EDMUND GARDNER

J F C Phillips, 61 Haverhill Road, London SW12, would be very interested in any information about references in primary sources to these eminent 19th century collectors of London topography.

#### THOMAS RICHARDSON

Mrs Nesta Macdonald, Flat A, 247 Fulham Road, SW3 6HY seeks information of all sorts about the map-maker and surveyor, Thomas Richardson, active from about 1769 into the nineteenth century. He took up residence in a new house in York Street, Marylebone, in 1767, and later lived in Chelsea. He mapped Chelsea (1769), Hyde Park Corner, Enfield Chase, Kew and Richmond, within the

London area. One of his associates was Peter Burrell who became the first Baron Gwydyr and built Gwydyr House in Whitehall.

#### ASHBURTON LODGE AND A SAILORS' REST

I am involved in some biographical research covering the period 1855-1905 and would be grateful for any information about either of the two following buildings:

- (a) Ashburton Lodge, Addiscombe Road, Croydon
- (b) A Sailors' Rest or hostel, built or maintained by Louisa Lady Ashburton, in the Docks (probably the Victoria & Albert Docks)

Helen M Arbuthnot, 17 The Causeway, Horsham, Sussex