

London Topographical Society

LONDON TOPOGRAPHICAL NEWS 5

November 1977

BRING US NEW MEMBERS

We are sending out copies of our current leaflets with this newsletter. The general leaflet, which was originally issued in February 1975, is brought up to date with an amendments slip listing deletions and recent publications, and is accompanied by a membership application form.

Please help to increase our membership by showing them or giving them to people you think will be interested in the Society's work. If you would like more copies please let the Hon Secretary know or let him have addresses to send them to.

OVERDUE SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Hon Treasurer writes

No member whose subscription is not paid can be sent the publication for the year, but the Society spends quite a lot of time and money in sending newsletters to people who seem to have disappeared and do not respond to reminders.

In future, if there is no response to reminders sent out with the May and November newsletters, I shall remove the names of those concerned from our books when the newsletter for the following May is due to go out.

If you find a reminder marked FINAL with this newsletter, this means that you have not acted on my May reminder: I hope you will let me have your current subscription soon, and if you like to add for 1978 as well, so much the better.

OUT-OF-PRINT PUBLICATIONS

We sold over £250 worth of out-of-print publications at the Annual General Meeting in July at Home House, but there is still a good list of items available (subject to being unsold), as follows.

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|----|--|----|---|
| 5 | Porter's map of London, c 1660
sheet 2 only out of two £1 | | plan of West London several sets £5 |
| 14 | Kip's View of London, 1710 12 sheets, sheets 1
& 12 stained and foxed, otherwise clean £12.50 | 61 | St Katharine's Dock, c 1590 several good copies
@ £2.50 and other copies in various states |
| 21 | Wren drawings of Old St Paul's 2 sheets
set 1 one sheet slightly dirty £3
set 2 reasonably clean, both sheets torn not af-
fecting views £3 | 64 | Charing Cross, 1610 several copies, fair to poor
£1.50 - £0.25 |
| 34 | Rocque Survey of London 1746 49 sheets (ie 24
etc sheets in half-sheets plus key) £8 | 65 | Walworth 1681 several copies, good to very soiled
£3 - £0.25 |
| 49 | Merian's View of London, 1638 several copies £2 | 68 | Kensington Views, 8 sheets several sets £3 |
| 50 | Hollar, 7 drawings on 4 sheets several sets £2 - £1 | 77 | Wyngaerde small long view, c 1550, 1 sheet
3 copies, fair to creased £2 - £1 |
| 54 | 1585 Plan of Piccadilly and Soho area etc 5 copies
in various states, fair to v poor £1.50 - £0.25 | 78 | Wyck's View of London from Southwark 4 copies
good to poor £3.50 - £1.50 |
| 56 | Piccadilly area drawings, 11 on 7 sheets, with 1710 | 82 | Cecil Brown, Prospect 1945 several copies, fair to
soiled £1 - £0.50 |
| | | 83 | Colsoni, <i>Guide de Londres</i> nice copy £4 |

At the moment we have no copies of the out-of-print volumes of the *Record* (ie 1-5, 8, 9, 11, 18, 19).

These out-of-print items are reserved for members, and there is no discount on the prices shown. To purchase any of these please get in touch with the Hon Secretary, 50 Grove Lane, London SE5 (telephone 01-703 2719); please do not send money as items may be sold out and postage has to be added to the bill as appropriate.

THE SURVEY OF LONDON

A new volume of the *Survey of London* is always an important addition to our knowledge of London and does not depend on our praise for recognition of its fine scholarship, draughtsmanship and presentation. The publication of another volume¹ last month does, however, prompt one to look back at the early volumes and especially at the beginning of the London Survey Committee² and to make some interesting comparisons.

Volume I was entitled *Survey of London: being the First Volume of the Register of the Committee for the Survey of the Memorials of Greater London containing the Parish of Bromley-by-Bow*, and was published in 1900. It was edited by C R Ashbee, who had been the chairman of the Survey Committee since its inception in 1894, and was printed under the auspices of the London County Council.

A long, informative and stirring introduction by Ashbee recounts that the area originally selected for recording was roughly a quadrant bounded on the west by a 20-mile line drawn northwards from the river through Aldgate Pump and on the south by the river itself. The area included the London parishes of Bromley, Bow, Poplar, Limehouse, Stepney, Mile End, Ratcliff, Shadwell, St George-in-the-East, Wapping, Whitechapel, Aldgate, Spitalfields, Bethnal Green, Hackney and Stoke Newington; it also embraced four parishes in Middlesex and fifty-six in Essex, going out as far as Epping, Brentwood and West Thurrock. This area was chosen because "Aldgate Pump was not only a historic spot in itself, but it marked the eastern point of the old City of London, and within the circumference thus drawn, lay not only the great East End, but most of the beautiful eastern suburbs that are rapidly being destroyed to make building room—for slums very frequently; but if not for slums, then, at the least, a sort of dreary villadom—for the vast population that is flowing out from the centre or being drawn in from perishing agricultural Essex."

How right the Committee was to see such an area as the most threatened and the most unregarded, and thus most in need of being recorded! However, when the help of the LCC was enlisted for the *Register*, that body, naturally enough, agreed to print only the portions relating to the County of London. The outlying parishes were therefore abandoned, although much work had been done, and attention was concentrated nearer home.

The Committee, wholly responsible for a concurrent series of monographs on individual buildings, usually ones under some threat, did indeed direct its efforts in the first six of the monographs (1896-1905) to buildings in the defined quadrant, but thereafter only three volumes of the *Survey* (vols viii on St Leonard Shoreditch, xxvii on Spitalfields and Mile End New Town, and xxviii on Brooke House, Hackney) and none of the remaining ten monographs fell within it.

It is not surprising that richer areas, richer both in

buildings and in their inhabitants, should have seemed more important, more accessible and more tempting. Since 1960 there has been a concentration on central London and West End areas—St James (4 volumes), St Anne Soho (2), Covent Garden (2), Kensington (2 so far) and Mayfair (the new volume)—which leads one to express some regret that areas which are more vulnerable both to loss of buildings and to the disappearance of documentary evidence now appear to be receiving little attention from the *Survey*.

In the preface to the first monograph, entitled *The Trinity Hospital in Mile End: an Object Lesson in National History* and published in 1896, the object of the Survey Committee is stated to be "to watch and register what still remains of beautiful or historic work in Greater London, and to bring such influence to bear from time to time as shall save it from destruction or lead to its utilization for public purposes." In the 4th report of the Committee (June 1900) Ashbee reaffirmed that its work "is not antiquarian; it seeks to touch only living things; it desires to show not what has been, but what actually exists of beautiful or historic things in the London we inhabit ..."

If the areas now covered no longer correspond with the original intentions, the form of the *Survey* has undergone no less of a change. The first volume recorded sixteen buildings or groups of buildings in photographs, delicate watercolours (in monochrome), drawings and plans, all of existing or recently existing buildings, with descriptions, dating evidence, some historical notes to each building, and a note of other documents in the Committee's possession—in other words, a descriptive, illustrated inventory. As successive volumes have come out, more attention has been paid to history, estate development and architectural influences, to the point where the latest volume, the first on the Grosvenor Estate in Mayfair, can be entitled 'General History'. In recent volumes buildings long since demolished have been recorded in detail, and whereas Ashbee's Volume I excluded buildings after about 1800 the Mayfair volume illustrates buildings as late as 1960.

Ashbee thought they should impose a time limit of ten years on their task of covering the 192 parishes of London, and appealed for £10,000 to be placed at the disposal of the Committee, all to be spent on clerks, assistants, draughtsmen and photographers, with a large proportion of voluntary work as hitherto. Nowadays, the research inevitably takes much longer, and the areas covered by each volume are much smaller, than at the outset, but perhaps we should see how the original intentions have been fulfilled by others in the London area.

The first official list of buildings which in any way corresponds with Ashbee's intention is the inventory of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments; five volumes on London were published between 1924 and 1930. Unfortunately, the Commission's terms of reference precluded anything after 1714 (this has been modified since): perhaps a later date would have delayed publication inordinately. These volumes are copiously illustrated with many plans and photographs, so that the relatively small number of buildings, almost all of some importance, is well documented.

More recently, statutory lists of buildings of special architectural or historic interest, with various supplementary lists, have been compiled, under successive Town and Country Planning Acts, for the purpose of

¹ Volume xxxix *The Grosvenor Estate in Mayfair Part 1: General History*, General Editor F H W Sheppard published for the Greater London Council by The Athlone Press £20 (see the leaflet enclosed)

² For an account of its work see 'The London Survey Committee, 1894-1952' by W H Godfrey in *London Topographical Record* xxi (1958), 79-92

preventing unauthorized demolition or alteration. The listing, rather like the *Survey*, was done borough by borough, and the whole of the inner London (LCC) area was covered in some seven or eight years from about 1948; the lists have subsequently been revised and enlarged out of all recognition and now suffer from many inconsistencies. These lists include only brief descriptions, sometimes no more than enough to identify the buildings by sight, and are virtually devoid of historical or aesthetic comment, but perhaps they come closer than recent volumes of the *Survey* to fulfilling the function which the original Survey Committee had in mind for their *Register*, namely to draw attention to the interest of the buildings so that thought could be given to them before plans were formed and decisions made.

There now exist two very large collections of photographs at the National Monuments Record and at the Greater London Council, which is now responsible for the preparation of the *Survey*; almost certainly they contain more material, though not in published form, than Ashbee would have thought necessary for his purpose. Finally, mention must be made of Pevsner's two *Buildings of England* volumes on London, which, in spite of the omission of some of one's favourite buildings, have probably done more than any other published work to further Ashbee's aim "to stimulate the historic and social conscience of London" in relation to our architectural heritage.

The *Survey of London* is, therefore, no longer fulfilling the original intention of providing the *Register* which was started seventy-seven years ago; it would take far too long to complete to be useful for this purpose and it has in effect been superseded by other works. It is, instead, an unparalleled document which is to be welcomed for its contribution to our detailed knowledge of the development, history and architecture of selected, but increasingly contiguous, sections of London. We should continue to be grateful to the GLC for its enlightened sponsorship of the undertaking in its present scholarly and exhaustive form.

REGISTER OF RESEARCH

In October last year in London Topographical News 3, Frank Kelsall contributed a note on a proposed register of research, with an appeal for entries. He reports:

The response has been very small and I assume that members are diffident about the merits and interest to others of their own research. The project is, therefore, being set aside, with thanks to those who did send entries or offers of help. Existing registers, in addition to that in *Urban History Yearbook* and that of the Society of Architectural Historians, mentioned before, include one maintained by the Garden History Society and an international group of carto-bibliographers.

I would like to point out, however, that my query in the same issue of the newsletter about Robert Clayton's property files produced many extremely helpful replies and useful leads. It was certainly worthwhile for me to advertise in the *Notes and Queries* column and I hope others have had a similar experience.

A VIEW OF GREENWICH BY HOLLAR, 1637

A fairly recent (1973) reproduction of Wenceslaus Hollar's View of Greenwich, 1637, has come to our notice.

The original view is an etching on two plates measuring about 5¼ x 33 inches. The reproduction is an enlargement to 8½ x 49½ inches (available in two halves, each with white border, and with instructions for mounting) and is published by David McLean, 11 Nevada Street, Greenwich, London SE10, price £1 including postage.

The Society reproduced the same view at the original size in 1930 (publication no 63) and still has a few copies available at £2 plus postage.

There are certain differences which we should point out and no doubt purchasers will choose whichever suits them better. The Society's reproduction is of the first state recorded in Hind (*Wenceslaus Hollar and his Views of London*, item 20); Mr McLean's is the fourth state in which the cartouche inscription has been changed and a London publisher's name added, and the dramatic massed clouds have been erased. Our version was printed in collotype by Emery Walker whose work was exceptionally fine, evidently benefitting from selective processing to bring out the best of both dark and light areas; the recent reproduction is by offset lithography (150-line screen) and looks very attractive at the larger size, but it does not preserve the sharpness of the original quite so well as the collotype printing of the Society's version.

Both the reproductions were taken from originals in the British Museum.

LONDON FROM THE BASKET OF A BALLOON

Guildhall Library has recently published a facsimile of Banks' Balloon View of London, a curious cross between a map and a bird's-eye view, which shows almost the entire area of the metropolis as it appeared in 1851. Street names on it appear on roof tops, and Banks' earlier premises in Tonbridge Row appear in the foreground. John Henry Banks issued several similar productions — a 'Cosmorama View of London' in 1843 and in 1845, for example, and a 'Panoramic View of Liverpool' in 1847. The London view of 1851 was published on the opening day of the Great Exhibition, and was worked up from daguerreotypes taken, it would seem, from a balloon tethered on Parliament Hill. It therefore shows London looking southwards. Places depicted on it include the Crystal Palace, the Colosseum, Lord's Cricket Ground, nursery grounds in Brompton, and Mr Wyld's Monster Globe in Leicester Square. A site near the bottom of the print is shown cleared for the building of King's Cross Station. Banks' Balloon View passed through at least six editions between 1851 and 1862. The steel plate for printing surfaced at the auction of G F Cruchley's map stock in 1877.

The Guildhall facsimile is very slightly reduced from the original measuring 26 by 40 inches. Copies can be purchased from Guildhall Library, Aldermanbury, London EC2P 2EJ, for £2 plus 50 pence in the UK for postage and packing.

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TALLIS'S LONDON STREET VIEWS

The handsome reprint of John Tallis's *London Street Views* of 1838-40 and 1847, with introduction by our Chairman, Peter Jackson, was published by Nattali and Maurice in association with the Society in 1969. After steady sales for several years we have almost run out of copies and are marking it as out of print in our lists. The few copies which we still have are available to members only at the price of £10 (no discount) plus postage. Please order from the Publications Secretary, R H Harrison, 7 Sunbury Avenue, Mill Hill, London NW7.

ALEXANDRA PARK AND PALACE

Two years ago we circulated leaflets about the GLC's publication of *Alexandra Park & Palace, A History*, by Ron Carrington. It was published at £5, but has been remaindered recently by the GLC, who are now selling copies at their bookshop at County Hall for £1. If you did not get it when it came out now is your chance to get a really good bargain.

A COUNTRY MAN IN LONDON IN 1774

This piece is taken from The Diary of the Visits of John Yeoman to London in the Years 1774 and 1777, published by Watts & Co in 1934. John Yeoman lived in Wanstrow, Somerset, and had relatives in and near London.

May 2nd Munday as Theres no Particulars for Me to Set down this days Memoirs, I Shall Mention two or three Articles that did not come to my Mind when I was writing the foregoing, As I have a great deal of time on My Hands & I am in a writing Humour. I will begin with the first of my Journey & Journel. The first that I Shall Mention is that of the State Coaches, which I think is Very Usefull, for If you Want to go to London from any place Within Ten Miles of the City in ever So great a hast you may go at Any Hour of the day, not only when you please, but Cheap to, or If you Want to go an Hundred Miles any way from the City you may be there In Eighteen Hours, or If you Want to go to any Place on a Party

of pleasure If its fine Weather you may Ride on the Roof or in the Inside, Just as you like. But I think the Roof is By far the pleasants for a Young Person With fine Weather. I can compare it to Nothing Else but for a Man to be Taking up in a Great two Armed Chair & carried through the Reigions of the Air into Differant Counterys.

There is no Shu(c)h thing as a Pack Horse to be Seen here nor a Woman a Horse Back. The Roads are all the Same as a Gravle Walk & every one that Keeps a Horse keeps a Cart. ye People what Brings goods to ye Marketts they All Bring it in these Carts, there is not a horse to be Seen with any Thing of that kind on his back as I have mention'd before, even People who has but a Jackass will have a cart. the Next Thing is the Contrivance that they have in London is a Maviell to one Who never see a City before. In the foot Road, Which is all Paved With fine White Stone, Under the which every one has a cole house. over the Same theres a Round hole about Nine Inches over cover'd with a Plate of Iron even with the Pavement. So the(y) take up this Iron plate, the coals are Throne down without going into Peoples Houses. the Water is another Curious Article, there (is) F P 12 ft placed up in the side of the Streets att every thirty Yards, the meaning of which is that twelve feet across the Street theres a Fire Plug that if you Pull that up the water flows up all over the Street in case of fire. there is another conveyance of water which is Brought from the New River by which Three Parts of the City is supplied With it, not only the Princeple Inhabetants but every House have Water Plenty.

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 items of interest to members or information about research in progress. Please write to the Hon Secretary, 50 Grove Lane, London SE5.

CHESTER CHESTON Jnr

John Smallshaw, A15 Peabody Square, London N1 8RT, writes: I would appreciate any information that can be given regarding Chester Cheston Jnr, architect of the fine church of St Mark, Sandringham Road, Dalston, consecrated in 1870. (The tower was added later by a different architect.) A Mr Chester Cheston was surveyor for the Tyssen-Amherst estate in Hackney at this date, and I believe his son (the architect) succeeded him in this office.

CHARTERHOUSE AND THE NORTH FAMILY

For some biographical research I should much appreciate answers or informed conjecture to two questions relating to the Charterhouse. First, when the North family sold most of the Charterhouse, was the portion retained by them the same structure which subsequently became known as 'Rutland House' (the latter becoming the site of the remarkable *Siege of Rhodes* in 1656)? And, second, can we tell with any certainty who was residing in the North-held portion of the building, east of the chapel, in 1602 (ie some members of the extensive North family or perhaps tenants)?

Dale B J Randall, Department of English, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina 27706, USA.

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