

LONDON TOPOGRAPHICAL NEWS

The newsletter of the London Topographical Society

NUMBER 17

NOVEMBER 1983

NEW SECRETARY AND PUBLICATIONS SECRETARY

As foreshadowed in the last Newsletter, Stephen Marks did not stand for re-election as Secretary at the Annual General Meeting. He was heartily thanked for his tireless work over the last 17 years. The Society's present extremely healthy position is very largely due to his enthusiasm and effort.

The new Secretary is **Patrick Frazer** (formerly Publications Secretary) and the new Publications Secretary is:

Simon Morris, 13 Alma Square, St John's Wood, London NW8 9QA (telephone 01-286 3223).

NEW PUBLICATIONS LIST

An up-to-date publications list is enclosed with this Newsletter. Two of our oldest available publications, Nicholls' view of London Bridge and Hollar's view of Greenwich, are now technically out of print. However, there are a few copies left, mostly rather soiled, which are reserved for members only. No discount is allowed for out-of-print material.

Back on the list is the popular coloured map of the City of London Parishes (no 92). It has been reprinted from the same positives that Stanfords used 24 years ago and which they had very conveniently kept all this time. As a result the price has risen only marginally to £4. The Council has decided that the cost of reprinting Langley and Belch's map (No 114) would be too great to justify. There are now only a few dozen copies left.

BOOTH'S POVERTY MAPS, 1889

In 1984, the Society's publication will be the four sheets of the maps, demonstrating the distribution of wealth and poverty in London, which accompanied Charles Booth's survey of the subject, issued in 1889-91. Remarkably faithful colour facsimiles are being prepared by Cook, Hammond and Kell. The maps will be accompanied by an Introduction by Professor David Reeder of Leicester University; this is already in final draft and makes instructive and exciting reading. Ralph Hyde of Guildhall Library is preparing a bibliographical note, and Dr Angela Raspin of the London School of Economics will contribute a short account of the Charles Booth Collection and how it came to be at LSE.

CLAIMS

We quite often receive claims from overseas institutions for Volume 25 of the *London Topographical Record*. Would the Librarians concerned please note that the *Record* is not published every year. The next volume is due in 1985.

One university sent a claim last May for this year's publications. We try to publish in the summer in time for the Annual General Meeting and usually succeed, but we would suggest that claims for current publications should not be sent before the end of the year.

NEWSLETTERS BY AIR

Overseas members who would like to receive their newsletters by air (and who have not already arranged this) should let the Membership Secretary (*Trevor Ford*, 59 Gladesmore Road, South Tottenham, London N 15) know with their next subscription and include the appropriate sum. The extra cost is £1.25 or 3 dollars for each year's issue of two newsletters, making a total of £6.25 or 15.50 dollars US or Canadian.

IS YOUR ADDRESS CORRECT?

Members may have noticed that there has been an improvement in the clarity of our address labels, following the transfer of the membership list to computer. Would you

please check the label used to send you this newsletter and let *Trevor Ford* (59 Gladesmore Road, South Tottenham, London N15; tel 01-802 0595) know if there are any errors in your name or address.

COVENANTS

Will members who find a buff Inland Revenue form enclosed kindly fill it in and return it to me. This has to be done at the start of a covenant and not every year, which is why some members last year did not receive a form when they expected it: they had already dealt with it the year before.

Anthony Cooper

6 Waterside Place, Princess Road, London NW1 8JT

A-Z OF REGENCY LONDON

In 1979 members received *The A to Z of Elizabethan London* for their subscription, and in 1981 *The A to Z of Georgian London*. Stocks of both are still available from the Publications Secretary. Next year Harry Margary, in association with Guildhall Library, will be publishing an *A to Z of Regency London* based on the 1813 edition of Richard Horwood's map of London. Since so many members will be wanting to make their sets of this series complete the Society is purchasing 1,000 copies at a discount. Members will thus be able to acquire it at a very favourable, reduced price as an 'extra'. They will not be

receiving it for their subscription.

Horwood's survey, as those who received the LTS's full-scale facsimile of the 1792–99 edition in 1966 will already know, aimed to show every house in London and set out to give all the street numbers too. The 1813 edition of it provides more street numbers than the first edition, gives rather more detail on manufactories, and extends further eastwards so as to consist of 40 sheets instead of the original 32. The proposed Regent Street, built between 1816 and 1820, is already shown in outline. The new *A to Z* will adopt the same format as its companions. In addition to the map sheets it will contain introductory notes by Ralph Hyde, and an entirely new and, for the first time, thorough index that is being compiled by Joseph Wisdom of the Guildhall Library's cataloguing department.

The *A to Z of Regency London* should be available in time for the AGM next summer. The price will be given in the next issue of this newsletter.

PEVSNER'S LONDON

London 2: South, by Bridget Cherry and Nikolaus Pevsner. The Buildings of England, Penguin Books 1983. 813 pages, including plans, plus 111 plates on 64 pages. £11.95

The first volume of the *Buildings of England* was published in 1951; coverage of the country was completed in 1974 with the issue of volumes on Oxfordshire and Staffordshire. Many volumes have been revised, but none as radically as the volume under review. London was covered by two volumes early in the series, when 'London' was the area of the London County Council (*London 1: The Cities of London and Westminster* (1957) and *London except the Cities of London and Westminster* (1952)). The first of these has been revised twice, in 1962 and 1973, but *London except* (as it is often called) or *London 2* has never been brought up to date.

Now, the latter is being superseded by a new scheme of three volumes covering the Greater London area, excluding the Cities of London and Westminster, as before; it incorporates portions of the former counties of Surrey, Kent, Essex and Hertfordshire, and the whole of Middlesex. These are the new *London 2: South*, published while we yet mourn the death of the founder of the series, and two further volumes, *London 3: North West* and *London 4: North and North East*, still to be published.

The new volume follows the format and layout of the earlier volumes except in one very important particular: it is a fifth taller than its predecessors, a change which must have caused a great deal of heart-searching for the editors, faced with the enormous increase of material to be included. The alternative would have been to extend London over more volumes, but this would have had its disadvantages, not least, presumably, commercial.

As it is, the volume runs to over 800 pages with 64 pages of photographs, and the use of a smaller typeface results in half as much again on each page as in the earlier volume on London. This will give some measure of the scale of the undertaking in bringing together material from several earlier volumes, revising or re-writing entries, and taking account of the demolitions and new buildings of almost a third of a century, further complicated by the reorganisation of London's local government in 1965.

There is now a much more comprehensive introductory section. The general introduction by Bridget Cherry relates specifically to South London, while specialist introductions on prehistoric and Roman archaeology by Joanna Bird,

timber-framed buildings by Malcolm Airs, and industrial archaeology by Malcolm Tucker, cover the whole of Greater London. Each of the boroughs and a short section on the Thames crossings have their own introductions. Thus the book deals with very much more than the buildings it covers, serving also as a guide to the physical background and historical development of the area, complemented by extensive information on further reading.

The excellence of the material needs no recommendation: it continues in the pattern firmly established over the last thirty years. The specially drawn maps are a model of clarity. The larger page size has made possible clearer photographs; the selection is, of course, different for the different area, but where the same subjects are shown new views have generally been used.

At less than £12 the volume is very reasonably priced, being published with a grant from the Greater London Council to cover the cost of research. The help of the Greater London Council and several of its officers, as well as of many other bodies and individuals (among whom your reviewer is flattered to find himself), is fully acknowledged, thus adding to the irony of the threatened abolition of that institution itself. No-one who is remotely interested in the development or buildings of South London can say he does not want this book on his shelves, even if it has grown a bit too big for those without a poacher's pocket to carry it on them.

THE SURVEY OF LONDON

Survey of London Volume XLI, Southern Kensington: Brompton, general editor F H W Sheppard. Published for the Greater London Council by The Athlone Press, 1983. xviii+318 pages, including numerous figures, plus 108 plates, coloured frontispiece, and plan in pocket. £45.

After the publication of two volumes on the Grosvenor Estate in Mayfair (Vols XXXIX and XL) this volume marks the resumption of work on Kensington, begun with *Northern Kensington* (Vol XXXVII, 1973) and *The Museums Area of South Kensington and Westminster* (Vol XXXVIII, 1975), and to be completed in a fourth volume describing the Kensington High Street and Earl's Court areas, with a general review of the whole of South Kensington.

It is also the last volume to appear under the editorship of Dr Sheppard, who was appointed in 1954 and has been responsible for a total of sixteen volumes, a remarkable achievement. The format established in the first of his volumes, *The Parish of St Mary Lambeth, Part 2: The Southern Area* (Vol XXVI, 1956), with two-column text, has continued with little change, except that slightly wider and longer columns have enabled more to be put on the page without any loss of elegance or readableness. All his volumes, including the present volume, are enclosed in a dust-jacket of constant design, an extract from Kip's view of London with a coloured title-band, a different colour for each parish or borough treated: together they take up, in recognisable livery (for those who do not destroy their dust-jackets), almost half the shelf-space needed to house the *Survey of London*.

The area of the present volume is a narrow wedge of land containing Harrods, Brompton Oratory, Brompton Cemetery, and many sought-after residential addresses; it stretches from Knightsbridge to the cemetery, which marks the western edge of Kensington, and is bounded on the south by the boundary between the old Metropolitan

Boroughs of Chelsea and Kensington along Fulham Road, and on the north by Old Brompton Road and the old boundary with Westminster.

Development first took place at the eastern end of this wedge, as one would expect, during the middle and later years of the eighteenth century, but the bulk of development recorded in this volume belongs to the nineteenth century, and the more prominent buildings to the Victorian period. Subsequent changes are also recorded, but form a relatively small part of the account of this area, and, one might say, make a generally undistinguished contribution to its architectural character.

The volume is copiously illustrated both with photographs and reproductions of old maps and views and with line drawings in the text. These last continue the fine tradition of measured drawing which has been built up by the *Survey of London* over many years. Those who saw the recent exhibition at the Building Centre Gallery, 'Survey of London Drawings 1903–1983', will appreciate the importance and strength of this tradition.¹

The present volume is a handsome book which may be too expensive for most individuals, but is an essential part of the investigation and documentation of London's development and ought to be widely available in libraries and institutions. Two changes face the *Survey*. Following the retirement of Dr Sheppard, it has recently been announced that Miss Hermione Hobhouse, formerly Secretary of the Victorian Society, author of books on Thomas Cubitt, Regent Street, and Lost London, and organiser of the current exhibition on Prince Albert at the Victoria and Albert Museum, would be the new editor: the *Survey* will be in good hands. The second change, however, is of great concern, the proposed abolition of the Greater London Council, which has borne the whole cost of the *Survey*. We must hope that if, as has been stated, the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments takes it over, it will maintain the *Survey* to its present high standard and detail.

1 An illustrated article, 'Measured Drawing: The 'Survey of London' Tradition', by John Earl (a member of the Greater London Council's Historic Buildings Division), will appear in the forthcoming *Association for Studies in the Conservation of Historic Building Transactions* Vol 7. This will be available in December from the editor, Stephen Marks, Hamilton's, Kilmersdon, near Bath, Somerset and details will be sent on request.

ALPHABETICAL LONDON

The London Encyclopaedia, edited by Ben Weinreb and Christopher Hibbert. Macmillan, 1983. ix+1029 pages. £24.

At first sight this mammoth book appears to be the perfect Christmas present for each and every member of the Society. Certainly, anyone who read David Piper's uncritical puff in the *Observer* would think so. It is similar in shape, size and weight to the Oxford Companion series, with some 5,000 entries and more than 500 illustrations.

This book is squarely in the tradition of earlier London gazetteers, notably Peter Cunningham's *Handbook of London* and Henry Wheatley's *London Past and Present*. Like them, the majority of entries are topographical descriptions of streets and buildings, but the scope is broadened to include shops and auctioneers, football and cricket clubs, and even television and radio companies. In addition, there is a number of wide-ranging essays on subjects such as Drains and Sewers, Executions, Public Lavatories and Baths, Maps of London, Street Signs and Street Vendors.

The alphabetical listing of entries is internally cross-referenced and supported by two indexes. One of the indexes deals with the 10,000 people who are mentioned in the text: Christopher Wren alone has over 100 references. The definition of London's boundaries is generous to a fault, including entries from as far afield as Kingston, Croydon, Ilford, Harrow and Hounslow.

Credit for initiating the *Encyclopaedia* is given to Ben Weinreb, who started working on it as a spare-time activity ten years before Christopher Hibbert joined the team in 1979. In all, no less than 160 contributors are acknowledged, including Ann Saunders, Victor Belcher, several other members of our Society, and many other familiar names in London topography.

With such a galaxy of contributors it is not surprising to find that the *Encyclopaedia* is full of lively and interesting entries. There is no doubt that it is a marvellous book to dip into, making it almost impossible to reach an entry without being diverted by half a dozen others on the way. However, it has to be said that by no means all the entries are of a uniformly high standard and that the editing leaves much to be desired.

To take a few examples, there is no mention of the first balloon flight in the Honourable Artillery Company's entry, there is confusion over just what was built on the site of the Millbank Penitentiary, Wick House on Richmond Hill is not across the road from the Star and Garter Home, and the date of State House is a century out. If these are quibbles, there is no possible excuse for the Lombard Lane entry which would have us believe that this short and ugly alley contains the premises of no less than five banks, when in fact it contains not a single one. To add insult to injury, three of the five are spelt with apostrophes in the wrong place. What a pity that the contributor clearly never bothered to visit it, or that no one noticed the similarity between the entries for Lombard Street and Lombard Lane.

Errors like that cast a shadow over the rest: what other traps are there waiting for the unwary student? Peter Cunningham had the right idea in 1849 when he asked his readers to send him details of any errors, however trivial, for 'the value of a work like this consists in its extreme accuracy'.

Apart from outright errors, the editorial choice of what to include and what to exclude is sometimes rather perverse. Capital Radio, Radio London, LWT and Thames Television are all in, but there are no entries for *The Times*, *Illustrated London News*, *Observer* or any of the other major London newspapers. Several uninteresting modern London hotels get their own entries, faithfully listing the number of their bedrooms, but the City livery companies have to make do with one composite entry. A number of second-rank banks get in, but not the Abbey National Building Society which is financially more important and topographically more interesting. Members will be relieved to know that the London Topographical Society gets its own entry, but the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society is only mentioned peripherally, and is given the wrong address to boot.

Indeed, there is an unfortunate inconsistency about whether to give exact addresses or not, and anyone looking for London Stone will look in vain for it in the wall of the Bank of China, which moved out of Cannon Street nearly ten years ago. Altogether it looks as though rather too much reliance has been put on sources which are either inaccurate or out of date.

With too many cross-references leaving the reader high

and dry, the *Encyclopaedia* could have done with rather more editorial control and polishing. Perhaps it was finished off in too much of a hurry. The second edition, if there is one, could be very much better, especially if a bibliography was included.

In spite of all its faults, *The London Encyclopaedia* is still a most entertaining book. The member who gets given it for Christmas will find it extremely difficult to put it down and get to bed before Boxing Day. Others, who are not so lucky, will have to decide for themselves how seriously the errors undermine the book's value.

Patrick Frazer

LONDON ABROAD

Graham Pascoe, a member living in Germany, has sent us the following notes on books on London which are available in Germany and which he thinks may not have been published here.

Street Life in London, by John Thomson and Adolphe Smith. A complete reprint in the series 'Die bibliophilen Taschenbücher', No 217, paperback, published by Harenburg, Dortmund. No knowledge of German is needed, as there is only a 9-line paragraph of introduction in German, the rest of the book consisting entirely of photographic reproductions of all the 36 photos (perhaps a bit small, about 4 x 5 inches, but well printed) and the complete original texts, in English of course. If such a reprint is not available in Britain, this one is well worth buying. Price 14.80 Marks (about £4).

Weldstadt London, No 261 in the same series. A selection of 65 prints out of the 104 in *The Microcosm of London* by Rowlandson and Pugin, 1808-1810. Not a complete collection, and the pictures are smallish (about 4 x 5 inches), but the colour printing is very good and little, if any, detail is lost. There is a paragraph in German about each print, plus a Postscript, but not much is lost if one knows no German as the texts are entirely derivative, though quite interesting (with several errors). Paperback, price about 16 Marks (£4-£5).

Sport für Gentlemen, No 211 in the same series. A collection of English sporting prints, the same size as the others in the series, well reproduced. Only a few of the pictures are relevant to London, about half a dozen coaching scenes, including the picture of the courtyard of the Swan with Two Necks. The introduction and commentaries to the pictures are very good, well written and informative, but it is only of peripheral relevance to London; one would miss a lot without a knowledge of German. Price as above.

London - eine europäische Metropole, edited by Norbert Kohl, published by Insel Verlag, Frankfurt, 1979 (Insel-Taschenbuch No 322). Paperback, the best in a series of anthologies of writings about famous cities. Most of the passages are translations from English, but there are also some very interesting original accounts of London in German, including Thomas Plattner's 1605 account of bear-baiting, various 18th-century accounts of St Paul's, Kew Gardens, St James's Park, etc, and an amusing account by Wilhelm Liebknecht of a picnic with Karl Marx and his family on Hampstead Heath, in which the party threw stones at a chestnut tree and Marx ricked his right arm and couldn't move it for a week. In all there are about 100 pages of original German accounts of London, for the most part very interesting. Naturally a good knowledge of German is needed, including a knowledge of 17th- and 18th-century German for the earlier passages, but if one has enough German, it's a very good buy. Price about 14 Marks.

NOTES AND QUERIES

The newsletter is issued twice a year. Space is available for you to ask questions relating to London topography or to communicate items of interest to members or information about research in progress. We would also like to print the results of enquiries. Please write to Stephen Marks, Hamilton's, Kilmersdon, near Bath, Somerset.

BENJAMIN READ'S FASHION PLATES

In April 1984 Guildhall Library and the Costume Society will be publishing a set of six reproductions of fashion plates by Benjamin Read, with text by the costume historian Anne Buck. Notes on the topography are being supplied by our Editor, Dr Anne Saunders, and on the printmaker by Ralph Hyde.

Read, a tailor with premises in Hart Street, Bloomsbury, and on Broadway, New York, was trading from 1822 until 1856. Between the late 1820s and the mid-1840s he produced large and very handsome coloured prints, usually at the rate of two a year, one showing the summer fashion, the other the winter. In the background of each print would be a view of a fashionable location, such as Carlton Terrace, Regent's Park, Buckingham Palace, the Colosseum, the Diorama, Windsor Castle, Green Park, Madame Tussaud's, Kensington Palace, Cumberland Terrace, the Zoological Gardens, the Royal Pavilion at Brighton and the Pump Room at Bath. New York scenes may also have featured. In many cases Read's trade information was trimmed off the bottom by purchasers and only the image remained.

In order to assess the range of this tailor's graphic output, and also to find copies complete with the trade information, the publishers would very much like to know of prints by Benjamin Read in the possession of LTS members, whether the subjects of them are represented in the foregoing list of places or not. They are also anxious to hear of such prints in public collections.

Information please to Ralph Hyde, Guildhall Library, Aldermanbury, London EC2P 2EJ (tel 01-606 3030 ext 2864)

LONDON WATER SUPPLY TO 1903

G M Saul, 20 West Way, Rickmansworth, Herts writes: Prior to 1903 water was supplied by one of several water companies. The hydrant and valve covers used by each company included the initials of that company, eg NR for New River Company, WM for West Middlesex Company. Within the area known as 'Water London', approximately that of the Metropolitan Police, there remain some of the old lettered covers.

I am in the process of writing a brief history of each of the companies, referring to existing records and hardware. I would appreciate information about the covers. For those who know the Public Record Office in Chancery Lane there is an 'NR' cover at the foot of the steps.

The final eight companies were:

NR	New River	LW	Lambeth Water Company
GJ	Grand Junction	CW	Chelsea Water Company
WM	West Middlesex	EL	East London Company
S&V	Southwark & Vauxhall	KW	Kent Water Works

Edited by Stephen Marks, Hamilton's, Kilmersdon, near Bath, Somerset, and issued by Patrick Frazer, Hon Secretary of the London Topographical Society, 36 Old Deer Park Gardens, Richmond, Surrey.