Notice of the
Annual General Meeting
Wednesday, 5th July 1995

The ninety-fifth Annual General Meeting of the London Topographical Society will be held on Wednesday, 5th July 1995 in the Governors' Hall at St Thomas' Hospital, London SE1. As usual, the meeting will start at 6.30pm, following refreshments which will be available from 6.00pm. The award-winning Florence Nightingale Museum will be open specially for LTS members between 5.00pm and 9.00pm – see below. The hospital is on the south bank of the Thames by Westminster Bridge. The nearest stations are Westminster and Waterloo. The interior of St Thomas' is rather confusing but there will be plenty of signs pointing the way to the Governors' Hall. Members who go in through the main entrance should turn right at the reception desk, then take the next left turn and walk past the lifts until they reach Queen Victoria's statue, then turn right.

St Thomas' was originally founded in the early twelfth century on a site in Southwark. It moved in 1871 to its current premises which were designed by Henry Currey. The Governors' Hall and the Grand Committee Room, which we shall also be using, are two of the finest rooms in the hospital.

Members attending the meeting will be issued with this year's publications, volume xxvii of the London Topographical Record and a portfolio of maps by Joel Gascoyne.

St Thomas' was suggested as an AGM location by Dr Desmond Croft, a LTS member and consultant physician at the hospital, and he has kindly helped us make the arrangements, including the special museum opening. After the business part of the meeting he will give a short talk about his family's connections with St Thomas' and Guy's which have extended over three centuries. There will also be talks about the hospital's buildings by Mr Barry Jackson, consultant surgeon and Chairman of the Works of Art Committee, and about Joel Gascoyne and his maps.

Please write to the Hon Secretary if you would like to nominate anyone as an officer of the Society or as a member of Council, or if you wish to raise any matter under item 6 of the Agenda.

As always, we hope that as many people as possible will come to the AGM, especially as this year's publications will be particularly expensive to post. Anyone feeling strong enough also to act as postman for friends or neighbours will be especially welcome. There is no need to inform the Hon Secretary if you are going to attend. The publications will be sent to all other members, although please be patient as this will not be until several weeks after the meeting.

AGENDA
1. To approve the Minutes of the 94th Annual General Meeting
2. To receive the 95th Annual Report of the Council for 1994
3. To receive the Accounts for 1994
4. To receive the Hon Editor's report
5. To elect officers and members of Council
6. To discuss any proposals by members
7. Any other business

Items 1-3 are all published in this Newsletter

– Patrick Frazer, Hon Secretary.


Two annual publications were issued free to members during 1994. Publication number 147, Drawings of Westminster, was a book reproducing twenty-one pencil drawings of interior and exterior views executed by Sir George Scharf between 1859 and 1874. The text was written by Peter Jackson. Number 148 was the Topography of London, a facsimile of John Locke's Gazetteer (2nd edition, 1813) with an introduction by David Webb. During the year the Hon Editor was also busy preparing the 1995 volume of the London Topographical Record and negotiating other publications for the future.

The Society also issued two Newsletters, in May and November. The Society's Council met on three occasions to discuss the publishing programme as well as administrative matters including finance and membership, and arrangements for the AGM.

After the relatively sharp fall which followed the subscription increase in 1982, membership stabilized at about 880, with the small number of new recruits balancing the inevitable deaths and resignations. Total membership was still about 30% higher than it was ten years previously. With
strong financial resources and a healthy flow of income, the Society is well placed to continue its ambitious programme of publications.

The ninety-fourth Annual General Meeting of the Society was held at St Paul’s Church, Covent Garden, on 29th June. It was attended by Mr Peter Jackson, the officers of the Society and, in spite of a national rail strike, some 200 members and guests. The minutes of the 93rd Annual General Meeting, held at King’s College were read and approved. The Annual Report of the Council and the Accounts were received. The Hon Editor introduced the year’s subscription publications and outlined plans for future publications. All the members of Council were re-elected. The officers were also all re-elected, viz: Peter Jackson as Chairman, Roger Cline as Hon Treasurer, Ann Saunders as Hon Editor, Simon Morris and Caroline Ryan as Joint Publications Secretaries, Trevor Ford as Membership Secretary, Penelope Hunting as Newsletter Editor, Patrick Frazer as Hon Secretary and Hugh Cleaver as Hon Auditor. After the business meeting, there were three talks: by the Chairman on Sir George Scharf’s drawings, by David Webb on John Lockie’s gazetteer and by Marie Draper on the history of St Paul’s church.

**Florence Nightingale Museum**

As an extra inducement to attend the AGM we have arranged to make a single lump-sum payment so that members and guests can visit the museum free of charge between 5.00pm and 9.00pm on 5th July. This will allow people to drop in either before or after the meeting.

St Thomas’ is naturally proud of its connection with Florence Nightingale, who established the Nightingale Training School of Nursing at the hospital. The excellent museum, opened in 1989 and managed by a separate trust, traces her life and influence, separating the myths from the realities. There is plenty to enjoy, including pictures, personal possessions and correspondence, Nightingallia, a twenty minute tape/ slide show and shop. It has won a London Tourist Board award and was a finalist in the Museums Year Awards.

The museum is part of the hospital site, though outside the main buildings close to Lambeth Palace Road.

**Publications 149 and 150**

This year, your Council has (extravagantly? generously?) authorized two publications – the *London Topographical Record* volume xxvii and Gascoyne’s Maps of Stepney 1702-4.

The Record contains fourteen essays. Rather than list them all – you can soon read the contents page for yourselves – I shall pick out a few points.

The volume begins with the text of two lectures on early Victorian development in north-west London by the late Sir John Summerson. Your Hon Editor, when newly-appointed as Archivist to St Marylebone, did the running to-and-fro, the fetching-and-carrying, for the first of these. Perhaps the research begun here was intended to develop into a history of Victorian London, an enterprise which became too great to be carried through. If so, what we have here is all the more precious and is, beside, pure vintage Summerson. In view of its importance, I have put it first in the volume instead of keeping to the usual strict chronological order. These lectures are ably reinforced by Malcolm Brown’s study of the Eyre Estate before 1830.

Two of the essays – “Mountjoy’s Inn, Fenchurch Street” by Caroline Dalton and “The Angel Court Development” by D.E. Wickham trace the history of particular sites from the Middle Ages to the present day, and contain much valuable evidence on late twentieth century development. Christopher Board tells the extraordinary story of the Secret Map of the County of London, 1926.... All these – and many others – are coming in July!

The second publication is a folder containing Joel Gascoyne’s large map of Stepney, with his smaller depictions of Limehouse, Bethnal Green and Whitechapel, ten sheets in all. The folder also contains a booklet with essays on Gascoyne himself by Professor William Ravenhill, and on the topography of the maps by David Johnson. This is particularly happy, since three of the essays in the Record (Judith Etherton on a newly-recognized Treswell Survey, Isobel Watson on Stepney Green and John Appleby on Limehouse Sawmill) draw on Gascoyne for their evidence.

Having publications in the form of one map and one book increases the cost of postage. Please make every effort to get to the AGM so that you can carry away your 1995 goodies – or else let the Hon Treasurer know before the AGM that you will subsequently collect them from the Bishopsgate Institute – thereby saving the Society good money and packing effort.

– Ann Saunders

**Dr Ralph Merrifield FSA**

Our President, Dr Ralph Merrifield FSA, FMA died on 9th January aged eighty-one. He was an active President of the Society and regularly contributed reviews and pieces to the Newsletter. An obituary will be published in the forthcoming volume of the *London Topographical Record* and a Memorial Service will take place at St Bartholomew-the-Great, West Smithfield, at 3pm on 16th May.

**Dr Helen Wallis OBE**

Dr Helen Wallis OBE, who died on 7th February 1995 aged seventy, was well-known in London topographical circles through her many lecture engagements on London mapping to local societies and through her association for over forty years with the British Library Map Library (1951-95),
twenty-five years of them as the Map Librarian. One of her lesser known and more recent investigations was into the site of the north London rubbish pit which was reported as having been conveyed to St Petersburg by barge at the end of the nineteenth century. Such was Helen’s ever inquiring mind that even in her last fight with cancer she continued to research, completing with the great assistance of Anita McConnell the Royal Historical Society’s Historians’ Guide to Maps a few months before her death.

– Sarah Tyacke

Marie Draper

I first met Marie in 1947, when we were both taking the post-graduate course in Archive administration at University College, London. From there she joined Ida Darlinton’s tiny Survey of London team at County Hall, where she made very substantial contributions to thirteen of the parish volumes (22-3, 25-34, 36). During the preparation of volume 36, which described Covent Garden and was published in 1970, she spent most of two years researching the archives at the Bedford Estate Office in Bloomsbury. The authorities there were so impressed by her that they invited her to become Archivist to the Bedford Settled Estates, the post which she held for nearly twenty-five years until her recent retirement.

When I became Editor of the Survey in 1954 I had very little idea of how to set about producing the volumes. But Marie had already been doing the job for five years, and she initiated me into the use of all sorts of source materials that I had never heard of, and instructed me in the abstruse art of taking notes from ratebooks. And even when, in the preparation of the volume on Southern Lambeth, I dragged her out in the freezing weather on long exploratory excursions into the mazes of Brixton and West Norwood, she never complained. She was a marvellous colleague – helpful, calm, reliable, cheerful, always willing to do even the dullest jobs – much respected by everyone who knew her; and her gentle smile was never far away.

She was also, of course, a very fine scholar. Besides her numerous contributions to the Survey of London (notably in volume 28, on Brooke House, Hackney, 1960), she was the principal author of the very distinguished monograph on Marble Hill House, Twickenham, published by the G.L.C. in 1970. And at the Bedford Office she was a skilful archivist, responsible in recent years for the removal of the entire archive from Bloomsbury to Woburn.

She will be very greatly missed.

– Francis Sheppard

St Thomas’ Hospital: from Holford to YRM

by Moira Rudolf Hanley

St Thomas’ Hospital started the war with nine separate pavilions, generally dating from 1866-71, connected by colonnades and ranged along the Thames from Westminster Bridge to Lambeth Bridge (Plate 1). The Treasurer’s House occupied Block 1, nearest Westminster Bridge, with Gassiot House, the Nurses’ Home, adjoining. Blocks 2-4 and 6-8 were ward pavilions; Block 5, as now, consisted of the then entrance hall (Central Hall) and Chapel with the 1904-7 addition of the Governors’ Hall and Administrative Offices facing the river. The Medical School occupied Block 9, and the present St Thomas’s House and Riddell House (opened 1937) were behind Blocks 5 and 6. In the worst week of its history, September 9-15th 1940, three direct hits by high explosive bombs destroyed many facilities above ground, killed nine people and injured sixty others. By the end of the war four ward blocks, three operating theatres, most of the nurses’ and staff accommodation, as well as the outpatients’ department were wrecked. From that time there were a number of proposals for rebuilding the hospital; the following is an attempt to set out the building history.

In 1944 a Constructional Panel was appointed to consider an Interim Scheme drawn up in the last years of the war, and to work out a programme for the reconstruction of the hospital; Professor W. G. Holford (subsequently Sir William, then Lord Holford), a hospital Governor, was a member. Their Preliminary Report, circulated in May 1946, contained various proposals: the concentration and vertical extension of the main part of the hospital within a shorter frontage; the building of a new Operating Theatre Block at the north (i.e. Westminster Bridge End) of the central range; the building of a new Medical School, also at the north of the site; remodelling and modernization of the existing wards, and the development of land to the east of Lambeth Palace Road – which then ran between Riddell House and the Victorian hospital – to accommodate the Nightingale School and residences. The main priority was, however, for hospital and medical school to be reunited in London and for the worst of the war damage to be consolidated. Work began in 1945 with the repair of George Ward, Block 6, as ‘transfer station’ for patients in wards being unbricked or reglazed, and continued the following year with the reconstruction of Ann, Dorcas, Job, and Lydia Wards in Block 8 as a Maternity Unit. That year’s total bed complement of 247 almost doubled in 1947 as the emergency reconstruction programme drew to a close.

The Interim Scheme was followed by a programme of rehabilitation affecting almost all departments; in addition to some sixty different projects it included the rebuilding of the South
Operating Theatres, the addition of a special four-bed ward, Holden Ward; the provision of a new Radiotherapy Department, and the replanning of Accident and Emergency. Meanwhile, the Board of Governors continued to work on the redevelopment programme. Visits were made abroad to study the latest in hospital design; more land was brought under the Board's control; various ministries and local authorities were consulted, and in 1950 William Holford and Leslie Creed, in association with the Governors and the Constructional Panel, brought out their Studies for the Reconstruction.

The first part of the Studies drew heavily on the Panel's Preliminary Report, while the second developed proposals such as the realignment of Lambeth Palace Road. The Governors – despite the 25% loss of floor area during the Blitz – opposed complete demolition and rebuilding on the grounds that Henry Currey's 1866-71 building was well designed, serviceable, and still relevant; the French hospital at Beaujon had recently been completed to a similar plan. Moreover, the problem was not one of constructing a new hospital on an empty site, but of gradually and systematically repairing salvageable buildings with minimum disruption. In addition, most building could only be done by licence, involving lengthy negotiations with the Ministries of Health, and of Public Buildings and Works (later the DoE), and there was the difficulty of obtaining building materials.

In 1946 the National Health Service Act completed its passage through Parliament. The new St Thomas', then only 500 beds against a pre-war complement of 682, needed to be brought into line with the Goodenough Committee's recommendations, published in 1944, that 950-1,000 beds was the optimum size for a teaching hospital, based on a yearly intake of 100 clinical students. Holford's solution was to remodel the existing buildings, retaining their original lines and reinstating the courtyards (Plate 2). Blocks 1 and 2 were to be demolished and the hospital concentrated within the area of Blocks 2 – 7, with a Maternity Wing at the south end of the site and Operating Theatres at the north. The east, or Lambeth Palace Road end of the pavilions, was to be linked by a long block providing communication to all levels. The dormer storey of each pavilion was to be replaced by two new floors, and ancillary services – bathrooms, sluices, sanitary towers – housed in a narrow building on the north of each block. The entire western front, facing the Houses
of Parliament, was to be rebuilt, though the design was not finalized at the time of the Studies. Holford intended to retain Henry Currey's Central Hall, Block 5, but resite the Chapel at the top of the central range, and demolish Percivall Currey's 1904-7 westward extension of Administrative Offices and Governors' Hall (Plate 2). Early in 1955 while Block 7a, the first part of the scheme, was being built, tiles began to fall from the walls of the Victorian wards. Structural engineers examined Block 3, nearest the most badly damaged area, and found unexpected problems: dry rot and corrosion of the wrought iron girders supporting floors and flat roofs. They advised that although the foundations were sound enough to carry a replica rebuild, they would not bear the extensive alterations and additions proposed by Holford. Since the cost of strengthening the foundations would have negated the saving in reusing what existed, his scheme was abandoned after completion of Block 7a, which survives as incongruous infill, bearing no relation to the ward pavilions on either side.

Holford was unable to prepare another scheme, but continued as Consulting Architect. In 1956 the hospital's staff architect William Fowler Howitt began planning the new buildings. The following year, the Minister of Health agreed in principle to the building of a new hospital, and authority for draft plans was granted in 1959. This scheme, subsequently included in the Ten Year Plan for the Development of Hospitals in England and Wales, was to cost some £13 million and be carried out in three distinct stages. The contract for the first, to be completed in two and a half years, was awarded to Sir Robert McAlpine.

Howitt's new building (Plate 3) was visualized in vertical rather than horizontal form. It consisted of four twelve storey blocks — built separately but joined together, with no lateral communication between them — flanked by two eight storey residential blocks and connected to them by colonnades and low rise buildings housing the Nightingale School. The space left by the demolition of Block 5 and the Governors' Hall was to be a landscaped garden. The Outpatients' Operating Theatres and Accident and Emergency fronted onto Lambeth Palace Road. The Lambeth Palace Road was aligned to its present position and opened in June 1961, doubling the size of the hospital site. The following year excavation began for the first stage, the southernmost one of Howitt's four towers, the present East Wing. Demolition of the Victorian ward pavilions was scheduled to coincide with the start of the second tower.

The Ministry of Health's Ten Year Plan came out in 1962. This proposed that St Thomas' discharge the function of a district general hospital, then the responsibility of the Lambeth Hospital, and that the latter take a subsidiary role. At the same time the Medical School put forward a plan to raise its annual intake of students from eighty to ninety-six. The effect of this was to jeopardise Howitt's building since the 825-bed hospital planned was already too small for its purpose. The first stone was however laid in July 1963, and in October the Minister of Health announced incorporation of the Lambeth Hospital into St Thomas'. Earlier, it had also become obvious that the Architects' Department could not carry out the scheme; in June 1963 a senior member of the team had resigned, and the department was subsequently disbanded.
The Governors sought the help of a private architectural firm, Yorke Rosenberg Mardall, whose Principal Architect was Eugene Rosenberg. YRM’s instructions were to develop St Thomas’ Hospital in accordance with the Ministry of Health’s revised guidelines, taking into account the requirements of medical teaching and likely changes in local population. St Thomas’ would have 1,255 beds while the Lambeth Hospital would continue to provide acute services until the new buildings were commissioned. No doubt Eugene Rosenberg would have preferred to demolish the rising steelwork of the East Wing and begin again; he had no alternative but to continue and to plan the next stage for maximum flexibility. YRM’s proposals were accepted on 9th January 1964. These left the programme for the East Wing untouched, but otherwise bore no resemblance to the abandoned scheme. The factors influencing the densely planned ward and treatment blocks – the North and Lambeth Wings respectively – were the increase in beds without a correspondingly larger site; the town planning requirement that the height of the new buildings must not exceed that of the East Wing, and that the hospital continue to function during rebuilding, with minimum disruption.

The approval of all authorities concerned was finally secured in December 1966, after enforced cost cutting. These included the Building Regulation Department of the GLC, the London Fire Brigade and the Factory Inspectorate; the Planning Authorities of the Borough of Lambeth, the GLC, and the City of Westminster. There were further discussions with the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works, the Church Commissioners (because of the proximity of Lambeth Palace), and the Royal Fine Arts Commission. These last were particularly protracted and a compromise was reached; while they would not give the design their blessing, they would not stop it. The residence, Gassiot House, originally intended to be a twelve storey block to complement the North Wing, was split into two to prevent it towering over County Hall. A model of the area from Vickers Tower, Millbank, to the Shell Building on the South Bank, showing the relationship of the scheme to Whitehall and County Hall was exhibited at the Houses of Parliament. Full size mock-ups of the four bed and single bed bays were set up at the National College of Ventilation, Heating and Fan Engineering, and experiments conducted on air flow to ensure optimum efficiency of the air conditioning system. At the same time the completed East Wing was being occupied, and the detailed planning of Stage II, subsequently renamed Scheme II, was progressing.

Scheme II, under the executive charge of John Ross, a partner of YRM, was to consist of 612 beds. Administration for the Hospital and Medical School, outpatient, diagnostic, and other support departments; eight major and numerous minor operating theatres; six major laboratory departments, a clinical research institute (the Rayne Institute); Gassiot House and the Nightingale School, plus staff dining facilities, Chapel, and the ‘ceremonial core’ of the hospital: Governors’ Hall and Grand Committee Room. Scheme III was to follow on completion of Schemes II and Iia (Medical Staff residences), and was to consist of three new buildings containing 447 beds and a new Medical School. This, the ‘KTW Project’ or Biomedical Centre, was drawn up in response to recommendations made in 1968 by the 1962 Royal Commission for the Review of Medical Education. It was the joint invention of King’s College, St Thomas’ Medical School, and the Westminster Medical School, and was to be used for the teaching of basic sciences to medical students, and students of other biological disciplines.

Scheme II required the excavation and demolition of Blocks 1–4, together with a large number of occupied houses. More than fifty departments had to be relocated, many in huts erected outside Riddell House and St Thomas’s House, on the former site of the Lambeth Palace Road. The majority of the 300 displaced families were rehoused in the purpose-built blocks of flats, Canterbury House and Stangate, on the Lambeth Palace Road. The contract for the new hospital was signed on 18th October 1968 – at £12.8 million, one of the largest of that time – and on 1st January 1969 John Laing Construction moved onto site.

Work was divided into three sections, each with its own management team: Gassiot House and the Nightingale School, the Lambeth Wing and the North Wing. The first problem, when building began in 1970, was the removal of the extensive Victorian foundations before piling could begin for the footings of the new buildings. Some 14,000 cubic yards of old concrete was eventually removed by controlled blasting, and c1,500 piles, each 2ft in diameter, were sunk through 30ft of water-bearing ballast to depths of 80–90ft. Another major problem was the construction of special lower-ground floor chambers, 4ft thick protected by 2 inch steel plates, for the radiotherapy treatment plants. These are situated immediately above the 100 year old Battlebridge Sewer, and took eleven months to complete. In addition, the cranked columns and cantilevered walls of the third storey which carry the overhang of the floors above, needed temporary support by scaffolding to ground level.

The first part of Scheme II, Gassiot House and the Nightingale School (Plate 4), was opened in summer 1972; the North and Lambeth Wings followed in November 1976. Construction of Scheme III, the Biomedical Centre, was prevented by shortage of money and the major changes occasioned by reorganization of the NHS in 1974. Today’s St Thomas’ Hospital (Plate 4) consists of half a Victorian hospital with numerous accretions, two residences – St Thomas’s House and Riddell House – of the 1920s and 1930s; a defunct road and refurbished Victorian Medical School; two
fragments of abandoned schemes, and the huge blocks of the YRM hospital. While the mix of buildings lacks clarity and the 'new buildings' have been the subject of some criticism, the architects did make attempts to incorporate important amenities: the retention of the old trees on the embankment, the separation of vehicles and pedestrians; the creation of an award-winning garden on the deck over the car park; and last – but not least – the founding of an important modern art collection for the enjoyment of patients and staff.

Sources: unpublished
History and Works of Art (IWAC) Collection, St Thomas' Hospital:
Sir Robert McAlpine, "St Thomas' Hospital: Stage I, now under construction", (nd).
Yorke Rosenberg Mardall, "Feasibility Study", (nd).
"St Thomas' Hospital Commemorative Catalogue", (1976).
R. Sharpton, "Towards Improved Health Care: No Substitute for the Governors", (c.1977), Brief Outline History of St Thomas' Hospital, (nd).

Sources: published
E. M. McInnes, St Thomas' Hospital, (1963, reprinted and enlarged 1991).
Circle: Special Edition on the Planning, Building and Occupation of the new St Thomas' Hospital, (October 1975).
Moira Ockrim (later Rudolf Hanley), "The Bombing of St Thomas' Hospital", STH Gazette, (Summer 1990), pp 76-90.

Acknowledgements
I would like to thank Mike Messer and colleagues, Central Illustration, St Thomas' Hospital, for the photographs.

The author, Moira Rudolf Hanley, Art Historian, Special Trustees for St Thomas' Hospital, has curatorial responsibility for works of art and items of historical interest in St Thomas' Hospital and the Medical School. The collection comprises some 1800 modern original works, as well as furniture, china, silver, clocks, and the Doulton Tile Panels. She is an architectural historian by training, and has been at St Thomas' Hospital since 1989.
Richard Horwood’s Map of London: eighteenth century cartography and the Society of Arts
by Elizabeth Baigent

One of the treasures of the RSA’s archive is Richard Horwood’s 1799 map of London, which he deposited there in order to claim the Society’s bounty of fifty guineas. A closer look at the history of the map tells us much about eighteenth century cartography and the Society’s role in fostering it, and a closer look at the map itself tells us much about Regency London.

Richard Horwood first comes to notice at the age of twenty-one when he surveyed the Trentham Hall estate in Staffordshire. His brother Thomas, the agent of the estate for the Marquis of Stafford, Granville Leveson-Gower, commissioned Richard to survey the estate to help its more effective management. Some of Richard’s Trentham maps, redrawn and dated 1782, survive.1 Horwood’s start as an estate surveyor was typical of surveyors of the day. Agriculture was still the mainstay of the economy and landowners and tenant farmers were experimenting with new methods which often demanded systematic gathering of information through surveying and mapping. The Society of Arts was quick to encourage such agricultural improvement and details of schemes which won its approval were published in its Transactions and the relevant map lodged in its archives. Most estate surveyors went no further in their profession. For Horwood, however, estate surveying was only the start of his career which culminated in his remarkable maps of Liverpool and, especially, London.

London in the 1790s was a conurbation of about three-quarters of a million people living in the cities of London and Westminster and ever increasing areas of the surrounding counties. The most recent accurate map of London was John Rocque’s, surveyed from 1738 and published in 1748.2 Horwood saw both the need for a new plan and the possibility of raising subscriptions from the gentry, then the normal way of funding expensive mapping projects, and from rich London tradesmen. He also hoped for patronage from the Society of Arts, which since 1759 had offered cartographers premiums, bounties and medals.3 In October 1790 to attract potential subscribers Horwood published a map of the area around Leicester Square and Haymarket “as a specimen of a Plan of LONDON”.4 In March 1791 Horwood sent the Society the “specimen”. He was thanked but told that the map must be complete before its merits could be judged.5 Horwood must have raised money by subscriptions since the following year he published the first sheet of his map, dated 22 June 1792. Another followed in 1793 and by 1795 eight sheets were finished. Having “completed eight Plates comprising One quarter of this plan of London” Horwood submitted them to the Society hoping “for the honour of their approbation”.

Horwood attended the meeting of the Committee of Polite Arts and explained that the map “was begun in the year 1791 and...will be completed in 1796; it would have been completed sooner had he not been obliged to survey it wholly himself”. The Committee acknowledged that the sheets it had seen were “executed in a very accurate manner, and on a scale that promises to be of considerable Utility”, but still would not recommend an award until the map was complete.6 Undeterred Horwood raised further subscriptions and a loan of £500 from the Phoenix Fire Office, to whose Trustees and Directors the map was ultimately “most respectfully dedicated”.

By late 1799 his “Plan of the Cities of London and Westminster, the Borough of Southwark and parts adjoining” in thirty-two sheets was complete. This remarkable map was the largest ever printed in Britain and shows the city in extraordinary detail. Horwood attempted to show each individual property and to number all the houses.7 In December 1800 it was considered by the Society who, as was customary, sought an expert opinion on it, choosing the Architect and Surveyor to the City of London, George Dance the Younger.8 On 13 May 1801 it was recorded that Dance’s opinion “appeared favourable but not sufficiently explicit to form therefrom a certain Conclusion”. Horwood could not be present as he was in the country, so a decision was again postponed until he should appear or the Committee could obtain other evidence “as to the general Utility and Accuracy of this map”.9 Horwood would not let the matter rest and finally on 30 April 1803 consideration of the map was resumed. The Committee heard a letter from Horwood vouching that the map “had cost him 9 Years Labour” and that he “took every Angle, measured almost every line and after that plotted the whole Work and completed it”. The Committee resolved that the map deserved the “approbation and encouragement of the Society” and recommended he be given a bounty of fifty guineas “on his leaving his map with the Society”.10

By this time Horwood was in Liverpool where official patronage for his scheme to map that city was quickly secured. He received the promise of help from the Corporation’s surveyors and a subscription for ten copies from the Treasurer. His map of Liverpool, which was similar in conception to his London map, was published in six sheets in July 1803 with 760 subscribers. Just three months later, on 3 October 1803, he died, and was buried in Toxteth, Liverpool.11

By contrast with Liverpudlians, Londoners treated Horwood unenthusiastically. In particular it is not clear why the Society of Arts was so reluctant to reward him, although Horwood was by no means the only respected cartographer who found it hard to secure a premium.12 The fact that the survey took nine years to complete, a fact that Horwood cited in support of his case, may have counted against him, since the Society had
explicitly tried to speed up the production of maps. Defects in the map, such as the 
incomplete representation of parish boundaries and the backs of buildings, would have been 
noticed by the referee, George Dance, and, as a 
subscribers, he may also have been irritated that 
Horwood's map was more modest than originally 
promised and was late in arriving. Perhaps 
Horwood's cool reception simply reflected the 
Society's waner interest in mapping; its last 
premum for a county map was awarded in 1809. 

Horwood's experience neatly sums up the 
Society's contribution to British cartography. The 
Society was never the chief source of finance for 
surveys: its fifty guinea bounty to Horwood must 
be compared with the 836 people who subscribed 
five guineas each for the map and his £500 loan 
from the Phoenix Fire Office. Neither was its 
approval critical to the success of a project: 
Horwood's subscribers included the King and 
Queen and such commercial patrons as the Bank of 
England. Nonetheless the Society's approval was 
important enough for Horwood to persist over 
many years to win it. And few cartographers were 
so well off that a bounty of fifty guineas could be 
spurned.

Fellows of the Society have access to the first 
edition of Horwood's map (1799). The sheets are 
bound into a book and are colour washed to show 
the different parishes outside the City of London, 
where the boundaries were too complicated for 
Horwood to mark them on, and to show different 
land uses such as parks and open spaces which 
are green and stretches of water which are washed 
blue. Ironically, the RSA's house in John Adam 
Street is omitted altogether, in one of the instances 
where Horwood's original plan to show all 
properties was defeated by what he described as 
"the immense mass of work" involved.

Fellows may compare the original edition to the 
third, published by William Faden in 1813 and 
reproduced as The A to Z of Regency London. Faden, who was himself twice honoured by the 
Society for his cartographic achievements, obtained the plates of Horwood's map and updated 
them to show new developments. The 1813 edition 
shows new housing for the less well off south of the river and, most remarkably, the growth of 
housing, docks, warehouses and commercial 
buildings in east London and the dock area. As 
well as these, new bridges over the Thames and 
John Nash's projected and actual schemes for the 
west end may be seen. Although London at this 
time was not growing as rapidly as some industrial 
towns in the Midlands and north, it was still 
increasing dramatically in size and changing as it 
lost old manufacturing functions, such as cloth 
production, and gained new commercial functions, 
especially in the dock area.

Horwood's map is a lasting monument to his 
initiative, skill and "indefatigable perseverance" 
and is a rich source of information about London 
in the late Georgian and Regency periods. Horwood 
said of his map "considering the immense mass of 
work, (it) is, I flatter myself, well done". Fellows 
will undoubtedly agree.

Notes

1. Laxton, Paul, "Richard Horwood's Plan of London: a 
guide to editions and variants 1792-1819", London 
Topographical Record 26 (1996), 214-263. 
2. Laxton, Paul, "The Society of Arts and the surveys 
of English counties 1759-1809", Journal of the 
Royal Society of Arts 112 (1963), 43-6,119-125,269-275,538- 
543; and cf. Baigent, Elizabeth, "The Royal Society of 
Arts and the Dictionary of National Biography", RSA 

4. Laxton, Paul, "Richard Horwood's map and the face of 
London, 1799-1819", introduction to The A to Z of 
Regency London, Lympne Castle, Kent, Harry Margary, 
London Topographical Society Publication 131 (1985), iv- 
xiv.

5. Minutes of the Committee of Polite Arts, 16 March 
1791.

6. Minutes of the Committee of Polite Arts, 20 February 
1795.

7. Laxton, Paul, "Richard Horwood's map and the face of 
London 1799-1819", introduction to The A to Z of 
Regency London, Lympne Castle, Kent, Harry Margary, 
London Topographical Society Publication 131 (1985), iv- 
xiv.

8. Minutes of the Committee of Polite Arts, 12 December 
1800: and cf. Harley, J. Brian, "The Society of Arts and 
the surveys of English counties 1759-1809", Journal of 
the Royal Society of Arts 112 (1963), 43-6,119-125,269- 
275, 538-543 for expert advice taken on other submitted 
plans.

9. Minutes of the Committee of Polite Arts, 13 May 1801.

10. Minutes of the Committee of Polite Arts, 30 April 
1803.

11. Laxton, Paul, "Richard Horwood's map and the face of 
London, 1799-1819", introduction to The A to Z of 
Regency London, Lympne Castle, Kent, Harry Margary, 
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xiv.

12. Harley, J. Brian, "The Society of Arts and the surveys 
of English counties 1759-1809", Journal of the 
Royal Society of Arts 112 (1963), 43-6,119-125,269-275,538- 
543.

13. Minutes of the Committee of Polite Arts, 10 March 
1760 in which the Committee called for county maps 
eligible for a premium to be delivered "within one 
Year...or two Years at the most".

14. "Dance, George, Esq. Gower Street" is listed as a 
subscriber in Horwood's "Proposals" of 1795, reproduced 
as p. iv of Laxton, Paul, "Richard Horwood's map and the 
face of London 1799-1819", introduction to The A to Z of 
Regency London, Lympne Castle, Kent, Harry Margary, 
London Topographical Society Publication 131 (1985), iv- 
xiv. cf. note on Dance's residence in Robinson, C.J., 
London, (1888). 11. Subscribers were promised a set of

15. The names and addresses of the 838 subscribers appear on Horwood’s second prospectus of 1 December 1795 cf. note 14.


The author, Dr Elizabeth Baigent, is Research Director of the New Dictionary of National Biography, and lecturer at St Hugh’s College, Oxford. She wishes to acknowledge Paul Laxton’s early research on Horwood. Her article is reproduced with permission from the RSA Journal vol cxiii, no 5455, December 1994.

News and Notes

A Special Note from the Treasurer
It is possible I shall not be able to get to the AGM to present the Accounts this year. I realize this will not be a calamity, because you really come to hear Ann Saunders telling you what delights are in store and to eat the tea and meet your friends. However if you do have any questions about the Accounts, it would make easier the life of the officers who are present at the AGM if you would raise the questions with me before the meeting so that I can supply an answer to be given to you privately or at the meeting as you wish.

AGM locations – an appeal for ideas
Dr Croft may not be the only LTS member who is in a position to suggest a suitable AGM location. Every year the Council ranks its collective brains and tries to identify somewhere large enough and interesting enough – a process which inevitably gets more difficult – so any help would be very welcome. The ideal location is in central London, is not normally open to the public, and is interesting architecturally, historically or by association. It must be capable of seating at least 200 people and be within our budget. Most, but not all, City halls and national museums have priced themselves out of our range. Ideas from members who can offer some inside track – to gain access to a difficult location or negotiate a special price – would naturally be specially welcome. However, the Hon Secretary would be delighted to hear any suggestions, even if only half-baked.

Cakes and Ale
As members will have read, this year’s AGM is at St Thomas’ Hospital. Fortunately Mrs Joyce Cuming is available this year to mistress-mind the tea, but all those who can bake anything tasty are urged to contribute samples of their skills.

Book Fairs
The London Antiquarian Book Fairs will take place at the Hotel Russell, Russell Square, WC1, from 23rd June to 3rd July. Thousands of antiquarian, rare and second-hand books, maps and prints will be for sale and there are two complete changes of exhibitors and stock during the period. Admission is by catalogue only (£3.00), giving entry to all three fairs. Opening times vary, please telephone the organizers at 01763 248400.

Westminster Archives Centre
The City of Westminster’s archives and local history collections are now under one roof in a modern building at 10 St Ann’s Street, London SW1P 2XR (on the south side of Victoria Street near Great Peter Street). This is all the material previously at the Victoria and Marylebone libraries including the exceptionally fine collection of maps, photographs, engravings, watercolours and drawings. Opening hours are 9.30am – 7pm Monday to Friday, 9.30am – 5pm on Saturday.

Westminster Cathedral Centenary
The celebrations surrounding the centenary of Westminster Cathedral continue until November. From 17th-20th May there is an International Flower Festival with music (to book in advance telephone Margaret Ferguson, 0171 821 1981). Centenary lectures are being given by the Rt Hon John Patten (8th June) and Sir Edward Heath (9th November), among others. There is also an exhibition of the art, architecture and treasures of Westminster Cathedral from 2nd July – 15th October in the recently restored Cathedral Hall, Ambrosden Street, SW1. This will trace the cathedral’s history from the drawing board to the present day through drawings, paintings, models etc. For information (a brochure with a diary of events is available) and enquiries about these and other centenary events, telephone 0171 798 9055.
Traitors' Gate again
My plea for information on the source of the story about Traitors' Gate being sold to Barnum, which appeared in the LTS Newsletter No 39 produced some interesting correspondence.

Norman Bar wrote to say that he found the story in London Town Past and Present by W.W. Hutchings who quotes as his source Augustus Hare’s Walks in London. My edition of Hare is the sixth dated 1894 and it does indeed give the story in full adding that the gates “became the most important and attractive object in his (Barnum’s) Exhibition at New York”.

In reply to my letter to the New York Historical Society, Wendy Shadwell, Curator of Prints, wrote to say that “I have not been able to find any evidence that Barnum purchased and exhibited Traitors’ Gate. And he was not shy about promoting his acquisitions! I have checked the indices of every book by and about Barnum that we have (a lot); also the “snakes” (long slim flyers) advertising his productions. I learned he exhibited everything from Napoleon’s watch to educated white rats, but no Gate”.

I would still like to find out where Hare got the story and I will continue the chase.

- Peter Jackson

The Prophetic Eye
The life and work of the philanthropist George Peabody (1795-1869) is the subject of an exhibition at the Museum of London until 9th July. Those of us living in or travelling through London must surely have noticed a Peabody Estate, Buildings, Square, Peabody Hill or Peabody Avenue – all of them named after their benefactor.

George Peabody began his working life at the age of eleven in his local village store in Danvers (now Peabody), Massachusetts, progressing to his brother’s drapery shop in Newburyport. After serving briefly in the war of 1812-15 he went into business in Baltimore, trading on credit and exploiting the commercial opportunities at a time of expansion in trade and imports. Once financially secure and with his widowed mother’s mortgages paid off, Peabody’s initiative led him to England to negotiate the sale of American cotton to the Lancashire mills. Ten years later in 1837, he settled in London with offices at 31 Moorgate. He took into partnership a fellow American called Julius Spencer Morgan and together they organized the capital necessary to lay the first and second transatlantic cables. In this enterprising partnership lie the origins of the merchant banks Morgan Grenfell, J.P. Morgan and Morgan Stanley.

The presence of a competent partner gave Peabody the freedom to travel and to plan how to spend his fortune. Acquaintanceship with Lord Shaftesbury and Baroness Burdett Coutts among a circle of reformers and philanthropists encouraged Peabody to establish a trust to finance housing for the industrious poor of London most of whom lived in insanitary slums.

London’s first housing scheme, the Bagnigge Wells estate in Holborn (1846) had set a precedent and in 1862 George Peabody extended the concept by founding the Peabody Donation Fund with an endowment of £150,000 (later increased to £500,000) for “relieving the poor and needy of this great city, and to promote their comfort and happiness”.

The map of London was soon dotted with large housing blocks – the first Peabody building designed by H.A. Darbishire (1862-4) was in Commercial Street, Spitalfields; the second, Peabody Square, Islington (1865-6), contained 240 tenements of between one and three rooms available at comparatively cheap rents of between 2s 6d and 5s a week. In 1866 another, larger Peabody Square had been built at Shadwell to a similar plan of 240 tenements with the addition of an attic floor where the wash-houses and baths were located. These “healthy and comfortable dwellings for working-class families” were equipped with a range for cooking and heating, a boiler, cupboards, gas-light, a coal store and communal washing facilities. Compared with the rookeries and slums which they largely replaced they were indeed model dwellings.

Peabody’s gift financed further properties in Westminster (1866), Chelsea (1870), Blackfriars Road (1871), Bermondsey (1875), Stamford Street (1875), Southwark Street (1876), Pimlico (1876), Old Pye Street (1877), Whitechapel (1881),

Plate 5. Peabody Square, Islington, built in 1865. (Peabody Trust).
Bedfordbury, Wild Street and Abbey Orchard Street (1882), Whitecross Street (1883), Clerkenwell (1884) and Herbrand Street (1885).

By 1885 there were at least twenty-eight philanthropic associations providing homes for the poor of London. Many of these nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings can still be found, modernized and inhabited, including Peabody Square in Islington. The Peabody estate renewal programme is currently the largest property renewal project in London.

Whereas George Peabody is known in London principally for his housing trust, in America he is renowned for founding educational and cultural institutions – the Peabody Institute Library, Massachusetts (1852) and the Peabody Institute of The John Hopkins University (1857) were among the first.

At the time of his death in 1869 Peabody was famous on both sides of the Atlantic. He had broken new ground in non sectarian philanthropy, he was the first American to be awarded the Freedom of the City of London, the first to hold Fourth of July celebrations in London and the first American to be given a funeral service in Westminster Abbey. His statue behind the Royal Exchange stands as a memorial to a successful Victorian merchant/financier/benefactor whose housing trust now provides and manages 13,500 affordable homes for 27,000 Londoners in twenty-four boroughs.

The exhibition “The Prophetic Eye” is downstairs at the museum. The admission cost of £3.50 includes the museum galleries and is valid for three months. You will not be troubled by noisy schoolchildren at this exhibition but you cannot escape the background music.

There is to be a Memorial Service to George Peabody at Westminster Abbey on 16th November; for details of this and other events celebrating the bicentenary of Peabody’s birth telephone Sue Nickson, 0171 928 7811.

Heritage Open Days
Heritage Open Days will be held on Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th September 1995. Over that weekend hundreds of properties of architectural, historic or cultural interest which are not usually accessible to the public will open their doors free of charge. Last year, the first year of the scheme, over 900 buildings were open – country houses, town halls, contemporary offices etc. If you know of an interesting building that might be prepared to take part in Heritage Open Days ’95 please contact Jean Ashton tel. 0171 930 0914. In any case make a note in your diary – details of open buildings and other events will be advertised nearer the time.

Hackney History Prize
A prize of up to £150 is offered for a written report based on original research into any topic connected with the history of Hackney (this means the present borough of Hackney and the former boroughs of Hackney, Shoreditch and Stoke Newington). The entry must not exceed 3,000 words and must reach the Friends of Hackney Archives by 31st July 1995. Enquiries and further details from 0181 363 5516 (evenings).

The Genius of Wedgwood
From 9th June – 17th September the Victoria and Albert Museum is mounting the Josiah Wedgwood bicentenary exhibition. Famous works, including 250 items from the Frog Service commissioned by Catherine the Great of Russia in 1773, and the Portland Vase, will be shown. The Frog Service, lent by the State Heritage Museum in St Petersburg, originally consisted of 952 pieces each one decorated with views or antiquities – the views of eighteenth century London include the Chelsea waterfront, Syon House, Northumberland House, the Horse Guards building and Hampstead.

The exhibition looks at Wedgwood the potter, entrepreneur, businessman, chemist, inventor, designer and marketer, his techniques and his contribution to British industry and commerce. Admission will be £4.75 or £2.75 for concessions. Advance bookings can be made through First Call, tel. 0171 497 9977.

Theatre Royal, Haymarket
There are three buildings in London’s theatreland which are world famous: the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, for opera, the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane for musicals, and the Theatre Royal, Haymarket for plays.

Built as “The Little Theatre in the Hay” in 1720 by John Potter, a wealthy carpenter, the name was changed to the Theatre Royal, Haymarket in 1766 when it was granted a Royal Patent or Charter. The present theatre, built to designs by John Nash in 1821, has been restored at a cost of £1.3 million. This marks 275 years for what has been home to some of the finest plays in British drama.

In celebration, members of the London Topographical Society are invited to a historical guided tour – please see the enclosed leaflet for details.

Book Reviews and Notices

Poplar, Blackwall and The Isle of Dogs
by the Survey of London. The Athlone Press for the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England 1994. Two volumes (xliii and xliv), 900 pages, 16 colour plates, two colour frontispieces, 144 pages black and white illustrations, 3 end-pocket plans. £130.00 for the set.

The Survey of London was established in 1894 to record the development of London’s built environment, so it is fitting that two volumes
published in their centenary year cover the parish of All Saints in the East End, where change has been most profound - the areas of Poplar, Blackwall and The Isle of Dogs. The topography of London has altered more dramatically in the last fifteen years than in any other capital in the western world. Most of that change has taken place east of the Tower of London, in the area known today as Docklands, and so rapid has been the pace of development that maps of the area are outdated before they go on sale. The parish of All Saints has been at the very centre of this explosion, and was an obvious choice for the Survey to tackle, not least because it represented a return to the Survey's roots, the first volume in 1900 being Bromley-by-Bow, another East End parish that was faced with threats to its historic fabric.

The Survey's decision to chart the development of All Saints was taken in the early 1980s, when the London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC) was just beginning its task of regenerating the wasteland left behind by the closure of the five upriver enclosed docks and scores of riverside wharves. It was obvious that important surviving buildings from the docks era were going to be subject to demolition or radical refurbishment, along with much of the social housing which had grown up around those vast engines of employment. The first job was to identify the sources for the historical study of the area, a major one being the Port of London Authority Library and Archive. In early 1982, shortly after I became the Authority's Librarian, I received a telephone call from Hermione Hobhouse, the Survey's General Editor, asking me what was the extent of the PLA's holdings on Poplar, Blackwall and The Isle of Dogs. I explained that we had primary source material on all three of the private enclosed docks set up in All Saints in the nineteenth century - the West India, East India and Millwall Dock Companies, including civil and engineering drawings, maps and photographs, together with the PLA's own records dating from 1909 to the closure of the docks. Little did I know that this brief telephone conversation was the beginning of a trail that would end twelve years later in November 1994 at Canary Wharf, when the volumes were launched. On a daily basis between 1984 and 1991 members of the Survey's team of researchers visited the archives to comb through our records. I saw at first hand how the history of a parish going back four hundred years could be unravelled layer by layer from the source material, using everything from pencil notes to computer graphics to record the complex story. The end result is the two volumes which do full justice to a parish which lay at the heart of London's commercial prosperity and helped to make it a world city.

Volume xliii covers Poplar, the West India and Millwall Docks and The Isle of Dogs, while volume xlv deals with Cubitt Town, Blackwall, the East India Docks, and modern Docklands. A great deal of thought has gone into making this massive work as user-friendly as possible. As a Librarian, part of my job is to provide people with accurate information quickly, and I have often roundly cursed authors and editors who don't see fit to provide an index or proper notes - you know the information is in the pages, but you can't unlock it. I have already put these two Survey volumes to the acid test of using them to answer detailed enquiries over the phone - and they work. There is a comprehensive index at the back of volume xliii; each volume contains its own list of figures with page references: the abbreviations used in the figures and references are clearly listed and the references themselves are detailed and exhaustive. All the black and white illustrations and colour plates are at the back of volume xlii and have captioned page references which link them to the appropriate piece of text. The reproduction of the images is really remarkable - not always the case even in books at the top end of the range. The quality is such that I could not detect which images date from the 1990s and which were taken a hundred years ago. Inside the back cover of the second volume are three folding plans, including one which shows the area divided into the relevant chapters in the books, a very quick and useful finding aid. The front covers of the two volumes are in full colour and show the two prominent landmarks of the parish, albeit separated by the best part of two hundred years - one is the mast house at Brunswick Dock, which at 120 feet dominated the skyline between 1789 and 1862, the other is Canary Wharf Tower, completed in 1991 and at 824 feet the second tallest building in Europe.

The text itself is clearly laid out and edited so well that the input of each of the team of researchers is seamless. Reading some earlier Survey volumes can be akin to looking at tombstones in a cemetery - the buildings of interest, like the people, are long gone. Docklands is no exception in that the Blitz, the blight caused by the closure of the docks, and the often thoughtless destruction of many buildings in the last two decades in the name of regeneration have all caused havoc to the fabric. Yet in All Saints, by a remarkable stroke of fortune, there are some survivors of great significance. The oldest is the church of St Matthias, dating from 1652-4, known for centuries as Poplar Chapel, and covered in the Survey by ten pages of text and plans. The magnificent Gwilt sugar warehouses on the north quay of West India Dock get the same amount of coverage. Domestic housing ranges from the early nineteenth century Nelson House and Isle House at Coldharbour, built as substantial private residences, the Constable Cottages in Garford Street, the Festival of Britain showpiece Lansbury Estate to the strikingly ugly blocks of Robin Hood Gardens. I recommend anyone to take the section on Poplar High Street and use it to navigate down this stretch of road which, now a back-water, was
for hundreds of years the principal street in Poplar – in a few pages the history and topography of four hundred years of evolution is laid bare.

Modern Docklands is a melting pot of architectural styles and ideas – the deliberate lack of regulation in the early years of regeneration led to a free-for-all where planners virtually built what they liked. The result is a hotch-potch of styles, which makes for variety if nothing else. The upgrading of the transport infrastructure has also had deep effects on the building fabric. The Limehouse and East India Dock link roads and the Docklands Light Railway have all appeared since 1987, and construction of the Jubilee Line extension is well underway. The resultant effect on the topography of the area is well charted in volume xliv, both in terms of commercial developments and domestic housing. Surprisingly, Canary Wharf Tower (or to give its more prosaic designation, No 1 Canada Square) is given only a half-page of text, and I would have thought that a description of the fast-track methods used to construct and fit it out in under three and a half years would have been warranted.

But nothing can detract from what has been achieved by Hermione Hobhouse and the Survey team – a synthesis of the four hundred year history of the parish of All Saints which is not only a fitting tribute to the previous one hundred years of the Survey’s work but a benchmark against which all future volumes will have to be measured.

– Bob Aspinall

**Imperial London – Civil Government Building in London, 1851-1915**


Implacably they line Whitehall, those grey impersonal buildings, monolithic reminders of past grandeur. We hardly give them a glance as we go by; familiarity has now bred disinterest. But really we should not be so blasé, and now an author has arrived who has set himself the prodigious task of discovering what was involved in the creation of London’s imperial past.

M.H. Port’s main concerns are the Whitehall ministries, the Law Courts, the South Kensington museums, the British Museum, art galleries of the period and, to a lesser extent, the Houses of Parliament. He has not treated the buildings in isolation (a task partially accomplished by the London Surveys and Histories of the King’s Works) but put them into a general metropolitan context. He deals with the competitions that were held, the construction problems, the controversies, rivalries and in-fighting that went on. The infinite intricacies of London’s development become apparent.

Those self-important institutions may now look bland but many of them went through very difficult pregnancies. Highly decorated and ornate as many of them are the expenditure on them would appear to have been prodigious, but, in fact, their mid-Victorian sponsors were tight-fisted and often gave architects and builders a hard time. Many an architectural frivolity was discarded.

With its impressive portico, the National Gallery dominating Trafalgar Square looks as if it had been there forever, but the author has a story to tell about early problems. Bloomsbury, Burlington House and South Kensington were alternative options each with a sponsor, each with disadvantages. Initially Trafalgar Square was far from being the best site. The front had to be set back (so that the view of St Martin-in-the-Fields should not be spoilt) and not be taken as far north as Orange Street (as today) because of a large barracks regarded as an essential military base for control of Westminster in any public tumult. A parish workhouse and public baths were also in the way. Kensington Gardens had its advocates because even in the 1850s ecologists were crying havoc. Gravely they shook their heads about the damage to pictures exposed to the smoke from the steam engine working the fountains in the square, from Thames steam boats and from noxious Lambeth chimneys.

Because there are so many modern echoes it is fascinating to hear of these long-dead controversies. Unfortunately M.H. Port sometimes fails to follow through about the buildings in which he has so much engaged our interest. After going into some detail about how the dome of the British Museum Reading Room came about, he dismisses the result too briskly, only saying it “was completed in three years”. This leaves us longing to hear the oohs-and-aahs and no doubt harrumps with which it must have been first received. It also seems a pity that the author so sternly excludes aesthetic evaluations and latter-day criticisms. So, while he tells us about Aston Webb’s Victoria and Albert Museum, he is silent concerning the museum’s limitations for displaying art treasures (that has had to be corrected ever since).

Admiralty Arch – surely a key building in so exhaustive a study of imperial London – is mentioned five times, but one of its most curious features is ignored. To the right of the arch is the First Sea Lord’s house: to the left the Admiralty itself. But tantalizingly the author fails to mention or describe the rooms, offices or corridor that supposedly must link these two buildings in the curved segment over the three archways. This is a daring, probably unique architectural caprice – London’s Ponte Vecchio – that certainly deserves fuller treatment.

But these are small pin-pricks set against a huge amount of valuable information. Thanks are owed to the diligence of the author and Yale University Press in producing a reference book of such importance to anyone researching the government buildings that we take far too much for granted.

– Felix Barker
Medieval London widows 1300-1500
edited by Caroline M. Barron and Anne F. Sutton. Hambledon Press 1994. xxxiv + 271 pages, 12 illustrations. £37.50 or £20.00 by individual application to Hambledon Press, 102 Gloucester Avenue, London NW1 8HX.

This is an odd book to be recommending to you, and yet I do recommend it, because I think it is an important book, and one that tells us a great deal about London at a time when records are fragmentary. It is a collection consisting of an introduction and fourteen essays, reconstructing what can be gleaned about the lives and circumstances of widows who lived in London during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. They range in status from the noble to those who were so poor as to be almost invisible.

Widowhood was the one time in a woman’s life when she could act independently in public. The overwhelming impression that came through to me as I read these pages was of the strength of mind and the individuality of these women who walked through the city streets, transacted business, brought up their children or adopted alms-children in a disciplined manner, urged on their living husbands to become Aldermen or Lord Mayors, and strove to implement the wishes, and eternal welfare of a departed spouse by establishing charities or schools.

Much of the evidence is taken from wills and you can hear the women laying down the law to their descendants and dependants, redoubtable in death as they had been in life. Lady Joan Bradbury leaves twenty nobles to Joan Herrat “my littel maid” provided she “use herself honestly as a good maid ought to do till able to be married”, while her own eldest daughter, Denise, already well married, is bequeathed “my great ketell wherein I have usid to sethe my brawn, my newe great bras potte, and ij of my bras pottes beying next in valew”; we can hear one efficient housewife speaking to another. Elizabeth de Burgh, Lady of Clare, leaves to the minories by the Tower her bedewing and bed-hangings, which include eighteen fine woolen curtains and twelve green hangings with the border powdered with owls. Joan, widow of the immensely wealthy Richard Buckland, shipowner and merchant of the Calais Staple, sues the Duke of Bedford’s executors for £1,070, still owing to her in 1456 and wins her case. Idomena Braytoft and Alice Coker are poor widows, but each leaves to her parish church her best table cloth and towel.

The names of several of the contributors to this volume will be well-known to members of this Society – Elspeth Veale is one of our Vice-Presidents, and Caroline Barron, Derek Keene, Jenny Stratford and Anne Sutton are all respected friends. The skill and persistence required to tease out the fragmentary evidence contained in wills, civic and livery records are admirable; this is a book from which we can all learn, if not about London’s topography, then about medieval Londoners.

St Magnus the Martyr
by John Wittich 1995. £2.50.

The Past, Present and Future of St Ethelburga, Bishopsgate
The Ecclesiological Society 1994. £3.00.

Two small church guidebooks have come in for review, one a straightforward account of St Magnus the Martyr in Lower Thames Street, the other a compilation of three addresses given at a symposium to discuss the past history (Paul Sutherland), the present plight (Richard Lea) and the possible future (Daniel Parry-Jones) of poor, bomb-damaged St Ethelburga’s church. Taken together, they demonstrate both the possibilities and the problems of such publications.

The first problem lies with the saints themselves. There were two devout ladies called Ethelburga; even the more learned may be forgiven for confusion. St Ethelburga of Bishopsgate was a Princess who resigned her worldly dignity to become the first Abbess of Barking, a house for nuns established by her brother St Erkenwald, who was himself buried in Old St Paul’s. St Magnus is still more elusive. There were several Greek martyrs of that name but by some inexplicable change, another Magnus has claimed the dedication. He is represented by a handsome statue, carved by Martin Travers, as the twelfth century Viking whose exploits are recounted in the Orkneying Saga and who seems to have been more remarkable for violence and ambition than for holiness. The history of the Orkneys is complicated and controversial; the author might have been wiser to have given less, possibly disputable, detail about the Viking or at least to have explained how he came to usurp the dedication.

The booklet on St Ethelburga is a plain, well-presented little volume with a particularly interesting final section on reactions to the IRA bombing and with suggestions on how restoration might be undertaken. The Ecclesiological Society is to be congratulated on producing and disseminating what is, in effect, a policy document. It will not necessarily achieve the result it desires – the preservation and restoration of the damaged church – but it does provide a proper starting point for argument and discussion, and might, we hope, produce a satisfactory outcome.

John Wittich’s guide to St Magnus is, as might be expected, more conventional. After all, there is a well-kept church around which to guide visitors. The coloured photographs, taken by the author, are handsome, and the numbered ground plan on the back, with the key, is most helpful. The typeface, however, at least to this reader, is tiresomely small and uncomfortable to read, and the alternations between Roman and Italic typefaces in the Tour of the Church seemed to me to be
confusing. Stricter proof-reading would have been an advantage. It is however good to have some information about the pre-fire church of St Margaret, Fish Street and about St Michael, Crooked Lane which disappeared with the rebuilding of London Bridge; the parishes were united with St Magnus.

The author, like many others of us, seems to have compiled the guide by looking up older histories in the Guildhall and Bishopsgate libraries – such back referencing is a necessary part of research. I should have been glad to have had fuller information on Roman London Bridge and the adjacent Saxon graveyard which recent excavation reports would have provided, or on Sir Charles Duncombe, benefactor to the Church and a colourful character whose life is discussed in the DNB and in volume ii of The History of Parliament. The House of Commons 1660-90, or on the various adornments brought to the church early this century. I may be wrong, but the guide seems to me to be written without any real personal knowledge of, or involvement with, St Magnus; such knowledge, such involvement, are surely prerequisites for writing a guidebook to any church or place.

All this brings two thoughts to my mind. The first is that the City of London is downright lucky to have, still available, Sir John Betjeman’s Guide to the City Churches. First published in 1974 and revised at intervals with updated illustrations, the current version has 30 pages, 16 illustrations in colour, 33 in black and white and a centre page map to guide us round the treasures freely available. The price varies from church to church, but at (usually) under £2.00 it is the best value on the market for it is worth its weight in uranium.

Which brings me to my second point. In these days, when the City churches are under threat, could not some responsible body initiate a new series of well-researched, well-written and well-illustrated guides, one for each church? All Hallows-by-the-Tower and St Mary-le-Bow are already properly served but many of the others would be made the more welcoming with such a guide. I do not make light of the task. A few years ago I tried to write one for St Martin-in-the-Fields. I gave – voluntarily – eighteen months to the task, tried as hard as I could, and still wish I had done it better. I do not know who should undertake the organization of the work – the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings? The Museum of London? English Heritage? The Friends of the City Churches? The Ancient Monuments Society? Perhaps the provision of such guides would help to stem the attempts, stimulated from ecclesiastic financial losses, to deprive London’s workers of their havens of quietness. In these churches there is something too valuable to be thrown away casually.

– Ann Saunders

Note: the Ecclesiological Society booklet can be obtained by post from our Hon Treasurer (who also happens to be the Treasurer of the Ecc.Soc.) for £3.60; personal callers can purchase copies at the cover price at Bishopsgate Institute and at the AGM.

A Comprehensive History of the London Church of St Mary, the Virgin, Aldermanbury

This is the history of the church that formerly stood in Aldermanbury, on the corner with Love Lane, and which now occupies the campus of Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, U.S.A. The building (what remained of it after the bombing of 1940) crossed the Atlantic, stone by stone, in 1966, leaving a commemorative plaque and a pleasant garden marking its City site.

Professor Grimes, who excavated the site in 1967, suggested that the first church on the Aldermanbury site was no earlier than eleventh century; the earliest known documentary reference is 1181. The authors of this history, however, (Professors of religion and self-confessed amateurs in ecclesiastical and British history) begin with the bald statement “London, or Londinium, as the Romans called it, was founded by the Romans”. This leap back to Roman London turns out to be valid, for Aldermanbury runs round what was the east side of the site of the Roman fort and the area is one of unusual topographic continuity. Chapter two moves on to the medieval parish church and contains good explanatory sections on medieval “institutions” – the parish, sokes and hagas, wards and guilds. These first two chapters rely heavily on the work of Tony Dyson and John Schofield. Every chapter begins with an introduction and ends with a conclusion and bibliography. In between we are given synopses of British history e.g. The Coming of the Renaissance, The Tudor dynasty, and when the background has been sketched we focus on St Mary Aldermanbury and its parishioners during the corresponding period. The jumps back and forth between national and local history and numerous digressions in the form of excursions tend to break the flow. Readers might also find the phraseology disconcerting – the Roman “state level society”, the “sort of kremilin situation” of Saxon London, “the overarching City polity”, “During the Fall of 1661” and “a city block east”.

The authors make a concerted effort to establish a connection between Shakespeare and the church and parish of St Mary Aldermanbury (tenuous), likewise Milton (he was married for the second time in the church) and Judge Jeffreys (a resident of Aldermanbury whose remains were buried in the church). The era of Edmund Calamy is based on more substantial stuff – this Presbyterian leader was the church’s most famous minister. The authors relish this era, examining and quoting from Calamy’s sermons and weighing up their impact. Calamy was ejected from the living in 1662
after twenty-three years at St Mary Aldermanbury.

The church was rebuilt in 1437, destroyed in the Great Fire and rebuilt by Wren and Hooke 1672-7. It suffered from remodelling by Edmund Woodthorpe in 1863 and was hit by an incendiary bomb in December 1940. The blackened shell of St Mary Aldermanbury remained ruinous for twenty-six years, during which time a tree growing in the body of the church reached a height of thirty feet. The parish was amalgamated with several others and by 1959 the church faced demolition or at best the preservation of its east wall.

Meanwhile Sir Winston Churchill had delivered his "Iron Curtain" address to Westminster College, Fulton, Missouri, following which the college sought to establish a Churchhill Memorial. It was certainly an "imaginative concept", as Churchill himself described it, to resurrect and restore a ruined Wren church in Missouri. St Alban Wood Street, St Michael Paternoster Royal and St Anne and St Agnes Gresham Street were other candidates for removal to Missouri but St Mary Aldermanbury was fixed upon as the most suitable. The architect Marshall Sissom supervised the dismantling and reconstruction of the church with the assistance of Frederick Sternberg in Missouri. The death of Churchill in 1965 had the effect of boosting funds and a year later the stones of St Mary's were shipped across the Atlantic. The restoration of the church followed Wren's design as closely as possible and took three years; much of the silver plate, carving and furnishings came from London and in 1969 St Mary Aldermanbury was rehallowed. It is now used as the college chapel, for concerts and lectures and has a memorial museum to Churchill in the undercroft. At a time when the future of our City churches looks bleak, St Mary Aldermanbury rests secure, albeit in another continent.

--- Penelope Hunting

Note: a model of St Mary Aldermanbury can be seen at the Print Room, Guildhall Library.

Clothworkers' Britain. A Provisional Gazetteer

This is an A to Z of buildings, monuments, villages, towns and districts with a definite connection with clothworking, then and now. It begins with Addington in Surrey where Barlow Trescothick, the twenty-first Clothworker Lord Mayor of London, lived and where he was (still is?) commemorated in St Mary's Church, and ends with York where the Castle Museum, and the Halls of the Merchant Taylors, Merchant Adventurers and St Anthony's Hall would interest anyone trying to picture what the earlier Clothworkers' Halls in the City of London looked like.

London is divided into the City (fifty places) and inner London (thirty places). For obvious reasons Guildhall, Clothworkers' Hall and the Clothworkers' church of St Olave in Hart Street are awarded several paragraphs each. Less obvious entries include the Museum of London (it houses the portrait of the first Clothworker Lord Mayor of London, a chess set given by James II to Samuel Pepys, Master of the Company 1677-8, and porcelain bearing the Company's coat of arms), and Moorgate (because of the tenter frames depicted outside the More Gate on the Agas mapview). This reader was surprised to see Chelsea listed. Chelsea and clothworking? Ah, but of course, Sir Thomas More signed the first ordinances of the Clothworkers' Company in 1532, Crosby Hall was once owned by Sir John Spencer, Clothworker, and Dr Phene was Master of the Company 1906-7.

Thus what at first glance appears to be a gazetteer of limited interest touches on a wide range of subjects and contains some surprises. The compiler (archivist to the Clothworkers' Company) admits that this is not a definitive list, indeed readers are encouraged to submit additions, notes or details. Members of this Society, if they secure a copy, may well be able to contribute.

--- Penelope Hunting

Putney in 1636. Nicholas Lane's Map
by Dorian Gerhold. Wandsworth Historical Society 1994. A4 booklet, 52 pages, black and white illustrations. £4.75 including post and packing from Ms Hilary Sims, 31 Hill Court, Putney Hill, London SW15 6BB.

It seems that Nicholas Lane's map of Putney in 1636 was made for the chief landholder in the area, Sir Abraham Dawes. The map focuses on Putney High Street, with the buildings (Dawes' house is given special attention), fields, roads, meadow, common land and heath in the vicinity. Lane measured each field, strip and garden and provided a key to the landholders. The buildings are representational although not lacking in detail and the distribution of the houses along the High Street is clear, as are the names of the fields and roads; strangely the church is but a blob.

Reading on, admiration for and interest in the map and its maker increases. Lane, we are told, spent his working life in Kingston where he was buried in 1644. Twenty-one of his maps (1618-42) are known to have survived and can be found at the P.R.O., the B.M., B.L., Merton College Oxford, Kent, Surrey, Essex, Northamptonshire and West Sussex Record Offices. Most of his maps are of places in the south-east but later commissions took him to the Fens and Ireland. Diana Gunasena has written briefly about Lane in The Wandsworth Historian (1982 no. 34) where she includes a catalogue of his known work. As she points out, his maps were well-presented, accurate and the high standard of his work was reflected in
the social standing of those who commissioned him. He deserves wider attention.

Dorian Gerhold's publication reproduces Lane's map of Putney at almost A4 size but rather indistinct, with over the page a much clearer detail showing Putney High Street; a key identifies buildings and other features. These are then described and illustrated and there is background material on Putney and its inhabitants in 1636, the buildings, the land, roads, commons, Putney Park, field names, landholders and other features. An appendix allows comparisons to be made between Lane's survey and one made by Ralph Treswell junior in 1617; a publication concentrating on the latter is promised by the author, who edited *Putney and Roehampton Past*, reviewed below.

Lane's map was first published in *Surrey Archaeological Collections* (1927), disappeared, and was rediscovered fifty years later. It was subsequently donated to St Mary's Church, Putney, and reproduced in 1980 for sale in connection with the church rebuilding fund. The original is now held by Wandsworth Historical Society, and a colour reproduction (approximately 30 by 18 inches) can be obtained for £5 from the Parish Office. You are advised to telephone 0181 788 4575 in advance (no postal orders).

— Penelope Hunting

**Soho Past**


Soho is one of London's liveliest areas. From the beginnings as an aristocratic suburb of seventeenth-century London to its present status as London's Latin quarter, there has almost always been something rather risqué and illegal about the place. It was only developed in the first place in blatant contravention of the early Stuart planning laws. One of its first buildings was what today would be called a casino and fitness centre that was popularly called Shaver's Hall...

Richard Tames does not describe the quarter's architecture in any detail, nor does he analyse it; this has been done extremely well by other writers. His strength, as might be expected from a member of the Executive Council of the Guild of Guide Lecturers, lies in his ability to tell the tale of the people and the institutions that have filled the buildings and have given life and a particular flavour to the area. He respectfully acknowledges his debt to earlier writers, including our own Hon Editor and the two volumes of the *Survey of London*.

His organization and condensation of the enormous amount of available material is exemplary. He takes us chronologically through Soho's earliest days, when it consisted of open fields that were periodically used for hunting (the name "Soho" apparently derives from a hunting cry) and through its early development. A thematic approach takes over from there. The tales of the grandees and their houses and at the other end of the scale, those of the immigrants, Huguenot, Jewish, Italian and Swiss, are recounted. The salons and saloons, the famous ladies, the churches and hospitals, the political exiles (Italian carbonari as well as Marx) and the bourgeois Bohemians are all dealt with briefly but well. There is a good account of the numerous trades that were and still are to be found in Soho, ranging from silversmiths to the theatre and, of course, restaurants and strip joints.

The illustrations embrace portraits and trade cards, old maps, topographical drawings, watercolours, prints and photographs and range from the sixteenth century to yesterday. The selection is imaginative and enhances the text. The illustrations also appear in the correct places relative to the text which is far from always being the case in such picture books. The only thing that is missing, and which would have helped the complete outsider to the area, is a modern map of Soho taking account of the changes that followed the creation of the Charing Cross Road and Shaftesbury Avenue at the end of the last century.

To summarize: this book makes a very good general introduction to a fascinating area. And even those who pride themselves on some knowledge of Soho might find themselves learning something.

— Peter Barber

**Putney and Roehampton Past**


This follows the now customary format of this series, except that the authors are a team from the Wandsworth Historical Society and uncredited by name; this leads to variations in style and some authors are more practised than others (your reviewer speaks as one whose only publication is as a member of a similar team). As a definite benefit the profuse illustrations contain many photographs not previously published and indeed some were only discovered during the preparation of the book.

The short chapters deal with themes such as churches, schools and transport. As is to be expected there is a lot about the river and the bridges and also about the commons. The ground which was productive was put to good use to grow produce for the City, which could be reached by the area's good transport links. The themed chapters involve a lot of jumping about the parish, so that although there are several maps, well reproduced, more would have been welcome. One expects to read such books with a modern street map to hand, but one's library is not likely to
contain large scale maps showing mansions demolished almost a hundred years ago (The A to Z of Victorian London shows some of them, but not all). The publisher might have copied Peter Jackson’s idea of diagrammatic keys in his Walks in Old London, showing the viewpoints of the photographs presented on each page spread.

These are minor carps, and this well produced and first major study of the history of this parish is to be welcomed.

— Roger Cline

The British Library and The St Pancras Building

The construction of the new British Library has been beset by blunders. This booklet seeks to restore confidence and optimism.

Fifteen years ago, in November 1980, the government confirmed its commitment to the building of the new British Library while at the same time the £22.5 million allocated to pay for it (1980-84) was reduced to £9.5 million. This cutback in finances had the effect of making nonsense of the project in architectural terms. Furthermore, the enterprise suffered from a confused management structure involving at various times The Department of Education and Science, the Office of Arts and Libraries, the Historic Building Division of the DoE, the Property Services Agency, Laing Management and latterly the Department of National Heritage and Sir Robert McNaPle and Haden Young. Building costs were underestimated, architects and designers fell behind schedule with working drawings and between 1978-88 there was no overall budget to work to — construction could only be planned on an annual basis according to the funds available for that year. By 1990 the shortcomings of the new building had become obvious — as one journalist recognized, the St Pancras building would be “the bibliographical equivalent of the M25. Its vast underground bookstores will be full to overflowing from the start, and there will still be a need to keep some books elsewhere — the very problem the new building was supposed to help overcome”.

Jamming of the mobile bookshelves, the wrong paint, electrical and mechanical faults have been among the problems of construction. And even when these hitches are overcome, critics suspect that there will not be enough seats to meet demand. The design of the building has also been criticized — the Prince of Wales thought it looked like an academy for secret policemen.

Sir Anthony Kenny, Chairman of the British Library Board, does not disguise the problems and he addresses the doubts about the building squarely. He wisely avoids citing an opening date, a date that Friends of the Round Reading Room at the British Museum dread. I suppose we shall become used to the St Pancras building, as we wait for the “occasional use” book we need to be brought from Boston Spa.

— Penelope Hunting

Stop Press ..... AGM Raffle

First prize: Plan of London and Environs (1832) from Lewis’ Topographical Dictionary. Second prize: six local histories from the Historical Publications series. Third prize: Artists’ Houses in London 1764 -1914 by Giles Walkley. Tickets at £3 each will be on sale at the AGM or by post from Simon Morris (address on page 20). $ in bills accepted, please send s.a.e. if acknowledgement required.

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