The Annual General Meeting
held on
16th July 1997

The ninety-seventh Annual General Meeting of the London Topographical Society was held at Westminster School on a very warm afternoon. It was attended by a record number of members and guests who circulated between College Hall, School Hall and the courtyards. There was an ample tea in College Hall, then a change of location to School Hall for the stalls, the AGM and the talk. The Minutes of the AGM will appear as usual in the Newsletter for May 1998.

Members were presented with this year’s publication, The Royal Exchange and copies were being unwrapped greedily even before the Society’s Hon Editor, Dr Ann Saunders, began her report. In all senses this book is exceptional, and its production was orchestrated from conception to distribution by Ann Saunders. Tribute was paid to the whole team – the contributors (those present stood up to be applauded), the printers and those who had given or promised financial support.

The Assistant Librarian to Westminster Abbey, Dr Toby Trowles, gave a talk about the historic links between the Abbey and the School, particularly the uses of the two rooms made available to the Society on this occasion, College Hall – the oldest dining room in continuous use – and School Hall, where tradition dictates that on Shrove Tuesday pancakes are thrown for the boys.

The Society is grateful to Dr Desmond Croft, one of its members, for suggesting Westminster School as the location for the AGM and for helping with the arrangements. If any other members have suggestions for the location of future AGMs – bearing in mind cost, numbers and accessibility – please let the Hon Secretary know.

Note from the Hon Treasurer

Subscriptions are due on 1st January. If you have paid in advance or pay by banker’s order there is no need to take action. The domestic rate is £20 and the rate for addresses outside UK is £25 if paid in sterling or cash, or the equivalent of £37 if paid by cheque in foreign currency (i.e. US dollar cheques for $60). If you are not sure whether you are due to pay this year, send a cheque to the Treasurer (address on the last page of the Newsletter) and he will only present it if the payment is due. Banker’s orders and covenant forms are available from the Treasurer on request. Subscriptions paid by banker’s order earn a discount of £2.

– Roger Cline

We welcome the following new members:
Chartres, The Rt Revd & Rt Hon R.J.C., MA BD, The Old Deanery, Dean’s Court, London EC4V 5AA.
Christmas, Mr C.A., 33 The Drive, North Chingford, London E4 7AJ.
Galer, Mr D.W., BPharm, 507 Hurst Road, Bexley, Kent DA5 3JX.
Harper, Mr J.C., QC, 4 Breams Buildings, London EC4A 1AQ.
Herbert, Mr F., Hon FRGS, 46 Chilcombe House, Fontley Way, Roehampton, London SW15 4NB.
Howard, Miss M.A., BA MA, 21 Bedford Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP2 7LW.
O’Connor-Taylor, Mrs D., 33 Old Road, Old Harlow, Essex CM17 OHD.
Routledge, Dr N.A., MA PhD, 24 Rothsays Street, London SE1 4UE.
Schneider, Mr W., 188 Windermere Avenue, Wembley, Middlesex HA9 8QT.
Thurley, Dr S.J., 5 Manor Gardens, Larkhall Rise, London SW4 6JZ.
Watson, Mr B.H., MEd, Foxwarren Cottage, High Street, Marsham, Norwich NR10 5QA.
The Metropolis in Manuscripts: some sources for the history of London at the Wellcome Institute Library
by Christopher Hilton

In 1665 a London merchant, John Moore, wrote to his brother about the great plague then afflicting the city. The letter is now held by the Wellcome Institute’s Western Manuscripts Department and is a clear demonstration of one of the abiding fascinations of archive documents – their sometimes striking immediacy: “we have a very crase sickly time att London: since June came in and are very fearfull it will grow worse every weke while Summer weather continues, for the plague increases much and spreads it selfe very strongly in the City and Suburbs: 17 dyed one weke, 43 next and last weke 112 of the plague...” (MS.7382/3).

In this letter Moore is not writing at a distance from events, recollecting them for some remote posterity: he is immersed in them as they unfold, unaware of how the story will end, responding to the situation of the moment. As we read him, a vivid little window into 1665 opens before us.

The Wellcome Institute Library’s Western Manuscripts Department, which deals with archive material dating from before 1900, holds a wide variety of illustrations of London’s history: Library users walk out of the Institute onto the Euston Road full of how the city was experienced by its previous inhabitants (the other departments of the Library also offer material for the historian of London, whether published texts, illustrations, or the twentieth century archives held in the Library’s Contemporary Medical Archives Centre). For example, at Westminster one may recall Joseph Jackson Lister describing in a letter of 1865 to his son, the future Lord Lister, how he was allowed to see: “the plans for the new St Thomas’s Hospital that is to be erected on the site of the Thames opposite the Houses of Parliament. The ground for the buildings is to extend from Westminster Bridge to Lambeth Bridge, the cost to be 330,000£ & the Hospital is talked of as to be the first in the world! but certainly it appears a grand scheme. On the Thames embankment... there is to be a public promenade, then another at a higher level for the Hospital & from this six blocks of building for the wards run back...” (MS.6965/46).

The Institute’s holdings, of course, centre on medical affairs, but they often have a bearing on life beyond them. For example, in a casebook from St Bartholomew’s Hospital (MS.4337) one finds the treatment of persons with gunshot wounds sustained during the 1780 Gordon Riots, perhaps London’s most serious civil disorder of the eighteenth century. Another example of the darker side of the metropolis is to be found in MS.7058, which concerns John Bishop, Thomas Williams and their henchman James May, London’s equivalent of Edinburgh’s Burke and Hare. Like their more famous counterparts, these Londoners tapped the lucrative market for corpses represented by the dissecting rooms of the capital’s hospitals and like Burke and Hare they moved from grave-robbing to murder, usually of people sleeping rough around Smithfield. Documents collected include printed ephemera and manuscript confessions apparently dictated as they waited to be hanged: “I Thomas Williams saw a boy asleep in the Pig Market Smithfield I gave him a penny and he Bought a penny worth of Pudding. I then took him to the Bell Public House at the Top of the Pig market and gave him a Half pint of Beer... we went up Ludgate Hill thro Cheapside Home me Bishop and the Boy... Bishop went and got some Rum and gave him very Nigh a Quartern with a Portion of Laudnau [sic] in it The Boy laid down and went to sleep on the Floor asleep Bishop took the boy up in his arms and put him Head first into the Water Butt which is sunk in the ground and I assisted him he there died and me and Bishop stripped him and put him in the Box...” (MS.7058/6).

As well as work – honest or dishonest – leisure activities also occur in the Department’s holdings. These can be as utterly ordinary as the Sundays recorded in the 1832 diary of George Pike, who notes visits to chapel and occasional dinners with friends in an almost unvarying routine (MS.7199).
Alternatively, they can be unusual, once-in-a-life-
time events. In his autobiography written in 1863, 
John Hodgkin, brother of the physician Thomas 
Hodgkin, records that

“In the winter of 1813-14 occurred the great 
frost.... A fair was held for several days on the 
Thames between Blackfriars & London Bridge. My 
brother & I walked there one day from Pentonville 
& remained a short time on the River close to the 
Fair. I do not remember many of the details, but 
besides the vast crowds and usual features of a 
pleasure fair, we saw a fire & also a large broad 
wheeled wagggon on the ice” (WMS/PP/HO/E/C5).

Until recently, much of the area we now know as 
greater London was rural, surrounding a small 
urban core. In 1823 John Hodgkin wrote to his 
mother and brother describing a journey across 
this hinterland, now swallowed by suburbia: “When 
I reached Streatham town, then I turned to the 
right & pursued a winding road till I reached 
Carshalton. Just after passing the church I came 
to a space which if I had been in a French town 
instead of an English village, I might from its situa-
tion, size, shape & the appearance of the houses 
round it, have termed La Grande Place; save only 
that it was an entire sheet of water, a footpath on 3 
of the sides (from whc horses & carriages were 
carefully excluded) being the only dry land in the 
square. Fording his shallow lake I proceeded to 
Sutton and Cheam...” (WMS/PP/HO/D/A256).

To this rural hinterland the metropolis could 
export activities that were unsuitable for the city; 
for example, the Western Manuscripts Department 
holds numerous documents relevant to the housing 
of London’s mentally ill outside the city. MSS. 
5274-5275 concern a private asylum in 
Kensington, run by William and Charles Finch 
and comprise transcripts from an 1840 court case 
brought by Richard Paternoster, who claimed that 
he had been wrongly imprisoned; MSS. 5725-5726 
date from the late nineteenth and early twentieth 
centuries and document the Manor House asylum 
in Chiswick, including letters from patients there; 
while MS. 2997 comprises two stories composed, 
written and decorated by an inmate of Colney 
Hatch asylum in 1908.

Londoners could also escape to this hinterland in 
search of tranquility. This might simply take the 
form of a day out, perhaps to the Crystal Palace 
which, after the Great Exhibition of 1851, had been 
moved to a wooded site on the heights above South 
London and reopened in 1864 as part of a major 
entertainment complex. The attractions of Crystal 
Palace Park included, dotted around the lake, 
statues of prehistoric animals, chiefly dinosaurs, 
constructed by the sculptor Benjamin Waterhouse 
Hawkins with the advice of the anatomist Richard 
Owen (these can, of course, still be seen in the 
Park). The Department holds letters from Hawkins 

to the naturalist Henry Lee, including a lunch invit-
aton from 1868 in which he promises “if the 
weather be really fine we intend to go down to my 
mud Island where I am to hold forth on my Big 
Beasts...” (MS.5383/3).

Some Londoners, however, were not content with 
escaping merely for the day. The theme of moving 
to the suburbs occurs as early as the eighteenth 
century: in 1742 one Henry Newman describes a 
visit to Sir Hans Sloane, who had recently retired 
from London to Chelsea, then a village. Newman 
may well have envied Sloane his rural retreat: he 
writes that he was “oblig’d to ask Sr Hans’s advice 
for an Asthma that I find growing upon me by a 
constant residence in London Smoke” (WMS/ALS: 
Sloane). Newman notes that Sloane is still close 
 enough to London to keep in touch with its society: 
he “goes almost every morning to the Coffeehouse... 
and there the Gentlemen of the Town meet him...”. 
This convenient proximity to the city would, in 
time, lead to absorption into the metropolis for 
Chelsea and other once rural retreats. John 
Hodgkin wrote in his autobiography in 1863 “take a 
glance at a district formed by striking a circle with 
the radius of a mile, and the New River Head as a 
centre, & you will find one of the most uninterest-
ing and least agreeable regions which can be found 
in the dullest belt of faubourgs which separates the 
active heart of the city from the first patches of 
green fields, cockney gardens, & suburban villas. 
Sixty years ago my father used to delight in 
describing our residence, Penton Street, 
Pentonville, as situated on the top of the first hill 
north of London. This expression now seems as if 
it could only have been used in burlesque, quite 
appropriate as it was then” (WMS/PP/HO/E/C5).

By the end of the nineteenth century develop-
ment had covered much of London’s former hinter-
land but it was still possible to sit in one of the 
suburban villas that had covered the countryside 
and cling to the dream of escaping the metropolis. 
In 1888 Charles Spurgeon, the popular Baptist 
preacher, wrote to a friend about his home in 
Upper Norwood, “I cannot imagine a more beautiful 
situation... nor more life-giving air. We have the 
salt on our windows fresh from the sea” 
(WMS/ALS: Spurgeon).

From Bishop and Williams prowling Smithfield to 
Spurgeon’s rus in urbe, these and many other 
sources relating to London are detailed in a recent 
guide, No.5 in the Western Manuscripts 
Department’s series of thematic handlists (the 
Contemporary Medical Archives Centre has pro-
duced a complementary guide to London-related 
archive material dating from this century: CMAC 
sources leaflet 29). Anyone with an interest in 
London is invited to visit the Wellcome Institute 
Library, which is open to the public free of charge, 
and find their own vivid windows into the city’s 
past.

The Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine 
is located in the Wellcome Building, 183 Euston 
Road, London NW1 2BE. Library hours are 9:45-
5:15 Monday, Wednesday & Friday, 9:45-7:15 
Tuesday & Thursday and 9:45-1:00 Saturday (all 
manuscript and early printed material for consulta-
The Topography of the Lines of Communication – Mapping the Civil War Defences of London

by David Flintham

The seventeen kilometre circuit of forts, bulwarks and other earthworks, known as the “Line(s) of Communication”, were constructed in 1642-3 to protect London from Royalist threat during the initial stages of the English Civil War. Never attacked, they were decommissioned in 1647 and for the next two hundred years the remnants of these defences gradually disappeared under an ever-expanding London.

Despite the number of contemporary descriptions of the defences there is no known contemporary map of the complete circuit. Although maps and plans which appeared from the mid-seventeenth century onwards did show certain individual features, the first known map to show the complete circuit did not appear until 1720 when William Stukeley sketched what he considered to be the course of the defences. His map shows fifteen forts and bulwarks and unfortunately his source is unknown. As this work is roughly drawn it is impossible to take it as anything more than a suggestion of the actual location of the defences.

George Vertue’s Plan of the City of London as fortified by Order of Parliament in the Years 1642 and 1643 (1738) is undoubtedly the best-known map of the defences. Although its accuracy can be questioned and, like Stukeley, Vertue gives no indication as to his sources, it is still useful. The King’s Topographical Collection in the British Library contains a copy of this map to which has been added a number of hand-written notes. Firstly, it gives a source for the map as “copied from Wenceslaus Hollar’s Map of England in 6 Sheets; & traced from the Remains & Foot-steps of the Works by Cromwell Mortimer M.D., Secretary of the Royal Society”. The notes continue “The works marked in red are still to be traced & 9, 11, 20, 21 are still in being anno 1746”. Unfortunately, this and other colourings have faded from the map. This is doubly disappointing as the notes go on to say “The green were dry ditches The blue were watery ditches”. Although the colour has faded the shading remains and various sections of ditch and rampart are shaded differently. For example, the section of ditch from the Thames to a point between Gravel Lane and Whitechapel Road is shaded the same way as the shore of the Thames itself. When a section of what is most likely to have been the defensive ditch to the south of Whitechapel was excavated in 1992 and 1994, there was sufficient environmental data to support the fact that the lower part of the ditch was wet.  

John Rocque’s Map of London clearly identifies sites such as Whitechapel Mount, Bedford House and the Dog and Duck. A second look at Rocque reveals likely locations for other sections of the defences. For example, it is likely that Bruton Mews, to the east of “Berkley” Square, was built on the site of Vertue’s “A small Bulwark at the place now called Olivers’...”  

Detail showing the small bulwark called Oliver’s Mount (15) in the area of what is now Berkeley Square, from Plan of the City of London as fortified by Order of Parliament in the Years 1642 and 1643, George Vertue, 1738, King’s Topographical Collection vol 20 no 16, British Library.

Detail showing the possible course of the defences to the east of Berkeley Square from John Rocque’s map of London and Westminster, 1747, (The A to Z of Georgian London, LTS publication for 1982).
Mount”. Does Rocque’s “The New River Head” give any indication as to the alignment of Vertue’s “A large Fort with four half Bulwarks at the new River upper Pond”? With careful interpretation, Rocque is a most useful source when attempting to locate the sites of the defences.

Although indications as to the location of particular features appear on various maps, as London expanded developments wiped out the final traces of the defences (although one source states that traces of the fort at Hyde Park Corner can be seen today within Hyde Park). As a result, subsequent maps of the defences as a whole concentrate on either reprinting or re-interpreting Vertue’s plan or attempting to plot the alignment of the defences based upon evidence from various sources. The plan was reproduced in W. G. Ross, *Military Engineering during the Great Civil War, 1642-9* (1887), probably the first specialist study of Civil War fortifications. It is of particular interest because William Lithgow’s *The Present Surveigh At London* of 1643, the most complete contemporary description of the defences, is an appendix.

The first of the “modern” studies was by Norman G. Brett-James, and appeared in the *London Topographical Record* of 1928 and later in his *The Growth of Stuart London* (1935). Part of this comprehensive study concerns the mapping of the defences and visible traces in the eighteenth century. The research culminated in his *Plan of London Showing the Fortifications of 1642-1643*. This map indicates the location of the forts mentioned in three sources: the Resolution of the Court of Common Council (the “specification” of the defences), Lithgow’s description and Vertue’s map. The results of this study are some twenty-five forts, fourteen of which are mentioned by all three sources, seven are mentioned by Lithgow and Vertue, one by the Resolution and Vertue and three by Lithgow only. Unfortunately, Brett-James did not include the fifteen forts mapped by Stukeley. The results of aiding Stukeley’s work to that of Brett-James appear below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentioned By</th>
<th>Number of Forts</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lithgow only</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithgow and Stukeley</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithgow and Vertue</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithgow, Vertue and Stukeley</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution, Lithgow and Vertue</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution, Lithgow, Vertue and Stukeley</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution and Vertue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vertue Only</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1930 the Ordnance Survey published *A Map of Seventeenth-Century England* including an interpretation of Vertue’s map, showing the location of the fort. In the same year the *Journal of the Society of Army Historical Research* included an item titled “The Defences of London in 1643” by Lt. Colonel J. H. Leslie.” This paper was intended to be read in conjunction with the Ordnance Survey map and includes Lithgow’s account, a summary table of the ordnance (cannon) mentioned by Lithgow and a re-print of Vertue’s explanation of the forts.

The next major study of the defences was by David Sturdy and appeared in the *London Archaeologist* of winter 1975. Sturdy looked at the defences from an archaeological viewpoint and included an interesting comparison of London’s defences with those of Oxford, the Royalist capital. He makes use of a number of different sources and laments “I am sure that at least once every year for the last century and a half a section across the Ditch has been laid open. Not one has been sketched and they are gone forever”. Sturdy’s map indicated nineteen forts together with the suggested course or courses of the joining ditch and rampart. Sturdy intended his article to stimulate interest and further study, to promote the examination of maps and views for traces of the defences and the archaeological investigation of sections of the ditch which he felt sure would be laid open. He hoped to “repeat this article in 5 years’ time with a fuller discussion, with details from half-a-dozen early maps, with two or three archaeological sections”.

![Drawing showing batteries and breastwork at Southampton House (later Bedford) House (11) from Plan of the City of London as fortified by Order of Parliament in the Years 1642 and 1643.](https://example.com/drawing)

*George Vertue, 1738, King’s Topographical Collection vol 20 no 16, British Library.*

A study of one particular section of the defences was made in 1978 when Rosemary Weinstei looked at “Southampton House and the Civil War”. This paper is worthy of investigation for the reproduction of Richard Daynes’s 1643 map of Chimney Conduit and Lamb’s Conduit Fields which shows the line of the fortifications running northwest. I believe that this is the only contemporary map of any part of the defences. Amongst the number of other maps and plans included is David Sturdy’s map of the conjectured location of the fort and breastwork in relation to the current Bedford and Russell Squares and the British Museum.
In the seventeen years following Sturdy's article there was little new investigation. In 1979 the alignment of the defences through Lambeth was plotted in Donald Imber's *Lambeth Lost and Found*, but it was not until 1992 that any archaeological investigation took place. Four years later the most recent study was published in *London and the Civil War* (reviewed on page 11) in which Victor Smith and Peter Kelsey's paper, "The Lines of Communication: The Civil War Defences of London", builds upon Brett-James's and Sturdy's work. It looks at the enabling and construction of the defences, their use and their effect upon the capital. Both Vertue's and Stukeley's maps are reproduced and a number of sources are used, including fieldwork, to describe and plot the circuit of fortifications. Resulting from this is a map of modern London superimposed with the Lines of Communication. Unfortunately the reproduction of the map is poor, however it is possible to take the information from it and trace it onto a suitable OS map.

With a subject such as this, new findings are always likely. Indeed I am aware of archaeological investigations into two possible sites since 1994. If you would like to learn more a good starting point is Smith and Kelsey's essay and the work of Brett-James. Both Sturdy's and Weinstein's work can also be recommended.

**Notes**


2. e.g. Wenceslaus Hollar, *A Map of Both Citties of London and Westminster Before the Fire c.1670*. John Oliver, *A Mapp of the Cityes of London and Westminster and Borough of Southwark with their Suburbs c.1680*.


4. Cromwell Mortimer, notes dated 1747 on George Vertue, *Plan of the City of London as fortified by Order of Parliament in the Years 1642 and 1643*.

5. *Ibid* no. 9 is the fort at New River Upper Pond, 11 the fort at Southampton/Bedford House, 20 is Vauxhall fort and 21 the fort in St George's Fields.


15. MoLAS *op cit*.


.................
The Last of Old London Bridge
by Simon Bradley

Visitors to Wren’s St Magnus Martyr Church in the City may have noticed some large moulded vousoirs lying just west of the tower. They are all that remains to see of the medieval Old London Bridge, which ran immediately west of the church until a replacement was built on the present site in the 1830s. The stones come from an arch of the bridge that was discovered as late as 1921, during the construction of Burnet and Tait’s Adelaide House. Had things turned out differently, however, there might have been rather more for the modern antiquary to enjoy.

The arch was the second arch of the bridge from the north, known as the Mill Lock; one of the two arches of the bridge adapted in 1581 to house a water-wheel, which pumped supplies for the City conduits to the top of old St Magnus’s tower. The Builder, which took a close interest in the discovery, first mentions the arch in July 1921, when it reproduced the substance of a letter to the press from Sir Hercules Read, President of the Society of Antiquaries, urging that the remains be preserved. Preservation would not necessarily have been in situ: in September 1921, we learn that the L.C.C.’s architect had offered the arch to Bermondsey Borough Council to be set up in Southwark Park. By November this scheme appears to have foundered, and it was reported in the House of Commons that the Office of Works was keen to see the remains preserved.

The Builder itself considered preservation in situ “the only possibility”. In January 1922 it published drawings of the remains showing the medieval and eighteenth century phases of work: both the well-known widening in 1758-62, and lesser repairs in 1703, when three strengthening ribs were added to the arch. The magazine also organized a visit to the site, which nearly a thousand people attended. A further visit was held in July, in connection with a meeting at Carpenters’ Hall. The Archbishop of Canterbury himself took the Chair, W.D. Caroe and Herbert Cox gave scholarly accounts of the remains. To save the arch, the sum of £11,000 was needed: to redesign the substructure of Adelaide House so that the public could enter and view it and to compensate the owners for loss of rentable space. However, the only public body wealthy enough to find so much money in a hurry was the Bridge House Estate, which took the view that archaeology was no part of its mission. Meanwhile the owners of the site were eager to begin work.

In October 1922 a compromise was offered. Sir Robert McAlpine and Sons, contractors to the new building, proposed to remove the arch to the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley. The Builder of 20th October 1922 reports that the arch was being dismantled for re-erection, subject to approval from the City Corporation and the Empire Exhibition authorities. But thereafter the trail goes cold, in the pages of the Builder at least. Did the stones of Old London Bridge reach Wembley? Do other fragments survive somewhere, unrecognized?

News and Notes

Medieval London Conference

Recent archaeological work and research on medieval London provides a rich diet for those who would like to attend a one day conference at the Museum of London, London Wall, on 14th February 1998 (repeated on 28th February). Beginning at 9.30am with “Middle Saxon London – the Royal Opera House excavations” and concluding with “Civic...of stickes; towards a material history of medieval London” at 5.10pm, thirteen papers will be presented by a strong team of archaeologists and historians. The Guildhall will receive due attention, also the discoveries at Number One Poultry. The ticket price of £24 includes tea or coffee and a copy of the published papers. Please apply to Derek Hills, CBA Mid-Anglia, 34 Kingfisher Close, Wheathampstead, Herts AL4 8JJ, stating which date you require, cheques payable to CBA Mid-Anglia.

Hackney Church and Churchyard 1741

An attractive, coloured plan of Hackney Church, the Churchyard and adjoining buildings has been published by the Hackney Society. St Augustine’s Tower is Hackney’s oldest building having survived when the body of the church was demolished in 1798. This plan by the surveyor Roger Root shows the old church as rebuilt at the beginning of the sixteenth century, elevations of Church House (built in 1521, later a school, the site of the first Hackney Town Hall, and now a Midland Bank), and details such as the parish stocks and the cage used for local criminals.

The style of the drawing is unusual, combining elevations and plan with measurements (the scale is 15 feet to the inch) and sharp detail. It is published in A2 size with explanatory notes written by the Borough Archivist down one side. £4.50 plus £1 p & p (cheques payable to The Hackney Society) from Jack Youngmark, 21 Sanford Terrace, London N16 7LH.

George Childs’s Drawing Book

The “Advanced Drawing Book” of George Childs (1837) has been donated to Hampstead Museum by the Rt Hon Sir Henry Brooke. Whether this book came about because of Childs’s knowledge and love of Hampstead or because he realized the market potential in a village just beginning to be enclosed by new suburbs inhabited by the sort of person who liked to sketch, is not known. Childs exhibited watercolours of Hampstead 1836-7 and his other landscapes cover localities all over the country. He also worked as illustrator to several other authors and seems to have had a connection with S.S. Teulon, architect of St Stephen’s, Haverstock Hill, for whom Childs did several architectural drawings. Childs died in 1873, by which time the Hampstead
he had recorded forty years previously was already becoming surrounded with new Victorian estates. The first shot in the battle to save the Heath had been fired in 1829, with Sir Thomas Maryon Wilson’s attempt to develop it and by 1871 the battle had been won. During Child’s lifetime Hampstead changed from an isolated country village into a suburb with the miraculous preservation of the Heath in its midst.

Enquiries to Hampstead Museum, telephone 0171 431 0144.

British Archaeological Association

The Council of the British Archaeological Association is keen that members of kindred bodies should have an opportunity to attend relevant lectures in its annual programme and believes this to be of mutual benefit. The lecture on 7th January 1998: “Recent archaeological and conservation work at St Paul’s Cathedral” by Dr John Schofield, Mr Martin Stanchile and Dr Gordon Higgott might be of particular interest to LTS members. Meetings are held at the Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, Piccadilly. Tea is served from 4.30pm and the Chair is taken at 5pm. Non-members are welcome to attend but it would be appreciated if they would telephone the Hon Director, Philip Lankester, beforehand (work: 0113 220 1878, home: 01904 613615).

Medieval Southwark

Eric J. Thompson of 120 Melrose Avenue, London NW2 4JX writes: “Dear Editor, In his review of Martha Carlin’s Medieval Southwark in the May issue of the Newsletter, David J. Johnson says that her reference to Richard III’s offer to make the borough part of the City was new to him. Any members of the Society wishing to pursue this further may like to know that the background is discussed in an article by Anne F. Sutton on ‘Richard III, the City of London, and Southwark’. This is on pages 289-295 of Richard III: Crown and People which was published by the Richard III Society in 1985 (ISBN 0 904893 11 1). The King’s offer was recorded in the entry for 13 January 1484 in the Journal of the Court of Common Council (Corporation of London Record Office: Jor.9.f.43). Richard’s intention to bestow and make the borough of Southwark part of the liberty of the City, and further to give £10,000 towards the building of walls and ditches around the borough, had been made at dinner at Whitehall on 6 January (the feast of Epiphany) 1484, at the same time as he presented the Mayor and Aldermen with a gold cup which he desired the commonalty to use in their Guildhall.”

Bedlam: Custody, Care and Cure 1247-1997

An exhibition at the Museum of London until 1st March 1998 tells the story of Bethlem Hospital, possibly the oldest psychiatric institution in Europe. The exhibition explores the history of the hospital and its buildings and other themes such as the links between madness and creativity and the work of inmate artists. Closed on Mondays, normal ticket price to the Museum £4. The book on the history of Bedlam by Asa Briggs, Roy Porter and Penelope Tucker is a 768 pager published by Routledge at £150.

OBITUARY

Felix Barker
1917-1997

Felix Barker was a valued member of our Council for several years before he died on 11th July 1997 at the age of eighty.

He was born on 7th May 1917 in London and was educated at Felstead and later as an exchange scholar, at Choate School, Connecticut.

As a journalist he joined the Evening News just before the war and remained with that paper until it ceased publication in 1980.

Early on he was its theatre critic and later became its film critic as well, a dual role unusual in Fleet Street. But his first love was history, particularly the history of London, and it was this mutual interest which brought us together in 1949 when I began working for the Evening News. Felix had persuaded the editor to publish a series of articles called “Untold Tales of London” based on hitherto unpublished material in the Public Record Office, which I was assigned to illustrate. Thus began a long and happy collaboration. We worked together for fourteen years on London 2000 Years of a City & Its People, published in 1974, and also collaborated on History of London in Maps (1990).


He was a very enthusiastic member of the Council and never missed a meeting if he could help it. His suggestions and comments were always of the greatest value and he made every effort to publicize the Society’s publications when he could. His greatest scoop was the article he wrote for The Times which resulted in the Rhinebeck Panorama being our best seller. I am sure it would have amused him to be remembered for that.

- Peter Jackson
OBITUARY

Donald Olsen
1929-97

Donald Olsen, who died suddenly at his home in Seattle, U.S.A., on 19th May aged sixty-eight, was the author of three classic books on the history of London. The first, published in 1964, with a second edition in 1982, Town Planning in London. The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries was a detailed archival study of how the owners of great estates, particularly those in Bloomsbury, sought to develop their lands to create prestigious residential areas. In the second, The Growth of Victorian London (1976), he proudly declared that “practically no one has anything good to say about what the Victorians did to London, and no one at all about the impact of the twentieth century on the metropolis; yet practically everybody agrees that London today is the most civilized and agreeable of the world’s great cities”; and he went on to explore “what the Victorians did to London and what, in so doing, they revealed about themselves”. This was a more reflective book with wider horizons than its predecessor, and it led on naturally to his masterpiece, The City as a Work of Art. London, Paris, Vienna (1986), in which he described the form and functions of these three great cities and related them to the respective political and social values by which they were moulded. In the words of David Cannadine, it was “written with wit, warmth and wisdom, and was not only a stylish celebration of city life, but also a superb piece of urban history by one of its foremost practitioners”.

These achievements were the more remarkable because Donald Olsen had been born with spina bifida. Even as a young man he could only walk with crutches, and latterly he was for many years confined to a wheelchair. For most of his career he taught at Vassar College, State of New York, where he was Ellery Professor of History. On his periodic visits or rather long stays, in England he enriched the lives of everyone with whom he came into contact, and he retained his enthusiasm for great cities until the very end of his life. He was, in fact, a splendid American academic – Anglophile, learned, discerning, an unforgettable companion and an intrepid traveller, and a wonderful writer.

— Francis Sheppard

Book Reviews

The Banqueting House, Whitehall Palace
Historic Royal Palaces Agency 1997. 39 pages, lavishly illustrated. £3.95.

This new account of the Banqueting House, a collaborative work of several hands, is distinguished for its superb illustrations: historic prints, drawings and paintings from a wide range of sources, and new photographs principally by Jan Baldwin. It is an excellent souvenir of a visit to the House, and contains a brief but well-told account of the building's history - and indeed its pre-history, from Queen Elizabeth's wooden banqueting house, through James I's brick and stone replacement, to Inigo Jones' magnificent essay in Palladianism - its texture and design a culture-shock in the topography of Stuart London.

Built essentially for the elaborate masques produced by Ben Jonson and Jones for the entertainments of a luxurious court, the Banqueting House was transformed by the installation in the ceiling of Rubens's splendid canvases glorifying James I: the "flaming and smoky torches" used to illuminate the masques were liable to damage the costly paintings, so the masques were removed elsewhere, and the House became the grand reception room of the English court. The booklet poignantly recalls Charles I's final exit from the House, going, "from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown"; describes the return there of his son; the building's adaptation to a chapel royal - its function from 1698 to 1890 - where the royal Maundy ceremony was carried out annually; and its use as a museum for the United Services Institution from 1893 to 1962. A special section, with a fine throw-out large photograph of the entire ceiling, gives the history of, and describes Rubens's work, for which he was paid £3,000. (Your reviewer's one criticism of the text is its hopelessness, though doubtless inevitable, attempts to give a modern equivalent of historic prices: here are multipliers of roughly 70 for 1662, 73 for 1638, 27 for 1810 and 48 for 1893.) We can now enjoy the architectural and painted splendours of the Banqueting House in a quiet visit, possibly at some society's function (too expensive, alas! for the London Top. Soc.), or vicariously in the pages of this excellent publication.

— M.H. Port
Stadtnerneuerung in London und Hamburg. Eine Stadtbaugeschichte zwischen Modernisierung und Disziplinierung


Dirk Schubert's Habilitationsschrift which he submitted at the Technische Universität Hamburg-Harburg in 1994 is a massive and interesting work. It deals with the complex field of "urban renewal" in London and Hamburg, and it covers the equally complex period from the Industrial Revolution to the early 1950s. By its very nature the study is bound to attract a very mixed group of readers – always provided these can cope with Schubert's often laborious and sometimes almost boring German prose – there is something for almost everybody in these more than 700 pages, some 200 of which are taken up by splendid illustrations.

Schubert sees urban renewal as deeply embedded in and closely related to both modernization and social discipline. He is fully aware of it being politically controversial. While dealing with the modernising and controlling aspects of urban renewal, Schubert offers a surprisingly weak interpretation of the historiographical theories associated with these terms which most of his audience could do well without. His work is on the whole, however, very well and plausibly structured. Future comparative studies can benefit greatly from his approach. London and Hamburg have been chosen, he explains, because they were both major ports, and by their very nature ports attract migrants, seasonal workers, in short, people whose economic and social securities are subject to often immediate and drastic changes. This "urban proletariat" can be found in abundance in either place, and in fact the term "slum" was first used in England in 1825. Although London and Hamburg differ in major ways – in population figures as a whole, the fact that London was a major capital and thus the seat of a government which provided and executed national legislation for urban renewal, an element which in Germany only took on a force of its own during the Third Reich – they also had in common the fact that certain areas were outside the town's immediate jurisdiction. Schubert structures each one of his four major chapters (he believes in a chronological order of events throughout his study) in the same way. First, he poses his main questions. Then he introduces the evidence for London, to then proceed to what happened in Hamburg at roughly the same time, before, finally, he aims to achieve a synthesis of the two. He opens his study with an account of the Industrial Revolution which took place in England some forty to fifty years before Germany got round to it, and here he deals most extensively with the social dimensions. He outlines the close relation between the contemporary social awareness of poverty and slums, the threat of diseases, the growing enforcement of public health and hygiene, with measures now termed urban renewal. He states more than once that the abolition of slums (in both cases situated very close to the city itself) all too often led immediately to their establishing themselves elsewhere. For Schubert the move from "ordering" to "planning" urban settlement came very soon; in both cases it formed an integral part of local administration by the 1880s. His second major chapter is dedicated to the period of "Imperialism", which in Hamburg saw the disastrous outbreak of the cholera in 1892. Here Schubert deals with the development of Garden Cities (with a lot of credit to Ebenezer Howard) as well as with the rebuilding and remodelling of major streets and routes – Kingsway in London, and the Mönckebergstraße in Hamburg. His third chapter covers the period from the outbreak of World War I to the Great Slump. In both countries the framework of urban living conditions was greatly changed and "renewal" was substantially replaced by "renovation". His last chapter is concerned with the 1930s to the 1950s; Schubert shows the ideological and political component the National Socialists in Germany attached to urban planning and he is able to illustrate to what extent Nazi propaganda used "English lower working class living conditions" for their political means.

Schubert focuses on six developments in London and four in Hamburg: Boundary Street (1900), Millbank (1903), Kingsway (1905), Tabard Street (1930), Ossulston Street (1930), Rockingham Street (1930); Südrliche Neustadt (1900), Nördliche Altstadt (1906), Südrliche Altstadt (1918-35) and Nördliche Neustadt – the Gängeviertel (1933) respectively. The part of his study which has the greatest appeal to the reader is his amazing collection of illustrations; the one with the least is his system of references. There is an odd mixture of included Harvard-references and added endnotes. In our computer age it remains a mystery why publishers still use endnotes, and in a 700 odd page book this is a real nuisance. His bibliography is most impressive, the index is useful. Social historians, readers interested in the various aspects of town planning, Londoners and Hamburger's, and hopefully others too will enjoy turning the pages.

– Bärbel Brodt
London and the Civil War

This is a collection of eight essays covering various aspects of London during the first Civil War (1642-47). The work results in part from the series of lectures which were presented by the Museum of London in 1992 to mark the 350th anniversary of the outbreak of the conflict.

The first essay, Rosemary Weinstein’s “London at the Outbreak of the Civil War”, describes the capital during the approach to Civil War. It is often easy to overlook the social fabric which the Civil War tore into but with this essay the events which follow can be viewed against the development of peace-time London. A fine piece which neatly sets the scene (will the author build on this and follow her excellent Tudor London [1994] with one on Stuart London)?

“Insurgency, Counter-Insurgency and Inaction” considers the role of the City in the Great Rebellion. Robert Ashton looks at what caused the City to support Parliament and why this support eventually waned. Parallels between City and Parliament are discussed and the reasoning that led to moderate Londoners declaring “for King and Parliament” are debated.

Lawson Nagel’s “A Great Bouncing at Every Man’s Door”: The Struggle for London’s Militia in 1642” looks at a topic which is often overlooked, namely what caused the Trained Bands to declare for Parliament and not the King. It discusses the need for internal security during the winter of 1641/2 and concludes with the early actions of the Trained Bands during the autumn of 1642.

The Trained Bands at war is the subject of Keith Robert’s “Citizen Soldiers: The Military Power of the City of London”. The author has extensive knowledge of the London Trained Bands which results in a quite thorough study of the Trained Bands both in London and on campaign, and their effectiveness on the offensive and defensive.

“The Lines of Communication: The Civil War Defences of London” is the title of Victor Smith and Peter Kelsey’s essay. Their work on one of the largest defensive structures of early modern Europe is in three parts and is summarized on page 6 of this Newsletter.

Ian Roy’s “This Proud Unthankfull City: A Cavalier View of London in the Civil War” looks at the capital from a Royalist perspective. It discusses the decline in relationships between the crown and City and Parliament during the crisis, arguing that the capital turned against the King through “the work of a dedicated minority”, the “puritan faction”. London was not entirely against the King, and this essay looks at both the actual and imagined support enjoyed by Charles I.

The amount of disruption which Civil War brought to London cannot be understated. The conflict resulted in worsening conditions, trade was severely restricted and much of the peace-time work-force was absent. Even so, London was expected to fund the majority of the Parliamentary war effort. This forms the basis of Stephen Porter’s essay, “The Economic and Social Impact of the Civil War upon London” which looks not at London’s effect upon the war but the war’s effect upon London. He discusses the wartime decline in industry, the service sector and trade. The absence of the Court was devastating for those traders who were directly reliant on it and there was a marked knock-on effect on others.

“Political Funerals during the English Revolution” looks at four contrasting funerals. Ian Gentes discusses how important the state funerals of Pym and Essex were for differing propaganda purposes. The funerals of Colonel Rainborowe and Robert Lockyer were more of a public demonstration of defiance against those who opposed radicalism.

In conclusion, all the essays are informative, readable and contain a great deal of detail. The accompanying references are very useful and each of the authors should be congratulated on their work. I would have liked more maps and illustrations and a better standard of reproduction of the three maps included. It would have been useful if the scope of the book had been enlarged to include the entire Civil War period, perhaps even 1640 to 1660. However, it is a fine book on an important subject and I would recommend the paperback at £14.99.

—David Flintham

Visions of Southwark


Peter Marcan’s latest miscellany covers the London Borough of Southwark. He describes it (on the cover) accurately enough as a “book of moods and atmospheres, of descriptive writing and historical facts”. The descriptive writing tends to the mawkish rather than the Dickensian which seems to be its model, and the historical facts do not add up to a coherent account of the topography — which Marcan would not claim — though they do provide many dates of buildings, names of architects and occupiers, and other points of interest which are often difficult to discover. But the numerous black and white illustrations are useful and attractive. Marcan reproduces all kinds of graphic work — drawings, paintings, engravings, etchings, wood and lino cuts, and a few photographs of surviving buildings and sculptures. They are drawn largely from magazines such as the Illustrated London News and the Builder but also from trade papers and even subway murals. Almost all of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, some well-known, others a surprise, together they constitute an interesting anthology of graphic styles. The impression they leave of a townscape of busy if grand Victorian buildings and occasional charming corners, not entirely obliterated by the twentieth century, seems an accurate vision of Southwark.

—David J. Johnson
The officers of the
London Topographical Society

Chairman
Peter Jackson FSA
The Vane
The Avenue
Northwood
Middlesex HA6 2NQ
Tel. 01923 829 079

Membership Secretary
Trevor Ford ARAM
151 Mount View Road
London N4 4JT
Tel. 0181 341 6408

Hon Treasurer
Roger Cline MA LLB
34 Kingstown Street
London NW1 8JP
Tel. 0171 722 6421

Publications Secretary
Simon Morris MA
22 Brooksby Street
London N1 1HA
Tel. 0171 609 0890

Hon Editor
Mrs Ann Saunders PhD FSA
3 Meadway Gate
London NW11 7LA
Tel. 0181 455 2171

Newsletter Editor
Mrs Penelope Hunting PhD FSA
40 Smith Street
London SW3 4EP
Tel. 0171 352 8057

Hon Secretary
Patrick Frazer MA MSc
36 Old Deer Park Gardens
Richmond
Surrey TW9 2TL
Tel. 0181 940 5419

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