

LONDON TOPOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter

Number 65
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The Annual General Meeting

The 107th Annual General Meeting took place at St Mary's Church, Wyndham Place, London W1, on Monday 2nd July 2007. After the sharp drop in numbers the previous year, the total attending the meeting returned to previous record levels of well over 300.

Members were welcomed to the business meeting by Penelope Hunting. The report on the 106th AGM and the annual report for 2006 were approved. Roger Cline introduced the annual accounts for 2006, pointing out that the donation from the Scouloudi Foundation had been £1,250 rather than the £1,000 stated. Because the planned book by Simon Thurley had not been published, costs had been lower than expected, leading to a substantial surplus for the year. Following a question from the floor about valuing the stock of publications, the accounts were formally accepted.

In her report as Hon. Editor, Ann Saunders said that the annual publication, *The A-Z of Edwardian London*, had been a technical triumph that looks even better than the original, thanks to a special printing process set up by Graham Maney.

For next year, there were three possibilities: Peter Jackson and Felix Barker's book on *The Pleasures of London*, Simon Thurley's delayed book on *Somerset House* and the so-far-unpublished captions from Peter Barber's hugely successful *London Maps* exhibition at the British Library. It was not planned to issue all three in 2008, but two might be possible.

From the floor, member John Thorpe proposed a vote of thanks for Dr Ann Saunders, citing the immense contribution she makes to the Society through her scholarship and drive, combined with a lovely personality, good humour and a literary style that is a joy to read.

The Society's officers were all re-elected, viz: Penelope Hunting as Chairman, Ann Saunders as Hon. Editor, Roger Cline as Hon. Treasurer, Denise Silvester-Carr as *Newsletter* Editor, Simon Morris as Publications Secretary, Patrick Frazer as Hon. Secretary and Hugh Cleaver as Hon. Auditor. Similarly, the other members of Council were all re-elected.

The Chairman introduced Professor Michael Port, who spoke about St Mary's Church. He said that churches were our earliest public buildings and it was good to see St Mary's being used as such, and not just for religious services. It was designed by Robert Smirke and built as part of a state-funded initiative to bring churches to the poor at a time when 90% of people in the parish of St Marylebone had no place to worship (the script of his talk is published on pages 2-4 of this *Newsletter*).

Accounts matters arising from the 2007 AGM

As I reported at the AGM, a gremlin got at the Accounts circulated with *Newsletter* 64, I am afraid. The Accounts I sent off for the *Newsletter* were correct but the gremlin caused one figure to be altered. The grant from the Scouloudi Foundation had been generously increased this year from the usual £1,000 to £1,250, but the gremlin changed the figure back to £1,000. With the correct figure of £1,250, the printed total income of £14,474.93 is correct, as are all the other figures. Our apologies have been conveyed to the Foundation for this slip.

At the AGM I was asked why the additions to stock (the reprinting of *Rhinebeck Panorama* and the *Booth Poverty Map*) which appear in the assets did not also appear in the expenditure. The reason for this is that our assets comprise liquid assets in the form of money in the bank and more solid assets in the form of our book stock. Spending money to buy stock is simply converting assets from one form to another and so does not constitute expenditure of our total assets. When we sell the stock for a profit (I hope) the value of the publications sold is deducted from the assets and the profit from the sale is added to the income for the year. This year the value of our stock has increased considerably and our liquid assets have only gone up by an amount smaller than last year when we did not buy in any extra stock.

The A to Z of Edwardian London

Please check your *A to Z of Edwardian London* (contact the Treasurer if you have not received yours). We have found that a few copies of this year's publication have one gathering omitted and another duplicated. Each time the fault has occurred in the index, which you may not yet have consulted to any extent. Please fan through your pages to check they are all present. If you are unlucky enough to have a faulty copy please tear out both copies of the first duplicated page and send them to the Treasurer to obtain a replacement copy of the publication. Members who visit central London may prefer to exchange copies at a pre-arranged meeting with the Treasurer.

Subscriptions for 2008

The annual subscription to the Society remains unchanged for the seventeenth year in succession! If everything goes according to plan, you only need to send us a cheque to pay your 2008 subscription. We will not invoice those who paid by standing order last year (and those whom we have noted have completed a new standing order) or who have already paid for 2008 in advance. The Librarians of institutions are asked to pass on any invoice they receive to their accounts department with an authorisation to pay.

– Roger Cline

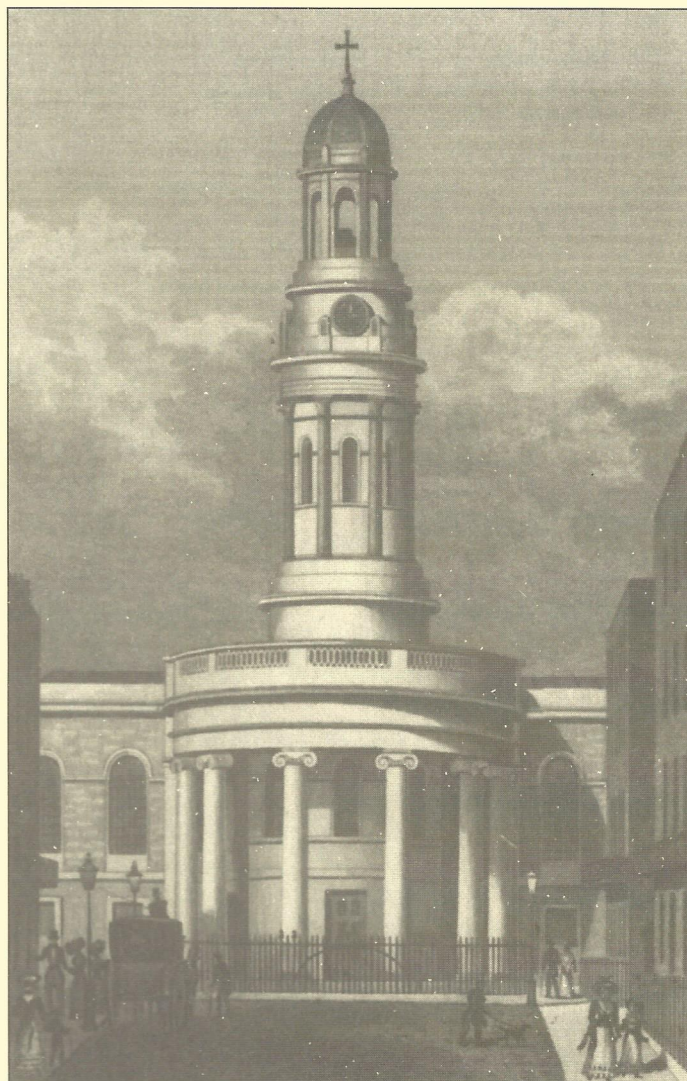
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St Marylebone Churches by M.H. Port¹

The following is the script of Professor Port's talk at the AGM held at St Mary's, Wyndham Place, Marylebone, July 2007.

Churches were our earliest public buildings, and in this age when their very existence is often threatened it is good to see St Mary's, Wyndham Place, being used both as a religious and a secular public building. It also has a particular historical interest in its having run through the gamut of liturgical changes since it was built.

St Mary's, Wyndham Place, was designed by Robert Smirke. Son of the artist, Robert Smirke R.A., the younger Smirke was one of three architects who had in 1814 been appointed Architects attached to His Majesty's newly re-organised Office of Works. His colleagues were John Nash, then the favourite architect of the Prince Regent, and John Soane, Professor of Architecture at the Royal Academy, both of whom were nearly thirty years older than Smirke. Such a disparity might well suggest that relations between them were not particularly easy. Nash was a rollicking devil-take-the-detail, punch-drinking sort of chap, rather casual in his business methods, but with a brilliant eye for making a picture of his architecture and its setting.² Soane, son of a jobbing builder, had made



St Mary's, Wyndham Place, drawn by T.H. Shepherd, 1828.

his way by sheer ability and marriage to the heiress of a wealthy builder.³ An architectural genius who set high professional standards, Soane's temper was irritable. Smirke,⁴ aged sixteen, had entered Soane's office as a pupil, but a mutual antipathy between them led to his leaving after a few months. He then trained under the City architect George Dance and the notable surveyor Thomas Bush. He visited Paris in 1802, travelled extensively in Italy and crossed to Greece, then hardly a part of the architectural Grand Tour. He returned home in 1805 and rapidly built up a flourishing practice, particularly favoured by members of the government and their supporters. His appointment to the Office of Works was therefore as unsurprising as that of his two colleagues.

Smirke was influenced by the simplicity of ancient Greek architecture that he had observed in Southern Italy and Greece, and, "content to dwell in decencies for ever",⁵ devised an architectural style massive but simple in character, nicknamed Smirke's "new square style".⁶ An early example was his rebuilding of Covent Garden Theatre in 1808, attacked by Soane in his Royal Academy lectures in 1810 as a prime example of the ignorant fault of sacrificing everything to the ornamentation of a single front of the building,⁷ which is essentially what Smirke has done at St Mary's, with all his effects concentrated

on the south front that looks down Wyndham Place to Bryanston Square. This may, on the other hand, be seen as a successful piece of picturesque townscape design. But if one looks at Smirke's oeuvre as a whole, one does find a tedious repetition of a few Grecian formulae, as in his churches, based on Grecian temples, with the same tower, built up of bits and pieces of Greek work – because of course Greek temples did not have towers.

It is an inaccurate commonplace that there was little church-building in England between the Reformation and the Victorian age. In fact, St Mary's was a product of an amazing state-funded enterprise for bringing the Church of England to the poor. In 1818, after a good deal of pressure in and out of Parliament, with the economy reviving after the Napoleonic Wars, Lord Liverpool's government proposed a grant of £1 million for building new churches in populous parishes. A mixed commission of clerics and laymen was appointed to administer the grant, and it was hoped that it would promote further contributions from the public at large so that some 200 churches might be built.

The Industrial Revolution had produced new towns in remote parts of the country, but had also stimulated the growth of many existing towns and cities, most notably London, the greatest industrial city in Britain. One of London's most crowded parishes was St Marylebone, with a population in 1811 of nearly 77,000 and 96,000 in 1821 – nearly twice the size of Norwich or Newcastle. Governed by an aristocratic select vestry, the parish was one of the best-governed in London. Because the parish church, rebuilt in 1742, was small, in 1811 the vestry obtained an Act of Parliament to build a chapel of ease on the Marylebone Road.⁸ Plans were obtained from Thomas Hardwick, an officer of the Office of the King's Works, a local resident. After work had started, the vestry decided it should be made the parish church and built on a grander scale with a six-column Corinthian portico instead of a four-column Ionic, at an ultimate cost of some £75,000. The two angled wings on the south provided family pews, as well as aggrandising the entrance from the High Street, and there were two tiers of galleries on iron columns inside. The interior was considerably altered in the 1880s.

However, nearly 90% of Marylebone's inhabitants were still not provided with church accommodation. Although generally well-to-do, the parish contained slum areas, for instance around Lisson Grove and near Great Portland Street. And the Portman Estate, stretching northwards from Oxford Street lacked a church. So when the Church

Building Commissioners set about their work in 1818-19, they found that the St Marylebone Vestry wanted assistance by way of grants towards building four new churches. St Mary's was the first to be built, completed in 1823, catering primarily for the Portman Estate's largely well-to-do inhabitants, but also embracing a densely-occupied district of mean houses west of Seymour Place that included the notorious Cato Street, hideout of the plotters to murder the Cabinet in 1820. So Smirke provided 1,300 free seats as well as 528 for renting, at a cost just under the Commissioners' limit of £20,000 for London churches, rented seats being essential to provide a stipend for the minister – there was no other resource.

Smirke largely repeated his design for St Anne's, Wandsworth, begun a little earlier. The *Gentleman's Magazine* critic at the time complained of "marked frigidity" in the design,⁹ a comment one can appreciate well when viewing the church from the north-east. The Church Building Commissioners had a statutory duty to build as cheaply as possible, so that St Mary's is essentially a brick church with only the architectural dressings in stone. Sir John Summerson followed contemporary critics in condemning Smirke's "peppercot" tower: "It has nothing to say and goes to enormous lengths to say it."¹⁰ Elizabeth and Wayland Young complain that it "looks from the side as though it had been bought in three pieces and stuck together crooked".¹¹ However the Manchester clergyman William Johnson admired it sufficiently in 1822 to have Smirke reproduce it at Salford as St Philip's.

Internally, St Mary's has galleries on three sides, but there were alterations in 1900, and again, to the formerly deep west gallery, in the late twentieth century. These galleries were essential to provide the requisite accommodation within the cost limits and often were largely free seats, though often the front row was for renting. Contrary to the



St Mary's, Wyndham Place, Marylebone, 1965. English Heritage, NMR.

Commissioners' rules, the pulpit and reading desk were united in front of the altar: there is no structural chancel, merely an altar recess with ceiling panelling differing from the body of the church to emphasise the sanctity of the sanctuary. It is flanked by a small vestry and a robing room, visible externally. The piers that support the galleries (probably cased by Sir Arthur Blomfield in 1875) are continued as ungrammatically-slender Doric columns probably with iron cores (as Soane recommended), giving something of the traditional character of an Anglican parish church with nave and aisles. The low-pitched coffered segmental ceiling is probably sustained by slender iron beams: Smirke was an innovator in the use of cast iron.

In 1875 Sir Arthur Blomfield made extensive alterations, inserting choir stalls, so distancing the altar from the congregation, together with re-seating the church with uniform benches (mis-called pews):¹² all of which has been swept away by changing liturgical fashions in the 1970s and 1980s.

I have been asked to refer also to St Mary's three contemporary churches. The aristocratic parish vestry, determined to have the best, invited Smirke's colleagues Nash and Soane to design two more of their allotted four district churches, and gave the fourth to Thomas Hardwick, architect of the new parish church. Hardwick, probably with an input from his son Philip, designed an impressive church in the Roman style for the poor district of Lisson Grove as well as the more opulent part near Regent's Park. Still extant, Christ Church, Cosway Street, has been converted into offices and its fine interior is no longer visible. Costing slightly less than St Mary's, Christ Church held a similar 1,800 worshippers, but divided equally between free and paying seats.

It was natural that Nash, the architect of the new Regent Street, should design the church for that sector. With his brilliant eye for effect, Nash placed it at the point where Regent Street has to twist to join Portland Place: so All Souls, Langham Place closes the vista northwards along Regent Street. The west end is the most brilliant in a Commissioners' church: a circular portico, almost detached from the body of the building (in contrast to Smirke's half-buried handling at St Mary's) supported on Ionic columns of a delicate somewhat French character with cherubs' heads between the volutes. But the unique feature, scathingly attacked by gentlemen connoisseurs at the time as "a flat candlestick with an extinguisher on it",¹³ is the sharp spire emerging from an arcade of columns, possibly inspired by Patrington church in the East Riding. Bath stone clads the church, Nash's contractor, Robert Streather, having taken the contract at unbelievably low prices, so that the total just scraped within the Commissioners' £20,000 limit. The interior has been restored after major war damage, and the crypt has been opened up, enabling one to see the impressive inverted arches that Nash built in order to support the

church on a site riddled with springs and sewers.

The fourth church, Holy Trinity, Marylebone Road, allotted to Soane, was the one that caused the worst problems. To begin with Soane did not believe that a church of the size demanded could be built in London for less than £30,000, so there were prolonged arguments over design. There was also considerable disputing over exactly where the church should be built. When the site on the Marylebone Road opposite Great Portland Street was finally determined upon, it was not wide enough for the required eastward orientation; the vestry complained that "the whole of the expenditure for ornament would be laid out in vain" unless the church stood north-south. The rector solved the problem by arguing that "only a trifling inclination to the east is necessary". The vestry grew angry with Soane's procrastination and threatened a change of architect, but in 1825 a design was accepted in which the tower and balustrade were cut down to bring the estimate under £20,000. The Duke of Portland then headed a subscription to raise the necessary sum, £1,280, to enable the original tower design to be executed. Headquarters of the SPCK for many years, Holy Trinity now faces an uncertain future but as the major church of an English architectural genius it must be preserved. Indeed, these five churches from the close of the period of Classical church-building are all of major importance and their survival must be secured.

Notes

1. The following account is largely drawn from my *Six hundred new churches: the Church Building Commission 1818-1856*, (2nd edition, 2006), which contains a more detailed account of Smirke's church designs as well as of All Souls and Holy Trinity.
2. See John Summerson, *The life and work of John Nash, architect* (1980).
3. See Dorothy Stroud, *Sir John Soane, architect* (1984).
4. See Howard Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600-1840* (3rd edition, 1995).
5. *Library of the Fine Arts* (1831), quoted by Colvin, Dictionary p.876.
6. A.W.N. Pugin, a title page for *Contrasts* (1836), reproduced in the Pugin Society edition, with introduction by T. Brittain-Catlin (2003), p.viii.
7. David Watkin, *Sir John Soane. Enlightenment thought and the Royal Academy lectures* (1996), p.544.
8. See Elizabeth and Wayland Young, *Old London Churches* (1956), pp.244-5.
9. *Gentleman's Magazine* (1827), pt ii, p.9.
10. John Summerson, *Georgian London* (1945), p.207. In later editions "enormous" becomes "considerable".
11. *Old London Churches*, op cit, p.246
12. B.F.L. Clarke, *Parish Churches of London* (1966), p.129.
13. H. Grey Bennett MP, *Parliamentary Debates*, new series xi, p.35.

Riddle of the Tower Ravens almost resolved by Geoffrey Parnell¹

The Tower of London has for centuries been at the heart of the English nation and crown and its resident ravens have become a recognised symbol of this story throughout the world. Visitors to the fortress are told that as long as there has been a Tower there has been a contingent of ravens living within its walls and accounts of their activities past and present abound.

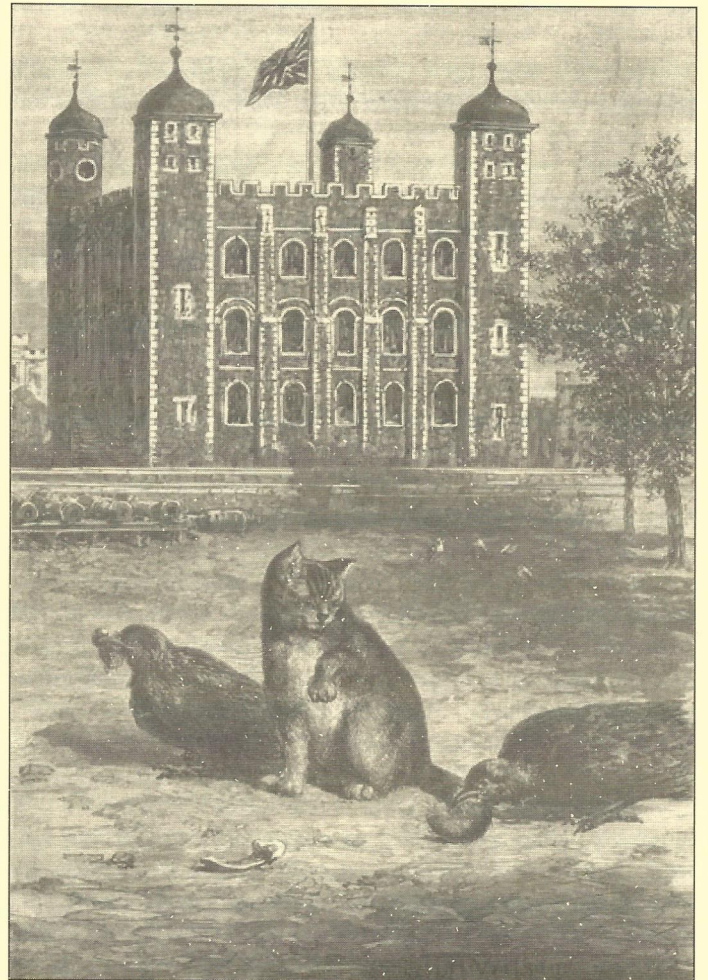
It comes as something of a surprise, therefore, to observe that no mention of the birds is made in any of the guidebooks that have been published regularly since 1740 until the official colour souvenir guides of the early 1950s. Given that the Tower is one of the most recorded monuments in the world, it is perhaps even more surprising that no apparent reference to the birds appears in print of any kind until 1895. The observant and acidic diarist Ned Ward in his *London Spy* recalls rooks, rather than ravens, fluttering over him when he visited the fortress at the end of the seventeenth century. The Tower historian John Bayley makes no mention of them in his great work *The History and Antiquities of the Tower of London* published in 1821. Harrison Ainsworth would surely have woven the birds into his 1840 *The Tower of London: A Historical Romance*, but all that features is "a flock of carrion-crows and ravens" attending Lady Jane Grey's execution, almost standard fare for a period drama of the time.

Alfred Smee describes a colony of rooks that took up residence on the White Tower in 1817, some even roosting on the seventeenth-century weather vanes that still surmount the turrets, after their home in St Dunstan's-in-the-East was disturbed by the rebuilding of the church.² However, the birds were unable to reconcile themselves to the change and after the builders had withdrawn they returned to their traditional quarters. William Harvey, writing under the pseudonym 'Aleph' reflected on the event in his 1863 book *London Scenes and London People* and at one stage contemplated the "autobiography of a patriarchal raven – one of those for instance, which roost on the crown of the loftiest pinnacle of the Tower". At first glance this seems like a promising reference to ravens at the Tower, but on closer consideration it is clear that poetic license allowed a rook to be called a raven.

The natural historian W. H. Hudson in *Birds of London* first published in 1898 probably provides the answer to the enigma of when the ravens first became closely associated with the Tower. Hudson recounts the mysterious appearance of a solitary raven in Kensington Gardens in March 1890 and the accompanying speculation as to whether it was a wild bird or a pet that had made a successful bid for freedom. The rarity of such a sighting is illustrated by the fact that the last reported breeding of ravens in central London occurred in Hyde Park in

about 1826. In seeking to explain the phenomenon Hudson states that "For many years past two or three ravens have usually been kept at the Tower of London" and that at the time of the sighting in Kensington Gardens the mate of a raven called Jenny had departed the Tower after unsuccessful attempts had been made to clip his wings. Hudson seems to suggest that the birds were privately owned and notes that Jenny was still at the Tower and that she had since been provided with a new mate. A certain Edith Hawthorn writing three years earlier in the October 1895 issue of the RSPCA's journal, *The Animal World*, supports this account. In a humorous article centred around the pilfering of a cat's meal by Jenny and her mate, Hawthorn notes that the Londoners of the day were more than familiar with the City pigeons, but few were aware that they were being watched "by two tame ravens" (see the illustration). Significantly she also adds that the mischievous behaviour of the two birds was providing "food for constant gossip", thus indicating that during the last decade of the nineteenth century the mythology of the Tower ravens was beginning to take shape.

The process must have moved rapidly, for in 1903 Henry Thompson states that "Rising on to Tower Green under the plane and elm trees in ominous proximity to the site of the Block the five pet ravens may be seen... The ravens... are a private gift to the Tower, and should one die this is



Engraved illustration of a cat and two ravens at the Tower, from *Animal World*, October 1895.

replaced by the donor.”³ The association between the sinister ravens and the scaffold site on Tower Green immediately became an essential part of Tower mythology and S. T. Dodd portrayed the scene in one of a series of illustrations first published in *Cassell's Magazine* of June 1904.

Various diarists and writers provide similar descriptions to that of Thompson during the next few years without doubting contemporary assertions being made by Yeoman Warders that the birds' connection with the fortress stretched back to antiquity. It is not until 1918, however, that the identity of a donor is first revealed. In his account *The Tower of London From Within* Major-General Sir George Younghusband, Keeper of the Jewel House, mentions, almost in passing, that “The present birds were given to the Tower by Lord Dunraven.” The Dunraven connection is intriguing. The name itself spells an association and heraldic records show that raven supporters with elevated wings were added to the family arms in 1822. Moreover, the 3rd Earl of Dunraven and Mount-Edwards, Edwin Richard Wyndham, was a respected Victorian archaeologist and antiquarian and an acknowledged expert in the field of Celtic studies. Among the works he would have been familiar with was *The Mabinogion*, the great Welsh epic dating from the pre-Norman era. In this collection of stories “Bran”, translated as Raven, the hero of Branwen Daughter of Llyr, commands his companions to cut off his head “and carry it to the White Hill in London”. Some writers have identified this as Tower Hill and the site of the Tower of London. Could a romantic association have been constructed between the Dunraven family and the Tower of London? If so, the 4th Earl, Windham Thomas, may have been involved, for the death of his father in 1871 probably pre-dates the introduction of the first birds at the Tower. None of the surviving family papers deposited in the Public Record Office, Belfast, or the Glamorgan County Record Office, reveal any further information. I was in communication with Thady Windham Thomas before his recent death, but the 7th Earl was unable to add anything to the story, other than the fact that he recalled ravens breeding in the wild on the Dunraven Castle estate in Glamorganshire while he was a child.

That said, evidence suggests that the first “official” ravens at the Tower did not come from the grounds of Dunraven Castle, but from a long-established London company called Philip Castang who provided animals for institutions and public alike. Writing in the letter pages of *Country Life* on 27 February 1955, R. H. Smith, the manager of Philip Castang, mentions how early-nineteenth-century posters advertising the menageries on Tower Hill and the Exeter Change “together with the order for the first Tower ravens” were then hanging on the wall of his office in Hampstead! Philip Castang had married the daughter of Joshua Brooks whose father first established the business in New-Road, Tottenham Court, during the early nineteenth cen-

tury. Upon the death of Joshua Brooks the business moved to Leadenhall Market and changed its name to Philip Castang. The business remained in the City for almost a century before moving to Hampstead. It finally closed some years ago, but I managed to trace the present Mr and Mrs Castang who were kind enough to let me inspect the surviving company accounts. They show that the firm was supplying ravens to the public during the last two decades of the nineteenth century at the cost of 20 shillings a bird, but although the menagerie posters mentioned by Mr Smith have been found, the framed order for the Tower ravens has not. Mr Smith died many years ago and the fate of the order is a mystery. Mr and Mrs Castang remember the former manager as an efficient and intelligent man with a considerable knowledge of the history of the company and the natural world. In their view Mr Smith's assertion that he had an order for the first ravens must be taken seriously and it is tantalising to think that the document may be in the possession of a relative or associate and could surface again.

It is not the purpose of this paper to chart the history of the ravens at the Tower throughout the twentieth century, but something may be said about the emergence of the famous legend that predicts that the White Tower and the kingdom will fall if the birds ever leave the fortress. The earliest printed reference to this I have been able to find is in the *Evening Standard* of 15 October 1949, when it was reported that a small army of 30 feral cats had taken up residence in the Tower. The report states that “They have even attacked the Tower's ravens, which are officially on the strength of the garrison because there is a tradition that disaster will befall if the birds ever leave.” The late Peter Jackson in the *Evening News* of 16 November subsequently rehearsed the tale in a cartoon strip. Official records, however, indicate that as a result of the disruptions and deprivations of the Second World War the raven population declined and that for a short period there were, in fact, no birds at the Tower. Perhaps, therefore, the story emerged as an antidote to that demise, following the re-opening of the fortress to the public in 1946.

In conclusion it can be shown that at least two tame ravens, probably privately owned, were being kept at the Tower of London by the 1880s and that at some stage between 1895 and 1903 the number was increased to five who were deemed to be “official” residents with an ancestry stretching back into the mists of time. That this late-Victorian event has been so elaborated and transformed says much about the effectiveness of the machinery at the Tower for manufacturing legends – what a former Tower official in the nineteenth century aptly described as the “traditional snowball”.⁴ More recent tales, such as the bizarre account of the introduction of a lavatory in the upper chamber of the Bell Tower for Adolf Hitler, demonstrate that this practice is still very much alive.

Notes

1. Dr Geoffrey Parnell is Keeper of Tower History at the Royal Armouries, HM Tower of London.
2. A. Smee, *Instinct and Reason* (1850), p.144.
3. "The Tower of London" in G. R. Sims, *Living London* (1903), vol. 3, p.12.
4. *Notes & Queries* 8 September 1860, p.192.

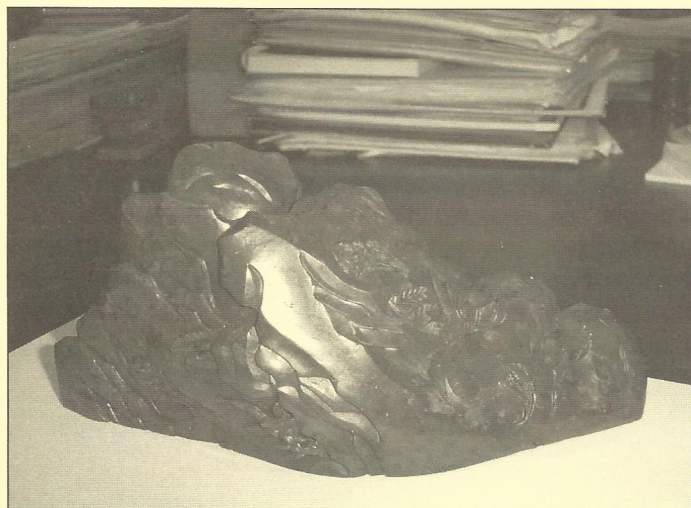


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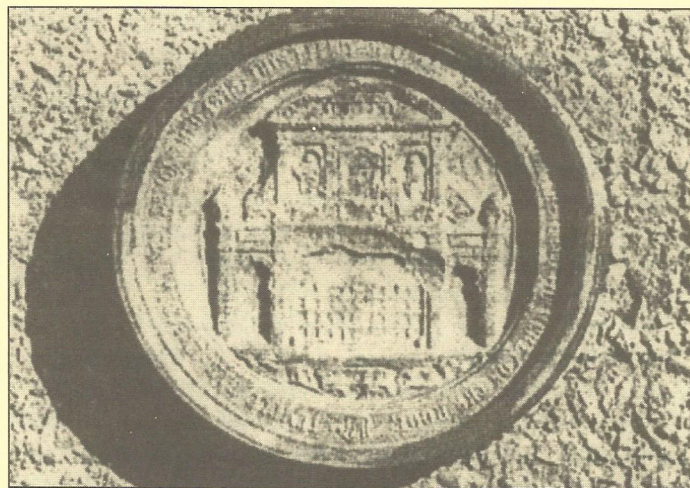
City Heritage – lost and found

An unusual exhibition is to be held in 2008 to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the City of London Guide Lecturers' Association. The theme of the exhibition is the tracing of items that were once in the City of London, and are now, for whatever reason, no longer there. The idea of the exhibition was prompted by the return of Temple Bar to the City.

Over 200 items of significance have been traced around the world. The furthest find relates to a paperweight made from the roof of Temple Bar when it was removed from Fleet Street in 1878. This was "dug up" in Wellington, New Zealand. The story of this is just one of the fascinating incidents encountered. A man, digging over his garden in Wellington, unearthed the paperweight, and was not sure what it was. He realised its association with London, and put details on the internet. It now transpires that the paperweight bears the initials "HJ" which could be Horace Jones, the City's chief architect, and, of course, the designer of Tower Bridge. The dates coincide well, as Horace Jones would almost certainly have obtained one of these souvenir paperweights for himself. **But how did it get to New Zealand, can any member help?** I am anxious to trace any descendants of Horace Jones, so if any member can help, please contact me (see below). No doubt one of his descendants migrated to New Zealand. The site where the paperweight was unearthed was previously a Catholic seminary, demolished in the 1960s.



A lead paperweight made from the roof of Temple Bar when it was removed from Fleet Street, 1878.
Found in Wellington, New Zealand.



A rare medal showing Temple Bar, found in New Zealand.

The exhibition will contain mostly photographs of items "then" and "now". If you remember the golden statues of the nine Muses that were over the entrance to the Barbican twenty-five years ago and which were universally mocked and decried – well, they are now adorning a winery in Stellenbosch, South Africa. Better known is the fact that the bells from St Dunstan's-in-the-East, a Wren church just south of Eastcheap, now sadly just a wonderful garden and church tower, are also to be found at a winery – in Calistoga, California.

The City of London has not been kind to the statues it once commissioned. William IV was removed to Greenwich Park; Queen Anne (the original statue from outside St Paul's Cathedral) is now in Hastings; Charles II was dispatched to Newby Hall, Ripon. A statue of a "Young Bull and Horseman" by Sir Edgar Boehm was shipped at great expense to Melbourne in 1888, for the Australian Centennial Exhibition. The City declined to pay for its return, so it is still on show in Melbourne!

Many members will have seen reports in the Press recently that items salvaged from the bomb damage at the Baltic Exchange in 1992 have been pieced together to form the pediment and front entrance. These have been sold recently to an Estonian businessman to be incorporated into the façade of a building being erected in Tallinn, Estonia. How appropriate to go to the Baltic to see the old London Baltic Exchange!

Many London suburban churches have items from churches in the City of London, such as reredoses, panelling, and altar rails which were saved when the church was demolished – generally in the nineteenth century. What is curious is that many such cases, the church name was transferred too. Thus St Dionis, Parsons Green, has items from St Dionis, Backchurch in the City, and St Bartholomew, Tottenham, has items from St Bartholomew, Moor Lane.

I did appeal to members of the LTS one year ago to see if any more items could be traced and had some positive response. So once again, if you know of anything suitable or potentially worthy of noting for inclusion, please contact me.

– Robin Michaelson
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Making History: Antiquaries in Britain 1707-2007

As Dr David Starkey pointed out in his lecture at St James's, Piccadilly, the Society of Antiquaries has been obsessed with "things" for 300 years. 190 such "things" from the Society of Antiquaries' collections are exhibited at the Royal Academy until 2nd December, including the Diptych of Old St Paul's published by the LTS in 2004.

You may not be particularly interested in the late Bronze Age shield found in an Ayrshire bog in 1780, but you will surely want to study a watercolour of King Edward VI's coronation procession by Samuel Grimm (1785). This shows Cheapside on 19th February 1547 as the young King processes under a golden canopy, passing the goldsmiths' shops, the churches and the spectators watching from tall houses. The view stretches from the Tower of London to the Palace of Westminster, taking in the south bank of the Thames. It is the only surviving record of a mural painted for Sir Anthony Browne's house at Cowdray, where it was destroyed in a fire (1793). Grimm's watercolour is just one example of the diligence of generations of Fellows of the Society of Antiquaries and their commissioned artists in recording and preserving "things" past.

Edward VI's coronation procession brings to mind the triumphal arches erected to mark King James I's passage through the City in March 1604, by Stephen Harrison. These seven large, rare plates include a representation of "Londinium" which topped the arch erected at Fenchurch Street. Harrison's arches are not to be found in the current exhibition – they remain an undiscovered treasure at the Society of Antiquaries and an item on the "wish-list" of future LTS publications.

Newsletter Editor

Sadly, Denise Silvester-Carr, who has edited the LTS Newsletter since 2003, is not well enough to continue as editor. With her many contacts in jour-

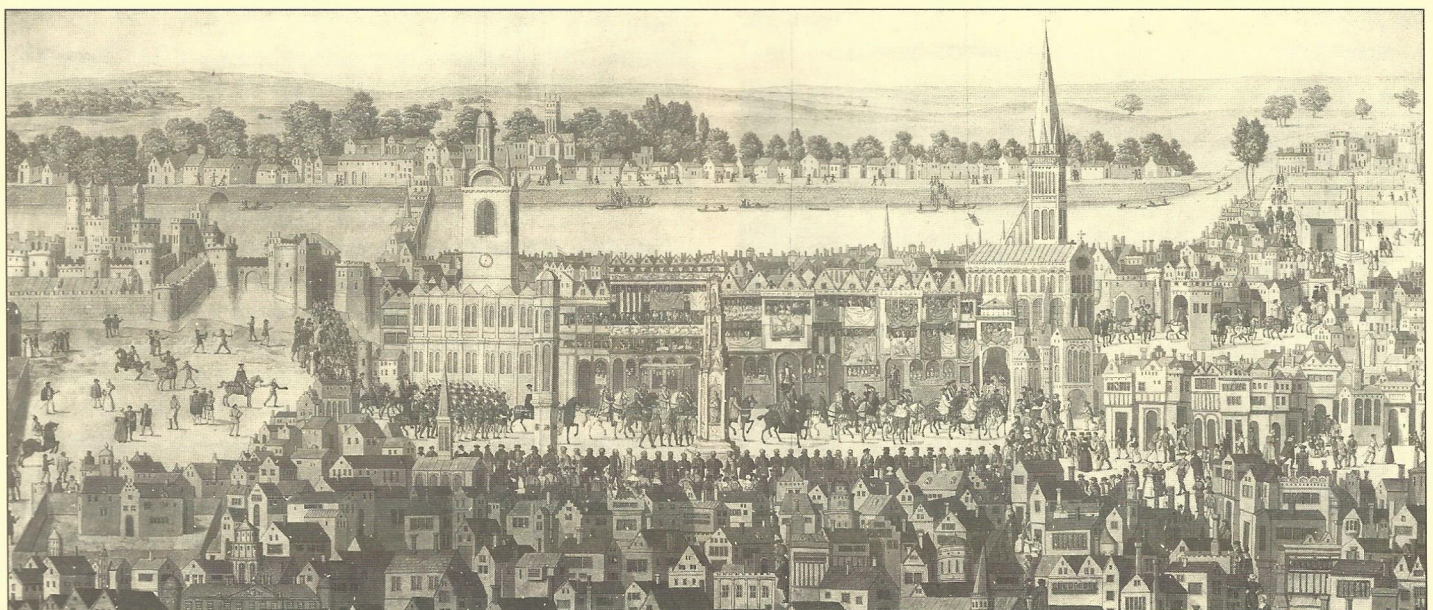
nalism and at the museums, Denise has never been short of a good piece for the *Newsletter*. She has kept us abreast of London events and provided us with a constant flow of book reviews which she often penned herself. Thank you, Denise, for doing this job with such expertise and good humour.

This *Newsletter* is a stop-gap between editors, cobbled together by the Chairman and the Hon. Editor with Denise's help. There are better things to come. Mrs Bridget Cherry OBE, BA, FSA, has agreed to take over as *Newsletter* editor in 2008. Bridget Cherry is renowned for her work on the *Buildings of England* – she started as Pevsner's research assistant in 1968 and was later editor of *The Buildings of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales*, co-authoring the volumes on *London 2: South, London 3: North West* and *London 4: North*.

Please submit contributions – articles, news, notes, reviews of books and exhibitions – for the May *Newsletter* to her (for address and email see the back page of the *Newsletter*).

Local Local History

Jack Whitehead, author of *The Growth of Stoke Newington*, writes to say this book is out of print: "I am updating it but cannot afford to print it in the ordinary way. Instead I am building it up on the web and people can read it and copy pages from there. 500,000 Mbytes have been copied in eight weeks and there is a lot more to be added before the book is done." He continues, "The concept is rather different from a book. This is Local Local History. I have reprinted the original book and it is available on the website to copy down, but the rewritten and enlarged form is completely different. It is based on the nine schools in Stoke Newington – one secondary and eight primaries. There are general sequences of maps which apply to the whole area but each school will have, as well, a sequence of small pieces of the same maps with the individual school in the middle. Secondly, each



Coronation Procession of Edward VI (1547). Watercolour by Samuel Hieronymus Grimm (1785).
Photograph copyright Society of Antiquaries of London/John Hammond.

Please see www.locallocalhistory.co.uk

Apologies are due to Aidan Flood of Camden Local Studies and Archives for the incorrect spelling of his name in the May *Newsletter*. His name was spelt correctly in the first place (Aidan) but an error crept into the note (Adrian).



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The hotel functioned from the 1870s to 1935, then was used as offices until the 1980s. Its reincarnation, discussed from the 1960s, only became a reality with the decision to route the Channel Tunnel rail link to St Pancras. The descriptions of the buildings before alterations now in progress, together with a helpful summary of the current changes, will be of great help to those who investigate the site in future. Meanwhile a succinct selection of illustrations and a copious bibliography will enhance the experience of the armchair explorer.

– Bridget Cherry

**Buried in Hampstead –
a survey of Monuments at Saint-John-at-Hampstead**

Reported by Christopher Wade. Camden History Society. 2nd edition 2007. ISBN 978-0-904491-69-2. 96 pages, A5. £7.50 (obtainable for £9 post free from Flat 13, 13 Tavistock Place WC1H 9SH).

A descriptive book on a closed cemetery should not need a revised edition, but much has happened in this Hampstead Parish churchyard in the 20 years since a band of volunteers recorded the inscriptions and locations of gravestones and more elaborate monuments in the church and churchyard. More monuments have been given listed status and improvements for better access and information provision are due for introduction in 2008 with the help of a Lottery Grant of some £250,000. The artist John Constable and the marine chronometer inventor, John Harrison, are probably the most famous “inhabitants” of the old section and there are famous names too many to list in the new.

This new edition has a better reference system to assist searching under many headings, including the occupations and home locations of the commemorates and sculptors. The book has been reset and given an attractive photographic cover.

– Roger Cline
(who declares an interest,
being the CHS book salesman).

**Walking the Streets of Eighteenth-Century
London: John Gay's Trivia (1716)**

Edited by Clare Brant and Susan E. Whyman. Oxford University Press, 2007. ISBN 978-0-19-928049-0. 256 pages. 10 b/w illus. £50.00.

In 1716, John Gay published a poem, *Trivia*. Born in Devon in 1685 into a moderately prosperous family, he had come to London at the age of nineteen to serve an apprenticeship to a mercer, which he completed. He had, however, great literary ambitions and would turn his hand to anything from a libretto for Handel to plays for the London stage. *Trivia* is a mock-heroic poem about negotiating the streets of the capital, its title containing a double meaning — *Trivia* indicates that it deals with seem-

ingly trifling matters, but the word can also be bisected into tri-via – a crossroads.

The post-Fire capital was a growing, changing city, the largest in Europe with some 575,000 inhabitants. Gay emphasises two new factors which required recognition – the arrival of the coach, and the need to negotiate the crowds pressing in with greater density and variety than they had ever done. The poem offers street-wise advice to a newcomer who might, if unwary, meet only too easily with disaster.

The couplets fall into three divisions: i) the equipment needed to walk the streets – a stout coat and shoes and a substantial stick, an alertness to the changes in the weather; ii) the problems to be negotiated by day; iii) the dangers to be avoided after nightfall. Particular emphasis is laid on the coach which had come in more or less with the Restoration. Gay inveighs against the unhealthy effects of riding mewed up in a vehicle instead of stepping out in a wholesome manner. But the walker must be attentive lest

*Thy Foot will slide upon the miry Stone,
And passing Coaches crush thy tortur'd Bone.*
(III, lines 175-76)

while earlier the poet has warned

*Who can recount the Coach's various Harms,
The Legs disjointed and the broken Arms?*
(II, lines 520-21)

An equal problem were the dense crowds of other pedestrians:

*How all the Pavement sounds with trampling Feet,
And the mixt Hurry barricades the Street.*
(III, lines 29-30)

It was only too easy to find oneself, involuntarily, sharing a narrow space with those whom one would never have met socially. In fact, the poem sounds very much as if it were describing today's journey on the Underground in rush hour.

Night-time dangers are more perilous still. The beggar to whom you have given alms will suddenly raise his crutch to crack your head and rob you; the prostitute will lure you to the “Cobweb Room” where disaster lurks again. The poem ends with a fire from which, with unexpected success, a fireman rescues an infant, and Gay calls on his reader to acknowledge how zealously he has worked to please his audience.

Gay profited from the poem only to invest his earnings in the South Sea Bubble, thereby losing them all. Indomitably, he continued to write and his libretto for *The Beggar's Opera*, set to the tunes of traditional and popular ballads, brought him real fame and financial security.

The genesis of this volume was a conference chaired by our member Professor Penelope Corfield of Royal Holloway College. The text of the poem is

preceded by nine papers, all informative, though some contain a little too much “academic historian’s newspeak”. However, the contribution by Susan E. Whyman, formerly of Princeton University, should be required reading for all LTS members, so clearly does it set out the manner in which early-eighteenth-century England was changing. The wealth of references in the footnotes to contemporary letters and documents filled me with delighted admiration; several eighteenth-century correspondents mention casually that they have walked from the City to Chelsea and back again. This edition of the poem ends with a set of notes, discussing the couplets almost line by line most helpfully, since the frequent classical allusions are not necessarily part of today’s national curriculum for schools.

The mass of earnest essays takes precedence over the poem which occupies thirty-five of the volume’s 256 pages. Such scholarship is helpful but, at the end of a careful reading, I think there is much better value in the Fyfield/Carcenet paperback *Selected Poems* at £6.95, even though it only gives parts I and II of *Trivia*, which is a fascinating poem. Behind the mock-heroics and classical references, John Gay might be describing twenty-first-century London.

– Ann Saunders

**The Man who buried Nelson –
the surprising life of Robert Mylne**

By Robert Ward. Tempus Publishing 2007. ISBN 978-0-7524-3922-7. Paperback, 203 pages, b/w illustrations. £14.99.

“Surprising” is not the word that springs to mind when considering the life of Robert Mylne. “Notable” or “accomplished” seem far more apposite when considering the man who built Blackfriars Bridge in the 1760s. For this is him – the scion of the famous family of Scottish masons who came south from Edinburgh with the eclipse of Scottish sovereignty in the eighteenth century to find fame and fortune in London.

We begin this well-written and engaging biography with a view of the Northern Athens at the time of Union, and the slow decline of the Edinburgh Mylnes is charted by reference to the diminishing number of buildings attributed to the family as the eighteenth century wore on.

But for Robert, completing a Continental tour and with little experience to his name, a most wonderful opportunity arose – the City wanted a new bridge built, decided to hold an open competition, and appointed a Scotsman to run it. What better opening for young Robert? But it took more than luck. Robert had talent and, important in Augustan London, political astuteness. His design for Blackfriars Bridge outflanked the rivals with greater stability, lesser incline and lower abutments. He also ably dissected the rival designs in a thinly veiled anonymous attack published to defend

his own entry. The rest is well-known, and the author draws on extensive archival sources to describe the construction and use of the early bridge. How was it viewed by contemporaries? They loved it – foreign visitors hailed it as magnificent, gorgeously decorated and (most important) with lower parapets than Westminster so the melancholy could throw themselves over without hindrance, and the sane could appreciate the view.

The story, of course, does not end there. As the title promises, we go on to learn much more about Robert Mylne, and in particular his appointment as Surveyor to St Paul’s Cathedral, in which capacity he did indeed bury Nelson, and also as Surveyor to the New River Company, beginning a long association with that pioneering aqueduct.

In short, this is an enjoyable and scholarly book, and a fitting sequel to the author’s earlier book on the New River.

– Simon Morris

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