LONDON TOPOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter

Number 67

November 2008

LAMAS Conference

The London and Middlesex Archaeological Society's annual conference on Saturday 15 November promises to be of exceptional interest, focusing on different ways London has been recorded – see box for details. To whet your appetite, here are a couple of images from the collection in the Bishopsgate Library, which is the subject of one of the talks.

LONDON AND MIDDLESEX ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
SATURDAY 15 NOVEMBER 2008
10.00 am–5.00 pm
City of London School for Girls, Barbican

LONDON RECORDED:
by WORD, MAP and CAMERA

London from Fitzstephen to John Stow: the Eye of the Beholder. Prof. Caroline Barron

Fixing the Image: the Mapping of London to 1900. Peter Barber, Head of Map Collections, British Library

To Make Nobler and More Humanely Enjoyable the Life of the Great City: the Work of the Survey of London, 1894-2008. Colin Thom, Senior Historian, Survey of London, English Heritage

Life and Labour in the 1930s: London's Forgotten Survey. Dr Cathy Ross, Museum of London

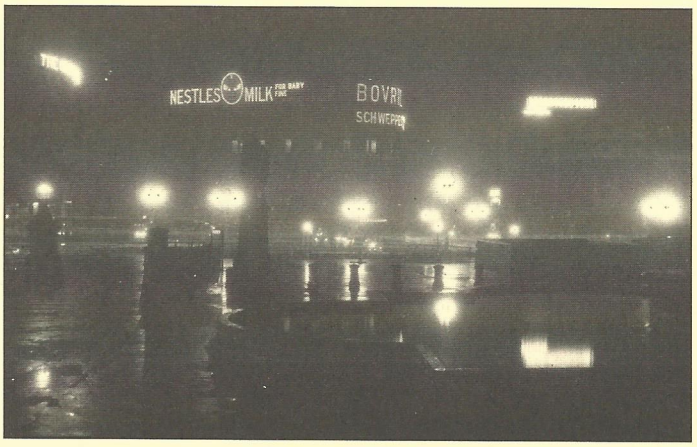
Recording London by Camera: the LAMAS Slide Collection at the Bishopsgate Institute. Stefan Dickers, Library Special Collections Manager, Bishopsgate Institute.

The Conference will be introduced by Professor Caroline Barron, President of LAMAS, who will also present the Annual Local History Publications Award.

There will be displays of recent work and publications by Local History Societies.

Tickets *(including afternoon tea)*: £10 *(£7 LAMAS members).*
Available from: *Local History Conference, 24 Orchard Close, Ruislip, Middx. HA4 7LS* enclosing cheque (payable to LAMAS) and stamped addressed envelope.
www.lamas.org.uk

Balloon Festival, Crystal Palace Park, 1900



Trafalgar Square by night, c. 1930

Out and About: Current and Future Events

The City's Heritage – Beyond the Square Mile. Guildhall Art Gallery, 19 September – 9 November. You will need to hurry to see this intriguing display before it closes, assembled to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the City of London Guide Lecturers Association. Should you miss it some of the information in the exhibition can be found in the Summer 2008 issue of *Cityguide* (£5, available in the Guildhall Art Gallery).

Packed neatly into a tight gallery space is a collection of objects, texts and photographs, organised by Robin Michaelson. They introduce an extraordinary range of items originally associated with the City of London but now scattered all over the world, from whole buildings to a lead paperweight dug up in New Zealand, made from the roof of Temple Bar. Surprises and curiosities abound. Scattered remnants of London Bridge may be well known, less familiar moved structures include the façade of 73 Cheapside, laid out on the ground to create a lavender garden at Fred Cleary's house near Dover. Parts of Bodley's grand reredos for St Paul's are now in the cathedrals of Sydney and Melbourne. New homes for furnishings from demolished City churches include not only the London suburbs, but Sterling Winery, California, which bought the bells of St Dunstan-in-the-East in 1970. Another winery, in South Africa, has provided a home for gilded statues of the Muses, where they look happier than they did during their brief sojourn over the northern entrance to the Barbican Arts Centre. Glimpses into Victorian history are provided by the family scrapbook and memorabilia of Sir David Salomons, who in 1855-6 was the first Jewish Lord Mayor; another scrapbook and associated material provide souvenirs of the building of Holborn Viaduct and the radical transformation of the Fleet valley in the 1860s. The story is brought up to date by photos of façade sculptures from the demolished Baltic Exchange awaiting transport to a new home in Tallinn, Estonia. All this and much more demonstrates the powerful resonance of the Square Mile over the last two centuries.

Guildhall Library: John Milton 1608 – 2008
A small exhibition of manuscripts and books celebrates the 400th anniversary of the birth of the poet John Milton: 1 October – 19 January 2009. On **Friday December 5**, 2.00 – 4.30, Dr Gillian Spraggs will talk about the life and times of John Milton in and around the City. Milton was born 400 years ago in Bread Street and the afternoon will explore aspects of the seventeenth century City and Milton's work. Some readings will be included, and a chance to see original documents held in the Guildhall collections. The session will end with seasonal refreshments. Admission – £10/£7.50 (Booking essential on 020 7332 3851).

The London Society's annual Banister Fletcher lecture will take place on **Wednesday 10 December**, 6.30 at the Royal Society, Carlton House Terrace, when Ian Dungavell, director of the Victorian Society, will speak on **London as it might have been, the Victorian Society and fifty years of change in the capital**. The lecture will examine both the losses, and those buildings which the Victorian Society, now celebrating its 50th anniversary, was able to save. Tickets: £15 from the London Society office at Mortimer Wheeler House, 46 Eagle Wharf Road, London N1 7ED.

At the **Wallace Collection**, up to 11 January, a free exhibition, **Cartoons and Coronets**, commemorates the brilliant and witty artist Osbert Lancaster, keen observer of architectural fashions and inventor of many astute and still current stylistic labels relevant to London ('Pont Street Dutch', 'Bypass variegated', 'Stockbroker's Tudor'...).

The Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre's Autumn/Winter exhibition, 'The Boys: Triumph over Adversity', on loan from the Jewish Museum, tells the inspirational story of how young Holocaust survivors rebuilt their lives in post-Second World War Britain. 9 October 2008 – 31 January 2009. Admission free. 32-38 Theobalds Road WC1.

The **London Transport Museum** at Covent Garden has reopened after refurbishing and has a an exhibition on **The Art of the Poster: a century of outstanding poster design for the capital's public transport system**. 16 October 2008 – 31 March 2009. See their website for details of related lectures.

London Parks and Gardens Lectures. Members may by interested in the winter programme of the **London Parks and Gardens Trust**, held on Monday evenings at 6.30 for 7.00. The first two are at the Swedenborg Society, 20-21 Bloomsbury Square WDC1A 2JH, the 2009 lectures are at the Garden Museum, Lambeth Palace Road SE12 7LB.

13 October: the **Gardens of Witanhurst, Highgate**, by Kristina Clode; 10 November: **Gardens and green assets of the Peabody estate**, by Matthew Frith; 8 December: **Garden Ornaments in Artificial Stone, London Companies in the 18th and 19th centuries**, by John Davis; 12 January: **John Brookes: Fifty years of Garden and Landscape design**, by Barbara Simms; 9 Februray: **Urban Parks, toward a viable future**, by Hazel Conway; 9 March: **Bushy Park and its deer**, by Hugh Prince; 6 April: **Mile End Park – 20 century plan, 21st century vision**, by Mike Rowan.

A treat for topographers is in store at **Sir John Soane's Museum**. From 20 March – 6 June 2009 there will be an exhibition on the topographical artist **George Scharf: From Regency Street to the Modern Metropolis**, curated by Jerzy Kierkuc-Bielinski and Sue Palmer.

An Unknown Arts and Crafts Interior:
7 Hammersmith Terrace, London W6 9 TS.
The home of Emery Walker, printer, antiquary, and mentor to William Morris, has been open to the public for four years. Now closed for the winter, it will reopen in April 2009. In the tall Georgian house on the River Thames, the interior survives much as it was in the lifetime of Sir Emery Walker (1851-1933), and provides an opportunity to appreciate a genuine Arts and Crafts interior. Among many mementoes of Walker and his circle of friends, it contains furniture and glass by Philip Webb, architect of Red House, as well as hangings from Morris's nearby London home Kelmscott House, and textiles by May Morris, who lived next door at no. 8. Dates and times of opening from April to September 2009, as well as booking arrangements for tickets, can be found on the Emery Walker Website – www.emerywalker.org.uk

Notes and News

We are sad to record the death of our member Dr Betty Rowena Masters, OBE, FSA, on 12 October 2008. She will be remembered as a shy but hugely knowledgeable archivist to the Corporation of London. She was born in 1924, entered the Record Office in 1964 and rose to become Deputy Archivist before her retirement in 1984. She was responsible for the LTS publication No. 117 (1974): *The Public Markets of the City of London Surveyed by William Leybourne in 1677.*

Bancroft Road Local History Library and Archives, Tower Hamlets, has been the subject of a vigorous and successful rescue campaign. The building, originally the Mile End vestry hall of 1860-2, extended several times, was to be sold, and the incomparably rich collections dispersed. Fortunately, after protests by many supporters from all over the world, a public meeting attended by 150 people, and a petition signed by thousands, the local councillors have had second thoughts. The building will be retained, and fundraising for its improvement is to be set in hand. The objective of the campaigners is to convert the whole building into a local history centre. They would welcome further letters of support. Write to them at stepney.history@live.co.uk

Changes at the Guildhall Library. Alarm bells have also been ringing about the future of the Prints and Maps Service, which is to be moved out of the Guildhall building in the City. This is part of a general shake up that will take place in 2009. The Business Library is to move into the space currently occupied by printed books, printed books will move to the prints and maps space, and the prints and maps themselves, together with their staff, will move permanently to London Metropolitan Archives in Northampton Road, Clerkenwell at the end of March 2009. The manuscript reading room is to be modernised and during the alterations manuscript readers will temporarily be accommodated at Northampton Road. Longterm benefits will include better conservation facilities and digitisation of the whole of the Guildhall prints and maps collection. The Guildhall staff nobly undertake to continue their work of cataloguing, responding to requests, and producing documents during the course of these changes, but some disruption is inevitable and you are advised to consult them in advance of visiting. Some of the prints and maps material is already at Northampton Road. Contact: printsandmaps@cityoflondon.gov.uk 020 7332 1839. Some printed books may also be unavailable at present: to check availability contact printedbooks.guildhall@cityoflondon.gov.uk 020 7332 1868/1870.

It is good news that the Guildhall Library's programme of **exhibitions** will continue. The current, highly apposite one, **Orderly, Mellow and Studious** has evocative images of the old library in use from 1872-1974, a lofty Perpendicular-style building by Horace Jones. A delightful wood engraving by Grace Golden, 1928, shows serious readers poring over books, lit by green-shaded lights; other views show the dim basement which housed the treasures of the Guildhall Museum, later to be united with the Museum of London.

DAVID JOHN JOHNSON
3 June 1934–17 April 2008

David Johnson was the longest-serving member of the London Topographical Society's Committee, his name first appearing on the roll in 1972. He read history at University College London, was inspired by Professor T. F. Reddaway to take up the study of London history, and was commissioned by the Corporation to write *Southwark and the City* (OUP, 1969), an account of a sometimes uneasy relationship from Roman times to the present day; there is no better study of the subject.

In 1966 he entered the Record Office of the House of Lords, becoming Deputy Clerk in 1981 and Clerk of the Records ten years later, retiring in 1999.

He was the kindest and gentlest of men, always ready to help others with their research or to do an unobtrusive kindness to those who were sick or in trouble. He died suddenly and unexpectedly. We shall miss his quiet but authoritative comments in Committee – a presence such as his cannot be replaced. A fuller obituary will appear in the next volume of the *Record* in 2010.

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2008

The 108th Annual General Meeting took place at St Pancras Church, Euston Road, on Thursday 3 July 2008. It was attended by about 310 members and guests.

Members were warmly welcomed to the business meeting by the chairman, Penelope Hunting. The report on the 107th AGM and the annual report for 2007 were approved.

Roger Cline, Hon. Treasurer, said that the annual accounts for 2007 showed a rosy picture. As a result, Council was proposing that the Society should provide a contribution to the British Museum's cost of cataloguing the Crace collection. The Society had received grants from the Scouloudi Foundation and from Howard de Walden. The accounts were approved.

In her report as Hon. Editor, Ann Saunders said that the annual publication for 2008, *The Pleasures of London* by Felix Barker and Peter Jackson, had been the most difficult ever. Denise Silvester-Carr (who received a round of applause) had shouldered much of the burden as co-editor and Graham Maney had saved the Society £5-6,000 by arranging for the printing to be done in Taiwan. The chairman congratulated Ann on the quality of the publication.

Ann Saunders hoped that next year's publication would be the long-awaited book by Simon Thurley on the old, pre-Chambers, Somerset House, when it was at its most romantic, with masques and entertainments.

The chairman reported that David Johnson, who had been a member of Council for 30 years, had sadly died in April after a short illness.

At the election of officers, all the incumbents were re-elected, viz: Penelope Hunting as Chairman, Ann Saunders as Hon. Editor, Roger Cline as Hon. Treasurer, Bridget Cherry as *Newsletter* Editor, Simon Morris as Publications Secretary, Patrick Frazer as Hon. Secretary and Hugh Cleaver as Hon. Auditor. Dr Peter Ross of the Guildhall Library was elected to Council, as were all the existing Council members.

At the Chairman's invitation, Kent Barker spoke about the long and difficult history of *The Pleasures of London*. Macmillan had intended to publish the book about 21 years ago, but pulled out because of a financial downturn. No other publisher could be found, both the authors died, the manuscript and many of the illustrations were lost. It was a huge tribute to Denise Silvester-Carr that she had been able to reassemble the text, even rewriting some missing parts. The two authors would be pleased and delighted that their book had been published at last.

Valerie Jackson-Harris then made presentations to Graham Maney, Ann Saunders and Denise Silvester-Carr in appreciation of their work on the book.

Roger Cline gave a short talk about St Pancras and its church, which had been praised by Sir John Summerson as the perfect example of a Georgian London church.

Finally, Robin Michaelson spoke about a forthcoming exhibition that he was organising at the Guildhall Art Gallery, devoted to buildings, structures, statues and other items that were once in the City of London but are now dispersed around the world.

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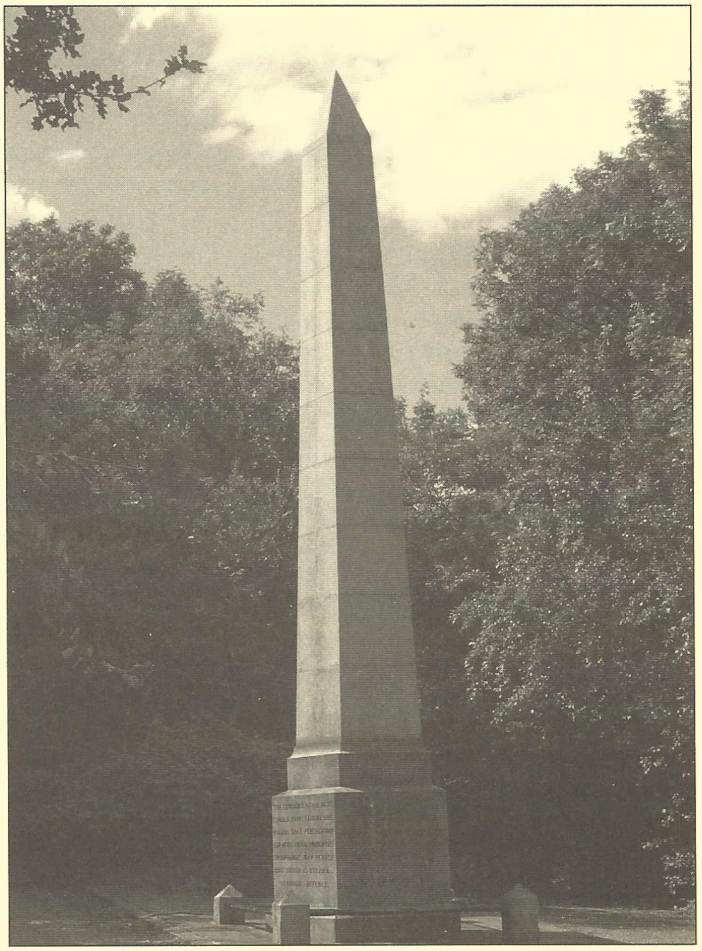
Miscellanea

Monuments and memorials can play an important part in enlarging our historical consciousness. Until recently 19th century monuments received scant attention and even less care. But attitudes are changing. Elsewhere in this issue is a review of the most recent volume published by the Public Monuments and Sculpture Association, a body which works to raise public interest in the subject. Its publications, however, have so far been unable to tackle the huge task of assessing the memorials within the London cemeteries, which so often are now in serious state of decay. The potential of cemeteries for surprising discoveries is demonstrated by the following details contributed by Bill Russell, an LTS member, about a monument at the recently restored Nunhead cemetery, inspired by Tony Aldous's article in the last *Newsletter*.



Scottish Political Martyrs' Obelisk, Nunhead

A focal point at one end of the main drive in Nunhead cemetery is a large, sober obelisk; surprisingly it commemorates the five 'Scottish political martyrs' who were sentenced to transportation to Australia in 1793. Their crime, at a time when the government was extremely nervous about revolutionary fervour, was to hold a convention in Edinburgh to promote parliamentary reform. The campaign for the memorial was inaugurated in 1837 by the radical MP Joseph Hume and paid for by public subscription; the base gives biographical details, the date 1851, and uplifting sentiments, among them 'the experience of all ages should have taught our rulers that persecution can never efface principles'. A similar monument was erected in Calton Hill cemetery, Edinburgh in 1844, by the Friends of Parliamentary Reform in England and Scotland. But why was Nunhead chosen for the English Obelisk? Obelisks, inspired by those of ancient Egypt, are not infrequent, but a five-sided one is unusual. Apart from war memorials, collective monuments are uncommon in cemeteries, but an example with a similar theme exists in the Dissenters' burial area at Kensal Green cemetery: a granite obelisk to 'the Reformers', which lists 'those who have given their time to improve the conditions and enlarge the happiness of all classes of society'.

Those who have followed the competitions for the changing displays on the 'empty plinth' in Trafalgar Square over the last few years will be aware that contemporary public works may also convey topical messages. The latest winners include a giant 'ship in a bottle'; Yinka Shonibare's scale model of Nelson's ship will have patterned sails inspired by textiles poplar in Africa, celebrating London's multicultural heritage.

Books and maps for sale

I am culling my large collection of 19th and 20th century books and a few maps on London and the suburbs. Examples include Sala G., *Twice Round the Clock* and Heal A., *Sign Boards of London* (1988 rep.). Any member interested is invited to apply for a list by sending a large stamped addressed envelope to John M. Rawcliffe, 9 Copley Dene, Bromley, Kent BR1 2PW or emailing jmrawcliffe@hotmail.com

– John M. Rawcliffe, LTS member

Right up our street

There is a new website that provides ideal support for our many collectors of old maps and prints of London (and elsewhere in the world) as it contains a large number of historical images from which copies up to A0 size can be obtained at very reasonable prices. These copies can be on gloss or satin finished photographic paper, on art paper, or on canvas, with additional mounting or framing options if required – also at very reasonable prices. I have found the support staff, namely Mike McConnell, extremely helpful in following up enquiries by return of e-mail, and also very willing to undertake special requests to process parts of images or to combine images for a particular purpose. Altogether this company, connected with the British Library, provides a very useful and helpful service and one that I can highly recommend to all members of the Society. The address is www.historystreets.com

– Colin Wells, LTS member

Maps on pots

If you are looking for an original present you may be interested in Annabel Faraday's maps on pots; a map of your choice can be printed on to a variety of high quality stoneware pots and bowls. Prices from £120. For details see Annabelfaraday.co.uk or email Annabel@bethnalgreen.biz

Future publications

The next LTS publication will be the long awaited study of old Somerset House, by Simon Thurley. Plans are well advanced for the 2010 issue of the Record. Among its contents will be an article by Robin Woolven on the Bomb Damage maps of Middlesex, complementing the London maps published in 2005, and an article on the topographical artist John Claude Nattes, by Aidan Flood, whose work was the subject of a recent exhibition at the Guildhall.

The deadline for the next *Newsletter* is 16 April 2009. Please send your comments and contributions to the editor: bridgetcherry58@yahoo.co.uk

Circumspice

What is it? Where is it? Answer on page 8.

Changing London: what's in a name?

What do the following have in common: a cheese grater, a walkie-talkie and a helter-skelter? Answer: they are all unofficial nicknames given to designs for new towers of offices in London, in an attempt to distinguish individual character in the flood of recent designs. The frenzied enthusiasm for building tall which has gripped developers over the last few years may well be dampened by the current economic climate, so it is perhaps a good moment to take stock of what has been happening to the skyline of London and review some of the current aspirations.

From 1990 we have become familiar with the sleek profile of what is commonly called Canary Wharf (in fact No. 1 Canada Square), up till now the tallest building in London at 235m. This was a solitary landmark until joined by its slightly lower companions, which were intended from the 1980s but completed only in 2002-3. The result is now a clumsier skyline cluster for the Isle of Dogs, although one that has its own coherent grand scale when one stands in Canada Square. The consequence of the multiplication of Dockland offices was to strengthen the City of London's determination to make the Square Mile the visible core of the global financial capital, an approach endorsed by Ken Livingstone's London Plan of 2004, which encouraged 'attractive landmarks promoting London's character'. For the last ten years a skeletal framework of tower cranes has been the prelude to a drastically changing City.

In the 1980s the 183m NatWest Tower on Bishopsgate (now obscurely named Tower 42) seemed daring, outstripping the three residential Barbican towers and focusing attention on the hitherto less fashionable eastern sector of the square mile. Lately this emphasis has intensified. East of Bishopsgate, a gap between conservation areas, and the absence of safeguarded views toward St Paul's from this direction has provided the rationale for a dominant 'eastern cluster'. A harbinger was Foster's curved tower for Swiss Re, the Gherkin as it is popularly known, built on the site of the Baltic Exchange, completed in 2003. While its bulk and shape make it unmissable from every possibly viewpoint, its 180m height is relatively modest in comparison with its possible future neighbours. One of the most ambitious of these is the 'cheesegrater', named from its tapered profile, for which a site is being cleared with some difficulty at 122 Leadenhall St. If built, this 48 storey (225m) building by Rogers Stirk Harbour & Partners will dwarf Rogers' once shocking 1980s Lloyds building opposite. Three and a half centuries ago this was an area which escaped the Great Fire of 1666, as is evident from the survival of St Helen's Bishopsgate and St Andrew Undershaft. The latter's name (once relating to nothing taller than a maypole) may continue to be peculiarly appropriate. Nearby on Bishopsgate is a site intended for the 300m 'Helter-skelter', officially known as 'the Pinnacle', but it now seems doubtful whether this daring design by the American firm Kohn Pedersen Fox will go ahead. The same is true of the oddly shaped 'Walkie Talkie' by Rafael Viňoly, planned for Fenchurch St and given permission in 2006. But further north, on the east side of Bishopsgate, work has started on the 46 storey, 203m Heron tower at 110 Bishopsgate (named after its developer not its shape) by Kohn Petersen Fox, approved after a Public Enquiry, and permission also exists for a

City of London, Eastern sector, 2008

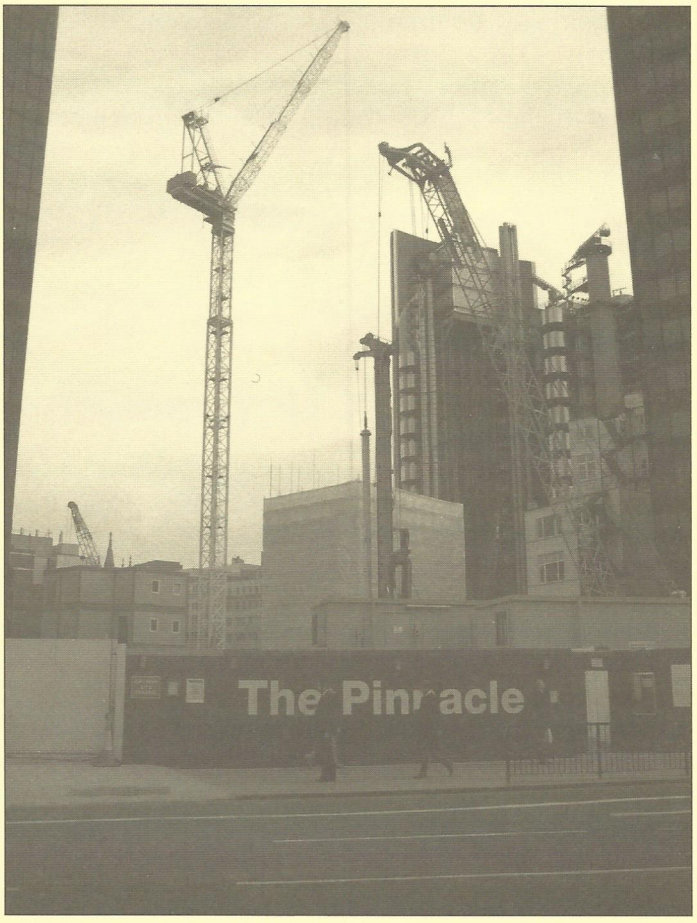
lower Heron building close by at Nos. 142-150. On the west side, beyond Liverpool St Station, right on the City boundary with Shoreditch, the Broadgate complex is being extended by a 165m tower by Skidmore Owings and Merrell. Whether all these will now be completed as planned is unclear, but there is no doubt that the visible hub of the modern City is shifting east, affecting not only the skyline but the ground level topography, as old streets and alleys are transformed into American-style plazas and atria.

Efforts to impose new buildings on the northwest fringe of the City have been less successful. A long-running struggle over the future of the market buildings of West Smithfield has ended – for the time being – with victory for the conservation lobby. The Corporation of London planned to sell the General Market Building of 1883, together with the Fish Market (1886) and the Listed Red House Cold Store (1898) to a developer, for replacement by offices. The verdict announced in August 2008 after a long Public Enquiry was that these buildings contribute positively to the character of the Farringdon area and should be retained, a significant judgement, as the two market buildings (unlike the older Meat Market) are not listed and had only the lesser protection of being in a Conservation Area.

Skyscrapers affect the image of London as a whole; lower buildings alter our more local perceptions of the familiar. Interesting aspects of exploring the City today are the unexpected transitory views experienced while new buildings are still holes in the ground. Some of these are to be filled by buildings designed by big names in the international architectural world. Three bulky faceted glass blocks by Foreign Office Architects between Mansell Street and Minories will dominate older buildings around Aldgate. Further west, Wren's St Stephen's Walbrook is to have a backdrop of an attention-grabbing new headquarters for Rothschilds by Rem Koolhaas, to be completed in 2010, and the large New Exchange site east of St Paul's will be filled by a building by Jean Nouvel.

The passion for tall buildings is spilling out beyond the City boundaries, most obviously south across London Bridge, with the encouragement of the borough of Southwark. East of Borough High Street, the 1970s offices occupied by Price Waterhouse are being demolished for the much publicised 'Shard of glass', by Renzo Piano, granted permission in 2003. At 300m, the design was the first to establish a staggering new scale for both London and European skyscrapers (although this height is quite far down in the global league – compare Dubai). Recent buildings in Southwark, less spectacular from a distance, are already transforming the area further west behind the Tate Modern: the proud four-to-six storey Victorian business premises of Southwark Street now seem puny in relation to the glamorous thirteen storey glass-walled building opposite by Allies and Morrison, descriptively named 'Blue Fin building' by its occupants. Blackfriars Road has a similarly large new landmark, in the shape of Alsop Architects' flamboyant 'Palestra'; in this case the somewhat obscure name was chosen by the developers, inspired by the former existence of a boxing ring nearby, in order to create interest in an indifferent site. Palestra heralds further large newcomers proposed for Blackfriars Road, including a prominent boomerang-shaped hotel and residential tower by the river, for Beetham, on which a public enquiry is currently under way.

Further upstream other schemes could intrude on the skyline of Westminster. The spiky riverside flats at Vauxhall are to be dwarfed by a sleek 180m cylinder for the developer St George's, claimed as Europe's tallest residential building. Still more dramatic is the extraordinary recent design by Rafael Viňoly for the new owners of Battersea Power Station. The now derelict power station, listed Grade II* in 2007, has been closed since 1983. The latest scheme would partially convert it for hotel, flats and leisure activities. Rising far above the four familiar chimneys would be a 300m 'ecotower', housing a gigantic ventilator ringed by apartments, above offices gathered below an 'ecodome'. But this does not yet have planning permission. Will London be transformed into a realm of soaring towers and exotic skyline shapes, or will these remain pipedreams of the early 21st century, a London that never was, for future topographers to mull over? The latter seems possible, given the current financial situation, coupled with the less enthusiastic approach of the new mayor, and the reservations of English Heritage. A less intrusive skyline

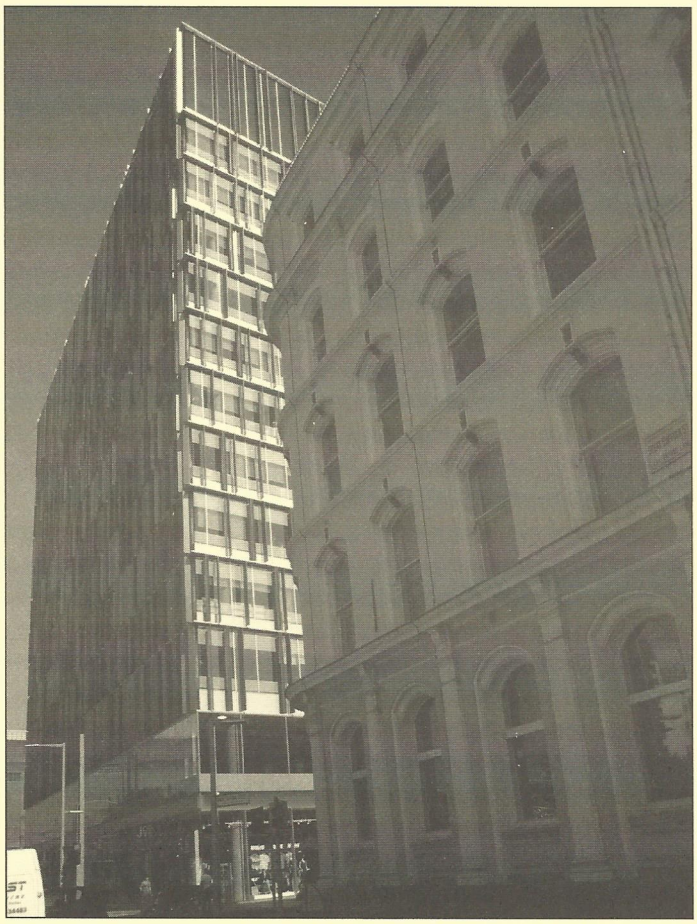


Bishopsgate: site for The Pinnacle, 2008

would also meet with the approval of UNESCO, unhappy about the impact of tall buildings on the World Heritage sites at the Tower of London and the Palace of Westminster.

How does one keep up with the changing face of London? It is instructive to visit the **Building Centre at 26 Store Street WC1** (just east of Tottenham Court Road, entrance free, with café and bookshop). Here development is presented with a positive slant, with an impressive large model demonstrating the impact of some (not all) of the new proposals. More details about the architects and developers involved can be found on its website: **newlondonarchitecture.org** The Building Centre also hosts conferences and exhibitions. Currently, **London's Towns, Shaping the Polycentric City** (24 September – 15 November) focuses on developments in the outer boroughs, and reflects the concern of the new mayor, Boris Johnson, that there should be more scope for local employment, as well as housing, for the growing population of outer London. In addition to existing activity at Stratford and the Olympic site, some exquisite models and ambitious plans demonstrate how new commercial centres could transform places such as Ilford, Wembley and Croydon. The exhibition shows that much else is already in train elsewhere to achieve the desired quantity of new housing over the next 20 years (sites for 30,500 dwellings have been identified).

For keeping up to date on London planning issues, a useful resource is **Londonforum.org.uk**, the website of the London Forum of Civic and Amenity Societies. But if you want to see another face of London, look at Paul Talling's fascinating website: **derelictlondon.com**, which is full of sad, evocative pictures of decaying and abandoned buildings of character, with some interesting background notes. Some of this material is now gathered in his book, *Derelict London*, published by Random House, 2008, price £9.99. More cosy nostalgic views of old shops, eating places and the like on the brink of extinction can be found in **DisappearingLondon.com**, based on a 2007 TV series, with anecdotes contributed by viewers. The converse to outer London development is offered by *Archaeology in Reverse*, an elegaic collection of colour photos by the much esteemed Hackney photographer Stephen Gill, with an Afterword by Iain Sinclair. They depict the Lea valley on the verge of its transformation for the Olympics, a haunting mixture of dereliction and wilderness (2007, Nobody, in Association with the Archive of Modern Conflict, ISBN 978 0 9549405 53).



Blue Fin Building, Southwark Street, 2008

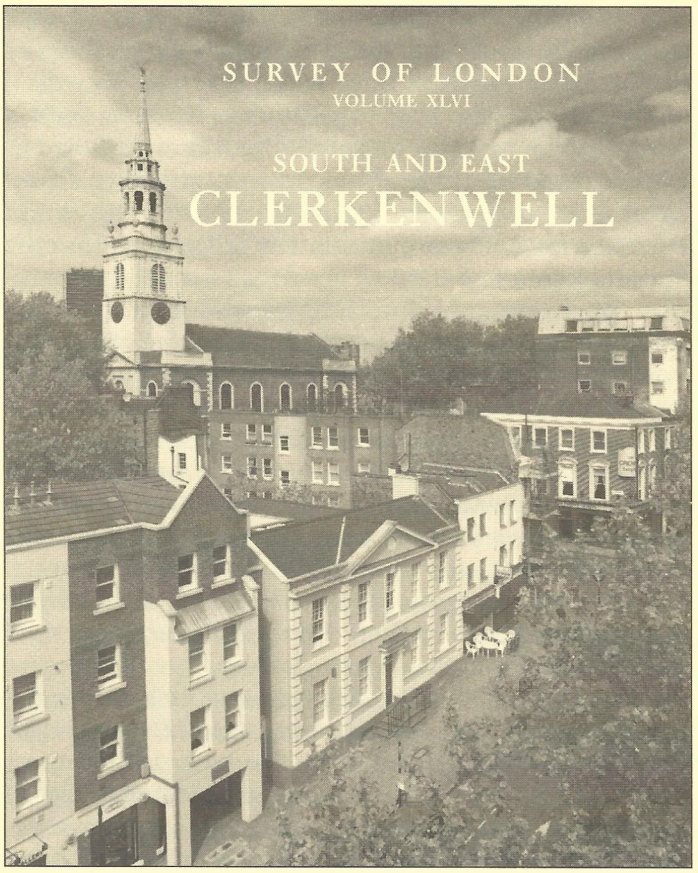
Circumspice (see page 5)

Designed by John Soane as his country house, Pitshanger Manor stands between what is now Walpole Park to the west and Ealing Green to the east. The photo is from the Green and is of the east or entrance elevation. Never the traditional manor house of the area, Pitshanger belonged from the early C18 to the Gurnell family; bought in 1800 with 28 acres of land by thriving architect John Soane; and restructured by Soane with its impressive and characteristic east front. He kept parts of the earlier house, notably interiors by George Dance the Younger which he admired, and because the Dance wing was "the first whose progress and construction I had attended at the commencement of my architectural studies in Mr Dance's office..."

Many of the rooms behind Soane's new façade are surprisingly modest in size, and at first sight pose something of a conundrum. It is said that he planned the house for occupation by himself, his wife Elizabeth, and their two sons John and George. Why then, though the house is amply provided with reception rooms – drawing room, small drawing room, eating room, eating room extension, breakfast room, monk's dining room, library – does it appear to have had only one bedroom? However drawings in the Soane Museum in Lincolns Inn Fields show other bedrooms bearing the names John and George. The house, which is now a museum and owned by Ealing council, was opened to the public 150 years after Soane's death. It is listed Grade I, and was recently the subject of a detailed conservation plan by Michael Shippobottom of architects Donald Insall & Associates. Ealing's chief architect Gavin Leonard says the council expects to put in a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund next summer to fund the first stage of the building's restoration.

Reviews

Survey of London, Vol XLVI, South and East Clerkenwell; Vol XLVII, Northern Clerkenwell and Pentonville
English Heritage, 2008. ISBN 9 780300. 137279/139372. 468pp and 523pp. £75 each



Osbert Lancaster, whose work is currently on display at the Wallace Collection, once reviewed a volume of the *Survey of London* with the comment that whenever he thought ill of the Greater London Council he then thought of the *Survey* and held his peace. 'No other public body supports so magnificent a publication.' More than thirty years later we may sometimes doubt the work of English Heritage but hold our tongues, for these two volumes, with that on Knightsbridge published in 2000, show that body a worthy successor in its care for the *Survey*. For consistent scholarship, lucid in its exposition of history, topography and architecture, catholic in its outlook about what is worth recording, and handsome in its publication, there is nothing to beat the *Survey*.

Some *Survey* volumes, those on Spitalfields and Lambeth notable examples, have preceded urban regeneration, their publication drawing attention to unfashionable areas subsequently gentrified or a target for new commercial investment. But these volumes celebrate a regeneration now well established; one would be tempted to say complete were it not for the advent of Crossrail. Alan Baxter will find his taking of premises in Cowcross Street in 1979 has turned him into 'the harbinger of affluent design professionals' many of them in the fields of design and media. This regeneration has taken two forms: either the conversion of older buildings (in this area largely those of the later 19th and early 20th centuries) or new buildings designed with a greater degree of contextual awareness than is apparent in other areas of London. There are many buildings included, if not in great detail, which have been built while the volumes have been in preparation and at a time when both Islington Council and English Heritage have given great weight to conservation control. The volumes are well matured; the decision to work on Clerkenwell goes back some twenty years to the days soon after the abolition of the GLC when the *Survey* was in the care of the old Royal Commission on Historical Monuments. Those who have known that the volumes have been in preparation may have been frustrated in not having earlier access to the results but the maturity of the end product makes the wait well worthwhile.

Clerkenwell falls more or less neatly into two halves which these two volumes follow. There is an area of early development in the south (covered in Volume XLVI); St John's Gate is the obvious physical evidence of this, plus The Charterhouse, the historical architectural complexity of which leaves it for treatment in a separate monograph to follow. This was the area which became a centre for specialised small industries, such as electro-plating. To the north there are quieter residential areas such as the Lloyd Baker, Penton, Northampton and New River Company Estates; in this respect Volume XLVII follows a more traditional pattern of *Survey* volumes. There is an interesting thought that the development of the New River Estate is a direct consequence of the invention and adoption of the cast iron water main.

One the themes to come out in the volumes is the importance of the area to the whole county of Middlesex. The Sessions House still stands at Clerkenwell Green but it followed Hicks Hall, long the centre of Middlesex County administration; there was the Bridewell, later House of Detention, and the Coldbath Fields House of Correction. Secondly, there is the importance of the routes through the area; the railway is largely hidden below ground but The New Road/City Road, Clerkenwell Road, Farringdon Road and Rosebery Avenue represent major street improvement schemes of the 18th and 19th centuries, all with an immense effect on the character of the area. Thirdly, Clerkenwell was a centre of London radicalism, still represented by the Marx Memorial Library on Clerkenwell Green, whose difficult conservation history set out by *Survey* is a textbook example of how architectural and historical interest don't always pull in the same direction. Fourthly, there is the importance of the water supply, most obviously seen in the presence of the New River Company in Clerkenwell, but also in the former spas – Sadlers Wells, Bagnigge Wells, the London Spaw.

In two such rich volumes it is difficult to choose favourite bits. At the north the account of the site of The Angel explains how, when and why this difficult road junction and tube station became such a landmark. At the south the description of Charterhouse Square, from its few surviving houses of c.1700 through Victorian rebuildings to the *moderne* flats where Hercule Poirot lived, is an outstanding condensation of the long and complex history of a notable London backwater. And the account of Lubetkin's work for Finsbury Borough Council will become essential reading for anyone interested in seeing how 20th century architecture for a public client was really brought about.

It is impossible to review the *Survey* without commenting on the quality of the illustrations. In its early years measured drawings were the foundations on which the *Survey* built. These remain a key element in presentation and the skill of the *Survey* draughtsmen is to draw not just for record but for explanation. Photography has developed enormously in recent years and in *Clerkenwell*, for the first time, we see extensive use of colour and photographs integrated with the text rather than gathered at the end. It makes for much better reading. This is a product of the *Survey*'s new arrangement with the Paul Mellon Centre and these are the first *Survey* volumes to be published by Yale. The triple alliance bodes well. My only reservation is that the enthusiasm for illustration (some 1200 in the two volumes) means that some are reproduced at an infuriatingly small size.

– Frank Kelsall

Ann Saunders, Historic Views of London: Photographs from the collection of B. E. C. Howarth-Loomes
English Heritage, Swindon, 2008

There are daguerreotypes of London dating from 1839 and Henry Fox Talbot made calotypes in the capital in the early 1840s, but most surviving early photographs of the city date from the following decade. By the late 1850s, the invention of the wet-collodion process and technical improvements resulted in much shorter exposure times, allowing the recording of people and moving vehicles in urban settings. In particular, there was the stereoscopic camera, which produced double "instantaneous" photographs. These proved very popular and today, carefully interpreted, they are a valuable but still under-exploited resource for historians of London and its architecture. A large and hugely interesting collection of such stereo cards was assembled by the late Bernard Howarth-Loomes. Thanks to the good offices of Stephen Croad and Ian Leith in the happy days when the National Monuments Record was where it should be – in our capital – I was able to reproduce some of them in my 1984 book on the earliest photographs of London, but otherwise very few of them have been published – until now.

This handsome book contains some two hundred London photographs, mostly mid-Victorian, from the Howarth-Loomes Collection, which is now in the care of National Museums Scotland. The images are very well reproduced and should be of deep fascination to any London topographer. Some appear to be the only photographic record of long-lost buildings: two show the original Inigo Jones arcades in Covent Garden, one includes John Nash's grand double-house in Lower Regent Street, another is of the Cremorne Gardens in Chelsea and there is a puzzling daguerreotype of Brunel's original terminus of the Great Western apparently being taken down. Thinking of Brunel, there are also beautiful images of his beautiful short-lived Hungerford Bridge as well as a rare distant view of the first Blackfriars Bridge by Robert Mylne. Another boon is a pair of early views of Pugin's St George's Southwark.

I regret to have to record, however, that the accompanying text is a disappointment. Not only is the dating of the photographs vague, and sometimes contradicted by internal evidence, but many of the captions are inadequate. In such a book, the purpose of a caption is surely to identify and explain buildings and streets which have been demolished or altered out of recognition rather than to state the obvious, like "one top-hatted gentleman strides out briskly, preparing to cross the road, while another saunters along the pavement". With a view of the Mansion House and Poultry taken before Queen Victoria Street was cut through (page 50), it seems a pity not to point out that the church tower visible is that of Wren's St Mildred's, demolished in 1872. And with a remarkable photograph of Marochetti's equestrian statue of Richard I in Old Palace Yard (page 86), we are told that, next to Barry's and Pugin's new building "the exposed late mediaeval brickwork on the left has been revealed" when it is nothing of the sort. In fact what is shown is a temporary brick end to the old Law Courts by Kent, Vardy and Soane where the southern pavilion, destroyed in the 1834 fire, was not rebuilt (as comparison with the photos on pages 80 and 81 might have suggested).

Some images are wrongly identified. With a view of the Coal Exchange taken from the Monument (page 59) we are told that the "new structure" to its right is Horace Jones's Billingsgate when it is clearly the early 19th century Custom House. Gilbert Scott's new church of St Mary in Stoke Newington is confidently described although the photograph so captioned (page 116) actually depicts the old church which it superseded. In an interesting early view of King's Cross Station (page 162), the building to its left is identified as "the eastern side of St Pancras Station" when it is the adjacent Great Northern Hotel by Lewis Cubitt. The photograph labelled as being of Charing Cross Station (page 166) is of its sister at Cannon Street: both, indeed, are by the Thames and once had arched iron roofs by John Hawkshaw but otherwise their appearance and settings were very different. And the caption to the photograph of the new Northumberland Avenue

(page 95) gives no information at all about the confused building depicted: this is not surprising, for it is in fact the former (extant) Imperial Hotel of 1874 at the Newgate end of Holborn Viaduct.

For such errors to be broadcast in a book issued by English Heritage, whose publications are usually suitably scholarly, is unfortunate. The photographs themselves, however, are so very interesting that I hope these mistakes may be corrected in a second edition.

– Gavin Stamp

The Greater London History and Heritage Handbook
Compiled/published by Peter Marcan 132pp. £25, plus £2.50 p&p, available from Peter Marcan P.O.Box 3158 London SE21 4RA (cheques to Peter Marcan)

This is a new edition of a handbook first published in 1999 by the bookseller Peter Marcan. Its 1250 entries include both books and organisations, arranged under boroughs, followed by a general section and an index. The book is a useful starting point if you want to hunt down a local society, campaign group, museum or archive collection. If you are curious about the wonderfully diverse character of London you can browse through entries covering topics as varied as gated communities, the meat trade, police history and psycho-geography. But beware: the book comes with an errata sheet, and the index is somewhat idiosyncratic; after hunting in vain for the London Topographical Society I eventually located it in a section titled Learned Societies (together with a solitary companion, the Society of Antiquaries). LTS publications are listed, but not its A-Z series, which are (in the section Print/Maps) wrongly described as all being published by the Guildhall Library.

Fewer subheadings and a better index would improve the book's value as a reference work, but it is none the less a fascinating compilation, given extra interest by reproductions of London subjects by contemporary artists.

– Bridget Cherry

The Norweb Collection: Tokens of the British Isles 1575-1750: Part VII – City of London [Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles 59]
by R.H. Thompson and M.J. Dickinson. Spink & Son Ltd. 2007. ISBN 10 1 902040 80 5. 381 pages. 60 plates. £36.99

Between 1648 and 1672 the disappearance of legal small change compelled thousands of tradesmen throughout England, Ireland and Wales to issue their own brass and copper tokens to the values of a farthing, a halfpenny and a penny in order to continue to do business. The tokens circulated in the areas where the issuers were known and were trusted to give silver coinage of the realm in return for accumulated tokens presented to them by other tradesmen. At a relatively low cost, the issuers were able to sustain and advertise their businesses and sometimes profited when tokens were not redeemed.

The tokens were illegal but almost all were designed and struck at the Royal Mint in the Tower by enterprising moneyers. The authorities turned a blind eye until 1672 when the appearance of a regal copper coinage (bearing for the first time the image of Britannia) met the need for legal small change and finally made the tokens redundant.

These tokens have long been popular with collectors and the largest collection, covering the whole of the British Isles, was assembled in the twentieth century by an American, R. Henry Norweb III. Our member Robert Thompson, aided more recently by Michael Dickinson, has for over two decades been cataloguing the tokens and in the process has put together the fullest listing yet compiled. This volume covers the City of London where, not surprisingly, given its size, the largest single volume of tokens was produced. The 1443 issues, all fully described and illustrated by particularly good photography, contain over 230 that had not previously been properly listed anywhere and corrections have been made to previous listings.

An impressive amount of information is imparted in the most economical of ways. Each entry gives, in an abbreviated form, the name of the issuer, the date of issue where known, a reference to the previous standard works by George Williamson or Michael Dickinson, a reading of the inscription (from examples held by public institutions and museums where it is not possible with the Norweb token), a reference to the design type, a provenance citation for the Norweb example and where possible biographical notes on the issuer. The individual descriptions are complemented by a lengthy list of designs (or types) which has its own index, and by indexes of trades, issuers and places of issue. There is an extensive bibliography and a concordance with the books by Williamson which appeared as long ago as 1888-91 and was itself a revision of an earlier work, and its 1986 revision by Dickinson.

Such a complex level of compact description is indispensable for a volume forming part of the authoritative catalogue of British coins, many parts of which have been published by the British Academy. It is nevertheless likely to seem rather daunting to the non-numismatist. I encourage him or her to persevere. The street and alleys are referenced to our *A-Z of Restoration London* and the volume reproduces Peter Jackson's key map for ease of use. Readers will thus be able to people the streets of London before and immediately after the Great Fire in a far fuller and livelier way than through the contemporary Hearth Tax returns and in a manner that resembles Tallis's street views of Victorian London. Since the issuers included feckless tradesmen whom we encounter in the pages of Pepys's diary, chandlers, tavern and coffee house keepers as well as wealthy liverymen, there is a rare chance to learn about all types of Londoner.

The book's lists and indexes also provide valuable data for the geographical distribution of commercial activity in the City and for the resumption of this activity in the immediate aftermath of the Fire. It is even possible to get some idea of the issuers' perceptions of the world from the designs they selected for their tokens. It is revealing, for instance, to see that when faced with the need to represent taverns called 'The King's Head', most chose a portrait of Henry VIII, with Charles II in second place, James I a long way after both, Henry VII still featuring and Charles I being least popular. Family historians will also find much of value since many of the issuers included not only their own initials but also those of their wives on the tokens: a chance here to add names, or at least initials, to family trees and to pin down some hitherto uncertain identifications. To further facilitate this exercise there is an index of these initials.

In short, despite its numismatic focus, Thompson and Dickinson's book should be of great interest to anyone interested in Restoration London and its inhabitants. We look forward to the appearance of the next volume covering Middlesex which will tell us as much about the residents of what are now the London suburbs north of the Thames and their activities.

– Peter Barber

Public Sculpture of South London
by Terry Cavanagh, Public Monuments and Sculpture Association, 2007 Liverpool University Press. ISBN 978 184631 075 1. 504pp. £25

This is the tenth volume in the Public Sculpture and Monuments Association's exemplary National Recording Project and the second on London (the first, on the City of London, by Philip Ward Jackson, appeared in 2003). It covers the four inner boroughs of Lambeth, Lewisham, Southwark and Wandsworth, and is a notable achievement in furthering the PMSA's aim to increase awareness of the subject. Each entry has a description, most have an illustration. There are, alas, no maps, but plentiful reading matter is provided by notes on date, material, condition and ownership. Where possible circumstances of the commission are discussed, particularly revealing for recent works when first-hand information is available from both patrons and sculptors. There is also a glossary and a useful, well annotated biographical section on the 'makers' (a more accurate term than sculptors given the variety of works considered).

The oldest sculptures in the book are within hospital precincts. Guy's, still on its original site in Southwark, has two fine likenesses of its founder; memorials to the early benefactors of St Thomas's are now scattered rather awkwardy around its present hospital buildings in Lambeth. Although the southern riverside was the site of many sculpture workshops, such as the 'Southwark school' tombmakers and Eleanor Coade's works by Westminster Bridge Road, until recently workaday south London attracted little figure sculpture on public sites. An exception is the puzzling statue to King Alfred in one of South London's few squares: Trinity Church Square, Southwark, laid out c.1825. This worn carving has (surprisingly) been claimed both as a medieval work from Westminster and as a sculpture by Rysbrack, but is here more convincingly attributed to James Bubb, possibly a reject from his work for Manchester Town Hall.

Unlike many guides to London's monuments, this one does not confine itself to freestanding statues of notables, so there is plenty more to record. For the topographer, there is much that can add to appreciation of local character and events. A small poignant plaque commemorates James Braidwood of the Fire Brigade who died in the great fire of 1861 which consumed the warehouses of Tooley Street. Details of the hop trade, so important in Southwark, are depicted on the pediment of the Hop Exchange, roundels on the Bermondsey Leather Exchange show leathermaking processes. A south London speciality was the terracotta decoration produced at Doulton's Lambeth pottery by locally trained modellers. Much of their work has vanished, but their intricate detail can still be seen

Hopgatherers on the Hop Exchange, Southwark

on the one remaining building from the Doulton factory near the Albert Embankment.

As civic consciousness grew, sculptural *pièces de résistance* were commissioned to decorate public buildings. These revel in the greater freedom of the 'New Sculpture' movement of the turn of the century; prosaic everyday subjects give way to grand allegorical themes. Battersea Town Hall and Polytechnic are both richly adorned with work by Paul and Horace Montford, Vauxhall Bridge has fine, undeservedly little known, bronze figures by Drury and Pomeroy, and County Hall a grandiose but incomplete programme by Ernest Cole, whose erratic progress is described in fascinating detail. First World War Memorials range from the pompous Waterloo station arch to an elegant Victory figure on a Gas Company memorial at Lower Sydenham. Eric Kennington's memorably austere group of soldiers in Battersea Park makes a striking contrast. A comparable change of mood is demonstrated by the 1930s low relief sculpture on Wandsworth Town Hall depicting obscure local historical themes.

South London is important for the introduction of modern public sculpture to the capital. The post war outdoor sculpture exhibition at Battersea Park in 1948 is described as the first in the world, and the development of the South Bank as a cultural centre has left a legacy of distinguished works, given due attention here. Significant also was the patronage of the LCC, which idealistically placed works of art in new council estates; the Henry Moore Two piece reclining figure at the Brandon estate in Southwark (1963) is now one of the few still in situ.

For many probably the least familiar aspect of this book will be the large quantity of more recent sculpture. From the 1990s both the London Docklands Development Corporation and private firms acted as patrons for new works in the redeveloped docklands, and the fashion has spread elsewhere. Some are inspired, some less so, but all are dutifully recorded and their not always obvious intentions are explained. Earlier generations decorated their buildings; today there is enthusiasm for embellishing spaces, with subjects ranging from realistic human and animal figures to abstract compositions. One wonders what their life span will be. Will the PMSA's efforts succeed in arresting change, or will a future edition of this book need to extend the existing fifty pages devoted to older lost or removed works?

– Bridget Cherry

Historic Clapham
by Michael Green, 2008. Tempus Publishing, Stroud. ISBN 978 0 7524 4122 1. 224pp. 105 b/w and 20 colour plates. £19.99

Michael Green is both an architectural historian and an archaeologist, skills that shape his book. Eschewing the usual paths through Clapham's suburban development, he focuses entirely on the subjects that interest him most: prehistory, the middle ages, and detailed examinations of the sites of the parish church and of Clapham Place. He has a keen visual sense and all topics are generously illustrated. On Clapham Place in particular, built by Sir Dennis Gauden in the 1660s and demolished a century later, the author is able to advance the discussion considerably through previously unidentified drawings.

In the early chapters he displays a deep understanding not simply of geology but of the ways it determines settlement history, particularly important in areas of poor soil like Clapham. The many maps are helpful here, although incomplete keys make some of them hard to follow.

Unfortunately all these strengths co-exist with notable weakness on medieval documents and (as the bibliography confirms) the secondary sources that inform their interpretation. Sturdy dislike of the medieval Church perhaps explains Don Knowles for Dom David in the text, and Eamon Duffy's citation in the text but not the bibliography. Despite a laudable focus on the downtrodden peasantry, misunderstandings include aspects of both manorial jurisdiction and assarts.

Most seriously, the author believes that the hide was always a fixed land measure, and since there were four virgates to the hide and the local virgate was 16 acres the local hide must always have been 64 acres and any alteration in a manor's hidage must mean a transfer of land. This is simply wrong: the hide, although sometimes actual (although there are always questions about non-arable land and assarts) was also cadastral (i.e. tax valuation), and therefore highly mutable. Hence the apparent crash in hidages all across Surrey, not just in Clapham, between 1066 and 1086.

The result of this misunderstanding, amplified by local patriotism, is an astonishing misinterpretation of the Battersea charters and their boundary descriptions. Dismissing C.J. Taylor's excellent work as irrelevant and ignoring a wide range of other authorities, he twists the descriptions to fit his belief that they cover only Battersea and Clapham, and not the (well documented) attached berewick at Wandsworth. Thus 'This syndon tha landgemaera to Badrices Ege and to Wendleswurthe', 'These are the boundaries to Battersea and to Wandsworth', becomes 'These are the landmarks *from* Battersea *to* Wandsworth'. Even having to correct the scribe: 'To Fugelrithe then north' (p.77) 'The boundary turned west (not north as in the survey)' apparently rings no warning bells. Nor do a thane created from mistranslating the dative/ablative forms of 'the' and a lot of mistranscriptions.

If the whole book were at this level it would not be worth reviewing, and it is a mark of the quality of the rest that the flaws demand a serious critique. I shall refer to it regularly and with pleasure, while continuing to wonder why archaeologists are still so often unwilling fully to engage with historians.

– Pamela Taylor

Pinner, Hatch End, North Harrow and Rayners Lane
by Patricia A. Clarke. Phillimore 2007. ISBN 978 186077 465 2. 128pp + 216 black and white illustrations, index. £14.99

Patricia Clarke's little book of 216 historic photographs and picture post cards epitomises the development of London in the last two hundred years: as she remarks in her introduction, "In 1800 Pinner was a classic rural society." Successive decades saw the arrival of the new wealth a court photographer, building and railway contractors and entrepreneurs, industrialists, furniture manufacturers enlarging old or building new houses. Then railways facilitated the arrival of the Hatch End stockbroker and the Rayners Lane clerk, a host of suburban businesses springing up to meet their needs and increase further the demand for terraced and semi-detached houses that swallowed up the old farms. The new inhabitants' spiritual wants were met by new churches and improving the old, their intellectual by building schools, their grosser ones by new pubs and cinemas. But all these have their time and pass, and Clarke records blocks of flats replacing old mansions, demolition of pubs, the replacement of cinemas by super-markets, while schools are pulled down and rebuilt. However, the most significant of Pinner's historic structures, the great tithe barn of Headstone Manor (no. 171, used as a theatre after rather than during the Second World War) has mercifully survived the perils of public authority ownership. A useful sketch-map marks the location of the buildings illustrated.

For those with connexions to the district, this volume, a sequel to one that covered the whole of Pinner's history, will fascinate; while the general reader may mull over, as I have indicated, the more general significance of the illustrations.

– M. H. Port

Between the Commons: South Battersea's Formative Years 1851-1900
by Dr Roger Logan, 2008. 44pp, stapled between card covers, with a few engravings and sketches; available from Hilary Sims, 112 Putney Bridge Road SW18 1NJ

This is Wandsworth Historical Society's Paper 15, but avid collectors of earlier issues in the series will be disappointed to find this is a re-issue of paper 3 of 1977 which had the title South Battersea, with a few corrections. The account can be read as a piece of local history and also more generally as how the development of an area so close to the railway lines radiating from Clapham Junction was little affected by public transport before c.1880. The area covered is the strip south of Clapham Junction and north of Nightingale Lane lying between Clapham and Wandsworth Commons. The building of the streets and important buildings, generally moving eastwards from Wandsworth Common towards the older villas along the west side of Clapham Common, is recounted in chapters and sketches of (unnamed) street layouts covering each decade, but what is lacking is a description of the type of houses constituting the development – detached/semi-detached/terraced – and their size or value. It is a pity that Wandsworth in the 30 years since the original edition could not have improved the presentation and cartography of this research.

– Roger Cline

Ruth Belville: The Greenwich Time Lady
by David Rooney. 2008. National Maritime Museum. ISBN 978 0 948065 97 2. 192 pages. 12 illustrations. £12.99

When we set our watches and clocks how do we know that they are correct? From the 1850s some relied on electric time signals to give us regular checks but until radio and television there was little for the ordinary man. David Rooney is curator of timekeeping at the Royal Observatory and as such is well placed to write the engaging story of Ruth Belville: The Greenwich Time Lady. With her chronometer named 'Arnold', she walked London for almost 50 years, visiting her clients to give them an accurate time check, which she had authenticated weekly at the Observatory.

Ruth Belville provided a service that she took over from her mother in 1892. She had little competition initially, but the Standard Time Company, which was formed in her mother's time, began to exert pressure. In the first years of the new century they increased it, suggesting that 'no mere man' could have access to the astronomers at the Observatory and employing a 'dirty tricks campaign'. There were other threats that had less effect and the efforts of William Willet and the Daylight Saving had little impact on her business.

Rooney puts her at the heart of the story which was to continue until the advent of the BBC pips in 1924. The nail in her coffin came when Ethel Cain, the 'golden voice' of the Post Office's TIM, won a competition to read 'at the third stroke...'. People could telephone TIM and, with the increasing popularity of the telephone and the start of the Second World War, Ruth Belville felt the time had come to hand over her service to TIM. She was well-advanced in years and she died aged 89 in 1943.

There is not a great deal known about the Belville family but Rooney has trawled material from numerous sources to put the story in the specific framework of time. Wisely using his special knowledge he tells a lucid and enthralling story, and in an easily readable book he wears his knowledge lightly. The notes are comprehensive, and there is an excellent index.

– Denise Silvester-Carr

George Morland:
a London artist in eighteenth-century Camden
by Marian Kamlish, 2008. ISBN 978 0904491 74 6. Camden History Society. 136 pp. 133 black and white illustrations. £11.95

In 1787 the successful young artist George Morland moved with his pregnant wife to the newly developed area that was to become known as Camden Town. Morland is an artist who is now largely forgotten but he was enormously popular for about twenty years before his death at the age of 41 in 1804. Those who do remember Morland today tend to think that he must have lived a life of rural poverty like the subjects of his paintings – the first two works he exhibited were, typically, entitled 'Hovel with Asses' and 'A Girl attending Pigs' – but Morland lived all his life in the heart of the London art world. He was brought up in Soho, son of the painter Henry Morland, exhibited at the Royal Academy from the age of ten onwards, and by the time he was thirty a 'Morland Gallery' had opened where his paintings could be seen and prints based on them could be bought. Sadly Morland's success did not bring financial stability. He was notoriously extravagant and, although he was said to have been earning the huge sum of £1000 a year in his early twenties, he spent much of his adult life fleeing from creditors and, according to one obituary, "in drinking and in the meanest dissipations".

Marian Kamlish has based her account on quotations from the four biographies published shortly after Morland's death with additional comments from more recent writers. Her enthusiasm for this intriguing artist shines through, and she also gives us a glimpse of the northern fringes of late eighteenth-century London which makes the book an enjoyable read for a wider audience. Her careful research into the precise locations of Morland's many addresses will, for instance, allow those of us who walk towards Marks & Spencer's car park off Camden High Streeet to imagine "a neat small house, with a garden to it, in Pleasant Passage" where the Morlands lived for three months before moving to Warren Place where Woolworth's now stands.

– Sheila O'Connell

London – after a fashion
by Alistair O'Neill. Reaktion Books 2007 240pp
ISBN 13 9781 86189 315 4. £14.95

Reaktion Books is a publisher to watch for challenging and ground-breaking subjects. Following on from some of the themes in *London from Punk to Blair* (ed. Joe Kerr and Andrew Gibson, 2003), O'Neill explores the interface between avant garde fashion, art and London topography over a longer period. O'Neill is a research fellow at the London College of Fashion, and fashion is the thread that binds the chapters together; their relationship to art is more variable, but some fascinating little known histories are brought to life, grounded in different parts of London. The story starts in Jermyn Street with a Victorian Turkish Bath and tattoo parlour patronised by the upper classes as part of end-of-the-century decadence. It continues with the respectably domestic-looking Hanover Square premises of Lucile (Lady Duff Gordon), fashionable designer of stage costume and ladies' wear, and creator of stage-inspired teagowns, who pioneered the training of working-class girls as exotic fashion models. More outré activities follow: surrealists in Mayfair between the wars, with an exploration of the role of women as embodiments of surrealist fantasies, and of Francis Bacon amid the 'spivs' of post-war Soho. From there it is only a short step to Carnaby Street, Swinging London, and the transformation of men's fashion in the 1960s. As a contrast to this relatively tight West End focus, attention turns to the parallel development of King's Road as a centre of fashion for the young at the time of the gentrification of Chelsea, with Mary Quant, Biba, the rise of Punk, and, in the 1980s, a self-conscious rediscovery of chintz flower designs reflecting Chelsea's garden history. Then finally a radical switch eastward, where the desolation of the old industrial spaces of the East End provided new inspiration for artists, and latterly, novel settings for fashion photographers of the 1990s. This is perhaps not a book for the conventional topographer, but its eclectic efforts to recapture the ephemeral moods of different neighbourhoods, inspired by the spirit of Jonathan Raban's 'soft city of illusion, myth, inspiration, nightmare' adds to appreciation of the complexity of 20th century London. – Bridget Cherry

British Pathé Film Archive

In 2002, with a £1m grant from the lottery New Opportunities Fund, some 3,500 hours of newsreel footage from 1896-1970 is available online. Some of the footage was never released for public viewing and some is mute. It may be viewed free in Britain by home users and is now more popular than ever, owing to the increasing number of broadband subscribers. Go to www.britishpathe.com.

A search for London gives 16,472 results (though not all will relate to our capital); for example, there's riverside artists at work in 1956, a film première of 1955, work in a toy factory in 1945, training firemen in 1957, rose petal cigarettes being made in the East End in 1959 and plenty more, including the war, sport, the arts, fashion, royal visits, ceremonial and people and business in the news. There's even a film of 'nippies' in a cycle race in Herne Hill in 1933!

Some of the newsreel descriptions are poorly researched, and mistakes abound, and one is left feeling it's a job only half completed. There is no attempt at chronological order, so that search results are all over the place, and the site could be more user-friendly. The process of form filling to take you from the search through to viewing on the PC screen is, sadly, torture and evidence of the dead hand of some miserable bureaucrat but, persevere, and you will find some gems of London film newsreel. Some older members might even recognise a face on film!

Indeed, if you have more information about any film, or you find a London newsreel that might be of special interest to members, perhaps you'd let the *Newsletter* editor (and your local Borough Archivist) know. – Lester May

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