

newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY MAY 1970

The Society begins

This is the first Newsletter of the Camden History Society and lists the initial activities to be arranged. A crash course is planned for members who want to know the basic history of the three parts of Camden. Research projects are beginning and publications are being talked about.

There is no limit to the field of research - very little has been done in a hundred years. The Victorian period, for example, has left a great deal of material, little of which has been classified and documented. The development of local government, health and education improvements, transport and housing progress are all uncharted, just to name a few of the more obvious areas.

The metropolis sometimes makes people yearn for the rural life of, say, 'St. Pancras-in-the-Fields', but the quality of life then, even at first acquaintance in research, is a sobering discovery. The 'highways and byways' mentality is all very well but what about the residents? What was their Utopia? To find that out is one of our aims.

The Society has set off well with a good membership total which could easily be doubled. The basis of any expansion, however, should be the activity of present members and we hope that many will take part in the various projects.

A slip is enclosed with this Newsletter for you to return. It is intended to give your officers an indication of the likely response to our first activities although firm details and dates are sometimes missing. It is possible that the crash course might be over-subscribed as accommodation is limited, but this is something that can easily be repeated. It would assist us, however, if you could return the slip in the near future.

Vane House goes

Vane House, in Rosslyn Hill, has been under sentence for some time and now Mr Anthony Greenwood has confirmed that there will be no reprieve.

The house, better known as the Soldiers' Daughters' Home, is not an architectural gem, with recent additions hiding what grace it had. The preservationist argument has, therefore, been rather weak on this ground. This would apply, though, to a number of buildings which ought not to disappear. What the preservationists have in mind is that environmental reasons should have more weight. If a street or a building is pleasant, but without high architectural merit, should it be saved, all other considerations equal?

Vane House was built by Sir Henry Vane in the 17th Century. He had been a Governor of Massachusetts at the age of 23 and entered Parliament in 1640. He was a leading member of the Commonwealth but refused to take part in the trial of Charles I. After a breach with Cromwell he was imprisoned but this did not save him from being tried for high treason after the Restoration. He was executed on Tower Hill - Pepys has described this.

An 18th Century resident was Dr Joseph Butler, Bishop of Durham, who had a great liking for stained glass. An occupier in the 19th Century was Charles Pilgrim who gave his name to the lane opposite.

St Pancras Anniversaries 1970

There are a number of anniversaries this year in Camden. This first list is from St. Pancras only. Hampstead and Holborn events will appear in future editions.

DEATH OF GEORGE WHITEFIELD

Two hundred years ago George Whitefield died. He left his name to Whitefield's Tabernacle in Tottenham Court Road and to Whitfield Street at the back.

He had a busy, religious life and is said to have preached over 18,000 sermons. Banned from speaking in most churches he led the vogue for preaching in the open air. He was an Evangelist, classified as a Calvinist Methodist, and an early associate of the Wesleys. Despite a breach with John Wesley they had an arrangement that whoever should outlive the other would preach the sermon at the funeral. In fact Whitefield was buried in Boston, New England, and Wesley made his sermon in Tottenham Court Road. The entire chapel was draped in black for six weeks.

HOPE CHAPEL

In Prince of Wales Road, near the Polytechnic, is Hope Chapel. It opened there in 1870 with seating for 200. It began in Hatton Garden in 1837, moved later to a site now covered by St. Pancras Station, went north to Camden Town and eventually bought the freehold of their present building.

CHALK FARM BAPTISTS

The foundation stone of Chalk Farm Baptist Church was laid in the same year. When, in 1957, the Church was being reconstructed, a bottle was discovered underneath the stone, containing a copy of the Camden and Kentish Towns' Gazette, a forerunner of the North London Press.

TRAMCARS

The year 1870 saw the Parliamentary sanction for laying tramways in St. Pancras. An article by Mr Charles Lee on the early implementation of tramways in Camden, will appear in a future Newsletter.

Social History projects

An analysis of the interests stated by members who completed application forms shows a large number interested in the

social history of Camden. This subject, of course, covers a very wide range of activity and we have therefore asked Mr Leslie Newman, who teaches local history, to organise research projects under this heading.

The subject covers treatment of the poor, health, education, customs, communication, and the relationship between the classes. Some of these items could well mean long-term research and it is the intention to select fields in which findings could be produced fairly quickly so as to give members experience in completing a project for discussion by the Society. These findings would, of course, be eligible for publication by the Society.

Transport Project to start

The Society is to set up a Research Project into Transportation in the Borough. Mr Charles Lee, an expert on London Transport has kindly agreed to give general guidance to the Project, and members who are interested are invited to fill in the enclosed form.

1000 Photographs to Catalogue

The Borough Librarian has, in the local history collection, nearly 1000 old photographs of parts of Camden. These have never been catalogued. The Society has been asked if its members would help in this under the supervision of Mrs Gee, the Borough Archivist. If you would like to help in this fascinating work, please contact the Secretary.

Oldest Ratepayers in St Pancras

One of the members who attended the first meeting of the Society was Mr Basil Leverton, a partner in the firm of funeral directors Leverton and Sons. They have been in business in St. Pancras since 1789 and were then in the area off Hampstead Road opposite Tolmers Square which was then a reservoir. In 1834 the firm moved

to Whitfield Street (then called Hertford Street) and in 1889 transferred to Ever-sholt Street where the Post Office now stands.

NOTES AND QUERIES

Members will sometimes have local history queries which other members may be able to solve. You are therefore invited to write to the Newsletter with your questions or else with any other information you think might be of interest to readers. Please address your letters to the Secretary.

- Q 1: In his Camden Festival lecture on the Bedford Theatre, Geoffrey Fletcher asked the audience whether anyone knew the name of the architect. Called the New Bedford Theatre it was built in the 1890's and the plans of the building have disappeared.
- Q 2: Where is the exact site of the original workhouse in the Frognaal area?
- Q 3: What is the derivation of Traitors Hill on part of the Holly Lodge estate? Miller, in his St. Pancras Past and Present, erroneously gives Parliament Hill as being called Traitors Hill, but the 1796 survey map of St. Pancras shows plainly that is where the Holly Lodge flats are at the moment. Miller surmises that the name arose when some Gunpowder Plot conspirators went there to watch the Houses of Parliament explode. However, the first reference found to Traitors Hill is not until 1691 in the Cantelowes Court Rolls.
- Q 4: Where did Debussy stay during his visit to Hampstead in 1895?
- Q 5: Where was the site of the old windmill in the Windmill Hill area.
- Q 6: What is the origin of the name Lam-bolle Road in Hampstead?

New building for Hearts of Oak

The bronze coloured tower block in Euston Road is the new headquarters of the Hearts of Oak Benefit Society. It was opened by the Queen Mother on April 16th.

The Society began in 1842 when twelve men, dissatisfied with the administration of another Provident Society, met at the Bird in Hand tavern in Long Acre. John Hadley was the first Chairman and the landlord of the tavern was treasurer. By 1863, with over 5000 members, they were still using the facilities of the Bird in Hand, but then moved to Greek Street in Soho. More expansion in 1875 made them move to Charlotte Street in Camden and in 1906 to Euston Road.

SIR JOHN WOLFENDEN becomes President

Sir John Wolfenden, C.B.E., Director and Principal Librarian of the British Museum has agreed to be the Society's first President.

Also, Sir John Betjeman, Sir Colin Anderson, Chairman of the Fine Art Commission, and Sir James Brown, President of the Highgate Literary and Scientific Institution, have all accepted our invitation to become Vice-Presidents.

The Society also recommended that the Mayor of Camden, in office, should be asked to become Patron of the Society. Dame Florence Cayford, last year's Mayor, accepted our invitation.

Plaque to Dickens House

As part of the Dickens celebrations this year the Dickens Fellowship in Doughty Street received two plaques in April, both representing coats of arms. One was from Strood Urban District Council where Dickens lived for part of his itinerant life, and the other from Camden where he lived at a considerable number of addresses. Mr Eric Dickens-Hawkesley, the author's great-grandson received the plaques.

Geoffrey Fletcher, the artist and writer, who spoke at the Society's first meeting, has recently completed his book 'The London Dickens Knew', in which there is a great deal about Camden. It is published by Hutchinsons at 45/-.

SOCIETY BACK PAGE

MEMBERSHIP TOPS 200

Membership is now over the 200 mark. As might be expected the main concentrations are in Hampstead, Highgate, Holborn and Camden Town. There are also a few members from surrounding boroughs. Fourteen associate members include the Highgate Society, Holborn Society, the Highgate Literary and Scientific Institution, the Hampstead Townswomen's Guild, the Hampstead Photographic Society, the Holborn Chamber of Commerce and a number of colleges and schools.

OFFICERS

The Officers of the Society, elected at the first Public Meeting in April were:-

CHAIRMAN: Cllr John Richardson
SECRETARY: Mr G. D. Gregory,
Central Library, Swiss Cottage, N.W. 3.
TREASURER: Mr W. H. Meadows
PUBLICATIONS
SECRETARY: Mr Ian Norrie
ARCHIVIST: Mrs C. M. Gee

The Council of the Society consists of the above officers and the following members:

John Parkhurst, Richard Henwood, Charles Lee, Leslie Newman and representatives from the Holborn Society, Highgate Society, Highgate Literary & Scientific Institution, and the Heath and Old Hampstead Society.

All communications to the Society and to this Newsletter should be addressed to the Secretary at the address above.

VICTORIAN ARCHITECTURE

Victorian domestic architecture in Camden is the subject of a talk to be given by the Hampstead architect John Brandon-Jones in June, arranged by the Society.

It will be held in the Children's Library at Swiss Cottage on 25th June at 8pm. It is an illustrated talk and free to members only.

CAMDEN BY CANAL

One way to see some parts of Camden is to use the Regent's Canal. On 24th July we hope that many members will like the idea of spending a summer evening on board the 'Jenny Wren', for we have chartered this traditionally designed and decorated narrow boat for a trip on the Canal. The fare is 7/- for members and 8/- for non-members.

The trip will start from the Garden Jetty, 250 Camden High Street (2 minutes walk from Camden Town Station) at 7pm, and return by 10pm. There will be a break half-way, at the Islington end, for refreshments. Would members please make a booking on the enclosed form.

STREET NAMES REGISTER TO START

A great deal of information already exists on the derivations of street names in Camden. Many members may well be interested in this field of research and a complete index of this information would make an interesting publication. Members who would like to do this work should contact the Secretary.

CRASH-COURSE IN CAMDEN HISTORY

The Society is arranging a crash-course on Camden's local history in September. It will take the form of a weekend at Camden's Training Centre at Fitzroy Park, in a house left to Camden by an architect.

It is planned to demonstrate the early manorial system in Holborn, Hampstead and St. Pancras, the formation of the large estates and how this affected the development of Camden, the social history - the pubs, pastimes, housing conditions, agricultural and industrial peaks, the improvements in transport and communications and so on.

This is an important course as it will provide members with a background to all their researches and will, we hope, show in what ways the components of Camden were not isolated from each other.

newsletter

No.2

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY JULY 1970

Vote Gladstone Liberal!

Political memories are notoriously short. Furthermore, at local level, they are non-existent. Which M.P.'s or vestrymen in Camden kept their promises a hundred or even fifty years ago is not known. A student recently working on a thesis and needing to know the sort of people running local government in the Camden area in the late 19th Century, found our records completely unresearched.

The records of elections are littered with political descriptions such as Progressive or Moderate though in what degree is obscure at the moment. There were Liberal Unionists and Gladstone Liberals fighting each other. We do not know what the 235,000 residents of St Pancras in 1881 felt about being part of the Parliamentary constituency of St Marylebone. And how did Mr Cobden come to have his statue near Mornington Crescent and what made Napoleon III pay so much of its cost?

What part did the elected representatives play in retarding or encouraging progress in social welfare? Were the vestries entirely unrepresentative and were their members really as pompous as their speeches indicate?

Local historians have tended to ignore this subject altogether. Any member interested would be the first in the field.

Shaw Theatre to open

The Council is opening later this year the Shaw Theatre plus a brand-new, very large, reference library in Euston Road. The Theatre is named after G.B.S. who was a member of the first St Pancras Council in 1900. He was also made a Freeman of the Borough.

VICTORIAN ARCHITECTURE TALK

80 members came to Swiss Cottage Library on Thursday evening, June 25th, to hear Mr John H. Brandon-Jones give an illustrated talk on the subject of Victorian domestic architecture in Camden.

Using examples taken almost entirely from Hampstead, he developed the theme of houses built by architects for themselves or for other artists. Norman Shaw's fine houses were mentioned, especially that built for the artist Long in Netherhall Gardens, unhappily demolished before the War. Other architects like C.F.A. Voysey (house in Platt's Lane) and A.H. Mackmurdo (house in Redington Road) had very individual idioms.

The work of Batterbury & Huxley in Steele's Road and Hampstead Hill Gardens - according to Mr Brandon-Jones too little known and appreciated - received honourable mention. Apparently not much has been written about this firm of architects, who built largely for artists; one of their achievements was Studio House, built for the first editor of "The Studio". Two pubs in keeping with the domestic architecture of this period were praised: The Horse and Groom, and the Bird in Hand.

Judging from the questions afterwards the audience must have included a number of enlightened amateurs. One interesting observation had been made that Norman Shaw's own house in Ellerdale Road ought to get a plaque, but for some reason this had not been agreed to.

Camden's First Tramway

A hundred years ago Parliament sanctioned the first street tramway to serve any part of what is now Camden. This was far from being the beginning of the story, as a proposal by responsible promoters had been made as early as 1857, but this was defeated in the House of Commons in March 1858 through the opposition of Sir Benjamin Hall, First Commissioner of Works, whose name is perpetuated by the great bell, Big Ben. During the next decade the traffic potentialities of our main roads, both east-west and north-south, attracted the attention of tramway promoters, but not of local men. It was the undertaking peculiarly associated with St Pancras and Hampstead which received Parliamentary approval in August 1870 by an Act which incorporated the London Street Tramways Company.

In the previous year three other tramway companies had been sanctioned by Parliament to serve other parts of London, but it was the London Street Tramways Company which was the first to be required to adopt the policy of the Tramways Act 1870, in being allowed an original tenure of only 21 years. Moreover, it was our own local company which was the subject of the test case, taken right up to the House of Lords, on the terms of compensation to be paid, when the 21 years had expired, if the municipal authorities decided upon acquisition.

Construction began in October 1870 on the first section, from Euston Road, along Hampstead Road, High Street and Camden Road, to the North London Railway station then called Camden Town, whence the tramway continued along Great (now Royal) College Street and Kentish Town Road to the Midland Railway station at Kentish Town. The last named point was then more widely known as the Bull & Gate. After a formal inspection public traffic began on 27 November 1871, when the cars were described in the contemporary press as very comfortable and commodious.

Difficulty in providing horses caused the next portions to remain unused for some months until the London General Omnibus Company contracted to provide them. The section from Camden Town to Brecknock

Arms, Camden Road, opened in February 1872 and that from Camden Town to Kings Cross in April the same year. By 1890 the system had grown to 13½ route miles, extending into Hampstead, Holborn and Islington.

Charles E. Lee

HIGHGATE CEMETERY REGISTERS

The local history department of any public library depends to a great extent for the acquisition of its material on the staff being aware of the activities, publications and disposal of records of local societies, institutions and local firms. However, a disturbing proportion of material is obtained by chance - an odd word in a conversation may indicate the presence of irreplaceable records, ready for the incinerator or to be collected as salvage - details of a firm's history for example.

An example of this occurred a few weeks ago when Camden's local history department had the good fortune to acquire copies of the burial registers of Highgate Cemetery. These were found in a disused building in Nunhead Cemetery in Southwark, among burial records of Nunhead and an assortment of refuse. They were discovered when someone investigated reports of vandalism in the Cemetery, realised the value of the documents and contacted his local library.

The burial registers date from the opening of the Cemetery in 1839 up to 1949 and indicate plot numbers. To make the fullest use of these registers they need to be indexed and members of the Society, who are interested, are invited to help. Members may also like to know that Pitkin Pictorials will be publishing later this year an illustrated guide to the Cemetery.

Malcolm Holmes

(Members who wish to help with the indexing should contact Mr Holmes on 405 2705 at the Holborn Library, Theobalds Road.)

Recent Books

- Helen Caroline Bentwich,
The Vale of Health on Hampstead Heath,
1777-1967. High Hill Press, 1968.
- Sir John Betjeman,
Victorian and Edwardian London from
old photographs. Batsford, 1969.
- L.G. Bullock,
Historical map of London. Bartholomew,
1969.
- John Butt and Ian Donnachie, editors.
Industrial archaeology 1969. David &
Charles, 1970.
- Kenneth Cameron,
English place names. Methuen, 1969.
- A.R. Campbell,
The London tradesman (1747). David &
Charles, 1970.
- Ida Darlington and
James Laurence Howgego,
Printed maps of London circa 1553-1850.
G. Philip, 1964.
- Baron F. Duckham and
John R. Hume, editors
Transport history 1969. David &
Charles, 1970.
- F.M. Gladstone and A. Barker,
Notting Hill in bygone days, 2nd rev.ed.
Bingley, 1969.
- Olive and Nigel Hamilton,
Royal Greenwich: a guide and history to
London's most historic borough. Green-
wich Bookshop, 1969.
- John Hayes,
London: a pictorial history. Batsford,
1969.
- Christopher Hibbert,
London: the biography of a city. Long-
mans, 1969.
- A.E.J. Hollaender and
W. Kellaway, editors,
Studies in London history. Hodder &
Stoughton, 1969.
- Alan A. Jackson,
London's termini. David & Charles,
1969.
- Stella Margetson,
Fifty years of Victorian London, from
the Great Exhibition to the Queen's death.
Macdonald, 1969.
- Mavis and Ian Norrie, editors,
The book of Hampstead. 2nd rev.ed.
High Hill Press, 1968.
- A.L.F. Rivet, editor,
The Roman villa in Britain. Routledge &
Kegan Paul, 1969.
- Ann Saunders,
Regent's Park: a study of the develop-
ment of the area from 1086 to the present
day. David & Charles, 1969.
- Jack Simmons,
St. Pancras station. Allen & Unwin, 1968.
- A.L. Smith,
Dictionary of City of London street
names. David & Charles, 1970.
- Alan Sorrell
Roman London. Batsford, 1969.

NOTES AND QUERIES

- Q 7: Mr Anthony Cooper asks for any information on the Old Chalk Farm Tavern and adjacent buildings in the early 19th Century.
- Q 8: He also requests information on the Governesses' Institution at the corner of Prince of Wales Road and Ryland Road, now the annexe of St Richard of Chichester School and formerly Miss Buss's Camden School for Girls.
- Q 9: Is there any evidence to show that Charles Dickens ever visited Admirals House in Hampstead?
- Q 10: Is there any evidence to show that Ford Madox Brown lived in Hampstead before 1851?
- Q 11: Who designed and built Burgh House?
- Q 12: Who was Christopher Cary, buried Hampstead Parish Church 1808?

- Q 13: When was Crown Lodge, Haverstock Hill, built?
- Q 14: Miss Joan Morris writes: "I am particularly interested to get information about the St Mary's Clerkenwell Nunnery dating from before 1100 A.D." Although outside Camden, can any member help? Miss Morris adds that she has already consulted Dugdale Monasticum Anglicum and the Victoria County History and wonders whether there are any archaeological remains.

A 1: Both Miss Gillian Shinar and Mr F.D. Cole have written to say that according to Diana Howard's book on Theatres and Music Halls in London, the architect of the Bedford Theatre, Camden Town, was Bertie Crewe and the contractor was W. Johnson & Co. It was built 1896-8. Crewe also designed the Woolwich Hippodrome and the Princes Theatre.

A 2: Brenda Tyler writes re Froggnal Workhouse:
The early history of the house first rented as a Workhouse, probably in 1724, is not easy to discover. The only description of its whereabouts appears to be by J.J. Parks in 1810 who puts the position as the top of Froggnal on the right hand side facing upwards in, apparently, the grounds of what is now the National Institute for Medical Research. It would therefore have been just above the house, still extant, once called the Three Pigeons, built about 1720. From prints dated 1801 the Workhouse would appear to be Tudor. It may be the very Froggnal hall from which Froggnal takes its name. First Vestry minutes to mention it are in 1747 and there are some records at the GLC. Park says that it is mentioned in 'An Account of Several Workhouses' in 1725.

Hampstead Anniversaries

In 1870 building commenced on South Hill Park, Gayton Road and Adamson Road. Also built were the White Horse public house in Pond Street, West End Lane Station and Ebenezer Chapel.

St Stephen's Church, Rosslyn Hill

Anthea Steel writes to ask if any other member is interested in the fate of the above Church. It is gradually subsiding and seems unlikely to be saved. It was the work of Samuel Sanders Teulon; the Victorian architect who has the reputation of building the ugliest of the Gothic Revival churches, although Ian Nairn says of St Mark's, Silvertown, another of his churches, that it reveals "an architectural imagination the size of Blake's".

Teulon has other connections with Camden: he built St Paul's, Avenue Road (1864) and St George's Schools in the same year in Old Gloucester Street. He lived at Tenslys, Hampstead towards the end of his life and was buried in Highgate Cemetery after a service at St Stephen's.

Miss Steel suggests that there should be a proper visual record of St Stephen's and perhaps some of its interior carving should be rescued. Members interested should contact her at 16a Hampstead Hill Gardens, N.W.3.

HUNTLEY STREET THREATENED

There is a very pleasant - at least from the outside - Georgian terrace in Huntley Street which is worth seeing before it goes. It belongs to University College Hospital and will be demolished eventually to extend Hospital premises.

BM OFFERS HELP

Mr Reginald Williams of the Department of Prints and Drawings at the British Museum has kindly written to say that members might find their collection of material of interest in research.

Seventy Years of Central Line

London Transport is to publish a booklet to mark the 70 years of the Central Line. It will be written by Mr Charles Lee, a member of the Society and leader of the Project Group on Transport.

He writes:

When The Prince of Wales (soon to become Edward VII) formally inaugurated the original section of the Central London Railway on 27 June 1900, no previous railway in this country had been built along a route so crowded with passenger traffic as that between Bank and Marble Arch. The highly attractive traffic artery provided by Holborn and Oxford Street had engaged the attention of railway promoters for more than 50 years, but Parliament seemed reluctant to authorise a railway in the central area, either in shallow subway (like the Metropolitan Railway) or on viaduct. It was the invention of the deep-level tube, driven through London clay by an excavating shield and lined with cast-iron segments, which altered the whole situation.

The Central London Railway Company was incorporated by an Act in 1891, but great difficulty was experienced in finding the capital. The line was built by the Exploration Co. Ltd, a mining finance organisation, and most of the money was found by Sir Ernest Cassel and his friends. Construction work was begun in April 1896 at the site of Chancery Lane Station. Originally the three stations in what is now Camden, were Chancery Lane, British Museum and Tottenham Court Road.

Despite the Royal opening, public traffic did not begin until July 1900. London was sweltering in an average temperature of 90 deg. in the last summer of Queen Victoria's reign, and "the deliciously cool atmosphere of the tunnel (always in the vicinity of 55 deg.) has proved most grateful", in the words of a contemporary writer. The initial adoption of the universal fare of 2d immediately attracted to the railway the friendly nickname of the 'Two-penny Tube', which it retained throughout the Edwardian era.

Weekend Course full

The Society's weekend course on Camden history on September 12/13th, is now booked up. Discussions are being held to arrange a second course for those who cannot attend the first.

Camden Council has generously given us the use of its house in Fitzroy Park, which is used by the Council for staff training. There are large grounds surrounding the house - almost more than is decent in London - and, given fine weather, the setting is ideal.

Most speakers have now been arranged. Depending upon airline punctuality the Society's President, Sir John Wolfenden, will close the course on the Sunday after lunch. Sir James Brown will talk on Highgate, Professor F.M.L. Thompson of the History Department, Bedford College, will cover Hampstead and Cllr John Richardson, St Pancras. John Lehmann, whose book on Holborn is to be published in August, will be speaking on that area. In addition architects from both Camden and the GLC will describe local record sources.

Fuller details will be given to those attending the course.

TWO CANAL TRIPS SOLD OUT

As there were so many applications to join the Canal trip on July 24th the Society arranged a second one. This too is now filled although members who wish to go and haven't already applied should write to the Secretary in case there are cancellations.

MEMBERSHIP AT 250

At the time of writing the membership total had reached the 250 mark. This is an increase of 50 since the last Newsletter.

PROJECT REPORTS

SOCIAL HISTORY

Over 40 members applied to take part in projects under this heading. It began work on June 30th under the leadership of Mr Leslie Newman.

TRANSPORT

This group of a dozen has met once under the guidance of Mr Charles Lee. It had preliminary discussions and will meet again in July.

STREET NAME DIRECTORY

The response to this project has been surprisingly high. The group will have its first meeting in July to determine the method and extent of its work.

CATALOGUE OF PHOTOGRAPHS

Eleven members have already started work on the collection of photographs held by Camden Libraries.

PHOTOGRAPHING CAMDEN

Talks are being held between the Society and several film-making societies to explore the suggestion of photographing Camden.

OFFICERS

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N.W.3.
TREASURER: W.H. Meadows
PUBLICATIONS
SECRETARY: Ian Norrie
ARCHIVIST: Mrs C.M. Gee

All correspondence to this Newsletter or the Society should be sent to Mr Gregory at the address above.

newsletter

No. 3

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

SEP 1970

Northern Heights Exhibition

The Highgate Literary and Scientific Institution in Highgate Village is mounting an exhibition from October 7th to October 14th, with the co-operation of the Heath and Old Hampstead Society and Camden Libraries. It will be called 'The Northern Heights - 986AD to 1970AD'. Its main subject matter will be the Fairs on the Heath, the fight to save the Heath, Highgate Cemetery, and the surrounding houses and people. Members are urged to make a particular effort to see this exhibition of the unique material that is housed in the Institution and elsewhere.

Pevsner to talk to Society

Bloomsbury, threatened by Commerce, University and Hospitals, all of which benefit from its man-size buildings, landscaping and dignity, is the subject of Nikolaus Pevsner's talk to the Society on November 3rd. It will be at the Holborn Library, Theobalds Road, in the Lecture Room at 8 pm

John Lehmann's Holborn

One of the last decisions of the old Holborn Council before it melted into Camden, was to commission John Lehmann to write a history of Holborn. This was published on September 3rd by Macmillans at 63s and was marked by a reception in the Mayor's Parlour. It is an entertaining book, well illustrated and deals with the highlights of Holborn such as Grays Inn, Lincolns Inn, Bloomsbury and other places of learning, as well as with the seamier side of gin palaces and slums. A full review will appear in the next Newsletter.

The Forum Goes

The stock situation of the man giving his girl friend's young brother some money to go to the cinema will soon be 20th Century history to explain to our children. With the closure of the Forum in Kentish Town hardly any cinemas are left in the northern part of Camden.

Older members will recall when the area was full of them. There was the Palladium where Marks & Spencer stands in Camden High Street and the Alhambra at the junction of Kentish Town Road and Holmes Road. In Gaisford Street stood the Gaisford and nearby the Palace in Kentish Town Road where it is joined by Prince of Wales Road. The bingo hall in Delancey Street was once the Fan Cinema and the petrol station in Malden Road was the site of the Court Cinema, previously named the Gem and the Doric. There was even the Lismore in Lismore Road. If that wasn't a sufficient choice, just outside the boundary of the Borough near Tufnell Park Station, the Stanley Hall, now part of the Boston public house, also showed films.

William Ellis for Boys Again

Old Elysians (pre 1937 that is), will no doubt turn sentimental to hear that their old school in Gospel Oak is to revert to youth work. Camden Council is converting part of the old building to accommodate the Hampstead Sea Cadets whose headquarters, the Wharrie Hall, in Fleet Road, is being demolished.

Up to the time the William Ellis Endowed School began in 1887, the building housed the Gospel Oak Schools. In 1937 William Ellis moved to larger premises in Highgate Road and their old building has been used as a depot by the Borough's Building Department.

Tour of St Pancras Station

Under the guidance of Mr Charles Lee the Society is organising a tour of St Pancras Station and Hotel. As only a limited number can be satisfactorily accommodated on such a tour applications to join this will be treated on a strict first-come-first served basis. It will be on December 5th at 10am

Highgate Woods Excavations

On October 20th the Society will be holding a joint meeting with the Highgate Literary and Scientific Institution at their building in South Grove in Highgate Village. Mr Harvey Sheldon who has led the excavations for some seasons past, will be talking on the finds and conclusions they have made. Highgate Woods are outside the borough but they are near enough to have a great deal of relevance to Camden.

The talk will begin at 8.15pm

PHOTOGRAPHERS WANTED

Many buildings and a great deal of industrial archaeology are disappearing from Camden. Whatever the merits or demerits of this there is no doubt that in most cases a photographic record is not made before demolition. The Society is, at the moment, having talks with several groups of filmmakers, but what we need to form urgently is a group from the Society which can take still pictures of threatened buildings and objects.

Some members have already indicated that that they are interested in photography and there are, no doubt, more. We should be glad to hear from any members who would like to help in the near future.

RECORDING HAMPSTEAD CHURCHYARD

Mr John Brandon-Jones, the architect who, in June, gave the Society's first talk on Camden's Victorian Buildings, is interested in recording the inscriptions in Hampstead Churchyard which do not appear to have been noted before. Members who would like to join him on this are invited to write to the Society.

Evening Classes

There are a great many Evening Classes for people interested in Local History. Below is a selection of what there is locally and you are recommended to obtain the appropriate brochure for fuller details.

Camden Institute have two courses on Archaeology. One offers an introduction to British Archaeology, describes the methods used in the field, the laboratory and the study to discover facts about the distant past. A large part of the Course will deal with the Old Stone Age to the arrival of the Romans. It will be at Haverstock School.

There is also a Course of 24 meetings at Holmes Road which will include several museum or site visits and will be illustrated. It is an introduction to the archaeology of Prehistoric and Roman Britain.

Camden Institute also have two Courses on subjects relevant to Camden. One is at New End entitled Hampstead History. It traces the development from a hamlet, to village in the 17th Century and a small town in the 18th Century. Then there is 'Life and Times in Hampstead and Highgate' at Parliament Hill. This Course covers the period 1769-89 and will attempt to discover how most people lived in the locality at that time.

Also at Haverstock School there are five meetings from September 30th on Illuminated Manuscripts. It will provide the opportunity to see slides of manuscripts not usually accessible to the general public.

At Parliament Hill School there is a Course on the Principles of Local History. This is a Course in the Spring term only.

London University also hold a great many courses of interest. Their range includes Palaeography, Heraldry, Sources of Local History, London History and Archaeology.

Catalogues may be obtained from the Camden Institute 87 Holmes Road, N.W.5 and the University of London, Department of Extra-Mural Studies, 7 Ridgmount St, W.C.1.

Rare St Pancras Book Find

Camden Libraries have recently bought at auction a manuscript book called 'St Pancras and the Wodehouse (Woodhouse) family'. It is a book which compiles, from 1699, the association of the Wodehouse family with St Pancras and has much original material in it of the early 18th Century. It is particularly interesting because the author stoutly defends a Vicar of St Pancras called Randolph Yearwood, whom he knew. Yearwood was suspended for marrying couples without banns or licence and there is no doubt from the registers that something very peculiar was going on at St Pancras while he was Vicar. Several times he married over 100 couples a year there - a figure completely at variance with the population figure of the Parish. When a new, very correct, Vicar succeeded in 1689 the number of marriages went down to below ten per annum. In 1676 Yearwood was in the Fleet Prison for debt.

FINE WEATHER FOR CANAL TRIPS

Both of the Society's outings on the Jenny Wren up the unfashionable part of the Regent's Park Canal had good weather. The mechanics of the lock system were new to a great many members and they were further informed by a leaflet compiled by Mr Meadows.

The many opportunities for making the tow-path area pleasant and available for leisure were obvious. There were derelict buildings and land for a lot of the distance. There were a few houses but apart from the odd fisherman there was no-one about.

NEEDED - PUBLICATIONS ASSISTANCE

The Society is anxious to produce publications. We have a number of ideas and, indeed, a lot of our efforts will be wasted if they do not receive publication. We would like to hear from members who are interested in this field. They may be designers, people who can read proofs, or arrange for publicity and distribution, or who can help with the clerical work.

PROJECT REPORTS

Projects have now been formed on Social History, Transport, Street Names, Cataloguing old photographs, Highgate Cemetery Registers. Members who have not already joined any of these may do so at any time, and they should write to the Secretary for information.

The Social History group meets next on September 22nd at 7pm at Swiss Cottage Library.

Street Names Register

Four groups are now operating. They cover the Wards: Hampstead Town, Camden, Holborn and Chalk Farm. It is hoped that when research is complete for each group of wards the Society will publish as a series of booklets.

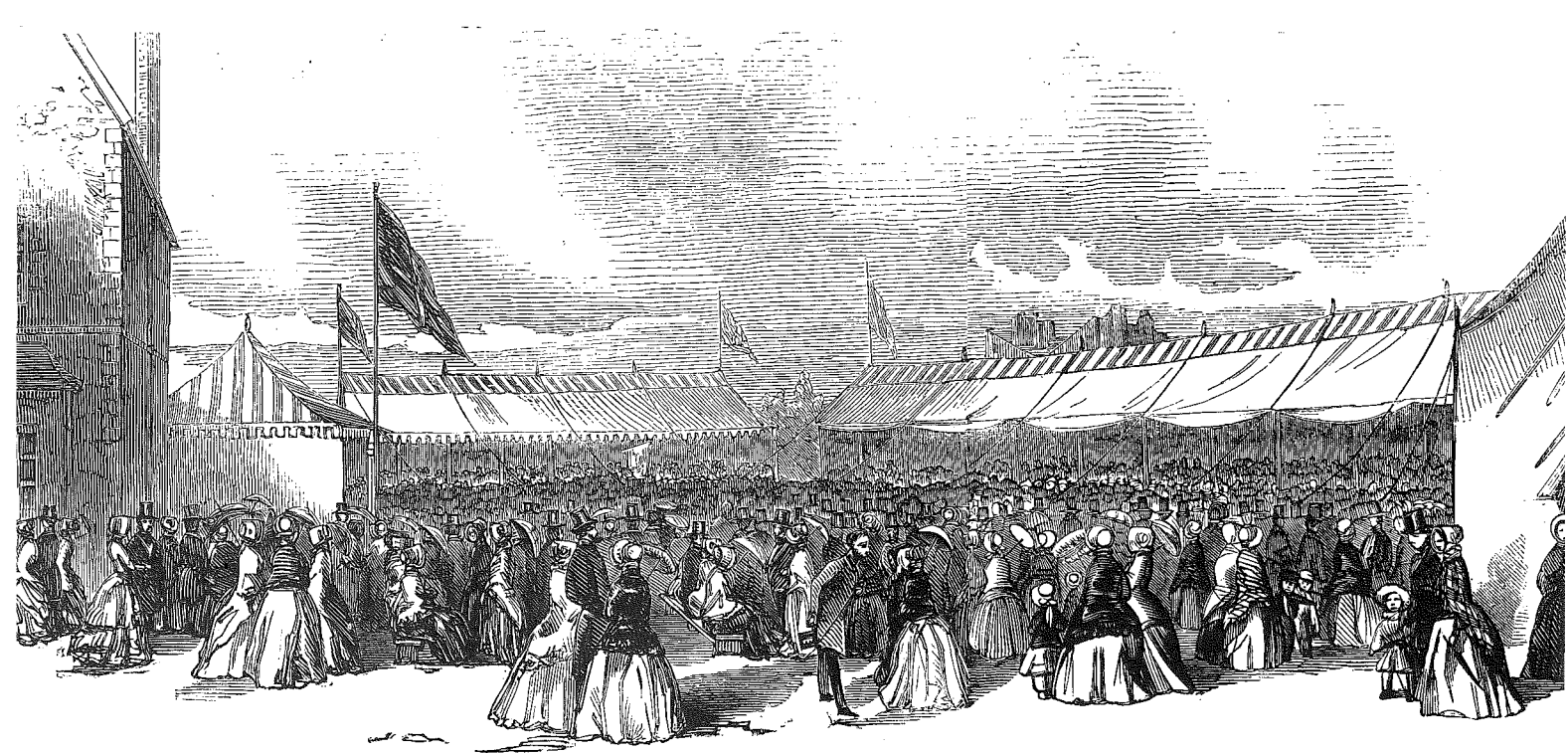
MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Society is now 290. This represents an increase of 40 since the last Newsletter.

OFFICERS

CHAIRMAN: Cllr John Richardson
SECRETARY: G.D. Gregory, Central Library, Swiss Cottage, N.W.3.
TREASURER: W.H. Meadows
PUBLICATIONS
SECRETARY: Ian Norrie
ARCHIVIST: Mrs C.M. Gee

All correspondence to this Newsletter or the Society should be sent to Mr Gregory at the address above.



FANCY SALE FOR THE BUILDING AND ENDOWMENT FUND AT THE GROUNDS OF THE ASYLUM, KENTISH-TOWN.

NOTES AND QUERIES

Queries

- Q 15: Mr Philip Venning writes to ask if any members have information about the Hampstead Historic Club which used to meet from 1885-7 at Old Wyldes, North End, N.W. 3. Despite the name the Club had nothing to do with antiquarian matters but was a study group of the infant Fabian Society and the Fabian Essays were one of the results. Apart from references in Fabian biographies Mr Venning would be grateful for further research leads.
- Q 16: Alderman Trevor Rogers of Gosport points out that there is a district called Camden Town in Gosport, with some streets named after statesmen such as Brougham, Russell and Camden, and a pub called the Britannia. He compares also the Inverness Road and Reed's Place in Gosport with the Inverness St and Reed's Place in N.W.1. He asks if any member can suggest a reason for the name of the district in his Borough.
- Q 17: Mr K.W. Blyth would like to know the derivation of Laurier Road, N.W.5. It was previously called Lewisham Road, one of the recurring names in the Earl of Dartmouth's family (Lady Lewisham for example).

- Q 18: Mr B. J. Taylor would be grateful for details of the history of the Roman Catholic Mission of St Alexis, Kentish Town (1845-54). In addition, any member interested in helping him on the research should contact him at 1 Garnett Road, N.W. 3.

Answers

- A 8: The Governesses Asylum in Prince of Wales Road was opened in 1849 by the Rev. David Laing who had been responsible for the building of nearby Trinity Church. The Asylum was not popular and eventually sold out to the Camden School for Girls. The Governesses went to Chislehurst instead.
- A 13: Crown Lodge - Miss Constance Richardson writes to say that Mrs P. Brand, who owns Crown Lodge, gives the date of its building as 1761.

Notes

- N 1: John Richardson has noticed an unobtrusive foundation stone on the Rochester Square Spiritualist Church. It was laid by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in 1926.

newsletter

No. 4

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

NOV 1970

Heath Exhibition Next Year

The Society's main contribution to the centenary year of Hampstead Heath will be an exhibition. It will be held in April at the Rosslyn Hall off Hampstead High Street and will also be part of the Camden Festival.

New Assistant-Secretary

Members of the Society who knew of Mr Gregory's illness will be pleased to learn that he is now back at work. In the meantime the Society has appointed one of our members, Mrs Coral Howells, as assistant-secretary. Mrs Howells is, at the moment, working on the transcription of the St Pancras book mentioned in our last issue.

Another St Pancras Book Find

The enormous St Pancras Collection is, only in the last few years, being catalogued. It came as no surprise, therefore, that in a dusty box file a few weeks back was discovered the manuscript of the earliest known history of St Pancras, written in 1834. It was never published and was written by Silas Mills who lived at 21 Chalton Street. John Richardson, who is transcribing it, says that the language is tortuous and enough to put off any publisher, but it looks as though it might yield some original information.

Dustcarts c1910



The dustmen of Hampstead were definitely not on strike when this picture was taken c1910 outside Lymington Road Depot. In 1912 the Hampstead Council minutes re-

port representations made by the London Carmen's Union, then acting for dustmen, for an increase in pay from 4/7d a day to 4/8d. This was agreed to.

Archaeological Happenings

The Camden Libraries, Arts and Recreation Committee, at the instigation of the Society has recently been discussing the procedure for preserving archaeological remains when excavations on new developments take place. An arrangement has now been made with the London Museum to help on this. In the meantime the Society has been invited to do preliminary work in locating possible sites within development areas so that at least everyone is forewarned. Those members who indicated on their membership form that they were interested in archaeology will shortly be notified of a meeting to discuss this and other matters but if any further members are keen on this, please write to the Secretary.

We are also inviting to this meeting Mr Harvey Sheldon who gave a talk on the Highgate Wood excavations at the Society's joint meeting with the Highgate Literary and Scientific Institute on October 20th. A large number of people came to the talk which was lavishly illustrated by first class slides and had an enthusiastic, well-informed commentary from Mr Sheldon. Highgate Wood, between Highgate Village and Muswell Hill has yielded a number of kilns and a great deal of Roman pottery. There is no evidence so far of an actual settlement there but the dig will continue next year.

ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE NEWSLETTER

There are thousands of illustrations in the Camden archives, most of which will never be published. However, until the Society has a magazine which will be able to utilise this vast store, we have decided to reproduce some in the Newsletter. Pictures will therefore appear which have no topical application and members are welcome to request pictures of areas or particular buildings for inclusion.

John Lehmann's Holborn

Holborn is a difficult area to define. Parts of it have been built on since the early development of London. What many people think of as Holborn - Bloomsbury - came later, and some of that is in St Pancras. But like it or not, the fortunes of Holborn are inextricably involved with those of the City and, apart from during the Bloomsbury era, it is difficult to pick out a Holborn identity.

John Lehmann, not a professional historian himself, had, therefore, a difficult task when the Holborn Council invited him to write a history of Holborn when it went out of business.

Inevitably then, the bulk of the book is concerned with the highlights of Holborn - the Inns of Court, Bloomsbury, Drury Lane, the British Museum and that remaining gem, Ely Place.

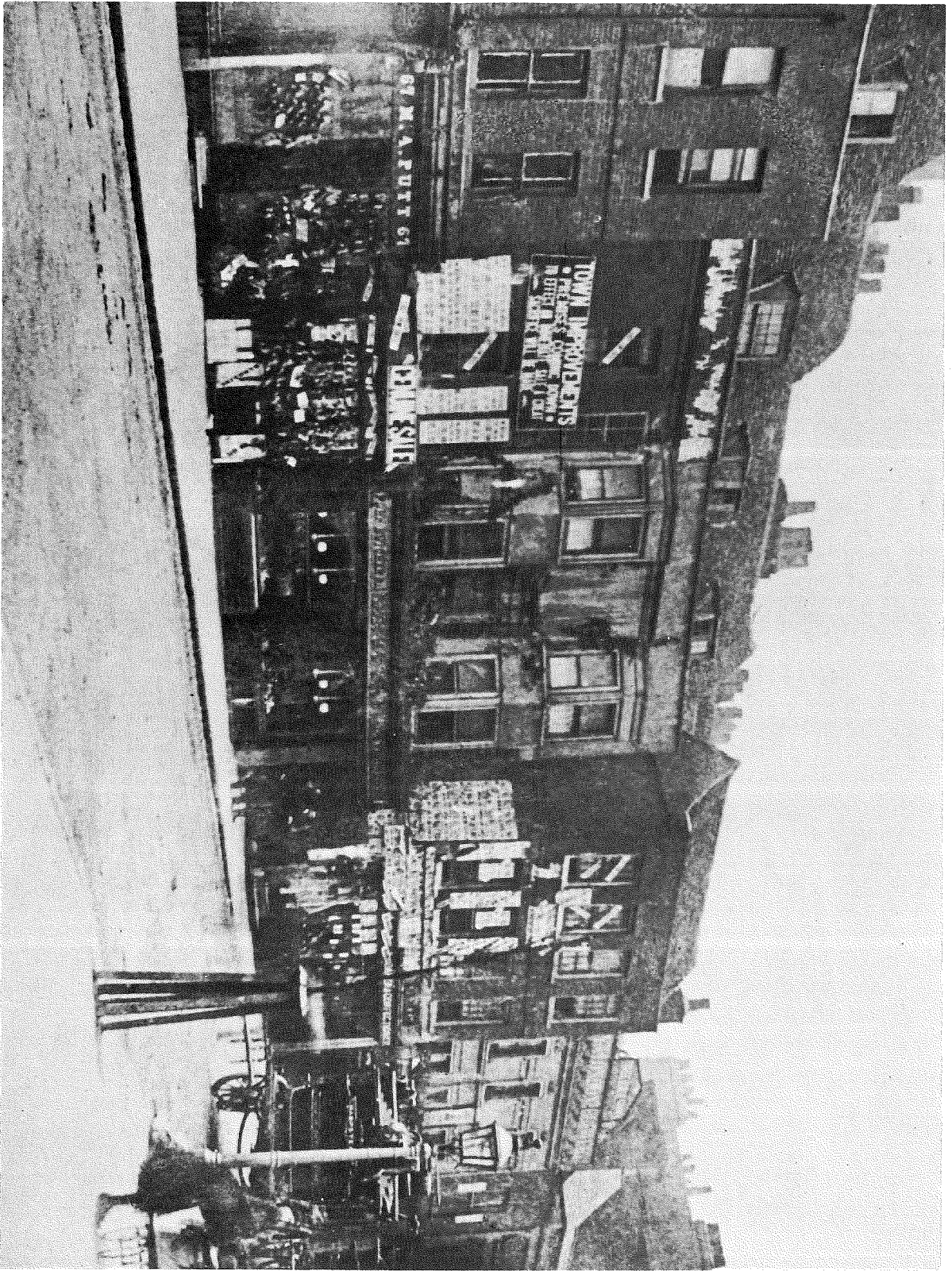
The book is entertaining, and it is, perhaps, churlish to ask for more, but it would have been informative to have had more than there is on the less glamorous side of Holborn life in the 19th century and the reforms that changed it. A situation where in one home for illegitimate children in 1865-6, 97 died out of 171 admitted, demands exploration. More of this period might have unbalanced the book for the general reader but for people who know Holborn well already, it would counteract the emphasis on the well-trodden high spots.

Also, the 20th century gets only 10 pages, indicative, sadly, of the increasing involvement of the area with the Metropolis and the gradual shift of residents northwards. Even so, one gets the impression that history and community life ended just as the old Holborn Council came into being in 1900.

The book throughout is absorbing and well written. There are also some delightful photographs taken by the late Hans Wild.

J. R.

Holborn by John Lehmann/Macmillan. 63/-



Heath Street c1880



Heath Street—no date

The Weekend Course

The weekend felt like a mixture between a conference and a country houseparty; with speakers of a universally high standard, in the setting of a secluded private house and grounds.

The 'Basic History of Camden' was built up for the forty members who attended by talks on its separate parts and by information about the sources of material relating to Camden. Professor Thompson started by explaining the village, parish and manor of Hampstead and was followed by Councillor Richardson's picture of St Pancras, including Camden and Kentish Towns.

As the meeting re-assembled after lunch on Saturday we learned that Mr Lehmann had lost his voice and was unable to speak on Holborn, but Mrs Gee instead gave us an amazing inventory of the Swiss Cottage Library's local collection - including, for instance, over two thousand photos, sketches and engravings.

Miss Mercer, head archivist of the GLC followed with equally intriguing examples of the treasures in the Middlesex and London archives, photo-copies of which she distributed, from manor court hearings to proposed viaducts.

Sunday's meeting started with a lively talk by Sir James Brown about Highgate village and its early inhabitants, from Philippe the hermit, to the first "town-planner" Collett the barrister. We then heard from Mrs Gosling, in detail, of the local material that is held at the Highgate Literary and Scientific Institute.

The Course was closed by Sir John Wolfenden's compelling injunction to us to study and record our history, and we parted after two days of, perhaps, avoiding the rain but soaking ourselves in History instead.

Brenda Tyler.

THE REGENT'S CANAL

We have received a letter from Camden Council to say that it has plans in mind for improving the towpath area of the Canal in Camden. They also invite the Society to send in any ideas or views that we might have. If members have suggestions perhaps they would write to the Secretary.

Those members who recently went on the trips on the Canal which we organised will be interested in the following cutting from the St Pancras News in August 1859: EXCURSIONS ON THE REGENT'S CANAL: Persons desirous of taking a trip from Camden Town to Paddington, should avail themselves of the opportunity offered by the swift little barge packets, that have been placed on the above canal, for the conveyance of passengers. The boats are 72 feet long and are drawn by two horses. They stop several times on their journey, and the charge is 6d.

LOCAL SOCIETIES

Some members may be unaware of the existence of two long-standing local societies in Camden which they might wish to join.

The Holborn Society, founded in 1954, holds regular members' meetings with talks and discussions on architecture, planning and conservation matters. Its secretary is Miss E.L. Martin, 20 Rugby Chambers, 2 Rugby Street, W.C.1.

The St Pancras Antiquarian Society was founded in 1924. They meet at least once a month and make many visits over London. At the end of November they are visiting the Kensington Palace area and in December go to the Horniman Museum to see a film on the raising of a 17th Century Swedish warship. The Secretary is Mr E.G. Brassington, 2 Stonegate, St Silas Place, N.W.5.

MEMBERSHIP

The number of members has risen to 320 an increase of 30 since the last Newsletter.

Carnegie Grant for Local History

The Carnegie United Kingdom Trust has announced its Grants Policy for 1971-1975. It will give grants for original work in local history on the recommendation of the Historical Association. The grants are intended as contributions towards expenditure incurred by organisations or groups carrying out specific projects that give amateurs experience of original work in local history under skilled direction.

The Camden History Society Council will consider this announcement at their next meeting to see if we wish to enter any project for a grant.

St Pancras Station Visit

We have now received sufficient applications to go on the tour of St Pancras Station and Hotel. Those who have applied will be notified by post of details.

THE MAPS OF LONDON

The London and Middlesex Archaeological Society are holding a conference on Nov. 21st at which Miss Helen Wallis will be speaking on the variety of maps in the London and Middlesex area. Her talk will show how the topographic maps of London from the mid-sixteenth century onwards provide a wealth of material for the local historian.

Two other talks make up the conference. Mr J.F.C. Philips will be talking on 'The Print Collection of the Greater London Council and its use for the Local Historian', and Keith Bailey will speak on 'A street survey in Wandsworth'.

Any member who wishes to attend should write to H.E. Robins, Secretary, Local History Committee, London and Middlesex Archaeological Society, 3 Cameron House, Highland Road, Bromley, Kent. It will be held in the Livery Hall at Guildhall, London, E.C.2, starting at 1.30 pm. There is a fee of 6/- including tea.

MAPS OF CAMDEN

Camden Libraries' Department has compiled an interesting list of maps of the Borough available either in our own libraries or at the GLC. Holborn, of course, features in many of the older, general maps of London and only specifically Holborn maps are included in the following selection:

Holborn & New Court (1658-GLC), The Bedford Estate in London (1795-HCL), Parish Map of Holborn (1815-GLC), Greenwood's map (1824-Holborn), Hampstead - Belsize Manor (1679-HCL), Roque's map of Hampstead (1745-HCL), Newton's Hampstead (1762-HCL), Steven's Hampstead and Highgate (1805-HCL), OS Drawing of Hampstead (1807-HCL), Park's Hampstead (1814-HCL), Hampstead Tithe Map (1839-HCL), Daw's Hampstead (1864-HCL), OS Hampstead (1866-HCL).

St Pancras (1790-HCL), Thompson's St Pancras (1804-HCL), Parish maps of St Pancras (1849, 1850, 1854, 1860, 1868, 1874, 1880, 1893, 1900, 1910, 1934 all at HCL). HCL means Hampstead Central Library.

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