

newsletter

No 39

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

JAN 1977

Two Hampstead Schools – our January Event

at University College School,
Frognaal, NW3, on 27 January
at 7.30 pm.

Two of the most illustrious north London schools are the subject of our January talk. South Hampstead High School for Girls was founded a hundred years ago in Winchester Road and moved to Maresfield Gardens in 1882. Our speaker, appropriately, is Miss Prunella Bodington, headmistress for 15½ years and the author of the recent centenary publication about the School. The other establishment is University College School which has buildings in Frognaal and Holly Hill, and which was founded in 1907. The speaker, a familiar name in Hampstead, is the former headmaster Mr C D Black-Hawkins.

Thomas Shepherd and his London

Burgh House, NW3, on 10 February
at 8 pm

Thomas Shepherd is the best known illustrator of early London buildings. Many of his drawings feature Camden buildings still standing and his work is indispensable to publishers looking for illustrations for a London book. His work is the subject of a talk by John Phillips, the GLC curator of maps and prints, in a joint event with the Historical Association. Camden History Society will be mounting an exhibition at the same time, showing some of the Shepherd prints in the Camden collection. An event not to be missed.

Sights and Sounds of Somers Town 1800-1939

at the Polytechnic of North London,
Prince of Wales Road, NW5,
17 February, 7.30 pm

Architecturally Somers Town was a casualty of, first, a building slump and, second, the railway age. It began promisingly enough. The land, owned by Baron Somers for the most part, was developed by his principal landholder Jacob Leroux. Clarendon Square was its principal feature within which stood the unusual 15-sided Polygon, a group of houses. In No. 29 The Polygon lived William Godwin and his wife Mary Wollstonecraft, the champion of women's rights. Their daughter, Mary, who wrote 'Frankenstein' in 1818, married Percy Bysshe Shelley.

The new buildings of Somers Town in the early part of the 19th century attracted a good many French émigrés, fleeing from the French Revolution. Then there was a sudden slump in house buying and this, together with the new railways, killed any cohesive plan for the area.

However, as anyone living there will tell you, until quite recently there was a definite community and the tape-slide show by Dr John Broad of the Polytechnic will be of great interest in showing this.

NEW STREET NAME

The Society was consulted about an appropriate name for the passageway linking Oriel Place and Heath Street in Hampstead. After consulting The Streets of Hampstead and other records of the area, we made various suggestions and, of these, 'Bakers Passage' was chosen as the official name.

Henry Bassett, Architect

Henry Bassett, who had to pull down two houses near the Chalk Farm railway bridge (The Story of Fitzroy Bridge, September Newsletter), was evidently architect for quite a number of houses in the neighbourhood. He showed a model of 'a pair of Italian villas, now being erected in Gloucester-Road, Regent's-Park' at the Royal Academy exhibition in 1844, which Sir John Summerson (Architectural Review August 1948) identifies as 8 and 10 Gloucester Avenue, now demolished. George Bassett Junior, probably a near relation, bought at the Southampton Estate sale in 1840 the plots both sides of the then Gloucester Road south of the canal down to the present Cecil Sharp House and to the railway bridge on the east side, which makes it likely that Henry would design houses on these sites. George himself appears in the Directories from 1846 in the second house from the railway bridge.

Sir John Summerson also thinks that Henry Bassett was architect for the splendid Italianate terrace in Gloucester Crescent backing on to Parkway, and this is surely correct as Henry was the purchaser of this plot at the Estate sale.

A characteristic of Henry Bassett's style seems to have been a wide overhanging eaves supported by frequent consoles: this appears on the Gloucester Crescent terrace and on 194 and 196 Regent's Park Road, the two houses which did not have to be pulled down, and it was also on the Gloucester Avenue houses which, sadly, are demolished. Henry Bassett was born about 1803 and won the gold medal of the Society of Arts in 1823 and of the Royal Academy in 1825. He was of 'Prowis Place, Haverstock Hill', presumably Powis Place, in 1840, and died intestate before 17 March 1847 when his widow was granted the property at the north end of Gloucester Avenue where the Pembroke Castle now stands, originally to have been road. He left an infant son.

The Bassetts were Surveyors to the Southampton Estate; Henry appears in the 1840s and George (Senior?) in the 1830s. But for his early death, Henry Bassett might have become one of the better known Victorian architects.

Anthony Cooner

OTHER SOCIETIES

LAMAS are organising a trip of particular interest to historians and archaeologists, to Austria and Northern Italy at the end of July, which lasts two weeks. The tour includes Innsbruck, Salzburg, Vienna, Verona, Padua and Venice. The cost is £180. Full particulars from Lawrence Snell, Newman College, Bartley Green, Birmingham.

The Greater London Industrial Archaeology Society is holding a talk on 17 February on Late Roman and Anglo-Saxon Industrial Archaeology. The speaker is Brian Adams. Admission is free and the talk will be at the City of London Polytechnic in Jewry Street, EC3.

Bound for Success

Camden History Review now has its own binder: it is black with gold lettering and holds ten copies

You can get one at CHS meetings or order it by post

Members' price: £1.25

Postage and packing: 45 pence extra

Reviews Nos 1-4 are available, price 75p each (postage 14p)

CHS Publications, 28 Willoughby Road
London, NW3

HAMPSTEAD MAP 1762

The New Year has started well with photographic copies of a map of Hampstead dated 1762 being added to the Local History Library at Swiss Cottage. There is no other map for Hampstead for the period which can compare in any way with it for detail and information.

The original, together with a field book showing land ownership and occupation, were discovered in a solicitor's office by CHS member. David Sullivan, while researching among manorial records.

Malcolm Holmes
Local History Librarian

A HUNDRED YEARS OF ST PANCRAS GARDENS

One of the pleasantest, and least known, small open spaces in the Borough is St Pancras Gardens which surround the old St Pancras Church in Pancras Road. They are on the site of two burial grounds, the one belonging to St Pancras Church itself, and the other - a piece of land acquired by St Giles-in-the-Fields for burials which their own burial ground could not accommodate. The graveyards had particularly grisly histories, which might well make the subject of a lecture for the Society one day, and eventually were reduced in size by the coming of the railways. In 1877 they were laid out as public gardens and few tombs were left in their original position but certainly the Sir John Soane monument and that of the Cecil Rhodes family are worth seeing.

There is related a tale about Thomas Chatterton, the poet, to bear in mind while you walk round inspecting the tombstones. He was amusing himself one day reading the epitaphs in St Pancras Churchyard when he fell into a fresh-dug grave. A friend helped him get out, whereupon Chatterton said 'My dear friend, I feel the sting of a speedy dissolution. I have been at war with the grave some time, and find it not so easy to vanquish as I imagined; we can find an asylum from every creditor but that.' In three days time he committed suicide in Holborn and was buried, it is thought, in St Andrews Burial Ground in Gray's Inn Road.

HAMPSTEAD CONSERVATION

—A NEW GUIDE

A very good map of Hampstead has just been published showing the designated conservation areas and those specially listed buildings within them. It is by Nancy Hill and is published by the Hampstead Conservation Area Advisory Committee. The publication, attractively laid out, was designed by David Morgan. Copies can be obtained from the Acorn Press, Finchley Road, or else from our own Publications Secretary at 28 Willoughby Road, NW3. It will, of course, be on sale at our bookstall at future meetings. The price is 40p, plus postage.

Camden at War

Our last three Reviews have taken as their themes Edwardian, Victorian and Georgian Camden, in that order: so special features on Stuart and Tudor Camden must follow in future editions. But I would like to interrupt our backwards march of time with a more general theme, Camden in Wartime, and I invite contributions from our members.

Various wartime subjects keep cropping up in our researches: Civil War defences, the 18c and 19c local Volunteers, reminiscences of World War I, air-raids in the last war: any aspects of war on the home front, not forgetting the Home Guard, will be included. There will be room, of course, for other articles also in Camden History Review - 5, but will prospective contributors, please, contact me first, and at the latest by the end of February.

Christopher Wade (794 2752)

HIGHGATE POSTCARDS

The Society has recently acquired a number of sets of 5 sepia views of the Highgate area in the 1920's. There are two views of St Joseph's Retreat; two views taken from Highgate Archway over the stretch of road now partly widened or under threat of widening. These two views are particularly interesting showing the transport of the time and the morning traffic situation. The last view, more strictly an Islington one, is of the Great Northern Hospital in Holloway Road.

This interesting set can be obtained at the very reasonable price of 25p plus self-addressed 4 x 9 stamped envelope from CHS Publications, 28 Willoughby Road, NW3. They are mint cards - surprise your friends with what, at first glance, looks like one of those postal items that get delayed in sorting offices for 50 years!

A Square Deal

THE BATTLE FOR TOLMERS SQUARE
by Nick Wates published by Routledge
and Kegan Paul, £2.95

Many publications covering aspects of Camden's life and history have been published in the last few years but there have been only a handful as well researched and documented as this book by Nick Wates.

Gradually he chronicles the long, involved story of the attempts to redevelop the area, mainly for offices, which started over seventeen years ago. Through the skilful use of interviews, 'confidential' reports, correspondence, unpublished minutes and other sources, he describes the conflict of interests over the proposed developments, involving property developers, community groups, squatters, political parties and the local Councils - a struggle closely followed by press and T.V.

Supporting this are 174 photographs both past and present, maps, tables, plans and statistics, all presented in a readable form. Many of the photographs suffered in quality from being too small and were often captionless, but on the whole they helped capture the atmosphere of the situation which had been caused by the phenomenal rise in office rents and property values in London and the opportunity for large capital gains.

The fears of another Euston Centre wiping out a whole community caused opposition to unite (usually!) against the various schemes produced by the developers Stock Conversion and Camden Council. Often, however, the opposition from outside the area seemed to be centred more on the thoughts of 'immoral' profits to be made by the developers (one estimate gave £12 million) rather than on the suitability of the development.

It was at times difficult to present a united opposition to the various plans when even the activists in the Tolmers Village Association were sometimes seen as unrepresentative of local opinion. Some of the long-standing residents saw the attempts to protect dilapidated buildings as being a barrier

to being rehoused in decent accommodation and were often antagonistic to the increasing numbers of squatters coming into the area.

The squatters on the other hand, particularly in North Gower Street and Tolmers Square, often contributed to the preservation and repair of the buildings which had been allowed to become derelict. One particularly successful improvement to the environment was the community garden in Drummond Street, created from seized vacant land. Unfortunately, the enthusiasm for this appears to be disappearing and it is rapidly returning to the character of a parking lot.

The controversy raised by the Tolmers Square saga helped to change, radically, Council attitudes towards major redevelopments and public participation in them. Any suggestions now of a joint redevelopment involving private enterprise and the Council is a political hot potato regardless of how beneficial the scheme could prove.

The appendix by Tim Wilson on the historical development of the Tolmers Village area, while adding little in the way of new information, has presented an accurate and readable account from Domesday to date.

Malcolm Holmes

WHY DO LOCAL HISTORY?

In the current issue of The Local Historian (volume 12, nos. 3-4, 1976, pp 158-60) Susan Beckley, an assistant local archivist in Wales, seeks the reasons for the current popularity of local history. Her article may be consulted at Swiss Cottage Library but, in brief, she says that local history groups promote social contacts; help members, especially newcomers to an area, to identify with the local community; assist in keeping traditions alive and in preserving historic buildings; and provide a stimulating occupation for our increasing leisure time or retirement years. She says that as more people become disillusioned with national government, so they give more importance to their own locality.

Cherry Layell

The Mystery of an 18th Century 'Hampstead' Author

Collectors of early children's literature have read about an anonymous woman author who is known to have flourished in the 1780s and whose real name was only disclosed in 1869 as being Dorothy Kilner. Her most popular book was called The Life and Perambulation of a Mouse, first published in 1783 and 1784 under the pseudonym of "M. P.", with many subsequent editions during the nineteenth century, none bearing the author's real name. Dorothy's connection with Hampstead remains a mystery that members of the Camden History Society might like to try to solve.

Dorothy Kilner was born in 1755, and died in 1836 in her own home in Leytonstone Road; she never married. She attended the parish church in West Ham, where many members of her family were buried. No family records exist of her staying in Hampstead, yet several of her books include "Hampstead" at the end of the author's Dedication, together with the pseudonymous "M.P." which it is known stood for Maryland Point where the Kilner family had settled in 1759 when this address was a hamlet in the Essex countryside. (Daniel Defoe refers to Maryland Point in his famous Tour. The Kilner home was a double-fronted Queen Anne house, demolished in 1927.)

Since Dorothy Kilner's original children's books now fetch high prices at such auctions as Sotheby's and are listed in all the better known collections from the British Library to the Library of Congress and Toronto Public Library, as well as running to at least twenty-nine known different titles (including several American editions and also translations into French), this author's connection with Hampstead would be one to be proud of, if it could be established in detail. As it is, "Hampstead" occurs at the end of the Dedication of the following first editions dated: "Jan. 23, 1781" in The Holiday Present; "April 9, 1781 and April 22, 1783" in the two volumes of A Clear and Concise Account of the origin and design of Christianity; and "Oct. 18, 1782" in

Anecdotes of a Boarding School; or, an Antidote to the Vices of those Useful Seminaries, also published in two volumes. Subsequent editions and later titles usually bore no date or place; and the author's pseudonym was altered to "M. Pelham" in some - such as in the 1806 Jingles; or Original Rhymes.

CHR 4

Extract from letter to CHS Publications from F John Napthine of Belchamp Walter, Suffolk

'My first twenty years were lived in Kentish Town; then I lived in Hampstead 30 years; in Hendon 20 years. I am now nearer 84 than 83 and living in Suffolk (my ancestral county) but oh! how I love Camden and rejoice in the work of yourself and all your helpers and correspondents.

I should like to take this opportunity of saying how astonishingly good is the 4th Camden History Review with such erudite articles and illustrations.

The awe-inspiring energy of research and the presentation of it is beyond the range of ordinary thanksgiving.'

LAST RESORT FOR MR HOWELL

Mr Denis Howell, the Minister responsible for coping with the Drought of last year, has not needed ideas for inducing rain. However, in case the same problem arises this year, he may care to take note of what happened on Hampstead Heath in 1921, which was also a very dry year.

About 2000 people, including a representative of the meteorological office, gathered there to see Brocks, the fireworks manufacturers, put on a display of 'rain rockets' in an attempt to end the drought. There were loud explosions for 15 minutes, but no rain, which was just as well as no one had been sufficiently confident to take an umbrella.

Postcard Views of Hampstead

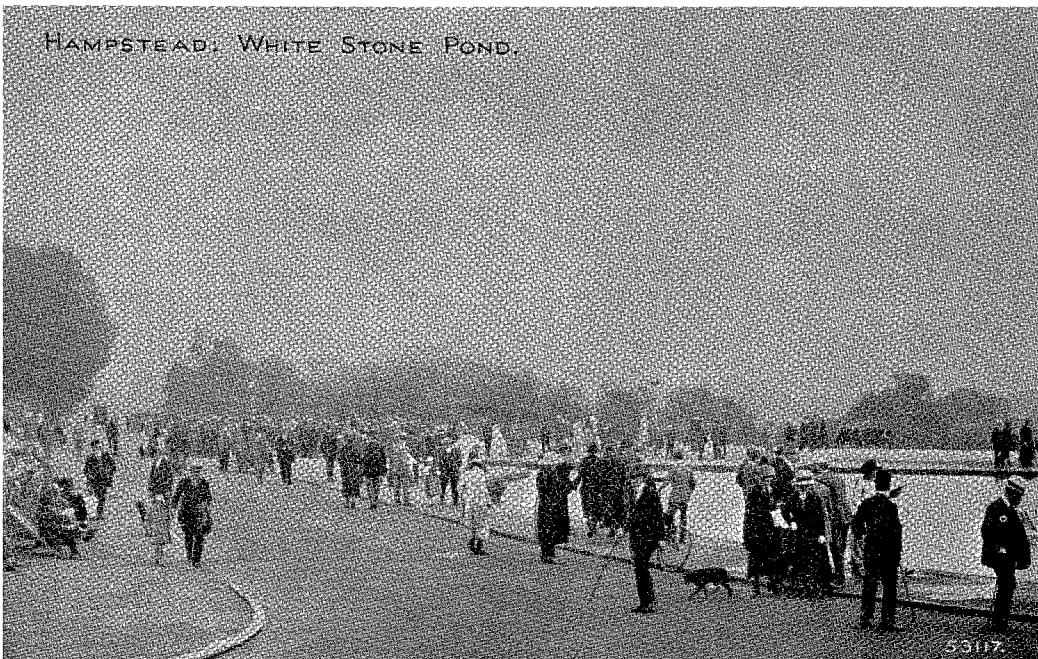


721 HAMPSTEAD. — Church Row. — LL



HAMPSTEAD. HEATH STREET.

51810.



HAMPSTEAD. WHITE STONE POND.

53117.

newsletter

No 40

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

Mar 1977

A Tour Round the Museum of London in March

The Society has arranged two tours around the splendid new Museum of London this month. They are on Tuesday March 22nd at 5.30pm and on Monday March 28th at 3.00pm, the latter tour for those who find the daytime more convenient. We are to meet Rosemary Weinstein at the entrance hall. The Museum, housed in an adventurous new building, is a development of the joint collections of the old London Museum in Kensington and the Guildhall Museum. Nearest tube stations are St Pauls or The Barbican.

St Pancras Station and Hotel- Our April Event

April 28th, 7.30pm, at the Methodist Church Hall in Birkenhead street, W.C.1.

Anyone who has been on one of Mr Charles Lee's tours of St Pancras Station and Hotel will know that an illustrated talk by him on the same subject by him is a treat not to be missed. The building and the speaker need no introduction.

HAMPSTEAD GRAVEYARD

Christopher Wade reports that the group of members indexing the names of those buried in Hampstead Churchyard has logged 1000 names



ST. PANCRAS STATION, 1890

DAVID SHEPHERD S.A.V.A.

Best Sellers

This is the time of year when we analyse our sales of CHS Publications, largely for the benefit of our annual accounts, but also to learn as much as we can about who reads what and where. This year we have been impressed by the numbers of Reviews ordered and sold by the Trade in Camden and have compiled a Best Seller Chart, showing who has sold how many. Our publications are on sale in about 20 shops in the borough (not to mention the Willoughby Road Distribution Centre) and some of them have accounted for a remarkable turnover of stock. The two chart-toppers for the last twelve months are the Regent Bookshop in Parkway, Camden Town, and the High Hill Bookshop in Hampstead. Each has sold over 200 copies of our Reviews. Equal third are the Owl Bookshop in Kentish Town and Bobbies, the news-agents in Swains Lane, Highgate. They are closely followed by the Brunswick Minimart in Brunswick Square, and Sheppards the second-hand bookshop in Royal College street, with the Highgate Bookshop not far behind. Coming up on the rails is the new Museum of London, which has such an attractive bookstall that they have twice sold out of Camden History Reviews.

C.W.

WRITING LOCAL HISTORY COURSE

There is to be a week's course on WRITING LOCAL HISTORY at Flatford Mill Field Study Centre, under the auspices of the University of Cambridge Board of Extra-Mural studies. This is from 13-20th April.

The course will concentrate on the most difficult and rewarding part of the local historian's work - the analysis and interpretation of his varied sources and the writing-up of the results. Students are invited to bring along examples of their own work, finished or unfinished. The Director of Studies is David Dymond, editor of the Local Historian.

The cost is £45 for tuition and accommodation. Details from The Director, Board of Extra-Mural Studies, Madingley Hall, Madingley, Cambridge.

TRANSPORT GROUP

The Transport Group meet next at Swiss Cottage Library on Tuesday, April 5th at 5.30pm

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Really, news of things to come. The Society, apart from reprinting Medieval Camden, is publishing a booklet entitled Roman Camden. The Borough Council are publishing soon a new set of postcards of Bloomsbury, and also two maps are being reprinted. These are Newton's map of Hampstead, and the Somers Town portion of the c1796 St Pancras map. The Local History Department are also preparing a slide pack on Highgate Cemetery.

Camden Oral History Project

A project to record Camden's history orally has been set up as a W.E.A. course in association with the Camden History Society. It will attempt to record the recollections of local people about local events, industries and community life, as well as the social effects of, and responses to, national and international events. This will involve not only interviewing, editing and transcription, but also background research, preparation of stimulus materials and exhibitions. It is hoped to involve those interviewed in other aspects of the work and in future interviews.

One of the first fields of interest will be the Second World War and its impact on Camden. The tutor/organiser is Brian Foster, 42 Oakford Road, N.W.5 (267 8368). He would welcome any help.

MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the Society is now 572. Recent new members include the Museum of London, Mary Adams, Mrs I.W. Barnett, Mrs D. Butt, Mr and Mrs J. Connor, Judith Edwards, Mrs M Engler, Mr and Mrs M Festing, Miss V. Festing, Prof. L Forster, Mr and Mrs Fryxell, Dr and Mrs Gary, Miss M Ilott, Mrs J Layton, Mr M Lewis, Miss C Mainds, T McCarthy, M. Ward, Mrs M Harriott, Mr L Millington, Miss Rita Spurdle, Mr N Thomas, Drs C.B. and C.J. Williams, Mr E. Wolfe.

HENRY BASSETT

Following Anthony Cooper's note on Henry Bassett, architect in our last newsletter, Hugh Pocock has deposited at Swiss Cottage Library a great many biographical details of the Bassett and Pocock families. Interested members should contact Malcolm Holmes there for details.

PUBS OF ST PANCRAS

Public houses play an important part in the history of any area. It is surprising just how long-lasting they are. Even in modern times the pub is either kept or replaced in new development. A 1721 list of pubs in the parish of St Pancras contains quite a few which are still thriving and members may be interested in the complete list for that year, derived from the Licensing records at the Middlesex Records Office.

Hole in the Wall, Tottenham Court
King David
Ye Tun (Goodge st)
Cow and Hare (on the site of the present St Annes church) Highgate hill
The Angel, Highgate
Bird Cage
Brill
Milford Farm (presumably Millfield farm in Highgate)
Black Horse (Tottenham Court)
Ye Cock (Tottenham Court road)
Ye Garden House, Black Mary's (Grays Inn Road area)
Ye Greyhound, Cain Wood
Crab tree (Tottenham Court road)
Adam and Eve, Tottenham Court
Horse and Groom (Kentish town)
Blue Posts, Tottenham Court rd
Swan, Kentish town
Adam and Eve, St Pancras
Carpenters Arms, Highgate

Bull and Gate, Kentish town
Two Brewers
Black Dog
Pindar of Wakefield (Grays inn rd area)
Red Lyon, Battle Bridge
White Hart, Battle Bridge
Ye George (nr St Pancras church)
Three Tunns (Grays inn rd area)
Ye Last (now the Bull and Last, Highgate road)
Ye Bull, Kentish town (now the Assembly Rooms)
Oxford Arms, Kentish town
Bulls Head, Tottenham Court
Anglers, Kentish town (now the Jolly Anglers, Kentish town rd)
Kings Arms, Tottenham Court
Garden of Eden, Tottenham Court
Castle, Kentish town

John Richardson

MORE STREETS OF HAMPSTEAD

R.B. Shaw writes:

May I please correct a statement on p.39? Martin Shaw lived locally, yes - at 18 Belsize Lane at the time you speak of. But he never bought logs in his life, or at least not before he was 80. It was his habit to buy a tree for about 5/-, and himself to saw and split it into logs for the fire. I remember a particular occasion when as a very young child I had difficulty in carrying an ice-cold metal wedge from the house to the tree on Ivy Bank, a distance I suppose about equal to the length of the platform of Hampstead Heath station. My father found the exercise congenial, and conducive to mulling over in his mind whatever he was composing at the time. He indulged in it most afternoons for a couple of hours between lunch and tea. I remember my pride on the first occasion I was allowed to wield the axe and split a log for myself.

ARCHAEOLOGY IN ACTION

The current exhibition at the Church Farm House Museum, Greyhound Hill, Hendon, has been mounted by the Hendon and District Archaeological Society, and is as excellent as their last. Its title 'Archaeology in Action' not only suggests the many tremendously interesting facets of archaeology that the well-displayed exhibits demonstrate, but also the great range of activities of HADAS as a society.

There are displays of finds from their recent digs, notably those from the Mesolithic site on West Heath. Methods of excavation, and also long operations of processing and recording finds are described so that one has the dual interest of both seeing the artifacts themselves and how they fit into the context of an excavation.

The other activities of HADAS, such as recording burial grounds, and the survey of the parish boundaries of Barnet are also illustrated.

The exhibition is well worth a visit and runs until March 27th. It is open on weekdays from 10.00-12.30 and 1.30 to 5.30, and on Sundays from 2.30-6.00.

Joanna Wade

WILLIAM GEORGE JENNINGS

(1797-1843)

Exhibition of watercolours of Hampstead and Highgate at Martyn Gregory Gallery, 34 Bury Street, SW1. 8-23 December 1976

Oh dear! Where did the captions for the paintings come from? Alas, certainly not a result of careful consideration of local scenes of Hampstead and Highgate.

The watercolours, from a recently discovered portfolio dated June 1843, showed mainly rural scenes. The style, at times reminiscent of George Shepherd, seemed almost to depict an earlier period of Hampstead and Highgate's history than mid 19th century.

Unfortunately, when discovered, none of the pictures had labels and, while attempts had been made to identify scenes, cautious suggestions advanced by members of the CHS and others were obviously seized upon as firm indication of locality.

Could Rosslyn Hill really have looked like the picture shown for that street in the 19th century? The scene of the 'Cow and Horse;- site of the vicarage and gardens of St Anne's Church, West Hill' while exact in caption seems unrelated to local topography. And so one could go on.

Would it really have detracted from the exhibition to use "possibly" before many more captions or even "unidentified".

"Jack Straw"

LOCAL HISTORY DIARIES

Mr Ken Ellis, an adult education tutor, attempted recently to set up an ILEA class in diary-writing. He contends that the keeping of local diaries is good local history in the making and is keen to encourage the rather neglected art of diary-writing. Unfortunately there was insufficient response to this and the class had to be abandoned. He is, however, willing to have another try, this time with private tuition. Any interested member should contact him on 485 9035. The fees are £1.50 per private session and 60p a person at group sessions.

Goodbye St Matthews

In what must be record time the Church Commissioners have declared redundant and demolished a very substantial church. This is St Matthews a reasonably attractive Gothic pile in Oakley square, N.W.1. The Borough Council admit to having received notification from the Commissioners of their intent but as it was received just before the Christmas holidays the matter could not be brought before the appropriate committee.

There is no doubt that the Commissioners have acted with indecent haste in this, no doubt because they would have anticipated local opposition from conservationists. The Church is in a privileged position in that they are not bound by the same planning restrictions that apply to a private landowner. Ironically the Government has announced that it has put aside a substantial sum of money to help conserve old churches which is granted on condition that the Church Commissioners give up such privilege.

For the record, the church was consecrated in 1856 and was designed by J. Brandon. It was beautifully positioned on land donated by the Duke of Bedford and its demolition will allow us to see, looking south, the full horror of those towers on Hampstead road by Mornington Crescent.

I understand that the Church might have considerable legal difficulty in using the ground for any other purpose. That'll learn 'em.

J.R

SANDWICH STREET CHURCH GOES

St Mary's German Lutheran Church in Sandwich street has been demolished together with the accompanying school buildings in Thanet street. We are indebted to the Annual Report of the Kings Cross Community Association for the following details: The church and the school were designed by W.M. Teulon (1823-1900), brother of the better known S.S. Teulon. The church, called the St Pancras Mission House, was opened on 3 April 1873, and the church school the year before. Since World War II the church building has been leased and subsequently sold to the German Lutheran congregation. The school was not used as such after the outbreak of war. W.M. Teulon lived in the area for many years, between 1854 and 1867 at 42 Guilford street and later at 18 Upper Woburn place.

newsletter

No 41

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

MAY 1977

The Annual Meeting and Dick Whittington

The Annual Meeting of the Society is on May 18th. It will be followed by a talk on Dick Whittington by Caroline Barron.

The Annual Meeting part of the evening will be held at the Highgate Literary and Scientific Institute, in South Grove, Highgate Village, at 6.30pm.

The Agenda will be:

- a) Minutes and matters arising
- b) Apologies
- c) Reports from the Chairman, Treasurer and Publications Secretary
- d) Election of officers and Council
- e) Resolutions (if any)
- f) Any other business

In connection with item (d) you are invited to send in nominations to the Secretary or else to propose at the Annual General Meeting.

The present officers are:

President- Sir James Brown
Vice Presidents- Charles Lee, Sir Colin Anderson, Sir John Betjeman, Michael Robbins and Professor F.M.L. Thompson

Chairman - John Richardson
Vice Chairman- Cherry Lavell (who does not wish to be nominated this time)
Secretary - Jenny Stevens
Meetings Secretary - unfilled
Treasurer - Jane Ramsay
Publications Secretary - Christopher Wade
Archivist - Malcolm Holmes

The present COUNCIL (which should consist of the 7 officers above and 9 others) consists of:

Coral Howells, Christina Gee, Horace Shooter, E.G. Brassington, John Lawson, Gillian Tindall, Anthony Cooper, Vivienne Morris

After the Annual Meeting, which should finish at 7.30pm there will be refreshments available. From the

Institute we cross the road to Dyne House, Southwood Lane (part of Highgate School) for the talk by Caroline Barron on Dick Whittington.

Dick Whittington is much in the news lately with a battle raging as to where his commemorative stone should be sited.

Whittington, of course, is a London folk hero, his position reinforced by his escalation to pantomime figure. Unfortunately there is a lot of information to depress the romantics, but on the other hand plenty of facts to delight the historian. Caroline Barron is a noted authority on London history and we look forward to a fascinating talk.

This part of the meeting is being held in association with the Hornsey Historical Society. It starts at 8pm.

Two Canal Walks in June

David Thomas, leader of our Industrial Archaeology Group, is leading two walks along the Regent's Canal in June. The first one will be along the beautiful stretch from Little Venice to Camden Lock. This will be on June 22nd meeting 6.30pm at Warwick Road tube station.

The second stretch is from Camden Lock to Islington, a less familiar walk, most of it opened to the public fairly recently. It is a stretch dear to the hearts of industrial archaeologists and one that David Thomas knows a great deal about. For this walk meet at Camden Town tube station at 6.30pm on June 30.

REMINDER FROM THE TREASURER

Mrs Ramsay thanks all those who have so promptly sent in their subscription renewals, and would be grateful if anyone who has not yet renewed, could do so now. Renewal forms were enclosed with the March Newsletter.

Hampstead Heath walk in June

Sunday, June 26th, 2.30pm, meeting
at Jack Straw's Castle

Christopher Ikin and David Sullivan of the Heath and Old Hampstead Society will lead walks on various parts of the Heath which illustrate its history. Tea will be provided and there will be a collection for the H&OHS funds.

Most of us have walked on the Heath and know the pleasure of this. To have in addition two excellent guides to enlarge our knowledge and appreciation of this marvellous piece of open space makes for a memorable event.

It is expected that a large number of members will want to come on these walks and we are afraid that numbers have to be limited. To reserve a place, on a first come, first served basis, please send a stamped addressed envelope to Christopher Wade, 28 Willoughby road, N.W.3

HEATH AND OLD HAMPSTEAD'S 80th BIRTHDAY

Apart from the historical Heath Walk on June 26th, a joint event with the CHS, the Heath and Old Hampstead Society is celebrating its 80th birthday with a party at Kenwood, a walk round Hampstead and an exhibition at Swiss Cottage. The walk will be on Sunday, June 19th, starting at 2.30 from the Hampstead Community Trust's building at 78 Hampstead High street: it will be led by Christopher Wade and will concentrate on the Conservation Area.

The exhibition at Swiss Cottage Library will run from July 5th to August 13th and will be called 'Protecting Hampstead Heath': it will include old prints, water-colours and photographs from Camden's Local History collection

Further details about the H & OHS from the Hon. Sec, 117 Heath st, N.W.3

VALE OF HEALTH'S 200th BIRTHDAY

It is exactly 200 years since the Hampstead Water Company drained the marsh of Hatchett's Bottom, built the new reservoir and thereby founded the Vale of Health as it is today. To celebrate this bicentenary the Vale of Health Society, backed by the CHS and the Heath and Old Hampstead Society, is organising an Open Afternoon on Sunday, July 3rd, from 2-6pm. There will be conducted tours, some gardens on view, possibly an exhibition, certainly cups of tea.

To Shelley at Penshurst

30th July, 1977

With the help of Christina Gee and the Keats-Shelley Memorial Association the Society's Annual Outing is a really attractive one this year. We shall be going to Penshurst Place, nr Edenbridge, Kent to visit the Shelley Exhibition. We shall be going by coach. The price, which includes entrance fees, coach ride and cream tea is £3.50p

This is an advance notice and more details will appear in the July Newsletter but members ought to make their reservations early. They should be sent to Christina Gee at Keat's House, Keat's Grove, N.W.3. First come, first served!

ROBERT THOMAS CROSFIELD

Mr George Ingram is researching into the life of Robert Thomas Crosfield (Crossfield) and wonders if any member can help with information. He writes:

Crosfield was buried at Hendon, St Mary's Churchyard in 1802. In 1796 he was acquitted at an Old Bailey trial for conspiring to kill George III by means of a poisoned dart or arrow propelled from an air-gun.

He was a member of the London Correspondence Society, which quickly collected a large membership throughout the country - the king and his government were apprehensive of this movement, which after a time they managed to suppress.

It is not known why Crossfield was buried at Hendon - he is known to have had several addresses in the east end of London. But many people buried at Hendon did not reside locally, some came from Hampstead and Highgate etc. Does anyone know if he did?

He acted as a ships' surgeon and gained his qualification at Leydon University in Holland. He was sometimes called Doctor Crosfield.

Members with information should contact Mr Ingram at 53 Selborne Gardens, N.W.4

FESTIVAL TIME

Would you like to help promote the CHS and its publications by running a CHS stall at your local street festival? You would? Then get in touch with Christopher Wade (794 2752). Some of the first festivals of the season are:

June 4 Fitzrovia, Priory
" 7 Gayton (Hampstead)
" 11 Falkland
July 2 Queens Square
" 9 Bloomsbury, Albert street,
Kings Cross

New Books on the Northern Heights

Hampstead, Highgate Village and Kenwood
A Short Guide by Ian Norrie (High Hill Press, £1.20)

The author has revised and enlarged two earlier guides and amalgamated them into a companion volume for The Streets of Hampstead. One of its many attractions is Norrie's personal and pungent comment on all and sundry - for instance, on the Heath Street Baptist Chapel, which is variously described 'beastly', 'ghastly', 'grossly out of proportion' and a 'massive horror'. A new feature is a number of suggested Walks, the first Urban Trails for Hampstead, but readers should not rely on the skeleton map included in the new book, which is thoroughly beastly and grossly out of proportion. They should buy a Map of Hampstead and Highgate Village (25p), which is, of course, also published by Ian Norrie

The Kindling and the Flame

A Centenary Review of the History of South Hampstead High School by Prunella Bodington (Published by the School and available there or from the CHS bookstall, (paperback) at £1.00.

One of its distinguished Headmistresses, Miss Bodington covers the school's progress from Winchester Road to its present eminence in Maresfield Gardens. The story is well illustrated with old photographs and with the sort of tale she told so well at her recent CHS lecture.

Holy Trinity School, 1876-1976

Another lively and well-illustrated history from a tiny Church school tucked behind the vast South Hampstead High. It includes 'A Pupil's Memories' by CHS Member Julia Smith. Available from the school or the CHS bookstall, price 50p

Hampstead and Highgate

The Story of the Hilltop Villages by Mary Cathcart Borer (Allen, £7.50p). Not boring, but not to be taken seriously as local history. Such cavalier treatment of facts can only be labelled 'wrong but romantic'. To think that it costs ten times as much as Camden History Review...

London Villages

by Nerina Shute (Hale £4.50)

Hampstead and Highgate are two of the eleven 'villages' covered by another romantic lady, who has worked hard at her literary research. Nothing seems to have happened in Highgate since Coleridge died.

Discovering London Villages
by John Wittich (Shire, 50p)

Again, Hampstead and Highgate are included, with brief, practical walkabout guides, reasonably up-to-date and reasonably priced.

Hampstead Conservation Guide

Mentioned in our January Newsletter, remains the best value for money (40p) and is also available from the CHS bookstall.

C.W.

People Need Roots - the story of the St Pancras Housing Association, by Irene Barclay (published by the Association, 1976, hardback £2.50, paperback £1.50)

Irene Barclay tells the story of the Association: how it was formed and how it functions and is financed; of the acquiring of land and the rebuilding of properties; of the people involved - the organisers, tenants, children, friends and supporters; of its achievements from 1924 through the war years to the present day, and of the changes in the lives of the people living in St Pancras during those years.

The emphasis of the book is that the fundamental aim of the Association was not just to provide new blocks of flats for people living in slum properties in Somers Town, but to rehouse them without disrupting the community and to provide communal facilities such as gardens, play-areas, club houses etc.

Although Irene Barclay does not speak much of herself, a picture emerges of someone with incredible energy, dedicated to her work and her belief that people need roots.

Felicity Macqueen

BOOKSTALL BARGAINS

Our bookstall at the AGM will include a bargain counter of slightly imperfect CHS publications at greatly reduced prices! Most of them will be Reviews, which have been much thumbed at Newsagents and finally returned as sub-standard.

Deirdre Le Faye's Medieval Camden has been sold out again and been reprinted. Thanks to a friendly printer, Eric Collen of Hovecrest, we have been able to keep the old price of 30p.

Goodbye St. Matthews

Charles Lee writes:

In connection with the item 'Goodbye St Matthews' in the March Newsletter, may I point out that the architect was John Johnson, whose work was acknowledged in the contemporary press and also in the lengthy obituary notice in The Builder for 11 January 1879 (p53).

With regard to the 'indecent haste' of the Church Commissioners I think it should be stated that the Church of St Matthew, Bedford New Town (to give it its official title) was declared redundant under an Order of 27 October 1976. It had not been a Parish Church since January 1956, when the parish was united with that of Old St Pancras. The structure was found to be dangerous, and a draft demolition order was sent to Camden Council on 22nd November 1976; it was advertised in the Camden Journal on Nov 26th. The full statutory notice for objections was given, expiring on 29th December. It appears that the members of the Development Control Panel of Camden Council did not learn of the letter until 26th January and no one seems to have noticed the official advertisement. By then it was too late to object, and demolition began on 14th February. For the record, I may say that the demolition order was confirmed on 17 January 1977.

Perhaps I should declare an interest by saying that my wife and I were married in this Church, and that I had the privilege of writing a short history of this Church, which was published in December 1931.

John Richardson writes:

I am grateful, as always, for a factual correction by Mr Lee. I took my information from the generally reliable source of Walter Brown's St Pancras Book of Dates.

I am, however, not at all impenitent at my description of 'indecent haste'; Mr Lee's useful chronicle of events can only serve to increase one's suspicion that the Church Commissioners jumped for joy at the lack of reaction from Camden and set to work to demolish before the general public became aware of what was happening. The Commissioners are not beginners in the matter of buildings. They know that if their proposal was known to the public there would have been considerable agitation for a period of consideration. A notice in a local paper is not enough in these days of neighbourhood societies and conservationists. What would have happened, for

example, if they had declared St Pancras Old Church as redundant and unsafe and gone through the same processes and got a similar reaction because of the Camden oversight? Would it not be regarded as 'indecent haste', not to mention vandalism, if they had demolished that?

The Church Commissioners own some of the best buildings in the country and they should cease to think that official applications to local authorities and advertisements in small print in local papers is the sum total of their responsibility. Their buildings are cherished by a great many people and the Commissioners should evolve ways of asking them as well.

I would have thought too that the fact that the long-standing marriage of Mr and Mrs Lee was at St Matthews would in itself have warranted its preservation!

Advance Notice

We have been asked to include in the Newsletter a brief, advance notice of events to be covered by the next Newsletter, so as to give more notice to members.

So, here is advance notice that 1977 is the centenary of the opening of the little known St Pancras Gardens (next to St Pancras Old Church, Pancras Road) and that Mr Charles Lee will be giving a talk on July 20th on the history of that area. It will be at the Working Men's College, in Crowndale road, at 7.30pm

To complement the talk we are very pleased that on the Saturday morning (11 am) following the talk the Rev. R. Coogan will be conducting a tour round the gardens and the old church - a rare opportunity to see inside this charming building

This Newsletter is edited by John Richardson and all contributions, letters etc should be addressed to him at 32 Ellington street, N.7

THE SOCIETY

Chairman - John Richardson

Vice-Chairman - Cherry Lavell

Secretary - Jenny Stevens, St Pancras Library, 100 Euston road, N.W.1.

Treasurer - Jane Ramsay, Swiss Cottage Library, N.W.3

Publications Secretary - Christopher Wade, 28 Willoughby road, N.W.3

newsletter

No 42

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

JUL 1977

St Pancras Gardens and Their History – our July events

Wednesday, 20th July, 7.30pm at the Working Men's College, Crowndale Road, N.W.1.

St Pancras Gardens, previously two burial grounds, is the site of some remarkable history. Charles Lee, the expert on this area, is our speaker on this subject and those who know Mr Lee will have great expectations of the evening.

The old St Pancras burial ground, was famous for being available to Roman Catholics in those difficult times, for being thoroughly overcrowded, and being the resting place of Jonathan Wild, the thief-taker, and Earl Ferrers a celebrated murderer. It also held the bodies of William Godwin and his wife Mary Woolstonecroft, Paoli the Corsican hero and various relatives of Cecil Rhodes.

In 1803 the church of St Giles-in-the-Fields, having run out of burial space in their own cemetery, purchased the ground next to the St Pancras cemetery. This contains the bodies of John Flaxman, the sculptor, Sir John Soane amongst many other well-known people

On the Saturday morning after this the Rev. R. Coogan, Rural Dean, has kindly agreed to conduct members over the gardens and old St Pancras Church, site of one of the oldest churches in London. We meet at 11am at the Church in Pancras Way.

There is an interesting exhibition on at the Karl Marx Memorial Library in Clerkenwell Green. It is called 'A People's History of Clerkenwell' and has a wide range of fascinating material. The library and building are worth visiting too. It runs until July the 15th, weekdays 2.30-7.30, weekends 2.00-6.00.

Summer Outing to Penshurst

There are still a few seats left on the coach for the outing to Penshurst Place, Kent. The date is Saturday, 30th July. We hope to visit Chislehurst (home of William Camden) and Smallhythe Place (home of Ellen Terry) on the way. Please bring a packed lunch and pray for fine weather. At Penshurst there will be an opportunity to see the State Apartments and Gardens as well as the Shelley Exhibition and the Toy Museum before a cream tea at 4.30. Tickets from Mrs Christina M. Gee, Keats House, Keats Grove, N.W.3 at £3.50 each.

Incidentally Mrs Gee has asked us to point out to all those she has already sent coach-boarding instructions to, that the Camden Town pick-up point is at Bayham street where the 31 bus terminus is.

Burgh House

Members will have seen the frequent reports in the Ham & High about Burgh House's sufferings and the Council's concern about who should have stopped the rot when. The recent suggestion that this beautiful and historic building should be used as a Local History Centre and accommodate Camden's Local History Collection is naturally of great interest to our Society. Your Council at their last meeting framed a resolution welcoming the proposal in principle provided that the Council will repair and maintain the building in a way appropriate to a Grade One house. This resolution was expressed in a letter to the Ham & High. We hear also that the Buildings, Works and Services Committee of Camden Council has pushed the scheme further ahead by agreeing to the proposal at committee stage.

Roman Camden

As a companion to Medieval Camden we have now published Brian Robertson's researches on Roman Camden, based on a paper he delivered at our Archaeological Symposium way back in 1971. The article includes a map of all the Roman finds in the area and photographs of some of them. Two appendices give illustrated reports on Roman remains by 18th century anti-quaries. There is also a selective Reading List about London in Roman times. Roman Camden is available to CHS members for 30p at our bookstall or for 39p by post. You can use the order form with this Newsletter.

KEEPING THE MARKS OF THE PAST

The Royal Veterinary College has expressed a wish to present to the Borough a wooden garden seat, suitably inscribed, in commemoration of the Queen's Silver Jubilee. The College is obviously conscious of its links with the area, having been located on its present site since 1791. It is hoped the seat will be placed in St Pancras Gardens.

If only this would encourage other firms and institutions to leave some form of permanent memorial to record their own long associations with Camden, or perhaps ensure the preservation of their own historic features.

Far too often landmarks outside factories and other buildings disappear, sometimes to be scrapped, sometimes sent elsewhere. Alas for the Coade stone horse outside the former Voile and Wortley premises in Bidborough Street, and the Black Cats outside the old Carreras building at Mornington Crescent, now dispersed to Jamaica and Bristol.

But there are still many plaques, old signs, lamps and relics of earlier industrial ages attached to the buildings of the Borough, that just a little thought could protect and preserve.

Perhaps the CHS could award an annual accolade to whichever firm or institution in the Borough has done most that year to conserve, restore or otherwise enhance an historical building or other feature. While not in the same league as the Queen's Award to Industry, it might, in a local context, provide some encouragement to others.

'Jack Straw'

PHILIP LAYMAN - HERBALIST AND DISTILLER

Sydney Arrobus has kindly passed on to us a letter from a friend who mentions his wife's uncle, a Philip Arthur Layman, who lived at 7 Pandora road. From there he ran the Herbal Research Centre from which he maintained, with his wife, a remarkable mail-order business of herbal cures etc, and he also kept bees in his garden. In a 1934 newspaper cutting he is described as a journalist and advertisement designer and was fined £10 for "possessing an illicit still and depositing spirits at his address with intent to defraud his Majesty of the duty". The still, made from banana skins in an old oil can was described by the magistrate as a "foul and filthy mixture" and "a lethal type of cocktail."

Advance Notice

The ill-fated talk on 'The Work of Rescue' by Robert Kiln has had to be cancelled once more as Mr Kiln is going to America. We are having instead a talk by Desmond Collins on 'The West Heath Excavations - Early Man in Hampstead'. This will be at Swiss Cottage library on 22nd September, 7.30pm.

Gillian Tindall's book on Kentish Town will be published by Maurice Temple-Smith in September and Miss Tindall will be giving a talk on the subject on October 18th at the North London Polytechnic, Prince of Wales road, N.W.5 at 7.30pm

Even further ahead there will be a change of date and venue for Christopher Wades talk 'Hampstead Through Artists' Eyes'

Details of all these events will be given in later Newsletters.

LAUDERDALE HOUSE

We are happy to report that the other stately, but neglected, historic house in Camden, Lauderdale House, is fast approaching its re-awakening. The Friends of Lauderdale House have secured a grant towards the cost of an administrator and plans are now being made for a programme of repair and activities. More news next Newsletter.

Local History Publications

Reproductions of maps and postcards are now available from all Camden libraries and Keats House. The maps are Newton's Map of Hampstead 1814 which was used in Park's History of Hampstead, Somers Town c1790, and a set of Holborn postcards 1885-1955.

The postcards have already proved to be a popular purchase, capturing as they do, life in past eras. The earliest is a street scene of Holborn from outside Staple Inn c1885. The others are New Oxford street 1903, Southampton Row 1908, Holborn Tram Station (beneath Kingsway) 1952, and the splendid interior of the Grand Restaurant of the Holborn Restaurant c1954. Mr Charles Lee provided valuable information in helping to date the street scenes.

The price is 25p each for the maps, while the set of postcards is 30p.

Vale of Health Reprint

To mark the Vale of Health's bicentenary celebrations this month, our Society has collaborated with Carlile House Press in the reprinting of Helen Bentwich's history of the Vale. It was originally published by High Hill Press in a limited edition in 1968 but has been sold out for some time. It seemed too useful a piece of local history research to be allowed to stay out of print. Helen Bentwich had done considerable original research into the naming of this new settlement (nothing to do with the Plague of London), the mystery of Leigh Hunt's residence, the rude remarks of Charles Dickens and the Vale's notorious reputation in the last century. With its constellation of literary and artistic residents (D.H. Lawrence, Stanley Spencer et al) and its conservation problems of today, the Vale's history continues to be lively. The new edition is a paperback and costs 99p (Order form enclosed)

NEW MEMBERS

The new membership total is 622. New members recently enrolled include:

Ms P Beesley, Ms G. Brangwyn, Miss C. Chacksfield, Miss P. Charlo, Dr M. Cormack, Mr and Mrs C. Dean, Mr and Mrs W. Featherstone, Miss J. Hamilton, Mr and Mrs Metcalf, Mrs A. Morris, Ms L. Nicholson, Miss M. Prest, Miss M. Ryan, Miss E. Silvertown, Ms J. Snowden, Ms M. Spencer and Ms Unerman

THE RATEBOOKS ARE BACK !

An audible sigh of relief recently echoed around the Camden Archives store at John's Mews, Holborn when the last of the 4838 volumes of large, heavy ratebooks were returned to the shelves.

The building, a store for a miscellaneous collection of Council documents together with the Borough's ratebooks for the 18th century to 1955, was closed for major repairs to the strongroom floors in March 1976. Unavoidable delays occurred as the whole of the site's redevelopment was under discussion by Camden Council and until a decision was reached repair work could not start.

Camden's collection of ratebooks from the 18th century are remarkably complete and are usually a more reliable guide to dating the construction and alteration of buildings, and the period of occupancy of inhabitants than directories. Sometimes additional information, for example, owners, may be provided. While more recent ratebooks are convenient to use, many of the 18th and 19th century ones are arranged in the order in which rate collectors went round the streets. The route may be up one side of a street, into a court or side road, continuing along the street to the end, crossing over and back down the other side - often without recording housenumbers. (Housenumbers were not compulsory until well into the 19th century). For this reason anyone wishing to use the ratebooks is strongly recommended to first refer to directories, maps and other sources and then to fill in the gaps from the ratebooks.

Access to the store is by appointment only and anyone wishing to use the books should contact Richard Knight, Holborn Library, 32 Theobalds road (405 2706). Staff will be available to assist with information on the volumes.

Malcolm Holmes
Local History Librarian

CHALK FARM STREETS GROUP TO BE FORMED

Under the leadership of Anthony Cooper the Society is forming a group to work on the history of the streets of Chalk Farm. We need researchers, walkers, typists and people with long memories for this. Those interested should contact Mr Cooper at 68 Regent's Park road, N.W.1 (722 7063)

The Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting, which was added to by a talk by Caroline Barron on Richard Whittington, was a great success. We are grateful to the Highgate Literary and Scientific Institution for their kind hospitality for the first part of the meeting and to Highgate School for the second.

Caroline Barron's talk dispelled, unfortunately, all the myths about Dick Whittington, but the reality was just as interesting.

Those elected for the coming year are:

President: Sir James Brown
Vice Presidents: Sir John Betjeman,
Charles Lee, William Maidment, Sir
John Summerson, Professor F.M.L.
Thompson and R. Michael Robbins

Chairman: John Richardson
Vice-Chairman: Gillian Tindall
Editor of Publications: Christopher
Wade
Secretary: Jenny Stevens
Treasurer: Mrs Jane Ramsay
Archivist: Malcolm Holmes

Committee members: E.G. Brassington,
Anthony Cooper, Mrs Christina Gee,
G.D. Gregory, John Lawson, Miss Deirdre
Le Faye, Cherry Lavell, Horace Shooter
and Rosemary Weinstein.

The Publications Editor reported another year of productivity and profits. The 4th Camden History Review and the new Binder for Reviews were both selling well. Review no.2 and Medieval Camden had both been reprinted without an increase in selling price. Roman Camden had made a timely appearance for the AGM. Distribution of our publications had been much boosted by new outlets at the GLC Bookshop, the V&A bookstall and the Museum of London. Over 5000 Reviews had been sold in the last four years. Thanks were due to our voluntary distributors, designers, stall-manners and the Thames Television, who were plugging The Streets of Hampstead in a forthcoming programme (July 22nd, 6pm). Help was still wanted at Street Festivals. More material for the Review, based on members' own original research would be welcome.

Stephen Geary - A Doubt Resolved

Historical writers using secondary sources of information will be well aware of the problem of conflict between standard works of reference. A long-standing doubt concerning the age of the architect Stephen Geary has been resolved recently, and the facts are worthy of record, and annotation in the sources mentioned. Geary is perhaps best known today as the architect of Highgate and other cemeteries, but his work in Camden also resulted in the name Battle Bridge being changed to King's Cross. Writers in recent years have probably relied on H.M. Colvin's "Biographical Dictionary of English Architects, 1660-1840," which was published in 1954. This gave his date of birth as c1797. However, Frederick Teague Cansick, in the second volume of his "Epitaphs in the Churchyards and Cemeteries of St Pancras" (Jan 1872) gave a transcription of Geary's tomb wording which said "who departed this life August 28th 1854 in the 75th year of his age." Frederick Miller in "St Pancras Past and Present (1874) also gives this date of death and says " in his 75th year." Similar statements are made by Frederic Boase in "Modern English Biography" Vol 1 (1892). James Stevens Curl adopted the same particulars in his fascinating volume "The Victorian Celebration of Death" (1972), quoting both Cansick and Boase.

Until recently the principal evidence for the younger age was a brief obituary note in the "Gentleman's Magazine" (Oct 1854) which said "aged 57.". Enquiry of the library of the Royal Academy of Arts produced the statement that Geary was admitted to the Royal Academy Schools on 14th November 1817, aged 20. His work was shown in Summer Exhibitions between 1814 and 1838.

It appeared therefore, that Cansick, Miller and Boase were in error and the obvious thought was that a transposition of figures was the initial cause. Malcolm Holmes searched the burial register for Highgate Cemetery and found that Geary was recorded as aged 56 at death. Then, a few months ago, the tomb was located. This says " in the 57th year of his age". The discovery confirms the conjectural transposition of figures and resolves the doubt.

Charles Lee

This Newsletter is edited by John Richardson and all contributions, letters etc should be addressed to him at 32, Ellington street, N.7.

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newsletter

No 43

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

SEP 1977

Early Man in Hampstead – our September talk

Our society is always envious of the energy and success in the archaeological field that has been associated with the Hendon and District Archaeological Society. One of their main digs has been on West Heath and many important finds have been made.

The area is close to our own borders and it is therefore of particular interest to have Desmond Collins speak to us about one of the most important digs in the London area for some time.

This talk is on September 22nd at Swiss Cottage library, starting at 7.30pm

Kentish Town and its fields beneath – Gillian Tindall's talk in October

To coincide with the publication this month of Gillian Tindall's book on Kentish Town 'The Fields Beneath' (see review) the Society has invited her to talk to us on the same subject. This will be on October 18th at 7.30pm at the North London Polytechnic, Prince of Wales Road, N.W.5.

Miss Tindall is Vice-Chairman of this Society and she is familiar to most for her many books and regular articles in the Evening Standard.

The book is a treasure-house of new research and interpretations of Kentish Town history and will be on sale on the History Society bookshop that evening.

The talk is as highly recommended as the book.

THE SOCIETY

Chairman – John Richardson
vice-Chairman – Gillian Tindall
Secretary – Miss Jenny Stevens, St Pancras
Library, 100 Euston road, N.W.1
Treasurer: Mrs Jane Ramsay, Swiss Cottage
Library, N.W.3
Editor of Publications: Christopher
Wade, 28 Willoughby road, N.W.3

COADE STONE HORSE FOUND

Dr Hartston writes:

My eye alighted on Jack Straw's column on p.2 of the last Newsletter, wherein he gave the impression that the Coade stone horse which used to adorn the Riding Stables in Bidborough street, is lost.

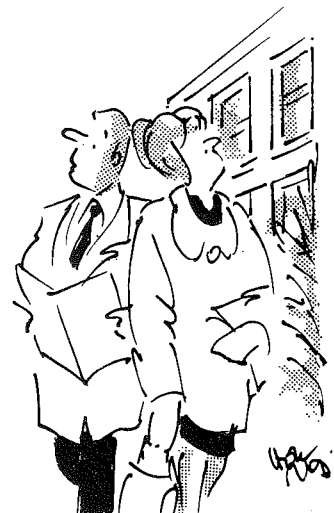
Not so. The dear horse – alas painted a revolting puce colour, is in excellent condition in the 'back yard' of Bidborough House and in the possession of the London Borough of Camden. I suggest it be offered to the Royal Veterinary College in exchange for the park seat they're offering. A sort of 'Equus pro sede' if my schoolboy Latin still holds water.

ADVANCE NOTICE

We are now able to be certain of the date of Christopher Wade's talk 'Hampstead Through Artists' Eyes'. It is on Nov 8th at Rosslyn Hill Chapel, N.W.3, starting at 8pm. This will be a joint event with the Chapel.

An area that has never yet been dealt with in any of our talks is Chalk Farm. On December 8th Anthony Cooper will correct this at Swiss Cottage Library, beginning at 7.30pm

Details of both talks will be in the next Newsletter.



"Apparently this street is noteworthy for the fact that it's of no historical interest whatsoever."

Archaeology in Camden

The report given below has been compiled by Cherry Lavell from information kindly supplied by Irene Schwab of the Inner London Archaeological Unit.

The Unit paid a lightning visit to Camden last spring when a site became available in Platt Yard (between Platt street and Purchase street). Most of the site was covered by thick concrete, but enough space remained for two east-west trenches to be dug by machine and examined by members of the Unit. Both trenches showed evidence of heavy waterlogging of the site until at least the 17th century. Underneath the present cobbled surface of the yard was brown soil make-up containing a brown-glazed earthenware candlestick of 17th or 18th century date. Below this was a layer of black waterlogged clay, which in ordinary circumstances might have contained seeds or other plant remains giving a clue to what was growing in the area at the time; but of these the Unit could find no trace, and perhaps the chemical conditions of this soil were particularly destructive. Below the black clay was a layer of blue clay which proved, when examined scientifically, to be the original or bedrock yellow clay which had been altered by lack of oxygen when the black layer accumulated above it. Underneath the blue clay was the undisturbed yellow clay. Apart from three sherds of pottery and a clay pipe, all of 17th century date, nothing else was found. The results were however interesting since they provided archaeological confirmation that this area was too marshy for medieval habitation.

Irene also says that the Unit would welcome volunteer help, especially at weekends, from anyone willing to turn up at the Shadwell site currently being dug (telephone the Unit at 242 6620 for details).

Exhibitions by the Unit are planned as follows: County Hall (tentative dates- 17th Oct to 4 Nov); Central Library, Islington (4-29 December); Central Library, Tower Hamlets (24 Oct-17 Dec). The Unit are also running an evening class, primarily for beginners, at the City University on Monday evenings from 6.30 to 8.30, starting on 26 September, with a strong emphasis on local and practical work. Volunteers to work on finds processing are welcome at the Unit's HQ, Imex House, 42 Theobalds Road, on Tuesday evenings from 6 to 9pm, starting on 20th September. The Unit would also be glad to hear from anyone who would like to help with site-watching or with background research on individual sites. So, even if there is not much doing in Camden at the moment, any would-be diggers can gain some useful experience ready to help in our own patch when the need arises.

Book Reviews

THE FIRST THIRTY YEARS

Those who have wondered at the origin of the name Rackstraw House, at the corner of Primrose Hill and Adelaide Road, will find enlightenment here (as well as in 'More Streets of Hampstead'). This building is one of the near dozen homes and flatlet-houses run by the Hampstead Old People's Housing Trust, of which the enterprising and energetic Marjorie Rackstraw was the founder and remains the president. The history of the Trust so far, 1947-77, has now been diligently compiled and imaginatively recorded by W.R. Page and attractively published by the Trust (£1 paperback). For local historians it has that special bonus missing from so many local chronicles, an index.

FRINGE BENEFITS

Some recent publications from neighbouring boroughs and history societies, all available at the CHS Bookstall:

Victorian Jubilee (ed: Edward Sammes), a glossy Jubilee salute from the Hendon and District Archaeological Society, chronicling some events which took place in 1887 and 1897 in the Borough of Barnet. (50p)

Money, Milk and Milestones (ed Brigid Grafton Green), a lively miscellany of excerpts from HADAS newsletters. Apart from the subjects in the title, there are short pieces on trade tokens, historical hedges and 'an unusual pillarbox in Golders Green' (35p)

Hampstead Garden Suburb 1907-1977

by Brigid Grafton Green in her capacity as the Suburb's Archivist: this authoritative record, published by the HGS Residents' Association, is well illustrated with old photographs, portraits and maps. (50p)

Memories of Hornsey by Edwin Monk, with historical notes by Joan Schwitzer and with many illustrations and maps. The first Occasional Paper to be published by the Hornsey Historical Society, these are the personal recollections of a nonagenarian with a vivid topographical memory. (90p)

The Site of Southwood Park

by Ralph B. Pugh, the story beneath 75 luxury flats in Southwood Lane, Highgate reprinted from a Hornsey Society Bulletin. (48p)

(continued back page)

The Fields Beneath

The Fields Beneath: The History of One London Village (255pp Maurice Temple Smith, £8.50)

by Gillian Tindall

One of the best things about the Camden History Society is that it encourages local residents to explore the history of their own area and to define their sense of attachment to the place where they live. And when a local resident produces such a history as Gillian Tindall has done for Kentish Town in 'The Fields Beneath', it should be read by all of us, both for its special interest as the record of one London village and as a model of the way local history may be presented.

The title should not mislead anyone into thinking that the book is an elegy. Far from it, for the author's voice speaks out for Kentish Town with an enthusiastic sense of personal commitment. She argues vigorously against the outsider's view of 'darkest Kentish Town' and convinces us that it is as fertile for local historians as the more obviously picturesque areas of the borough. All that is needed is a discriminating eye and an intelligently informed mind, both of which Miss Tindall possesses and persuades her readers to share. It is an unusually vivacious historical documentary, where much painstaking research combines with a knowledge of present reality to give history a human face which is recognisable to all of us. Miss Tindall situates her record of Kentish Town within a definite tradition of historical research going back to William Wodehouse's book compiled shortly after 1700, and including the 18th and 19th century accounts of Dr Stukeley, William Elliott, J. Bennett and J.F. King's Panorama.

It is a pity that printing costs prevented the inclusion of visual material in the text, for there is the remarkable 19th century document of King's Panorama plus the London Transport photos of 1903/4. These both provide rich visual records which would have supplemented the text very well.

The book begins by evoking the present condition of Kentish Town with a lively social awareness and then moves back in time to reveal the past which has given the present its form. Indeed, vestiges of it are still visible in the lines of roads and garden walls which follow ancient field boundaries or the underground presence of the Fleet. There are

still, Miss Tindall reveals, some isolated architectural evidences of the 18th century past which were not destroyed by railways and progressive urbanisation, houses that are now so disguised that it requires energy and intelligence to ferret them out.

As a historical documentary, the shape of the book follows the emergence of Kentish Town as a village with a separate identity from St Pancras in the 16th century. The stages of its growth and change are traced from its days as a rural village, through its emergence as a country retreat for 18th century middle-class gentlemen who also had business in the City, and a place of resort for daytrippers who sought fresh air in the pubs and pleasure-gardens of Kentish Town, to its decisive development in the 19th century as an urban community. The old estates like the Southampton Estate were sold up for building terrace houses and light industries.

She discusses the radical influence of railways on the area, both their immediate effects and the long-term ones on roads and communications. Some of her most stimulating comments are those on 19th century middle and working-class values and aspirations, so extending the range of interest from Kentish Town in particular to a more general sociological discussion.

The book has both the toughness and the oddity of historical fact. Miss Tindall has studied the Manor and Court Rolls, the later Census Returns, newspaper cuttings and maps, as well as collecting a wealth of private documentation.

What I most like is the sense the book gives of the dailiness of Kentish Town life. Miss Tindall has done more than record the metamorphosis of a village; she has demonstrated with a novelist's imagination the continuum of human behaviour which shows less fundamental changes in the human psyche than in the environment.

The book ends with a wonderful kaleidoscope view of the disparate elements which make up life in Kentish Town today. The final image is of the recorder, "In an upstairs room of a house opposite someone is typing." The author is clearly not like Isherwood's Camera but a local resident who knows her area intimately and who has created out of her personal interest a thoroughly researched and engaging account of what Kentish Town has felt like as a place to live in through all its vicissitudes up to the present time.

Coral Howells

(continued from p2)

Hornsey, Highgate and the V.C.H. by Michael Wright, Ralph B. Pugh and T.F.T. Baker, a collection of essays on these areas and in particular their relation to the Victoria County History being compiled about them. There is also an interesting history of the VCH project itself and its 165 volumes.

Christopher Wade

LAUDERDALE HOUSE

Dr N. Kerling from St Bartholomew's Hospital writes:

In Peter Barber's article on Lauderdale House in CHR4 he states that 'The story of the house following Lauderdale's departure is one of gentle, uneventful and largely unrecorded decline until 1889' when it was presented to the London County Council.

I enclose some information from the Minute Books of the Governors of St Bartholomew's Hospital. You will see that the house served a useful purpose from 1872 to 1882.

14 May 1872. Alderman Sir Sydney Hedley Waterlow has granted to St Bartholomew's Hospital free from rent for seven years a mansion and 4 acres of ground known as Lauderdale House at Highgate, as a convalescent Home for patients of this Hospital. He promised to make alterations and additions for 35 patients and to furnish the house at his own expense. (Ref Ha 1/23, pp561, 562)

23 May 1872 Thanks is noted to Sir Sydney Waterlow for his 'munificent offer' at great cost to himself, to give the Governors the opportunity to establish a convalescent Home for patients (Ref Ha 1/23 p565)

8 July 1872 The Convalescent Home was opened by the Prince of Wales

13 Feb 1879. In 1878 339 patients came to Highgate. An average of 29 patients a day were nursed. The total number of patients since July 1872 was 2345. The expenditure over 1878 for the Hospital was £1371. Thanks are conveyed to Sir Sydney Waterlow and the Governors informed him that they are ready to move out at short notice as they wish to establish a convalescent home as an integral part of the Hospital



A rare postcard of a building now demolished. The present building was erected in 1937. The large chimney in the background is part of the Borough Council's Electricity Generating Station.

newsletter

No 44

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

NOV 1977

Hampstead Through Artists' Eyes — Our November Talk

Tuesday, Nov 8th at 8pm
Rosslyn Hill Chapel, N.W.3

One of Constable's many views of Hampstead Heath features a handsome windmill somewhere below Jack Straw's Castle. Hampstead was famous for its windmills, but was there really one in the middle of the Heath? Or did the painter take out his artist's licence and import one from his native Suffolk?

In this lecture, Christopher Wade will be looking at a large selection of paintings and prints of old Hampstead and commenting on their usefulness and otherwise to the local historian. The works will include some by Chatelaine, Constable, Madox Brown, Du Maurier, Robert Bevan and the Camden Town Group. Many of the pictures concerned can be seen in public galleries in this country. Others will be by obscure but valued local artists from the last three centuries

(This is a joint event with the Rosslyn Hill Chapel)

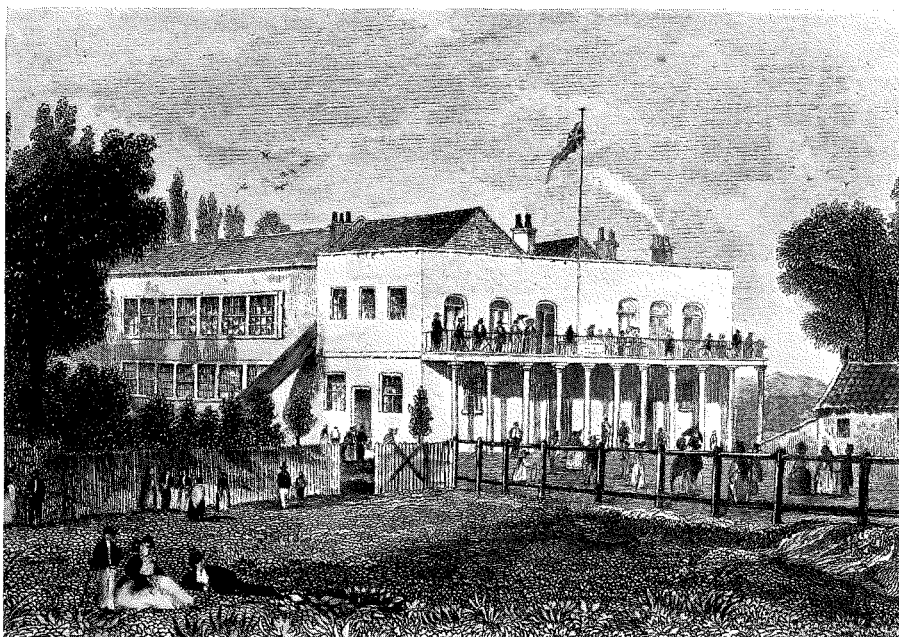
The History of Chalk Farm — in December

Thursday, Dec 8th at 7.30pm
Swiss Cottage Library

Many of us think of Chalk Farm as a rather indefinable area. Is it part of Hampstead or Camden Town? Can those people in West Kentish Town fairly claim to be part of Chalk Farm when they sell their houses? Anthony Cooper might well attempt a definition in his talk which is sure to be packed with previously unearthed facts and a measured architectural appreciation. This is the first talk we have had on Chalk Farm and is sure to be a popular one.

THE MENDES DA COSTA FAMILY

Members of the Society and of the Highgate Literary and Scientific Institution are reminded that on December 6th, Peter Barber of the British Museum, and a member of both organisations, will be giving a talk on this prominent Highgate Jewish family. It begins at 8.15 and will be at the Institution.



The Chalk Farm Tea Gardens will feature
in Mr Coopers talk in December

Our Fifth Review

As we go to press we hear that Camden History Review No.5 is also being printed. You can find out the contents of the latest review on the enclosed hand-out, which is also an Order Form. I beg you to use it because not only is this Review our very own publication which needs your support but because it is a rich collection of highly readable and well-illustrated articles about our own patch of London. The special feature this year is 'Camden at War', but the majority of contributions are about peaceful subjects - art, architecture, archaeology, education, numismatics, books and how we celebrated Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897. The Review has been edited by Christopher Wade and designed by Mildred Nasmith ...and it still costs the same as No 1 - 75pence!

BOUND AND DELIVERED

Now that there are five Camden History Reviews to keep clean and tidy, you should also have (if not already) our special BINDER. This is a handsome, black, thick binder labelled CAMDEN HISTORY REVIEW in gold letters. It is not only very handsome and unites your Reviews into the nucleus of a Camden History Encyclopedia but it stops your friends from filching your precious copies. You can buy Binders at our meetings or order them by post (£1.35 plus 45p packing and postage).

If you would like all our Reviews (Nos 1-5) ready bound in a Binder, you need only send £5 to our publications office and they will be delivered free to any address in Camden. This will save you some time, trouble and postage - and it will, incidentally, make a splendid Christmas Present for your friends, relations and Camden-lovers everywhere.

You can order Binders and Reviews and our other publications, which all make ideal Christmas presents (how about Roman Camden as a stocking-filler?) on the enclosed Order Form.

Christopher Wade

HADAS PUBLICATIONS

Our Hendon friends in HADAS have kindly been distributing our leaflets in their area and we are glad to reciprocate this month with their hand-out. Particularly topical is their Victorian Jubilee and much of what they did in Barnet must have happened in Camden too.

THE REV R CONYERS MORRELL

In 1935 there was published 'The Story of Agar Town' a booklet which is now a collector's piece. It was written by the Vicar of St Thomas, Agar Town who was the minister there from 1914-1948. The church was eventually demolished and a housing estate covers the site.

The author, the Rev. Conyers Morrell, has recently died aged 94. He was Mayor of St Pancras 50 years ago and helped to organise the Agar Dramatic Club and the Agar Band, later called, (so Mr Lee tells me), the Wrotham Syncopators.

THE INWOOD FAMILY

We have been sent, by Ms Gladys Chacksfield, a long and detailed genealogical survey of the Inwood family (see CHR 4). Should any member wish to consult this account of a highly talented architectural family, Malcolm Holmes, Camden's Archivist, has a copy.

ST PETER'S CHURCH, BELSIZE SQUARE

Mr Howard Isenberg writes to say that he is writing a pamphlet on the history of St Peter's Church, Belsize Square, N.W.3. If anyone can help with material please write to him at 6 Newton House, Abbey rd, N.W.8

IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM

Members doing research may like to know something of a little-known archive centre - that of the Imperial War Museum. The Department of Documents at the Museum holds an expanding archive of private papers which records the experiences of men, women and children in war-time during this century. Most of these documents take the form of letters, diaries or memoirs. The scope of the archive is such that it covers the interests of both social and military historians and collections ranging from the papers of private soldiers to field Marshals, from Admirals to women doctors, are held here.

The acquisition of new material is an important part of the work of the Department of Documents. By its very nature, however, first-hand evidence of how the wars of this century were fought and what life was like in wartime is extremely vulnerable and easily lost unless steps are taken to preserve it. The Museum would therefore be very happy to hear from anyone who has material which they might wish to deposit.

The CHS History Essay Prize ST PANCRAS OLD CHURCH APPEAL

The Camden History Society announces an ESSAY COMPETITION for the best stories of any remarkable residents of the Camden area and their contribution to the local community. There will be prizes of £25 worth of books and book tokens and the best entries will be published in the Camden History Review.

The prizes for this competition will be supplied from money donated by Lionel Leventhal Ltd, High Hill Bookshop and Owl Bookshop.

1) The Camden Characters can be famous or unknown, great or small, dead or alive, but preference will be given to lesser-known people of earlier years (not later than World War II) and to those thoroughly involved in the life of the community.

2) The Judges will be Gillian Tindall, Malcolm Holmes and Christopher Wade.

3) Prizes of at least £5 will be awarded to the best essays from entrants under 18 years of age.

4) Entries should be between 1000 and 1500 words in length and typed in double spacing (or very clearly written) on one side of the paper only. They should be sent to:

CHS Essay Competition
28 Willoughby Road
N.W.3

to arrive by 30 June 1978. Results will be announced in October 1978 on publication of Camden History Review No.6.

Those Members who were part of the many that went round old St Pancras Church a few months back will not need convincing that the church deserves any effort to restore it.

An appeal is to be launched on November 18th to finance a major restoration programme and details of this will be circulated in the next Newsletter.

NEW MEMBERS

Ms Judith Barry, Miss W. Birley, Ms Christine Burden, Mrs C. Castledine, Lady Richard Clarke, Ms Fiona Friend, Mr P. Goldman, Mrs H. Guest, Ms Sandra Jenkins, Mr J. Jones, Rev S. Kirby, Mr and Mrs W. Stead

THE SOCIETY

Chairman - John Richardson
vice-Chairman - Gillian Tindall
Secretary - Miss Jenny Stevens, St Pancras Library, 100 Euston road, N.W.1
Treasurer: Mrs Jane Ramsay, Swiss Cottage Library, N.W.3
Editor of Publications: Christopher Wade. 28 Willoughby road, N.W.3

This Newsletter is edited by John Richardson. Items for publication should be sent to him at 32 Ellington Street, N.7 (607 1628)



Special Offer for members

50p. (inc. postage)
A map showing interesting or typical Victorian Hampstead houses together with illustrations of famous past occupants - like this line drawing of Elgar and his house - is available from CORTINA 24 NETHERHALL GARDENS NW3. The map comes with an explanatory leaflet containing brief notes on the illustrated houses. Cheques made payable to Eric Wade for 50p.

Hampstead. White Stone Pond



"Wylde's" Constables Cottage,

Hampstead.



West End Green.