

# newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 117

Jan 1990

## From Board School to Adult Education

Wed, Jan 24th, 7.30pm  
Camden Adult Evening Institute  
Holmes Road, NW5

In Holmes Road, Kentish Town, is a building which features prominently in the educational history of the area and, indeed, will take on new significance in adult education now that Camden Council is to run its own educational service.

Its fascinating history from a typical Board School to one of the best-known venues for adult education was recently told in a book entitled '87 Holmes Road', which is on sale at local central libraries.

Our talk is on the same subject (the book will be on sale too!) and the speakers are Ann Langton and Cecily Herbert.

### FROM JEAN SCOTT ROGERS

I was surprised and touched to read Roger Cline's piece about my retreat to Suffolk in the last Newsletter, so I feel very reluctant to correct him in any way, but as yours is a history society I feel I should let you know that it was not a catalogue I wrote for the Theatre Museum in Covent Garden but an illustrated history - Stage by Stage - the Making of the Theatre Museum, published by HMSO in 1985.

I shall miss the CHS very much and would like to take this opportunity to say that should any members find themselves in the Ipswich area with an hour or so to spare they would be welcomed at Cambridge Cottage, Coddendam (Tel 327).

Jean Scott Rogers

## Trollope and Bloomsbury - our February talk

Wed, 21st Feb, 6.30pm  
Lecture Hall, Holborn Central Library  
Theobalds Road, WC1

Our President, Christopher Elrington, is the speaker for our February event. His subject is the portrayal of Bloomsbury in the works of Anthony Trollope. The writer was, in fact, born in Keppel Street, aptly enough the street facing the building in which our President works - Senate House. But he appears not to have lived in Bloomsbury in later life, although he uses the area frequently enough in his books.

Please note the earlier starting time for this talk!

## Coming Attraction

An Exhibition entitled Hampstead Past is now on show at Burgh House. It consists, in fact, of all the illustrations to be found in the book of that name by Christopher Wade which has just been published by Historical Publications. (Highgate Past by John Richardson appeared at the same time: both are priced £12.95). Christopher will also be talking about the pictures for the Society on Monday, March 19th at Burgh House at 7.30pm when members will also have the chance, of course, to see the actual illustrations still on display.

## SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL

You are reminded that subscriptions for 1990 are due on 1st March. A prompt renewal would be much appreciated by your officers, and it would also save postage and further reminders. A notice is enclosed for those who pay cash or by cheque. If you pay by banker's order no action is necessary.

## Gardening on the Heights

Highgate is doing rather well for publications lately. We have received a copy of All Highgate is a Garden, a history of the Highgate Horticultural Society from 1859-1989, by Elisabeth Cunnington and Frances Rust. Miss Cunnington has long been a member of the CHS - less commonly known is that when she was teaching in South Africa one of her pupils was Nelson Mandela.

The Highgate Horticultural Society was formed in December 1859. Its first President was the vicar of Highgate School and its first treasurer the aptly named James Cutbush, of the nursery garden in Highgate village. Its first show was held the following year in the grounds of the house in Hampstead Lane owned by Lady Dufferin and the Society later used a number of large houses and their grounds for their annual shows - Holly Lodge, Southampton Lodge, Winchester Hall, Cane Wood Towers and Fairseat among them.

One may gain some idea of the interest in the Society by the fact that for the 1883 show, held in the grounds of Holly Lodge, the attendance was 20,000. No doubt many wanted to see how the very very rich lived as well as the plants. The Baroness Coutts in 1871 donated a prize to those 'who shall have pledged themselves to prevent the destruction of Birds, their Nests and Eggs'.

This account encompasses quite a lot of Highgate social history - it isn't just about horticulture. There are also numerous illustrations and maps.

Copies may be obtained from local bookshops or from the Highgate Horticultural Society, 11 North Grove, N6 4SH for £7.95 plus 45p postage and packing. It is paperback, 72pp, with 24 ills.

## A KENTISH TOWN FAMILY

Mrs D.L. Moody has written to seek help in her family history research. The photograph reproduced is at the wedding of Albert Edward Moody and Winifred Beatrice Lees on 6 June 1927 at Holy Trinity, Haverstock Hill. Those appearing in the photograph are:

Top row: (l to r) Annie Leake, Mrs Timms, Bobbie Moth, May Livermore, Alf Livermore, Lil Leake, Arthur, George and Dolly Moody, Amy Friend, Albert Elston, Fred Lees, Con Heim, Alice and John Tindall.

Second Row: Tom and Dennis Leake, Sid Leake and daughter, Lucy Ripsher, Winnie Lawn, George Heim, Lucy Heim, Ernest and Robert Lees, Tom Timms and child.

Seated row: Maud Heim and Conrad, Ethel Leake, William Moody, Albert and Winnie Moody, W Lees and Mrs Lees, Florrie Elston, Percy Lawn.

Front row: George Moody, Eric Leake, Amy Belcher, Ivy Leake, Dorothy Moody, Tom Moody.

If any member has information on any of those appearing would they please write to Miss Moody at 41 Fairfield Way, Barnet.



## Camden Anniversaries 1990

Here is the usual round-up of anniversaries to be celebrated or best forgotten in 1990.

### 50 years:

The bombing of London had just got into its stride. At University College, 70,000 books were destroyed in a fire caused by an incendiary bomb. St Paul's in Avenue Road, a Teulon church, was badly damaged and was eventually taken down in 1958. Cecil Sharp House, the headquarters of the English Folk Dance and Song Society was damaged, although it is now under a more potent threat today from some of its members. St Bartholomew, a church in Grays Inn Road, was almost totally destroyed and St Mark's, in Regent's Park Road, was damaged.

### 100 years:

The Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital for Women in Euston Road, designed by J.M. Brydon, was opened. It has been, and still is, under threat of closure. The collection of non-conformist religious books, Dr Williams' Library, moved to Gordon Square. Also in Gordon Square the Mary Ward Centre was established at University Hall. The Hampstead Mortuary in New End was opened. This is now the New End Theatre. The fledgling Westfield College bought Kidderpore Hall in Hampstead.

### 150 years:

A row of buildings called Greenwood's Almshouses were opened in Rousden Street, Camden Town. These are now gone and replaced by a row of 1930s houses. The Windsor Castle pub in Parkway was destroyed by fire. Heals, growing from a bed manufacturers, moved to Tottenham Court Road from Rathbone Place. The Scientific and Literary Institution was established at 36 Whitfield Street by followers of Robert Owen.

### 200 years:

The St Pancras Female Charity School was opened in a building near the present Temperance Hospital in Hampstead Road.

### 250 years:

First admissions were made at the Foundling Hospital in its original premises in Hatton Garden.

### PEOPLE

Significant dates relating to people with Camden connections are:

### 50 years

Death of Oliver Lodge, scientist who had a number of Camden addresses.  
Death of Mrs Patrick Campbell, actress, once a resident at Pitt House, North End, Hampstead.  
Death of Florrie Forde, music hall entertainer, who once lived in Haverstock Hill.  
Death of Lord Rothermere who lived at various houses in West Hampstead in his more penurious days.  
Death of Sir Raymond Unwin, architect, who lived at Wyldes farmhouse.

### 100 years:

David Bomberg (b 1890), artist, who had several Hampstead addresses. Agatha Christie (b 1890) who lived once at the revolutionary Isokon flats in Lawn Road. (Will our screens be full of Death on the Nile again?). Charles de Gaulle (b 1890) lived in Frognaal during the war. (Will France be celebrating again this year?) Naum Gabo (b 1890), artist, had several Camden addresses including a studio in Cliff Road. Edwin Chadwick, public health reformer, (d1890) lived in Cartwright Gardens. Henry Selous, artist, (d1890) whose name was so unjustly removed from a street name in Camden Town recently, lived in that area, and also, it seems, at Keats House. Information required if this is so.

### 150 years:

Born in 1840: Thomas Cobden-Sanderson, craft bookbinder who once lived in Frognaal, Hiram Percy Maxim of gun fame, who had a workshop in Hatton Garden, Richard Whiteing, writer, with several Hampstead addresses, Sophia Jex-Blake, physician and feminist, who lived in Bloomsbury and Sir James Linton, artist, with numerous Hampstead addresses.

### 200 years:

Sir William Edward Parry (b1790) explorer, who lived at Heath End House, Spaniards Road. Thomas Southwood Smith (b1790) another public health reformer, used often to stay in Fitzroy Park, Highgate. William Henry Hunt, artist, who once lived in Marchmont Street.

John Richardson

## NEW LISTED BUILDINGS

The following properties have now been listed as Grade II:

59 St Giles High Street WC1. Now house and restaurant; early 19th century.

35 Goodge Street W1, house, 1767 by Jacob Leroux

4 Percy Street W1, house c1766-70 and nos 34-37 of the same date.

## Spring Path

Spring Path, a welcome refuge from the traffic of Fitzjohns Avenue, is a relic of a footpath that once ran from Church Row to Belsize Avenue, continuing as Cut-Throat Alley down the wall of Belsize Park towards England's Lane. For most of the length it is clearly shown on John Rocque's map of 1746. Nothing remains of the notorious alley but uphill much of the path is represented by modern roads. One other stretch of footway to survive is the passage between the top of Belsize Crescent and Belsize Village.

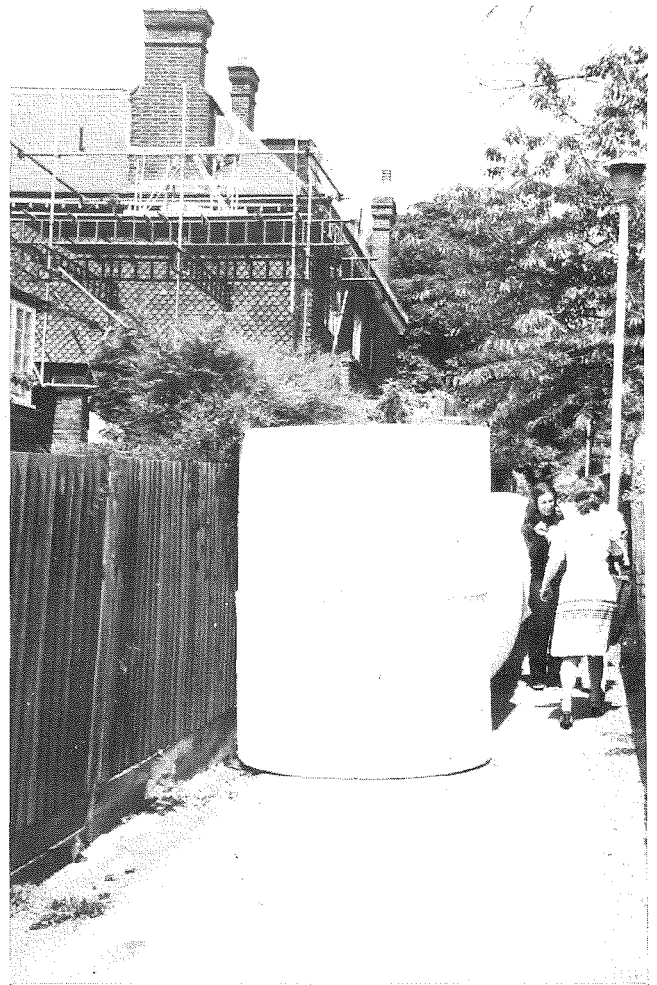
Householders do not always welcome old footpaths alongside their properties. In 1881, when the path was still open from Shepherd's Walk to Belsize Crescent, the occupants of Lyndhurst Terrace (which backs on to Spring Path) tried to get the right of way suppressed. They were thwarted by other local residents, who claimed that the footway was 'much used and very convenient'. However, in 1883 (as part of the deal whereby Lyndhurst Road was extended westwards) a 136-yard stretch immediately south of Spring Path was closed, giving the present T-junction with Shepherd's Path.

Just west of Spring Path lay the ventilation shaft to the tunnel between Hampstead Heath and Finchley Road & Froggnal Stations on the North London Railway, the Broad Street Line. This shaft (or rather its superstructure) may be seen, newly built and standing in fields, in the 1860 frontispiece to The Streets of West Hampstead (1975). Later, it was in the back garden of 80 Fitzjohns Avenue (now flats) but workmen could obtain unobtrusive access from the old footpath.

With the end of steam traction there was less need for ventilation and in 1978 the shaft was capped, having first been filled in with large cylinders of foamed plastic; the photograph shows the scene in the path.

It will be a pity if in some future energy crisis the North London has to go back to steam.

Roy Allen



### LINES ON A HAMPSTEAD GARDEN

Deirdre Le Faye has dug up some lines by Thomas Park, the antiquarian and poet, who was the father of John James Park, Hampstead's first historian. Father and son lived at 18 Church Row in the early part of the 19th century - a plaque now marks the house. The lines in question refer to Thomas Park's garden (in fact I find that they have already appeared in Barratt's Annals of Hampstead, but they bear repeating). They come from The Poetical Register, and Repository of Fugitive Poetry, for 1810-1811, which was published in 1814 and are entitled Apologetical Lines on my Hampstead Garden.

The jessamine, sweet-brier, woodbine and  
rose,  
Are all that the west of my garden bestows;  
And all on the east that I have, or desire,  
Are the woodbine and jessamine, blush-rose  
and brier:  
For variety little could add to the scent,  
And the eye wants no change where the  
heart is content.

# newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 118

Mar 1990

## Hampstead Past - our March talk

Monday, March 19th, 7.30pm  
Burgh House, New End Square, NW3

Many illustrated treasures of Hampstead are, at the moment, on view at Burgh House where an exhibition, Hampstead Past, marks the publication of Christopher Wade's book of the same name. He will be talking to us this month on the same subject. There will, of course, be lots of slides, but they will go hand-in-hand with a concise history of Hampstead. Not to be missed!

## Coming Attractions

On 17 May we have a talk by Eric Robinson on Camden's geology. This will be at St Pancras Church Hall at 7.30pm.

Our Annual Meeting this year will be outside Camden. We shall be at the Society of Antiquaries at Burlington House, Piccadilly. This is on Thursday, 21st June at 6.30pm

In July we have a conducted walk around Holborn, with Ruth Hayes as our guide. This is on the 19th. We hope, too, that month to have a talk on the British Medical Association.

## A NOTE ABOUT COVENANTS

From 6th April 1990, a husband and wife will become two separate taxpayers. Most members of the Society will be taxpayers in their own right, by virtue of their earnings, pension or investment income - they will not be affected. However if any member does not personally pay tax and believes he or she may have a covenant with the Society signed on the basis that tax would be deducted from their spouse's income, he or she is invited to check the matter with me. The best time to telephone (722 6421) is after 9pm.

Roger Cline  
Treasurer

## Coade Stone - a Secret Revealed

Mon 23rd April, 6.30pm  
Holborn Central Library, Theobalds Rd WC1

In Georgian times one of the great building aids was an artificial stone made by a Mrs Eleanor Coade. Its advantage, apart from its durability, was that it was amenable to quite delicate carving. Motifs and monuments could decorate the architecture and landscapes of that age. The exterior facings of Bedford Square, for example, are made from this material. In the more austere styles of later years the need for the stone declined and Mrs Coade's firm closed c1840. The firm and the material were then almost completely forgotten.

Coade Stone was rediscovered by writers in the 1950s and it acquired the myth of being a material whose chemical mix had been lost irretrievably. This architectural detective story has now been solved, however, and it is the subject of our April talk. The formula has recently been analysed by the British Museum Research Laboratory and our speaker, Alison Kelly, is able to describe this and the manufacturing process.

Ms Kelly has been a London University lecturer for over twenty years on subjects connected with English architecture, furniture and decoration, particularly that of the late-Georgian period. Her recently published book on Coade Stone has identified over 650 sites at which Coade stone still survives.

## Things Past

At our February meeting our President, Christopher Elrington, gave us a fascinating talk on Trollope and Bloomsbury. There was a large audience which included visitors from the Trollope Society.

Trollope is famous for his portrayal of human characters and the English countryside, and he had a strong feeling for places and social nuances. But he was born in London, in Keppel Street, a road now cut short by the later building of Senate House. After education at Harrow and Winchester he worked as a surveyor for the post office (and, indeed, claimed he had invented the pillar box).

Bloomsbury, as featured in his books, was a socially declining area. In fact, the fashionable had long ago moved on to Mayfair and Tyburnia and it was regarded as a sign of lack of money if you were east of the Tottenham Court Road. The world of Bloomsbury then is succinctly captured in a number of his novels, and those of us used only to his Barchester series will have come away with an appetite for the other books we haven't read.

### A LAMB IN GOSPEL OAK

It now takes patience, due to many road closures and traffic management schemes, to drive into and around the Gospel Oak area. However, those familiar with it will know that the parish church of St. Martin's in Vicar's Road is a most unusual one, admired by many architects and critics. A pamphlet has just been produced about its architect Edward Buckton Lamb, written by Renee Kathleen Boucher. This may be obtained for 20p plus SAE from the Rev Paul Conrad, St Martin's Vicarage, Vicar's Road, NW5.

### A CAUTIONARY TALE

Malcolm Holmes has sent a cutting from the Sunday Telegraph of Jan 7th which includes a cautionary tale. Evidently someone at English Heritage has authorised the destruction of thousands of records, many of which relate to ancient monuments such as Stonehenge. It is an irretrievable loss.

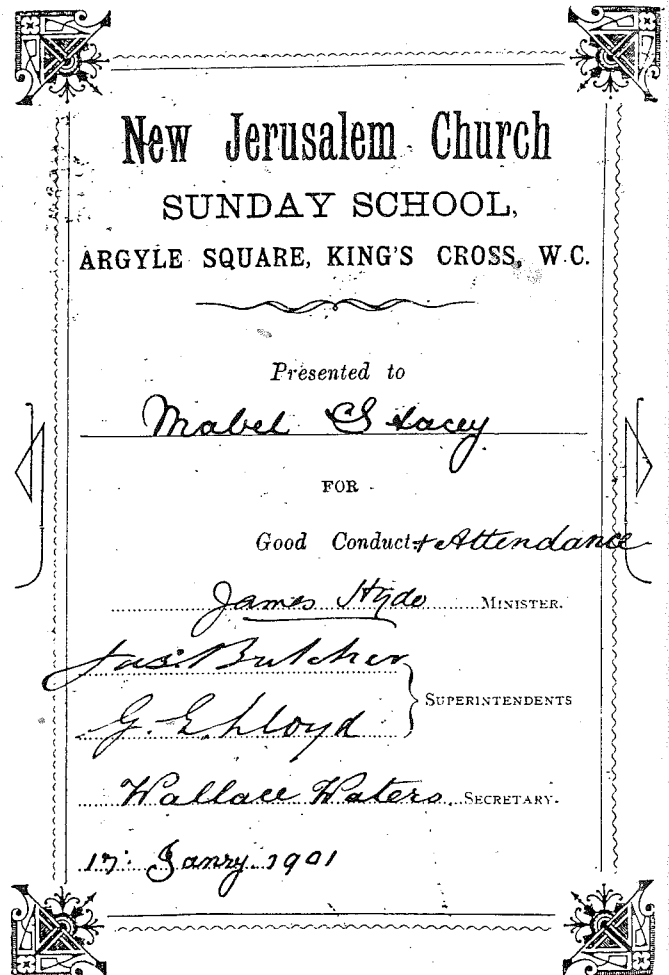
It has encouraged Malcolm to make the point that if any member is responsible for the archives of any company or organisation then he or she should devise a system by which they are clearly labelled as being documents to be kept permanently or else to be sorted.

## A Church in Argyle Square

Roy Hidson has sent us a photocopy of the title leaf of a book entitled 'Heaven and Its Wonders and Hell' by Emanuel Swedenborg, published in 1899 by the Swedenborg Society - a sect founded in London in 1788, which was devoted to the writings of Swedenborg the Swedish theologian. His followers founded, among others, the New Jerusalem Church in Argyle Square. This was opened on 11 Aug 1844 in a building designed by J.D. Hopkins.

Mr Hidson also sends a copy of the book plate in the volume, which we reproduce here.

The church is now demolished but there may be some members who can remember it, or even have an illustration of it!



### LONDON LOCAL ARCHIVES

The second edition of a useful book, recently published, is London Local Archives. This lists the archive repositories of all local authorities, with details of opening hours, addresses etc. It costs £2.75 or £3.10 by post from GLAN, c/o Archives Section, Bromley Central Library, High Street, Bromley, Kent BR1 1EX. Alternatively it may be bought at Swiss Cottage or Holborn Local History Centres.

## Beating the Bounds of Camden Archives on Film

Camden Council has revived the old custom of Beating the Bounds. Traditionally this occurred in Rogation Week. The Vicar and civic leaders would walk the bounds of the parish to establish that boundary markers were in position and that no one from outside the parish had encroached on their territory.

Today, Camden's walk round what is now a much larger parish (about 18 miles) is a charity affair and will be slightly earlier in the year - on 31st March. One rest on the way will be at The Flask in Highgate Village where the party will take part in the traditional 'Swearing on the Horns' ceremony. The master of ceremonies there will be Malcolm Holmes, Camden's local history librarian.

Everyone is welcome to join in, even if it is just for part of the way.

### Alan Farmer

We were sorry to hear of the death of Alan Farmer, long-time member and author of Hampstead Heath - the only comprehensive history on the subject.

Alan was a courteous and modest man. In fact, he was so diffident that it was difficult to get to know him well. What was apparent though was his love for the Heath and there is no doubt that his book will remain the standard work on the subject for many years to come.

A number of his possessions relating to local history are going to Burgh House. One of them, an unusual postcard, is reproduced here.

## Archives on Film

The Poor Ratebooks for St John Hampstead and St Pancras parishes up to 1900 are now available on microfilm at Swiss Cottage Library. These should be used instead of the bound volumes previously consulted at Theobalds Road.

This new facility is part of a programme of microfilming undertaken by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. It is hoped that soon there will also be available on film the St Pancras Directors of the Poor minutes 1804-77, 1888-1900, and St Pancras Vestry minutes 1718-1862.

A number of other heavily-used records are also about to be filmed and researchers should check that items of this kind held at Swiss Cottage are not away being filmed and hence unavailable for consultation.

It is worth repeating the opening hours of our Local History libraries. They are:

#### Swiss Cottage:

Monday 9.30-8pm

Tuesday 10.00-6pm

Wednesday Closed

Thursday 9.30-8pm

Friday Closed

Sat 9.30-5.00 (1st and 3rd in month)

#### Holborn

By appointment (405 2706 x337)



## THE LIBRARY OF DR WILLIAMS

Further to our list of Camden anniversaries in the last edition, Mr John Creasey, Librarian of Dr Williams's Library at 14 Gordon Square, has sent us a leaflet about the library which moved there a hundred years ago.

The library, devoted to non-conformist literature, was created after the death of Dr Williams in 1716. It began at his former house in Hoxton but then new premises were built in Red Cross Street, Cripplegate, and the first librarian was appointed in April 1730. It remained there until 1865, when their premises were bought by the Metropolitan Railway Company. Obligated to move, the library eventually settled at Grafton Street, Fitzrovia and in 1890 went on to Gordon Square.

The books bequeathed by Dr Williams are known from a catalogue of 1727. They are a miscellaneous and fascinating collection of over 6,000 volumes, which includes a Shakespeare first folio. There is also much French Protestant literature, some of it extremely rare.

The opening times of the Library are 10-5 on Mon, Wed and Friday, and 10-6.30 on Tues and Thursday.

## HIGHGATE'S GARDENS

You gave a generous amount of space in the last Newsletter to All Highgate is a Garden: a History of Highgate Horticultural Society 1859-1989. But your readers will have looked in vain for the name of the publisher. This was the Hornsey Historical Society, who were responsible not only for the design and printing but for the picture research that led to the 'numerous illustrations' you have kindly remarked on.

May I take this opportunity of reminding those who would like to have a closer look at all our publications that the headquarters and bookshop of the HHS is at The Old Schoolhouse, 136 Tottenham Lane N8, open 10-12 on Thurs and Fridays and 10-4 on Saturdays.

Joan Schwitzer

## Saxon London on the Strand

Members who heard Ann Saunders' fascinating talk just before Christmas - and those who missed it - may like to know that the December issue of the journal Antiquity (vol 63, no 24, pp706-18) contains a round-up of all the archaeological evidence for the Saxon settlement on the Strand. The Saxons did not settle in the area of the Roman city (roughly the same as the modern City of London) but preferred to stay outside the walls and set up a trading post along the river - the Strand as it is today. Some 20 sites around Aldwych and Covent Garden to Trafalgar Square have now produced Saxon material, and archaeologists are calling this area 'Lundenwic' for convenience. It looks as if it measures about 1km x 0.6km, quite sizeable for the time. The authors of this article, Robert Cowie and Robert Whytehead, discuss the roads, waterfront, buildings, industries, food production, churches, coins and burials of Lundenwic. Do have a look at it if you can.

Cherry Lavell

## OUR CHRISTMAS MEETING

For three years our Christmas meeting consisted of members giving ten-minute talks on various aspects of Camden history. What we would like to do as from this year is to have short readings of Camden in Literature, chosen and given by members. The pieces do not have to be from Betjeman and the like - although it is expected that he will be featured, but they could be travellers' tales, excerpts from fiction set in a Camden location etc.

So, bear this in mind for the time being and we will announce arrangements for participation in a future Newsletter.

## DOCKLANDS MUSEUM TO CLOSE

We have heard from the Museum of London that the London Docklands Development Corporation is withdrawing funding from the Museum in Docklands as from 31st March 1990. Unless this decision can be reversed the project will close on that date as no other funds are available.

They urge members to write individually to Michael Honey, Chief Executive, LDDC, Unit A, Millharbour, Great Eastern Enterprise, E14 9XX, in support of the project - before it is too late!



# newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 119

May 1990

## Geology of Camden - our May talk

Thurs 17 May 7.30pm  
St Pancras Church House, Lancing St NW1

We have another unusual subject for our talk this month - the Geology of Camden. This is the first time we have had a talk related to this subject and it will be interesting to hear how the geology has affected the development and nature of the area we live in. Eric Robinson is our speaker.

## The Annual Meeting

Thurs 21 Jun, 6.30pm  
Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House  
(Royal Academy building) Piccadilly W1

Our annual meeting this year is in the splendid premises of the Society of Antiquaries, where John Hopkins will give a talk on the Society.

This will be our 20th anniversary meeting and we are sure that you will find the surroundings and the talk worthy of the celebration. In that connection it would be very helpful if we can get some idea of the number of people likely to attend so that refreshments may be available in the right quantity. Please let Jane Ramsay know if you are coming - c/o Swiss Cottage Library, Avenue Road, NW3.

The refreshments are going to be first this year, promptly at 6.30. The business meeting will begin at 7.00 and the talk will be at 7.30pm. The entrance, by the way, is on the left-hand side of the courtyard, just before you get to the main entrance of the Royal Academy.

Nominations are required for the officers and council of the Society. The present holders are:

PRESIDENT: Christopher Elrington  
VICE PRESIDENTS: Frank Cole, Anthony Cooper, R. Michael Robbins, Dr Ann Saunders.

CHAIRMAN: John Richardson  
VICE CHAIRMAN: Christopher Wade  
SECRETARY: Jane Ramsay  
TREASURER: Roger Cline  
PUBLICATIONS MANAGER: Diana Wade  
MEETINGS SECRETARY: Horace Shooter  
ARCHIVIST: Malcolm Holmes  
PUBLICITY: Diana Rau  
EDITOR OF CHS REVIEW: John Gage

Council members:

Peter Barber, Eric Brassington, Christina Gee, Philip Greenall, Ruth Hayes, Gillian Tindall, Ann Winser.

Christina Gee has given notice that she wishes to stand down. As many of you know Christina has organised most of the outings and social functions we have ever had - more will be said about that at the AGM. Ann Winser, who represents us on the LAMAS Local History committee, has also indicated that she wishes to stand down as she now lives so far away from Camden. Nominations should be sent to Jane Ramsay, c/o Swiss Cottage Library, Avenue Road, NW3.

## The Summer Outing

Christina Gee's last fling as the organiser of our annual summer outing is a splendid choice - Kelmscott, home of William Morris, in Gloucestershire. The house, still basically a private residence, is one of the sights of the Arts and Crafts movement, and those of us who haven't seen it are impatient to get there.

That is the good news. The less good is that, for one reason or another, the trip is slightly more expensive this year - £15 each, which includes entrance fee, coach and tea. Also, there will be a talk on William Morris and Kelmscott by Dr Ann Saunders. All in all, we think, very good value.

The outing is on Saturday, August 4th, leaving from two points in West Hampstead and Camden Town. Details are on the enclosed leaflet and the closing date is May 31st. Don't miss it!

## FOGGY TIMES AT SWISS COTTAGE

Anne Blanco White has sent us a cutting from the Midhurst and Petworth Observer, 8 March 1990:

'I read a most interesting letter in the daily paper on the subject of fog. The writer said that she remembered a bunch of students who used to wait with flaming torches outside Underground stations in the evening rush hour. She would emerge from Swiss Cottage to hear the call, "Adelaide Road and all points east!" Led by the torchbearer, the crocodile of pedestrians would set off through the pea-souper in single file, each holding the coat of the person in front; at every intersection the leader would call the name of the road and they would peel off to their homes. Those were the days!'

## New Publications

Several new publications are now available for sale:

Our former President, Dr Ann Saunders, is the author of St Martin-in-the-Fields, a 24-page booklet on the history of that church and parish: members will recall that she talked to the Society on the subject last December. The book is remarkable value - produced in full colour and for only £1. It is obtainable only at the crypt. Very readable and informative - a must for anyone interested in London's history.

Then, for Bloomsbury buffs, is Tea and Anarchy! The Bloomsbury Diary of Olive Garnett 1890-1893. In 1890, when she was 18, Olive Garnett went to live at the British Museum where her father was Keeper of Printed Books, and for nearly ten years his family occupied one of the official residences. Olive, in her diary, recorded the literary, artistic and social life that went with the residence. The book (hardback £17.50 and paperback at £11.95), is obtainable from Bartlett's Press, 39a Kildare Terrace, W2. It consists of 264 pages and has 12 illustrations.

The Islington Archaeology and History Society has just published The Squares of Islington: Part I, Finsbury and Clerkenwell, by Mary Cosh. (£4.95, 112pp, 40 illustrations, from the IAHS (833 1541), or from the Museum of the Order of St John, St John's Gate, Clerkenwell, EC1, or from Islington bookshops.)

As the population of London grew in the late 18th and early 19th centuries the area to the north of the City saw an extensive development of terraces and squares. One of the earliest was Finsbury Square (1770s); others were Myddelton Square and Percy Circus. These were located in the old borough of Finsbury, which included Clerkenwell and St Luke's.

The second volume will feature the squares of the old borough of Islington.

Further afield is a publication about Hackney called Gentlemen in the Building Line by Isobel Watson. It concerns an area north of Victoria Park, between Mare Street and Hackney Wick, which contains one of London's most remarkable Georgian terraces and many examples of fine Victorian building. There are the dignified houses of Victoria Park Road, the Hospital for Poor French Protestants in the style of a French chateau, plus a suburban village and a housing estate developed in order to increase the number of Whig members of Parliament.

Copies may be obtained from Padfield Publications, Roland House, 29 Stepney Green, E1 3JX, for £4.95 plus 85p postage.

## Coming Attractions

Thurs, Jul 19th. Walk around Holborn, conducted by Ruth Hayes. Meet at Holborn Central Library, 6pm.

Mon 17th Sept, 7.30pm, Burgh House. 'London Underground - The Blitz, Shelters and Art', by Christopher Rolfe.

Wed 10 Oct, 7.30pm, Heath Branch Library. 'Maps as Fiction' by Peter Barber.

## CORRECTION

It has been pointed out that captions to two illustrations in the last CHS Review are incorrect - they are in the article on family bakeries by Maureen Waugh. Neither photograph was taken in 1946. The top one on p.18 was taken in 1913 and shows Louis Launer and his friend Barbetta (he was never actually a partner), and the bottom one was taken about 1927.

## New Life for an old Roller

A 1921 steam roller has been rescued by Camden Council after being found buried under a grass mound on the Cumberland Market estate.

It was owned by St Pancras Council when it was 'retired' in 1950 and parked on the children's playground, presumably for use as a rather large Dinky toy. About ten years later it was found to be dangerous and was covered with soil and grass to become part of the landscaping scheme. Seemingly, its existence was then forgotten until, during recent landscaping work, the old machine was found.

It was made by Aveling and Porter of Rochester and is believed to be the only steam-driven vehicle left from the St Pancras Council fleet. It is 15' long and over 7' high. It weighs ten tons and is driven by a coal-fired piston valve engine which was considered to be 'state-of-the-art' in its day.

For the time being it will be stored free of charge in Stanmore on a farm belonging to a steam enthusiast while Camden looks for sponsorship to repair it. The cost of the work could well be £10,000 since all the brasswork, unsurprisingly, has gone.

If any members have memories of the steam roller, or indeed of any of the steam vehicles which their local councils used to have, we should be glad to have them. The Council intends to build up a dossier on the old fleets and, in the absence of many records, it will rely quite heavily on the memories of older residents.

### WEST HAMPSTEAD HISTORY

A resident of West Hampstead, Roger F. Rowley, has compiled a history of his area, under the title The Growth of the Western Side of Hampstead. A typed copy has been lodged with the Local History Library at Swiss Cottage and may be consulted there.

Meanwhile, our own Streets Group covering the same area, is approaching the end of its researches (as is the Belsize Park group) and it is hoped to publish the results - an updated Streets of West Hampstead - by the end of the year.



The rediscovered steam roller.  
(Photo Philip Hawkins)

## Things Past

It came as no surprise to the packed audience at Burgh House in March that Christopher Wade's talk on 'Hampstead Past' was so entertaining. With numerous illustrations, all of them in the exhibition upstairs for us to see at leisure, he went on a gallop through the highlights of Hampstead's history. Very enjoyable and much appreciated by the audience.

An entirely different talk was in April when we heard about Coade Stone from Alison Kelly. Ms Kelly had been researching this mythical material for years - how was it made, why did it suddenly cease to be made? First of all, she showed us many examples of the Coade work, much of it sculpted by John Bacon. It was, it seems, actually a pottery ware fired in kilns rather than just a mixed up material. Hundreds of examples, nearly two hundred years old and mostly in relatively pristine condition, still survive in areas of London. The carved faces over the doorways of Bedford Square are familiar, but there is work in Belgravia, Ham House and so on.

Ms Kelly tackled the reason for the demise of the firm and its secret formula. Firstly, Mrs Coade was aged - she was in her eighties when she died. Also, it seems likely that the company had done £20,000 worth of work for the Duke of York, which had never been paid for, nor was likely to be. It may simply have been this.

Ms Kelly's book is due to be published this week. Called Mrs Coade's Stone, it is published by Images, Lloyds Bank Chambers, Upton upon Severn, Worcs WR8 0HD, price £48 inc postage. It has 480 pages and 230 illustrations.

## The New Man Cometh

Not only policemen look younger - Borough Librarians do as well, though nowadays in Camden they are called Directors of Leisure. Christine Wares, who had been in that post for some years and who never appeared to look anywhere near a retiring age, has, indeed, recently retired. Christine was always a good friend of the Society and we shall miss her.

However, she has been succeeded by her own youthful deputy, Philip Hawkins. Under the new arrangements he is not only responsible for the library service but for cemeteries, swimming pools and gymnasiums.

It seemed a useful time to find out what was in the pipeline that might be of interest to local history people and so I went to see the new Director.

There have, of course, been cuts in staff and opening hours during the last two years. This was the first matter I touched on and he was reassuring on this. He said that it was unlikely, unless something catastrophic occurred, that there would be further reductions. I pointed out that conditions for the public, let alone the staff, were uncomfortable at Swiss Cottage. Quite often there is no room to work - a situation made worse if any researcher is using maps. I asked if it were possible for more space to be obtained there to ease the problem. He promised to look into this.

We then turned to the proposed new Local History Centre at Swiss Cottage, which will be contained in the complex of buildings to replace the Odeon across the road. Work should be starting soon on this project and Camden expects that much of its archive material will be housed there. Now that large items such as rate books, paving board records, vestry minutes etc, were being micro-filmed, it was possible to have these resources more available. There will be better provision in this new building for school projects, so that local history as a school subject can be taken more seriously. There will also be a meetings room which our Society, and others, may have use of and a display area for exhibitions. Access for the disabled will be provided. Mr Hawkins admitted that the funding of the running costs of this centre was still a bit in the lap of the gods.

We talked then about Keats House. He pointed out that despite cut backs the House was still open every day, which was more than could be said for many similar houses. However, it was recognised that unless the services of Keats House were reinstated and upgraded the building would fail to achieve full registration as a museum. This would mean that Keats House would be unable to obtain grants which could fund improvements at the house. A number of recommendations to improve the situation were, at the present time, being considered by the Leisure Committee, and he was optimistic about the future for Keats House.

Philip Hawkins, of course, runs a department which is in the front line if any spending cuts are necessary. On the other hand there are ominous sounds from other quarters about making libraries pay for themselves, presumably from charges made for their services. He walks a very thin tightrope in the present economic situation.

What is evident, though, is his goodwill towards the Society and our subject, and I am confident that the extensive co-operation between us and the borough will continue under his aegis.

John Richardson

## HAMPSTEAD AT WAR

Hampstead Museum is appealing for souvenirs of Hampstead life during the last war for its next exhibition at Burgh House. Loans of any relevant material, eg photographs, official documents, clothing coupons, ARP directions, will be welcomed by the curators, Christopher and Diana Wade (071- 794 2752).

But no more tin helmets or stirrup pumps, please, or gas masks - unless they're odd ones like the Mickey Mouse variety.

Material is required by mid June and the exhibition runs from July 7 to September 30th. (Camden History Society will be having a talk on the Blitz to coincide with this.)

The current show at Burgh House (until June 24) is Kate Greenaway in Stitches, which presents sketches by the Hampstead artist, together with their counterparts in cross-stitch.

# newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 120  
Jul 1990

## A Walk around Holborn

Thurs Jul 19th, 6pm  
Meet at Holborn Central Library,  
Theobalds Road, WC1.

It isn't often that we have a full-blooded Holborn event, but July is different. Ruth Hayes will be leading a perambulation of some of Holborn, beginning outside the Holborn Library, opposite Grays Inn. For those of you who do not know the backstreets of the area, there is a great deal to see.

## KELMSCOTT BOOKED

We have a full coach load of members to go to Kelmscott for our Annual Outing. If anyone drops out before the date (August 4th) Mrs Gee will notify those on the waiting list.

## NEW LISTED BUILDINGS

The following buildings have now been listed:

The Town and Country Club, Kentish Town Road (formerly the Forum Cinema). Built 1934 by J Stanley Beard and W.R. Bennett.

Nos 61-66 Guilford Street, WC1. Terrace of five houses, now hotels and houses. Built c1793-9 by James Burton.

Nos 168-170 Gower Street, WC1. Early 19th century houses.

The Camden Arts Centre, Arkwright Road.

Four firemen's cottages next to the fire station, West End Green, built c1901 by W.A. Scott.

## PAYING GUESTS

Please note that in future non-members will be asked to subscribe £1 if they attend CHS lectures.

## A Geological Walk

In May Eric Robinson gave a talk on geology in Camden. It was a great success - he is an enthusiastic, infectious and very knowledgeable speaker on his subject. So eager was the audience for more that Mr Robinson has kindly agreed to give a Geological Walk around part of central Camden. We meet at St Pancras church hall, Lancing Street, NW1, on August 25th at 10am.

## Coming Attractions

Mon 17 Sept, 7.30pm, Burgh House, NW3  
Talk on 'London Underground - The Blitz, Shelters and Art', by Christopher Rolfe.

Wed 10 Oct, 7.30pm, Heath Branch Library.  
Peter Barber on 'Maps as Fiction'

Tues 20 Nov, 7.30pm, St Pancras Church Hall. Roger Cline on the centenary of the City and South London Underground

6 Dec, 7.30pm, at Burgh House  
Camden in Literature (see this edition)

## Camden in Literature

For this year's Christmas meeting at Burgh House we are inviting members to make contributions within the theme of Camden in literature. We would like you to entertain us with any items from literature which feature parts of Camden. They could come from Dickens, of course, but we would hope that you would search further afield!

Please let Jane Ramsay know if you intend to read something as we would like to get the evening arranged. We have three contributors already, but would like about another four.

## Things Past

The Annual Meeting was a great success. The Chairman revealed that the Society had not been formed in 1970 as we had thought, but in November 1969. Red faces all round, but we decided to celebrate the 21st as well as the 20th anniversary!

We said thankyou to Tina Gee for her services to the Society over 20 years and we presented her with a Sidney Arrobus painting of Brighton beach, a town in which Tina spent her college years. The artist, a member of the Society, was present at the meeting but sadly, as most of you will know, he died a few days later in his studio. He will be very much missed.

Those elected this year were:

PRESIDENT: Christopher Elrington  
VICE PRESIDENTS: Frank Cole, Anthony Cooper, Christina Gee, Dr Ann Saunders

CHAIRMAN: John Richardson  
VICE CHAIRMAN: Christopher Wade  
SECRETARY: Jane Ramsay  
TREASURER: Roger Cline  
PUBLICATIONS MANAGER: Diana Wade  
MEETINGS SECRETARY: Horace Shooter  
ARCHIVIST: Malcolm Holmes  
PUBLICITY: Diana Rau  
EDITOR OF CHS REVIEW: John Gage

Council members:

Peter Barber, Eric Brassington, Philip Greenall, Ruth Hayes, Sue Palmer, Gillian Tindall, Robin Woolven.

## WALKING LITTLE ITALY

Members may like to know that each year the Italian community centred around Hatton Garden goes on procession to commemorate the festival of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. This year the procession, starting out at 3.30pm from St Peter's Italian church in Clerkenwell Road, will be on Sunday 22nd July. This colourful assembly tours the Italian streets around.

## THE GIBSON LECTURE

In the Camden History Review no 16 there is a reference to an annual Gibson lecture, including details of life at Pitt House in Hampstead, on 12th August. Millicent Bradbury writes to say that the date for this talk will now be 9th August at 7.30pm in Sutton. For details her telephone number is 081-741 5917

## THE HAMPSTEAD ANNUAL

This publication lasted, I think, from 1897 to 1905 and was edited by Ernest Rhys whom I remember as translator of my Penguin Iliad and Odyssey

In my hunts round local bookshops, I came across the volume for 1897, one which I already had myself. It was in good condition but rather expensive and so I left it there. On the next visit, the binding had begun to disintegrate but the price hadn't. Next time the shop had had a roof leak and the book was left to dry out and the price had halved. On the most recent visit, the binding had not survived the rain and I eventually located separate parts of the book in different shelves.

I threatened the owner of the bookshop with a report to the RSPCB (for the prevention of cruelty to books) and he was so impressed that he donated the remains of the book to the CHS.

The book is complete except for the covers although all the gatherings are separate: the only damage from the rain is a stain on the frontispiece page which does not obscure the picture of George du Maurier. It is what the booksellers call a reading copy and could be taken to your bookbinding evening class in the autumn if you felt so inclined. The best offer (eg about £5) to me at 34 Kingstown Street, NW1 8JP (071 722 6421) by 31st August secures. All proceeds to the Society.

Roger Cline

## THE ARIS FAMILY

Mrs Susan Middleton (nee Luff) is trying to trace her mother's family - Aris. Her name was Edith Maud Aris and she was born in St Thomas Gardens, off Queens Crescent, in 1911. The Aris family seems to have lived in and around this area for some time prior to that date. Her father was George Henry Aris and was born on 10 Feb 1879. Anyone with information should contact Mrs Middleton at 54 Bramley Drive, Pakuranga, Auckland, New Zealand.

## Spotlight on Belsize Park

In 1820 the spotlight fell on Belsize Lane and the whole district had a narrow escape. A Bill in Parliament, promoted by Colonel Henry Samuel Eyre, called for a turnpike road from the Yorkshire Stingo in St Marylebone (opposite the bottom of Lisson Grove) to Hampstead Green, taking in Belsize Lane. The proposed road was ostensibly for the public good but in fact to serve the colonel's estates in St John's Wood.

At that time Belsize Lane ended at Daleham Mews in an open space known as The Waste but, through a gate just west of the mews, it continued between elm-lined hedges as a private way, used only by cattle and carts. This 'accommodation' lane, 350 yards in length, is prematurely treated on some early maps as part of Belsize Lane. The view 'Belsize Lane about 1850' (Barratt's Annals II, 270) is probably the former accommodation lane, by now a private toll road.

The Bill was opposed by Sir Thomas Maryon Wilson, Lord of the Manor of Hampstead (father of the man who became involved in the struggle over the Heath); his manor farm abutted the accommodation lane, which was also to be turnpiked. The farm had an enterprising new tenant who had been repairing fences and who, in the words of his brother (also a farmer), had 'laid a very great quantity of dung upon the land'. Trespass and theft, already a problem, would be worse if a public road gave easy access to the fields.

Sir Thomas was joined by the residents of Belsize Lane, notably William Everett of Belsize House, which had side entrances on the lane; George Todd of Belsize Court (now flats); William Tate of Hunters Lodge; and Thomas Roberts of 11 Rosslyn Hill, whose back garden ran down to the lane. They asserted there was no demand for a road on the proposed line; and that Belsize Lane was too narrow for a turnpike and could not be widened without damage to their houses and outbuildings. Furthermore, the loss of seclusion and privacy would greatly reduce the value of their properties.

A House of Commons committee studied written objections and heard local witnesses, including a surveyor (Henry White) and an auctioneer (George Paxon). Todd fielded his coachman, who testified that carts could not pass one another at several places in the lane. John 'Memory' Thompson, brewery valuer and builder of Froggnal Priory (Barratt II, 272-76), complained that development along the

turnpike would spoil his view to the Surrey hills over the 'vale' at St John's Wood.

Peter Potter of Kentish Town, who had surveyed the route and produced a map, denied that anything would be demolished in Belsize Lane, even though at 'the pinch' it was only fifteen feet wide. At Hunters Lodge the width was just over nineteen feet (barely the distance from the front of the house to the centre of the present roadway) but he maintained that two carriages could pass without impinging on Mr Tate's windows; whatever the reason, today's windows are deeply recessed.

Potter also sought to show that Belsize Lane, far from being the idyllic backwater portrayed by the residents, was a down-at-heel neighbourhood that could only benefit by being turned into a main road: it was a 'resort of vagabonds of every description' and a place where no respectable female could walk because of 'nuisances'. As for the accommodation lane, at the far end he had come across a pond where two women 'as naked as they were born' were washing themselves. The pond favoured by these hygienic ladies was probably a large one in the forecourt of the Tavistock Centre (at the bottom of Fitzjohns Avenue), fed from Shepherd's Well by a stream which nearer London became the Tyburn.

Fortunately for Belsize, the opposition won the day. But a few years later the colonel got his revenge with another turnpike on a different route - and that is now Finchley Road.

Roy Allen

(Sources: Professor F.M.L. Thompson and GLRO E/MW/H/III/38/17)

### HAMPSTEAD CORRECTION

Godfray Le Querne, who has been enjoying Christopher Wade's book, Hampstead Past, reports a caption error on p77. Reproduced there is a poster of the North London Railway and dated, in the caption, as soon after 1860. In fact, Mr Le Querne tells us, it must be after 1909 since in the corner is the name of Sir Frank Ree who was the General Manager of the LNWR from that date - he died in 1914. (The LNWR took over the NLR in 1909).

The NLR suffered disastrously from the advent of electric trams and tubes, and he believes that this poster was part of its attempt to meet the competition of the Hampstead tube in 1907.

## ROYAL PALACES AND ENGLISH HERITAGE

English Heritage has recently announced that as from March 1991, its members will no longer have free access to the royal palaces in and around London, such as The Tower, Kensington Palace, Hampton Court and the Banqueting House in Whitehall. Since many people will have taken out their life memberships precisely in order to secure this privilege the news will have come as a blow. They will be relieved to hear that English Heritage is prepared to refund their life membership fees minus the cost of the years enjoyed to date. It will then be possible for you to invest the refunded money in the life membership scheme for the Royal Palaces quango that will, surely, shortly be in the offing. Please write to English heritage Membership Dept, PO Box 1BB, London W1A 1BB if you want to take advantage of this little advertised offer.

Peter Barber

## EDGELL RICKWORD (1898-1982)

A biography of this under-rated poet, critic and editor has just been published by Carcanet Press at £16.95. Charles Hobday's Edgell Rickword: a poet at war contains much of interest to Society members for Rickword was at the centre of the left-wing literary world of the 'thirties. With Jonny, shortly afterwards to become his second wife, he opened a boarding house in Arkwright Road in the summer of 1943: they later moved to Buckland Crescent where they shared a flat with Jonny's first husband and spent most of their evenings in the Adelaide at Chalk Farm. In 1954 Rickword became manager of what was then Collet's Bookshop in Haverstock Hill at a salary of £9 weekly.

I have a slight personal interest in Rickword since his father was Borough Librarian of Colchester, where I began my career.

Frank Cole

## THE IRISH IN CAMDEN

Aidan Flood and the Local History Dept of Camden have published an interesting analysis of Irish settlement in Camden. It contains a brief survey of the history of the Irish in Camden and London generally and much detail about recent years.

It contains 28pp, perfect bound, and costs a remarkably modest £1.95 from Local Studies libraries, or £2.35 post from Local History Library, Swiss Cottage Library.

## A Saxon Settlement in Shorts Gardens

The Department of Greater London Archaeology of the Museum of London recently conducted a dig in Shorts Gardens, Holborn. The site proved particularly interesting as it demonstrated that the middle Saxon London settlement extended so far north from the Strand. Whilst the greater part of the Saxon town lay to the south in Westminster there is obvious scope for further discoveries to be made in Camden.

The preliminary report of the archaeologists suggests that the site at Shorts Gardens was occupied in the 8th century by a group of artisans, mainly working with iron, both smelting and smithing it, possibly for export, though the town of Lundenwic was probably large enough at this time to support a number of iron workers.

These smiths would appear to have lived with their families in a small group of houses built with wattle and daub walls, which may have been whitewashed. The roofs of these dwellings may have been thatch. The yards were made from compacted gravel.

The fence which ran across much of the site was probably used as a boundary; it may indicate a division of property, or perhaps it was a field or yard boundary.

There was evidence of other crafts - a number of loomweights, bone needles and batters, which indicated weaving. There was also evidence of bronze working.

A fuller report is available at the Local History Libraries in Swiss Cottage and Holborn.

## The Vets Celebrate

The Royal Veterinary College was founded in the fields of Camden Town in 1791 - the first in the English-speaking world. To mark the bicentenary next year The Royal Veterinary College London: A Bicentenary History, by Ernest Cotchin, will be published through Barracuda Books. A limited edition of individually numbered copies will be available from the publishers (which will include the list of subscribers) at a pre-publication price of £18.50 (£20.75 inc post and packing). Copies may be ordered from Barracuda Books, Meadows House, Well Street, Buckingham MK18 1EW.



# newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 121

Sep 1990

## Underground Art - our September talk

Monday, 17th September, 7.30pm  
Burgh House, New End Square, NW3

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the commencement of the London Blitz. An exhibition at Burgh House demonstrates its effect on Hampstead, and our talk, entitled 'London Underground - The Blitz, Shelters and Art', deals with an intriguing aspect of that communal experience remembered by everyone who participated.

Our speaker is Christopher Rolfe, who members may recall has given talks to the Society on Wells and Lawrence in past years.

## Maps as Fiction

Wed, 10 Oct, 7.30pm  
Heath Branch Library, Keats Grove, NW3

October's talk 'Maps as Fiction' is an unusual one. Peter Barber, Deputy Keeper of Maps at the British Library (and, of course a council member of our Society) seeks to show that maps aren't always what they seem to be. Maps, like books, like histories, are sometimes biased, drawn up for particular purposes. The unwary, not knowing the purpose, can quite often be misled.

The talk will be illustrated with examples from the British Library collection

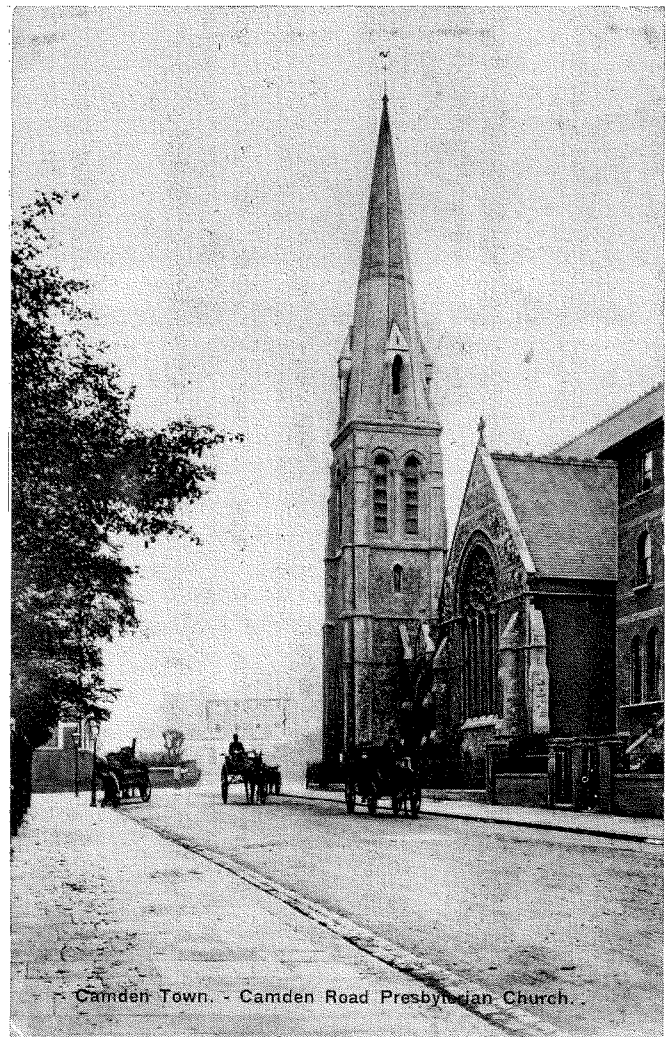
## Coming Attractions

Tues, 20 Nov, 7.30pm, St Pancras Church Hall, Lancing Street, NW1. Roger Cline on the centenary of the City and South London Underground.

6 Dec, 7.30pm, at Burgh House.  
Camden in Literature. A short anthology of excerpts, read by members, featuring areas of Camden in literature. Plus Christmas party.

## A Church in Camden Town

Postcards of Camden Town scenes are hard to come by. Featured here (kindly sent in by Lester May) is a rare one - showing what was entitled the Camden Road Presbyterian Church, but which was in fact in Camden Park Road. The building is still there and is being extensively refurbished at the moment for, presumably, offices, studios etc - it had been a warehouse and a theatrical scene-painting place for many years. The view is taken from North Villas and looks towards Camden Park Road crossing the picture - Cliff Road is in the distance.



## Kelmscott Beloved

Kelmscott, the house William Morris seems to have loved more than any other, was an inspired choice for the latest CHS outing. Cool in the countryside with not too much walking about, it was as full of interest as anywhere.

Certainly there was one hitch. Members waited 'putting the world to rights' while a coach that broke down was replaced. After that, it was smooth running to the lovely grey-yellow Gloucestershire stone farm dating from 1570 or so with its tree-shaded garden. There was even a small river for the paddle that distinguishes every good charabanc outing. (See Poor but Happy in Somers Town).

Best of all was the talk by Dr Ann Saunders, our Vice-President, who after paying tribute to Tina Gee, whose twentieth and last outing organised by her it was, then brilliantly outlined Morris's almost hectic life and incredible versatility. From his childhood in the then countrified Walthamstow, where he learned to love trees, animals and flowers, to his discarded training, first as a clergyman, then as an architect, to his career as an artist, painter, poet, typographer, fabric designer, printer and Utopian Socialist. Dr Saunders continued to his not very happy marriage to the beautiful Janey Burton, the setting-up of his own company, his Camden connection with business in Queen Square, and the making of all his own furniture when he set up house in Red Lion Square - Janey not being consulted. Dr Saunders covered also his business ability, Janey's affair with Rossetti - with whom he worked closely, as he did with Burne-Jones, and his own hand work on tapestry and embroidery - in fact everything until his death 'of being William Morris' in 1896. Morris seems to have raised embroidery to the status of a craft rather than that of a fancy-work hobby.

With advice on what to see in the house - wonderful rafters included, after a climb up a curious, frightening staircase, Dr Saunders noted its subsequent history. Janey, who died in 1914, left the house to her daughters (one running the business, the other epileptic) and the one daughter bequeathed it in 1938 to the University of Oxford, from whom it came to the Society of Antiquaries in 1962.

Ever original, Dr Saunders commented on Janey's unhappiness and the affair with Rossetti. She wondered if William Morris's

very frightening hot temper had something to do with Janey becoming cold and withdrawn. (No one ever seems to have mentioned this before.) Then there was the curious fact that Morris made only a few sketches of Janey, while Rossetti painted several portraits - some of them still in the house.

Back to the wallpaper and fabric designs - still satisfying and still available - shop at Liberty's for them.

Joan Barraclough

## Camden Town 200

Moves are afoot to celebrate two hundred years of Camden Town - at least, it is generally thought that 1791 may be counted the birth year of the systematic build up of the area. It was in that year that Horace Walpole informed a correspondent that Lord Camden (the ground landlord of the acres east of the High Street) had let some land in Kentish Town for building 1,400 houses.

As many members will know, Lord Camden, (Charles Pratt), had taken his title from his residence at Camden Place in Chislehurst, the former home of the historian William Camden. Hence, by a devious route, Camden Town is named from a noted antiquary. What is not so generally known is that William Willett, builder of much of Belsize Park and inventor of the daylight-saving system we still have, was a subsequent resident at Camden Place.

No firm plans are yet made for the celebrations but if people have any suggestions for local events at this stage, can they please send them to Lester May, 24 Reachview Court, Baynes Street, NW1.

## NEW HISTORY COURSE

The time of new history courses is upon us. One of the most promising appears to be that entitled London History from the Records, directed by former Haringey Local History Librarian, Ian Murray. Organised by the London Archive Users Forum, it will be held at the Institute of Historical Research, each Wednesday from Sept 26 to Dec 12, 7.15 - 9.15pm. Guest speakers will cover a wide variety of topics - transport, crime, industry, health care, City livery companies, education, architecture, to name but some.

Further details may be obtained from the Course Director, 11 Coolhurst Road, N8 8EP, enclosing SAE

## The Belsize Deep Shelter

The Northern Line (then the Charing Cross, Euston and Hampstead Railway) to Golders Green was opened in 1907. During the 2nd World War a Deep Shelter was constructed under the Belsize Park station. The first public mention of these 'new tube shelters' was made by the Home Secretary on 3 Nov 1940 and the construction of the twin tunnels, each 1,400 feet long and 16ft 6ins in diameter was started that year under 10 underground stations including Goodge Street, Camden Town and Belsize Park for use as 'extra citadel accommodation' lest the new German secret weapons carried chemical or biological warheads.

When the early V1 weapons impacted on London in June 1944, there was relief that they carried mere high explosive, but, nevertheless the new Belsize Park shelter was opened 23 July 1944, and like the others closed to the public in October that year as the German air offensive faded. Although it remains the property of the Ministry of Defence, the Belsize Park Deep Shelter was leased to Security Archives Ltd in 1978 for the storage of important commercial documents.

The shelter was to have accommodated some 9,000 people and the equivalent bunk beds remain in place today, used as shelving for the archive material. The two DC powered lifts, commissioned in 1942, are still in use as is the original electric lighting system. The twin tunnels, just below the Northern Line tunnels, extend from below the Haverstock Arms public house to a point under the Royal Free Hospital. Both tunnels are bisected horizontally by a concrete floor so in all there are 5,600 feet of tunnel plus side tunnels and a recently bricked off entrance from the Belsize Park LT platforms.

Visible on the surface are the massive concrete vertical shafts, brick covering 3ft thick concrete walls topped with a bomb and gas proof steel and concrete cap. The small (four person) lifts descend inside the spiral steps in these shafts. The northern shaft of the shelter can be seen by the entrance to the tennis club behind 210 Haverstock Hill, while the southern shaft is on the corner of Downside Crescent at 174 Haverstock Hill. This grim concrete structure replaced the original Sycamore House, which was the end of the grand Victorian terrace, nos. 174-186. In the 1870s, soon after the terrace was built, no. 182 was the home of William Bagshaw QC, JP, a County Court judge from 1881 and Treasurer of the Middle Temple 1894-5.

Robin Woolven

## The Bachelor of Kentish Town

Roy Hidson has sent us an extract of local interest from 'The Year Book' published by William Hone in 1832 and which had been lifted from the Gentleman's Magazine:

'In March 1798, died, aged eighty-four, at his house in the neighbourhood of Kentish Town, where he had resided more than forty years, John Little, Esq. His life exemplified the little utility of money in possession of such a man. A few days before his death the physician who attended upon him advised that he should occasionally drink a glass of wine. After much persuasion he was induced to comply; yet by no means would entrust even his housekeeper with the key of the cellar. He insisted on being carried to the cellar door, and, on its being opened, he in person delivered out one bottle. By his removal for the purpose from a warm bed into a dark humid vault, he was seized with a shivering fit, which terminated in an apoplectic stroke, and occasioned his death. He had an inveterate antipathy to the marriage state, and discarded his brother, the only relative he had, for not continuing like himself, a bachelor. On examining his effects, it appeared that he had £25,000 in different tontines, £11,000 in the four per cents., and £2000 in landed property. In a room which had been closed for fourteen years were found 173 pairs of breeches, and a numerous collection of other articles of wearing apparel, besides 180 wigs hoarded in his coach-house, all which had fallen to him with other property by the bequest of relations. All his worldly wealth fell to the possession of his offending brother.

### SOANE MONUMENTS TRUST

The Soane Monuments Trust has been established to finance the restoration of a number of the architect's memorials and other public structures, including his own tomb and monument in Old St Pancras Churchyard. Information may be had from the Secretary, Robin Moore Ede, 21 Burton Place, WC1

### HAMPSTEAD CORRECTION

In the last Newsletter, while recording a correction relating to Christopher Wade's Hampstead Past, we referred to our correspondent as Sir Godfray Le Querne, instead of Le Quesne. We apologise for this.

## Refugee Theatre

One aspect of life in wartime Hampstead, incompletely documented here, is that of the small refugee theatres. There were three main venues where performances were given, usually in German, by newly-arrived actors and actresses from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary and Romania.

The Ham and High of 23 Feb 1940, has the first mention I have found: 'We have a new theatre in Hampstead that shines brightly in the intellectual black-out - Das Laternal - home of the Viennese Theatre Club at 153 Finchley Road. Even to one whose knowledge of German is limited to school text books, it is nevertheless fully apparent that these actors, producers, musicians, costume and scenery designers are all very gifted and that they make witty and lovely everything they touch.' The anonymous writer found Das Spiel von Sodoms End 'an impressive feat on a miniature stage' and concluded that this theatre club was 'a valuable addition to the artistic life of Hampstead'.

After an interval caused by the uncertainty of the position of aliens, the Lantern re-opened on 6 Sept 1940, and gave Zuckmayer's Der Hauptmann von Kopenick with Martin Miller in the lead. This Czech-born actor, who founded the Lantern, later became well known in London theatre. He totted up three years in Arsenic and Old Lace, and a thousand performances as Mr Paravinci in The Mousetrap.

Next door to the Lantern, at no 151, the circle of International Art had its headquarters. Here, on 23 May 1941, Cilly Zuckmann-Bizony gave a song recital in four languages. For actors and actresses, already known in their native countries, these refugee theatres were at first their only outlets - their lack of English saw to that. Some, like Miller, stayed on and improved their English (Elizabeth Bergner was probably the best known of these); others went on to Hollywood and achieved film careers. Conrad Veidt was one - he died in Hollywood in 1943. Others returned to Europe after the war.

To the Free German League of Culture headquarters, known as the Little Theatre, at 36 Upper Park Road on the corner of Tasker Road, local residents were invited to Sunday afternoon entertainments during the early part of the war. At one of these

the programme included English sea songs by Rudolf Offenbach given by Axi Bleier, and imitations by Eddie Regon. At another, music by Bloch, Kodaly and Bush was played by Sela Trau (cello) and Dr Max Rosal (violin).

The reviewer of the Ham and High (15 Nov 1940) comments that the Bush was 'obscure', but the Kodaly 'truly Hungarian in its energy and its harmony', and ends, 'We humbly demand more concerts from the League of Culture.' On 13 December of that year the League organised a concert in aid of air raid victims. Dr H. Flesch, the chairman, describes Hampstead as 'a cross between a battlefield and a residential district.' Walter Hudd, a distinguished English actor who lived at this time in Holly Mount, read a story by the anti-Fascist writer Jan Peterson.

Wendy Trewin

(To be continued next edition)

## THE BARBAULDS AT CHURCH ROW

Dionys Moore writes regarding an item on Mrs Barbauld in Newsletter no. 115.

Donald Towner (artist), who lived in no. 8 Church Row, did quite a bit of research into its past history and its inhabitants whilst he lived there from 1937 until his death in 1986. He was a great friend of ours and often used to talk about Mrs Barbauld and her niece, and one day dictated the following to me - Parkinson's Disease made writing difficult for him:

'Mrs Barbauld lived at No. 8 - her name is in the rate book for 1792. She held a small school in the 2nd floor back room, bars were put to the windows and the children scratched their names on the window panes. In the rate book Mrs Barbauld is said to live next door to John Howard. After a while her niece Lucy Aikin came to live with her (1822) and then moved to No. 18 in 1832/5. Mrs Barbauld moved to Rosslyn Hill.'

Alas, the scratched window pane was removed after Donald Towner's death (I remember seeing it a number of times).

# newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

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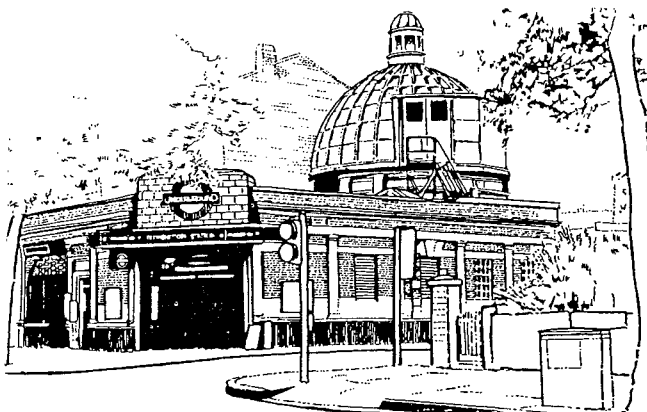
## A Hundred Years of the Tube

Tues, Nov 20th, 7.30pm  
St Pancras Church House, Lancing Street,  
NW1

The present, much criticised, Northern Line is the amalgamation of two separate systems. One was the Hampstead Tube, part of which was opened by David Lloyd George in 1907, and the first electric tube in the world, the City and South London Railway, opened for passengers on December 18th, 1890 from the unlikely terminus of Stockwell to the now disappeared station of King William Street. In 1900 the line going north from Borough station was diverted to London Bridge and then went straight under the river up to the Bank and King William Street was closed. The latter station had presented some problems, being but a single platform and it was at the end of a difficult tunnel gradient.

The stations built for this early line were quite distinctive. Kennington, for example, still survives virtually intact and is a listed building.

The story of the first electric tube built a hundred years ago, a momentous happening in London when all is said and done, is the subject for our November talk, and Roger Cline, our Treasurer, is the speaker.



Kennington Underground Station, an original CSLR station, which still exists. From 'London's Underground Stations' by Laurence Menear

## The Christmas Meeting

Thurs 6 Dec, 7pm,  
Burgh House, New End Square, NW3

Our Christmas event is a new invention. Several members will be presenting readings of favourite excerpts from literature which involve an area of Camden.

We shall be featuring Asquith on Keats Grove, Samuel Richardson, the Grossmiths, Betjeman of course, James Roose Evans, Wilkie Collins, Compton Mackenzie, and, most surprisingly, Sir David Napley.

Please note that the starting time has been brought forward to 7pm. We shall be having refreshments first (£2.50 at the door), and the talks will begin at approximately 7.45pm. Members are welcome to bring guests but the guests will also be charged £1 entry fee.

## KEATS HOUSE SOUND

As you may have read in the Ham and High, an appeal has been launched to establish a tape system in various languages at Keats House. This will enable visitors, who do not understand English, to plug in to the appropriate language translation as they go round the house - these devices are common enough in museums throughout the country, including Kenwood.

What is proposed is a 30-minute guide and discourse on Keats and his house by a Keats scholar, which would be recorded by actors and actresses of note. A Japanese company has offered to put up the money for a Japanese version but first of all Keats House needs to buy the tape system itself and in the present difficult times has no money to do so. Hence the appeal, which the Ham and High are promoting.

Donations should be sent to the Editor, Hampstead and Highgate Express, Marlborough House, 179-189 Finchley Road, NW3 6LB

## New Books

Change at King's Cross ed. by Michael Hunter and Robert Thorne. Historical Publications, £13.95, hardback.

This book developed from a day course run by Birkbeck College about two years ago on King's Cross and the Railway Age. I decided at the time that I would rather go to a day course on the Lord Mayor being run at the Museum of London, but having read the book, I realise I missed something special.

Books from Historical Publications seem to come in two varieties - pictures with text, and text with pictures. This one is of the latter type - the text is crammed full with facts and if you want more, the copious footnotes lead you to more treasures in the library. The pictures complement the text and include useful drawings and a marvellous modern aerial view.

Gavin Stamp starts off with an architectural and social history of the area, then we have chapters on the Canal, the stations, their hotels, the goods yard, the coal drops in particular and ending with Michael Hunter on the current planning discussion and a detailed survey of the industrial remains on the site. If you think coal drops or industrial remains are not your cup of tea, try going on an afternoon's tour led by Robert Thorne and you, like me, will be a convert for life!

This book is a real coffee-table book for me - I shall be reading it over again with every cup of coffee for a long time to come. If I have one carp, it is that the text is in modern fashion restricted to the inner two thirds of a page and is consequently in small type - the index needs a magnifying glass, or I need new spectacles. Put the book and the glass on your Christmas list.

Roger Cline.

Prehistoric London, by Nick Merriman. Museum of London, £4.95, paperback.

Did you know that the reason Trafalgar Square is so much lower than the National Gallery is that the Gallery sits on top of one of the gravel terraces that rise in steps above the Thames? That was just one of the many illuminating bits of information I gained from this beautifully written and illustrated book.

Now I shall think of that terrace every time I go round Trafalgar Square; and I shall also be reminded that elephants and hippos used to wander there a mere 125,000 years ago. Nick Merriman has done a marvellous job of compressing London's prehistoric past into just 48 pages, about half of which are taken up with excellent photographs and some of the best drawn reconstructions I have come across. (Even archaeological draughtsmen in the top flight of technical drawing tend to come to grief when they try to include people in their illustrations: the drawings here are in a different class altogether. Notice the tension achieved in the imagined reconstruction of hunters cornering a couple of red deer on Hampstead Heath 8000 years ago.)

For some years the Museum of London has had sufficient funding to support two separate units of archaeologists - one looking after the City and the other, the Department of Greater London Archaeology, responsible for all the rest. DGLA has been uncovering some amazing evidence for all periods of London's prehistory, from Neolithic houses at Runnymede, through the rip-marks of a Bronze Age plough at Bermondsey and an apparent cult-burial of the wild cow, both events about 2000 BC, to beautiful flint daggers, elegant polished stone axes, and a chief's residence just south of Heathrow Airport. The evidence comes only in little patches here and there among the houses, but it is building into quite an impressive story, and it looks as if the period 1200-700BC saw a peak in the fortunes of what was to become the London area, with great hoards of bronzework stashed away in the ground or thrown into rivers as offerings to the gods.

As we approach the time of the Romans, quite large and well-founded settlements grew up, as we can see from new finds at Dawley and Bedfont in West London and Rainham in the east. The book ends with Julius Caesar's vainglorious couple of expeditions in 55 and 54BC and the jettisoning in the Thames of the magnificent Battersea Shield with its elegant Celtic curlicue art and red glass mounts. Do read this book; it can be joyfully galloped through in an evening and will give you an entirely new view of London's past.

Cherry Lavell

## No 11 Rosslyn Hill

Little can be seen from the main road of 11 Rosslyn Hill, a Grade II listed building tucked away behind the former Congregational Church, but in winter there is a view from the far end of Waterhouse Close, round the corner. The house goes back at least to the start of the rate books in 1774.

No 11 originally stood in grounds of four acres alongside Rosslyn Hill and backing on to the first leg of Belsize Lane, where there was a long ornamental pond. The front entrance was near the bottom of Lyndhurst Road; this end of the street was formerly part of Rosslyn Grove, a tree-lined avenue that led to Rosslyn House.

The first resident of note appears to be Thomas Roberts who arrived in 1800; he was probably one of the four local men who in 1807 clubbed together to buy the lease of the Manor of Belsize from the Chesterfields. He had a town house at 39 Charterhouse Square (rebuilt), where in 1811 he is listed as a broker; he was also to be found at Batson's Coffee House. Roberts seems to have died about 1824 but his family stayed on until 1831. They were succeeded by Thomas Herring, a drug merchant.

By 1820 the house was called Belsize. This appears to have irritated Belsize House (the last version of the historic mansion, demolished 1853) into becoming known to itself, if not to the man in the street, as Belsize Park; the change may date from 1825, when there was a new tenant. In the ensuing confusion Thomas Moule noted in his English Counties (1838-9) that Belsize House, earlier occupied by Spencer Perceval, was 'now the seat of Mr Thomas Herring'.

Charles Gregory, an upholsterer, followed in 1853. By 1864 he had caused more confusion by calling the house Rosslyn Grove, a name still in use for the street it faced. Gregory died in 1877 and the place spent several years empty for most of the time, although in the 1881 census PC Henry Caraher and his family appear to be in residence; presumably they were in the coachman's cottage.

Eventually the 'Rosslyn Grove Estate' was bought by the Congregationalists, who earmarked the Lyndhurst Road frontage for their church (built 1883-84) and sold everything else. Most of the gardens were built up and the house was now approached sideways from Rosslyn Hill as no. 11.

Thomas Hancock Nunn, a reformer in the field of social service, was here from 1896 to 1933; he then retired to Shoreham but often spent the middle of the week at Rosslyn Lodge (12c Lyndhurst Road), at that time a hotel.

Roy Allen.

## The Allinghams and Hampstead

Helen Allingham (1848-1926), famous for her charming watercolours of rural England, was already established as an artist when she married the Irish poet, William Allingham. This was in 1874, when William's poetry was much revered: now he is mostly remembered for "Up the airy mountain..." The Allinghams' wide circle of friends included Carlyle, Tennyson, Rossetti and Ruskin. Helen was the first woman to become a full member of the Royal Watercolour Society.

In 1888 the Allinghams moved to Eldon Grove, Hampstead, where William died the following year. Helen stayed on, brought up her three children, and continued to paint until her death 37 years later.

Patrick Allingham (1916-89), their grandson, who was brought up in Hampstead, has bequeathed to the Hampstead Museum at Burgh House, a collection of Allingham material. This is being exhibited there from 6 October to 16 December (Wed-Sun 12-5). Displayed are many paintings and drawings by Helen of her family, of the countryside, of birds and flowers, and of Lord Tennyson, together with family photographs and other documents. Most remarkable is an original sketch by Rossetti, dashed off as an illustration of one of William's poems.

The exhibition coincides with the publication by Webb & Bower of a new illustrated biography, Helen Allingham's England, by Ina Taylor. The Museum has also published a booklet Helen Allingham and Hampstead (price £1).

### LINK WITH THE POLYTECHNIC

As announced at the Annual Meeting we are seeking to establish a closer relationship between the Society and the Polytechnic of North London, since quite a lot of emphasis is placed on local studies there. We are pleased to announce that Dr John Broad of the School of History in the Prince of Wales Road, has accepted our invitation to serve on the Council.

## Refugee Theatre (cont)

Continued from the previous Newsletter:

Among other entertainments given at 36 Upper Park Road during 1941, there was included a concert on 16 May devoted to the works of three refugee musicians - Erich Katz (German), Matthias Seiber (Hungarian) and Francis Chagrin (Romanian). [Chagrin in his later years was a frequent participator in the musical events of the St Pancras Arts Festival - ed.] There was a memorial concert on the 30th anniversary of Gustav Mahler's death and the programme included an appreciation by Dr Mosco Carner, songs performed by Ernst Urbach and Alice Schaeffer; the minuet from the Symphony No. 3 on two pianos by Franz Osborn and Berthold Goldsmith, and Irene Eisinger sang accompanied by the two pianos.

In February 1942 the Little Theatre housed a political-satirical revue, What the Stars Foretell, written, produced and acted by German refugees. One item, Moscow Calling Erna Kralmer, showed the effect of Russian broadcasts on German women. On 19 June the League took the Everyman Cinema to celebrate the anniversary of the British-Soviet Alliance by performing Salute to Soldiers of Freedom, a dramatic presentation which illustrated the new life of the Soviet people and their struggle against Nazi invaders. In July the League put on another satirical revue, Mr Gulliver Goes to School.

The League contributed £50 towards the cost of producing a Hampstead album for Orel, which was sponsored by the local Anglo-Soviet Committee. In June, 1945, this Committee organised a dance on Hampstead Heath and appealed for funds to help devastated areas of Russia. There were over a thousand dancers.

Things were becoming more political, though the Lantern Theatre moved to the Free Austrians' Centre and were actively part of a cosmopolitan dramatic organisation. Of the Blue Danube Theatre, Swiss Cottage, which lived on until 1956, I have discovered no details apart from the fact that they were devoted to revue.

More information please!

Wendy Trewin

## A PUBLISHER'S DAUGHTER

The Historical Association, Hampstead and N.W. London branch have asked us to publicise a talk of local interest on December 6th (Westfield College, 8pm). Unfortunately this coincides with our own December meeting.

However, we are hoping that the talk by Julian Pooley, 'A Publisher's Daughter in Hampstead: The Diary of Mary Nichols 1823-34' will be given to our own members next year.

## A MISSING GARAGE

Roger Cline is interested in the whereabouts of a bus garage in Albany Street. It is mentioned in London Transport Bus Garages since 1948, by J. Joyce, pub Ian Allan, 1988. On p9 there is a reference to Albany Street garage, code A, closed in 1916, and replaced by a new garage at Chalk Farm, code CF. Does anyone know where it was?

## FUTURE PUBLICATIONS

The Society would be interested to hear from members who wish to undertake the administrative work of editing and producing occasional publications for the Society. We have a number of titles we wish to pursue but we do need someone to take on responsibility for one or more of them.

Interested members should write to the Secretary, Mrs Jane Ramsay, c/o Swiss Cottage Library, Avenue Road, NW3

## THE ENCYCLOPEDIA REVISED

A new edition of the popular London Encyclopedia by Ben Weinreb and Christopher Hibbert is being prepared. We have been asked if members have alterations that they feel are necessary. If they have could they please write to Christopher Hibbert at 6 Albion Place, West Street, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 2DT with their suggestions.

## LIKE INTERESTS

Kevin McDonnell has asked if any members have a particular interest in the local government councillors etc, representing the Labour Party, from 1894 onwards for the Camden area. He is researching this field and would welcome news of any other person working in a similar area. He may be contacted at Flat 1, Garlinge Court, 14-16 Fordwych Road, NW2 3TG.