

newsletter

No 129

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

Jan 1992

George Godwin and The Builder

Tues 21 January, 7.30pm
St Pancras Church Hall, Lancing Street,
NW1 (Opposite Eversholt entrance to
Euston Station)

The remarkable George Godwin became editor of the fledgling magazine The Builder in 1844 and sat in the editorial chair for nearly forty years. The journal had been founded by Joseph Aloysius Hansom whose name is synonymous with the cab that he half invented. But it was in Godwin's time that The Builder achieved its status. Not only did it campaign for good, well-built architecture, but it took the authorities to task for the miserable and unhygienic conditions in which millions had to live. He didn't mince words, but he was always courteous and well-informed. During his years the art of the line engraving achieved great things - illustrations from The Builder are a delight to reproduce and to study.

Godwin was also, himself, an architect, with a number of London buildings to his credit. He also took an active part in the foundation of the Art Union of London and was its secretary for many years.

Dr Ruth Richardson, our speaker, has made a special study of Godwin and his relationship with The Builder, its artists, contributors and proprietors. She has for the past few years been compiling, via the Institute of Historical Research, a compendious index of not only the illustrations in The Builder during its heyday, but the features contained in those illustrations, cross indexed with locations. It will be a vastly useful reference for local and architectural historians throughout the country.

The Story of King's Cross

Tues, 25th February, 7.30pm
St Pancras Church Hall, Lancing Street,
NW1. (Opposite Eversholt Street entrance
to Euston Station)

King's Cross is much in the news, but mostly relating to the railway lands as numerous plans are put forward for their redevelopment.

Our talk in February, given by Robert Leon, is, however, about the King's Cross (or more properly, Battle Bridge) area which existed before the railways transformed it. Here we shall have the story of the statue of the king which gave Battle Bridge its new, and more respectable name, the career of the ubiquitous Stephen Geary, designer of the statue and, in its early stages, of Highgate Cemetery. Besides, Mr Leon will be recounting the story of the pleasure gardens here, in particular the Panharmonium.

Advance Notice

You will see from our previous Newsletter that our talk for March was to have been on the Gatti family, by Felicity Kinross. However, we are sad to report that Ms Kinross died just before Christmas, as a result of an accident. For our March talk, therefore, Roger Cline has kindly volunteered to speak about the creation of Regent's Park and its subsequent use by various warring factions - the subject of his recent Dissertation. The date of this talk, 17 March, is the same as previously but the venue has still not been settled. Details will be announced in the next Newsletter.

Camden Anniversaries

350 Years (1642)

In the Civil War in 1642 fortifications were built around north London to resist the king's forces. Some of them were erected in the southern part of Camden - details may be found in Camden History Review, Vol. 9, in an article by Rosemary Weinstein.

200 Years (1792)

People with Camden connections who were born in 1792 include: George Cruikshank, artist, who lived at 263 Hampstead Road; William Howitt author of The Northern Heights, who stayed in Avenue Road, Swiss Cottage and at Highgate West Hill; Rev Edward Irving, Scottish divine, who ministered to a popular church in Regent Square; John Linnell, artist, with many Hampstead connections, and Percy Bysshe Shelley, with some.

150 Years (1842)

The Tailors' Benevolent Institution at the foot of Haverstock Hill was opened this year; council flats now occupy the site.

All Saints, Gordon Square, was consecrated. The architect was T.L. Donaldson.

Basil Champneys, Frognaal architect, and Socialist writer, Henry Hyndman of Well Walk, were born in 1842. Thomas Norton Longman, publisher, who lived at Greenhill, Hampstead High Street, died. The Railway Clearing House was established. This organisation, which began with a few clerks, eventually finished with the vast building that still exists in Eversholt Street. Its function was much the same as the Bank Clearing House, debiting and crediting the numerous railway companies for shared services used by passengers and freight. It became a major employer in Camden.

100 Years (1892)

The foundation stone was laid of All Hallows Church in Savernake Road. The architect was James Brooks.

Hampstead Synagogue in Dennington Park Road was opened. Architect: Delissa Joseph.

Culross Buildings in Battle Bridge Road were opened. These were built by the London & North Eastern Railway Company to house people displaced by railway works. An accident on the Highgate Hill Cable Tramway resulted in tighter safety restrictions being imposed. The Company, already in financial difficulties, was unable to put these into effect and the track was closed for five years.

There was a disaster at Hampstead Heath station on the North London Line. A heavy downpour caused thousands to leave the fairground on Hampstead Heath on an Easter Monday and in the rush to get into the station two women and six children were crushed to death.

Jimmy Wilde, boxer, who lived in Whetstone Lane, was born this year, as was David Garnett, writer, with Fitzrovia and Bloomsbury connections, and William Johnson Cory of Pilgrims Lane and Cannon Place, who composed the Eton Boating Song.

50 Years (1942)

Deaths included Sir Reginald Blomfield, Frognaal architect, William Flinders Petrie, archaeologist of Well Road, and Walter Sickert of more addresses than can be counted.

A Burgh House Appeal

An appeal, for £100,000, is to be launched this month for a major refurbishment of the Hampstead Museum at Burgh House. As a first stage, the Keats Room has been renovated and rearranged and will be opened officially on 11 January, as a mark of dedication to Diana Wade who, with her husband, Christopher, was joint founder and curator of the Museum.

To launch the Appeal an exhibition entitled Hampstead Then and Now runs from the middle of January, and on each Friday in February Christopher will be giving his famous talks on walks around Hampstead. An entrance fee will be charged for these, which will go towards the Appeal, as will all proceeds from a large Book Fair to be held on 8 March at the House.

REGIONAL NOVELS

Dr Keith Snell of the Department of English Local History at the University of Leicester, is editing a book with the regional novel as its theme. By a regional novel he means one illustrating the life, customs, language, dialect or manners of a particular area. This could occur in various genres such as romantic or historical novels.

He would be interested to hear from members any suggestions they have of works relating to the Camden area that ought to be included. Malcolm Holmes, at Swiss Cottage Library, is kindly offering to co-ordinate any replies.

RESTORING A FOUNTAIN

Everyone knows the wonderful drinking fountain in South End Green. Unfortunately, it is very dilapidated and needs restoration. Its rescue is the object to mark the Silver Jubilee of the South End Green Association this year, and members are invited to support their appeal. Donations should be sent to the Secretary, Mary Maclean, 12 Parliament Court, Parliament Hill, NW3 2TS.

The fountain, made of a variety of granites, and probably the largest in Camden, was presented to the public by Miss Anne Crump of Hereford House, then on the site of the Cannon Cinema. According to Christopher Wade, the fountain was designed by J.H. Evins and offered 'accommodation for 16 persons and 4 dogs.'

THE ROYAL EXCHANGE

Our Vice President, Ann Saunders, has recently completed a booklet on the Royal Exchange to coincide with the recent thorough restoration of the building. It is a lively account, in the best Ann Saunders tradition, liberally sprinkled with illustrations, many in colour. The booklet (48pp and cover), published by the Guardian Royal Exchange, is sumptuously produced and is on sale at the bargain price of £1.50. It is available from David Webb at the Bishopsgate Institute, plus postage. Not to be missed.

THINGS PAST

Our October lecture was given by Margaret Richardson, Assistant Curator and Inspector of the Soane Museum in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Her subject was the extensive collection of architectural drawings, which contains about 30,000 items, including those of Soane and his own office.

Soane kept detailed daybooks and drawings noting what work he, his staff and pupils were engaged on. But he also made drawings of many other buildings here and abroad, many of which have now disappeared. He also amassed an extensive collection of drawings by other architects, including Wren, Dance and the Adam brothers.

In November, Penny Hadfield, archivist to Eton College, gave a talk on the collection relating to the Eton College estate in Hampstead. A large (but cold!) audience heard an interesting account in the church of St Saviour's, a building opened to serve the new College development.

Amongst the Victorians

Cherry Lavell writes:

Borough boundaries are surely there to be crossed, so I make no apology for drawing readers' attention to a wonderful time capsule to be found in Kensington, a few minutes' walk from the High Street. Here, at 18 Stafford Terrace, is Linley Sambourne House, preserved as a relic of life in the decades around the turn of the century. Linley Sambourne was a new name to me, but he was a Punch cartoonist and illustrator of such classics as The Water Babies, who bought this house in 1874. It remained in his family's ownership until ten years ago, when his grand-daughter, the Countess of Rosse, and her husband handed it over to the Victorian Society who now run it. (One of the volunteer curators is Sheila Ayres, who was one of the stalwarts involved in compiling our own Streets of Belsize.)

The house is well worth a visit (£2 admission) as it gives such an intimate and vivid glimpse of late Victorian life. Amazingly, very little has been changed since that time - the Rosses seem to have let the 20th century intrude as little as possible - so the furniture, stained glass, pictures, soft furnishings, bric-a-brac and general family muddle remain comfortingly in place for our delight and instruction. (The house is popular with school-parties who gasp at the antique plumbing, the list of housemaid's duties, and the bachelor bedroom with its Stage-Door Johnnie memorabilia.) From the moment you go through the front door you are among genuine William Morris wallpapers and dozens of Sambourne's own drawings; and a particularly charming feature is the fountain on the stair-landing. Masses of family documents - diaries, letters, photos - stuffed in drawers are gradually being studied and will add much to our knowledge of how a Victorian and Edwardian house was managed. The sense of family continuity is extraordinarily powerful and I do recommend an expedition to see this splendid house.

(A room of the house appears briefly in the film Enchanted April, now on current release - an interesting, unviolent, engaging period piece. Ed.)

Shopping in Belsize Village

We show here a photograph of Belsize Village in 1904. Roy Allen comments: The view is taken when the shops on the right were known as Upper Belsize Terrace; the 'Upper' was not dropped until 1934, when the prior claim to 'Belsize Terrace' of Nos 79-93 Belsize Lane had long been forgotten.

Davies, the shop on the left, was to trade under that name as a draper's for another forty years; it is now a fruiterer's. In the terrace, the two girls (one partly concealed by the other) appear to be studying advertisements in the window of No. 7, Mrs George's Registry Office for Servants.

Since 1890 John Dudman had been established in large new premises at 56 Rosslyn Hill with his Hampstead Borough Stores (the name survives, on high) but he still had no less than four shops in the Village, wearing a different hat in each. In the one behind the horse's head he was a cheesemonger while, coming down from Mrs George's, in No 8 he was a family grocer, in No 9 an Italian warehouseman and in No 12 (behind the

lamp post) a wine merchant. It is a pity Nos 8-9 came into the same ownership; they were later combined under one facade, thus destroying the harmony of the terrace.

The shop to the left of the horse is Belsize Farm Dairy but the farm was a distant memory. Most of the fields were taken for Fitzjohns Avenue, opened in 1876; and the farm buildings (off Belsize Lane) gave way to Daleham Mews, started by 1881.

In 1905 Franklin Vallet, the chemist next to Davies, found room in his shop for a public call office of the National Telephone Company, which soon took over the whole premises.

This row of shops was renumbered in Belsize Lane in 1908 but before that it was part of Belsize Park Terrace; and, as these shops are in fact the main subject of the view, it seems misleading to entitle the picture 'Upper Belsize Terrace' - perhaps the photographer got his terraces muddled.



This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society, Hampstead Central Library, Swiss Cottage, NW3. It is edited by John Richardson, 32 Ellington Street, London N7 8PL (071-607 1628) to whom contributions should be sent

newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 130

Mar 1992

Keeping the Peace in Regent's Park

Tues, 17 Mar, 7.30pm
Sharpleshall Street Library, off Regent's
Park Road, NW1

Our March talk on Regent's Park is by Roger Cline. Roger has recently completed an MA Degree in London Studies at Birkbeck College (in company with Robert Leon, our February speaker) and his dissertation for that degree forms the basis for the talk, which is about the various uses of the park over the years and the occasional friction that developed.

Members who travelled to the Museum of London in November to hear Roger on the same subject need not worry that this will be a mere repeat. The Museum talk prompted the acquisition of new material, and much has happened in the Park since then, so this will be an updated version.

Roger is also hoping to lead a walk in the Park for the Victorian Society at the end of April in which he hopes to inspect the inside of St John's Lodge, presently under renovation for residential use. This may be your last chance to see inside this the first villa to be built in the Park (unless you move in Middle Eastern social circles!). Non-members of the Victorian Society are welcome to join this walk and exact details will be given at the March meeting.

The Review to Come

The 17th Camden History Review is now at the printers and will probably be distributed with the next Newsletter. Edited by John Gage, it is packed with interesting articles, as usual. Subjects covered include the Chalcots Estate, the Round House, a 19th century diary and journal, the making of King's Cross and the Royal Veterinary College.

Things to Come

Due to circumstances too complicated to explain we have been unable to arrange a talk for April. However, the good news is that we shall probably have two talks in May. One of them is already fixed - the celebrated broadcaster, John Wells, talking on the London Library, that institution about which he has recently written a history. This will be on May 20 but the venue is not yet fixed.

At the time of going to press the other talk in May is not yet confirmed, but you will have details in the next Newsletter.

Other things to look ahead to are the Annual Meeting. This will be on 23 June at Camden Lock, when, after the business part of the meeting, Dr Michael Essex-Lopresti will be talking about the Regent's Canal and the Lock. So, a pleasant venue on what we hope will be a good summer's evening, and an appropriately outdoor subject to interest us.

The Society has made a provisional booking to tour Kensal Green Cemetery on July 5th. Numbers will probably be restricted and there will be a form in the next Newsletter to book.

The Annual Outing is on 1 August. It will take the form of a tour of Chatham Dockyard and a visit to nearby Faversham. Again, details will be in the next Newsletter.

In September we shall be having a talk on the Streets of West Hampstead given by those members of the Society who have been compiling our new publication (which will be out in the summer) on that area.

We hope also to hear about Druids and Primrose Hill later in the year, and the Royal Exchange.

A TRAIL OF BLOOD AT PRIMROSE HILL

Vice President Frank Cole has been checking and indexing the mass of military documents at the Royal Artillery Institution at Woolwich. The library there contains the diary of Gunner Herbert Danks who was stationed on the Heavy Anti-Aircraft site on Primrose Hill between May 1940 and February 1941. This period is covered in thirteen closely-typed quarto pages and is a detailed record of his army life, the guns in action and off-duty moments in London at the time. There are two sketch plans of the gun site which, if drawn at the time, certainly contravened regulations!

The entry for Sunday 21 July 1940 reads: 'More fun last night. A man challenged and fired upon on the side of the hill nearest the Zoo. Six shots were fired...Later on a trail of blood was reported between Elsworthy and King Henry's Roads.'

A copy of the diary has been deposited at the Local Studies Library at Swiss Cottage by courtesy of the Secretary of the Historical Affairs Committee R.A. Institution.

Religious Devils in Hampstead

'Religious Devils of Hampstead' is the next exhibition at Burgh House. It celebrates 300 years of the congregation at Rosslyn Hill Chapel and it runs from 4th April to the 17th May. The title comes from a comment made in the early years of this famous non-conformist chapel, one of the oldest such congregations in London, when the Dissenters who founded the chapel were much opposed by the local Anglicans. The exhibition has been researched by Ruth Rowntree, a member of the congregation, who has shown the close relationship between the congregation and the leading families of Hampstead.

On Friday the 8 May at 2.30 in the afternoon, Ruth Rowntree will talk about the exhibition and the history of the chapel.

From the 23 May is 'Hampstead For Sale' - pictures of Hampstead and other works by local artists presented as a fund-raising exhibition for the Museum appeal.

In the Huguenot Heartland

The way to 18 Folgate Street in the Huguenot heartland of east London is easier to find than anyone might think. From Liverpool Street Station to Bishopsgate, then north for a few hundred yards and Folgate Street is found on the right. Here no. 18 has been restored to its eighteenth-century or early nineteenth-century self. It is revealed as the home of a family of silk weavers and merchants from the days of their prosperity to the time when free trade brought cheap imports and their decline.

The first floor living room is elegant while the dining room shows signs of some hectic drinking. In the bedrooms, chamber pots are used, though mattresses and sheets are modern. The kitchen is copied from that shown in Beatrix Potter's Tailor of Gloucester, the attic from Bob Cratchit's home in Dicken's Christmas Carol. When it was furnished the family were hard up and had to take lodgers. A downstairs sitting room is 'shabby genteel' with bargain lengths of fabric used for covers and curtains - and there are early gas lamps without incandescent mantles.

Dennis Severs from America, who runs the house and has furnished it, has used authentic items from second-hand shops to give a better lived-in look without the museum atmosphere. He opens it for visits on the first Sunday of every month from 2pm to 5pm, charging £5. This for seeing the house. Performances, when this narrow, rather dark but fascinating house is used to tell a story, cost from £25 and must be specially arranged.

Mr Severs lives there in 18th-century style, but there is a telephone - 071 247 4013.

Joan Barraclough

NEW OPENING HOURS

Because of spending restrictions the opening hours of the two Local Studies Libraries at Swiss Cottage and Holborn have once again to be changed. The new hours are:

<u>Swiss Cottage</u>	<u>Holborn</u>
Mond 10-7	10-7
Tues 10-6	10-6
Wed closed	closed
Thurs 10-7	closed
Fri closed	10-6
Sat 10-5	by prior appt only

Please note that the Holborn local history room is closed each day from 1-2



This is an 1898 photograph of East-Enders enjoying themselves on Hampstead Heath in the days when people dressed up to go to the Heath. The Editor regrets that he has lost his note of who sent him the photograph. So that he might return it, he would be grateful for a reminder!

THE REV PAUL de FORTIS

Those who attended the talk on the Eton College Archives in November will be sorry to hear of the tragic death on Christmas Eve of our host for that evening at St Saviour's, the Rev. Paul de Fortis. Although he had only been at St Saviour's for a few months, Mr de Fortis gave us a full guided tour of the church before the main meeting and had clearly done his homework on its history. We had been hoping to get an article by him for the Newsletter or the Review.

This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society, c/o Hampstead Central Library, Avenue Road, NW3. It is edited by John Richardson, 32 Ellington Street, London N7 8PL (071-607 1628), to whom all contributions should be sent.

BONES IN SOMERS TOWN

Recent excavations to build the new British Library at Somers Town have revealed three coffins. It has been suggested that the bones contained in them are of readers at the British Library who have waited too long for their books. But the most likely reason for their existence is that a non-conformist chapel, the Beulah, later Bethel, and graveyard were once in the area - a record exists of burials by 1798. The chapel was at the junction of Chapel and Wilstead Streets. The area of the graveyard appears to have been built over soon after and then was taken by the Midland Railway in 1875 who disinterred the burials but seem to have missed some.

INFORMATION WANTED

Marika Sherwood is researching the lives of those Africans and West Indians who lived in Camden during the 1930s and 1940s. She understands also that there was a Black community in the Tottenham Court Road area at the turn of the century.

If anyone has any information or recollections perhaps he or she could send them to her at 20 Laurier Road, NW5 1SG

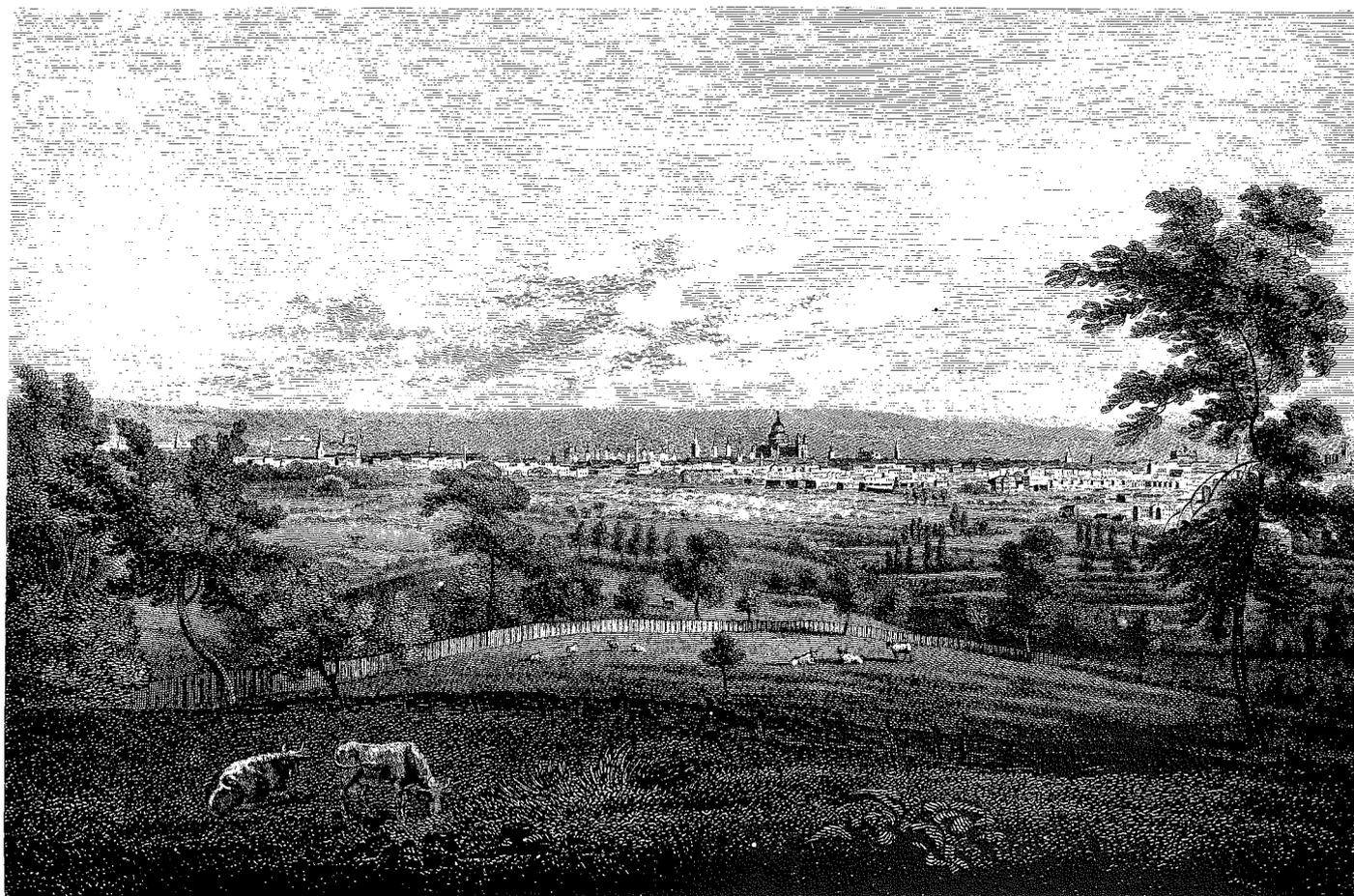
Adultery in Highgate

Deirdre le Faye has sent us a copy of some pages from a book entitled Crim. Con. Biography: or celebrated trials in the Ecclesiastical and Civil Courts for Adultery and other crimes connected with Incontinency, compiled by Francis Plowden in 1830.

One entry concerns a Highgate affair. A Mr and Mrs Rose had lived for several years together 'in the greatest happiness and connubial felicity' and were each aged 29 and had four children. Mrs Rose had begun an affair with a Mr Blackmore and, neglecting her children, it seems that she was in the habit of leaving the house as soon as her husband had left for his work each day and meeting with Blackmore for walks around the country. In one on these walks they went to Hornsey churchyard and were seen by two of the witnesses in the case, James Corbett, shoemaker and a man called Good, who had been offered half a crown by Blackmore to keep the matter quiet. But the matter was heard of in Highgate Village and soon reached the ears of the husband and the result was the case before the court as to how much damages were to be paid to the aggrieved party.

Testifying to the court were Sophia and William Newbiggen of Highgate who said that they knew the married couple and they seemed to be happy up till 1824 and Betsey Barker, a nurse who attended Mrs Rose in two of her confinements, affirmed the affection which existed. But Mr Newbiggen also testified that at the end of 1824 he had seen Blackmore with his arm around Mrs Rose walking up Birmingham [Bromwich] Walk which leads from Kentish Town to Highgate. Damages in favour of the husband were assessed at £150.

This is a view of London from Highgate published in 1797, no doubt one that was seen by the unfortunate lovers in the item printed above. Peter Barber, who kindly sent in the illustration, would be interested to know if anyone can pin down the vantage point. Was it Parliament Hill or was it somewhere on the later Burdett-Coutts estate?



newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 131

May 1992

Our talks in May

Wed, 20 May, 7.30pm
St Pancras Church Hall, Lancing Street
NW1 (opposite Eversholt Street entrance
to Euston Station).

John Wells, the celebrated and very funny broadcaster, is our speaker on the 20th and his subject is that august institution, the London Library, which last year reached its 150th year. John Wells was also the author of the book, published recently, which gave an historical account of the Library. It can hardly fail to be an entertaining evening.

The Library has recently launched an appeal for £3 million to maintain its facilities and independence. Those unfamiliar with the Library at 14 St James's Square, may like to know that it contains over a million books with an emphasis on the humanities, especially history. Becoming a member is, of course, a useful way of increasing the Library's funds, but if you simply want to make a donation it should be sent to the London Library 150th Anniversary Appeal, 14 Park Place, SW1A 1LP.

Wed, 27 May, 7.30pm
Camden Town Branch Library,
Camden High Street, NW1

Unity Theatre, that brave venture which began near King's Cross and was for many years in a converted chapel behind Goldington Crescent, was destroyed by fire some years back and, so far, has not risen again from the flames. It will have a place in English theatrical history as the first important left-wing theatre in the country. A number of playwrights and actors established their reputations in the little hall in St Pancras and the history of the enterprise makes a fascinating story.

Our speaker is Professor Robin Alston of University College.

The Annual Meeting

Tues, 23 June, 6.30pm
Camden Lock, Chalk Farm Road, NW1

Our Annual Meeting is in the New Market Hall at the refurbished Camden Lock and our speaker is Dr Michael Essex-Lopresti whose subject is the canal itself. Refreshments will be served at 6.30, the business meeting is at 7pm and the talk at 7.30pm.

You are invited to make nominations for officers and places on the Council. The present incumbents are as follows:

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

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

Council members:
Peter Barber, Eric Brassington, John Broad, Ruth Hayes, Lester May, Sue Palmer, Gillian Tindall, Robin Woolven.

Nominations should be sent to our Secretary, Jane Ramsay, c/o Swiss Cottage Library, Avenue Road, NW3.

Members may like to know that the London Canal Museum has opened at 12/13 New Wharf Road, NW1. Exhibits include the ice well already in the building when Gatti's, restaurateurs and ice-cream manufacturers, used it to store ice before the advent of refrigeration.

A FOUNTAIN FOR DIANA

Last month a fountain was unveiled near the front door of Burgh House in memory of Diana Wade, a much-loved stalwart of both the Hampstead Museum and this Society. Diana was particularly fond of the sound of water and this feature, designed by Elizabeth Bristow, seemed the most apt reminder of her.

PORTRAIT OF THE PALACE

A recent publication of the Hornsey Historical Society is Palace on the Hill - a history of Alexandra Palace and Park, by Ken Gay. As many will know, there have been two disastrous fires at the Palace, one soon after it was opened, which meant a complete rebuilding, and a second in 1980 that necessitated a restoration which though much admired got financially out of control. The future of the Palace, and in particular the grounds, are now in jeopardy because of this overspending.

Copies of Ken Gay's book may be obtained from the HHS, The Old Schoolhouse, 136 Tottenham Lane, N8 7EL, for £2.70 plus 60p postage.

HAVING BABIES IN HAMPSTEAD

Dr Lara Marks is researching the development of maternity care and infant welfare services in Hampstead and Kilburn 1902-39. She would be interested to hear from health professionals and social workers who worked in the area during that period or from women who had babies there. In particular she seeks mothers who had babies at home or in New End Hospital, Queen Mary's Maternity Hospital or in a Hampstead nursing home, or who had experience of ante-natal clinics such as those in Pond Street, Dynham Road and Kingsgate Road. Dr Marks may be contacted at the Geography Dept, Queen Mary and Westfield College, Mile End Road, E1 4NS.

HAMPSTEAD VERSES

Bette Greenhalf is compiling a book of Hampstead etchings and relief prints which she would like to accompany with old verses or sayings about Hampstead features. There is, of course, the music hall song about the Bull and Bush, but if members have other suggestions perhaps they would send them to Ms Greenhalf at 91 Greenhill, Hampstead High Street, NW3 5TY.

READINGS FROM MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT

A touching ceremony took place on 27 April at Old St Pancras Church when the renovation of the William Godwin/Mary Wollstonecraft memorial in the churchyard was celebrated. Funds were raised from such bodies as the Keats-Shelley Association, the Camden History Society and the funeral undertakers, Leverton's, to do the work. The occasion was timed to celebrate Mary Wollstonecraft's birthday that day and the 200th anniversary of her book Vindication of the Rights of Women, still seen as a key book in the evolution of women's rights. Claire Tomalin performed the honours on the day, and Janet Suzman read extracts from letters from Mary to her husband and a stanza by Shelley about her.

The memorial, should you wish to see it, is in the churchyard on Pancras Road, near the coroner's court.

On 7 June there will be a programme of Mary Wollstonecraft readings, given by, amongst others, Juliet Stevenson, Francesca Annis and Fiona Shaw. This will be at the Conway Hall at 7pm. Tickets may be obtained from Sheila Robinson, 081-985 9951.

Versions of Belsize House

During its last 190 years there were three versions of Belsize House. What might be termed the historic mansion appears to have been started in 1663 by Col. Daniel O'Neill, a Royalist during the Civil War. The house, basically a hollow rectangle 121 feet wide and 110 feet deep (Gent's map, 1679), was not built in a day; even a year later it had only seven hearths, compared with a final total of thirty-six. It was centred roughly between Nos. 13-14 and 21 Belsize Park, looking north-east towards Haverstock Hill up the future Belsize Avenue.

Soon after 1700 the house, with its 25 acres of gardens and park, became an entertainment centre. There is a view of the period, together with a map, on p20 of John Richardson's Hampstead One Thousand (1985). An outside staircase indicates that business was brisk.

Events in the park came to an end in 1745 and the house is empty on John Rocque's

map of the following year. This map shows the two projecting wings also seen in the print; these, and the central tower, were typical features of a Restoration mansion and they are still to be found at Belton House (1685-88) in Lincolnshire, being visited this month by the Hampstead Centre of the National Trust.

By 1751 Belsize had been rebuilt as a plain Georgian mansion two storeys high and six windows wide, with (set back) a short extension to the right. The entrance, under the third window from the left, was approached by a long flight of steps. Barratt has a view in his Annals of Hampstead (I, 231).

In 1797 this mansion became the country residence of Spencer Perceval, who had a town house in Lincoln's Inn Fields. A print of 1800, at E. Walford's Old and New London V, 492 (c1880), shows that the entrance was now under the fourth window, possibly one of the 'alterations and improvements' mentioned by Denis Gray on p38 of Spencer Perceval - The Evangelical Prime Minister (1963).

At first sight the house of 1751 seems completely new and indeed Lysons writes in 1795 'The mansion-house has been pulled down some years...there is now a modern-built house upon the premises'. It is nevertheless suggested that the 1751 house was simply the result of adding a Georgian front to the south-east side of the old building, the rest of which was demolished. The extension to the right is the left-hand projection of the historic mansion, with an extra storey to match the new roof line; and the house now faces London.

In support of this theory it might be noted that, according to Barratt (p228), the house was 'partly' rebuilt. Gray calls Belsize, not liked by the Perceval family, a 'rambling old place'. This seems an odd description for a compact Georgian structure barely fifty years old; but it could be apt if at the back there was still one side of the 1663 house.

Perhaps the main evidence is visual. the land slopes gently to the south-east but presumably, behind the 121-foot Restoration front, there was a level floor cutting across the contours. If the downhill end of this floor has survived

and is continued across the depth of the Georgian facing (seen in the 1800 print), the new front door will be well above ground level. Hence the need for all those steps.

The theory calls for the Georgian house to be on the 1663 site, two-fifths of the way across the top of the grounds. Some maps show it close to the main gate but in 1797 J. Stockdale, at over six inches to the mile, has more or less the historic position, a bit too far from the gate in fact.

In 1807 the Earl of Chesterfield sold the head lease of the Manor of Belsize (233 acres) to a syndicate of four local men, the house and its grounds going to James Abel of Frognal. Perceval departed in 1809 and was succeeded by William Everett. Soon afterwards the entire mansion came down and a new house was built, this time as close as possible to the main gate (to leave the hinterland clear for development?).

The Newton seven-inch map of 1814 (taken with a one-inch OS of about 1845 and the 25" of 1866) suggests that the house, mainly an oblong facing Haverstock Hill, had its uphill side roughly at the front of No 10 Belsize Avenue, on the south side of the road. Nearby there is an interesting relic, a short length of old garden-wall. This used to be visible, end-on, alongside the right-hand back corner of No. 16; now it is hidden by ivy. At the corner a moderate leftward curve leads to what was once the start of the long run down the north-east side of the park. The 1814 map has a sharp bend at this point but in 1827 the Greenwoods, at nearly eight inches, have a curve similar to the one at No. 16.

Roy Allen

(To be continued in the next Newsletter)

A Note from our Treasurer

A NOTICE FOR THOSE WHO DON'T READ INSERTS WITH THEIR NEWSLETTER!

If there is an insert with your Newsletter about subscriptions please read it - both sides of it. If there isn't such an insert then you are a member who does read inserts and has already paid your subscription in full for 1992.

Welcome to the Streets of West Hampstead

Our Street History Group has pleasure in announcing the publication next month of their revised and enlarged version of their survey of West Hampstead, which first appeared in 1975. A launching party is being planned and other related events include:

- 4 July-27 Sep: Exhibition at the Hampstead Museum, Burgh House
- 11/12 July: A stall and walk at the Jester Festival, Fortune Green
- 30 July, 7.30pm: A talk about West Hampstead at Burgh House
- 10 Sep, 7.30: A talk for Camden History Society at the Community Hall, Broomsleigh Street.

The book is a walk-about guide to the historical pleasures and curiosities to be found in West Hampstead - that rarely explored area between Finchley Road and Kilburn High Road. Attractions in the streets, due to the exuberance of the Victorian builders, include terra cotta sunflowers in Sumatra Road, ferns in Mazonod and dragons in Inglewood.

As for the street-names, mostly explained here, they range romantically from Pandora to Parsifal and surprisingly from Agamemnon to Skardu and Weech.

There is no shortage of remarkable residents. Among the writers are Thomas Hardy, Evelyn Waugh and T.S. Eliot, among artists, David Bomberg and Walter Sickert. Other celebrities include William Beckford, Lillie Langtry and Lord Northcliffe.

Then there is the lively social history of a district fragmented by four different railway systems in the mid-nineteenth century, and changed again later by immigration, wartime bombing and widespread reconstruction.

This book is a revised and expanded version of the Society's survey published in 1975. All the streets in the area are covered and many of them prove to have a picturesque past.

Advance Notice

Just in case the next Newsletter is not early enough to give much notice, please note that the July talk is on 15th at Heath Branch Library, Keats Grove, at 7.30pm. The subject is Shelley in Hampstead and the speaker is Judith Cherniak.

A trip to a Dockyard

This year, for the Annual Outing, the Society is combining the fascination of Chatham Dockyard and the charm of Faversham. An application form is enclosed and if you would like to go an early application is advised. It is on 1 August.

A tour of Kensal Green Cemetery

Kensal Green Cemetery was built in the heyday of Victorian cemetery building - it was opened in 1833, before our own Highgate Cemetery. It is still administered by the General Cemetery Company and is the oldest surviving cemetery still in the hands of its original owners.

Among the great and the good buried there are Blondin, the Brunels, Decimus Burton, Birkbeck, Wilkie Collins, Eastlake, Mary Hogarth, Mayhew, Clarkson Stanfield, Robert Smirke, Thackeray, Trollope and Thomas Hood - a number of these with Camden connections.

We have arranged a tour of this historic burial ground on Sunday, 5 July. We meet at the Anglican Chapel inside the cemetery at 2.20pm - the main entrance is on the Harrow Road. The tour will last about two hours and will include a talk in the Chapel, and a visit to the catacombs. Please bring a torch and wear sturdy shoes. There is a charge of £2 per person.

A form is enclosed. Please indicate if you are coming as this helps the tour administration in providing sufficient guides though, presumably if you change your mind at the last moment and decide to come, there will probably not be a problem. It might even be sunny.

newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 132

Jul 1992

Shelley and Hampstead

Wed, 15 July, 7.30pm
Heath Branch Library, Keats Grove, NW3

'High Hearted Friends' is the title of our July talk given by Judith Chernaik. It is about Shelley and Leigh Hunt in Hampstead and it marks the bicentenary of the birth of Shelley. Our speaker, a New Yorker who has lived in this country for many years, is a Shelley expert. She is author of The Lyrics of Shelley and Mab's Daughters. She is also the instigator and organiser of the Poems on the Underground project.

The Streets of West Hampstead

Our new publication Streets of West Hampstead has been well and truly launched. It is full of odd snippets of information, such as the location in the borough of the world's largest collection of modern art, a green telephone box, a medieval brass of a nun's head etc. Characters featured include the originator of the gym slip, the discoverer of terylene and the man who shipped the first hippo to London Zoo.

The research group will be giving a talk to the Society about the area on 10 September (details in next Newsletter).

The book is available at £5.95 from local bookshops, CHS meetings, or else from Christopher Wade, 28 Willoughby Road, NW3, enclosing 65p postage

Kentish Town Streets

We are anxious to publish a 'Streets of Kentish Town' volume, similar to those already selling well for the various parts of Hampstead. Members who would like to help compile this are sought - they should contact our Secretary, Jane Ramsay, c/o Swiss Cottage Library, Avenue Road, NW3.

A View of London

We published in our March Newsletter (No. 130) a 1797 view of London drawn from a vantage point somewhere in Highgate. Malcolm Tucker has been investigating:

'I set to work with straight edge, protractor and 2 1/2 inch map, in the hope of finding the vantage point from which it was taken. It soon became evident that the engraved view is not geometrically accurate. First of all, the buildings are individually enlarged, to make them clearer. If one determines the scale from the distance between Westminster Abbey on the right and the twin white blocks of Greenwich Hospital in the distance towards the left, then St Paul's Cathedral is drawn 650 feet high, or twice its proper size.

Moreover, the churches have probably been filled in with a degree of unreliability, because they were hardly visible to the naked eye. On the left, one can identify the pyramidal tower of Christ Church, Spitalfields, and I assume the chimney-like feature is the obelisk spire of St Luke, Old Street, since there were no large factory chimneys at that date. The two larger spires to their left are probably intended to be St Mary Islington and St Leonard Shoreditch, though which is which is uncertain.

The relationship of these four monuments resembles that seen from Parliament Hill, rather than from Highgate, yet Greenwich Hospital is in the position it would take from the vicinity of Highgate, as are the Foundling Hospital and one of the tile kilns near Battle Bridge (King's Cross).

I suggest, therefore, that the artist sketched from the vicinity of the later Highgate Cemetery, but then retired to his garret and added details, perhaps from someone else's drawing, taken from a different viewpoint.

The Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting was held in the new market building at Camden Lock. The talk for the evening was by Dr Michael Essex-Lopresti who took us energetically on a nostalgic tour through early cinema music.

As for the meeting itself our attention was drawn to the present perilous plight of the Victoria County History project, especially that part dealing with the old county of Middlesex. The VCH is, as many of you will know, one of the main reference planks for anyone doing local history research. Much still remains to be done in Middlesex - in our own borough alone St Pancras and Holborn are still not dealt with. Funding for the Middlesex volumes since the reorganisation of the London boroughs has been shared by seven boroughs covered by the publications. In recent years, however, both Hackney and Hammersmith & Fulham, have contributed only about one third of what was promised, and this year both Camden and Tower Hamlets have said that they can pay nothing at all. This therefore places the security of the three full-time staff and part-time secretary in jeopardy.

It was proposed at our meeting, bearing in mind the strength of our own balance sheet, that during this forthcoming year the Society should donate £1,000 to the VCH Middlesex provided that it could be usefully employed in the continuation of the project. This was agreed unanimously.

Officers and Council elected were as follows:

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

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

Council members:

Peter Barber, Eric Brassington, John Broad, Ruth Hayes, Lester May, Sue Palmer, Gillian Tindall, Robin Woolven

ARCHITECTURAL TOURS

Some enterprising architectural tours of London will be of interest to members. They are taking place on Saturday mornings during the summer and autumn, and are thematic in their approach. Different kinds of architecture are selected, from Classical to Hi-tech. It is a chance to discover, perhaps, some modern buildings that you don't know. For information please contact Architectural Tours at 90/92 Parkway, NW1 (tel 267 6497).

A BOOK ON PATMORE

One of our members, Ian Anstruther, has recently published a book entitled Coventry Patmore's Angel: A Study of Coventry Patmore, his wife Emily and the Angel in the House. The poet Patmore had a number of local connections, particularly North End near the old pub, the Hare and Hounds. The price of the book is £17.95 from bookshops or else a copy may be seen at Swiss Cottage Library.

UNDERGROUND LONDON

The fascination for underground London never diminishes. Two of the best-selling books on London - Lost Rivers of London by Nicholas Barton (soon to be reissued) and London Under London by Trench and Hillman, are evidence of that.

From 1-18 September an exhibition entitled London: the under ground city will be on show at the Building Centre in Store Street. It will deal with the services and infrastructure of the capital and will act as a backdrop to a symposium entitled 'What future for London's infrastructure?'. Further details from Esther Caplin, 57 Erskine Hill, NW11 6EY or Hony Snell at the Building Centre, 26 Store Street WC1E 7BT.

HENDON FAMILIES

From 1 July to 1 November there is an exhibition at Church Farm House, Greyhound Hill, Hendon, portraying the families that have occupied the house since it was built about 1660. It deals also with the lives of the families and their employees, and covers haymaking, dairy farming and thatching.

Versions of Belsize House

We continue below Roy Allen's article on Belsize House, which began in the previous Newsletter:

This upheaval, although recent, is not recorded in 1814 by J.J. Park in his Topography and Natural History of Hampstead; but neither does he mention the building of Belsize Court and Hunters Lodge (1810-12). Peter Barber tells us in Camden History Review 15 that Park finally concentrated on the natural history of the area. About 1820 Britton and Brayley report a 'handsome modern edifice'. Barratt (II, 270) quotes a reference in 1841 to a 'Gothic residence', without explaining what has happened to the Georgian one.

The Streets of Belsize (1991) has a side view at p65. On 27 July 1853, just before final demolition, an unknown artist ('BT') made some pen-and-wash drawings and we show here the main front of the last Belsize House.

Roy Allen

THE BIG MAC HOUSE

Controversy still rages in Hampstead over the proposal to open a McDonald's restaurant in the High Street. Meanwhile, Stella Greenall has sent us a copy of a letter to her from Jeffrey Evans with a history of the building (No 46) in question:

'...I am especially concerned as this was the original house and shop belonging to my family since it was established here in 1740 - trading as silk mercers for over 200 years from the same place, as well as our other branches - also [we used] the old house (listed Grade II) behind 45 and 46, now divided into two, which is late 17th century with a fine Jacobean staircase. I didn't even know the house was listed until now!

McDonald's want to extend the restaurant over the garden which has an age-old mulberry tree which I remember in my grandfather's time - it should also still have an old grape vine planted by my great-grandfather about the early 1820s. It would be so sad to destroy all this for yet another restaurant in Hampstead.

Dr Crippen's Camden

In his recent book Camden Town and Primrose Hill Past, John Richardson includes a photograph of Belle Elmore (Mrs Hawley Crippen) who tried some strike breaking in 1907 when she crossed the picket line and appeared on stage at the Bedford Theatre and the Euston Palace. This mention of Belle reminded me of the Crippens' association with Camden and neighbouring areas. The report of the 1910 trial, in particular Dr Crippen's statement to the police and the evidence of prosecution and defence witnesses, helped me to list their residences, businesses and other places associated with Crippen, his wife and his mistress. Few of the original buildings remain but the following notes may be of interest to tourists in Camden.

Dr Crippen had come to London in 1883 soon after he qualified as a doctor in America and he visited various London hospitals. He was back again in 1885 after he had gained his 'Eye and Ear' specialist diploma and he spent some time at the Royal Bethlehem Hospital where, he later claimed, he used the poison hyoscin in the treatment of the insane. He practised in America from 1886-96 and he married his second wife Cora (stage name Belle Elmore) in 1892. Crippen now turned to retailing patent medicines and, when he moved to London in April 1900, he lived for four months in Queens Road, St John's Wood before Belle joined him, when they took lodgings in South Crescent (24 Store Street) just off Tottenham Court Road. Crippen was employed as the manager of the American based 'Munyon's Homeopathic Home Remedy Company' a patent medicine firm for whom he had worked in America, and now he ran the advertising side of the business from their London headquarters at 121-123 Shaftesbury Avenue (now Angels Theatrical Costumiers).

When he paid a return visit to America in 1901-02, Crippen moved Belle into an apartment in Guilford Street (difficult to place as most of the houses in the street were then described as apartments or boarding houses) and, on his return to England, the couple took lodgings at 34 Store Street (above the present Olivelli's Hotel) - the South Crescent buildings having been demolished and replaced by the staff residence (now 'Imagination') for Bourne and Hollingsworth's store. The Crippens moved three doors down from 34 to 37 Store

Street (above the present 'West One Business Services') where they remained for about two years before finally moving up-market by leasing at £52 per annum, the semi-detached house at 39 Hilldrop Crescent ('a leafy crescent off Camden Road') on 21 September 1905.

By this time Crippen had moved from Munyon's to be physician to the Drouet Institute (The Dean Drug Company Ltd) at 10 Marble Arch but this business failed and he took over as manager of the 'Sovereign Remedy Company' at 13 Newman Street (now the entrance to the Post Office depot opposite the Rose and Crown). In turn this company failed and Crippen moved to the 'Aural Clinic Company' at 102 New Oxford Street (now occupied by the entrance to 'Argos'). In 1908 he returned to work as manager at Munyon's by then at Regent House, 272 Regent Street on the NE corner of Oxford Circus (now 'Top Man' in the old Peter Robinson building).

Dr Crippen held several jobs simultaneously and by 1908 went into partnership with a dental surgeon, Dr Gilbert Rylance, in the 'Yale Tooth Specialist Company', which had its (denture manufacturing) office at Albion House, 57-61 New Oxford Street. It was the Yale dental mechanic, William Long, (who had known Ethel Le Neve since she was typist at Drouets), that Crippen sent to purchase the boys' clothing for Ethel's disguise when she and Crippen fled to America by steamship. The site of Albion House is now occupied by the Rank Xerox company's modern red granite and glass Albion House on the SW corner of the New Oxford St/Bloomsbury St junction. It was in the old Albion House that Ethel Le Neve worked as a typist and bookkeeper, initially for Crippen at Munyon's (where another company doctor objected to her too smart appearance and requested a more sober habit of dress), then latterly for the Yale Tooth Company. She and Crippen (who paid for Ethel's smart clothes) probably started their affair late in 1906. Ethel herself was a Camden Town girl who lived with her parents at 17b Goldington Buildings, Great College Street, before she moved to lodge with Mrs Emily Jackson at 80 Constantine Road, Hampstead from September 1908 to March 1910.

In line with her pretensions to move in show business circles, Belle Elmore became Hon Treasurer of the Music Hall

Ladies' Guild whose committee meetings she attended each Wednesday in their own office in Dr Crippen's suite in Albion House.

The scene is now set for Camden Town/Kentish Town's crime of the century as, on about 17th January 1910, Crippen ordered five grains of the poison hyoscin hydrobromide from Lewis and Burrows, the chemist at 108 New Oxford Street (now Cheng's Chinese Restaurant) and he collected the hyoscin and signed the poisons register on 19th January. The last time Belle was seen alive was at dinner at 39 Hilldrop Crescent on 31 January and on 2nd and 9th February Crippen pawned, for a total of £195, some of Belle's jewellery at Attenborough's Pawnbrokers, 142 Oxford Street (now a 'Burger King' outlet).

On 20 February Crippen took Ethel Le Neve (who was wearing a brooch of Belle's) to the annual ball of the Music Hall Ladies' Guild Benevolent Fund at the Criterion. Ethel moved into 39 Hilldrop Crescent on 12 March and Inspector Dew of Scotland Yard interviewed Crippen about Belle's disappearance at Albion House where Crippen wrote his statement in between medical consultations and pulling patients' teeth. Inspector Dew and Dr Crippen once took a working lunch together at a nearby Holborn restaurant but increasing police interest caused Crippen to organise a disguise for Ethel and the couple left London in haste on 9 July. Inspector Dew discovered Belle's remains (poisoned with hyoscin) beneath the cellar floor of No 39 some four days later. Crippen and Le Neve (under the names of Mr and Master Robinson) were arrested by Dew at sea off Canada on 31 July. The doctor was tried at the Old Bailey 18-21 October 1910 and executed at Pentonville on 23 November.

No 39 was 'damaged beyond repair' by bombing in the Second World War and the southern half of Margaret Bondfield House was built on the site.

Robin Woolven

This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society, c/o Hampstead Central Library, Avenue Road, NW3. It is edited by John Richardson, 32 Ellington Street, London N7 8PL (071-607 1628), to whom all contributions should be sent.

newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 133
Sep 1992

The Streets of West Hampstead

Thurs 10 Sept, 7.30
Broomsleigh Street Community Centre
Broomsleigh Street, off Mill Lane,
NW6

Many members will already have seen our new publication The Streets of West Hampstead, published in the last few months under the editorship of Christopher Wade. Already 800 copies have been distributed for sale, which is very good indeed.

Four members of the group will be giving short talks on the areas they researched, and the delights they unearthed, at this meeting in September.

Kentish Town Group

Some members have said that they would like to join the group researching the history of Kentish Town with a view to producing a 'Streets of Kentish Town' book. The first meeting will be at 7pm at John Richardson's house, 32 Ellington Street, N7 (near Highbury tube station) on 24 September. Other volunteers will be welcome.

FOUNTAIN FOR DIANA

The fountain near the front door of Burgh House, erected to the memory of Diana Wade, is now complete and functioning. Diana was always very interested in water and the sound of it splashing over stones - she would approve of such a reminder of her.

Leonine Delights

Mond, 26 Oct, 7.30pm
Chalk Farm library,
Sharpleshall Street, NW1

On the face of it, the title of our October talk 'The Lions of London' and the venue, indicates an evening relating to nearby London Zoo. However, our speaker, Valerie Colin-Russ, needs no rifles or nets to snare her prey, as her subject is immobile - the large number of lions which decorates the buildings and monuments of London, including Camden. They are rampant and dormant, but always entertaining. A bottle of champagne will go to the member of the audience whose guess of the number of lions in Camden most closely corresponds to the speaker's own tally!

The evening promises to be a lively look at building decoration. It is hard to resist saying that it should be a roaring success.

Hampstead Cemetery Group

As a result of two tomb-trails around Hampstead Cemetery in Fortune Green, conducted by Christopher Wade, a research group has been formed under the leadership of Dick Weindling. Its mission will be similar to that of the group which eventually produced 'Buried in Hampstead', a selective review of those buried in the Hampstead churchyard.

The Hampstead Cemetery opened in 1876 because of the overcrowding in Church Row. The burial and grave records are kept at the Cemetery lodge, and the minutes of the Hampstead Cemetery Committee are kept at Holborn Library.

The group is meeting at 7pm on Thursday, 17 September at Christopher Wade's house, 28 Willoughby Road, NW3. Other volunteers are very welcome.

South for Satisfaction

Joan Barraclough has sent us her annual report of the Society's summer outing:

'It was southward again for Camden History Society. The destinations were Faversham and then the historic Chatham Dockyard. Both offered so much that it was impossible to see everything in one visit. There may be CHS members who will try to go again and spend more time on one or other. Faversham first, with over 400 listed buildings, a first-class Visitor Centre and very friendly inhabitants. There were those turnings, corners and by-ways so beloved of history enthusiasts, those thoroughfares no-one - thankfully - had thought of redeveloping and at least one excellent pub, the Ship, a coaching inn keeping up traditions of good service, with beams and carving. Perhaps the only criticism was that a pub lunch would have been a better choice than a picnic meal. It was hard to find anywhere to sit down to eat sandwiches.

At Chatham, the historic Dockyard, no longer needed by the Navy, is a working museum splendidly organised. The entrance ticket carries a clear map with notes of what to see. Perhaps a full day or more than one visit would be required to cover the distances. Otherwise, it was best to choose the sites of most interest. The Visitor Centre would always come first, with its presentation of the long development from wooden walls down to atomic submarines. Impressive was the case showing a three-decker afloat with a submarine beneath. Of interest to CHS was the fact that Nelson (a north Londoner through his Kentish Town relatives) joined the Navy at Chatham. It was here he saw the Victory built of Kentish timber. There was one fascinating diagram showing the careful sectional cutting of trees to give the pieces and shapes of timber needed for ships - the 'knees' especially being hard to procure.

The Gannet was there undergoing restoration following a long career, as Mercury, a rigorous training ship and of other interest as a surviving 1880s vessel. A paddle steamer was giving cruises (time too short to permit this), while Admiral, the heavy horse, stood patiently as the important technique of harnessing him correctly was demonstrated. He gives wagon rides and is to make a sponsored walk to Portsmouth to raise funds for his successor when he retires. Technology again - how many members have ever seen how ropes are

made? The Victory, it seems, used 20 miles of cordage and modern demand, if not from ships, is such that the ropery, a quarter-mile long, is working commercially and at a profit.

Buildings: the Georgian was as good as Hampstead. This especially applies to the magnificent Commissioner's house with its garden, which provided a rest before tea and home. Perhaps it was rather hot (the weather) but it would have been very unpleasant if it had rained all day. Tea one wants hot as it was, fresh and strong - a real sailor's cuppa with scones and cream.'

NB The Society hopes to go to Blenheim in 1993.

A View of London (cont)

Roy Allen has also been having thoughts about the view over London from Highgate published in Newsletter 130 (see also No. 132):

'The best clue to the vantage point seems to be the long fence which runs diagonally downhill across the foreground, with St Paul's in the distance. This appears to rule out Parliament Hill: the course of the fence cannot be equated with any of the nearby field boundaries on Tompson's map of St Pancras (c1800).

The Burdett-Coutts estate is more promising. Tompson suggests that a good view could be obtained from Seventeen Acre Field; a likely spot is near a corner where the boundary hedge or fence, having approached from due east, turns NNW to climb uphill. This corner, with the field to the south and west, would now be about 38 yards below Makepeace Avenue, 52 yards east of Hillway.

An objection is that, from this contour, the cross on top of St Paul's projects above the horizon, whereas the print has the two on the same level; but perhaps the artist decided that the effect would be more pleasing if the cathedral, cross and all, fitted neatly into the skyline.

If the vantage point was near the field corner, the long fence presumably marks the course of Swains Lane. The upper end of the fence may be concealed by rising ground at the foot of Traitors Hill, whose summit is now a wooded knoll 95 yards east of Hillway, alongside a footpath between Makepeace Avenue and Oakeshott Avenue.

CRESSY OR CRECY?

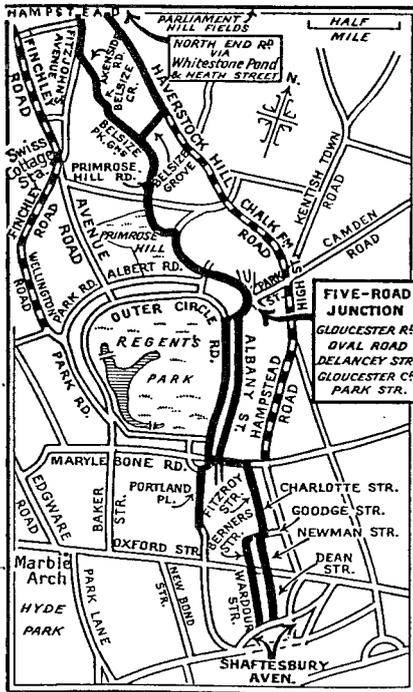
In *The Streets of Belsize* (p85), it was asked why Cressy Road (obviously, because of its proximity to Agincourt Rd, named after the battle), was not spelt Crecy. Roy Allen writes to say that the spelling Cressy was a usual anglicised way at the time the road was built. During the recent visit to Chatham Dockyard he noted that in 1853 a ship was launched there called HMS Cressy.

RIBA POSTCARDS

RIBA (the Royal Institute of British Architects) is selling some delightful postcards of drawings from its collections. Of particular interest to Camden people are Nos 2118, 3536, and 3530; the first two show various aspects of the Highpoint flats in Highgate, and the last the coffee room in St Pancras Room. They are in full colour and available at the RIBA Bookshop (where the other designs are on display) at 66 Portland Place, for 35p each.

Hampstead and Central London

From Haverstock Hill or Heath-street, Hampstead, the solid black lines indicate a good traffic-free route to Marylebone - road. Akenside-road is easily picked up just as the descent of Fitzjohn's-avenue begins. In Marylebone-road, Fitzroy-street is the turning with the beacons. At the southern end Wardour-street is one-way for north-bound traffic between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. and Dean-street is one-way for south-bound traffic between the same hours. Akenside-road can be reached from Finchley - road via Froggnal-lane and Arkwright-road.

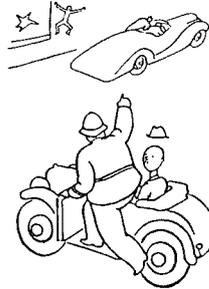
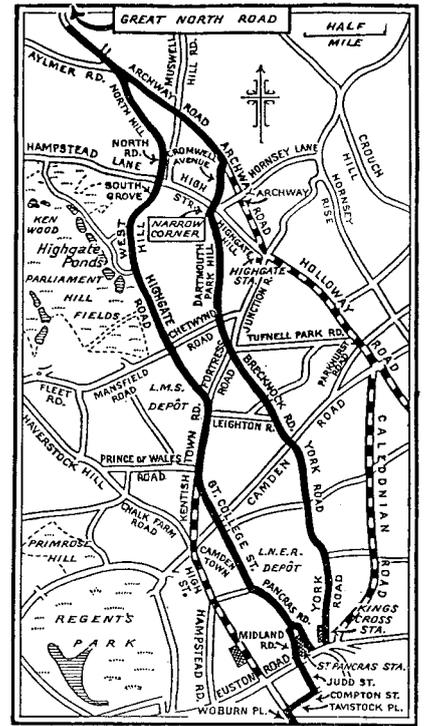


Don't swish too closely past those you overtake.

To the Great North Road

Officially, A1, the Great North Road starts at St. Paul's Cathedral, but to choose Goswell-road and Holloway-road for leaving London en route for, say, Edinburgh would not be wise.

Either of the routes shown in solid black is surprisingly direct and free of congestion, though having few other attractions. At the southern end Woburn-place springs out of Russell-square. The Camden Town High-street junction is to be avoided at all costs. In the York-street route beware of the dangerous corner at the top of Dartmouth Park Hill.



Obey the policeman always.

Rat runs in North London

Robin Woolven has sent us two pages from a publication by the splendidly-named A.G. Throssell, motoring correspondent of the Daily Telegraph c1938, in which he suggests ways to circumvent the traffic jams of north London - there were, he remarks, side roads 'less busy, free from trams and buses, which the motorist may follow in greater comfort and safety and, even if he travels a little further, save time on his journey.' Rat-runs, in other words. We reproduce two of them here, for those who would like to try them over fifty years later. The routes which are 'congestion-dodging' are marked in thick black lines and those crowded ones which they avoid are in black-and-white lines. The alternative routes look quite promising.

Encounter with the Queen

Deirdre Le Faye has sent us an excerpt from the memoirs of Anna Maria Pickering, edited by her son, Spencer Pickering, published in 1903.

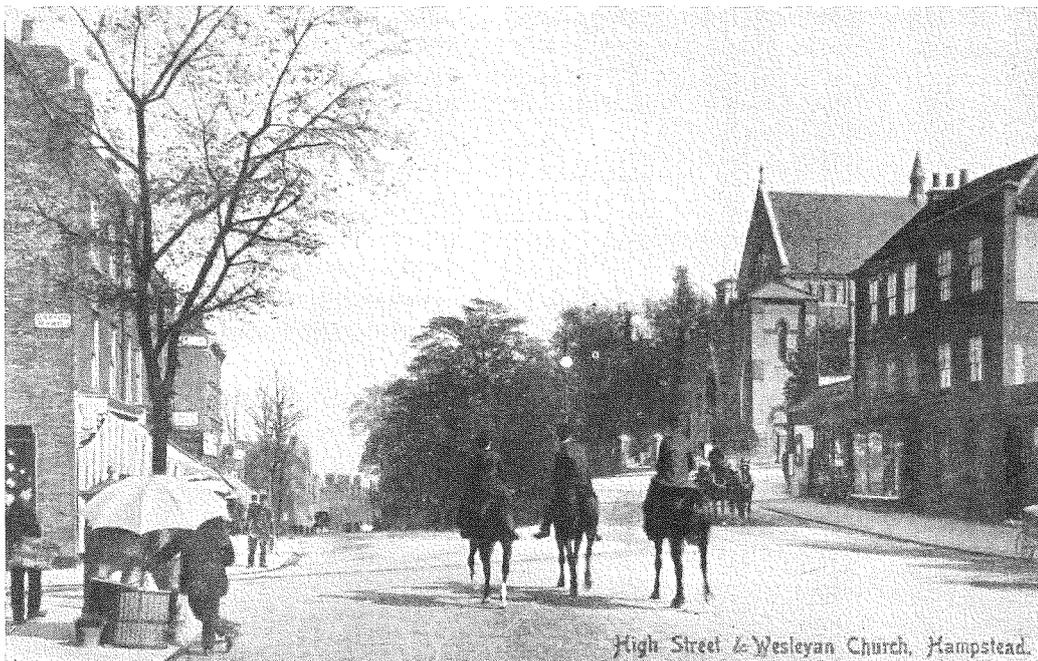
Ms Pickering relates: 'One day we had been for a drive in the country, as we often did: we had gone to Hampstead, and had rambled about the heath, filling the carriage with the flowers, gorse and may, that we had gathered. The road down from the heath was then nothing more than an extremely steep lane, with hedges on both sides, and so narrow, that there was hardly room for two carriages to pass. We were going down the hill at the very steepest point, when, suddenly, to our horror, who should appear but the scarlet outriders! The Queen was just upon us! There was only one thing to be done: we drove right into the hedge, on to the very steep incline, and there we waited. There was so little room, that when the Queen passed, the wheels of her carriage almost touched ours, and she actually stood up, looking to see if they could get by; but Prince Albert, with his greater sense of the proprieties, put out his hand, and pulled her down. We did what we could, but it only made the thing more ridiculous; we all stood up in the carriage, with our rural bouquets in our hands; and to make it perfect, the Queen, who knew my mother, turned round, after she had safely passed us, and gave us the bow, which she had forgotten in the moment of excitement....'

Most of the property about Hampstead belonged to old Sir Richard Neave. He and his two daughters lived in Albemarle Street, and we had to go to a large dinner there every year. He was an old family friend; indeed, the Neaves were connections of my aunt Andover, being relations of the Digbys. Every summer they migrated to Hampstead, and we used to drive out there, to spend the afternoon with them. Their house was Oak Hill Lodge, a low rambling cottage, on the top of the hill, commanding, at the back, the most glorious view that could be conceived. There was not another house to be seen from it then, and the prospect was so perfectly rural, and the timber so fine, that you could not realise that you were within a mile or two of London.'

CLEANING ST PANCRAS

Despite the recession, the cleaning of the old St Pancras Hotel on Euston Road proceeds - at least, we think so. One BR person jokingly said that actually behind all that scaffolding and plastic BR are demolishing the building. A Freudian slip, no doubt. Anyway, there is a small exhibition in the foyer of the Museum of London highlighting the problems and discussing the plans for transforming the building back into a hotel again when the times are more propitious.

An even less congested Hampstead High Street in Edwardian times.



High Street & Wesleyan Church, Hampstead.

This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society, Hampstead Central Library, Swiss Cottage, NW3. It is edited by John Richardson, 32 Ellington Street, London N7 8PL (071-607 1628) to whom contributions should be sent

newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 134

Nov 1992

A Tale of Hofmann and Brooke

Thurs 26 Nov, 7.30pm
Burgh House, New End Square, NW3

Our meeting in November is being held jointly for the first time with the Hampstead Scientific Society. The subject of the talk, to be given by Dr David Leaback, is a story of science and industry linking two Camden residents - A.W. Hofmann and Edward Brooke - who both died a hundred years ago. The Prince Consort persuaded Hofmann to come from Germany in 1845 to set up a college in Oxford Street, to encourage research and development in British industry. During the two decades that followed, Hofmann did just that and, in particular, initiated two of the first science-based enterprises in the UK. These very successful ventures were later taken over by the businessman, Edward Brooke. What happened next has parallels with current events, and reflects British attitudes towards science, technology and industry.

Among Hofmann's many discoveries was formaldehyde (18657). A blue plaque is being considered for his house in Fitzroy Square. Brooke's participation enabled him to build Athlone House in Highgate.

BURGH HOUSE HAPPENINGS

An exhibition entitled Magic Boxes opened at Burgh House on 3 October: it runs until 20 December. It takes as its theme the large number of books written for children which have Hampstead or Highgate connections. Much of the information and material has been provided by local resident, Elaine Moss, a well-known authority and adviser on children's books. The exhibition displays the work of over 35 local authors and artists and includes original material.

At the Hampstead Museum at Burgh House an exhibition begins on 9 January (running until 28 March) which might be called Charlton Aesthetic. It will show pictures by George and Daphne Charlton, who lived at 40 New End Square, opposite Burgh House, from 1932 until their deaths (1979 and 1991). Background information and any pictures, photographs and other material relating to these artists will be welcomed by the Curator. If you can help, please ring Christopher Wade (071 794 2752).

The Royal Exchange

Tues, 8 Dec 7.30pm
Burgh House, New End Square, NW3

The Royal Exchange in the City of London has recently undergone a substantial renovation, no doubt planned and budgeted in the days when there was money available in the City for such things. The present building, designed by Sir William Tite after Edward Jarman's building was destroyed by fire in 1838, is now used for several purposes - The Exchange as such, ceased in 1939. The owners of the building had the good sense to ask Dr Ann Saunders to write a book to commemorate the renovation and she will be talking to the Society about the history of this famous building and its predecessors. This is attraction enough, but there will also be wine and mince pies afterwards

NEW LIBRARY HOURS

As the cuts bite deeper in Camden more restricted opening hours for our Local Studies libraries have been introduced. As from 5 October the new hours are as follows:

Holborn Local Studies

Mon 10am-1pm, 2pm-7pm
Tues Closed
Wed Closed
Thurs 10am-1pm, 2pm-7pm
Frid 2pm-6pm
Sat by prior arrangement

Swiss Cottage Local Studies

Mon 10am-7pm
Tues 10am-6pm
Wed Closed
Thurs 10am-7pm
Fri Closed
Sat 10am-5pm

WEST HAMPSTEAD MEMORIES

Lord Finsberg has written with additional information for a future edition of *The Streets of West Hampstead*. He tells us (see p18) that the so-called 'Granny Drippen's steps', stairs which led off to a railway bridge by Broadhurst Gardens, were in his day, when he used to watch trains, called Granny Dripping's steps, named after a lady who sat there eating bread and dripping. He also notes that a shop called Dorlon once stood on the site of the branch library at the corner of Dennington Park Road and West End Lane. It was owned by a man called Lonnie Thom, who was a Belgian and had met Lord Finsberg's father during the 1st World War. It was a chocolate shop and probably could claim to be the first home-made Belgian chocolate shop in London.

A James Burton Trail

(with a dash of Cubitt)

Readers might be interested to know that a fascinating walk through conservation areas of North Bloomsbury and King's Cross was led for the Camden Civic Society by Diana Gurney on 17 October. We began by visiting the elegant Greek Revival church of St Pancras, built by the Inwoods (father and son) to accommodate the gentry who were moving into the area and for whom Old St Pancras was inadequate and too far away. We were allowed (through the kindness of the verger) to admire the elegant doorcase and honeysuckle pattern chairs in the vestry, and the remarkable round ceiling, with blue and gold decoration, over the gallery stairs. Leaving behind us some Cubitt work on the west side of Upper Woburn Place, we walked next through the still-perfect Regency Woburn Walk and past the intriguing features of Flaxman Terrace to Cartwright Gardens (formerly Burton Crescent) where we enjoyed the Regency facades of James Burton. Here, as elsewhere on this walk, it was impossible to ignore the great losses caused by the University's insatiable demand for space and new buildings.

On through airy Regent Square we went, to the unexpected oasis of the old burial ground of St George's Gardens, containing the chest tomb of Anna Cromwell (Oliver's granddaughter). From Handel Street (still in Burton land with more good facades) and past Coram's statue in Coram Fields, we were sad to see in Mecklenburgh Square a fine Regency terrace (Joseph Kay 1812) which had been spoilt by the addition of an unsympathetic top storey.

Crossing over Gray's Inn Road and past the old Royal Free Hospital (now an extension to the Eastman Dental Hospital, with decorative doorway) we found another burial ground oasis in St Andrew's Gardens. Doubling back through Pakenham Street, Cubitt Street, a good remnant of Ampton Street, and the splendid Frederick Street (more Cubitt territory), we had our

confidence in Camden's conservation work somewhat restored, only to be shaken as we discovered the evidently close-knit community of the early-19th-century flats off Argyle Walk, under threat of dispersal as the properties are converted to a hostel.

This walk through historic Camden occupies a very pleasant couple of hours and can be thoroughly recommended even if you do not have the advantage of Diana Gurney's sharp-eyed tuition. (Maybe we could persuade the Civic Society to lend Diana to us for a repeat performance, in return for a small donation to Civic Society funds?) Many of the streets show evidence of speculative building to broad Burton designs, and repay close study to see the truth of Sir John Summerson's remark that 'an individual Bloomsbury house would be a matter of assembly rather than design'. Perhaps a CHS Streets Group could be got up to tackle this area: it certainly needs a whole book to do it justice.

Cherry Lavell

REGIMENTAL HISTORY

Charles Fair is researching the history of the 19th County of London Regiment (St Pancras) during the Great War. The unit had its headquarters originally at 76, Camden High Street, a site which now has a Kwiksave store on it; in 1935 it became an anti-aircraft unit based on Albany Street barracks. Mr Fair's interest stems from the fact that this grandfather, Major C.H. Fair, was second-in-command of the regiment, whose colours and memorial are in Old St Pancras Church.

Members who have any personal reminiscences of the Regiment should contact Mr Fair at Cammocks, Hinxworth, Baldock, Herts (0462 743137).

SETTIMIO ALEXANDER

Information is welcomed about this 'Professor of Languages' who died at 76 Belsize Park Gardens on 9 May 1890, aged 53. Eliza Annie Foster was present at the death. Alexander (or Alexandre) was a son of the notable opera singer Josephine de Meric. Information to Christopher Wade (071 794 2752).

THE STREETS OF BELSIZE

Christopher Wade will be giving an illustrated talk about Belsize streets on Wednesday, 18 November at St Saviour's Hall, Eton Road, NW3 at 8pm, in aid of Church funds.

The Belsize Map of 1714

The Manor of Belsize depicted only in part or not at all on large-scale maps of 1762 (Hampstead) and 1839 (Tithe), comes to life in surveys of 1679 (William Gent) and 1714 (John Grove); each is at over nineteen inches to the mile.

Gent's map (at Swiss Cottage) also covers the Manor of St John's Wood, which joins Belsize at College Crescent; it was commissioned by Lord Wotton, who held the lease of both manors under the Dean and Chapter of Westminster. Grove made his map (at Westminster Abbey, ref 12450) for the Dean and Chapter themselves.

The two maps agree closely on topography but are very different in appearance. Gent produced a working document, with no attempt at embellishment. Grove turned out a typical estate map of the period, on parchment, in various colours, and lavishly decorated; north-east (not north, as indicated by the compass-rose) is at the bottom, giving a horizontal Haverstock Hill.

Grove's survey of 1714 (the date has been misread as 1734) is completed by two inserts on the map itself, one being a list of 'improved' rents. The other is a table of the forty-six parcels of land into which the manor was divided, with acreage and name of sub-tenant, and field name if applicable; this list may be compared with Deed 137, the 1679 terrier. Transcripts of both inserts have been deposited at Swiss Cottage, where there is also a set of photographs of the map.

The Bodleian Library in Oxford (Gough Maps 18) has documents which seem to represent preliminary work by Grove on the Belsize map and on one for St John's Wood. Folios 17-19 are surveyor's drawings of the combined manors, starting in the east and at twice the final scale. On 18 the layout of the Belsize House complex is identical to that on the map; and the field acreages are precisely those on the second insert.

Nos 20-21 are between them a fair copy for the whole area, mostly in colour and with different versions of some field names; 21 is endorsed 'The Old Survey of Belsize' but is almost entirely St John's Wood (the definitive map of this manor has not been located). No. 22 is a pen drawing of Belsize with the field numbers used on this map, replacing a provisional set on 18.

In 1718 Belsize House was occupied by Charles Povey, who had turned the mansion and its 25 acres of gardens and park into an entertainment centre; and the place was now called The Wilderness, a name which did not stick. The grounds took the form of a pentagon but Grove reveals that this did not always have the distinctive shape shown on maps from 1679 onwards. At some stage a strip of land, about 265 yards long and 55 yards wide, was acquired from the

Eton College Estate and added to the south side of the park.

The Hampstead map suggests that this strip was sliced off what by 1762 was appropriately known as Brick Wall Field. Nowadays the strip would be on the line of the middle leg of Lancaster Grove, running westwards from No 41 and its back garden (on the north side of the road).

Eton College received in return a Belsize field shaped like an isosceles triangle with a zigzag base. By 1855 this field, subdivided and partly built upon, had become enclosures 11 and 13 on the map on p6 of *Camden History Review* 17, illustrating Penny Hatfield's article on the estate (Brick Wall Field is enclosure 8). The apex of the triangle is now the corner of Belsize Park Gardens and Lambolle Place.

The evidence for the land-swap is mainly at Westminster. Grove paints the strip in a dark colour and his explanation is difficult to read, even under ultra-violet light, but it seems to begin "This part took in...". On the other hand the field, now outside the manor, is clearly annotated "This Exchangd for that part took into the Wildernes"; a similar entry appears on folio 22 at Oxford. It is not known when the deal was done; a likely date is 1663, when Colonel Daniel O'Neill started building the historic version of Belsize House (see Newsletter 131). In 1679 Gent ignores the transaction but shows the result.

Povey also built a chapel for the celebration of marriages, some perhaps of doubtful legality; and the fee was only five shillings provided the wedding breakfast was held in the grounds. This chapel ought to be on the 1714 map but not on that of 1679. The only additional structure at the later date seems to be a short sideways projection from the right-hand rear corner of the house. This might well be the chapel; if so, it was more or less on the site of 22 Belsize Park.

Why was this map made? The manor had passed to Philip Stanhope, second Earl of Chesterfield, and he died in January 1713. A fine was as usual payable for the renewal for the lease to his successor. It therefore looks as if the Dean and Chapter commissioned the survey so that they could decide how much to charge, an important aspect being the rents that would accrue to the new lessee. Grove had the map ready in July of the following year and the ensuing dispute is recorded by Professor Thompson on pp33-34 of his *Hampstead: Building a Borough* (1974). The outcome is not known but the Dean and Chapter were arguing from strength: they knew exactly what was going on. And so do we.

Roy Allen

ADVANCE NOTICE

Meetings to come include:

Mon, 18 Jan, 7.30pm, Chalk Farm Library. Gillian Gear on Industrial Schools

Tues, 2 Feb, 7.30pm, venue not fixed. Christopher Ikin on the Hampstead Garden Suburb

Wed, 10 Mar, 7.30pm, venue not fixed. Julian Litten on 'The Dead Beneath our Feet: the Post-Reformation Burial Vault 1550-1850.

Thurs, 22 April, 7.30pm, venue not fixed. Robin Woolven on Edward Walford.

Mon, 21 June, Annual Meeting at the Highgate Literary & Scientific Institution.

Book Review

The Heath Mount Register 1865-1992

Heath Mount was a famous Hampstead prep. school at the top of Heath Street (opposite Queen Mary's), which dated back to the Rev. J. Duncan's Hampstead Heath Academy of 1817. An advertisement in *The Times* that year offered places for 'a limited number of young gentlemen' and the institution gradually developed into a popular day and boarding school for the sons of local middle-class families. In 1934 the school moved to Hertfordshire, where it still flourishes. To celebrate its 175th anniversary, one of Heath Mount's ex-alumni has now compiled and had published (by the school), a selective biographical register of old boys (and recently a few girls) from the years 1865-1992. And he has revealed many of its distinguished past pupils.

Evelyn Waugh, 'famed for his bullying', dominates the early years of this century, notably because of the lifelong enmity with his contemporary, Cecil Beaton. At their first school encounter, '[Waugh] stood on his

toes and slowly thrust his face, with a diabolical stare, closer and closer to mine', wrote Beaton in his diary. Waugh responded later by caricaturing his enemy, as well as the Heath Mount headmaster, in his early novel *Decline and Fall*. Little wonder that other boys formed an Anti-Waugh Society.

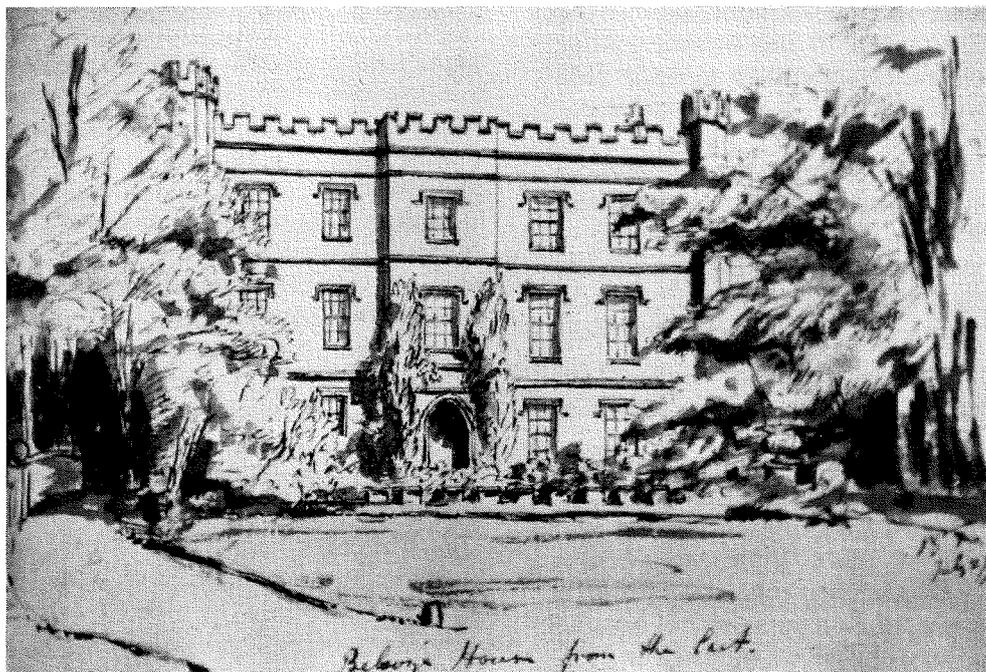
{Sir} Gerald du Maurier, the future actor-manager, became a weekly boarder in the 1880s, when his famous family, usually based next to the school, moved to Bayswater for the summer. He was accordingly forced to write letters home - mostly about the awful food, which are happily quoted here as a reflection of life at the school.

Other artistic old boys included Arnold and Clifford Bax in the 1890s and the singer, Ian Wallace, in the 1930s. The best-known commercial successes were John Spedan Lewis, who founded the John Lewis Partnership, and the Hon Esmond Cecil Harmsworth, who became Chairman of Associated Newspapers. For Hampstead historians, many other interesting local names, such as Bickersteth, Burnaby, Grylls, Hudson, Inman and Marnham, spring out of these handsomely produced and illustrated pages.

Copies, price, £15 available from Waterstone's in Hampstead, or by post (tel. Patrick Streeter on 0279 731308 for postal charges)

Christopher Wade

It was our intention to publish in Newsletter 132 the pen and wash drawing, by an unknown artist (1853), of the main front of Belsize House, to accompany the second part of Roy Allen's article. Unfortunately, the drawing, reproduced below, was omitted, for which we apologise.



Belsize House from the left.