

newsletter

No 201

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

Jan 2004

A Day in the Life of a Merchant Taylor

*Thursday, 15 January, 7.30pm
Burgh House, New End Square, NW3*

Over the past five years, Ann Saunders, in company with Matthew Davies, Head of the Centre for Metropolitan History, has been researching and writing a history of the Merchant Taylors' Company. This should be published in the next few months.

In the course of this she was asked to invent an imaginary account about a day in the life of a Merchant Taylor in the 17th century. She centred it around Sir William Turner, who was in fact a real person, and it is this account which forms the basis for Ann's talk on the 15 January.

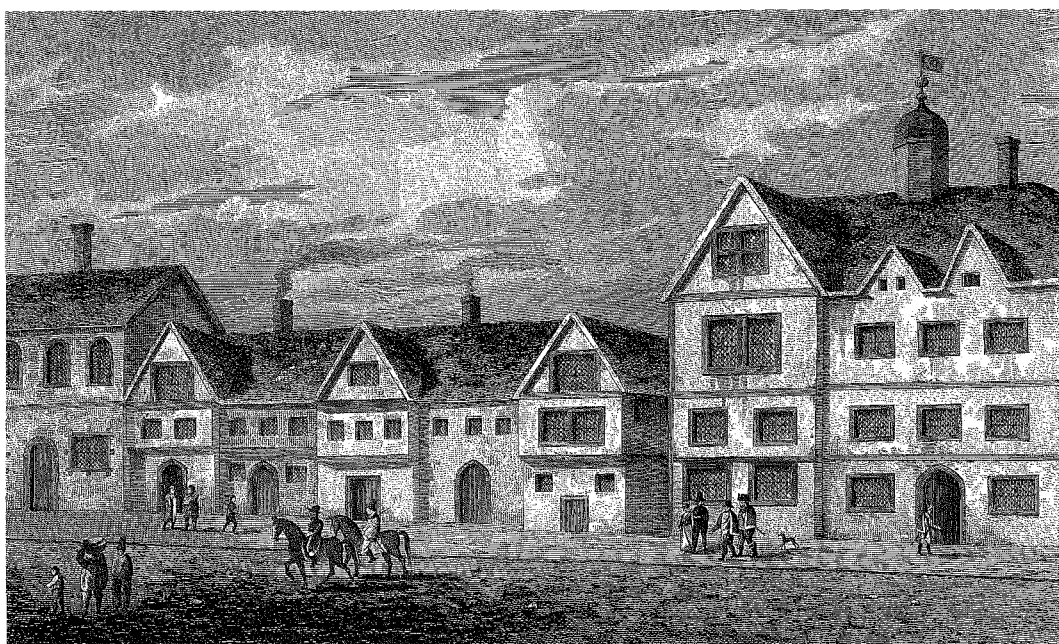
The Company, whose early prosperity depended upon the manufacture of the padded linen tunics which were worn beneath armour, and the making of tents, has had its Hall on the site of the present one at 30 Threadneedle Street since the last half of the fourteenth century. The drawing below, which also shows

adjoining almshouses, was made c1599. The building was much damaged in the Great Fire but reopened in 1671. It was again damaged in the last war and was reconstructed in 1959.

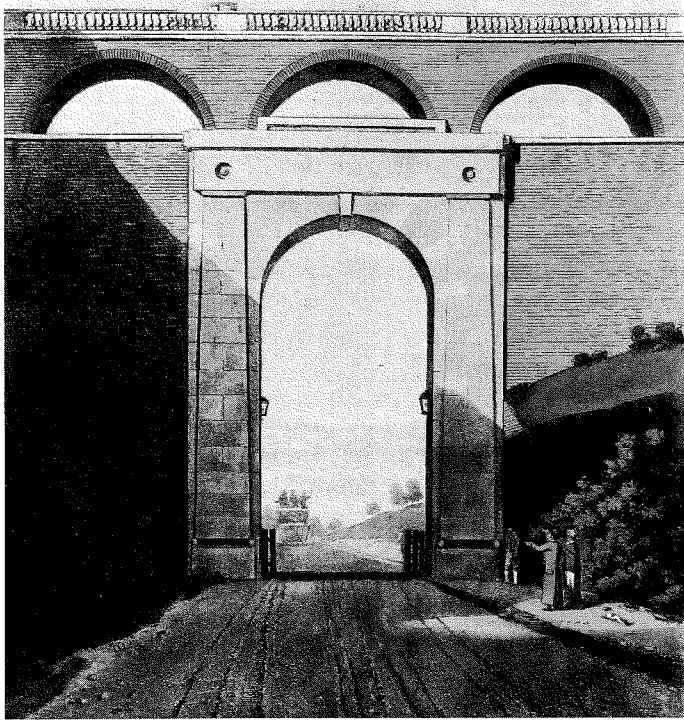
The Archway Bridge

*Thursday, 19 February, 7.30pm
Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church, 235 Shaftesbury Avenue, WC2.*

There was an inauspicious beginning to the construction of the Archway Bridge. It was originally planned as a tunnel through the ridge of high ground that stretched from the back gardens of Highgate High Street towards the general direction of Crouch End, and which carried the ancient route of Hornsey Lane. The hill up to Highgate was a hard one to climb in winter, especially for animals pulling loads, and the tunnel was proposed to avoid that incline and join up with the Great North Road beyond Highgate Village. Work on an arched tunnel began early in 1812 (against the protests of the innkeepers of Highgate Village, whose trade was threatened by the bypass), but to much rejoicing in that quarter the tunnel collapsed in the early hours of 13 April.



Merchant Taylors' Hall and almshouses in Threadneedle Street in the 16th century.



John Nash's old Archway Bridge depicted in 1814.

Bravely, the Company responsible decided instead to create a cutting through the ridge and bridge it, so that Hornsey Lane was carried on the new bridge designed by John Nash.

The story of this enterprise and its subsequent history is the subject of Simon Morris's talk in February. Members who have heard him talk to the Society before will know that he is a very entertaining speaker.

Advance Notice

Please put the following events in your new diary:

18 March: Tim Heath reading Lytton Strachey's *Ermyntrode and Esmeralda*, in the character and costume of Strachey. At Burgh House.

22 April: James Roose-Evans on the history of the Hampstead Theatre Club. At the The Space, Hampstead Theatre.

13 May: Michael Hall on St Michael's Church, Camden Town – a masterpiece by Bodley and Garner. At the church.

17 June: Annual General Meeting at Rosslyn Hill Chapel. Afterwards, *More Camden Characters*, mini-portraits of lesser known Camden residents, presented by members of the Society. As mentioned in the last *Newsletter*, Christopher Wade (7794 2752) would be interested to hear suggestions from members who would like to participate in this.

15 July: Gene Adams on two 18th-century Black figures in Camden.

August: Outing to Warkton Church and Boughton House.

Our new website

David Hayes has been working hard to achieve a new website facility for the Society. If now you tap in www.camdenet.org.uk/groups/chs/ you will get through to the new set up for the Society. It is not yet fully informed, but a start has been made. Apart from forthcoming talks and general information about the Society, it also includes an up-to-date index of entries in the *Newsletter* and the *Camden History Review* since their inception – this too was compiled by David Hayes and is immensely useful for research.

A new editor for the Review

The last excellent edition of the *Review* was edited by David Hayes. He has now agreed to take on the responsibility for that publication on a permanent basis, while Peter Woodford continues his role as general Editor of Publications.

Contributors should contact David at 62 Garrison Lane, Chessington, Surrey, KT9. His telephone number is 020 8397 6752 and his email is david.hayes@camden.gov.uk.

Lots of Publications

The Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre at Holborn Library now stocks approximately 174 local history publications – books, maps and postcards – including all the Camden History Society publications in print. Have you visited recently to browse through the selection?

The latest items for sale are:

London's New River by Robert Ward. (Historical Publications £17.95)

St Pancras Station by Jack Simmons, revised and with a new chapter by Robert Thorne. (Historical Publications, £15.95)

Feeding London. A Taste of History by Richard Tames. (Historical Publications £16.96)

Map of Hampstead Heath. (Mapu Publications, £5.99)

Streets of Camden Town. (Camden History Society, £5.95).

The full list of publications can be obtained by sending a stamped addressed envelope to the Centre at Holborn Library, 32-38 Theobalds Road, WC1X 8PA, or by accessing their website www.camden.gov.uk/localstudies.

Malcolm Holmes

HUNGARIAN DESIGNERS OF HAMPSTEAD

An unusual exhibition opens at Hampstead Museum, Burgh House on 14 March (until 16 May). In conjunction with the Hungarian Cultural Institute, the Museum will be exhibiting a photographic corridor display of some key Hungarian designers who lived in the Hampstead environs. Designers featured are: Marcel Breuer – designer of the Isokon chair and other classic furniture for the Isokon flats in Lawn Road; photographs by the *avant garde* photographer Laszlo Moholy-Nagy; and architectural and furniture designs by the modernist architect, Erno Goldfinger.

Competition time

The answers to the Camden Quiz set by Christopher Wade in the last *Newsletter* are as follows:

1. Vane House goes

- a) Where was it? – Rosslyn Hill
- b) Why so called? – From its occupant, Sir Henry Vane
- x) Where did it go? – To dust

2. Keats in St Pancras

- a) When? – 1820
- b) Where? – Wesleyan Place/Mortimer Terrace

3. Coleridge at Highgate

- a) When? – In April 1816
- b) Where? – Moreton House, South Grove
- x) On which drug? – Opium

4. Hawksmoor in Holborn

- a) Which church? – St George's, Bloomsbury
- b) When consecrated? – 1731
- x) Gin Lane

5. A Bit of Denmark in Camden

- a) Which church? – St Katharine's
- b) Where? – Regent's Park
- x) What links it with Harald Bluetooth? – Jelling Stone erected outside.

6. Milton in Camden

- a) When? – 1647-9
- b) Where? – Between Little and Great Turnstile, near Lincoln's Inn Fields.
- x) What did he write there about Charles I's executioners? – *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*

7. Jane Austen and Hampstead

- a) What connection? – Relatives buried in Hampstead churchyard
- b) Who was Philadelphia Hancock? – An aunt (buried at Hampstead)
- x) Did Jane come to Hampstead? – Possibly

8. The Hampstead Heath Rail Disaster

- a) When? – Easter 1892
- b) Why? – Caused initially by a heavy rainstorm and a rush of people to get on a train, then by the bad positioning of the ticket office
- x) How many crushed to death? – Two women and 6 boys.

9. Leg of Mutton Pearls

- a) What sort of pearls? – freshwater mussels

- b) Where found? – Leg of Mutton pond
- x) Where are they now? – Hampstead Museum

10) One Hundred Up

- a) The 100th edition of what? The *Newsletter*
- b) Who was the editor? – John Richardson
- x) Who said he would be "very surprised if I am writing this in 2004?" – John Richardson

The best set of replies was sent in by John Peach – a £10 book token will be sent to him.

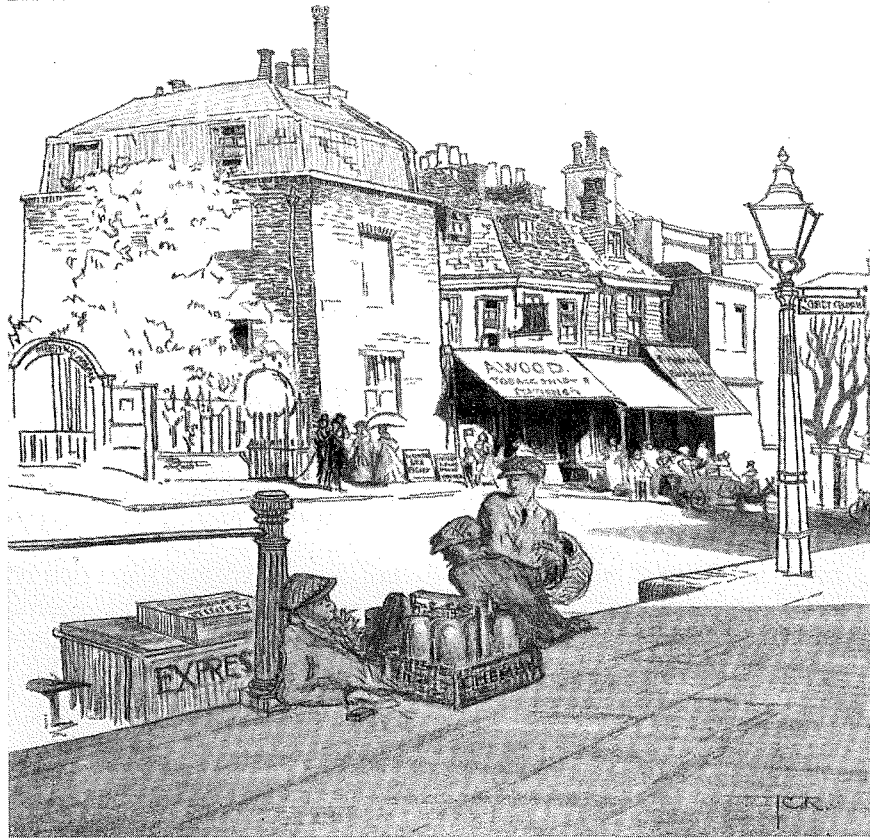
Below is the solution to the ingenious and devilish crossword set by David Hayes – so devilish, indeed, that no member came up with the solution! Hidden in the completed grid are Belsize, Portpool, Rugmere, Tottenham, Hampstead, Cantlowes and (diagonally) Blemundsbury, all Camden medieval manors – hence the crossword anagram of a title, *Riotous Romans*.

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| B | E | L | S | I | Z | E | P | P | O | R | T |
| T | L | E | A | D | E | A | L | I | P | U | P |
| O | L | E | M | O | R | R | I | S | E | G | O |
| T | R | A | M | L | I | N | E | A | R | M | O |
| T | U | R | K | U | C | B | A | H | A | E | L |
| E | M | T | I | N | N | E | D | A | F | R | O |
| N | E | S | T | R | I | D | D | L | E | E | L |
| H | A | L | H | A | M | P | S | T | E | A | D |
| A | T | E | A | T | R | E | M | B | L | E | S |
| L | A | M | L | E | E | R | E | D | U | A | E |
| L | S | O | I | A | D | I | T | E | R | R | E |
| C | A | N | T | L | O | W | E | S | N | E | Y |

Years Ago

The 200th edition of the *Newsletter* also featured a list of names (where signatures could be deciphered) of those attending the first meeting of the Society on 27 November 1979. Some of the indecipherable names have since been recognised. These include Ian Norrie, proprietor of the High Hill Bookshop, Christine Bush and Laurie Saunders, both from Camden Libraries, and Norman Oatway. Viv Morris was also there, although she does not appear, like John Richardson, to have signed the attendance book. Ms Morris remembers that she was also at a prior discussion at an evening class – she thinks it was on London history – which raised the question of whether a Camden History Society should be formed. Anthony Cooper and Wilfrid Meadows were also present.

The Editor apologises for the fact that this item in the last *Newsletter* was not proof-read and there were a number of literals.



These two delightful sketches, above of houses in Heath Street, and below of Holly Hill, are reproduced from a fairly rare booklet published in 1916. The author and artist is Fred Richards and the title is 'Hampstead, being eight sketches in pencil with some letter-press'. Mr Richards explains that the booklet was intended first of all as an advertisement for the Underground Railway, who defrayed the cost of printing and publishing. It was afterwards suggested that it should be sold, and the proceeds applied to some public service. The Company has accordingly agreed that the edition be placed at the disposal of the Mayor of Hampstead in aid of the Hospitals for Wounded Soldiers within the Borough. Price Sixpence.



This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society.

The Editor is John Richardson, 32 Ellington Street, N7 8PL (Tel: 7607 1628, Fax: 7609 6451, E-mail: richardson@historicalpublications.co.uk), to whom all contributions should be sent.

The Secretary of the Society is Mrs Jane Ramsay, Garden Flat, 62 Fellows Road, NW3, 3LJ (7586 4436),

The Treasurer is Angela Bowen, 3 Oak Village, NW5 4QR

The Membership Secretary is Roger Cline, Flat 13, 13 Tavistock Place, WC1H 9SH, (7388 9889)

The Publications Editor is Dr Peter Woodford, 1 Akenside Road, NW3 5BS (7435 2088; email: Drswoodford@blueyonder.co.uk).

The Editor of the *Camden History Review* is David Hayes, 62 Garrison Lane, Chessington, Surrey KT9 2LB (020 8397 6752)

Our website: www.camdenet.org.uk/groups/chs/

The Society is a registered charity - number 261044

newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 202

Mar 2004

Ermyntrude and Esmeralda

Thursday, 18 March, 7.30pm

Burgh House, New End Square NW3

Our March event is a novelty, for it is a reading of a piece written by Giles Lytton Strachey (1880-1932) when he was living in Belsize Park Gardens. He wrote it in 1913, but it was not published until 1969. The correspondence between the two female characters will be acted by Tim Heath (recently seen in *Jellicoe – the Musical* at the Shaw theatre), in the character of Strachey.

The piece is an unusual one, best summed up by Michael Holroyd in his excellent biography of Strachey published by Penguin in 1971.

'*Ermyntrude and Esmeralda* was written as an exchange of letters between two fancifully naive, nubile and inquisitive seventeen-year-old girls, one – Ermyntrude – living in the country, the other in town. At school they had both pledged themselves to discover as much as possible about the untold and manifold mysteries of sex, and in their holiday correspondence they report to each other the dramatic results of their investigations.

'Everything from babies to homosexuality is ingeniously touched upon with an amusing air of innocence, piquancy and wonderment. But soon their investigations take a more practical turn, leading to some remarkable experiences that culminate for one – Esmeralda – in a proposal of marriage from a fifty-year-old general and for the other in nightly copulation with the footman. Implicit throughout this lightly-written story is a scathing criticism of those repressive procedures and taboos that govern the upbringing of most adolescents, especially young girls. Though *Ermyntrude and Esmeralda* was not intended for immediate publication, it is Lytton's most entertaining fiction and a genuine work of pornography.'

History of the Hampstead Theatre Club

Thursday, 22 April, 7.30pm

The Space, Hampstead Theatre,
Eton Avenue, NW3 (by Swiss Cottage station)

Hampstead Theatre has just been rebuilt, a culmination

of many years of temporary buildings. Founded by our speaker, James Roose-Evans, it began in the Moreland Hall in 1959 with professional but virtually unpaid actors. They rehearsed at the Three Horse-shoes opposite, in an upper room. Roose-Evans was, of course, following in the notable footsteps of Norman MacDermott's Everyman Theatre, founded in 1920, but which closed in 1931.

The Hampstead Theatre was obliged to leave the Moreland and Hampstead Council supplied them with a shell of a building on the Swiss Cottage site in 1962, where productions began in December. The Theatre, which had hoped for a small permanent building there when the whole site was redeveloped as a 'Civic' Site, was then caught up in the limbo caused by the abolition of Hampstead Council and of the 'Civic' site when Camden was formed. As members will know, development of the whole area since has been piecemeal, fraught with controversy and has even lost one of the few prestige buildings built on it.

The history of the Hampstead Theatre has been one of many successes, remarkable dedication by directors, staff and actors, and a perennial shortage of money. James Roose-Evans should make for an entertaining evening!

ADVANCE NOTICE

Please put these events in your diary:

13 May: St Michael's Church, Camden Town, a masterpiece by Bodley & Garner. At St Michael's Church, Camden Road.

17 June: (AGM) Some more Camden Characters at Rosslyn Hill Chapel

15 July: Two 18th-century Black figures in Camden, by Gene Adams. At the Upper Room, 8 Greenland Street, NW1

August outing to Warkton church and Boughton House

SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE

The annual subscription of £10 was due on 1 March; if you do not pay by standing order or if you have not already paid in advance, please send your cheque to the membership secretary, Roger Cline, at Flat 13, 13 Tavistock Place, WC1H 9SH immediately. If you are not sure whether you have paid by standing order, please check your next bank statement and rectify any omission then.

The VCH

The Victoria County History Middlesex project is once again in severe financial trouble. Over the last ten years the London borough councils which helped to finance the project have gradually dropped out including, regrettably, Camden until only Westminster was supporting it. Now Westminster is withdrawing its grant, despite the fact that the VCH is currently working on a Westminster volume. In effect, unless funding can be found, the Middlesex project will have to be abandoned and the staff made redundant. It would be very difficult indeed to restart it and to pick up the research threads of the present staff.

There is little a society like ours can do to help when the sum needed is so large. Nevertheless, your Council and that of the Hornsey Historical Society have each pledged £2000 provided that there is evidence that sufficient funding has been found elsewhere to guarantee the continuance of the project. Hopefully, these two pledges will shame local councils into shouldering their own responsibilities in this matter.

A DAY OF CLOSURE

The Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre at Holborn Library will be closed on Tuesday 30 March to enable the staff to attend a training event. It will reopen on Thursday, 1 April.

Walter Sickert at 6 Mornington Crescent

Further to David Hayes's interesting piece in the July 2003 *Newsletter*, on 'the load of codswallop' served up by Patricia Cornwell.

Walter Sickert had a 'special interest' in Jack the Ripper because, as his friend Osbert Sitwell explained, 'he thought he knew the identity of the murderer'. Unfolding the mystery became one of his party pieces. Sitwell – in his *A Short Character of Walter Richard Sickert* – relays the story, telling how the landlady of Sickert's lodgings informed him that she suspected that a previous occupant of his room – a shy, consumptive veterinary student – had been the killer. The fellow had aroused her suspicions by being out late on the nights of the murders, and then burning his clothes in the grate. But before she and her husband could inform the police, the student's health collapsed. He left London, and the murders ceased. She learnt that he had died soon afterwards. Sickert was delighted with the story and pleased to think that he might be sleeping in 'Jack the Ripper's bedroom'.

Osbert Sitwell fails to mention the address of Sickert's lodgings. but his brother, Sacheverell, confirmed to Daniel Farson (then working on a book about the Ripper), that it was 6 Mornington Crescent, the house where Sickert took lodgings after returning to London from France in 1905. And this is supported by the fact that Sickert gave the title 'Jack the Ripper's Bedroom'

to one of the many paintings he did of his room there.

It is also lent credence by the history of the house itself. David Hayes is perhaps right to say that 6 Mornington Crescent was not a lodging house, but it was certainly a house with lodgers. In 1888 – the year of the murders – the ratepayer was listed as Mr G J Jones. In the 1891 Census the house was still occupied by Jones, a stationer, and his wife Louisa M Jones, but also by R E Waller (an Egyptian-born medical student), Jessie Waller (aged 25 and living on her own means), her sister Isabelle, Ellen Anderson (a 'visitor' aged seven), another 'visitor' called Emily Manchett, and one servant. By the time of the 1901 Census, Mr Jones had died, but his widow Louisa was still in residence, and listing herself as a 'lodging house keeper'. Her lodgers included another medical student, Thomas Llewellyn, a young tailor called Arthur Flowers and George Wellstead, 'a secretary to a public company'. Ellen Anderson was still visiting.

Louisa Jones was still the ratepayer in April 1906 when Sickert was in residence, so it seems that we can imagine her in the role of the garrulous landlady telling Sickert of her suspicions about an 1888 student lodger.

Cornwell, of course, is in no hurry to acknowledge any of this. She does mention Sickert's story of the veterinary-student in passing, and with perverse ingenuity seems to suggest that, since (according to her circular argument) Sickert was the Ripper, he was perhaps also the 'veterinary student' and had lodged at 6 Mornington Crescent during the autumn of 1888. And if he subsequently entitled a painting of his own room 'Jack the Ripper's Bedroom' it can only be because he was the Ripper!

Matthew Sturgis

The White Lyon and Bell

Joan Hardinges writes:

I was interested in John Richardson's article in the November 2003 *Newsletter*, regarding the newly discovered Kentish Town panorama, and the existence of what appears, on the well-known King Panorama of Kentish Town, to be a Tudor inn called the White Lyon and Bell.

The Inn was known to have existed in 1713. At the Court Baron of the Manor of Tottenham on 10 February 1749, Elizabeth Odom of St Giles in the Fields, widow and Relict of Richard Odom, Pastry Cook, exhibited his last will and testament bequeathing various properties in Kentish Town to Elizabeth. The Court Baron described the properties as the White Lyon and Bell in the occupation of Jane Marsh widow, and seven cottages or tenements on the north side of the said messuage formerly a stable and three cottages, in various tenures, to which Richard Odom had been admitted tenant at a Court Baron held on 7 December 1713. Elizabeth Odom applied to the Court to be admitted to

the properties and this was granted.

However, Richard Odom in his will described the properties as 'all those my dwelling houses, messuages or tenements, lands, tenements and hereditaments whatsoever with the appurtenances lying and being in Kentish Town'. He did not actually mention the property as being called the White Lyon and Bell, although he had another property called the George, formerly the George and Falcon near St Pancras Church, which he did name.

Two years later on 10 January 1750, Elizabeth Odom again appeared at the Court and surrendered the White Lyon and Bell and seven cottages to William Francis of St Pancras, Yeoman, who was admitted to the premises. However, whilst the Court was still sitting a William Marsden of Lincoln's Inn, Gent, complained against William Francis saying that the property was his right as Hugh Hunt had made it over to him some thirty years earlier. He declared that Elizabeth Odom had no right of entry. A long discussion ensued at which a George Sayer was a defendant. The Court was adjourned until three pm when William Marsden returned to the Court but George Sayer did not so was in contempt. Therefore Marsden was admitted to the property. He then released the property to Elizabeth Odom who apparently decided to continue as copyhold tenant. At her death in 1765, it was transferred to Robert Upton and Sarah, his wife.

In 1785 William and James Morgan, farmers of Kentish Town, executors of William Morgan, applied to be admitted to the properties, described as the White Lyon and Bell and seven cottages on the north side, saying that Robert Upton had surrendered the property to William Morgan decd on 2 November 1765. However, this was contested by a Charles Biggs of Lincoln's Inn, Gent, who declared that the tenements were his right and inheritance as Hugh Hunt had made them over to him some thirty years previously. A lengthy case ensued and the Court considered that Biggs should be admitted. He then surrendered to Robert Upton and his daughter, Sarah Gambee. They then surrendered two of the properties, the White Lyon and Bell in the tenure of Richard Upton, and a cottage and garden in the tenure of Elizabeth Hawkins, to Joseph Wallworth, lapidary, of King Street, Seven Dials. Wallworth died in 1793 and in his will devised the properties to James Morisset and Robert Lukin, jewellers, both of Denmark Street, near Soho Square. However, as in the case of Richard Odom, he did not actually name the White Lyon and Bell. He described the premises as 'my two copyhold messuages or tenements at Kentish Town, one in the occupation of Draper Gardiner, the other in my own occupation'.

Over the ensuing years the site was redeveloped, and in November 1811 James Morisset and Robert Lukin were granted licence as customary tenants of the manor to demise and let a newly erected messuage being the centre house of three new messuages where two copyhold messuages had formerly stood, to Harrison of Battle Bridge, Gent. The other six cottages

had been surrendered in 1790 to Sarah Gambee's son William.

Frederick King would have remembered the White Lyon and Bell and seven adjacent cottages and accurately depicted them in his Panorama. The Inn probably was Tudor. According to the *Survey of London* it was of ancient date and the principal inn of entertainment on the road, but the Court Baron books do not survive before 1722, to prove this.

Sources: Manor of Tottenham Court Minute Book M/90/036 (LMA)

Court Baron Books M/90/1 and M/90/2 (LMA)

Will of Richard Odom PROB11/771 (FRC)

Will of Joseph Wallworth PROB11/1236 (FRC)

Survey of London – Vol XIX Old St Pancras and Kentish Town.

I have not been able to discover who Hugh Hunt was, or a will for him.

John Richardson writes:

I am grateful to Joan Hardinges for delving into the Court records to produce this information on the White Lyon. But my puzzlement remains as to why this major inn does not appear in the Licensing Records. I transcribed them from 1721-1802 (a copy is held by Camden Local Studies) and it is most unlikely, however negligent at the time, that I could have missed it each year! Nor is there any pub with a different name that could have fitted the bill – the long-running pubs, such as the Bull & Gate, Assembly House, Anglers, Castle etc, lasted until modern times with their old names. Nor do any of the personal names above listed as in tenure, and probably therefore as licensee, appear in the list of licensees for the whole of that period. So, I am glad that the White Lyon was not a figment of King's imagination, but still mystified by its lack of appearance in the Licensing records.

Francis Thompson and the Camden Round House

In No. 8 of the *Camden History Review*, the late Michael Robbins contributed an article on the diaries of R B Dockray, Robert Stephenson's chief assistant on the London & Birmingham Railway. In his concluding paragraphs he attributed the design of the Round House to Dockray rather than Stephenson. However research for the recently published book, *Robert Stephenson. The eminent engineer*, edited by Michael Bailey (Ashgate £55) has thrown doubt on Dockray's involvement other than as supervising engineer for which he is due full credit. Someone with considerable architectural expertise was needed, but neither Stephenson nor Dockray were trained as architects and they delegated this kind of work. The first Company architect was George Aitchison, but he had moved elsewhere before completion of the line.

A letter written in Stephenson's own handwriting at the end of 1838, and addressed to Captain C Moorsom, Secretary of the L & B, records that approval had been given for the appointment of (Francis) Thompson as architectural assistant to Dockray for the redevelopment of the Camden Goods Yard, and the completion of unfinished stations on the line. The terms of

Thompson's employment are unknown, but other evidence suggests that he was an architectural consultant rather than an in-house architect and his services were called on as and when required. Early in 1846 he had completed the designs for the piers and abutments of the Britannia and Conwy tubular bridges on the Chester & Holyhead Railway, and would have been free to design the Round House. He had conceived and designed the first British locomotive roundhouse in 1840 at Derby on the North Midland Railway, and Camden was the second to be built. There is a strong possibility that the ironwork of the roof was designed by Grissell & Peto, as it bears a strong resemblance to their earlier work on the Euston trainshed. The main contractors were Branson & Gwyther of Birmingham.

Had Dockray's diaries prior to 1850 still existed Michael Robbins would have been in a position to give more information concerning the history of the Round House, for Dockray revealed far more in his diaries than in public, where he was reluctant to award credit to others than himself. His official obituary reported that he was a highly competent engineer but suggested that he was lacking in original vision.

Should any member of the Camden History Society have knowledge of the Camden Goods Station site prior to 1850, I shall be very pleased to hear from them by letter or phone.

John Rapley, 125 Poole Lane, Bournemouth BH11 9DZ (01202 574027)

A Place in the Sun

In February 2004 the first output of the 'Place in the Sun' project was posted on the web at www.a2a.org.uk. This represents 53,697 policies from 30 policy registers of the Sun Fire Insurance office from 1816 to 1824.

A team of volunteers, led by project manager Susan Sneddon, has worked on the registers since January 2003. To date they have completed the indexing of 38 registers, with more in preparation. Funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund has supported the first 15 months of the project. The London Archive Users Forum has also succeeded in securing funding from Awards for All to support the project to continue to March 2005.

The Sun policy registers offer an unparalleled source for details of the business, family and social history of the times they cover. From our initial stopping point of 1824, we are continuing forwards in time to 1830.

The period is one where records are especially valuable for family historians. There is an unbroken run of London-centred volumes, and Guildhall Library has an excellent series of London street maps (by Robert Horwood). We hope that the project will result in over 50 registers being indexed – nearly one sixth of the total of surviving Sun policy registers for London.

We are indexing the volumes by name of insured, address of insured, occupation or status of insured, and location of property insured (whether land or chattels). We are also recording other names and occupations of individuals and businesses mentioned in the registers.

The index can be found at www.a2a.org.uk (once you have entered a search term, choose 'Guildhall Library' from the Location of Archives menu; or choose the theme 'A Place in the Sun' on the Extended Search screen). Detailed instructions on using the index are available at www.history.ac.uk/gh/sun.htm. Information about the project can be obtained by contacting the Project Manager at firearchive@aol.com. or by leaving an old-fashioned telephone message on 07939 178246. If you would like to get involved in the project as a volunteer, you would be very welcome. Please contact Susan as above for details.

CITY MERCHANTS AND THE ARTS 1670-1720

Those members who heard Dr Ann Saunders give her entertaining talk on a day in the life of a Merchant Taylor will be interested to know that the written version of this is included in a book of essays by various authors, entitled as above, published by Oblong Creative Ltd, 416a Thorp Arch Estate, Wetherby LS23 7BJ, price £16.50 inc p&p.

The Camden Arts Festival

The Society is officially launching its next Occasional Paper on 30 April. The subject of this is the St Pancras and Camden Arts Festivals, which stemmed from the post-war determination of St Pancras council to promote the arts. The Festival eventually became, despite the lack of facilities, a notable event on the musical scene renowned for its presentations of rarely-heard operas, that drew music critics from near and far.

The book is written by Helen Lawrence, herself a professional singer and currently chair of the Hampstead and Highgate Festival. It is B5 size, has 136 pages and has 70 illustrations. It will of course be available at meetings and from Roger Cline our Publications Secretary, price £7.95 - more details in our next edition.

This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society.

The Editor is John Richardson, 32 Ellington Street, N7 8PL (Tel: 7607 1628, Fax: 7609 6451, E-mail: richardson@historicalpublications.co.uk), to whom all contributions should be sent.

The Secretary of the Society is Mrs Jane Ramsay, Garden Flat, 62 Fellows Road, NW3, 3LJ (7586 4436),

The Treasurer is Angela Bowen, 3 Oak Village, NW5 4QR

The Membership Secretary and Publications Secretary is Roger Cline, Flat 13, 13 Tavistock Place, WC1H 9SH, (7388 9889)

The Publications Editor is Dr Peter Woodford, 1 Akenside Road, NW3 5BS (7435 2088; email: Drwoodford@blueyonder.co.uk).

The Editor of the *Camden History Review* is David Hayes, 62 Garrison Lane, Chessington, Surrey KT9 2LB (020 8397 6752)

Our website: www.camdenet.org.uk/groups/chs/

The Society is a registered charity - number 261044

newsletter

No 203

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

May 2004

A Masterpiece in Camden Town

Thurs. 13 May, 7.30pm
St Michael's Church, Camden Road, NW1
(next to Sainsbury's)

Just as the vicar of St Mark's off Regent's Park Road got tired of people referring to his church as the one next to the Zoo, so no doubt do the faithful at St Michael's get irritated at being described as next to Sainsbury's. Unfortunately, the vast supermarket does now overshadow what is a masterpiece by the architects Bodley and Garner, built between 1880 and 1894.

Our talk on what Pevsner describes as an 'impressive' building, will be given by Michael Hall, an expert on Victorian architecture. Father Wheeler, the vicar, will be present. He tells us that the church has received the pledge of a National Lottery grant for the restoration of the west end of the church, but it is provisional on the raising of £150,000. There might be a collection!

Please note, that this talk is on the *second* Thursday of the month, not as usual on the third.

Camden Characters and the AGM

Thurs. 17 June, 6.30pm
Rosslyn Hill Chapel, Rosslyn Hill NW3

Our AGM this year is in Hampstead where Christopher Wade will be organising a second session of Camden Characters – short talks about notable, and not necessarily famous or particularly well-known, characters who have resided in the borough. We have one famous subject, Sir Hans Sloane, but we will also have Edward Rimbault, musical scholar and thief, Abraham Davis, an ambitious builder who developed the Holly Lodge Estate, and the Grylls family at Burgh House. Christopher would like another two speakers to talk for ten minutes – please contact him on 7794 2752.

We meet at 6.30pm for refreshments; the business meeting is at 7, and the talks begin at 7.30. Nominations for officers and our Council are invited. The present servers are as follows:

PRESIDENT: Prof. Christopher Elrington
VICE PRESIDENTS: Frank Cole, Christina Gee, Ann Saunders
CHAIRMAN: John Richardson
VICE CHAIRMAN: Christopher Wade
SECRETARY: Jane Ramsay
TREASURER: Angela Bowen
PUBLICATIONS EDITOR: Dr Peter Woodford
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Roger Cline
PUBLICATIONS (postal sales): Roger Cline
PUBLICATIONS (bookstall sales): Sheila Ayres
MEETINGS SECRETARY: Dr Peter Woodford
PUBLICITY OFFICER: Joan Barraclough
ARCHIVIST: Malcolm Holmes
AUDITOR: Geoffrey Harris

Council members: Sheila Ayres, Caroline Cooper, Steve Denford, Ruth Hayes, Jeremy Noble, Michael Ogden, Sue Palmer, Dick Weindling, Robin Woolven.

Nominations should be sent to our Secretary, Jane Ramsay, at the address on the back of this *Newsletter*.

The Annual Outing

Saturday, 7 August.

This year we have been able to make some Camden connections. We go to Northamptonshire, to Kettering for coffee (included in the cost), and we plan to see the Eleanor Cross at Gaddington, and the medieval village at Grendon Underwood, either before lunch or on our way to Boughton. We will probably have lunch in Kettering (picnic, pub or café).

In the afternoon we plan to go to Boughton House, the home of the Duke of Buccleuch and his Montagu ancestors. The house is a 500-year-old Tudor monastic building, gradually enlarged round seven courtyards, climaxing in 1695 when it was known as England's Versailles. It has an outstanding collection of 17th- and 18th-century French and English furniture, tapestries, 16th-century carpets, porcelain, painted ceilings and a notable ceremonial coach. The extensive parkland includes lakes, woodland, a plant centre and a tearoom where we can obtain tea (not included).

From here we go to nearby Warkton, where the church contains monuments to the second Duke and Duchess of Montagu designed by the sculptor L-F Roubiliac (whose most celebrated work was the bust of Handel, major benefactor of the Foundling Hospital). After the

2nd Duke's death in 1749, his London home, Montagu House, became the British Museum. We then return to London.

The cost of the outing is £22, and a booking form is enclosed. You are welcome to bring family and friends.

SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER

If you receive a subscription reminder with this edition of the *Newsletter*, please pay promptly because there will be no further reminders or Newsletters!

ADVANCE NOTICE

Please put these dates in your diary:

15 July: Gene Adams on Two 18th-century Black figures in Camden. At the Upper Room, 8 Greenland Street, NW1.

16 Sep: Geoffrey Fallows speaking on the Snakes and Ladders in the story of Camden School for Girls. At Greenland Street as above.

21 Oct: Jeremy Noble, *Echoes of the Wider World* in Victorian Primrose Hill, at Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel.

18 Nov: Jeremy Lamb, director of the Field Lane Foundation, on the history of the Field Lane School and Foundation. At Holborn Library.

16 Dec: Anthony Burton on Henry Cole and art: from agitator to autocrat. At Burgh House.

20 January: Ann Harvey on Eleanor Farjeon. Venue to be fixed.

The Elusive Hugh Hunt

At the end of her carefully researched piece in the March *Newsletter* on the White Lyon and Bell in Kentish Town, Joan Hardinges writes that she has not been able to discover who Hugh Hunt was, or a will for him. That is not surprising, for while he is named in a great many legal transactions he is elusive, not to say illusory, being a fictitious invention of lawyers involved in conveyancing. In the cases concerning the White Lyon and Bell, recorded in the Tottenhall court books in 1750 and 1785, it is significant that the successful litigants are described as of Lincoln's Inn, and as 'gent', indicating that they were attorneys. The cases are presented as though they were disputes, but in fact they were collusive actions of a type known as a recovery.

Landed property was often held under an entail (as it sometimes still is), that is to say it had been granted, not to A and his or her heirs and assigns, but to A and his or her issue, or his or her male issue, with remainder (that is, if the issue died out) to X and his or her heirs. Perhaps the best known example of an entail is in *Pride and Prejudice*, where Mr Bennet's estate was entailed on the male issue of one of his forebears, so that the Bennet children, all five being daughters, could not inherit it. Someone in possession of an entailed estate could not sell it or pass it on to his descendants other than those on whom it was entailed. Needless to say, people sometimes wanted to escape from this restriction on their freedom to dispose of what they saw as

their property, and their lawyers found a way of doing so through the device of the recovery. The origin of this and the legal theory underlying it are not wholly clear, but it was a form of action that evolved in the royal courts in the fifteenth century. In later centuries, as lawyers devised ways to satisfy their clients' wish to predetermine the descent of their estates more strictly, other lawyers (or perhaps the same lawyers) found ways of undoing the settlements, and the forms of recovery became increasingly more varied and elaborate.

In its simple form the recovery is relatively easy to describe. A is in possession of an estate which he wishes to convey to B, either so that B can enjoy it or so that B can convey it to A's representatives free from its previous restrictions. B comes to court claiming the estate against A, who calls C to warrant his title, on the assumption that C or his ancestor granted the estate to A or his ancestor with a warranty, i.e. a guarantee that if the title is successfully challenged C will grant A an estate of equal value on similar terms. C accepts the call to warrant, so that B's action is against C instead of A. After the hearing has begun C, who says that he was granted the estate by the mythical Hugh Hunt, asks for an adjournment, on the grounds that he may be able to reach an agreement with B out of court. When the court is reconvened, C is not there, and loses the case by default. The estate is adjudged to be B's, without the restrictions that limited A's title.

The device of the recovery, having evolved in the royal courts, had by the 18th century been borrowed by the manor courts in which land was granted to copyholders with descent to the copyholders' issue. From a modern perspective it seems a complicated and no doubt expensive way of conveying property, and it has resulted in a great deal of confusing legal verbiage in the record of the courts' proceedings.

Christopher Elrington

Arts Festivals book launched

The Society launched a new publication on April 30th. The full title is *Music, Art and Politics: a History of the St Pancras & Camden Festivals*. It has been extensively researched by Helen Lawrence, herself once a performer in the festivals. The book traces the history of this unique enterprise, from the time in the mid 40s when Krishna Menon, then a St Pancras councillor, decided to embark on a programme of bringing the arts to a wider public at very modest charge. Under the leadership of librarian Leonard Marcus it grew and grew, until the Festival was fully professional and had a special place in the musical world for its operatic presentations. These were ambitious productions, despite the severe limitations of the facilities in the hall behind the Town Hall.

Helen traces the Festivals to their glory days and then the gradual downward spiral as politics and political correctness took hold, eventually leading to their termination altogether.

This splendid publication is B5 size, 136pp, profusely illustrated and, as usual, designed by Ivor Kamlish. The comprehensive index is by David Hayes. The price is £7.95 – available at meetings. By post I am afraid that you have to add on another £2 for postage and packing.

Book Review

Trinity Camden Town United Reform Church – a brief history 1869-2003.

52 A4 pages, no ISBN, £3.50. Compiled by Donald Elliott with cartoons by Bernard Pike.

This church has been in the news since the proposed redevelopment of Camden Town Station includes its demolition, but many people may not have noticed it since Kentish Town Road is one-way at its site and so you only get a side view as you travel past.

The foreword mentions that many church histories do not make riveting reading since the church's ministry is slow and steady, but this history is an exception. It is enlivened by photographs and many cartoons, it is attractively produced and it is cheap! There is plenty of social history here, reflecting the poverty in the immediate area of the church and includes tales of the extra tribulations during the war years. One thing I learnt was that open-air preaching was practised near the Zoo in Regent's Park around 1875.

The present church replaced an Ebenezer Chapel built in 1835. Heavy traffic (including the heavier electrified trams?) necessitated its rebuilding in 1909 with facilities for social work as well as worship. Its ministry had been combined with many local churches as congregations dwindled – the church still benefits from the proceeds of the sale of the Presbyterian church on Haverstock Hill in 1970. The current minister looks after the Regent Square church as well.

In spite of the threat of development, the church opened up its Buck Street frontage in 2002 to make a more welcoming entrance and more light to the interior, which you can see on your visit to the church to pick up a copy of its history.

Roger Cline

TRANSPORT HISTORIES

The Local Studies and Archives Centre at Holborn Library is now stocking some of the transport publications of Middleton Press, all at £14.95. The titles for sale are:

North London Line by Vic Mitchell and Keith Smith

Hampstead and Highgate Tramways by Dave Jones

Holborn and Finsbury Tramways by Robert J. Hartley.

A full list of titles on sale at the Centre may be seen on www.camden.gov.uk/localstudies

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

While there is still a tendency for breweries and their ilk to rename pubs, Highgate residents have managed to get back an old name, the Duke of St Albans, for the

pub at the corner of Highgate Road and Swains Lane. This had been retitled the Platignum Bar.

However, the ultimate indignity is being proposed by London & Continental Railways, who have publicly asked for alternative names for St Pancras Station once the Channel Tunnel Link terminates there. How about London International they ask? Or some other bland name that only PR people can come up with. What on earth is wrong with St Pancras? Who are they trying to please? Surely not the French, who have put up with Waterloo and resolutely themselves stick to Gare du Nord. In the old days a letter to *The Times* would defeat this absurd proposal, but alas now you have to deluge some official with protest letters.

EXIT ST PANCRAS

It is old news now, but St Pancras has already disappeared in one way – the plaque at the east end of Gloucester Gate bridge, showing the martyrdom of St Pancras, has been stolen. It escaped damage when a vehicle ran into the adjacent parapet, but when the bridge was covered up by workmen repairing the damage, a thief prised the plaque off.

AN LCC MARKER

Bryan Diamond writes:

At the rear of Gainsborough Gardens, Hampstead, beside a gate leading from Heathside to a path along the triangular piece (Preacher's Hill) of the Heath, there is a knee-high iron marker. On its curved side are the words 'London County Council Boundary'. Its other side is quite rusty and I can see no inscription there. It is not shown on the Corporation's map of the Heath. When was it installed, and when did the boundary move north? Following the demise of both the LCC and the GLC, who now owns it? And how many others still survive?

NEW END THEATRE

The Hampstead Museum at Burgh House is staging, until 23 May, an exhibition on the history of the New End Theatre, which opened its doors to the public in the former mortuary of New End Hospital, on 2 April 1974.

THE FOUNDLING MUSEUM

London's first ever public art gallery and Britain's original home for abandoned children, is to re-open as The Foundling Museum on 15 June. It will be housed in a fully restored 1930s building in Brunswick Square, with a new extension designed by architects Jestico + Whiles, next door to Coram Family, which continues Thomas Coram's pioneering work.

A significant collection of works by the hospital's early artist supporters including Gainsborough and Reynolds will be re-united and displayed in interiors preserved from the now demolished Foundling Hospital building at nearby Coram's Fields.

Enquiries, telephone Rose Dempsey, 020 7841 3600.

West Kentish Town pictures

Ronald Dyer, who now lives in Karrinyup, Western Australia, has sent us some pictures of properties in West Kentish Town related to his family and the business of Herbert Godart, a relative.

PHONE: GULLIVER 4030.

ESTABLISHED IN 1883.

H. C. GODART & CO.

ELECTRICAL PRINTERS,
STATIONERS & BOOKBINDERS.

21 HAVERSTOCK ROAD, KENTISH TOWN,
LONDON, N.W. 5.



A letterhead in use in September 1939. The property was destroyed during the war.



The premises of HC Godart, electrical printers, at 21 Haverstock Road (no date)



A family home at 3 Lisburne Road (no date)

This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society.

The Editor is John Richardson, 32 Ellington Street, N7 8PL (Tel: 7607 1628, Fax: 7609 6451, E-mail: richardson@historicalpublications.co.uk), to whom all contributions should be sent.

The Secretary of the Society is Mrs Jane Ramsay, Garden Flat, 62 Fellows Road, NW3, 3LJ (7586 4436),

The Treasurer is Angela Bowen, 3 Oak Village, NW5 4QR (7482 5680)

The Membership Secretary and Publications Secretary is Roger Cline, Flat 13, 13 Tavistock Place, WC1H 9SH, (7388 9889)

The Publications Editor is Dr Peter Woodford, 1 Akenside Road, NW3 5BS (7435 2088; email: Drswoodford@blueyonder.co.uk).

The Editor of the *Camden History Review* is David Hayes, 62 Garrison Lane, Chessington, Surrey KT9 2LB (8397 6752)

Our website: www.camdenet.org.uk/groups/chs/

The Society is a registered charity - number 261044

newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 204

Jul 2004

A historic Black figure in Camden

Thurs. 15 July, 7.30pm
8 Greenland Street, NW1

At our July meeting Ms Gene Adams will give us a talk on two 18th-century Black people who lived a part of their lives in Camden. Gene has published an article on one of them – Dido Elizabeth Belle, a Black girl at Kenwood – in the *Review* (1984; 12: 10-14) and she will be continuing the story by recounting the adventurous life of Olaudah Equiano, a Nigerian who was bought in the West Indies, brought to England as a slave, given an English education and later calmly transported back to slavery in the West Indies. Eventually he bought his own freedom, returned to London and eventually became a leading campaigner for the abolition of slavery.

The talk is particularly topical, as 2004 is the UN Year to Commemorate the Campaign against Slavery, and the memory of Equiano is being duly honoured. Take, for instance, the Black Britons poll organised by the website Every Generation to balance out the BBC series on Great Britons, in which not a single Black made it into the top 100. According to a report in the 9 February 2004 *Evening Standard*, Equiano came 4th in the Black Britons poll, Ignatius Sancho, a contemporary of Equiano's also living in London (but not in Camden) and a trenchant writer in the same cause, came 32nd in the poll, three places ahead of Frank Bruno.

Equiano's considerable influence on opinion in the late 18th century was due in large part to the resounding success of his autobiography, published in 1789, which he probably began to write when he was living in Baldwin's Gardens, off Gray's Inn Road. From there he moved to Tottenham Street off Tottenham Court Road. Next door to the house where he lodged now stands the Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Centre, on the corner with Goodge Place. The Centre has honoured Equiano's memory by including his portrait amongst other notables of the area in a mural painting on the exterior wall, of which Gene has made a slide to be shown at the talk.

For the last major part of his life Equiano moved out of Camden, but not far – to what is now Riding House Street, which the locals still regard as Fitzrovia.

The August Outing

Saturday, 7 August

As announced in our May *Newsletter* we go to Northamptonshire, to Kettering and Boughton House. Full details were given then together with a booking form. The cost is £22, and there are still some places left. Please contact the Organiser, Jean Archer, 91 Fitzjohns Avenue NW3 6NX, tel 7435 5490 for more information and to book a seat.

The Annual Meeting

Officers and council elected at the Annual Meeting in June were as follows:

PRESIDENT: Prof. Christopher Elrington

VICE PRESIDENTS: Frank Cole, Christina Gee, Ann Saunders

CHAIRMAN: John Richardson

VICE CHAIRMAN: Christopher Wade

SECRETARY: Jane Ramsay

TREASURER: Angela Bowen

PUBLICATIONS EDITOR: Dr Peter Woodford

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Roger Cline

PUBLICATIONS (postal sales): Roger Cline

PUBLICATIONS (bookstall sales): Sheila Ayres

MEETINGS SECRETARY: Dr Peter Woodford

PUBLICITY OFFICER: Joan Barraclough

ARCHIVIST: Malcolm Holmes

AUDITOR: Geoffrey Harris

Council members: Sheila Ayres, Caroline Cooper, Steve Denford, Ruth Hayes, Jeremy Noble, Michael Ogden, Sue Palmer, Dick Weindling, Robin Woolven.

PROTEST CORNER

There have been serious rumblings, as mentioned in the last *Newsletter*, that the name of St Pancras Station will be changed to something quite bland like London International. This ought to be scotched early. Please voice your protest to Steve Jordan, London & Continental Stations and Property, 183 Eversholt Street, NW1.

Praise for Streets of Camden Town

In the *London Society Journal* no 447, Summer 2004 p23, John Hill writes as follows:

'Camden History Society's latest volume in the *Streets of...* series concentrates on Camden Town: from York Way in the east to the West Coast main railway lines in the west, and from the North London Railway line in the north to Bedford New Town and Somerstown in the south.

This history of Camden Town chronicles its origins, development and decline, and more recent rehabilitation. The area's progress is traced from landed estates (originally granted by Charles II) to elegant Victorian development, from social decline (with the coming of the railway and local industrialisation) to its position now as Britain's biggest media centre outside Soho. It is now cosmopolitan, vibrant, and well worth a tour-guide's visit.

The main text is presented in the format of eight 'Routes', intended to be walked, but so well written and presented that it is perfectly feasible and enjoyable to trace the Routes from the comfort of one's own armchair, following the maps provided. Street by street, buildings and their former occupants are identified and described in delicious detail.

This is an example of meticulous and detailed research presented in a most accessible and agreeable way. Fully indexed and modestly priced this book has got to be a best-seller.'

...And More Praise

Francis Adkin writes to mention 'the impressively high quality of the whole meeting held at Rosslyn Hill Chapel on 17 June. I am quite fussy about meetings (probably more so than most people). I like meetings which hold my attention by their clarity etc: my attention drifts rapidly when my attention is not held. At the 17 June meeting, the main thing was that the public address system gave extremely good clarity (excepting only when the speaker was not at the microphone: then there was complete inaudibility at the back). I find that at any meeting of any sort, bad acoustics can ruin everything. This meeting not only had good acoustics, it also had comfortable chairs, and good phraseology from the officers and speakers. (Incidentally I also liked the presentation of the accounts.) Speaking for myself, I hope more meetings can be held at this venue.'

Shops in Chalk Farm

Mrs Betty Phillips, who now lives in Clacton, has written about shops and places she knew in the Chalk Farm area when she was a girl. She was born in Cleveland Street, St Marylebone in 1923 and about the age of 4 she and her family moved to Ormonde Terrace

alongside Primrose Hill. Her brother was born in the Terrace in 1929. They had to move away in about 1933 because developers were moving in to update the houses and make them into flats. The family finished up at 56 Regent's Park Road, in a first-floor flat above the former Boys' Home. Below was a dry cleaners, and that was Mrs Phillips' home until she left to get married and move to Stevenage New Town in 1956.

She remembers many of the shops along Regent's Park Road. Starting from the cleaners beneath her, was Flaherty's the tobacco and sweet shop, then a café, and after another shop came a garage. Next to that was a factory that made veneers - she thinks called Souhami's. Further along was Mansis the greengrocer and a branch library and then a stationer's shop. Further along was a baker's, and on the corner of Erskine Road a chemist and post office and, she thinks, a pub. On the opposite side of the road on the corner of Berkley Road, was a grocer's who always had a barrel of broken biscuits by the door. Further along was a cobbler who used to live in the room behind the shop. Then came R & J Welsh ironmonger's shop which was always painted in a lovely shade of green. Also there was the cycle shop and the radio shop where she used to take accumulators to be charged for battery wireless sets.

Returning to the Boys' Home, in the King Henry's Road stretch, that was used during the last war to make components for fuses. The basement was turned into a shelter. The nearest bomb that fell was at the top end of Gloucester Avenue, which did not do too much damage. After the war a furniture firm moved into the factory and the last she heard it was a theatrical costumiers.

Mrs Phillips spent her early school days at Princess Road School, going on to Haverstock Central School which she left early in 1939 to work in the City.

SWIMMING IN THE POND

Mary Cane writes to say that she is researching for an MA dissertation on the Kenwood Ladies' Pond, which she hopes to extend to a book. She wants to provide a short history of swimming on the Heath, a section devoted to the facilities for women, containing interviews with swimmers and lifeguards etc. At present she is still confused as to which ponds have been used for swimming, despite research at the Local Archives Centre.

If any members have memories or information re the various ponds and their use for swimming, please contact her at 80 Burghley Road, NW5 1UN (7485 8233). Her email is mcane@globalnet.co.uk.

A WALK AROUND SOMERS TOWN

We are all invited to a Somers Town Trail on Saturday 17 July. Assembly is at St Mary's church in Eversholt Street at 11am, and the trail will be conducted by Malcolm Holmes. Various community leaders afterwards will express their aspirations and hopes for the

area, with particular relevance to the enormous changes happening there. The trail will last about one hour, and will end with a street party in the courtyard of the Sidney estate. This will also celebrate the 80 years since Fr Jellicoe founded the St Pancras Home Improvement Society.

A THEFT AT LYN DHURST TERRACE

Bryan Diamond writes to say that stained glass, a fireplace and marble pillars have been stolen from the Old Conduit House at 1 Lyndhurst Terrace. This gothic house is in all the books on Hampstead and there is a picture of it on the back cover of *Victorian and Edwardian Hampstead* by Alastair Service. Bryan is appalled at the theft and the boldness of the thieves.

CHARITY BEGINS RIGHT HERE

There is a new scheme for giving to a charity such as ours through your tax return if you are one of those taxpayers who completes a self-assessment tax return. From April 2004 you will be able to nominate the Society to receive all or part of any repayment which is due to you from the Inland Revenue. Any Gift Aid declarations you have signed continue to operate in respect of your payments by cheque or banker's order.

If you wish to make additional donations in this way, all you have to do is to quote our identification code which is LAA03VG at the appropriate place on the new self-assessment form. There will be a provision for the gift to be anonymous (which was not possible through the Gift Aid Declaration system).

Thankyou in advance for any gift you decide to make in our favour!

A Book on Frank Salisbury

Members may recall an AGM we held at Sarum Chase on West Heath Road, quite a few years back. It was a hot day and we spent most of our time in the gardens. The house was, from 1932 until his death in 1962, the home of artist Frank O. Salisbury, who specialised in portraits, murals of ceremonial and historical events, and stained glass. His sitters included 25 members of the House of Windsor, 5 Presidents of the USA, and numerous contemporaries. Significant locations of his work are at Buckingham Palace, the Palace of Westminster, the White House, the Pentagon and John Wesley's Chapel.

A new book is to be published on his life by Nigel McMurray. It will have 420 pages, 2 colour illustrations, 78 half-tone illustrations, together with a List of Works. The ISBN is 1-4107-3326-2. It is softback. For more details visit www.frankosalisbury.com. Or order a copy through a bookshop.

The Gardens of Hampstead

Now at Hampstead Museum at Burgh House is an exhibition on gardens of Hampstead past and present. This runs from 27 June to 26 September. (7431 0144).

Burgh House, incidentally, has been successful in raising the £222,000 to match funds for a grant from the Heritage Lottery, to renovate the historic house.

MARKER POSTS

Christopher Wade writes

In reply to Bryan Diamond's query in the last *Newsletter*, these posts were placed all round the Heath from the end of the 1880s, when the LCC took over the Heath's management from the Metropolitan Board of Works. Several are still easily viewable, eg on the north side of the Pryors, off East Heath Road.

W H Budden and the Primrose Hill Tunnel

In *Newsletter* 196 we published an item on W H Budden and the construction of Primrose Hill Tunnel, John Rapley writes:

The tunnel at Primrose Hill was driven, with some difficulty, through the London clay to a maximum depth of 68 feet. A deep cutting would have been a viable alternative, but due to the treacherous nature of the clay it would have required a wide swathe of land. There could also have been a problem in disposing of the large additional volume of spoil. Material from the tunnel was used to raise the site of the Camden Goods Station by about fifteen feet.

The Primrose Hill land was the property of Eton College, which was anxious to develop it as profitably as possible, and even before the tunnel, development began in order to demand higher compensation. In consequence Adelaide Road was laid out as early as 1830. The College required that the tunnel should be so constructed that it would support houses on top, and that their architect should be allowed to supervise the construction. Furthermore, they demanded that the eastern portal of the tunnel should have architectural merit and meet their approval, as well as supporting the gardens of houses in Adelaide Road. J C Bourne's print of 1837 gives an altogether misleading impression of the rural nature of the site. The design of the Primrose Hill portal is attributed to W H Budden.

Little is known of Budden except that he worked for a time in London as Robert Stephenson's personal secretary. In 1845 he was appointed head clerk at the Stephenson locomotive factory in Newcastle, and there he seems to have remained. No other architectural works are attributed to him. He may well have been a gifted amateur who was given his head to come up with a suitable design, and at that period several books of structural and architectural drawings for

railways had been published by Weale and others, which may have provided inspiration.

BLOOMSBURY IN FORMOSA

During the 14th International Virginia Woolf Conference, held in June this year in London, I led two walks for delegates around Virginia's Bloomsbury. The itinerary included her two houses still standing, at 29 Fitzroy Square and 46 Gordon Square, and the sites of her former residences at 52 Tavistock, 38 Brunswick and 37 Mecklenburgh Squares. When one of the delegates asked if there was a suitable book covering the topic and the area, I produced from my briefcase my copies of the CHS street guides *Bloomsbury and Fitzrovia* and *East of Bloomsbury*. The lady professor inspected both books and promptly asked if she could buy them as she was about to fly back to Taiwan and thought that they would be very useful to students and researchers at her Department of English at the National Taiwan Normal University. I obliged, so will need to replace my copies, but at least CHS street guides are now available in Formosa.

Robin Woolven

THE GOOD OLD DAYS?

Robin Woolven writes:

At the National Archive Kew I was researching the effects on Londoners of the great fog of December 1952 and found a file entitled 'Smog of December 1952: Report of Dr A E Martin of the Ministry of Health' (MH55/2664). The report concluded that 'substances in the polluted fog caused irritation of the ... bronchioles and so accelerated death in those already suffering from diseases of the respiratory and cardiovascular systems. In the present state of knowledge it is impossible to state that any one pollutant was the cause of death.'

Dr Martin's map shows that during the smog, the death rate in Hampstead and St Pancras was only 2.4 times that of the earlier period, while in Holborn death rates increased by 7 times. The consolation was that, as a result of that bad smog, clean air legislation was rapidly introduced.

OPEN HOUSE HIGHLIGHT

This year's London Open House Event in September includes 30 St Mary Axe, the 'Gherkin' designed by Foster and Partners. In all about 500 buildings will be open to the public.

A COLLEGE/TRAINING CENTRE

Frank Whitnall writes that he is seeking the likely whereabouts or any information regarding a College/ Training Centre (possibly called Camden College at some stage), which offered ex-World War 2 servicemen courses to qualify as teachers under the then Teachers' Emergency Training Scheme. The courses lasted for 12-18 months initially. My interest in this matter arose when I learned that a relative (an ex-RAF Navigator) enrolled as a student at 'Camden' sometime c.1946-1950.

If any member has information please get in touch with him at 106 Hardwick Lane, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP22 2RA (01284 753974). His email is whitnall@waitrose.com.

DR JOHNSON ACTIVE

Joan Barraclough writes:

A varied programme of events has been arranged for Dr Johnson's House at 17 Gough Square, EC4.

Most important is 'A Night at Old Slaughter's Coffee House' on 15 July. This has been organised jointly with the Library and Museum of Freemasonry, where there will be a talk and an evening of 18th-century amusement at the Freemasons' Hall, Great Queen Street. Costing £15 (7395 9254) it will last from 6 to 8.30.

Buried at St Pancras

A unique opportunity to learn more about the community came when the burial ground of St Pancras Old Church was partially cleared before construction of the Channel Tunnel rail link. Long associated with London's Roman Catholic community, it became the natural resting place for French émigrés.

Over 1300 burials were mapped during a watching brief, the remains of 780 individuals examined in detail. Of these, about 140 are named on coffin plates, including Comte Jacques Philippe de Marguenat, who died on 30 November 1793, Pierre Augustin Godart de Belboeuf (d1808), the last bishop of Avranches, and Arthur Richard Dillon (1721-1806) Archbishop of Narbonne and Primate of Languedoc, who was found buried with his porcelain dentures. Parts of 730 memorial stones were also recorded.

The human remains were exceptionally well preserved in waterlogged clay.

This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society.

The Editor is John Richardson, 32 Ellington Street, N7 8PL (Tel: 7607 1628, Fax: 7609 6451, E-mail: richardson@historicalpublications.co.uk), to whom all contributions should be sent.

The Secretary of the Society is Mrs Jane Ramsay, Garden Flat, 62 Fellows Road, NW3 3LJ (7586 4436),

The Treasurer is Angela Bowen, 3 Oak Village, NW5 4QR (7482 5680)

The Membership Secretary and Publications Secretary is Roger Cline, Flat 13, 13 Tavistock Place, WC1H 9SH, (7388 9889)

The Publications Editor is Dr Peter Woodford, 1 Akenside Road, NW3 5BS (7435 2088; email: Drwoodford@blueyonder.co.uk).

The Editor of the *Camden History Review* is David Hayes, 62 Garrison Lane, Chessington, Surrey KT9 2LB (8397 6752)

Our website: www.camdenet.org.uk/groups/chs/

The Society is a registered charity - number 261044

newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 205

Sep 2004

Miss Buss's Second School

*Thurs. 16 September, 7.30pm
Upper Room, 8 Greenland Street, NW1*

Nearly 21 years after founding the North London Collegiate School for Girls – a landmark in the education of girls – Frances Buss opened her second school, the Camden School for Girls. This was in January 1871, at 46 Camden Street, the original home of the North London Collegiate. Today, the pupils of Camden School in Sandall Road celebrate Miss Buss each year on Founder's Day, as well they might, for they are the recipients of an educational tradition in which pupils are encouraged to think for themselves.

Over the years the Camden School has had several homes, probably as many in number as the status of the school itself. Geoffrey Fallows, who until two years ago was a much admired headteacher there, has succinctly described his talk about the school 'Snakes and Ladders in the story of the Camden School for Girls'.

Echoes of the wider world in Victorian Primrose Hill

*Thurs. 21 October, 7.30pm
Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel, Rosslyn Hill, NW3*

Jeremy Noble is our speaker in October on the early cosmopolitan nature of his own neighbourhood. The area we now call Primrose Hill was almost entirely built up between 1850 and 1870. Unlike Hampstead, it was a new entity with no pre-existent nucleus of church, manor house and village street. Its inhabitants were 'suburbanites' to a man, woman and child.

This was the society lampooned by George and Weedon Grossmith, who knew of what they wrote, since they grew up on Haverstock Hill. But although Mr Pooter and his family are regarded as the archetypal suburbanites of the high Victorian age, they hardly represent the whole truth. The new semi-detached villas and even newer terraces housed a surprising number of people who had a much wider view of the world – either because they came from it or because, as servants of the empire, they helped to run it. Exiles, soldiers, administrators, economic migrants, foreign students, found at least a temporary refuge in the new development, and made Victorian Primrose Hill almost as cosmopolitan a place as it is today.

The New Review

Camden History Review no. 28, edited by David Hayes, is enclosed with this *Newsletter*. It is once again full of well-researched articles. Patrick Nother tells us about Randolph Yearwood, the notorious and troubled vicar of St Pancras during the difficult time of the 1660s. During his period in office he attracted the hostility of a significant group of residents and was thrown into the Fleet debtors' prison in 1676. The parish registers also reveal that Yearwood was performing irregular marriage services – about 100 a year in a sparsely populated parish.

Shirley Neale tells us about a quack medical establishment in Euston Road called the College of Health, established in 1828 by James Morison. He sold two types of pills, whose main ingredients were aloe and oatmeal. Only natural products were used and patients took at least 15 pills each day. But as Shirley Neale points out, Morison himself was a 'chronic hysteric and hypochondriac' up to the age of fifty, when he cured himself by the 'Hygienic Vegetable Universal Medicine' It was his Hygeian theory that he sought to promote at his college. All this and more from researches mainly carried out at the Wellcome Institute Library.

A charity, founded in the early sixteenth century and still remembered in buildings and street names, is the Eleanor Palmer Gift, described in an article by Marion Greany. The land she left to benefit charities in Kentish Town and Chipping Barnet was situated in that triangle between Highgate Road and Fortess Road – the latter road named after the Palmer fields called the Forteys.

David Hayes himself contributes an article on the Rev. Silvester Horne, preacher at Whitefield's Central Mission, Tottenham Court Road. The enterprise was amazingly active with an educational institute to the rear and numerous groups related to the church. Horne even had time to put himself up (unsuccessfully) for election to the LCC, but was more fortunate later when he became Liberal MP for Ipswich.

Silvester died in 1913, leaving a large family which included a son called Charles Kenneth, who was later to be much more famous – as the host of the radio programme *Round the Horne*. The family lived in Amptill Square.

ADVANCE NOTICE

Please put these dates in your diary:

18 Nov: History of the Field Lane School. By Jeremy Lamb, director of the Field Lane School and Foundation. At Holborn Library.

24 Nov: Visit to Senate House Library (University of London). 5.30pm (*see below*)

16 Dec: 'Sir Henry Cole: from agitator to autocrat in art.' By Anthony Burton. At Burgh House.

20 Jan: Eleanor Farjeon and family in Hampstead, by Ann Harvey. At Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel.

17 Feb: The making of the Foundling Museum, by Rhian Harris. At the Education Centre, the Foundling Museum, 40 Brunswick Square.

The Annual Outing

Joan Barraclough reports:

It was a busy day for Camden History Society members on the annual outing. If a drive through a medieval village is included, then there were five places visited. First came the attractive market town of Kettering. This has an interesting church and a very good museum. A vintage car attracted attention as did equipment for the Northamptonshire boot and shoe industry. Northamptonshire is, of course, Kettering's county. There were domestic equipment with china and kitchen utensils, as well as uniforms for the local regiment, plus a massive shield swimming trophy and fine silver cups.

The next call was a brief photo stop at Gaddington for the Eleanor Cross. This is only one of three surviving. The story behind them is that queen Eleanor, wife of Edward I, died when travelling with him. (It was not mentioned on the outing, but one was taught at school that Edward was hit by a poisoned arrow. Eleanor sucked out the poison from the wound and died. Her body was taken back to London and at each of the places where her body rested a cross was erected.) The Charing Cross now in the forecourt of Charing Cross station is a Victorian replacement for the one vandalised by Cromwell's puritans.

The highlight of the day was Boughton House, Northampton, home of the Dukes of Buccleuch. It formerly belonged to the Montagus, but the last Montagu married a Buccleuch, so that the house came into the possession of the Scottish family. The Duke of Montagu, who developed the house from a Tudor mansion paid special attention to a suite of rooms to receive William III. Their magnificence is almost overpowering. Unfortunately, everything is vulnerable to sunlight, so that time for dark adaptation is needed. There are innumerable paintings, and a bed with rich red hangings. Mortlake tapestries are everywhere. All this is overlooked by splendid painted ceilings.

The cost of these treasures, including wonderful furniture, may have been the reason why one wing was never finished. However, it contains an armoury, and there is also a magnificent coach. Grounds were splen-

didly laid out, though the two-hour visit did not allow very much time for touring them.

Grendon Underwood, the medieval village, had been passed on the way to Boughton House. The final call was, therefore, at St Edmund's the parish church of Warkton. This is notable for two Montagu tombs by Roubiliac, the French sculptor. He has seven tombs in Westminster Abbey but only single ones anywhere else in this country, apart from Warkton. These fine monuments are in a part of the church altered to hold them. It was the mausoleum of the Montagus until they went into the Buccleuch family, when all burials were in Scotland. Roubiliac also made a bust of Handel, now in the Foundling Museum in Bloomsbury.

Another link with Camden is Montagu House, which became home to the British Museum in Great Russell Street. One Duke of Montagu planted many fine avenues of lime trees and wanted to extend them all the way down to London and Montagu House. Unfortunately, other landowners did not like the idea and would not allow planting on their properties.

Visit to Senate House Library

Up to 15 members of the Society are offered a free guided tour of the Senate House Library, University of London, including the public reading rooms and a visit to Special Collections, with a display of printed and archival materials. This will be on 24 November, beginning at 5.30pm. The tour will last about an hour and a half and will conclude with tea and biscuits. The Library is on the fourth floor of Senate House and can be reached by lift. The route of the tour is fully accessible to visitors with sticks or wheelchair users and there are no stairs to climb. If you wish to take part, please send your name and contact details to Dr Peter Woodford at 1 Akenside Road NW3 5BS (tel: 7435 2088), or else email drswoodford@blueyonder.co.uk. Only 15 members can be accommodated, so admission will be on a first come, first served basis. Should demand exceed this number, we may be able to negotiate another visit at a later date.

CALL OFF THE DOGS

We have received a letter from Steve Jordan, Managing Director of Stations and Property, London & Continental Railways. He says that there is no plan to change the name of St Pancras station. The rumour was based on inaccurate press reports.

Welcome news.

A CHANGE OF USE

Readers of Gillian Tindall's *200 Years of London Justice*, published by the Society, will be interested to know that the Clerkenwell Magistrates' Court in King's Cross Road, unused for some time, has been bought by developers who plan to convert the premises into a hotel.

A NEW VCH VOLUME

Roger Cline writes:

Although there are funding difficulties for future volumes, the *Victoria County History* has published Volume 12 of the series on Middlesex, covering Chelsea. Patricia Croot, who contributed to the Hampstead volume (no. 9), is the major contributor to the new volume.

The standard price is a horrifying £90, but the publishers have made a special offer to Camden History Society members for orders received in September. You can buy the new volume for £67.50 and also a complete set of the previous eleven volumes for £345. If you want your purchase posted you should add £3 per volume, but you may prefer to collect it from a Society meeting or other convenient place by arrangement. Please send your order with a cheque payable to the Camden History Society by 25th September to Roger Cline, Flat 13, 13 Tavistock Place, WC1H 9SH. It may be possible to obtain individual earlier volumes at a discount – please discuss with Roger if, for example, you want the Hampstead volume.

Events at Local Studies

Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre is organising a number of autumn events at Holborn Library. These are:

20 Sept-11 November

'I came to Camden', an exhibition which explores the interconnected lives of a number of people of Asian descent who came to Camden to live, study and work over the past 200 years. Each went on to make a tremendous impact on the lives of others, both in Britain and also in India and Pakistan in the fields of arts, politics, medicine and law. They also contributed a startling number of 'firsts' – the first Asian woman to serve in the Special Operations Executive, the first woman to practise as a barrister in Britain, the first Asian mayor in Britain, the first Asian Member of Parliament.

The exhibition was researched by Mimi Romilly. Opening times are Monday and Thursday 10-7, Tues and Friday 10-6, Saturday 10-1 and 2-5. Closed Wednesdays.

Travellers Tales on Wednesday 13 October at 7.30pm, is a musical play which summarises the history of immigration into London, and then shows how the world has come to Camden over the last 200 years. Actors from different cultures portray teenage students whose teacher has set them the question: 'What does being British mean?' They decide to perform a play for their answer. This shows life through the eyes of local characters from the different communities who have lived in the area from 1790 to the present day. The show is performed by a local community theatre group – the Musical Flying Squad, the outreach team of Jellicoe-Neville Performing Arts. Admission free.

King's Cross Voices Open Day on 10 November, 11-6pm.

King's Cross Voices is an oral history project managed by the King's Cross Community Development Trust and funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the boroughs of Camden and Islington. The project is seeking to record the memories of the diverse local communities that have lived in and around King's Cross. If you would like to find out more, have a story to tell, photos to share, or would like to get involved as a volunteer, come along to the Open Day. There will also be talks on the project, how to use the archives to research family history, about King's Cross, exhibitions and an opportunity to look behind the scenes.

Archives Awareness Campaign

The Guildhall Library Manuscripts Section is organising a series of free events to encourage the use of archives by family and local historians. These begin at 2pm at the Guildhall Library Lecture Theatre:

14 Sept: 'Estate maps at Guildhall Library', talk by Stacey Gee, Assistant Archivist (45 mins).

12 October: 'The records of St Paul's Cathedral and the Diocese of London', by Stephen Freeth, Keeper of Manuscripts, followed by a visit to St Paul's Cathedral Library (2hrs).

21 October: Behind the scenes tour of the Manuscripts Section store and Conservation workshop (1hr).

2 November: 'Using the archives to trace the history of a community: Stepney 1740-80'. By Derek Morris, local historian (45mins).

13 December: 'Livery Company records at Guildhall Library'. By Stephen Freeth, followed by a visit to Goldsmiths' Hall (2hrs).

Numbers are limited. Please book in advance by telephoning 7332 1862.

GEOFFREY FLETCHER

Our former Vice-President, Geoffrey Fletcher died in July. He was probably familiar to members through his drawings in the *Daily Telegraph* of London buildings under threat and the many books of his drawings. His book *Changing London* included a drawing of the old railway workers' cottages in Kingstown Street which happened to include my former home along the street, and I wrote to him to find out if I could buy the original drawing; he could not find it but kindly drew me a slightly revised version which I still treasure. Geoffrey suggested that it would be dangerous to post the drawing and so delivered it. I arranged to take him to my lunch club in Lincoln's Inn and was horrified to find when he turned up that he was in lumberjack uniform of plaid shirt and jeans and so had to transfer our meal to the local pub – I would not have withstood the stares of the suited barristers and solicitors, although I am sure Geoffrey would not have noticed them at all! It was a jolly lunch in the pub with plenty of local anecdotes.

Roger Cline

A HISTORY PLAQUE

Martin Morton writes:

The Gospel Oak to Barking railway bridge at Dartmouth Park Hill has recently been repaired. As an apparent thankyou offering to the locals who have been inconvenienced by the related road closures there has been placed a metal plaque on each side of the road indicating the work that has been done, and giving some of the history of the bridge, together with what appears from my car window to be a copy of the original plans for the bridge.

A nice historical gesture, which others might be encouraged to copy.

The London Maze

Following on from the tremendous success of the 2003 London Maze, Guildhall Library and the Guildhall Art Gallery will be hosting the Maze again this year. there will be:

50 stands from London's local studies libraries, archives, museums and local history and archaeological societies.

A wide range of talks on London's history.

Free entry to the Guildhall Art Gallery.

Free tours of the Gallery and the Roman amphitheatre.

Themed walks of the City of London.

Performances such as Victorian parlour magic and Victorian amputations.

This is on Saturday, 16 October, 10-4.

Volunteers wanted

The recently (15 June) opened Foundling Museum tells the story of the Foundling Hospital and of the three major figures in its history: founder Thomas Coram, artist William Hogarth and the composer George Frederic Handel. The museum has been fairly successful at recruiting volunteers to act as room stewards and as front-of-house staff during the week (not Mondays) and weekends, but is eager to add more to the roster. The interesting work includes guarding the two major picture galleries, talking to visitors about the Foundling Hospital, and finding out the answers to any questions asked by the visitors. The number of visitors even at this early stage has been gratifying, but the volunteers have not been excessively busy.

Members of the Society who are interested in this voluntary work should contact Nicola Hughes on 78413600 or email on nicola@foundlingmuseum.org.uk. As little as 2-3 hours a week is welcome – these can be flexible.

THE LAMAS CONFERENCE

This year the LAMAS Conference is on the theme of St Paul's and the Diocese of London: 1400 years. The CHS and many other local history societies will be present with a display of publications. Tickets are £5 including tea and can be obtained from Local History Conference, 36 Church Road, West Drayton, Middlesex UB7 7PX.

NEWSLETTERS AVAILABLE

Mrs Shirley Dixon writes to say that she is sorting out the papers of a Professor of English who was a member of the CHS. Her papers include copies of the *Newsletter* during the 1970s and 1980s. If any member would like to obtain these free of charge please get in touch with her. Her email is Shirley.dixon@rhul.ac.uk. She has not given us her telephone number or address.

FOGGY LONDON

Robin Woolven's article in the last *Newsletter* regarding the 1952 fog and its consequences has prompted a letter from Virginia Berridge, Professor of History at the Centre for History in Public Health at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. A 'witness seminar' recalling the event is now on their website <http://www.lshtm.ac.uk/history>.

The Centre is also organising a conference about the healthy city which members may like to attend. It celebrates the 160th anniversary of the Health of Towns Association in 1884 at Exeter Hall in the Strand. For further details contact Ingrid James on 0279 927 2434, or on a long website name, <http://www.lshtm.ac.uk/history/healthoftowns.html>.

Elgar and Hampstead

Helen Lawrence, who wrote our recently published book on the history of the St Pancras and Hampstead Arts Festivals, has also published a book describing Elgar's years in Hampstead. Elgar was already famous and established as the greatest English composer of his age when he moved to Netherhall Gardens. He and his wife chose a vast house called Kelston, designed by Norman Shaw for the artist Edwin Long. Apart from a picture gallery it had a separate entrance for models "whom a wife would not want to meet on the stairs".

When bought by the Elgars it was renamed Severn House after Elgar's Worcestershire homeland. Though large the building was not particularly suitable for family life. His daughter recorded that it could accommodate only a small family, for everything had been sacrificed to a long stately corridor and the large music room and annexe. There was a large dining room, two large bedrooms and three smaller ones. Plus a separate place where callers had to wait, including nuns who came round for contributions and who were cossetted with cups of cocoa as they waited.

The 32pp booklet, *Elgar in Hampstead*, price £3 can be obtained from the Heath and Hampstead Society.

This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society.

The Editor is John Richardson, 32 Ellington Street, N7 8PL (Tel: 7607 1628, Fax: 7609 6451, E-mail: richardson@historicalpublications.co.uk), to whom all contributions should be sent.

The Secretary of the Society is Mrs Jane Ramsay, Garden Flat, 62 Fellows Road, NW3, 3LJ (7586 4436),

The Treasurer is Angela Bowen, 3 Oak Village, NW5 4QR (7482 5680)

The Membership Secretary and Publications Secretary is Roger Cline, Flat 13, 13 Tavistock Place, WC1H 9SH, (7388 9889)

The Publications Editor is Dr Peter Woodford, 1 Akenside Road, NW3 5BS (7435 2088; email: Drswoodford@blueyonder.co.uk).

The Editor of the *Camden History Review* is David Hayes, 62 Garrison Lane, Chessington, Surrey KT9 2LB (8397 6752)

Our website: www.camdenet.org.uk/groups/chs/

The Society is a registered charity - number 261044

newsletter

No 206

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

Nov 2004

History of the Field Lane School

Thurs. 18 Nov, 7.30pm

Holborn Library, Theobalds Road WC1

A summary of the history of the Field Lane School and Refuge is concisely given in the Society's publication *Streets of Old Holborn* by Steve Denford and David Hellings. The area of Field Lane and Saffron Hill attracted much attention from Victorian social reformers such as Lord Shaftesbury, who said in the Lords in 1861 that he had found 314 rooms in 62 houses in 8 small courts off Holborn Hill with an average size of 8 feet by less than 4 feet, in which 179 people were living. A Sabbath school, started in a back room in Caroline Yard in 1841 became the Field Lane Ragged School, and after it moved to 65 West Street (Chick Lane) in 1842, part of the premises also became a Night Refuge.

The building of Charterhouse Street forced a move to Hatton Garden and then the rebuilding of Clerkenwell Road made them move again, to Vine Hill in 1877. An inscription is still in place in the street saying: Ragged Schools and Refuge/ Founded 1841 ... Rebuilt 1877. The school later moved out to Hampstead.

The story of this remarkable school is our talk in November, by Jeremy Lamb, director of the Field Lane School and Foundation.

Sir Henry Cole: from agitator to autocrat in art

Thurs 16 Dec, 7.30pm

Burgh House, New End Square NW3

The career of Sir Henry Cole (1808-82) is the very essence of Victorian energy and endeavour. A combination of prodigious energy, organising ability, creative flair and in the end an autocratic tendency made him a formidable man in the development of arts and museums. Intimately involved in the success of the Great Exhibition of 1851, he went on to be instrumental in the founding of what became the Victoria and Albert Museum, which embodied his own enthusiasm for the blending of arts and industrial products.

This remarkable and controversial man is the subject of our December talk, by Anthony Burton. As it is our Christmas meeting, wine and mince pies will be served before and after!

The Senate House Library

There are still a few places available for the tour of the Senate House Library on 24 November, beginning at 5.30pm. If you would like to go, please contact Dr Peter Woodford at 1 Akenside Road, NW3 5BS (tel 7435 2088) or else email him on drswoodford@blueyonder.co.uk.

ADVANCE NOTICE

Please put these dates in your diary:

20 Jan: Eleanor Farjeon and family in Hampstead, by Ann Harvey. At Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel.

17 Feb: The making of the Foundling Museum, by Rhian Harris. At the Education Centre, the Foundling Museum, 40 Brunswick Square.

17 March: London's maddest Victorian Church at St Martin's Church, Gospel Oak. Speaker Anthony Edwards

21 April: John Passmore Edwards by Peter Baynes. Venue to be determined.

The Scattering

The London Irish Centre in Camden Square has played an important part in Irish life in this country for the past fifty years. Begun more than anything else to ensure that the usually impoverished Irish immigrant in London retained his or her Catholic faith, the Centre developed into a hostelling/job finding/counselling body which became essential as the waves of Irish came to London to escape the lack of opportunities in Ireland. It was certainly a necessary organisation at the time of the IRA bombings on the mainland when the Irish generally were treated with much suspicion and hostility.

To celebrate the fiftieth anniversary, the Centre has published a 248pp history of the organisation. *The Scattering*, written by Councillor Gerry Harrison, is now available in bookshops, price £12.95. A full review will be published in the January Newsletter.

Going, Going, Gone

Sadly, after 125 years the Fred Tallant Hall, formerly Tolmers Hall, in Drummond Street, Euston, will soon no longer be with us. The London CHA Club, which owned the freehold of the building, were forced to close and sell this year due to lack of members, and an ageing Committee. Planning permission has been granted to the new owners and it is anticipated that the bulldozers will move in during November.

Tolmers Hall was opened in November 1879 to accommodate the Sunday School of the nearby Tolmers Square Congregational Church, which on most Sundays taught some 750 children. It was also intended to provide evening classes for science and art among other subjects, with Tuesday evening lectures and social evenings. At the laying of the foundation stone in 1877 it was emphasized that the Tuesday evening entertainments were a 'great want in the neighbourhood' many of their friends not having comfortable homes and living in one room. The building also included on the ground floor a 'British Workman' or Coffee House, which in the early days attracted as many as 500 customers before 9 am., a good cup of coffee or cocoa being sold for a halfpenny. On the upper floors was a Reading Room, Lecture Hall accommodating 750 persons and classrooms for the children. The total cost of the purchase of the site, which three houses and a reservoir occupied, and the erection of the building was just over £11,000.

The London CHA Club, founded in 1901 at Gatti's Restaurant in the Strand, purchased Tolmers Hall in April 1926. The Club originated from the Countrywide Holidays Association, originally the Co-Operative Holidays Association, founded in 1891 by the Revd. Thomas Arthur Leonard, a Congregational Minister born in Stoke Newington in 1864. The intention was to continue the friendship and fellowship of the CHA rambling holidays, the Club being run entirely on a voluntary basis by its members. The Hall was renamed Fred Tallant Hall in 1935 in memory of Fred Tallant, Hon. Sec. of the Club from its foundation in 1901 to 1934.

In the early days there were more than one thousand club members drawn from all walks of society – local people, London University students, University College hospital staff, etc. It flourished for many years. The Club was open every evening for classes in ballroom, old-time and Scottish dancing, a general club on Tuesdays with talks and music, table tennis, badminton, Saturday dances and Sunday rambling. Many organizations hired the club rooms, among whom were railway, tramway and cinema organ enthusiasts, and the London Esperanto Club, which has met regularly on Friday evenings from the 1930s.

In 1940 a bomb badly damaged the upper hall, destroying its gothic structure and rendering the hall unusable for thirteen years until 1953. However, undaunted, the Club continued its dancing activities in the small hall.

I have some note-books detailing rambles in the sixties. A typical entry reads – January 21st 1968: Hampstead. 35 names listed. 'A very good varied walk including Zoo in Golders Hill Park. Lunch at Hare & Hounds, Bull and Bush too crowded. A few went to look at Wildes Farm which had just been sold. Tea and cakes at Ken Wood. More stopped for tea at Hampstead. No rain.'

Members and friends have spent many happy times over the years at Club events and rambling, and it is sad that the building will celebrate its 125th birthday under the bulldozer. The foundation stone laid by Samuel Morley, MP in November 1877 contains a bottle with artefacts of the day, including local newspapers and a photograph of the Revd Arthur Hall, Minister of Tolmers Congregational Church. I am hoping that I can rescue the bottle from the foundation stone. Photographs have been taken of the interior, which together with the Club archives will be placed with Camden Archives Department.

Joan Hardinges

References:

The London C.H.A Club – The First Sixty Years By CHA Club Members.

A Hundred Years of Holidays 1893-1993 by Robert Speake, Countrywide Holidays.

Camden & Kentish Towns Gazette 3 November 1877, *Ibid* 22 November 1879.

Heal Collection, Camden Archives.

The Elusive Hugh Hunt

I would like to thank Christopher Elrington for his very detailed explanation regarding the elusive Hugh Hunt and the Manorial Court proceedings. I thought it was odd that he appeared on so many occasions throughout the records. Christopher's explanation is being widely read, as the Islington Archaeology and History Society have drawn attention to the 'Hunt for the Elusive Hugh Hunt' in their latest *Newsletter*.

I am now working on the Hackney Manorial Records but so far haven't discovered any fictitious or suspicious characters relating to the houses I am researching. However, I'll bear this in mind in future.

Joan Hardinges

THE LAMAS CONFERENCE

In our last *Newsletter* we gave details of the Local History Conference organised by LAMAS. However, the actual date of the conference was omitted. It is on Saturday 20 November, morning and afternoon. The theme is St Paul's and the Diocese of London, 1400 years. Tickets are £5 including tea and may be obtained from Local History Conference, 36 Church Road, West Drayton, Middlesex UB7 7PX.

John Wilkinson of Lincoln's Inn

Coal sheds are not considered likely sources of information for a researcher but, some 30 years ago, the coal shed at a house in Elmfield Avenue, Teddington released an amazing cache of information that has now been analysed. Whilst emptying the contents of the shed, on a shelf above the coal was found a large folio of office copy letters dated 1823-25, written by a lawyer, John Wilkinson of Lincoln's Inn, relating to the affairs of the hedonistic William, 3rd Viscount Courtenay (later 9th Earl of Devon). How or why the letters got deposited in the coal shed remains a mystery yet to be solved because they would have been but one volume of a large record of correspondence.

At the time of correspondence, which totalled some 450 letters, the lawyer was in his mid-thirties, having taken over the Viscount's affairs in January 1822. The partnership of Lake Smith and Wilkinson was one of a distinguished group of lawyers who practised at Lincoln's Inn and its members were no strangers to eighteenth-century London society. Henry Wrottesley, Wilkinson's predecessor in managing the affairs of the Courtenay family, had a sister-in-law who was one of the 1st Viscount Courtenay's daughters.

The letters have the flavour of the later social impact of the Victorian author, Charles Dickens. *A Christmas Carol* comes to mind, as there were letters written on Christmas Eve and Boxing Day, leaving only Christmas Day for celebrations. There is the air of a clerk wearing woollen mittens and writing by the light of a candle. A Dickensian touch was also contained in a letter to Lord George Thynne. 'By the Bedford coach of tomorrow' wrote Wilkinson, 'I shall send a parcel to be left at Deadman's Cross'.

It became obvious whilst analysing the letters that the workload of an early nineteenth-century lawyer was generic in the extreme. In addition to acting on legal issues, Wilkinson had to sustain a total involvement in an unwearied devotion to Courtenay's welfare and at the time of writing, the Viscount was living in considerable comfort at his permanent home in exile, the Chateau Draveil at Villeneuve St Georges in the Seine et Oise district of Paris. Wilkinson undertook many personal commissions for the Viscount. Oysters were despatched when the weather was suitable; fumigation bellows for the chateau's garden were specifically manufactured and the latest gardening books obtained and sent across; soothing remarks were written in reply to the Viscount's distress on reading adverse remarks published in newspapers and pamphlets about him. A most interesting issue for the reader of the letters was the matter of his Lordship's shirts. This became an on-going saga as the lawyer was obliged to make arrangements to smuggle through French customs shirts manufactured in England. His Lordship had ordered some three dozen shirts from his tailor, Condell of 52 Bond Street. Although there were agents

employed at Dover and Calais to undertake the payment of customs taxes (Wilkinson considered them a parcel of sharks and rascals and would dearly have loved to dispense with their services) in the matter of importing silk shirts, there was obviously a complete embargo by the French. Condell's were requested to send to Lincoln's Inn 'such a number of Lord Courtenay's shirts as a single gentleman may venture to take over with him in addition to his own'. Mr Gostling at Doctors' Commons was requested that, on arriving in Paris, he would be kind enough to have folded in paper the shirts and send them to Lafittes & Co, the Viscount's bankers. Yet another obliging traveller to Paris, Mr Gawler of South Audley Street, was advised that half a dozen shirts would prove too many for placing in a portmanteau as part of his linen, as there was the encumbrance of his Lordship's crest and initial on the shirts. But, Mr Gawler was made of sterner stuff and suggested that a dozen shirts be sent round to him, a request undertaken by Wilkinson who exhorted him to send back some by his servant if that number proved too many to displace his own.

Wilkinson's involvement with Courtenay's affairs was not limited to the discharge of his duties in the office at Lincoln's Inn. In the spring of 1824, he travelled down to the ancestral home of the Courtenay family at Powderham Castle in order to report back to the Viscount upon the state of the building and the general maintenance of the grounds – on the face of it a perfectly straightforward occurrence. But, on arriving he found an agitated housekeeper, Mrs Bush, who implored the lawyer to take action upon a boar 'a native of some part of France and sent over to Powderham by your Lordship'. Wilkinson found himself confronted by a pig of singularly unpleasant disposition – 'savage beyond all conception' was how Wilkinson put it and bemoaned the expense of its upkeep 'for quite independent of the corn and other articles, he must consume the straw of a good farm to furnish him with bedding'.

Fascinating though these letters are in allowing the reader a glimpse of a professional man's involvement with, what we would now term, his client, in addition they are of immense value to a researcher owing to their disclosure relating to the character of the aristocrat whom Wilkinson served so faithfully for the rest of Courtenay's life. Previous historians and researchers have revealed Courtenay as a recklessly extravagant, flamboyant homosexual and much ink has been expended by them regarding his seduction by William Beckford and their consequent association until Beckford's banishment in 1785. There, William Courtenay's reputation appears to have rested, resulting in him achieving the appellation 'the Notorious third viscount'. Courtenay's subsequent exile, occasioned by his continued homosexual lifestyle, took place in 1811, and his character has, until now, been overshadowed by the earlier writings of the diarist, Joseph Farington.

It is through these letters of John Wilkinson that we

can appreciate Courtenay as having been a kind, caring and generous man who must have been charismatic in the extreme. His servants were devoted to him and in return the Viscount treated them not as his household but, in the trauma of his exile, as members of his family and made provision for them accordingly. A man of great courtesy, he was also intelligent and cultured, but his great weakness was a lifelong self-indulgence that affected all aspects of his life. His distress at his banishment from his family home at Powderham is evident and his desire to return 'to see the dear old place' moved the kindly Wilkinson to write 'Poor Lord Courtenay, most sincerely do I pity him and never were my feelings for him more intensely aroused than they were on my reading the letter'.

Wilkinson was an honourable man who worked tirelessly in the endeavour to ease the trauma of the Viscount's exile and it is difficult to be dispassionate regarding the fate of the 9th Earl of Devon after reading these remarkable letters. The lawyer had the greatest respect for Courtenay and considered him worthy of compassion rather than the object of notoriety and the subject of recorded salacious gossip.

John Wilkinson outlived William Courtenay by ten years, dying in 1845 at the age of 57.

Dorothy Presswell 2004.

Source: *the Wilkinson papers, Kerry/Read Deposit.*

Health and Hampstead

'Hampstead is the Healthiest suburb in London' it was stated in a House of Lords report in 1881. An exhibition, to be staged at Burgh House from 28 November to 27 February, will examine how this description was earned, justified and maintained. Hampstead, gifted by a geographical position, was first associated with health through the discovery of its natural spring waters. The 19th century saw hospital after hospital being founded and nursing became organised with free care as well as fee-paying provision.

The Museum at Burgh House is seeking to collect oral memories of Hampstead residents who lived there during World War II. If you would like to take part in this project please contact the Curator, Marilyn Greene on 7431 0144.

Elegance lost



This elegant building in Upper Woburn Place, next to St Pancras Church was, at the (unknown) time of this postcard, occupied by the Carbo-Limo Company. It has been replaced post war by a crass office block. A pity.

This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society.

The Editor is John Richardson, 32 Ellington Street, N7 8PL. (Tel: 7607 1628, Fax: 7609 6451, E-mail: richardson@historicalpublications.co.uk), to whom all contributions should be sent.

The Secretary of the Society is Mrs Jane Ramsay, Garden Flat, 62 Fellows Road, NW3, 3LJ (7586 4436),

The Treasurer is Angela Bowen, 3 Oak Village, NW5 4QR (7482 5680)

The Membership Secretary and Publications Secretary is Roger Cline, Flat 13, 13 Tavistock Place, WC1H 9SH, (7388 9889)

The Publications Editor is Dr Peter Woodford, 1 Akenside Road, NW3 5BS (7435 2088; email: Drswoodford@blueyonder.co.uk).

The Editor of the *Camden History Review* is David Hayes, 62 Garrison Lane, Chessington, Surrey KT9 2LB (8397 6752)

Our website: www.camdenet.org.uk/groups/chs/

The Society is a registered charity - number 261044