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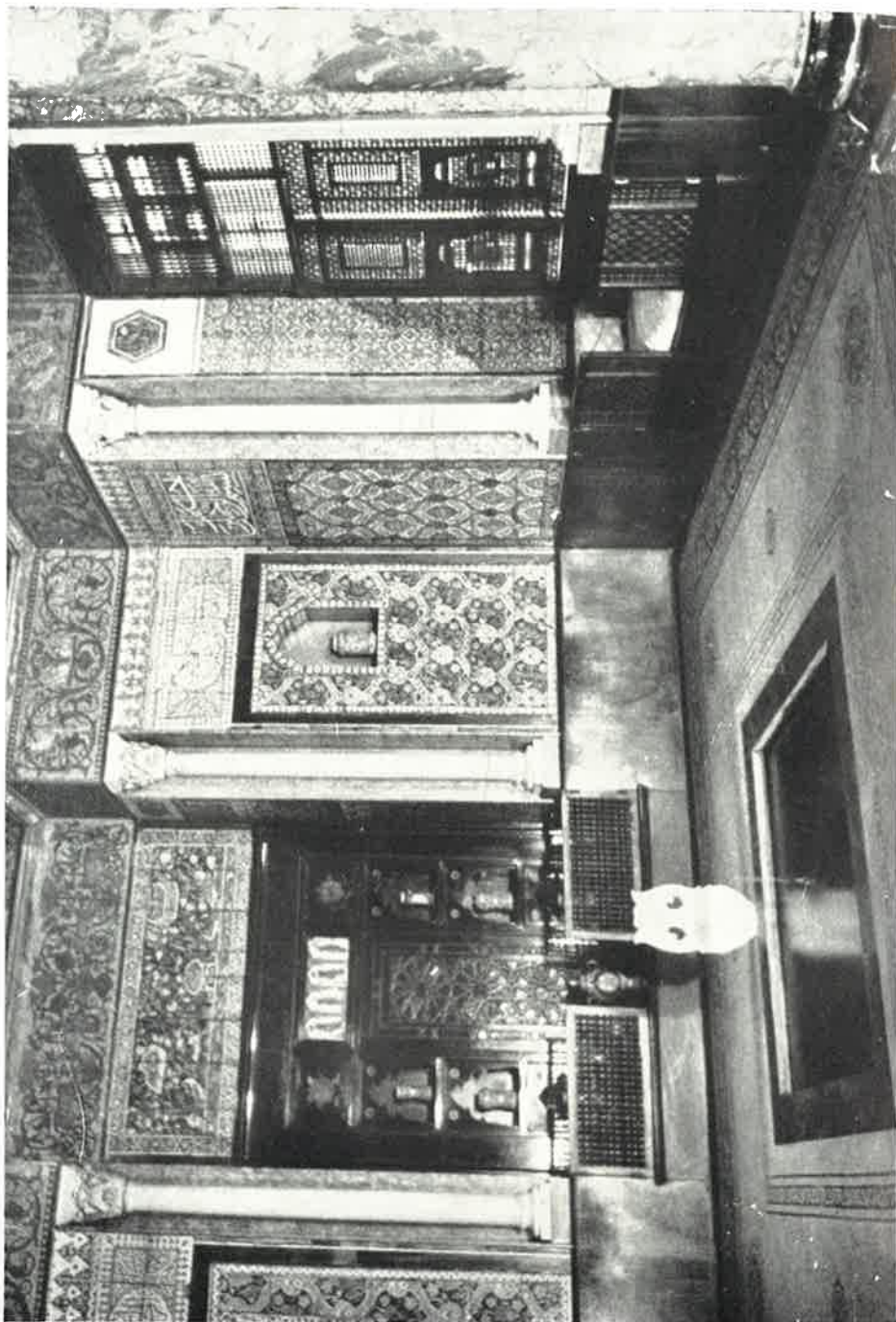
THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY



8th

ANNUAL REPORT

Year 1960 - 61



Arab Hall, Leighton House.

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THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

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Vice-Presidents :

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THE RT. REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF KENSINGTON

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Vice-Chairman :

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Mrs. G. Christiansen	Hugh Shillito, Esq.
W. G. Corfield, Esq.	Miss P. M. Ward
Keon Hughes, Esq.	R. T. D. Wilmot, Esq.

Hon. Treasurer : E. Norman-Butler, Esq.

Hon. Secretary : Mrs. G. Christiansen

18, Kensington Square, W.8 Tel. : WEStern 0931

Hon. Auditors : Messrs. Wright, Stevens & Lloyd

FOREWORD

Every year I sing the praises of The Kensington Society, as anyone in touch with the amenity world and aware of the heavy and disinterested work that falls upon those devoted to that Society, cannot fail to do. Never for a moment does the constant conflict cease between the educated few who wish to preserve, and the avaricious multitude who wish to destroy. Occasionally a gleam of light illuminates the battlefield, and we who fight in it get the impression that the forces of civilisation have made a slow and unspectacular increase during recent years. The London County Council, too, can usually be counted as certain supporters of our side. Occasionally, too, small success comes our way. The proposal to pull down Plane Tree House in Duchess of Bedford Walk, and erect in its place a tower block of flats at the entrance to Holland Park, has been abandoned, and the developers who wished to build a high block of flats on the site of 76, Bedford Gardens have had to modify their plan considerably. It would be easy enough to give you an optimistic picture of the activities of our Society. On the social side the success of the visits paid; the prize presented for a school essay on Kensington; the publication of a booklet on the Phillimore Estate; the assistance given to Barclays Bank for their decorative scenes of old Kensington. But underneath these evidences of gracious life the fierce contention between us and the "developers", helped as they often are by the Kensington Borough Council, has become a perpetual feature of communal life. In spite of all our efforts; and with the support of The Fine Art Commission; we failed to prevent the Borough Council from erecting their abominable concrete lamp standards. Our struggle to prevent the "development" in the Melbury Road area, strongly supported as we were by the London County Council has now received the decision of the Minister. The wording is a masterpiece of official verbiage. A careful reader will discover that the Minister has not confirmed the Preservation Order and yet is arranging for the houses in the Melbury Road area to be put on the list of houses to be preserved under Section 30 of the 1947 Planning Act. So strange a contradiction creates no confidence that Leighton House is safe.

No one can say that the life of the Kensington Society is a bed of roses, but those who work for it, including its capable and energetic Secretary, know that upon our efforts depend the possibility of a civilised life.

(Sgd.) Esher,
President.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Society was held at the Town Hall, Kensington, on December 5th, 1960, with Mrs. Mary Stocks, Vice-President of the Society, in the Chair.

The Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting, previously approved by the Executive Committee, were taken as read and signed by the Chairman.

Dr. Stephen Pasmore, Chairman of the Executive Committee, moved the adoption of the Report and Accounts for 1959-60, and Mr. Norman-Butler, Hon. Treasurer, seconded the motion. Both Report and Accounts were unanimously adopted.

The re-election of the Officers of the Society and the Executive Committee was moved by Miss Blackie and seconded by Miss White and carried unanimously.

The re-election of Messrs. Wright, Stevens and Lloyd as Hon. Auditors, moved by Mr. Keon Hughes and seconded by Mrs. Wilson, was also carried unanimously.

Proceedings ended with a vote of thanks to the Secretary.

The Meeting was followed by a lecture by Mr. Richard Edmonds, Chairman of the London County Council Planning Committee, entitled "London Skyline". An exhibition of photographs, maps and plans was provided by the London County Council.

Dr. H. Stephen Pasmore

At the first Executive Committee Meeting following the Annual General Meeting the Committee learned with great regret that Dr. Pasmore did not wish to stand for re-election as Chairman of the Committee.

Dr. Pasmore had served as Chairman of the Society since its foundation and under his Chairmanship the Society has grown from strength to strength. The Committee wishes to place on record their appreciation of the excellent work Dr. Pasmore has done for the Society.

Dr. Pasmore proposed that Mr. H. Gandell should be elected Chairman for the coming year. The proposal was seconded by Mrs. G. Christiansen and carried unanimously.

Mr. Hugh Shillito

In July a letter was received from Mr. Shillito who, owing to pressure of other commitments, found that he would be unable to continue serving on the Committee.

The Committee accepted his resignation with regret and expressed its gratitude for the work he had done.

A SELECTION OF CASES DEALT WITH

Melbury Road Area

The London County Council wished to make a Building Preservation order on Nos. 6, 8, 9, 11, 15 and 17, Melbury Road, and on Leighton House, 12, Holland Park Road.

The Kensington Borough Council and the Holland Park and Parways Estates opposed the order and as a result of these objections a Public Inquiry was held at the Kensington Town Hall on April 19th and 20th.

A Report of the proceedings will be found on page 18. Mr. Ashley Barkers' evidence, which covers the history of the houses concerned, has been given, for obvious reasons, in full detail.

The London County Council were strongly supported by the Kensington Society, Victorian Society, London Society, The Royal Academy of Arts and many local residents.

There is a Covenant on Leighton House restricting its use for cultural and artistic purposes while it is owned by the Kensington Borough Council. After 1963 the Kensington Borough Council will be free to sell Leighton House, if it so wishes. The intention of the present Council is no guarantee that future Councils will not wish to sell Leighton House and it is unlikely that this valuable and large site would be bought for any reason other than to demolish and redevelop the area. It was for this reason that the Kensington Society welcomed the proposed Preservation Order. *As we go to Press we learn with very much regret that the Minister has decided NOT to confirm the Order.*

The Society was represented by Council and Sir Albert Richardson gave evidence on the merits of the houses for the Society. Mr. Timothy Phillips, an artist and a member of the Society, also gave evidence.

The Society wishes to record its grateful thanks and appreciation to Mr. Ernle Money, Barrister-at-Law, who so ably conducted the Society's case at the Public Inquiry without fee; our thanks are also due to Professor Sir Albert Richardson and Mr. Timothy Phillips who gave evidence at the Inquiry and to Mr. Mark Haymon who prepared the Brief for the Case.

The Redevelopment of Site Nos. 2-34 Addison Road

An application to develop this site by building 17 three-storey houses and an 11-storey slab block of 40 flats was refused by the London County Council last year.

The owners of the site, the Holland Park Estates, and the building contractors appealed against the refusal of the London County Council to give planning permission for the development and a Public Inquiry was held on April 21st and 22nd.

The Kensington Society supported the London County Council and submitted a statement setting out the Society's objections.

The principal objection was that the 11-storey block would be unduly dominant and out of scale and character with surrounding properties. The proposed block is over 100 feet high. Three schemes were shown to the Inspector by the London County Council which would achieve a density of 136 persons to the acre with no building higher than 50 feet.

Many residents from the Addison Road area attended the Inquiry and strongly voiced their objections.

We regret to report that permission has now been granted by the Minister of Housing and Local Government for this development.

Kensington High Street Redevelopment

The proposed height of the new hotel which is to be built on the site of the old Royal Palace Hotel has been lowered to 120 feet. The redevelopment of the Ladymere and Kensington Church Street sites have, we understand, been postponed.

Plane Tree House, Duchess of Bedford Walk

Planning permission has been sought for the building of a 180 feet tower block on this site.

We accept the fact that London must build upwards. But if we care at all for the look of London we must guard against buildings or plans for buildings which tend to be out of harmony with their immediate surroundings. This would be the case in the plan to demolish Plane Tree House and erect on its site a tower block of flats 180 feet high at the eastern entrance to Holland Park.

To demolish this handsome-looking building, with its splendid trees and shrubs, would be bad enough; to erect in its place a 14-storey block of flats in so prominent a position would be monstrous.

A building of this height would inevitably dominate the view at both east and south entrances to the park and would, therefore, in the opinion of the Society, be wholly undesirable on aesthetic grounds. The Secretary wrote to the London County Council, putting forward objections on behalf of the Society.

We now understand that the application for the erection of a tall block of flats on this site has been withdrawn.

No. 76 Bedford Gardens

A letter has been received from Mr. Edward Seeley, thanking the Society for the support given him in his protest against the proposed development of the above-mentioned site.

The house, No. 76, Bedford Gardens, was acquired by a firm of developers who sought planning permission to demolish the house and build on the site a high block of 17 flats.

The original plan was withdrawn and another plan submitted to the London County Council. This plan has been passed, but the developers have had to modify the plan considerably and have agreed to leave two out of the three principal trees.

Street Lighting

At the beginning of this year the third phase of the Kensington Street Lighting Improvement Scheme came up for consideration by the Council.

Only a few days before the Council Meeting on February 7th, 1961, it was learnt that the Council would have before it a recommendation from its Works Committee that certain streets should have concrete lamp standards. Most of these streets were on the Society's list of streets for which preferential treatment had been urged: —

Ans dell Terrace, Bedford Gardens, Brunswick Gardens, Callcott Street, Campden Street, Canning Passage, Canning Place, Clareville Street, Dukes Lane, Earls Walk, Edge Street, Eldon Road, Farmer Street, Holland Street, Kensington Church Walk, Kensington Place, Kenway Road, Launceston Place, Lorne Gardens, Peel Street, Pembroke Square, St. Albans Grove, Sheffield Terrace, South End, Thistle Grove, Victoria Grove, Victoria Road.

The Secretary immediately informed each resident in the streets concerned. This was done to enable residents to make known their views to the Council before the recommendation was voted on at the Council Meeting on February 7th.

Although a number of petitions and a great many letters of protest were sent to the Council in the interval between the publication of the Council's Agenda and the Meeting of the Council, the Council unanimously passed the recommendation of the Works Committee.

The Council agreed that the following list of 26 streets were streets where existing lamp standards will be converted to take a fluorescent ring: —

Addison Avenue, Albert Place, Alexander Place, Aubrey Road, Aubrey Walk, Brompton Square, Cambridge Place, Campden Hill Square, Clareville Grove, Cornwall Mews South (western leg), Douro Place, Earls Terrace, Edwardes Square, Edwardes Place, Elm Place, Gordon Place (southern end), Hereford Square, Hillsleigh Road, Hyde Park Gate, Hyde Park Gate Mews, Kensington Gate, Kynance Mews, North Terrace, Selwood Place, Seymour Walk, South Terrace.

Some of these streets were not on the list drawn up by the Royal Fine Art Commission and the Kensington Society. It is clear that the selection of streets for the modern or old lamps has been an entirely arbitrary one.

The Kensington Society received over 300 letters protesting against the Council's proposals.

The South Kensington Liberals joined the Kensington Society in protesting against the scheme.

The Historic Buildings Secretary of the National Trust supported the protest made by the Eldon Road residents.

A housewife in Kensington Church Walk told a "Kensington Post" reporter: "It seems a shame to change the lights as it will spoil the whole atmosphere of this little by-way. Everybody around here feels exactly the same." It was the same story in Canning Place and many other streets.

A resident, a member of the Kensington Society, in Callcott Street delivered a circular and a postcard to over 400 houses in Bedford Gardens, Campden Street, Peel Street, Edge Street, Kensington Place, Hillgate Place, Hillgate Street, Jameson Street, Farmer Street, Callcott Street, Farm Place and Uxbridge Street.

This circular read as follows: —

11, Callcott Street,
London, W.8.
March 25th, 1961.

Dear Sir or Madam,

You probably know that the Kensington Borough Council is about to embark on the third stage of a scheme for reorganising the street lighting throughout the Borough.

The Council, through its Works Committee, sought the advice of the Royal Fine Art Commission on this matter. The Commission recommended that certain streets of special character or architectural merit should retain their existing lamps, or should have the original rectangular lanterns restored to the existing lamp-posts, adapted to take an improved form of fluorescent ring lighting. Among those recommended for such treatment are streets in the neighbourhood between Church Street and Campden Hill.

The Fine Art Commission's view was that other streets should, if possible, have an upright metal standard with a lantern-type head, such as can be seen in many Chelsea streets (e.g., Markham Square). If, however, the Kensington Borough Council preferred concrete posts for those streets, the Commission did not object to a small concrete lamp-post with horizontal reflector of a type approved by the Council of Industrial Design.

Thus the concrete type is the last of the Commission's preferences and, in their view, is not suitable for this particular neighbourhood. This is also the strong recommendation of the *Kensington Society*.

On February 7th, the Council met to vote on the recommendations of its Works Committee on the matter. It unanimously passed a Resolution under which the advice of the Fine Art Commission in regard to this neighbourhood and some ten other streets in the borough is ignored. These streets are to have their existing lamps replaced by dark grey concrete lamp-standards with a horizontal arm and reflector.

Nevertheless, the Council has selected approximately 25 streets which are to retain their lamps or have the original old lanterns replaced. Some of these streets are dark and composed of large late

Victorian or Edwardian houses, where the extra height of the concrete posts would, no doubt, be an advantage and where they would certainly not look out of proportion. It is clear that the selection of streets for the modern or old lamps has been an entirely arbitrary one.

The proposed concrete columns are slate grey in colour, of octagonal section, varying in width from 6½ in. at the base, 7½ in. at 2 ft. above ground, 6½ in. again at 4 ft., to 3⅝ in. at the top. There is a very short horizontal arm carrying a large rectangle of opaque glass 2 ft. 2½ in. long, tapering in width from about 1 ft. to 3 in. The height from ground level to the lantern is about 16 ft.

The height from ground level to the lantern of almost all the lamp-standards in the smaller streets here is approximately 12 ft. 6 in. —about 1 ft. 6 in. below the level of the bedroom window-sills. The height to the top of the bedroom windows is approximately 19 ft.

Thus it is clear that the new lamps will be level with the middle of the bedroom windows.

This is not, of course, true of streets with taller lamp-posts such as Kensington Place, but the houses here are also rather taller.

The Borough Council states that the new concrete posts and lanterns can be seen in Pembridge Square. They are at the East side of the square and it is a good place to see them for they are cheek-by-jowl with the old lanterns. It is also interesting to note that the houses in Pembridge Square are very large mansions, which bear no comparison with the houses in these streets. It is also in the Borough of Paddington. It might have been hoped that Kensington would do better than Paddington or Chelsea.

On behalf of residents of Callcott Street and many other neighbouring streets, I sent in a petition on February 5th, signed by approximately 50 people and the residents of Callcott Street have recently submitted a second petition. In the meantime, a neighbour of mine, Mr. W. S. Mitchell, and I are doing all we can to bring the Council to include this neighbourhood among those streets which are to retain the old lanterns.

The Council replied to our petition and to the many other petitions they received with a circular letter dated February 27th. In this letter they gave the clear impression that they had done everything in accordance with the recommendation of the Fine Art Commission and the Kensington Society; moreover, they stated that the Commission has approved of concrete lamp standards for these streets, which as I have stated is not true. They also say that, in their experience, people get used to the concrete posts; no doubt one has to become accustomed to many unpleasant things but it seems to me a poor argument in this case, when a perfectly reasonable alternative is possible. We are not arguing particularly in favour of the existing lamps, though they are in proportion. We simply wish to prevent the Council wasting money by erecting an ugly object when they could improve both the lighting and the appearance of the streets by taking the advice tendered to them.

The Council have said they would find too much difficulty in obtaining the lanterns but we have informed them that a large supply of these is available from another borough at £3 a piece.

The main points of our argument are as follows: —

1. It is a waste of ratepayers' money to put up new concrete posts in these streets. If any improvement is needed it is cheaper to buy old lanterns and adapt the element to give better light. Such light would be more than sufficient in these small streets. The Council should save money urgently needed for other amenities in the borough.
2. The concrete lamp-posts will be out of proportion in both size and style with these smaller houses. They are of a kind suitable for suburban by-roads with modern houses set back from the road.
3. The concrete lamp-posts are of a height which will cause the light to shine directly into bedroom windows, thus giving considerable inconvenience and irritation.
4. This is an old part of Kensington with particular charm and character; it is especially regrettable that the Council should be determined to spoil the neighbourhood in this way.
5. The Council has given no reasons for their intransigence in ignoring the advice of the Royal Fine Art Commission and the Kensington Society; it is particularly deplorable that the Council should find it necessary to mislead residents into thinking it has complied with this advice.

We think it very important that we should have the support of as many people as possible in our dealings with the Council and I should, therefore, be grateful if you will kindly return as soon as possible the enclosed stamped addressed card with your views duly indicated. The returned cards will be used solely as a numerical count of support for our views or otherwise.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) Angus Stirling.

In a letter to the Society, Mr. Stirling says that within 48 hours of sending out his circular he had received replies from 130 people, all of whom were against the Council's decision.

Letters of protest are still being received, and only recently a photostat copy of the petition and signatures of the Pelham Crescent residents was sent to the Society.

The many letters received show how strongly the ratepayers feel about the Council's disregard of the advice of the Kensington Society and the Royal Fine Art Commission.

Kensington Square

The owners of No. 16, Kensington Square have applied for planning permission to build a one-storey building 60 ft. long for office use, over the garden of 16, Kensington Square. The Society has strongly protested and urged the L.C.C. to refuse planning permission.

Roads through Kensington

The Society is taking a firm line in opposing re-routing of heavy traffic through residential areas in the borough.

Discussions have been going on about the proposed intersection of a new by-pass at Royal Crescent and Clarendon Road.

Letters have been sent to the Minister of Transport and the London County Council, protesting at any proposal to make permanent one-way streets of Earls Court Road and Warwick Gardens, and we have expressed our concern about heavy traffic using such residential roads as Addison Road.

Application was made to open a club at 77, Warwick Road, the Society supported residents in successfully opposing the application.

Plaques

The Society supported a proposal by a member that a plaque should be placed on No. 56, Holland Street, to commemorate Sir Charles Stanford's residence there from 1893 to 1917.

A plaque has recently been affixed to No. 21, Brompton Square, the home of Francis Place, the political reformer from 1833 to 1851.

The Society will be pleased to receive suggestions from members for the erection of plaques to notable past-residents.

KENSINGTON SOCIETY NOTES

Kensington Society announces the publication of

The Phillimore Estate

by

W. G. CORFIELD, M.A.(Cantab.)

Price Five Shillings.

Distributed for the Society by The Thackeray Book Shop, Thackeray Street, Kensington, W.8.

Mr. Corfield has been a member of the Executive Committee of the Society since its foundation and has resided on Campden Hill for over 30 years.

Mr. Corfield became fascinated with the history of the Campden Hill area from Saxon times and research became an enthusiastic hobby. The history of the Phillimore Estate is one of several detailed manuscripts he has written over a period of years on the area between Notting Hill Gate and Kensington High Street.

The booklet gives a description of the Phillimore Estate with its various historic houses and their occupants. It should prove of absorbing interest and appeal to all lovers of Kensington.

The booklet which constitutes a valuable contribution to our local history is sponsored by the Kensington Society, one of whose aims is to stimulate interest in the history of the Royal Borough.

The Society wishes to express its grateful thanks to Sir Oliver Scott, of the Thackeray Book Shop, for undertaking the distribution of the work.

Christmas Card

There are a number of Christmas cards left from last year taken from a water colour by T. Hosmer Shepherd 1852, of Onslow Square, price 4d each.

The new Christmas card is a reproduction of Ghiberti's Virgin and Child, Washington National Gallery of Art, price of card 6d. each.

The Secretary would welcome volunteers for selling Christmas cards.

Holland Park School Prize

This year the prize was won by Richard Blackburn with an essay entitled "A Kensington Economist."

The essay is printed in full on pages 40, 41 and 42 of this Report. The Society offers its congratulations to the winner.

Please note that subscriptions for the year 1961-62 were due on October 1st.

Extra copies of the Annual Report can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, price 2s.

Will members taking part in visits please make a point of being on time to avoid keeping the host and party waiting.

Visits involving payment must be paid for at the time of booking. No payments can be refunded, but tickets may be passed on to a non-member. Members wishing to cancel any visit previously booked, where tickets are issued and the numbers limited, should advise the Hon. Secretary as soon as possible, as other members may be on the waiting list.

It would be appreciated if letters requiring an answer were accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.

The Society is affiliated to the London Society, the Metropolitan Parks and Gardens Association and the Noise Abatement Society.

Noise Abatement Society

A subscription of one guinea, formerly paid to the Central Council of Civic Societies is now paid to the Noise Abatement Society. The objects of this Society are:—

To eliminate all excessive and unnecessary noise from all sources. To take all possible steps under existing law to protect the public in general and membership to the Society in particular, from assault by noise. To inform the public by every available means of the damage of noise to health and of their legal rights against those who create noise. To press for the enforcement of present laws against noise and for new by-laws where existing laws appear inadequate.

It is hoped that membership will prove helpful to our members. Members can also apply for personal membership to the Hon. Secretary, Noise Abatement Society, 6, Old Bond St., London, W.1.

Mr. Gorden Roe offered to present to the Society Walter Crane's design for the Order of the White Elephant used for the Shrove-tide revels of the Art-Workers Guild at Cliffords Inn. The offer had to be refused with regret because the Society has no permanent premises in which such a treasure could be housed.

The Photographic Record Group has little to report apart from an excellent series of photographs taken by Mrs. E. M. Watson, showing the site of the old Royal Palace Hotel in Kensington High Street. These present some unusual aspects of the area after the demolition of the hotel.

Trees

All reports reaching the Society of impending schemes involving the destruction of trees have as usual been investigated by Alderman F. Carter, Secretary of the Tree Group.

An appreciation has been received from Mr. W. H. Tregashes, Manager of Barclays Bank, Notting Hill Gate, for the help given by

the Society in suggesting various scenes of old Kensington for decorative work at their new bank.

Central Council of Civic Societies

The Society was founded in 1939 for the following purposes: —

To enable Civic Societies to confer on matters of common interest.

To encourage the formation of new Civic Societies.

To enable Civic Societies to take concerted action as a representative national body.

To stimulate public interest in the improvement of urban amenities.

The Society has been developed by Miss Bright Ashford, its Honorary Secretary since 1939, and between 50 and 60 new societies have been formed throughout the country, entirely due to her unflagging zeal and enthusiasm.

Miss Bright Ashford was present at the first meeting called to discuss the formation of a Kensington Society. The advice and help which she has given us has been of inestimable value, we would like to convey our appreciation to Miss Bright Ashford for this and for the valuable pioneer work which she has done for societies throughout the country.

Members are reminded of the aims of the Society and are urged to inform the Secretary as soon as possible if they hear any plans or proposals, which conflict with the objects of the Society.

We regret to report the death of the following members, who were founder members of the Society:

Mr. H. Cattell.

Miss Catherine Oules.

Mrs. A. H. Langdon.

Miss P. Vaughan Morgan.

ACTIVITIES OF THE SOCIETY

During the past year visits have been made to the following places of interest: —

Royal Academy of Arts. Members were met by Sir Albert Richardson, P.P.R.A., who kindly conducted members over parts of the Academy not open to the public.

St. John's Lutheran Church, Kensington, by permission of Dr. T. Paul, who very kindly gave members tea.

Royal Society of Arts.

Royal Horticultural Society's Garden, Wisley.

Armenian Church, Kensington.

Ken Wood, Cromwell House, Hampstead Garden Suburb, and Lutyens Civic Centre. Sir Albert Richardson, P.P.R.A., kindly conducted the party.

Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Kensington.

Houses of Parliament, with tea on the Terrace.

No. 18, Kensington Square, with tea in the garden.

Cabinet War Room. Four visits were arranged to the War Room as only ten can be admitted at one time.

Osterley Park House, Osterley.

Courage and Barclay's Anchor Brewery, by kind permission of the Directors, who invited members to tea.

No. 8, Addison Road, Kensington.

College of Arms.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our hosts and hostesses and all those who have helped to make our visits such a success.

FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS

November 29th at 8 p.m., Town Hall, Kensington High Street, W.8. A lecture by Mr. J. P. Brook-Little entitled: "The Splendour of Heraldry". Chairman: Mr. H. Gandell. Mr. Brook-Little is Bluemantle Pursuivant, Chairman of the Council and a Fellow of Heraldry Society and Editor of the Coat of Arms. The lecture will be illustrated with slides.

December 5th at 6 p.m. at the Library Lecture Hall, Campden Hill Road, W.8. The Annual General Meeting. Chairman: Mrs. Mary Stocks. The meeting will be followed at 6.30 p.m. by a lecture by Mr. Michael Robbins entitled: "The History of Earls Court."

January 10th, 1962, at 8 p.m. at the Town Hall, Kensington High Street, W.8. A lecture by Mr. James C. Kennedy, A.R.I.B.A., entitled: "19th Century London." Slides will be shown. Chairman: Mr. Keon Hughes. Mr. Kennedy is a Lecturer and an Architect in the L.C.C. Parks Department.

February 6th at 8 p.m. at the Town Hall, Kensington High Street, W.8. A lecture by Mr. William Collier entitled: "Town Planning in History." The lecture will be illustrated with slides. Chairman: Mr. R. T. D. Wilmot. Mr. Collier is a Senior Investigator of Historic Buildings for the Ministry of Housing and Local Government.

March 6th at 8 p.m. at the Town Hall, Kensington High Street, W.8. A lecture by Mr. L. W. Lane, Chief Planning Officer L.C.C. entitled: "Town Planning Today." Chairman: Lady Pepler.

March 24th at 3 p.m. A visit to Baden-Powell House, Queens Gate, S.W.7. Tickets are required.

April 26th at 8 p.m. at Queen Elizabeth College, Campden Hill Road. A lecture by Dr. Stephen Pasmore entitled: "Holland House 1614-1649: The Life and Times of Henry Rich, Earl of Holland." Chairman: Professor Joel Hurstfield, Professor of Modern History, University of London.

Report of the Proceedings at a
PUBLIC INQUIRY
into the future of the Melbury Road Area
held at Kensington Town Hall
on April 19th and 20th, 1961.

The Inquiry was held before Mr. J. R. M. Poole, Inspector for the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, following a proposal by the L.C.C. for a Preservation Order in respect of Leighton House, which is No. 12, Holland Park Road, and Nos. 6, 8, 9, 11, 15 and 17, Melbury Road.

The order was opposed by the Kensington Borough Council and the Holland Park and Parways Estate.

For the London County Council, Mr. Harold Marmham said that the houses were designed by artists and architects of the late Victorian era. They demonstrated the best of Victorian design of the artists' own merits and as an expression of the leading artists of that time. They formed the nucleus of the artistic world and are therefore rich in historical associations. He called Mr. Ashley Barker as his first witness.

MR. BRIAN ASHLEY BARKER, an Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects, holder of the Honours Diploma of the Architectural Association, and Senior Assistant in the Historic Buildings Section of the Architect's Department of the London County Council, said:—

The houses numbered 9 and 11, Melbury Road, Kensington, are included in the Statutory List of Buildings of architectural or historic interest for the Borough of Kensington prepared under Section 30 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1947.

The houses numbered 6, 8, 15 and 17, Melbury Road and No. 12, Holland Park Road, having been included in a Supplementary List of Buildings of architectural or historic interest, were the subject of a letter dated February 5th, 1960, from the Ministry of Housing and Local Government to the Architect to the London County Council stating that Ministry proposed to add them to the Statutory List and that an instrument for that purpose was being prepared.

At that time the Council had under consideration a planning application from Messrs. Stone, Toms and Partners relating to the sites of No. 6, Melbury Road and No. 14, Holland Park Road and envisaging the demolition of both of these buildings.

On May 16th, 1960, the Town Planning Committee of the London County Council determined to make a Building Preservation Order on all of the buildings numbered 6, 8, 9, 11, 15 and 17, Melbury Road as well as on number 12, Holland Park Road (also known as Leighton House) and the planning application was subsequently refused, both for this and other reasons.

The laying out of Melbury Road took place in the early 1870's on part of a small farm known as Little Holland House which had been added to the Holland properties in 1774. The eastern part of the road followed approximately the line of Holland Lane which led to the farmhouse and on to the stables of Holland House itself. Holland Park Road had already been in existence for some time as the mews to the early 19th century St. Mary Abbotts Terrace, facing Kensington High Street, and it retained much of this character on its south side until very recently.

The farmhouse had passed in 1837 to Lord Holland's aunt, Caroline Fox, and then to Henry Fox, later Lord Ilchester. Through the agency of the artist George Frederick Watts, a personal friend of Lord and Lady Ilchester, the house was let in 1850 on a twenty-one-year lease to Henry Thoby Princep, with whom Watts then went to live.

In 1865, Princep's son, Valentine, a painter of some repute and a Royal Academician, built himself a house on the north side of Holland Park Road to the design of Philip Webb: this survives as No. 14, but has been so much altered that it is not included in the present Order. The garden of the house ran through to the new Melbury Road and after the elder Princep's lease of Little Holland House fell in, Watts took over the northern half of this site and built himself a house to the design of Frederick Pepys Cockerell, now No. 6, Melbury Road, in which he lived and worked from 1876 until shortly before his death in 1904.

In the meantime, another artist had come to live in Holland Park Road. This was Frederick Leighton, later to be President of the Royal Academy, to be created a knight, a baronet and, one day before his death, to be raised to the peerage. In 1866, he built a house immediately to the east of Valentine Princep's. His architect was George Aitchison and the building that resulted from their combined efforts was in some ways the most remarkable of the many wealthy artists' homes to be created in London in the second half of the 19th century. The artist lived and worked there until his death on January 25th, 1896.

In 1875, while Watt's house was building, William Burges, the well-known architect, bought for his own occupation the lease of a plot of land on the other side of Melbury Road backing on to Holland Park. He took great pains not only over the structure of his house (now No. 9) but also over the very rich internal decoration and furniture, which he designed himself and a great deal of which still survives in the house. From the standpoint of architectural quality, as such, the house is probably the most important in the whole group.

Burges was followed in Melbury Road by two further painters, Marcus Stone on the south side in 1876 at the present No. 8 and Luke Fildes on the north at No. 11 in 1877. Fildes

lived here until his death in 1927. Both these houses are particularly attractive examples of the domestic style of Norman Shaw, the leading British architect in that field in the later 19th century.

Shaw's pupil, Halsey Ricardo, was responsible for the last two houses in this Order, Nos. 15 and 17, Melbury Road, which were built as a pair in 1894. They are included for their architectural merit alone and not for any associations with occupants of distinction.

Other artists who lived in Melbury Road were the Sculptor, Thomas Thornycroft at No. 2, one of a pair of houses which he built next to Watts, and his son, Sir Hamo, perhaps the more famous sculptor of the two for whom Sir John Belcher designed a small house and studio immediately to the west in 1892, now numbered 2A. The latter building is marked by an L.C.C. blue plaque as is also No. 18, again one of a pair, in which William Holman Hunt lived from 1903 until his death in 1910. None of these buildings, however, was considered suitable for inclusion in the present Order.

The foregoing is stated in support of the Council's contention in making this Preservation Order that these houses, designed by outstanding architects of the later Victorian Era, form the nucleus of an area which was the home of many of the most celebrated artists of that time.

I shall now consider each of the buildings in more detail, taking them in chronological order of building, and thus starting with Leighton House.

Leighton House, 12, Holland Park Road, Kensington

The principal part of the house which was finished in 1866 was the result of a close collaboration between Leighton and his architect friend George Aitchison, R.A. Aitchison, who lived from 1825-1910, had a considerable reputation in his own day, being Professor of Architecture at the Royal Academy and president of the Royal Institute of British Architects from 1896-1899. He had a wide practice but specialised particularly in decorative work and his clients included many people of distinction and taste, Princess Louise, for example, having commissioned him to redecorate several rooms at Kensington Palace.

The "Building News" for November 30th, 1866, published a full description of Leighton's new house illustrated by plans, perspective views and ornamental details. The account states that the erection of this house may be alluded to with pleasure since it "was designed for the special occupancy of a particular individual, whose requirements of necessity stamp it with proprietary character, and it is in its minutest details carefully considered and, above all, original".

At this time, of course, the Arab hall, the most remarkable feature of the house had still to be built. The design, as reported in

the "B.N.", consisted of a formal block facing the road, three storeys high and five windows wide with a central entrance, the rear being two-storeyed and the upper part containing a large studio. Only three bays of the front was built and when the house was extended by Aitchison in 1877-1879, it was to a more picturesque and asymmetrical plan, with the famous Arab hall to the west and the entrance moved to the east end of the building.

The style of the earlier part of the house is Aitchison's very personal version of the current Italianate manner, the later work being nicely blended with Saracenic detail in cut and moulded brick, culminating in the domed Arab hall. Red brick is used throughout, with dressings of Caen stone, and the roofs are slated except for the dome which is covered with tiles.

The entrance doorway is a simplification of a classical type with a vestigial architrave flanked by wide margins, and moulded brackets supporting a cornice hood. The low, hipped roof has a widely projecting cornice with large brackets and carved decoration in semi-circular panels in the metopes.

The later extension commences to the west with a three-light window in the ground storey only. The first storey is largely blind, the gallery it contains being top lit. Below the cornice, which was once surrounded by a battlemented parapet, is a broad band of moulded brickwork. The octagonal "drum" of the Arab hall is similarly treated and the dome has eight arched windows at its base: the hall itself is cruciform with brick-roofed projections in the angles, and the end face of each transept is framed in moulded brick with large lower windows and smaller lights above.

The rear of the house has on the ground floor a pair of window openings flanking a central projection with French windows. A moulded stone band marks the level of the first floor and another forms the sill to the glazed upper part of the centre, which is framed with a light cast-iron frame finished with a simple pediment. High up on either side is a row of three small square windows sharing a sill band and immediately above is the main entablature with panelled metopes and brackets supporting the cornice. At the west end of the building is a two-storeyed bow, the upper part forming an apse to the studio and the lower part having three long windows which light the drawing room. To the east is a small extension with a first-floor balcony and beyond a wholly-glazed "winter studio" originally supported on cast iron standards. The lower part has now been infilled in brick. Beyond this, going back nearly to the road frontage, is a modern library extension with an exhibition gallery over it.

The plan of the house gives an entrance hall entered behind a glazed screen at its east end, a small library to the west and a central, top-lit, stair compartment. Beneath the studio is the dining-room and drawing room whilst an ante-room, between the latter and the library, gives a fine vista through to the Arab hall. On the first floor Leighton's own bedroom and dressing room are at the front of the

house with the top-lit picture gallery to the west, and the whole of the rear is occupied by the studio.

The decoration of the interior is largely classical and Italianate in inspiration with a certain amount of Saracenic influence even apart from the remarkably rich Arab hall. There is a lavish use of fine mosaic, marble and ornamental tiles and most of the woodwork is lacquered black with incised gilt enrichment. Leighton had a remarkable collection of works of art in his house, some of which remain as an integral part of the decoration, and a number of well-known artists collaborated in providing various ornamental details.

The principal feature of the entrance hall is an altar-piece attributed to Tintoretto, placed in its present position by Leighton. The library has low, fitted bookcases and a chimney-piece beneath the window with a simple bolection-moulded surround in green marble. In the central hall the stone bottom flight of the staircase rises behind a colonnade which supports the rear wall of the first-floor studio. There is a small wooden balcony between the centre columns highly wrought with elaborate inlaid decoration of a Saracenic nature. The stair continues in ebonised timber with a closed string with incised lines and medallions and turned balusters of uncommon form. The walls above the dado and up to the level of the first floor are lined with decorative tiles from the middle east and very fine plain, coloured ones supplied by William Morris's associate, the artist-potter William de Morgan. The floor is laid in an ornamental design in black and white mosaic. A second colonnade to the west screens the ante-room, similarly decorated, which leads to the Arab hall. This is approached between paired Corinthian columns of brocatello marble with gilded caps, the bases and answering pilasters being of green marble. The three shallow transepts are formed beneath pointed arches and flanked by slender, inset columns. Shaped pendentives reduce the compartment to an octagon on which sits the circular dome. The floor continues the black and white mosaic treatment of the ante-room and staircase hall and in the centre is a rectangular pool, edged in black marble, with a single fountain jet. There is a considerable use of richly-coloured marbles on the walls but the principal decoration is the splendid collection of tiles, which, with the stained glass and a large part of the latticed screens to the windows as well as the first-floor balcony, was brought back from the middle east at Leighton's request. The alabaster caps of the smaller columns were carved by the well-known sculptor Sir Edgar Boehm and the birds in the stone caps to the larger columns were modelled by Randolph Caldecott. The frieze to the room, with its gold mosaic background, was executed to the design of Walter Crane and above this level the decoration is largely painted.

The other rooms on the ground floor are, by comparison, very simple. The asymmetrical dining-room has a remarkable oak chimney-piece with carved Corinthian columns supporting winged griffins with shields, and an upper stage with a bracketed cornice. The drawing

room is more formal with the bow window in one long wall. The chimney-piece of white marble has a semi-circular opening and inlaid decoration of a formal pattern and naturalistic grass design.

On the first floor the landing is open to the picture gallery which is divided by a pair of Corinthian columns into two compartments, each lit by an octagonal lantern and from the first compartment the latticed balcony looks down into the Arab hall. At the front of the house a small lobby leads to Leighton's bedroom and dressing room, both of which are quite plain. The studio at the rear, with its large projecting window, has a semi-dome to the eastern apse and at the western end the ceiling is coved behind a screen of columns which replace a gallery on cast-iron supports. Above the corniced doorcase are inset plaster casts from the Parthenon frieze and from Michelangelo's tondo of the Virgin and Child at Burlington House, which were placed in position for Leighton. The two chimney-pieces are of black marble, one being inset with decoration in coloured marbles and the other, rather curiously, being similarly decorated with oriental dishes.

I should like to read the following letter from Mr. Trenchard Cox, Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum at South Kensington:—

"Dear Sir,

*Section 29, Town and Country
Planning Act, 1947*

Thank you for your letter of November 8th, in which you ask for the opinion of the Victoria and Albert Museum on the importance of the eastern tiles incorporated in the interior decoration of Leighton House.

First, I will quote from the official Guide to the Collection of Tiles in the Victoria and Albert Museum, published this year (page 24). On Syrian (Damascus) tiles of the 17th century the Keeper of the Department of Ceramics writes as follows:

'There is little charm of detail in the large panels that must have been a standard furnishing in Syrian houses of the late 16th and 17th centuries, but their appearance in a reconstructed setting at Leighton House in Holland Park Road, London, shows that their massed effect can be attractive.'

At Leighton House, in addition to the more or less complete Damascus panels, there are several single tiles made at Isnik in Turkey during the 16th century. These are of some importance.

We consider that the tiles at Leighton House gain much from being set in the wall in a manner which is scarcely practicable in a Museum. They are complemented by the carved wooden Damascus lattice work which dates from the 17th century. Thus, the interest of the tiles and woodwork lies, perhaps, to even a greater extent, in the setting than in their individual historical or aesthetic importance; and we would regard Leighton House as a rewarding place to visit

for anyone whose interest had been aroused by seeing individual Near Eastern objects shown here under Museum conditions.

I should add that some of the tiles at Leighton House are by William de Morgan, an associate of William Morris, and an important figure in the history of English 19th century design.

There is no objection to our opinion being quoted at the public enquiry on January 4th, 1961.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Town Clerk, Kensington Borough Council,

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) Trenchard Cox,
Director and Secretary."

No. 6, Melbury Road

No. 6, also known as Little Holland House after the earlier farmhouse was, as I have stated, the first house of the group to be built in 1875 and was owned by G. F. Watts.

It is remarkable in that the architect, F. P. Cockerell, largely eschewed period detail and was obviously concerned to produce a style which would be characteristic of its own age and no other, although the influence of both Flemish and English architecture of the 17th century which went to form the so-called "Queen Anne" style of Norman Shaw can be seen here too.

Frederick Pepys Cockerell, 1833-1878, was the son of a famous father, Professor Charles Robert Cockerell, one of the most distinguished architects of this country in the middle years of the 19th century. The son's career was cut short at the age of 45 but he had by then a very considerable number of country houses to his credit. His two most important buildings in London, both of which have now disappeared, were the Freemasons' Hall in Great Queen Street and the old Gallery of the Society of Painters in Water Colours, in Pall Mall. He had previously done work for Watts and it seems that there was a considerable degree of understanding between the two men: certainly the plan of the house was entirely dictated by Watts's requirements.

Fronting the street is a large studio raised above a high basement which contained the kitchens. Behind lies a shallow, three-storeyed block with a lobby and a single living-room on the ground floor, and two rooms on each floor above. These are reached by a staircase and corridor across the rear which also formerly gave access to a gallery in the high, sculpture studio to the east. A small third studio lay to the west of the entrance and in 1881 this became the ante-room to a large new picture gallery, which, with a new porch and probably a conservatory, formerly existing on the garden front, was the work of Leighton's architect George Aitchison, Cockerell having died in the meantime. Aitchison also carried out further alterations and redecorations to the house after Watts's second marriage in 1886.

On the road front, the main studio has a large gabled and pinnacled projection with a glazed roof to it and a very large segmental headed window. A narrower window occurs in a low, hipped-roofed tower at the north-west corner and at the east end is a small annexe with a lean-to roof. The entrance porch is simply treated with a stone architrave to the opening and a semi-circular arch above. The small studio or ante-room has a nearly octagonal bay with brick cresting to its parapet and a taller, but similar bay is attached to the rear corner of the picture gallery.

Internally, there is a long entrance passage with a blocked doorway on the right to the ante-room and picture gallery which, in Watts's lifetime, were open to the public on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. At the far end a change of level and of direction leads into the lobby of the main part of the house, where the three French windows are answered by the light timber arcade screening the staircase at the rear. This rises in two flights with closed strings and turned balusters of a mid-18th century character, and from the half landing is entered the large front studio. Both this and the sculpture studio have been altered but the living-room is still very much as Aitchison redecorated it for Watts. The chimney-piece does not agree with the published design but the recess for a divan at the far end of the room, with the enriched four-centred arch and decorated tympanum above it, is recorded as being Watts's favourite seat, the reflecting surfaces behind being very useful to him when his hearing began to fail in his later years. There is also a very distinctive pendant arcade in timber across the rear of the room, which must be of the same date.

There is no evidence that the other rooms in the house have been much altered but they do not contain decoration or fittings of particular interest.

"Tower House," No. 9, Melbury Road

William Burges, A.R.A., who lived from 1827-1881 can be classed with Butterfield, Street and Pearson as one of the most gifted and original gothic architects of the nineteenth century. At the age of seventeen he had entered the office of Edward Blore and in 1849 he moved to that of Mathew Digby Wyatt; but he was soon absorbed into the main stream of the gothic revival and in 1856 gained the first award in the international competition for Lille Cathedral. His output was small, in inverse proportion to the amount of care he took with all his buildings and unlike the other three architects mentioned he excelled at domestic work.

Two cathedrals were actually built to his design, those of Brisbane and St. Fin Barre's, Cork, besides a number of churches and his two best-known secular buildings are perhaps the speech room at Harrow School and the huge Hertford College, Connecticut, U.S.A. His largest domestic jobs were Knighthayes Court in Devon and the rebuilding of Cardiff Castle for the fabulously wealthy Marquis of Bute, for whom he also rebuilt the smaller, ruined,

Castell Cock a few miles away. His work on these two castles may be compared to the famous medieval reconstructions of the French architect Viollet-le-Duc at Carcassonne and the Chateau of Pierrefonds but they were far more than mere archaeological exercises. No domestic interiors in the middle ages were as rich as those of Cardiff Castle and even in the nineteenth century one would have expected that such costly materials, fine craftsmanship and elaborate ornament could only have been afforded by an exceptionally rich man, were it not that the architect's own house is equally splendid, if on a considerably smaller scale. This is not, however, a building superbly constructed and decorated merely for show, but also a sensitively and conveniently planned house to live in and of all his works Burges is said to have regarded it the most highly. Certainly the present occupants have valued it sufficiently to have carefully conserved the original decoration during the twenty-five years or more that they have lived there and they have even gone to the trouble of buying back some of the original furniture which Burges designed for his own use.

The style of the house is essentially that of late medieval French domestic architecture and the materials used are a hard red brick with extensive stone dressings, the steep, gable-ended roof being covered with greyish slates. There are two principal storeys above a basement and the roof contains a garret. The three main living-rooms form an "L" shaped block with a square entrance hall in the angle, facing south and east and in front of it a circular staircase tower with a conical roof and a small gabled wing. An "L" shaped double porch serves both the main entrance and the garden door behind it. The ground and first floors of the house are marked by storey and sill bands and in general there are moulded stone dressings to the eaves and gables of the roof, the chimney stacks being finished in moulded brick. The larger windows have stone mullions and transoms with square or cusped heads to the lights but some of the smaller openings are arched in brick or have plain stone lintels. The windows to the basement have heavy segmental arches and are entirely without stone dressings. The porch is of stone, its square piers having carved caps and the deep entablature an arcaded cornice with a brick parapet in front of the large window, lighting the upper part of the hall. At the rear, the pair of windows to the library with their enriched mullions and very finely carved lintels are divided by a stepped buttress and the three windows lighting the drawing-room have a long balcony above them with a pierced parapet, supported on moulded stone brackets. Of the three dormer windows at the rear of the house the large central one has a high, arched gable.

The remarkably intact state of the interior has already been noted. The presence of a certain amount of the original furniture is scarcely relevant to the present enquiry except where it forms an integral part of the building as, for example, in the library, with its elaborate fitted bookcases. But there is an extraordinarily lavish use of painted decoration, stained glass and carving, often of figure

subjects and of a very high quality and there is a particular theme in the decoration of each room in the house. On the two main floors the ceilings are beamed with supporting corbels of stone and the windows are recessed beneath broad segmental arches. The chimney-pieces are generally of the medieval type with a tapered hood and several are of fantastic elaboration.

The entrance porch, the inner part of which is enclosed by glazed screens, has a mosaic floor with Burges's own dog, Pinkie, depicted in the centre. The front door and also that leading to the garden are faced with bronze, the panels modelled with figures in relief.

The hall, rising through two storeys, has another mosaic floor with a representation in the gothic manner of Theseus and the Minotaur. Opposite the entrance is a large fireplace and the doorways to the living-rooms are square headed with a roll moulding ornamented by pairs of lion masks. Two pointed archways, divided by a marble column with a carved cap and base, lead to the stone staircase which rises in a "U" shaped compartment round a solid core. A gallery at first-floor level runs across two sides of the hall. The dining-room at the front of the house has its walls lined with Devonshire marble for two-thirds of their height, above which is a frieze of figures executed in glazed tiles. The decorations illustrate Chaucer's "House of Fame" and on the upper part of the marble chimney-piece is a seated figure of Fame himself, supported by a trumpeting angel, executed in bronze with ivory hands and head and sapphire eyes. The ceiling, reputed to be of enamelled iron, has a central figure representing the sun surrounded by a circle of planets and the signs of the Zodiac. The theme of the library decoration is appropriately enough literature and the liberal arts. Roundels in the ceiling contain idealised portraits of the founders of the different systems of theology and law and the doors of the enclosed bookcases are painted with a series of figures relating to the visual arts and representing the letters of the alphabet. The chimney-piece has a plain surround of Mexican onyx to the opening but the upper part is of Caen stone, elaborately carved and painted, and takes the form of a medieval castle with lively figures in front of it, the whole intended to represent the dispersal of the parts of speech at the time of the tower of Babel. Nimrod himself sits in a turreted and gabled niche at the top of the composition. The walls of the room are painted with a diaper pattern and a deep and richly-gilded frieze of formalised foliage runs beneath the ceiling.

A wide opening opposite the library fireplace, with sliding doors and a central marble column, leads into one end of the drawing room. This has, unfortunately, lost its painted decoration, the theme of which was "the tender passion of love". But the three windows have a marble lining to their deep reveals and ball-flower enrichment to their segmental arches, much of the stained glass survives and there are built-in cupboards with painted doors on each side of the chimney-piece which is perhaps the most beautiful in the house. It is of Caen stone, carved and painted as before, and illustrates

Chaucer's version of the "Roman de la Rose". The hood, which is decorated with small roundels containing birds, has a finely-carved bracket supporting a standing figure of the god of love, in medieval dress with a Gothic canopy above his head. The frieze has a row of delicately carved figures standing between formalised trees and is extended on either side with the support of a richly carved bracket. The corbels supporting the ceiling beams repeat the theme of lively small birds, carved nearly in the round.

On the first floor the gallery over the hall has a hand-rail supported by turned wooden balusters and the shaped ceiling has painted decoration including the emblems of the constellations in the positions in which they were when the house was first occupied.

The front bedroom has lost a frieze of formalised flowers but otherwise retains its decorations on the theme of "the earth and its productions". Butterflies are painted in a formal pattern on the ceiling and frogs and mice appear on the beams. The relatively plain chimney-piece is of red marble.

What was Burges's own bedroom above the library, with a bathroom *en suite*, is decorated with "the sea and its inhabitants". The ceiling is set with tiny mirrors and a deep frieze, below the level of the corbels, has fish and eels and formalised waves. The frieze to the chimney-piece is similar but carved in relief, and a vigorously modelled figure of a mermaid supports a shelf on the hood which is also decorated with shells, coral and a mer baby.

The larger room over the drawing-room, known in Burges's time as the armoury is plainly finished except for the carved chimney-piece which has a crocketed ogee gable rising in front of the hood, with three large roundels carved with medieval versions of Venus, Juno and Minerva.

The storey in the roof is remarkably well proportioned, making the best use of the available space. There are good chimney-pieces in two of the rooms which were known as the day and night nurseries although Burges had no family and remained a bachelor to the end of his life. One illustrates the fable of Jack and the beanstalk, Jack supporting a shelf on the hood and the giant's head and hands apparently breaking through the stonework above. The second has a pattern of cords and tassels in the frieze and three shelves to the hood supported by lively figures of monkeys.

It is interesting to compare the present state of the house with the magnificent set of photographs of the building including interiors and furnishing which were taken at the time of its completion. This must be one of the most minutely recorded as well as one of the best preserved houses of its date in the country.

Nos. 8 and 11, Melbury Road

The architect of these two houses, Richard Norman Shaw, 1831-1912, had worked in George Edmund Street's office where he succeeded Philip Webb as chief assistant. The houses are in the so-called "Queen Anne" style, already referred to, which was developed in the

late 1860's and early '70's by Shaw, Webb and another former assistant in Street's office, William Eden Nesfield. Of these three, Shaw was by far the most important and his large practice could be said to have been more influential than that of any other British architect in the later 19th century.

Perhaps his two best-known surviving buildings in London are the Piccadilly Hotel and the New Scotland Yard buildings on the Victoria Embankment. He designed a considerable number of country houses ranging from the picturesque informality of Grim's Dyke, Harrow Weald, built in 1872 for the painter Frederick Goodall, to the classical symmetry of Bryanston, in Dorset, built later in his career, in 1890, for the Portman family. The interest of these two houses in Melbury Road lies in the demonstration of Shaw's handling of the medium-sized detached villa for clients of taste.

No. 8

As built, the house was of two principal storeys above a basement, the front part of the upper storey being occupied by a large studio, rising into the gable-ended roof which contained a garret at the rear. An additional floor has now been placed in the studio but this has not resulted in any change in external appearance. A single-storeyed wing to the east has a wholly-glazed studio over it and at the south-west corner is a small but taller wing, crowned with a characteristic pediment. The ground-floor level at this end of the building is considerably raised.

Norman Shaw used his favourite red brick and roofing tiles with a considerable amount of painted woodwork. Other detail is cut and moulded in a fine red brick, notably the centrally-placed entrance doorway which is architraved and corniced, with a panel of decoration above it capped by a segmental pediment. The front of the house is dominated by three great oriel windows at first floor level which are mullioned and transomed with leaded lights. The wooden eaves-cornice is continued across the two side oriels, which have gables above them, each with a small three-light window, but the central one rising higher with its own moulded cornice and flat roof. On the ground floor there is a pair of narrow segmental-headed windows beneath the western oriel, the sliding sashes divided by glazing bars, and to the left of the entrance is a longer pair at a lower level. Beyond are three very tall and narrow lights to the former dining-room, one within the main part of the building and two in the low wing which has a pair of wider windows in its eastern return wall. The front is framed by strip pilasters and at the western corner rises a very tall, panelled chimney-stack. The resulting effect is at once remarkably distinguished for so modest a villa and typical of the master's work.

On the garden front the eaves cornice is of moulded brick and two high chimney-stacks rise through the roof which has pedimented dormers lighting the garret storey. There is a long window to the

staircase, segmental-headed openings to the ground storey openings and a large three-sided bay in timber, lighting the drawing-room.

Internally, the house has been very thoroughly converted into separate dwellings, the main studio having an additional storey in its upper part. The entrance hall and staircase are largely reconstructed, only the two upper flights of the stairs being untouched: they are designed in a late 17th century style with closed strings, panelled newels and heavy, turned balusters supporting a broad handrail. The former dining-room, now somewhat reduced in size, has a beamed ceiling and an egg and dart moulding to the cornice. The room behind it has a plainer cornice and retains what is probably the original chimney-piece of mahogany with brass enrichments, the opening being flanked by Doric columns supporting a panelled frieze and double shelf, the cheeks and hearth having blue and white painted tiles. The drawing-room retains its panelled wagon ceiling, formed beneath the staircase, and further plain panelling to the dado. In other rooms are one or two very simple painted chimney-pieces set with blue and white tiles.

No. 11

This house is grouped in a picturesque manner at the bend of Melbury Road, to close the vista from the south and west. The main living-rooms are at the rear with a large studio above them, and in front stands a square block with three lower storeys and a garret, the large staircase rising in the angle between the two parts. To the west of the stair is a single-storey wing and another, apparently an addition at the north-east corner of the building, has had an extra storey built over it in recent years.

The facing material is again red brick and the roofs are tiled, that to the studio having gable ends, an eaves parapet and a nicely detailed crowning cupola in timber. There are hipped roofs to the staircase and to the front block, the latter having a large wooden cornice and two pedimented dormer windows. The low south-west wing has a flat roof guarded by a white-painted wooden balustrade which is repeated on a small balcony above the entrance doorway in the front part of the house. The tall, narrow windows have either segmental or flat-arched heads and are mostly arranged in pairs, the sliding sashes having thick glazing bars. The street front of the house is treated with brick pilasters and the tall, rather plain chimney-stacks continue the vertical emphasis of the design. The great studio windows are mullioned and transomed and have leaded lights, the large central one, of the five facing north, rising above the roof parapet with an arched treatment to the glazing and a moulded wooden capping. Below, there is a wide, three-light window to the dining-room and the drawing-room has a three-sided brick bay. The ground floor of the north-east wing has two similar bays in timber, but the upper storey has metal casements of a modern pattern.

Internally, there is a low entrance hall, with a mosaic floor, leading to the large stair compartment, the handsome staircase being of

a late 17th century type. The principal rooms are at a slightly higher level than the hall and those at the rear are little altered, all having beamed ceilings and decoration of a generally mid-18th century character. The dining-room has an enriched moulding to the cornice and the two-panelled doors have lugged architraves, a pulvinated frieze and dentil cornice. The elaborate chimney-piece is of walnut and has black and gold marble slips and a similar inlay to the tablet. There is a lugged architrave flanked by Ionic terms whilst the frieze has inswept ends and is decorated with fluting and oval paterae.

The drawing-room has more elaborate doorcases with a carved frieze and cornice. The wooden chimney-piece has been stripped of paint and has a lugged architrave with brown marble slips, the frieze having a festooned tablet, flanked by scrolls, and end blocks above which the enriched cornice-shelf breaks forward.

The studio on the floor above now has a false ceiling and is divided into a number of rooms. Oak panelling is said to survive behind modern partitions.

The wonderfully varied views of this house to be obtained from the two arms of Melbury Road and from Ilchester Place show Shaw's picturesque invention at its happiest, and its corner site makes it of very special importance in this group.

Nos. 15 and 17 Melbury Road, Kensington

These two houses have the appearance of a single building. There are three storeys above a high basement, plus a garret in the roof, and the front is six windows wide, the entrances being set in low wings approached by covered ways on either side of the walled forecourt. The general elements of the design are taken from 17th century work but this splendid exterior has a distinctive character typical of its author with his faith (to quote Pevsner), in the use of imperishable materials and colour in the modern street: the window openings have segmental arches with bars to the sliding sashes which have flush frames and are furnished with hinges and louvered shutters. The hipped and tiled roof has a heavy timber eaves-cornice with plain brackets, dormer windows and tall, plain chimney stacks.

The walls are faced with glazed ox-blood brick, there are moulded sill-bands of Portland stone and an enriched storey-band at second floor level with stone strip-pilasters framing the top storey.

The forecourt is entered by three round-arched gateways, the two side ones leading into the covered ways which have decorated iron supports of an "arts and crafts" character. The steps to the front areas are treated in an elaborate manner with stone balustrading inscribed with the architect's name and the date of building. The forecourt is paved with large buff quarry tiles and there is a very wide sunken area at the back of the house which is similarly treated. The rear elevation has three gables to the roof instead of an eaves-cornice.

Internally, the conversion of the two houses into flats has robbed the building of some of its original character, but there are still items

of great interest including entrance halls and the staircase in No. 15. Here, fascinating play is made with changes of level and semi-circular headed archways and recesses, the stair being dramatically lit from large windows. The walls are lined with glazed peacock blue tiles and the lower hall has an open timber screen at the rear framing curved steps down to the garden floor. Further steps, in grey marble, lead to the upper hall which has a fine and very distinctive chimney-piece of marble and alabaster, with a panel of decorative tiles and a mosaic hearth.

It will be seen from all the foregoing that these houses, covered by the proposed Preservation Order, are of quite outstanding architectural interest and rich in historical association, as well as forming a most important document in the study of the development of Victorian taste. Representations have been received from The Royal Academy of Arts, the Kensington Society, the London Society and the Victorian Society, all supporting the making of a Building Preservation Order. I am of the opinion that these buildings clearly warrant preservation. In the words of the Victorian Society's letter to the Council they "are a remarkable monument to the art-life of the Victorian age and to an aspect of the social history of Kensington".

Mr. Barker, cross-examined by Mr. J. Ramsay Willis, representing Parway Estates, agreed that No. 6 Melbury Road, in which the Estate had an interest, was not as architecturally worthy as the other houses in the group, but he said it had rich historical associations and was worthy of preservation as part of the block.

In reply to Mr. F. A. Stockdale, acting on behalf of the Holland Park Estate and the Royal Borough of Kensington, Mr. Barker said he took pleasure in looking at Leighton House from the outside. He referred to it as "a building without parallel".

Mr. Stockdale called Mr. William Bishop, F.R.I.C.S., of Drivers Jones & Co., the managing agent of the Holland Park Estate. He said that the Estate's objection to the Preservation Order was in principal, because there is no proposal to demolish any of the premises included in the order, except for No. 6, Melbury Road, the former home of G. F. Watts.

Mr. E. Maxwell Fry, architect, was also called on behalf of the Holland Park Estate, referred to Leighton House as "architecturally extremely disjointed". It had rather "painful and unpleasant marks of the owner and of the times". He thought most of the houses concerned "worthy of preservation", but thought that No. 6 Melbury Road had very little architectural merit.

Mrs. Diana Paul, a member of the Kensington Council, was then called. She said that the Preservation Order was "unjustified and unnecessary". Kensington Council had no intention of demolishing or changing the use of Leighton House. The rumour that they intended to do so, she thought, had been started by the Kensington Society.

This suggestion, which is wholly untrue, was immediately dealt with by Mr. Money, Counsel for the Society.

The Kensington Society opened their case by calling the distinguished architect, Sir Albert Richardson, a former President of the Royal Academy, to give his opinion on the merits of the houses.

He said the planning of Melbury Road and its houses and gardens is superb and an example of Victorian looking-ahead. He told the Inspector, "any interference would be detrimental to the whole borough". He described Leighton House as being "the background of a great artist, free from ordinary trammels and commercialism", and spoke of "the appeal it makes to the ordinary mind". It fulfils a wonderful purpose. It is pleasant to look upon and adds something to the locality.

Of No. 6 Melbury Road, a house which had not been highly commended by other witnesses, Sir Albert said it had a really superb silhouette and that its plan was masterly. It was part of the history of this period and was important to the other houses. If properly cared for, remarked Sir Albert, No. 6 would form part of the future cultural centre of the borough.

No. 9 was the best example of the work of William Burges, the architect, "I think it would be a disaster and a comment on the general decline if it were touched. Already the public dislikes the rubbish that is being erected and when intelligence reigns once more, people will realise the importance of these Victorian houses. They are part of the national heritage".

The next witness called by the Kensington Society was Mr. Timothy Phillips, an artist, and a pupil of Annigoni and Salvador Dali, who said that the area had a very great atmosphere which stimulated work. "I would feel the loss of these houses very keenly indeed and so would all the other artists in the area". He said there were insufficient studios in Kensington and the shortage was tending to drive artists away.

The Kensington Society concluded its case by presenting the following statement to the Inspector.

Several years ago the Kensington Society asked the London County Council to consider making preservation orders on groups of buildings. The Society was very gratified to learn that the County Council considers that Nos. 6, 8, 9, 11, 15 and 17 Melbury Road, and Leighton House (12 Holland Park Road) should be preserved both on account of their intrinsic architectural merit and of their importance as a group expressing the taste of well-known artists of the late Victorian period.

The Kensington Borough Council has objected to a Building Preservation Order being put on these houses. The Society deplores the action of the Kensington Borough Council and would like to submit the following observations for the consideration of the Minister.

Melbury Road and its region represents a development which took place in the 1870's on the site of an old farm house and the old Little Holland House and its grounds. In 1870 Lady Holland's circumstances were in that entanglement which led to her making over

the administration of the whole of the Holland Park property to Lord Ilchester. An agreement of 1871 forbade any building lease that would "interfere with the beauty and enjoyment of the house", but left Lord Ilchester free to dispose of the Little Holland House portion of the estate, and this he quickly marked down for development, planning a new street, Melbury Road.

G. F. Watts built the first house in Melbury Road and named it Little Holland House (now No. 6). Lord Leighton had already built for himself a house in Holland Park Road and the presence of Watts and Leighton inevitably attracted other artists, the district even acquiring the name of "the Leighton Settlement". Victorian academicians who enjoyed great prosperity by their subject pictures and the large sale of engravings made from them were able to indulge themselves architecturally and Norman Shaw, elected A.R.A. in 1872, was employed by his colleagues of the Academy. He designed No. 8 Melbury Road for Marcus Stone in 1876. Shaw also designed No. 11 for Luke Fildes in 1877. No. 15 Melbury Road is a typical example of the work of Shaw's pupil Halsey. No. 2 Melbury Road was the studio of the sculptor Sir William Hamo Thornycroft. Thomas Thornycroft was also a resident of Melbury Road. Holman Hunt lived at No. 18. No. 9 Melbury Road (Tower House) is a house on which that imaginative architect William Burges spent many years of loving effort. This house cannot be considered otherwise than one of the most wonderful houses in London, as interesting as Leighton House in its expression of its builder's remarkable personality.

For an idea of the atmosphere of these houses in the palmy days of the Victorian artist, one must search among the "Illustrated Interviews", in the early numbers of the "Strand Magazine", to which Eliot and Fry's photographs add a valuable documentation. The houses in Melbury Road were designed by outstanding architects for celebrated artists and form the nucleus of an area which was the centre of the artistic world of the 1870's.

Leighton House in Holland Park Road was for thirty years (1866-1896) the home of Lord Leighton, P.R.A. It was designed by him and erected under the direction of his friend George Aitchison, R.A. That part of the house known as the Arab Hall was begun in 1877 and finished in 1879, and is remarkable as being solely the creation of this artist's mind; it embodies the spirit of Eastern art, but without slavish imitation.

Its symmetrical proportions, wealth and beauty of colour and ornaments are achieved by clever and masterly blending of materials, old and new, Eastern and Western. The Eastern tiles (mainly 15th and 16th centuries) were brought from Rhodes, Damascus, Cairo, and elsewhere, by Lord Leighton with the help of his friends, Sir Caspar Purdon Clarke and Captain Sir Richard Burton. The modern blue tiles are the work of William de Morgan, the stained glass and lattice wood work came from Damascus and Cairo, whilst the marble

and stone work is executed in various styles. Particularly noteworthy are sets of tiles over the entrance, bearing an Arabic description, 16ft. in length. On the same floor as the Arab Hall are rooms formerly known as the drawing- and dining-rooms, in both of which small meetings are held.

On the first floor are studios, and a well-lit picture gallery, the latter being one of two built in 1929 and the gift of the late Mrs. Henry Perrin. The Large studio is available for concerts, meetings, etc., and the gallery ideally suited for exhibitions.

Leighton House was acquired by the Kensington Council in 1926, and is maintained as a centre for the promotion of art, literature and music. An enemy bomb fell at the front of the building in September, 1940, but the damage caused was mostly external. The building was re-opened on 16th May, 1951.

The legal history of Leighton House is a long and complicated one (see Report of the Libraries Committee which appears in the Council's Minutes for 1950).

The freehold of the property originally belonged to Lord Ilchester who, in 1877, leased it to the late Lord Leighton. This lease, with two others under which small portions of the grounds are held, all expire in 1963.

By 1925 the leasehold interest had become vested in a Mrs. Russell Barrington as a trustee and was maintained by a voluntary organisation known as The Leighton House Association, as a memorial to the late Lord Leighton, and used as a centre of art, music and literature.

As the funds of the Association were not sufficient to meet current expenditure, the trustees offered to transfer Leighton House, together with its contents, to the Council as a gift if its character and general purpose were maintained.

The Council eventually decided to purchase the freehold interest from the Ilchester Estate for the sum of £2,750, and to take an assignment of the leasehold interest from Mrs. Russell Barrington. Legal difficulties were then encountered by reason of the fact that as Mrs. Barrington was a trustee it was not competent for her to give the property to the Council without the consent of the Charity Commissioners which the Council were loath to seek lest their control of the property should be fettered by the Charitable Trusts under which Mrs. Barrington held the property. On the advice of Counsel various expedients were tried to overcome this difficulty including the appointment of four members of the Council as nominal trustees but eventually it was found necessary to obtain the consent of the Charity Commissioners to the free transfer. This was obtained on condition that the premises were used for the purposes of the Libraries Acts until the leases run out in 1963.

The Council are limited in their freedom of action by covenants which they entered into with the Ilchester Estate when they purchased the freehold interest. These restrictions are: Not to use the

property without the consent of the Ilchester Estate for any purpose other than—

- (a) Public Library purposes
- (b) Private House
- (c) Mayoral at-homes or garden parties
- (d) Orchestral, Chamber, Vocal or Choral concerts.

In addition, in the event of the Council ever disposing of the property, the Ilchester Estate were given an option to re-purchase at the then current market price which is to be settled, in the event of dispute, by arbitration.

In 1928, certain additions to the house were provided by Mrs. Henry Perrin and presented to the Council. The only condition imposed on the gift was that, so long as the additions known as The Perrin Galleries were held by the Council for the purpose of the Libraries Acts, specimens of sculpture of the late Miss Perrin, and certain exhibits of pottery donated by Mrs. Perrin, should be exposed for permanent exhibition and a prohibition against disposal of the articles so presented was also imposed.

In 1947 the Libraries Committee considered the future of Leighton House and, in view of the legal restrictions on a change of user, recommended that the premises, when restored, should be used for the undermentioned purposes:

- (1) Stimulating and developing general cultural interests of a musical, artistic and educational character
- (2) As a centre for the, at that time, Arts and Civic Society.

In short, the Council's freedom of action with regard to Leighton House is severely curtailed but, when the leases fall in in 1963, the Council will be in a position to put the property to any use they see fit, subject only to the necessity of obtaining the prior consent of the Ilchester Estate to any change from the purpose for which the property was originally bought. If the Council wishes to dispose of the property the Ilchester Estate must be given an option to re-purchase.

The fact that the Kensington Borough Council objects to the proposal of the L.C.C. to put a Preservation Order on the house suggests that the Council is unwilling to save Leighton House from the developers. There is no doubt that the Ilchester Estate is very anxious to re-purchase the property for development, so if a preservation order is not made Leighton House may well be demolished sometime after 1963.

The Kensington Society is of the opinion that Leighton House should be preserved for the following reasons—

1. It is a unique treasure house—containing objects of rare value. It would be monstrous to suggest that these treasures should be distributed among the art galleries and museums. The house where a great man lived and did the work which made

him famous is also of great interest. For example, visitors to Antwerp are more pleased with the Musee Plantin than any other of the many famous sights in that most interesting town. Christopher Plantin lived there, and the house where he carried on his trade of a printer can be seen. The authorities of Antwerp were wise in their generation. They have provided an attraction for their town. London is sadly lacking in such houses which is all the more reason why this particular one should be preserved. It is the expression of a great artist's personality and probably no more perfect artist's house is to be found anywhere.

2. It has been enjoyed and appreciated by many thousands from all parts of the world.
3. The famous "Arab Hall", staircase and corridors contain not only the largest collection of Eastern enamels of the best period in the world but also an extensive and superb example of Walter Crane's decorative art, likewise sculptured capitals of columns by Caldicott and Sir Edgar Boehm.
4. It has become a live centre in the Borough for cultural activities of all kinds. Lord Leighton's studio affords ideal surroundings and perfect acoustic qualities for concerts, lectures and meetings. There are 400 bookings a year, and some of these are for exhibitions lasting several weeks. Local history and other exhibitions of popular appeal have been organised and an exhibition of local artists has become an annual feature. No provision has been made in the new Central Library for exhibitions. University extension courses and other lectures on the arts are held during the winter months.
5. It is a public memorial of world-wide interest to one of the greatest Presidents the Royal Academy ever had—to a great artist, painter and sculptor.
6. The idea of Leighton House not being retained as a centre of art, as it has been for so many years, would not only be a local but a national reproach.

The Kensington Society believes that Leighton House and the small group of houses in Melbury Road call for special consideration and have a very strong claim to be considered as an architectural entity. The fact that some of the studio houses in Melbury Road have been converted into flats has in no way destroyed their architectural merit. The Society feels that it would be iniquitous to demolish these houses and earnestly hopes that effective steps will be taken to prevent such a contingency.

Many local residents gave their reasons why they approved the Preservation Order.

Mrs. Drysdale, Secretary of the Addison Road Society and wife of a Kensington Borough Councillor, wished to make it known that Kensington Council were not unanimous in opposing the Preservation Order. "The changing scene is very upsetting in this unique garden area of Kensington," she said. "The Ilchester Estate do not care about the appearance of their houses."

Finally, counsels for the Holland Park Estate, Parway Estate and Kensington Borough Council concluded their cases against the Preservation Order and counsels for the London County Council and the Kensington Society gave the case for the Order.

As we go to press we learn with very much regret that the Minister has decided not to confirm the Preservation Order.

The following is a copy of the letter conveying the Minister's decision.

Ministry of Housing and Local Government, Whitehall.

August 30th, 1961.

I am directed by the Minister of Housing and Local Government to say that he has considered the report of his Inspector, following the Local Inquiry held by him at the Town Hall, Kensington, on April 19th, 1961.

The Inspector says that Melbury Road has historical associations with persons who, in the previous century, being of consequence in the sphere of the visual arts, materially influenced matters of taste of that time. He considers that, with the exception of No. 6 Melbury Road, the properties included in the Building Preservation Order are all exceptionally fine examples of their period, that they are well preserved, and that they are among the best works of notable architects of the last century, certain of them having very important historical associations with famous people of that time. As regards No. 6 Melbury Road, he takes the view that, although this is a building of architectural quality and historical associations, it has not a sufficient degree of architectural or historical interest to justify that part of the Order which relates to it being confirmed. The other buildings in the Order he considers to be of very special architectural or historic interest. If there were any doubt concerning this exceptional interest he is of opinion that it would be reasonable to adopt the course of reconsidering the question of a Building Preservation Order at such time as specific proposals for the material alteration or demolition of the building arose, but in his view there is no doubt on the matter. He therefore recommends that the Order be confirmed, except in so far as it relates to No. 6 Melbury Road.

The Minister does not dissent from the opinion of his Inspector as to the interest of the buildings but he has reached a different conclusion on whether it is expedient to make a Preservation Order in respect of them at the present time. The Minister notes that the buildings in the order do not form a unity, such as a terrace, but are separate buildings standing in their own grounds. The buildings in the present order, are detached, of varying styles, and cannot be seen together. Nor do they of themselves form an area of special character because they are among other properties in large grounds which have no particular claims to preservation and which appear likely to be redeveloped. The Minister considers, therefore, that the future of each building should be considered separately.

The Minister accepts the view of his Inspector that No. 6 Melbury Road is not of sufficient architectural or historic interest to warrant its inclusion in the Order and he notes that this building is the only one of those in the Order which is at present threatened with demolition. He considers that it would be premature to assess the claims to preservation of the other buildings in the Order at the present time when there are no proposals to demolish or alter them. He has, therefore, decided not to confirm the Order.

The Minister has no doubt that Nos. 8, 15 and 17 Melbury Road and No. 12 Holland Park Road should be included in the list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest for the Royal Borough of Kensington compiled under section 30 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1947, in addition to Nos. 9 and 11 Melbury Road which are already so included, and he has arranged for an amendment to the list to be issued forthwith. Should at some future date proposals be submitted to demolish or alter any of the listed buildings in any manner which would seriously affect their character, the claims of the building or buildings in question to preservation should be appraised in the light of the circumstances then obtaining and it would, of course, be open to the Council to submit a Building Preservation Order in respect of any of them.

A KENSINGTON ECONOMIST

By RICHARD BLACKBURN (aged 18 years)

John Stuart Mill lived for a number of years in middle life at 18 Kensington Square. Like his neighbours, Thackeray, and John Richard Green, the historian, his intellectual outlook even when critical of the contemporary structure of society was characteristic of the Victorian Age. His vigorous liberalism was in complete accord with the temper of the English bourgeoisie which, within Mill's lifetime established itself as the dominant class in the State. By the time of his death he was revered as the greatest living English philosopher by the liberal middle class. The British industrialists of that time were men full of ruthless energy, with the self-confidence that comes with success and newly-acquired power. Following the Philosophical Radicals, Bentham, Ricardo and James and J. S. Mill, they believed in competition as a motive force of progress and were impatient of anything that mitigated its intensity. They believed in Free Trade and a limited extension of the franchise to include the middle class. The economic and political theories of J. S. Mill were a faithful reflection and justification of these concrete demands of the industrial bourgeoisie. Mill's belief in freedom of thought and expression was likely to be attractive to a class struggling to acquire a position in the government of the country. The bias against government, which is evident in Mill in his stress on the freedom of the individual, was natural at a time when the monarchy and the aristocracy were still clinging on to the reins of government. This bias was held in check, however, by the hope that government would soon be a monopoly of the middle class. In economics, Mill largely accepted the theories of Ricardo. These have been the source of capitalist economic theory. Mill, however, adopted a form of Fourier-ist Socialism and modified Ricardian theory to incorporate this element. Phalansteries, or workers' co-operatives, took the place of capitalist firms in Mill's conception of society, but competition was to remain.

The substructure of Mill's opinions remained always that which had been laid down for him in youth by the dominating personality of his father. His education was conducted by his father who held very definite opinions on what subjects should be taught to a growing boy. He was set to learn Greek at the age of three and Latin at seven. At twelve years he began to read logic, reading all that Aristotle had to say on the subject, several of the schoolmen and Hobbes. At thirteen his father taught him all political economy. As recreation from this arduous course of work he used to walk with his father on Bagshot Heath, being instructed that he must not think the syllogistic argument silly, and taught how to reduce arguments to correct syllogistic form. The defect of this vigorous education was that Mill was never able wholly to escape from the dominating influence of his father. Indeed, his fundamental beliefs

hardly developed at all after the age of fourteen when his education by his father ceased. This is exemplified by his attitude to the theory of evolution which he accepted intellectually but never seems to have thoroughly assimilated. In his "Three Essays in Religion", written very late in his life, he does not reject the argument from design based upon the adaptation of plants and animals to their environment, or discuss Darwin's explanation of this adaption. Similarly, in his work on political economy he never mentions Marxism. The main principles he maintained in political economy are derived from his orthodox predecessors, Adam Smith and Ricardo, which his father had taught him in youth. Ricardo's theory of value, with which on the whole he agreed, was superseded by Jevon's introduction of the concept of marginal utility. Mill was always too ready to accept a traditional doctrine unless there was a practical evil resulting from it.

The kernel of Mill's outlook was his empiricism which he inherited from the Empiricist School of Locke, Berkeley and Hume, and which had been inculcated by his father. He believed that experience, working by association, is fully competent to explain knowledge in all its kinds or forms. Deductive systems, such as logic or mathematics, can only be proved valid by reference to experience. Mill would maintain that we accept the proposition "two and two are four" as a generalisation from experience. He could not foresee the development of deductive logic which began with Boole's "Laws of Thought" in 1854. Indeed, everything Mill has to say in his "Logic" about matters other than inductive inference is perfunctory. He states, for example, that propositions are formed by putting together two names, one of which is the subject and the other the predicate. This important error has been avoided by modern logic. What Mill has to say on the subject of names, was quite inadequate and was not as good as what had been said by Duns Scotus and William of Occam. Mill's intellectual reputation has been much inflated, mainly because of the very fact that his outlook was so in accord with the educated middle class for which he was writing.

Mill's law of causation, which was considered at one time his greatest achievement, is not one which is employed in mathematical physics. Indeed, Mill could have realised the fallacy had he been acquainted with the calculus. The laws of physics never state, as Mill's causal laws do, that A is always followed by B. They assert only that when A is present, there will be certain directions of change; since A also changes, the directions of change are themselves continually changing. The notion that causal laws are of the form "A causes B" is altogether too atomic and could never have been conceived by anybody who had imaginatively apprehended the continuity of change. Moreover, Mill gives as proof of his law induction by simple enumeration which Hume had already exploded.

Mill's most original enduring work was his "On Liberty". Indeed, liberalism as a political philosophy has advanced very little since Mill's work. Sir Isaiah Berlin's "Two Concepts of Liberty",

which may be taken as representative of modern liberalism, is little more than a re-definition of Mill's ideas. Mill argues convincingly in favour of freedom of thought and of speech. He points out that the heresy of one age frequently vindicates itself in the next and that by summarily suppressing an opinion you may thereby be suppressing the truth. Truth is usually not the sole possession of either side in a controversy, but is shared in by both sides. Mill's outlook, however, remained unaffected by developments in Continental philosophy. He takes no account of Hegel's concept of freedom as co-operation of individuals in a State to master their environment. Mill's political philosophy was progressive in his own time since it concerned itself with the most important political problem facing the middle class at their stage of economic development. When man's material needs are satisfied, ability to develop his mind freely becomes most important. In emphasising liberty of speech and action at a time when considerable restrictions remained on freedom, Mill was concentrating on essentials. Once Mill's ideas are accepted, however, other political problems about how we are to use our liberty become more important. This is why the attempt by certain modern liberals to erect Mill's theories into a complete political philosophy is unsatisfactory. While praising Mill, we should remain conscious of his necessary limitations.

CONSTITUTION OF THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

1. The name of the Society shall be The Kensington Society.
2. The objects of the Society shall be to preserve and improve the amenities of Kensington by stimulating interest in its history and records, by protecting its buildings of beauty and historic interest, by preserving its open spaces from disfigurement and encroachment, and by encouraging good architecture in its future development.
3. *Members.* Members shall be Life or Ordinary.
4. *Subscriptions.* Life members shall pay a minimum subscription of £10 10s. Ordinary members shall pay a minimum annual subscription of one guinea, payable on October 1st each year.
5. *The Council.* The Council shall consist of not more than thirty members. They shall be elected by the Executive Committee.
6. *The Officers.* The Officers of the Society shall be the President, the Vice-Presidents, the Hon. Secretary and the Hon. Treasurer.
7. *The Executive Committee.* The Executive Committee shall consist of not more than twelve members and the Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer. The Chairman of the Executive Committee shall be elected annually by the members of the Executive Committee at their first meeting after the Annual General Meeting. Vice-Chairman
8. The Executive Committee shall be the governing body of the Society. It shall have power to (i) Make by-laws; (ii) Co-opt members and fill vacancies on the Executive Committee that may arise for the current year; (iii) Take any steps they may consider desirable to further the interests and objects of the Society.
A Quorum of the Executive Committee shall consist of not less than five members.
Not less than three Executive Committee Meetings shall be convened in any one year.
9. *Annual General Meeting.* An Annual General Meeting, of which 28 days' notice shall be given to members, shall be held when the Executive Committee shall submit a Report and an audited Statement of Accounts to the previous September 30th.
10. *Election of Officers and Members of the Executive Committee.* All members of the Society shall be eligible for election as Officers of the Society or Members of the Executive Committee. Nominations must be sent to the Hon. Secretary, duly signed by a proposer and seconder, within 14 days of the date of the Annual General Meeting. If more nominations are received than there are vacancies, voting shall be by ballot at the Annual General Meeting.

11. *Alterations of Rules.* No rule shall be altered or revoked except at a General Meeting of the Society. No motion shall be deemed carried unless it has been agreed to by not less than two-thirds of those present and voting.
12. The Society shall not be dissolved unless a majority of two-thirds of the subscribing members signify their approval of such a course by means of a postal ballot taken after receipt by the said members of a statement by the Executive Committee setting forth fairly and impartially a summary of the arguments for and against such course and the views of the Executive Committee thereon.

LIST OF MEMBERS

* Life Member.

† Member of the Executive Committee.

*A. W. Ackworth, Esq.
Major Adams
Mrs. G. Adamas
Miss A. E. Adshead
†G. W. A. Agnew, Esq.
Miss Jean Alexander
Miss Rachel Alexander
Mrs. P. R. A. Allen
*Hardie Amies, Esq.
Miss E. B. Anderson
T. Anderson, Esq.
W. Andrae-Jones, Esq.
Mrs. P. E. Andrews
Mrs. D. B. Askew
Mrs. Philip Astley
H.R.H. The Princess Alice,
Countess of Athlone
D. Atkinson, Esq.
David Barran, Esq.
Mrs. David Barran
Hon. Sir Patrick Barry
Miss L. E. Barstow
John Baxter, Esq.
Mrs. John Baxter
Sir Martyn G. Beckett, Bt., M.C.
W. W. Begley, Esq.
Miss E. Bennett
Mrs. G. R. Bennett
Miss B. Bernal
E. C. Bischoff, Esq.
Miss K. Blackie
C. C. Blagden, Esq.
*Miss A. C. Blanch
Miss M. Bowdler
Mrs. W. Bowman
†C. G. Boxall, Esq.
Mrs. C. G. Boxall
Mrs. J. M. Boys
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THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

Statement of Accounts

for the Year

1960 - 61

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY — STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR 1960-61

1959/60	INCOME	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
£371	Balance at 1st October, 1960	...	...	...	£386	8	8
	Subscriptions—						
31	Life	...	...	...	67	5	0
358	Annual	...	...	...	377	2	6
					444	7	6
	Other Income—						
18	Profit from Sale of Christmas Cards	...	...	...	28	19	8
2	Interest on Bank Deposit Account	...	...	...			2
4	Interest on Post Office Savings Bank Accounts	...	...	...	9	15	0
					38	14	10
					£784		
					£869	11	0

1959/60	EXPENDITURE	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
£51	London Meetings—						
	Hire of Hall for Annual General Meetings and Public Meetings	...	...	...	5	5	0
81	Cost of Public Meetings	...	...	...	10	0	0
183	Printing, Typing and Stationery other than Public Meetings	...	...	...	208	0	8
39	Postages and Telephone Calls other than Public Meetings	...	...	...	79	6	0
4	Bank Charges and Cheque Books	...	...	...	3	0	0
10	Planting Trees	...	...	...
3	Donations	...	...	...	4	4	0
5	Sundry Expenses	...	...	...	7	8	0
					317	3	8
22	Coach Visits—						
	Net Cost of Hire, Meals, etc.	...	...	...	29	7	0
	Balances at 30th September, 1961						
	carried forward—						
6	Martins Bank, Limited	...	...	...	66	0	4
	Post Office Savings Bank Accounts—						
329	Life Subscriptions	£404	7	0			
51	Prize Fund	52	13	0			
		457	3	0			
					523	0	4
					£869	11	0

We have prepared the above Accounts from the Books and Vouchers kept by Martins Bank Limited, Kensington High Street, London, W.8 Branch, and certify the same to be in accordance therewith.

Norfolk House,
Laurence Pountney Hill,
London, E.C.4.

23rd October, 1961.

WRIGHT, STEVENS & LLOYD,
Chartered Accountants.

THE HON. TREASURER, THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY,
c/o Martins Bank Ltd., 208, Kensington High Street, W.8.
I wish to become a member of The Kensington Society. I enclose herewith the sum of £ : s. d. for my annual subscription, or, I enclose herewith the sum of £ : s. d. for Life Subscription.

Signature
Address

BANKER'S ORDER

To Bank.

Please pay Martins Bank Ltd., of 208, Kensington High Street, W.8, to the credit of the account of The Kensington Society, my subscription of £ : s. d., and continue the same on the 1st of October annually until further notice.

Signature
Address

(Mr. or Mrs.) (Title)

Annual subscribers will simplify the collection of their subscriptions if they will fill in the Banker's Order. Cheques should be made payable to The Kensington Society.

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