

H. L. Bondell
Annual Report

1963-64



NOTTING HILL GATE - 1855

WHICH STOOD 100 YDS WEST OF CHURCH STREET (OLD ENGRAVING)

THE
Kensington
Society

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

Annual Report

1963-64



KENSINGTON PALACE FROM THE ROUND POND

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PALAIS DE KENSINGTON

The Kensington Society

PRESIDENT:

THE MARQUESS OF CHOLMONDELEY, G.C.V.O.

VICE-PRESIDENTS:

THE RT. REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF KENSINGTON

MRS. MARY STOCKS

COUNCIL:

Miss Jean Alexander	The Hon. Mr. Justice Karminski
Miss Rachel Alexander	Oliver Messel Esq. C.B.E.
Hardy Amies Esq.	Lady Norman, J.P.
The Hon. Mr. Justice Barry	Sir Duncan Oppenheim
W. W. Begley Esq. F.R.HIST.S., L.R.I.B.A.	Miss Irene Scharer
Sir Hugh Casson R.D.I., F.R.I.B.A., F.S.I.A.	Lord Spens, K.B.E., Q.C.
S. J. L. Egerton Esq.	Prof. Arnold Toynbee D.LITT., D.C.L., F.B.A.
William F. Grimes Esq., V.P.S.A.	Orlo Williams Esq., C.B., M.C., D.C.L.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN: H. GANDELL, ESQ.

VICE-CHAIRMAN: C. H. GIBBS-SMITH, ESQ.

Geoffrey Agnew, Esq.	H. Gandell, Esq.
C. G. Boxall, Esq.	C. H. Gibbs-Smith, Esq.
F. Carter, Esq.	Keon Hughes, Esq.
Mrs. G. Christiansen	Dr. Stephen Pasmore
P. E. Clarke, Esq.	Edward Seeley, Esq.
W. G. Corfield, Esq.	Mrs. Mary Stocks
G. F. Dearbergh, Esq.	R. T. D. Wilmot, Esq.

HON. TREASURER: Keon Hughes, Esq.

HON. SECRETARY: Mrs. G. Christiansen
18 Kensington Square, W.8 Tel.: western 0931

HON. AUDITORS: Messrs. Wright, Stevens & Lloyd

Foreword

FOR MANY YEARS, those of us who walked round Kensington revelling in its occasional onslaughts of beauty or historical association, have been plagued by the thought : don't let yourself love it too much—it may be bombed. And indeed some of it was ; and some of it wasn't. But now there is an added warning: don't let yourself love it too much ; it may be *developed*—because there is money to be made out of it and those who make that money are probably not Kensington, or even London residents. They don't care as we do, why should they ?

During the past year such fears have grown more menacing because two strong allies have been lost to the Kensington Society. Lord Esher, our former President, who wrote like a prophet and fought like a Trojan is dead. And the London County Council Planning Department which was our good friend in many a good cause, is about to be liquidated under the London Government Act. We are left to the tender mercies of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea operating through its Borough Engineer.

Meanwhile Tower House has continued to moulder because the man who would gladly cherish and maintain it, cannot secure a lease on reasonable terms. Is it possible that the Ilchester Estate is waiting expectantly for its complete disintegration in order that its site may be profitably developed? The future of Leighton House is as we go to press wrapped in mystery. Is it possible that the Borough Council dare not disclose the fate in store for it? Its site would doubtless yield a rich profit if developed. And over the quiet residential area centred on Kelso Place and St. Albans Grove there hangs a "shadow of great darkness": a most monstrous development scheme, the product of an unholy alliance between a nationalized industry and a capitalist development company, for the exploitation of the railway yards behind High Street Station. As at present planned it shews regard, neither for the traffic problem it will accentuate nor for the neighbouring residential amenities it will destroy. Fortunately the inhabitants of Kelso Place and its adjacent streets are well and truly on the war path. The fight is on.

Annual General Meeting

6

Tenth
THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Society was held on December 4th, 1963, at Kensington Town Hall.

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

Mr. Gandell, Chairman of the Executive Committee, moved the adoption of the Report. Before outlining the work done by the Society, he expressed the profound sorrow felt by the Society at the loss during the year of the President of the Society, Viscount Esher, and the Honorary Treasurer, Mr. Norman-Butler. Mr. Gandell said Mr. Keon Hughes had agreed to act as Treasurer. He moved a vote of thanks to Mrs. Christiansen, the Honorary Secretary, for the work she continued to do for the Society. The adoption of the Report was seconded by Mrs. Hylton Young and carried unanimously.

The adoption of the Accounts for the year 1962-63 was moved by Mr. Keon Hughes, seconded by Mr. Le Riche, and carried unanimously.

The Election of the Officers and Executive Committee was moved by Miss Gandell, seconded by Mr. Paley and carried unanimously.

Election of President. The Marquess of Cholmondeley had agreed to have his name put forward as President. No other name was put forward. Mrs. Christiansen proposed Lord Cholmondeley and this was seconded by Mr. Gandell and carried unanimously.

The meeting was followed by a lecture given by Mr. H. Gandell entitled "The Arms of the City Livery Companies".

CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

At the first Executive Committee Meeting after the Annual General Meeting, Mr. H. Gandell was elected Chairman and Mr. C. H. Gibbs-Smith, Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee.

THE RT. HON. VISCOUNT ESHER G.B.E.

Our late President, Lord Esher, died after our Report had gone to press last year, the following obituary notice appeared as a leaflet, we have included it in our Report this year.

It was with deep regret that the Society learned of the death of its very much revered President, the Rt. Hon. Viscount Esher, G.B.E. He was President since 1956 and took a very keen interest in all our activities, and was ever ready to rush to the defence when the beauties of our Borough were threatened.

Members will recall the vigorous and stimulating Forewords which he contributed each year to our Annual Reports. The foreword in *this year's Report was received only a week before he died.

He was an outstanding figure in the amenity world and one of the first to fight for the preservation of the past and to put up a stiff resistance against the destruction of such beauties as remain. Not only the Kensington Society, but amenity societies throughout the country have suffered an irreparable loss.

The National Trust, which he served for over thirty years, was one of the greatest interests of his life. Among his many activities he was chairman of the Trustees of the London Museum, the Friends of the National Libraries, and the Victorian Society. He was Life President of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, and President of the London Society.

The country owes him a great debt of gratitude for his long and devoted service on behalf of historic buildings and the amenities.

At the memorial service held in the Chapel of the Order of the British Empire in St. Paul's Cathedral, on October 24th the Society was represented by the Chairman, Mr. H. Gandell and the Hon. Secretary, Mrs. G. Christiansen.

SIR ALBERT RICHARDSON, K.C.V.O., P.P.R.A., F.R.I.B.A., F.S.A.

With the passing of Sir Albert Richardson on February 3rd the Society lost an exceptional friend.

Sir Albert, or perhaps better known to members as Professor—a title he liked—had shown tremendous interest in the Society for many years. He was most generous with his time and knowledge.

He lectured to us on a number of occasions, his last lecture was printed in our last Annual Report. He appeared at Public Inquiries, to put forward his own and our views as to why a building should be preserved. Many of our privileged visits were arranged by him or through him, and members will long remember some of these visits; behind the scenes at the Royal Academy, St. James' Palace, Strawberry Hill, Trinity House and perhaps best of all, his own house, each room a museum in itself, full of treasures of a past age.

The Professor was surely the last of England's great classical architects, and apart from his distinction as an architect, he was a gifted writer, artist and art critic. He cared deeply for old buildings, and the time will come when another generation will look upon buildings he helped to preserve as memorials to his foresight.

He accomplished great things, he warmed and coloured with his rich
* 1962-1963

7

personality the lives of many and we are grateful to have known him so well.

PARKING IN HYDE PARK AND KENSINGTON GARDENS

We would like to record our approval and delight that the Clause in the Society's Resolution to the Minister of Transport, at the Public Meeting in 1962, on 'Greater London and the Motorways', that car parking in Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens should be prohibited before 10.30 a.m., has been put into practice. This gives the genuine visitor to the park a chance to park their cars during the day, instead of the commuter taking the space all day.

8

CHELSEA AND KENSINGTON SOCIETIES

The Council of the Chelsea Society met the Executive Committee of the Kensington Society, to discuss how best the two Societies could work, when the new Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea comes into being next year.

The Societies will continue to work as separate entities, but, will exchange information and will support each other on matters of common interest to the whole of the new Borough.

At this meeting, both Societies expressed their grave concern about the non appointment of a chief architect for the Borough. This matter had been discussed with the Town Clerk, and, there appeared to be some doubt as to the correct procedure of the appointment of borough architects, both Societies wrote to the Minister asking him to clarify the position.

The Ministry replied "The internal structure of the local authority will continue to be largely their own responsibility. However, the Act does, of course, in section 74 oblige each London borough council to appoint a borough architect as soon as reasonably practicable, and in any event not later than 1st April 1968. The Minister proposes to make quite clear that the purpose of the provision in section 74 was that the borough architect should be a chief officer".

We have recently written to the Kensington Borough Council expressing our great concern at the Council decision not to appoint an architect at the present time, but that "the planning and architectural services should form part of the Borough Engineer's Department as it has done in the past." The Society feels that the need for a chief officer architect and a separate department is on the Town Planning side, and that such an appointment would in no way be exceptional, but would rather bring Kensington and Chelsea into line with other London Boroughs which are making such appointments.

BRIGHTER KENSINGTON GARDEN SCHEME

The Society donated the sum of £10 towards prizes in the Brighter Kensington Garden Contest.

The Society is considering ways and means of encouraging residents

to have, and, maintain window boxes by presenting plaques, similar to those presented in the City of London by the Worshipful Company of Gardeners, for those window boxes of high merit.

MR BOXALL

Mr. Boxall has been greatly missed by the Honorary Secretary in the compilation of the Report this year. Mr. Boxall's interest in the history and amenity of the Borough is well known to members, and the tremendous amount of work he has always done for the Society. We wish him a speedy recovery from his illness.

PHOTOGRAPHIC GROUP

Owing to Mr. Boxall's illness the work of the Group has been at a standstill. Much useful work has been done by this Group in the past, many photographs of streets and houses have been taken by members, thus helping to make the photographic survey of the borough complete. Some old and rapidly fading photographs in the local collection at the Library have been re-photographed. The Group was also responsible for having micro-film copies made of the Court Rolls of Kensington.

It would be a pity if this useful work were to come to an end. The Secretary will be glad to hear from anyone interested in taking charge or part in this Group.

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

The Society would like to form a local history group, the main objects of the group would be to make an intensive study of some of the historical aspects of the borough. Dr. Stephen Pasmore is very interested in this and has done much work in this field. The group would have regular meetings, at not too frequent intervals. If you are interested please write to the Hon. Secretary.

KENSINGTON NEW TOWN

Edward Norman-Butler, our late Treasurer, who died last year, wrote an essay entitled 'Kensington New Town', this was published in a booklet in 1951, commemorating the hundredth anniversary of Christ Church, Victoria Road. A considerable amount of research was done for this Essay and in view of the threat to this part of Kensington, we have printed Mr. Norman-Butler's Essay on page 27, which we feel will be of tremendous interest to residents living in the area.

HOLLAND PARK SCHOOL PRIZE

This year Mrs. Mary Stocks judged the essays written by pupils at Holland Park School, competing for our annual £3 3s. book token prize. There were three outstanding essays and we decided to divide the prize, we have awarded a £2 2s. token to Jennifer Abramsky for her essay on 'The Poor Law in Kensington, 1834-1840', a 10/6 token to Barry Holland for his essay 'Music in Kensington' and a 10/6 token to David Lewis for his

9

essay 'A Survey of Countries of Birth of Foreign Born Pupils at Holland Park School 1964'.

BUILDING PRESERVATION

We are reprinting the following notes on Building Preservation, from our last Annual Report, we think this legal background of Building Preservation may be of interest to members who have joined the Society recently.

Under Section 30 of the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947 (Section 32 of the 1962 Act) the Minister of Housing and Local Government is required to compile lists of all buildings of architectural and historic interest to guide local planning authorities in their preservation. The Minister, when compiling this list, may consult with any person or bodies of persons which appear to him to have special knowledge and interest. Buildings are listed on their merits and irrespective of their present condition.

Provisional Lists

'Provisional' lists are first circulated for comment to Local Authorities and interested public bodies. These place buildings in three categories:

GRADE I. Buildings of such importance that only the greatest necessity would justify their removal.

GRADE II.* Buildings of very great interest which are not quite eligible for Grade I.

GRADE II. Buildings of considerable historic or architectural importance which have a good claim to survival.

GRADE III. Buildings of interest, often as a group of or item of townscape, which although not regarded as having a sufficient degree of architectural or historic interest to deserve listing under the Act, nevertheless deserve careful consideration in preparing town-planning proposals.

Statutory Lists

From these, Statutory Lists, which comprise only Grades I, II,* II, are compiled for certification by the Minister. Supplementary lists of Grade III without any statutory force are for reference only and owners are not notified.

Lists are available for inspection at Council Offices. Listing does not qualify a building for a Historical Buildings Grant.

Under Section 30 (Section 33 of the 1962 Act) once a building has been listed and the owner and occupier notified, two months' notice of the intention to demolish, or of works that would seriously alter the character of the building, must be given to the Local Planning Authority and a copy of this notice sent to the Minister.

A selection of cases dealt with

64 LADBROKE ROAD

An application was made to the Planning Authority to demolish No. 64 Ladbroke Road and for permission to build a nine-storey block of flats. The Society opposed this application on the grounds that it would spoil the character of this residential part of London. The application has now been refused.

LEX GARAGE SITE

An application was submitted to the Planning Authority for planning permission to redevelop the existing garage by the erection of two nine-storey and penthouse tower blocks, containing 68 flats, a motor car showroom, a public garage and workshop.

It was proposed to build a podium on the slope of the site with its roof level with the footway of Campden Hill Road. The two tower blocks would be mounted on the podium and with the penthouse and lift motor rooms would give a total height above Campden Hill Road of 113 ft.

The Kensington Place level of the podium would contain tenant's stores, 80 parking spaces for tenants' cars, and a public garage for 80 cars. The Kensington Place lower level would contain a public garage and workshop.

The Society felt that this was a very prominent site and a request was made to the London County Council that the height should not exceed that which had already been agreed by the Council for the Metropolitan Water Board site, plans for which had been passed in principle for six storeys on the Airlie Gardens frontage and four storeys from pavement level on the Campden Hill Road frontage. As we go to press we learn that scheme has been withdrawn for modifications.

KENSINGTON SQUARE

The Kensington Borough Council applied for planning permission to convert and use as offices the warehouse building at the rear of Nos. 25-30 Kensington Square which is owned by the Crown Commissioners and is subject to a lease to John Barker & Co. Ltd. The Borough Council desire to take a sub-lease from Barker's and to use the building for a limited period of 5 years for the Public Health, Children's and Welfare Departments of the newly created Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. The

Society opposed the application. Planning permission was refused and the Borough Council appealed to the Minister. A Public Inquiry was held on 31st December, 1963.

At the Public Inquiry, the Borough Council's appeal was supported by Barker's. It was opposed by the London County Council, by the Chairman of Kensington Square Garden Committee and by the Society, which was separately represented.

The Borough Council's case was that the need for additional office accommodation arose out of the creation of the new Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. It would be necessary to provide accommodation for a staff of 200 and it was essential that the offices should be within a $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from the Town Hall. It was stated that it had not been possible to find suitable accommodation and that this building afforded the only possible solution. Counsel for the Borough Council repeatedly stressed that if this building could not be used, it might well be impossible for the Borough Council to carry out its obligations under the London Government Act 1963 at all. The Borough Council was willing to give an undertaking that it would cease to use the building as offices at the end of a period of 5 years by when it was anticipated that the new civic centre on the Campden Hill Road site would have been at least partially completed.

It was stated in evidence that the visitors to the Departments in question would have to enter and leave the premises by way of the archway under 25 Kensington Square as Barkers would not permit anyone other than the Borough Council's employees to use the entrance to their own goods yard. Most surprisingly the Council's witnesses were very reluctant to concede that Kensington Square had special charm and character which ought to be preserved, and they endeavoured to show that its residential character had already suffered so greatly, and the traffic position had become so bad, that any further changes or increases in vehicular or pedestrian traffic could really make no further difference.

The London County Council opposed the application on the grounds that the proposed use would not accord with the Administrative County of London Development Plan, that additional traffic would be attracted to the Square and that the use of the premises for offices would be inappropriate and detrimental to the amenities of the Square. The London County Council proposed that temporary buildings should be erected on the Campden Hill Road site and that the warehouse building ought to be reserved for conversion into a multi-storey garage for the use of shoppers in Kensington High Street for which there was an urgent need.

The Society was represented by Mr. Edward Seeley, a member of the Executive Committee. Mr. Seeley urged that the historic and architectural interest of the Square should not be sacrificed as lightly as the Borough Council appeared willing to do so, and that to say that the character had already so changed and that the traffic problem had already become so bad that a little more could not really make any difference, was a policy of despair to which the Minister could not resort. He questioned the need to have the offices within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of the Town Hall



VIEW OF PROPOSED BUILDINGS FROM KELSO PLACE
Buildings hidden from view shown in shadow on Cottesmore Court.



VIEW OF PROPOSED BUILDINGS
FROM YOUNG STREET
KENSINGTON SQUARE

for which the Borough Council had not given any compelling reasons; it had been stated that many of the visitors to the Departments would come from North Kensington and the offices could be there. Others would come from Chelsea so that in any event there was no logic in having the offices at the geographic centre, which was already the most crowded part of the Borough. Mr. Seeley also pointed out that, notwithstanding the undertaking to vacate the offices at the end of 5 years, there was a real risk that they would be required for a longer period as it was unlikely, on the evidence, that the civic centre would be ready in that time. Further, in view of the large sum of money which it was said in evidence would be spent on converting the building, there was a risk that once the Borough Council's lease expired, arguments would be put forward for the continued use of the building as offices.

The Minister granted permission. The following letter was received from the Minister of Housing and Local Government :

MINISTRY OF HOUSING & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Whitehall, London, S.W.1.

19th February, 1964.

Sir,

Building at the rear of Nos. 25-30 (consec.) Kensington Square, Kensington

1. I am directed by the Minister of Housing and Local Government to say that he has considered the report of his Inspector, Mr. S. H. A. Rollinson, F.R.I.C.S., M.T.P.I., on the local inquiry into your appeal under section 23 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1962, against the decision of the London County Council, to refuse planning permission for the use of the first, second and third floors of the above premises as office accommodation for a limited period of five years by the Public Health, Welfare and Children's Department of the Borough.
2. The Inspector in his report, concluded that, although the location and accesses of the appeal site made it unsuitable for a commercial office use on the scale envisaged, there were special circumstances in this case which justified the temporary permission requested. He accepted that the proposed use was for a specialised local government service which should be located within a reasonable distance of the Town Hall and the future Civic Centre. He thought that the only possible alternative would be a temporary building on the proposed Civic Centre site. The evidence on this aspect was conflicting but on balance he thought that such an alternative would be difficult physically due to the cramped nature of the site, would probably delay the satisfactory organisation of the new services and would be very costly. The Inspector thought that wherever the necessary temporary offices were located near the centre of the borough some additional traffic must result and that this must be accepted. While in his view it would obviously be preferable to route all traffic through the Derry Street yard, he pointed out that a condition to this effect would be tantamount to the dismissal of the appeal. Since, therefore, the Kensington Square access would be used by the public, he thought that there was justification for allowing 7 cars to park in the yard. If this proved to be dangerous, or the public use proved to be noisy, the council could control both by the provision of an attendant at the entrance. The Inspector noted that the Borough Council were willing to accept a condition limiting the use to five years with an indication that the permission would not be renewed. He also noted that the council were aware of the restrictive covenant requiring the retention of the obscured glass and that they had reached agreement

concerning the provision of car parking spaces for staff in the car park in Young Street. He recommended that the appeal be allowed and the office use be permitted for a period of five years.

3. The Minister adheres firmly to the policy of restricting office growth and congestion in Central London. But he notes that the local planning authority accepted that the proposed use would not affect the general policy of restricting the growth of offices in Central London. In his view, the use for this specialised public service is an exceptional case and the Inspector found as a fact that the offices in question must be centrally situated in the Borough. In the Minister's view the case for allowing the appeal is enhanced by the need in the public interest, to help the new borough to meet its statutory responsibilities by the date fixed by Parliament. He accepts the view of the Inspector about the unsuitability of the only alternative site which the Inspector thought possible. While he appreciates the character of Kensington Square he notes that the Inspector found as a fact that the proposed use within the building would not affect amenities. He also found that the building is barely visible from any point in the Square.

4. Any risk to the amenity of the Square from the proposed use of this building could arise therefore only from the number of visitors during office hours. So far as access to and egress from, the building is concerned, it is desirable that Kensington Square should be used to as limited extent as possible for that purpose but the Minister does not consider that the fact that there will be a certain amount of traffic to and from Kensington Square, in itself justifies the refusal of planning permission, nor can he impose conditions about access and egress on land not within the appellants' control. He notes that the staff will use the entrance via Derry's yard, and he has no doubt that the Borough Council appreciates the need for effective supervision on access to and egress from the entrance under No. 25 Kensington Square. In this connection the Minister notes that the Inspector concluded that wherever these necessary temporary offices were located near the centre of the Borough, some additional traffic must result and that this must be accepted.

5. The Minister makes no comment on the question of obscured glass on the eastern and northern sides of the premises. That is a matter dealt with in a restrictive covenant.

6. The Minister therefore accepts the Inspector's recommendation and accordingly he hereby grants planning permission for the use of the first, second and third floors of the building at the rear of Nos. 25-30 (consec.) Kensington Square, Kensington for office accommodation subject to the following conditions :—

(a) the permission hereby granted shall enure solely for the benefit of the Council of the Royal Borough of Kensington and their successors under the London Government Act 1963, and shall not run with the land ; and

(b) the said use shall cease on, or before, 31st December, 1968.

7. This letter does not convey any approval or consent required under any enactment, bye-law, order or regulation other than section 13 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1962.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,

H. G. C. SUTLIFFE

Authorised by the Minister to sign in that behalf.

TOWER HOUSE, MELBURY ROAD

We regret to report that we have not yet been successful in obtaining a Preservation Order for this house. In the meantime the house continues to be empty and damage from vandals continues to be done.

It will be remembered that the London County Council applied for a Preservation Order for this, and other houses, in the Melbury Road area in 1961.

The Ilchester Estates appealed to the Minister not to confirm the Order. A Public Inquiry was held at Kensington Town Hall, on April 20th, 1961. The Society was represented by Counsel and by the late Sir Albert Richardson. At the Inquiry Sir Albert said "Tower House and the other houses in Melbury Road are part of a great tradition in planning and part of the national heritage."

During the past 12 months we have again been very active in trying to get a Preservation Order put on this house. We have written to the Minister of Housing and Local Government, we have been in constant touch with the Historical Department of the London County Council and with the Victorian Society. The Victorian Society strongly supports the Kensington Society in its efforts to save this unique house.

The Earl of Huntingdon in a debate on the Protection of houses of architectural and historic interest in the House of Lords on March 10th this year (*) said "A good many people, and also the London County Council, have been interested in trying to preserve Tower House—Tower House, built by Burgess in 1870 has a unique interior, there is no other house in England quite like it. The London County Council applied for a Preservation Order: an Inquiry was held in 1961: in spite of the Minister's representative being in favour of the Order, the Minister finally decided he would not give it. I do not know on what grounds the refusal was based. As a result, this building is gradually becoming derelict, and if its left long enough it will fall, I suppose, into disrepair and become a complete ruin."

Lord Hastings, for the Government, in his reply to the Earl of Huntingdon said "the noble Earl, Lord Huntingdon, brought up the question of Tower House. I happen to know that area very well myself, and it is an interesting matter. The Minister decided not to confirm the Preservation Order, it is true, but he did at the same time see that some of the buildings in the area of Melbury Road, including Tower House, were added to the statutory list, so that advance notice of demolition or alteration would have to be given. I understand that no such notice has, up to this moment, been given. Of course, if Tower House is vacant and neglected, which in fact I happen to know it is, a Preservation Order would not by itself help, unless the local Planning Authority were prepared to acquire it. I quite realise it may be argued that a building Preservation Order will assist or encourage somebody to maintain it—that is a moot point—but the local planning authority have powers, of course, to do something about it if they feel they would care to afford the expenditure involved."

* Hansard March 10th

We very much hope that the Planning Authority, under the 1962 Town and Country Planning Act, will exercise their powers and purchase this house.

A complete description of the house and details of the 1961 Public Inquiry appeared in our Annual Report 1960-61, a few copies are still available price 2/6d.

As we go to Press we learn that a Preservation Order has been made by the London County Council and is awaiting confirmation by the Minister.

ELDON LODGE, ELDON ROAD

An application was made to the London County Council for permission to use this house as a School of Economics, thereby changing its use from residential. The Society opposed this application which was subsequently refused by the London County Council. A second application was made to demolish the house and to build 8 small flats. The Society opposed the application, because it was felt that the development was out of character for the area, the application has since been withdrawn.

SELWOOD PLACE

The Society was notified by residents, of the danger of demolition of No. 4 Selwood Place. The Georgian Group and the Victorian Society's help were enlisted. The London County Council was asked to upgrade the Terrace which was on the supplementary list of Buildings of Architectural and Historical Interest.

On Monday, January 20th, residents informed the Secretary that demolition had begun. Because of the urgency of this matter, a telegram was sent to the Minister of Housing and Local Government.

The same afternoon the London County Council's Town Planning Committee met and a Building Preservation Order was made. The necessary legal and administrative procedures were completed by midday on Tuesday, and the documents were rushed to the Ministry, who granted provisional confirmation at once and formal notice was served on the owners on the 22nd January.

The speedy action of all concerned secured the reprieve of this early nineteenth century house in this charming and well-preserved terrace.

As we go to Press we learn that the Preservation Order made last January has been opposed by Shop Investments Ltd., and a Public Inquiry will be held at Kensington Town Hall, on January 5th at 10.30 a.m.

EDWARDES SQUARE NO. 57-59

The Society was informed that Light Industry was being carried out on these premises, this information was passed to the London County Council who ultimately served an Enforcement Order prohibiting this use of the premises. Similar cases occurred in *Kenway Road, Kensington Square* and *Campden Hill Square*, in each case the Society notified the London County Council.

239-253 KENSINGTON HIGH ST., 1-19 EARLS COURT RD. W.8
Two further applications for Planning Permission have been received by the London County Council for this site.

Scheme 1 Erection of twenty shops at ground floor level with a pedestrian arcade and precinct, above the shops, twenty two-storey three bedroomed maisonettes, and a landscaped garden. At basement level there would be parking space for fifty cars, with access via a dual carriageway ramp leading off Earls Court Road. The basement level car park would be used by vehicles servicing the shops.

Scheme 2 involves similar arrangements to Scheme 1 in respect of shops, pedestrian facilities and parking and servicing space, but contains a Tower Block, 143 feet high, over the shops on Kensington High St. frontage, containing forty eight four roomed flats on twelve floors.

Both Schemes made provision for widening Kensington High St. and Earls Court Road at this corner. Since 1961, the Executive Committee have inspected four different Schemes for this site.

The London County Council have been informed that, of the schemes before the Council at the present time, Scheme 1 was felt to be the most appropriate.

CAR PARK UNDER QUEENS GATE GARDENS

The Society strongly opposed the scheme to provide parking space for 83 cars in an underground garage underneath Queens Gate Gardens.

Queens Gate Gardens is one of the loveliest and best kept garden Squares in Kensington, it has won the Brighter Kensington Gardens Contest on many occasions.

The application was made by Campbell Court, who wished to convert the major part of the ground floor from its present use as a parking space for 28 cars and a caretaker's flat, into 7 luxury flats, and to construct the parking garage for 83 cars under Queens Gate Gardens garden enclosure. We were appalled that the Kensington Borough Council should agree in principle to this plan.

Thanks to the protection laws of London Square Gardens, they have been kept inviolate, in spite of the encroachment of building and the ever increasing value of land. Those who were sufficiently far seeing to make these laws, could never have envisaged that succeeding generations would consider building under the Square Gardens.

The Society wrote to the Minister of Housing and Local Government and the London County Council opposing this scheme. We are glad to report that the London County Council has refused Planning Permission, if an appeal is made to the Minister against the Council's decision, the Society will be represented by Counsel to put forward the Society's views.

TRAFFIC

It is nearly two years since the experimental traffic scheme was started in Kensington, routing through traffic through residential streets. The six months trial became a year, and still it goes on, with proposals to extend the area. The latest proposal for traffic to be diverted through Royal Crescent, Addison Road, Holland Villas Road, Addison Gardens etc. has been strongly opposed by the Society. This scheme was originally rejected by the Kensington Borough Council who said, that if the West Cross Route was constructed without delay there would be no need for the proposed measures. The Council has, however, decided to co-operate with the Minister of Transport for a trial period.

We have again written to the Minister supporting the Architectural Group, asking that the whole of the North to South route over the Railway be completed as soon as possible, that heavy through goods traffic should be banned in certain residential streets, and that comprehensive traffic surveys should be undertaken as a matter of great urgency.

ST. JAMES'S GARDENS

The Trustees of the Harrison Homes, who own eight houses in St. James's Gardens, propose to demolish Nos. 42-46 (inclusive), and replace them with a new building on five floors.

The Society enlisted the help of the Victorian Society and the London Society. Letters were sent to the London County Council and to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, opposing the plan and requesting that the houses in the north eastern section of the Gardens be listed as Grade III.

We understand as we go to press that an application for planning permission has not yet been received by the Council.

THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA

The Society supported the Chelsea Society in their efforts to retain the name of Chelsea. It was felt that as Kensington and Chelsea shared a rich heritage as a result of their close association with Court Circles down the ages, the name the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea would be a fitting title. A letter was accordingly sent to the Minister of Housing and Local Government.

DEVELOPMENT OF KENSINGTON HIGH ST. GOODS DEPOT, WITH ACCESS FROM SCARSDALE PLACE, KELSO PLACE AND KENSINGTON HIGH ST.

An application has been made for planning permission to develop this site. The development includes the erection of two residential buildings 22 storeys and approximately 290 ft. high, and, one residential building 17 storeys high, a multi storey car park for 1,075 cars, 38 shops, a super market, a public house, restaurant and 20 two storey houses.

The Society has opposed this scheme most strenuously. We alerted residents in the area, letters have been sent to the Minister of Housing, to the London County Council, and to *The Times* and the *Daily Telegraph*. We have been supported by the London Society and by local groups of residents.

The Executive Committee has met and discussed the scheme with the architects, Messrs. J. Douglas Mathews, and the Developers Messrs Taylor Woodrow Industrial Estates Ltd. We are grateful to them for allowing us to reproduce their photographs of the proposed buildings in this Report, see inset leaf facing page 12.

The following letter which sets out our views was sent to *The Times* and the *Daily Telegraph*.

Sir,

6th May, 1964.

The Kensington Society is much concerned about what it believes to be a gross over-development proposed for a site to the rear of Kensington High Street Underground Station.

The Outline Planning application is now before the London County Council for the erection of three tower blocks of luxury flats, two 290 ft. high and one 240 ft. high, for two restaurants, thirty shops, a supermarket, a public House, twenty town houses and a multi-storey car park for 1,075 cars. These cars and the many vehicles, both private and commercial, which such a scheme will attract and generate can only enter and leave the development area through narrow approaches, which are already desperately congested. To "improve" these approaches will inevitably involve a disastrous mutilation of the unique "village" character of this part of Kensington, just at the moment when the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, upon the advice of its Preservation Committee, is asking Local Authorities to pay particular heed to the preservation of such self-contained and coherent areas of architectural interest wherever they can be found.

We recognise that this area must be developed, and we welcome the fact that it is being treated as one problem and not piecemeal. We have no objection to the design of the buildings, so far as they can be understood from the published diagrammatic model. We protest because we believe that in a project of this scale, the potential damage done to Kensington cannot be contained within the limits of the site concerned.

Yours etc.

Hon. Secretary.

We are appalled that the Kensington Borough Council should be of the opinion that planning permission should be given. No decision has yet been made by the London County Council, we understand that the Council is undertaking a traffic survey in the area.

Lord Conesford, President of the London Society asked a question in the House of Lords about this development, Lord Hastings in his reply said "I understand that an application has been made to the County Council for permission to develop the site around Kensington High Street station. The development proposed included shops, flats, garages and a new station, and provides for some high buildings. How much traffic would be generated by the proposed development, and whether it could be adequately dealt with, are no doubt matters to which the County Council will give special attention in considering the application. I cannot comment on the merits of the application at this stage, but my Rt. Hon. friend the Minister has asked the Council to consult him if they wish to grant permission".

A Public Inquiry seems inevitable, the Society will be represented by Counsel.

Other activities

VISITS

20

ST. MARY-LE-BOW, CHEAPSIDE

By kind invitation of the Friends of the City Churches.

GUILDHALL

GUARD'S CHAPEL

Mr. Bruce George kindly met members and gave a short talk.

ROYAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY'S GARDENS AT WISLEY, SURREY

Tea was taken at the Gardens.

POLESDEN LACEY, SURREY

A Regency House containing the Greville collection of pictures, tapestries and furniture.

Tea was taken at the house.

18 KENSINGTON SQUARE W.8

The Hon. Secretary, Mrs. G. Christiansen invited members to view her house and take tea in the garden.

HATCHLANDS, EAST CLANDON, SURREY

A house built by Admiral Boscawen in the 18th century, the interior by Robert Adam, with fine plaster ceilings.

Tea was taken at Ripley

SALISBURY HALL, LONDON COLNEY, HERTS

Members visited this 17th century house, surrounded by a medieval moat. A feature of the house is its fine staircase and panelling.

Tea was taken in the village.

Future arrangements

21

OCTOBER 3RD 2.30 p.m.

By kind invitation of the Friends of City Churches. A visit to St. Katherine Cree, Leadenhall St. and at 3.30 p.m. to St. Andrew Under-shaft, Leadenhall St. Tickets not required.

OCTOBER 17TH 3 p.m.

A visit to Second Church of Christ, Scientist, London, 108 Palace Gardens Terrace, by kind permission of the Board of Directors, Miss Hardie, a member of the Church and the Kensington Society, will receive members. Tickets not required.

NOVEMBER 28TH 3 p.m.

In the Victoria & Albert Museum Lecture Hall. A lecture with slides, by Miss Helen Lowenthal, B.A. entitled "The Growth of London Elizabeth I to Victoria". Chairman Mr. Charles Gibbs-Smith. Tickets not required.

DECEMBER 2ND 7.30 p.m.

At Kensington Town Hall, W.8. Annual General Meeting.

Chairman: Mrs. Mary Stocks.

The Meeting will be followed by a lecture by Dr. Stephen Pasmore entitled "Thomas Henshaw and the 17th century Manor of West Town Kensington".

JANUARY 23RD 11 a.m.

A visit to the Mormon Church by kind invitation of the Elders. Please meet at 50, Princes Gate. Tickets not required.

FEBRUARY 12TH 2 p.m.

A visit to St. Paul's Cathedral, kindly arranged by Mr. Paul Paget, F.S.A., F.R.I.B.A. Surveyor to the Cathedral. Please meet at the West doors at 2 p.m. Tickets are required.

FEBRUARY 26TH 11 a.m.

A visit to Christie's, 8 King Street, St. James' S.W.1. Mr. John Herbert,

Director, has kindly agreed to meet members in the Boardroom for a short talk, members will then be able to see a sale in progress. Number limited. Tickets required.

MARCH 6TH 3.15 p.m.

A visit to the Apothecaries' Hall, Black Friars Lane, E.C.4 by kind invitation of Mr. Ernest Busby, the Clerk of the Company who will meet and talk to members. Tea has been arranged. Number limited. Tickets required price 3/6 including tea and gratuities.

APRIL 1ST 2.30 p.m.

A visit to the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, by kind permission of the Adjutant, Brigadier P. B. Cuddon, C.B.E., M.C. Tickets required, price 1/- to cover gratuities.

Please note the following visit has been arranged since the Programme Card was sent out.

March 12th, 10 a.m.

A visit to Knightsbridge barracks, this building is due for demolition next Autumn. Please meet at the main entrance Hyde Park. Tickets are required.

Kensington Society Notes

Subscriptions for the year 1964-65 were due on October, 1st.

Extra copies of the Annual Report can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, price 2/6.

We still have some copies of the Society's publication "Phillimore Estate, Campden Hill" by W. G. Corfield price 5/-.

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

When visits are arranged to properties of the National Trust, it would help the funds of our Society if those who are members of the National Trust would kindly bring their membership tickets.

Visits involving payment must be paid for at the time of booking, payments cannot be refunded, but tickets may be passed on to non-members. 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 others may be on the waiting list.

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

A great number of letters have been received by the Hon. Secretary with various suggestions. These have been carefully considered and where it was felt desirable and possible, steps have been made to comply with the requests.

Christmas Cards

The Christmas Card this year has been reproduced from a coloured engraving of Kensington Palace lent by Dr. Pasmore. Price eightpence each. (see frontispiece).

The Kensington Reference Library would like to know if any member has a Copy of the Kensington Society Annual Report 1959-1960. This is the only copy missing from their collection and they would like to have the copies from 1954 to 1964 bound, unfortunately we have only our filed copy for that year.

The Arms of the City Livery Companies

Lecture by Mr. H. Gandell

24

ON 4TH DECEMBER, 1963, after the Annual General Meeting, Mr. H. L. Gandell, the Chairman of the Society, gave a lecture illustrated with coloured slides of the Arms of the Livery Companies. This was a unique opportunity to see the Heraldry of all the City Companies, since much less than half of the eighty or so existing Companies have halls of their own, where their Arms can be seen. Mr. Gandell said, There are four features of special significance, one or more of which appears in all these Arms.

1. ROYAL EMBLEMS Being incorporated by Royal Charter, Companies naturally wanted to display some emblem of Royalty in their Arms.
2. RELIGIOUS EMBLEMS The Companies started as friendly societies with a very strong religious background. Several had their own Chapels, Patron Saints, Schools and Almshouses, so emblems of religion are frequent, especially in the earlier grants.
3. TRADE OR MISTERY EMBLEMS depicting the tools or products of their crafts. These, as one would expect, are very numerous, and are helpful in identifying the Arms. The work "mistery" has no connection with "mysterious", and simply denotes any craft or skill which required mastery.
4. PUNNING EMBLEMS In Heraldry, pictorial and verbal puns are quite common, and any opportunity for using them is usually taken.

At one time there were at least 100 Companies, and questions of precedence in procession and ceremonies led to rioting and bloodshed. So, in the reign of Henry VIII, the Court of Aldermen drew up a list in order of importance, and not based on the date of incorporation. The first twelve Companies were known as the Twelve Great Companies and still retain their numbers. They were mostly incorporated in the 14th Century, much earlier than their grants of Arms, because corporate Heraldry had not developed so early.

They are:

1. THE MERCERS (1568 grant) The Arms are purely religious consisting of a figure of the Virgin rising out of a cloud, which is repeated in the Crest. It is the only one of the Twelve Great Companies to have no Supporters—a rather odd distinction for so eminent a Company.
2. THE GROCERS (1532 grant) Cloves appear on the Shield, and the

Crest is a camel bearing 2 bags of pepper. The Supporters are Griffins—the traditional guardians of treasure.

3. THE DRAPERS (1438 grant) The Shield displays triple crowns, probably representing the virgin. This is the oldest Heraldic grant still in existence. The Crest, a ram, and the Supporters, lions, were granted later.

4. THE FISHMONGERS (1512 grant) The Shield displays crowned dolphins (the King of Fish, just as the eagle and lion were Kings of birds and beasts) and crowned stock-fish or dried fish. The Company was an amalgamation of the Fishmongers and Stock-fishmongers, which became united at the time of the grant. Above the fish are the crossed keys of St. Peter, their Patron Saint. The Crest is an Imperial Crown, and the Supporters a Merman and a Mermaid.

5. THE GOLDSMITHS (1571 grant) Two Quarters of the Shield show the leopard's head—the Assay mark, and Two Quarters show gold cups and buckles. The Crest is a demi-virgin rising from clouds, and probably represents Queen Elizabeth I, in whose reign the Crest and Supporters were granted. There is no record of the grant of the Shield, but it is depicted in manuscripts dating back to 1500. The Supporters are unicorns, which were frequently used as house signs by goldsmiths and symbolised wealth.

6. THE SKINNERS (1550 grant) The Shield is ermine surmounted by three gold crowns with ermine caps. The Crest is a lynx and the Supporters a lynx and a black marten. The Heraldic term for black is "Sable" and this is an obvious pun, there being no such thing as a black marten. Ermine was a Royal fur, and in Henry VIII's time no one under the rank of Earl could wear Sable.

7. THE MERCHANT TAYLORS (1586 grant) The only Merchant Company. The Shield displays a canopy between two seamless coats (associated with the Virgin Mary) surmounted by a Lion of England. The crest is a Holy Lamb, and the Supporters are camels, which were a feature of Merchant Taylors' pageants.

8. THE HABERDASHERS (1570 grant) The wavy design on the Shield denotes overseas trade. It is crossed diagonally by a Lion of England. The significance of the Crest—a laurel wreath—is obscure but the Supporters, Indian goats, allude to their raw materials.

9. THE SALTERS (1530 grant) The Shield and Crest display salt-cellar. The Supporters are black ounces (leopards) with coronets. The reason for these creatures is not obvious. The Crest and Supporters were granted later, in 1591.

10. THE IRONMONGERS (1455 grant) The Shield displays swivels and other ironware. The Crest and Supporters represent salamanders, which are alleged to be able to withstand any heat. The two on the Crest are chained together. The Supporters were not granted until 1923.

11. THE VINTNERS (1447 grant) The Shield shows three wine tuns, and the Crest a sailing ship for carrying wine. The Vintners share with the Dyers and the Crown the right of maintaining swans on the Thames, so the Supporters are a pair of swans with the Vintners nick in their beaks,

25

and with a bunch of grapes tied round the neck of each. The Crest and Supporters were granted as recently as 1957.

12. THE CLOTHWORKERS (1530 grant) The Shield shows a teazel for combing cloth and two hooks for stretching it. The Crest is a ram which indicates wool or perhaps is a pun for "rame", the French for a stretching frame. The Supporters are Griffins, guardians of treasure. The Crest and Supporters were granted later, in 1587.

Of the lesser Companies it is only possible to mention a few of the most interesting Heraldic points.

THE ARMOURERS-AND-BRAZIERS are unique in having two Shields of Arms but one Crest. On the other hand the TALLOW CHANDLERS are unique in having one Shield and two Crests. The original one (1456) was changed in 1602, but the earlier Crest was never cancelled. So, as recently as 1961, they applied to be allowed to use both and this was authorized. Both depict St. John the Baptist's head on a charger, the Baptist being their Patron Saint. The earlier Crest differs in showing a demi-angel holding the charger. The WAX CHANDLERS made superior candles for use in churches etc., and their Supporters are unicorns whose horns are painted to suggest candles!

The BARBERS have for a Crest and the PLAISTERERS for Supporters a quaint Heraldic monster called an Opinicus. This is a composite creature with the head and wings of an eagle, the body of a lion, and the tail of a bear.

The BAKERS' Supporters are buckles with garlands of wheat, which is a punning way of representing buck-wheat.

The BREWERS have for Crest a Saracen woman. Their Patron Saint was Thomas a Becket, and there was a legend that his mother was a Saracen Princess who had helped his father to escape from prison during the Crusades, and who later came to England and married him.

The DYERS' Supporters, which are panthers are spotted with all the Heraldic colours, as token of their trade.

The PAINTER STAINERS also have panther Supporters, which are probably intended as a pun on the word "painter".

The WEAVERS have the longest pedigree of all, their first charter of incorporation, which still exists, being dated 1155, some 335 years before they got a grant of Arms. Their Supporters are Wyverns—Heraldic dragons with only two legs—which is doubtless intended for a pun on "Weavers".

Finally there are some quite modern Companies, notably the MASTER MARINERS, who were granted the prefix "Honourable" by George V. The Arms were granted in 1927. Their Hall is unique in being afloat on the Thames.

Kensington New Town

by Edward Norman-Butler

PEOPLE WHO LIVE in the Victoria Road district of Kensington, of which Turner's shop at 15 Victoria Grove might be called the focus, may be interested in knowing something of its history.

Until the 1830's all the land now covered by Victoria Road and Grove and by Launceston Place was open country, and Kensington was still a separate town from London. Nottingham House had been bought by William III and as Kensington Palace it had remained the chief London Royal Palace until the death of George II in 1760. Queen Victoria was, of course, born and bred there but by that time it was no longer used by the Court, and the days of Kensington as a great social centre were over.

There was a series of large houses with considerable grounds behind them along the south side of the road from Knightsbridge to Kensington; Kensington House for example stood on the site of Prince of Wales Terrace and Kensington Court, and Noel House where now stands de Vere Gardens.

Behind these houses was open country leading to the small villages of Brompton and Earls Court and on to the little town of Chelsea. Much of this land was devoted to nursery and market gardens. When Faulkner wrote his "History of Kensington" in 1820, the parish of St. Mary Abbots, within the same boundaries as those of the present Royal Borough, was still primarily agricultural and the total population was only 10,886.

A little country road called Love Lane ran from the Kensington Road between Noel House and Kensington House down the line of Victoria Road and along the footpath which now runs through to Turner's shop. This is the origin of this rather curious footpath. The lane then continued down Victoria Grove to join Gloucester Road. Gloucester Road itself (named after the Duchess of Gloucester, wife of a younger brother of George III) was called Hogmore Lane until the early years of the 19th century, and was an old right of way leading from the Kensington Road to the village of Brompton.

Another old country road in the district was on the route of St. Albans Grove and led from Love Lane to Kensington Square after a turn or two on the way. The remaining streets were laid out with the development of the area.

A further interesting fact known about our area in its rural days before

Victoria came to the throne is that the Duke of Clarence, afterwards William IV, in 1804 inspected the Kensington Volunteers in a field behind where the College of Estate Management now stands. They were the Home Guard of that Napoleonic time. Their colours were worked by the Duchess of Gloucester and her daughter Princess Sophia Matilda. They were presented to the Corps in 1799, and are now in the parish church. Before the present house was built in 1885 as the High School for Girls, a building on this site in St. Albans Grove had housed Richard Ansdell, R.A., an animal painter who rivalled Landseer in popularity, and apparently kept quite a zoo of animal models. (Presumably Ansdell Terrace was called after him.)

Our "Village" was developed between 1837 and 1855 and was a suburb of Kensington rather than of London because the developments to the South and East of it came some years later.

It was called Kensington New Town and was one of several such towns dating from this time, of which Camden Town and Somers Town are two other examples. These towns were planned as entities with churches and shopping centres. The new fashion of semi-detached houses, first tried out some years before in St. John's Wood, was again much used. The boundaries of the New Town are not anywhere defined but we can take them to have been as follows; Victoria Road and the turnings off it, Victoria Grove, Canning Place, Launceston Place and Kensington Gate. The shopping centre was on the west side of Gloucester Road between Canning Place and Kynance Place. The shopping block to the south of Victoria Grove has unfortunately been mostly rebuilt but the existing northern block is a dignified range of buildings.

Christ Church, Victoria Road, was consecrated in 1851 and with its garden and decently proportioned interior is one of the more successful of the Victorian churches in London. It was designed by Benjamin Ferrey.

Much of the land on which the New Town was built appears to have belonged to the Vallotten family who lived in Rutland Lodge, Addison Road.

A valuation survives of "a Freehold Estate designated as Kensington New Town" made for a certain Mr. Inderwick, who was presumably developing the Vallotten Estate, on December 14th, 1842. (The Inderwick family were tobacconists and snuff merchants. They still have an interest in the shop of that name at 45 Carnaby Street, W.1. Nearly the whole estate as shown in this valuation is still in this family though part is now in the ownership of the Tachell family, one of whom married a Miss Inderwick.) This valuation shows in 1842 the following houses built or building, although the numbers may not still be the same:

Canning Place, Nos. 1 to 10

Victoria Grove, Nos. 1 to 23. (Note the Bust of Prince Albert forming the keystone to the arch to the Mews.)

Launceston Place, Nos. 1 to 31. (Then called Sussex Place.)

Gloucester Terrace, Nos. 1 to 17. (West side of Gloucester Road between Canning Place and Victoria Grove.)

It would seem from this that the houses in Launceston Place were just being built because some were noted as still unoccupied, Nos. 11, 12, 19, 20 are shown as "unfinished" and 23 and 24 are still "vacant ground".

St. George's Terrace (west side of Gloucester Road between Victoria Grove and Kynance Place) was also under construction.

The Launceston Place and Gloucester Terrace houses appear to have been let at rack rents of £50 per annum when first built, those in Canning Place at £40 per annum and in Victoria Grove at £35 per annum. Several houses had, however, already been let on longer leases at small ground rents. The whole estate at this stage of development was valued at £40,000 which must be a very small part of its present worth.

Without examining the title deeds of all the houses in the area or going through the rating records of the Borough Council, it is difficult to arrive at exact dates when individual houses were built. This above valuation, however, gives us a good deal of information when it is compared with two maps of 1837 and 1852. Except where the houses have obviously been built subsequently, we can assign the following dates to buildings in their respective streets:—

1837-42 Canning Place, Victoria Grove, Gloucester Terrace.

1842 Launceston Place, St. George's Terrace.

1842-52 Victoria Road, Albert Place, Cambridge Place.

1853 St. Albans Grove, Cottesmore Gardens north side.

about 1855 Cottesmore Gardens south side, Eldon Road Stanford Road.

The whole area is therefore early Victorian and householders indulge in flights of fancy when they say, as they sometimes do, that their houses are "Regency" or even built for hangers-on to a Court which left Kensington Palace in 1760.

Kensington New Town is thus described in Leigh Hunt's "The Old Court Suburb" published in 1855:

"From this point to the town of Kensington we pass houses both old and new, some in rows, and some by themselves, enclosed in gardens. They are all more or less good; and the turnings out of them lead into a considerable district, which has lately been converted from nursery and garden-ground into more streets, and is called Kensington New Town. It is all very clean and neat, and astonishes visitors who a few years ago beheld scarcely a house on the spot. A pleasant hedge-lane paved in the middle, and looking towards the wooded grounds of Gloucester Lodge, where Canning lived, leads out of it into "Old Brompton. One street, which has no thoroughfare, is quite of a stately character, though deformed at the corner with one of those unmeaning rounded towers, whose tops look like pepper-boxes, or 'Trifles from Margate'. (This certainly refers to Kensington Gate). The smaller streets also partake of those improvements, both external and internal, which have succeeded to the unambitious, barrack-like streets of a former generation; nor in acquiring solidity, have they, for the most part, been rendered heavy and dumpy the common fault of new buildings in the suburbs.

"This Kensington New Town lies chiefly between the Gloucester and Victoria Roads. Returning out of the latter into the high road, we pass the remainder of the buildings above noticed, and, just before entering Kensington itself, halt at an old mansion, remarkable for its shallowness compared with its width, and attracting the attention by the fresh look of its red and pointed brickwork. It is called Kensington House."

In 1855 Victoria Road was the site of the first London Airport as the following contemporary report recalls :

"The Eagle, the first aerial ship, will sail from Victoria Road, Kensington, in August with government despatches and passengers for Paris. It will in future voyages sail for Vienna, Berlin, Petersburg and other cities on the Continent. It is expected to reach Paris in 6 hours. The ship will be 160 feet long, 50 feet high and 40 feet wide and is manned by a crew of seventeen experimental sailors. The ship lies in the dockyard of the Aeronautical Society in Victoria Road opposite Kensington Gardens. It is stupendous as a first rate man-of-war, contains 2,400 yards of oil silk, the hull or frame of the ship is 75 feet long and 7 feet high and has a cabin in the centre 6 feet wide which is secured to the inflated balloon by ropes. An immense rudder is attached to the ship and there are four "flappers by which the ship will be impelled. The deck is secured by netting for the safety of the passengers who will be admitted to the pleasure of the voyage at a reasonable rate."

The airship came to an untimely end without leaving the ground and comic verses were written about it. It was housed at the top of Victoria Road near the Kensington Gardens. Prints and advertisements of the airship can be seen at the exhibition of Old Kensington at Leighton House. They are the property of the Kensington Public Library.

Kensington New Town (the name might well be revived) has a considerable early Victorian charm, suitable to a district with a Victoria Road and Grove and an Albert Place, and has long been recognised as being a pleasant part of London to live in.

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, Corporate or Ordinary.
4. SUBSCRIPTIONS. Life members shall pay a minimum subscription of £10 10s. Corporate members shall pay a minimum annual subscription of £5 5s. Ordinary members shall pay a minimum annual subscription of £1 1s. Subscriptions are payable on 1st October each year. *for the calendar year following*
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 and Vice-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.
8. The Executive Committee shall be the governing body of the Society. It shall have power to (i) Make bye-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. *7 si Dec?*
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.

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

Statement of Accounts
for the year
1963-64

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY—STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR 1963-64

1962/63	Income	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
	Balances at 1st October, 1963				486	8	7
	Subscriptions :—						
11	Life	21	0	0			
335	Annual	375	2	0			
					396	2	0
	Other Income :—						
	Interest on Post Office Savings Bank Accounts	12	18	11			
—	Sales of Xmas Cards	9	12	7			
					22	11	6

34

£867

£905 2 1

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

1962/63	Expenditure	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
	London Meetings :—						
	Lectures, Hire of Hall, Lantern etc. ...	22	15	0			
48	Cost of Public Meetings	—	—	—			
38	Printing, Typing, Stationery and Xmas Cards	82	7	5			
38	Postages and Telephone Calls other than Public Meetings ...	88	10	9			
81	Bank Charges	8	1	0			
5	Planting Trees	—	—	—			
10	Donations	13	18	0			
4	Producing Annual Report	145	12	1			
132	Sundry Expenses	11	11	4			
5	Wreath	—	—	—			
8	Book Prize	3	3	0			
					375	18	7

35

Coach Visits :—

12	Net Cost of Hire, Meals etc.	19	11	11
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Balances at 30th September, 1964

3	Martins Bank Ltd. ...	13	7	6
	Post Office Savings Bank Accounts :—			
428	Life Subscriptions ...	439	11	1
55	Prize Fund	56	13	0
		509	11	7

£867

£905 2 1

WRIGHT, STEVENS & LLOYD
Chartered Accountants

Norfolk House,
Laurence Pountney Hill,
London, E.C.4.
23rd October, 1964

The Hon. Treasurer, The Kensington Society,
c/o 18 Kensington Square, 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

19

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

(TITLE)
(MR. OR MRS.)

ADDRESS

(MR. OR MRS.)
(TITLE)

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



