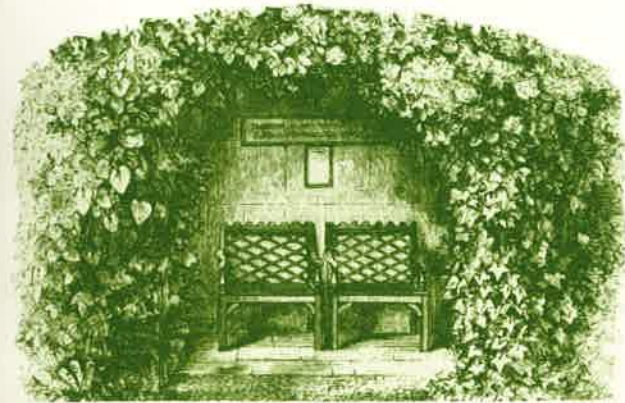


Annual Report

1964-65



*Here Rogers sat, and here for ever dwell
With me, those Pleasures that he sings so well.*

"VLL.HD. 1818"

Samuel ROGERS' SEAT IN HOLLAND PARK

THE
Kensington
Society

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

Annual Report

1964-65



Thomas Henshaw

Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. (Sutherland Collection.)

The Kensington Society

PRESIDENT

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

VICE-PRESIDENTS

LORD HURCOMB, G.C.B., K.B.E.

THE RT. REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF KENSINGTON
THE LADY STOCKS

COUNCIL

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

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN: MR. H. GANDELL

VICE-CHAIRMAN: MR. C. H. GIBBS-SMITH, F.M.A., HON. COMP. R.E.S.

Mr. Geoffrey Agnew	Mr. Ian Grant, A.R.I.B.A.
Mr. C. G. Boxall	Mr. C. H. Gibbs-Smith
Mr. F. Carter	Mr. Keon Hughes
Mrs. G. Christiansen	Dr. Stephen Pasmore
Mr. P. E. Clarke	Mr. Edward Seeley
Mr. G. F. Dearbergh	The Lady Stocks
Mr. H. Gandell	Mr. R. T. D. Wilmot

HON. TREASURER: Mr. Keon Hughes

HON. SECRETARY: Mrs. G. Christiansen

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

HON. AUDITORS: Messrs. Wright, Stevens & Lloyd

Annual General Meeting

eleventh

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Society was held on December 4th 1964, at Kensington Town Hall.

The Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting, previously approved by the Executive Committee and circulated to the 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. He moved a vote of thanks to Mrs. Christiansen, the Honorary Secretary, for the work she continued to do for the Society. He referred to the Society's liaison with the Chelsea Society, but stressed that the two Societies would continue to work as separate entities, but would support each other on matters of common interest. The adoption of the Report was seconded by Miss Hardie and carried unanimously.

The adoption of the Accounts for the year 1963-1964 was moved by the Honorary Treasurer, Mr. Keon Hughes, seconded by Miss Balian, and carried unanimously.

It was moved by Mrs. Christiansen, seconded by Mr. Gandell and carried unanimously, that Lord Hurcomb should be invited to become a Vice-President.

The election of Officers and Executive Committee was moved by Sir Alan Quartermain, seconded by Miss Gandell and carried unanimously. Mrs. Christiansen expressed appreciation for the help with typing which Miss Balian had done for the Society throughout the year.

The meeting was followed by a lecture given by Dr. Stephen Pasmore entitled "Thomas Henshaw and the 17th Century Manor of West Town, Kensington." Abridged report on page 30.

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.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Sir Trenchard Cox, Mr. Alec Clifton-Taylor and Mr. John Pope-Hennessy have been elected to the Council this year.

We regret to report the deaths since the publication of our last Report of :

Miss Rachel Alexander, a well known resident of Kensington, a founder member of the Society, who with her sister Miss Jean Alexander, has very generously, on a number of occasions, opened their house and given members tea in the garden.

Miss Margaret Brooke, M.B.E., a founder member of the Society. Miss Brooke was a great social worker and was the founder responsible for the building up of the London Council for Welfare of Women and Girls.

Miss Canziani, a founder member, a well known character in Kensington, who was much concerned with the preservation of trees. Obituary Notice by Lord Hurcomb on page 21.

Mr. W. G. Corfield, a founder member and a member of the Executive Committee. Obituary Notice by Mr. C. G. Boxall on page 21.

Miss Muriel Hardie, an active founder member of the Society. Miss Hardie only last year conducted members round her church in Palace Gardens Terrace.

Captain Ashwin Henderson, a founder member of the Society who encouraged many of his friends to join the Society.

CHANGE OF FINANCIAL YEAR

It has been decided by the Executive Committee to change the Society's financial year from October 1st—September 30th, to January 1st—December 31st. Subscriptions paid on October 1st, 1965 are valid until December 31st, 1966, thus giving members 3 months free subscription!

This has partly been done in order that the Annual General Meeting might be held in the Spring. Members may remember the disastrous weather conditions at our Annual General Meeting a few years ago, when only 15 members were able to get to the Meeting because of thick fog. We hope in future to make the Annual General Meeting more of a social occasion and this year we are holding it in the Orangery, at Holland Park on May 6th, 5.30 p.m.

NEW LEAFLET

During the year a new leaflet has been printed setting out the aims and objects of the Society. The Secretary will be very pleased to send copies of this leaflet to members who think they may be able to introduce new members. To be effective the Society must command wide support. We ask all residents and others who care about the beauty and amenity of the Royal Borough to become members and to encourage their friends to become members.

CONFERENCE

At the beginning of October 1965, a very successful and well attended conference was held on Town Planning and Housing in North Kensington. Mrs. Mary Stocks took the Chair.

Mr. Clifford Wearden, A.R.I.B.A. gave a paper on his proposed development scheme for the Lancaster Road area, Mr. Wearden was assisted by Councillor John Baldwin, Chairman of the Housing Committee. Slides were shown and a model was displayed.

This was followed by a paper by Mr. Ashley Barker entitled "19th Century development of Notting Hill" which was illustrated by slides. After a tea interval Mrs. E. Denington, Chairman of the Greater London Council's Housing Committee gave a paper on "The Housing Problem in Greater London and how the G.L.C. and the London Borough Councils can work together to tackle it."

This was followed by a paper by Lady Pepler on "Housing Trusts in North Kensington and the last paper was given by Miss I. Booker on "What makes Community Life."

A full report of these papers is obtainable from the Honorary Secretary price 5/-.

We wrote to the Town Clerk and the Chairman of the Libraries Committee explaining the nature of the Conference and at the same time invited a speaker from the Kensington Borough Council.

We asked if, under the circumstances, we could have the use of the Library Lecture Theatre at a much reduced fee. Two days before the Conference we were sent an account for £17 and told that a reduction could not be made.

We were appalled that the Kensington & Chelsea Borough Council should behave in such a niggardly fashion, especially in view of the fact that the Council and the Council's consultant architect, were given an opportunity in the first part of the conference, to make their own scheme more widely known to residents.

HOLLAND PARK SCHOOL PRIZE

It was disappointing that Holland Park School did not submit any essays to compete for the school prize this year.

THE HONORARY AUDITORS

For eleven years Messrs. Wright, Stevens & Lloyd have generously audited our accounts without even an expenses fee, furthermore Mr. T. Anderson of that company has advised us on many matters from Covenants to Financial Year endings, and although he does not live in Kensington he has shown a tremendous interest in the Society and we would like to record our thanks to him.

WINDOW BOX AWARD

We would like to record our thanks to Mr. K. Reilly, who very kindly designed the window box plaque without fee.

Twenty of these plaques were awarded to residents for window boxes of outstanding merit. These were presented by H.R.H. Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone. The window boxes were judged by the "Brighter Kensington" judges in June.

KENSINGTON SOCIETY



WINDOW BOX AWARD

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The "Brighter Kensington" scheme is sponsored by the *Kensington News & West Kensington Times* each year and we are grateful to the Honorary Secretary Mr. W. G. Thom for allowing us to take part in this scheme and for arranging for the window boxes to be judged.

A similar plaque award scheme is operated in the City of London by the Worshipful Company of Gardeners. Their plaques can be seen on the fronts of window boxes of many business premises in the city.

We hope to make this award each year and a fund for this purpose has been opened; the Secretary will be glad to receive any donations, and also to have her attention drawn to any window box which might be considered for a plaque. The plaques are made of aluminium and can easily be fixed to the fronts of window boxes—we hope to see many of these throughout the Borough.

THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA PLANNING DEPARTMENT

As will be remembered, from our Annual Report last year, the Society opposed the non-appointment in April 1965 of a Chief Architect to the Borough. We would now, however, like to record our appreciation of the help and co-operation we have received from the Borough Engineer and Surveyor and his department. Mr. Clinch has, we feel, shown sympathy with the aims and objects of the Society. We have received frequent lists from the Planning Department, showing those planning applications awaiting determination by the Council, which were thought to be of sufficient importance to awaken public interest. The planning department has always co-operated in showing and explaining the applications.

In June 1965 we were delighted to receive the following letter from Mr. Clinch.

Dear Mrs. Christiansen,

Ladbroke Estate and Norland Neighbourhood Unit

The Royal Borough has now taken over many of the functions previously exercised by the London County Council as Local Planning Authority. It has taken over from that Council the preliminary study it had been giving to an area centred upon Ladbroke Grove and the southern section of the Norland Neighbourhood.

The Borough Committee reached the conclusion that the Ladbroke Estate and Norland Neighbourhood Unit constituted an area of very special value and that in considering development applications for infilling and redevelopment it would not be sufficient to be satisfied that schemes were architecturally satisfactory in themselves but that they should be properly related in scale and texture with the surrounding development. In reaching this conclusion concerning this particular part of the Borough, the Committee expressed the view that it had inherited many attractive areas of great urbanity which have added materially to the character of West London.

In addition to examples of Town Planning in the grand manner such as the Ladbroke and Norland Development there are many smaller areas of intimate residential development which add considerably to the attractions of this unique Borough. They should all be treated with the greatest care.

My Committee had in mind that these areas should be defined in the Local Development Plan under preparation by this Council and that Developers should be warned in that Plan of the very special vigilance which would be exercised over development control in these particular areas. Action of this kind should not, however, await the completion and submission of the Local Development Plan to the Minister and the Committee is anxious to define these areas for its own information at the earliest possible date.

I have been authorised by the Committee to approach your Society on a confidential basis and ask whether you would care to make any submission to the Committee on this subject, including suggested areas for treatment in this way. In putting forward areas for consideration it would be very helpful if you could include a short statement of the reasons which guided your selection.

When these areas are defined I believe the Committee should further consider whether additional buildings or groups of buildings in them should be added to the statutory list of buildings of architectural or historic interest and I, personally, would welcome any suggestions you might wish to make on these lines.

In making this approach to you on behalf of the Planning Committee I would wish to emphasise that the Committee regards its function as a trust exercised on behalf of all the residents and that it will always welcome the co-operation of those with a real interest in this great Borough.

Yours sincerely,

F. H. CLINCH,
Borough Surveyor

Since June a comprehensive survey has been made by the Society and submitted to the Council. A report of this survey appears on page 14, and a map defining the areas, on the centre page.

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A selection of cases dealt with

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TOWER HOUSE

The Honorary Secretary attended a special meeting arranged by the Historical Buildings Dept. of the L.C.C. when the Council showed considerable concern about the condition of this house; various suggestions were put forward. We have been supported by the Victorian and London Societies in endeavouring to preserve this house: a Preservation Order has been made. For the past 8 months we have been told that the lease has been acquired, the house, however, remains empty and considerably dilapidated, and as we go to Press it appears that vandals have again damaged the house.

SELWOOD PLACE

The Preservation Order made by the L.C.C. on No. 4 Selwood Place was opposed by Shop Investments Ltd. This objection was later withdrawn. Letters were sent by the Kensington Society to the London County Council and to the Ministry of Housing & Local Government regarding a Preservation Order on the whole Terrace.

We were later informed by the Ministry of Housing & Local Government that a Building Preservation Order had been made on Numbers 1-12, 12A and 18 Selwood Place.

THE BOLTONS

This attractive early Victorian group of semi-detached houses which form a very fine example of urban landscape in London was threatened in 1964. The Convent owners of Nos. 20-23 The Boltons applied for permission to demolish and to rebuild a four storey block consisting of hostel, convent chapel, kindergarten and a car park for 20 cars.

The Kensington Society supported by the London and Victorian Societies and local residents, strongly opposed this application. The Kensington Borough Council supported the London County Council in refusing permission for the existing buildings to be demolished and in making a Building Preservation Order. The Order was not confirmed: under the existing law the houses are classified as ecclesiastical buildings, and consequently exempt from the relevant Planning Act.

A revised plan was subsequently put forward which involved

building an extension on the back of the houses, but keeping the facades; residents and the Society were opposed to this scheme.

The Society was in touch with the Ministry of Housing & Local Government and attended a meeting called by the L.C.C. at County Hall with representatives of the Historical Buildings Dept., the residents and the Victorian Society.

The plan was later amended showing a considerable reduction in the size of the proposed extension at the rear, the car park was eliminated and the Kindergarten school reduced to one classroom only. Planning permission was given on condition that the Convent Trustees agreed to a covenant restricting future development.

BETTING SHOPS IN THACKERAY ST. AND CAMPDEN HILL ROAD

The Society opposed both applications which were subsequently refused.

KENSINGTON SQUARE continues to be threatened in one way or another. An application was made to the Council by the Davies Educational Trust to use Nos. 4, 5 and 6 as tutorial premises; we opposed the scheme. The application was refused by the Kensington Borough Council.

34 KENSINGTON SQUARE

An application was made by Messrs. John Barker to use the main part of the rear garden as an extension to the open service yard of Derry & Toms store.

The Kensington Borough Council refused planning permission, the applicants appealed to the Minister and a Public Inquiry ensued. The Society opposed the application at the Inquiry; the Minister has now refused planning permission.

14 KENSINGTON SQUARE

This house until 1946 was in residential use. The Minister of Town & Country Planning in 1947 granted planning permission on appeal, for the use of the house for administrative offices and meetings by the Society for Cultural Relations between Peoples of the British Commonwealth and the U.S.S.R.

The house was sold to the National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers in 1962. An application was made by the Union to build 2 houses and garages in the garden of this house. Planning permission was refused by the Council, the Union appealed to the Minister, a public Inquiry was held, the Society was represented. The result of the Inquiry is not yet known.

ST. MARY ABBOTS VICARAGE AND HALL, VICARAGE GATE

An application was made to develop the site of the existing parish hall, vicarage and vicarage garden by the erection of

(1) A new two-storey vicarage, two two-storey houses, six garages and a 30 ft. high parish hall with parking space for twenty cars.

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(2) In place of the existing vicarage an eleven-storey block of twenty-seven flats and three maisonettes, 99 ft. high, with tank rooms giving a total height of 103 ft., together with thirty-one lock up garages.

The Society strenuously opposed a tower block on this site. A circular describing the development was distributed by the Society to residents in the area. Letters were sent to the Minister of Housing & Local Government, to the Diocesan Advisory Committee and to the Kensington Borough Council, and in spite of strong local opposition the Kensington & Chelsea Borough Council have given permission for the development.

QUEEN'S GATE GARDENS CAR PARK

A new plan is before the Borough Council for planning permission to develop a car park beneath the Square Garden for 89 cars.

The applicants, who are the owners of the Campbell Court block of flats, propose to demolish their existing garage and to build 8 dwelling units on this site. The Society alerted residents in the area that the application was before the Council. We have written to the Council strenuously opposing the application.

It may be remembered from our Report last year that we opposed a similar application in 1964 which was subsequently refused by the London County Council.

55-61 KENSINGTON HIGH ST./1-27 YOUNG ST.

An application for planning permission to develop this site is awaiting determination by the Council.

The scheme includes 22 lock up shops, post office, 2 large store units, approximately 200 flats and garaging for 154 cars. The Society has opposed this application, we objected to the large store unit at the bottom of Young St. on the north-east corner of Kensington Square, to the commercial units along Young St., and to the car parking arrangements which are in close proximity to the Kensington Court flats. We felt that it was an overdeveloped scheme for the site.

This application, we understand, has now been withdrawn.

WRIGHT'S LANE DEVELOPMENT

Members will remember that the Society strongly objected to plans proposed in 1964 for this site, these plans were subsequently withdrawn. As we go to press a new plan is before the Council awaiting determination. The new scheme, which also covers Pontings store, but not the warehouse, includes 52 lock up shops, a supermarket and restaurant, 362 residential units and garaging for 876 cars. The layout contains four slab blocks, the highest on the Pontings site is 226 ft. high, the other three are approximately 126 ft. high.

The Society is deeply concerned about this development, and although the density has been reduced from 200 to 170 to the acre, we consider it to be an example of gross over-development. Garaging for 876 cars and the many vehicles, both private and commercial, which such a scheme will attract and generate, can only enter and

leave from one narrow approach, which is already desperately congested. We oppose the tower block. We have written to the Royal Fine Art Commission asking them to recommend the rejection of these proposals—we have also written to the Kensington & Chelsea Town Planning department, to the Highway & Traffic Committee and to the Greater London Council.

OTHER CASES with which the Society has been concerned during the past year include Plane Tree House; Cromwell Rd./Knabesborough Place; Metropolitan Water Board; Lex Garage site; Earls Court Rd./Kensington High St.; crude decoration on wall adjacent to the entrance to Holland Park; St. George's Church, Campden Hill; Queen Elizabeth College Extension; 52/54 Hyde Park Gate; 1-7 Addison Rd; 15/17 Collingham Gdns; 31 Brompton Square; 22a Pembridge Villas; 19th century chapel Kensal Green Cemetery; 55/57 Edwardes Square; 42/46 St. James's Gardens.

REDEVELOPMENT KENSINGTON HIGH ST. AREA

As we go to Press, we have received an invitation from the Council to attend a Town Planning Committee on February 28th. Invitations we are told have been sent to Taylor Woodrow Property Co. Ltd., the developers for the Wrights Lane development, City Centre Properties Ltd., developers for the Kensington High St./Young St. development and to John Barker & Co. Ltd. developers of the Pontings site. Invitations have also been sent to Chamber of Trade & Commerce and to the Greater London Council Director of Planning.

The Council says it is deeply concerned at the future of Kensington High St. and feels that careful consideration should be given to the various proposals for this area with a view to co-ordinating them. We welcome the opportunity to attend this meeting, and are submitting the following statement.

Statement from The Kensington Society for the
meeting called by the Kensington & Chelsea
Borough Council on Monday 28th February 1966

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The Committee of the Kensington Society very much welcomes the action taken by the Planning Committee of the Kensington and Chelsea Borough Council in calling together both developers and societies interested in the redevelopment of Kensington High Street.

The Committee is very glad of this opportunity of obtaining information of the possible future policy of the Council, the intentions and attitudes of the various developers concerned and of the other amenity societies. It very much appreciates this early occasion for making public the feeling and opinion of the members and the position that this society is likely to take up.

The members of the Committee of the Kensington Society have had the opportunity of studying the map that the Council has circulated, and they have noted paragraphs two and three of the Borough Surveyor's covering letter. They felt that whilst it would seem desirable both from aesthetic and amenity points of view to define some unity of design and approach amongst the sites to be redeveloped, and also desirable that no interests should be allowed to clash with one another, the members consider that the spread out disposition of the sites will render any close architectural unity very hard to achieve.

The members of the Committee felt however that they would like to make the following points and to place them before the Council for their consideration:

Point 1 : Traffic

It would seem to be of vital importance that an early decision be reached about the role that Kensington High Street will play in the London street network if it is to continue its present function as a shopping street, and as soon as this decision is reached that the necessary traffic action be taken without delay. Ideally, all the through heavy east-west traffic must be diverted to the Cromwell Road where the shopping problem does not exist, and all the filtering north-south traffic be diverted to the new road at the western end of the High Street.

Without a long-term traffic policy and the necessary firm action for control, all development can only be piecemeal and may well turn out to be abortive in a very short time.

Point 2 : Related development and shopping content

Whilst a very close aesthetic relationship of these separated sites may not be very successful, it is obvious that a relation of use, function and activity can easily be achieved. If, however, the shopping activity might eventually spread equally over each side of the road, the question of access of pedestrians and the relationship of traffic becomes even more pressing.

Reciprocal easy access from one side of the road to the other could be achieved in three ways :

1. By diverting all traffic underground, say between Allen Street and the Park.
2. By providing a large number of tunnels under the road for pedestrians.
3. By providing bridges over the road for pedestrians and perhaps as a long-term policy raising the whole shopping deck of the street to first floor level.

Solution 1 seems to be the most desirable, allowing for a return to the proper traditional form of pedestrian market where shoppers may wander leisurely and without danger.

Solution 3 is probably the easiest but the least desirable, since, without the inducement of more shops upstairs it is known that the pedestrian is reluctant to climb, and bridges merely encourage jay-walkers whilst giving a sense of false security to the motorist. Furthermore, the difficulty of making this sort of provision anything but piecemeal makes it especially hard to resolve from a planning and amenity point of view, especially at the rear and the ends, and can easily result in a network of bridges leading nowhere surrounding civic buildings which have got lost in holes.

Point 3 : Amenity

This matter is to a certain extent bound up with shopping content. If the number of shops in the High Street area is to be considerably increased without an enormous off-peak increase in traffic or public transport access, the inclusion of a certain amount of office letting space in the developments becomes desirable. This would inject a constant daily non-resident shopping factor into the area. On the other hand, the Kensington Society feels very strongly that although the sites are in some cases very deep, the infiltration of shops and offices into the hinterland behind the High Street is very undesirable. The back areas which still remain quiet and largely residential should be protected against the influx of commercial vehicles and pedestrian shoppers at all costs, as the very high amenity that is at present enjoyed is becoming more and more rare. In taking this stand, however, the question is returned again to point 2, namely, how to make the High Street safe, agreeable, and commercially desirable.

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Finally, the Committee of the Kensington Society is very disturbed about the proposed introduction of high buildings over eight stories in a neighbourhood which at present has none. The introduction of enormous numbers of fresh inhabitants seems likely to overtax all existing services, and the proper relationships of civic order are threatened by buildings which will overshadow the Town Hall, all the local churches, and be visible from almost all the older residential streets.

The Kensington Society would welcome the opportunity of further discussion at a more detailed stage however, and is always willing to give whatever assistance lies within its power.

Other activities

Visits were made to the following:

BLenheim PALACE PETWORTH HOUSE, SUSSEX CLIVEDEN, BUCKS.
ASCOTT HOUSE, WING. VINTNERS' HALL, UPPER THAMES STREET, E.C.4.,
LINCOLNS INN and THE MANSION HOUSE

Mr. Peter Clarke very kindly arranged a South Kensington Victorian Walk, visiting several areas which had at one time or another been threatened. The walk started at St. Mary's Church, The Boltons, and finished for tea at the Commonwealth Institute. Mr. Clarke gave a talk on Victorian Architecture in Kensington.

A one day Conference was held on Town Planning & Housing in North Kensington. Mrs. Mary Stocks took the Chair. Papers were given by Mr. Clifford Wearden, A.R.I.B.A. assisted by Cllr. John Baldwin, Chairman of the Council's Housing Committee, on the Kensington & Chelsea Borough Council's scheme in the Lancaster Road area, and "The 19th Century Development of Notting Hill" by Mr. Ashley Barker. Housing papers were given by Mrs. E. Denington, Chairman of the G.L.C. Housing Committee, on "The Housing Problem in Greater London, and how the G.L.C. and the London Borough Councils can work together to tackle it"; "Housing Trusts in North Kensington" by Lady Pepler and "What Makes Community Life" by Miss I. Booker. A full Report of the Conference is obtainable from the Honorary Secretary price 5/-.

A Lecture by Lord Hurcomb entitled "Birds in Kensington". Chairman: The Bishop of Kensington. This will appear in full in the Report at the end of this year.

Miss Helen Lowenthal very kindly gave a talk to members about "Enjoying the Victorian Age", she took members on a tour of the Victorian Rooms in the Victoria & Albert Museum. This was a very enjoyable visit.

Mr. Rowlands, Librarian of the Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, kindly gave a talk to members about the architecture and planning of the building, and members were shown some of the original Waterhouse plans.

Future arrangements

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APRIL 21ST 2.30 p.m.

A visit to Burlington House, Royal Academy of Arts, Piccadilly, W.1. By kind permission of Sir Charles Wheeler, President of the Academy. Mr. Sidney Hutchinson the Academy Librarian has very kindly agreed to conduct members through the private rooms of the Royal Academy. Tickets are required, price 2/6. Numbers are limited.

APRIL 27TH 2.30 p.m.

Mr. Evans of the Public Record Office, Chancery Lane, W.C.2 has kindly agreed to show members some of the records concerning Kensington. Tickets are required, price 2/6. Numbers are limited.

MAY 6TH 5.30 p.m.

Annual General Meeting in the Orangery, Holland Park. The meeting will be followed by a talk about the Development of Holland Park since 1954. Lord Hurcomb will take the Chair.

JUNE 16TH 3.30-6.30 p.m.

18 Kensington Square. Tea in the garden. Numbers must be limited. This year a charge of 5/- is made, proceeds will go to the Window Box Plaque Fund.

JUNE 20TH

A visit to the R.H.S. Gardens at Wisley. Coach leaves Kensington Square at 1.30 p.m. Tickets must be booked and paid for in advance. Price including coach, tea and entrance £1 1s. 0d.

JULY 4TH

A coach drive through Dedham Vale, stopping at Flatford Mill. Mr. Randolph Churchill has kindly agreed for members to visit his garden at East Bergholt. Tea has been arranged in Dedham. Time will be allowed for the church and village to be seen. This will be a long visit, time of return cannot be estimated. Coach will leave Kensington Square at 11.45 a.m. Tickets must be booked and paid for in advance. Price including coach, tea and entrance to Flatford Mill, 28/-.

SEPTEMBER 6TH

A visit to Chartwell, Westerham, Kent. Coach leaves Kensington Square at 1.15 p.m. Tickets must be booked and paid for in advance. Price including coach, tea and entrance fee, £1 1s. 0d.

OCTOBER 24TH 2.30 p.m.

A visit to the Worshipful Company of Drapers, Drapers' Hall, Throgmorton Avenue, E.C.2. Tickets are required, price 2/6. Numbers are limited.

OCTOBER 29TH 2.30 p.m.

A visit to The House of St. Barnabas-in-Soho, 1 Greek St., W.1. Tickets 2/6 to cover arranging costs.

NOVEMBER

A visit to the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, by kind permission of the Manager. Date to be arranged later. Members wishing to be included in this visit should apply as usual. Tickets 2/6 to cover arranging costs.

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Kensington Society Notes

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Extra copies of the Annual Report can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary price 5/-, also copies of the Conference Report price 5/-. 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.

Owing to the continued rise in printing and postage costs, it has been decided that a nominal charge of 2/6 must be made for all visits.

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 N.T. membership tickets.

Visits 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.

The Kensington Society is registered as a charity and we invite Members to enter into a DEED OF COVENANT to pay the Society a stated amount for seven successive years, the Society may then recover Income Tax paid on the subscription. This enables the Society to almost double the amount it receives in respect of a subscription without any increase in the Member's actual payment, provided that he pays full tax on some part of his income.

If death occurs during the seven years, liability ceases. The COVENANT should be only signed by a Member who is liable for Income Tax at the full rate on some part of his income.

Covenant form appears at the back of the Report.

Obituaries

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MR. W. G. CORFIELD

The late Mr. W. G. Corfield had resided in Kensington for many years. He was a founder member of the Kensington Society and served on the Executive Committee until his death.

He always showed an enthusiastic interest in the history of the Borough, and the preservation of its character. Before the formation of the Kensington Society, he founded and was Chairman of the Campden Hill Protection Society, at the time when it was proposed to erect the Holland Park Comprehensive School. This Society was largely instrumental in ensuring that the school was well sited, and as many of the surrounding trees retained as possible. When the Society's functions were fulfilled its funds were handed over to the Kensington Society by Mr. Corfield. He proposed that the money should be used to donate a prize to be given to the pupil of Holland Park School who should write the best essay on Kensington History. This sum has been added to by the Kensington Society, and the prize until this year has been awarded annually.

During his lifetime Mr. Corfield gathered a large amount of information about the history of Kensington, particularly of Campden Hill, where he lived, and the Kensington Society sponsored the publication of his booklet, entitled "The Phillimore Estate, Campden Hill", which dealt largely with the ownership and development of the Estate. This is still obtainable from the Hon. Sec., price 5/-. He was a brilliant scholar, and very meticulous in detail when compiling his notes, spending hours in the Kensington Reference Library going through the Rate Books and Court Rolls.

His intention had been to write other booklets on Campden Hill and it is sad to think that owing to ill health during the latter years of his life, he was not able to complete his contribution to the history of the Borough. Kensington will be poorer for his passing.

C.G.B.

MISS CANZIANI

In the recent death of Estella Canziani at her London home at the age of 77, Italy has lost a life-long and devoted friend.

Daughter of Enrico Canziani, the distinguished Italian engineer, and Louisa Starr, the well-known portrait painter, she lived practically her whole life in Kensington and there knew intimately and frequented the houses of most of the famous painters of the day, who congregated in that neighbourhood. From these surroundings, she carried into the first half of the twentieth century much of the feeling and flavour of the late 90s of the last. In her art—she was a painter of varied accomplishment—in her gentle demeanour, in her whole outlook on life and even in the clothes which she wore, she was a survival from the old world of a vanished Kensington, about which she wrote a charming book. She had a clear view of certain values which guided her life—a love of beauty, the importance of tranquil enjoyment, the constant practice of the arts, and a deep humane feeling for all living things.

In the rambling old house on Palace Green, which had formerly been the laundry of Kensington Palace and was her mother's studio, she amassed a large collection of paintings and furniture and objects of art and folklore, though she had already generously given the most valuable of them to various museums. The garden was a grove of trees and shrubs to which wild birds resorted in numbers and she had a great talent for dealing with sick and wounded creatures; by her quiet ways she was able to induce the wild blackbirds and thrushes which frequented the garden to take grapes from her fingers on her door-step.

Estella Canziani was indeed a personality of influence and charm among all who knew her. Predominant in her thoughts and affections was always Italy, which she visited at least once a year, up to the present spring. She loved its architecture and especially that of the hill towns, like Bergamo, and she loved its beautiful landscape; both afforded endless subjects for her brush. But most of all she loved the Italian people, whose happiness she desired and whom she helped in many ways to secure the humane treatment of their domestic animals. Her vision went even wider than this, and with the advice and co-operation of Professor Ghigi and Professor Toschi she was able to endow the University of Bologna with her considerable property in Milan, to be used in trust for the protection and conservation of Italian birds and other wild life. That this had proved possible was a source of great pride, satisfaction and indeed consolation to her, as she told me many times in the closing months of her life. All she did and all she had was devoted to the service of others and in all the plans which her unselfish nature could devise the desire to benefit Italy lay nearest to her heart.

HURCOMB

Report prepared by the Society and submitted to the Borough Council

AREAS OF SPECIAL CHARACTER IN KENSINGTON

Explanation

In presenting these maps the point must be clearly made that it is not the intention to press for the preservation of all of the buildings within the Special Areas indicated on them. Where preservation of the existing architecture is desirable it is important to ensure that the buildings are included in the lists of buildings of special architectural or historic interest prepared by the Minister of Housing and Local Government—a vital, but quite distinct exercise from the present one. Here we are looking not only at buildings but at street layout, gardens planting and all the topographical features which give special quality to a district. Thus although it will be seen from the following statement that buildings of special interest are the key to a great part of the character of these areas, there are many sites which are occupied by structures which do not contribute to, or even which detract from the character which we wish to see enhanced. One of the principal objects in defining the areas is to try to ensure that where re-development occurs on such sites it should be so carried out that it contributes to the existing character. The same should be true in all considerations relating to the physical environment—whether matters of planting, street furniture, boundary walls, railings and other similar features.

DESIGNATION OF AREAS OF SPECIAL CHARACTER IN KENSINGTON

It may be helpful in delineating the areas of Kensington to which special interest attaches by virtue of their architecture or planning, if some attempt is made to distinguish the various phases of development in chronological order, and to state briefly the particular characteristics and merits which are seen to be displayed in each of these phases.

There is no substantial survival in Kensington dating from the time before William III took up residence at Nottingham House in 1689 and commenced its transformation into Kensington Palace, except for those parts of Holland House which survived the last

War. These two great houses in their parks formed the foundation on which the character of the central part of Kensington was formed. They are, of course, in their present day form, still vital to this character but they do not properly fall within the scope of this exercise. The first such development is:

(i) *The "Court Suburb"* (1690 onwards) now comprises—

- (a) Kensington Square, etc.
- (b) Houses in Holland Street.

Following in the train of William III's residence at Kensington, the village became attractive to much of the fashionable court society which had hitherto centred on St. James's. The introduction of completely urban forms into rural surroundings, which this migration brought about, was not altogether unique amongst the villages around London in the 18th century, but Kensington Square is the only example of an entire "West End" square constructed in such surroundings in the earlier part of the 18th century.

This square, even though it does not represent a formal architectural unity, is clearly of first importance. It is now a varied but coherent grouping of mainly 18th century houses still showing much early 18th century work, and with some outstandingly good individual buildings. The numerous additions and rebuildings which have taken place since the original construction of the square, have for the most part been in a common architectural tradition (except for the eastern side, which now shows little of its special interest) and the resulting amalgam of Queen Anne, Georgian and Regency forms is of special interest both historically and architecturally. The circumstances of its development in relation to both palace and village as a fashionable urban square, within a rural context, the biographical interest of its past inhabitants, and the exemplar of 18th century house forms which it provides all establish its special place.

The square is an isolated unit, not linked directly with any other area defined in this exercise. The core of the old village has gone and Holland Street, the only other remaining fragment under this heading, is linked topographically with Campden Hill.

(ii) *The pre-Victorian "Urban Village"* (say 1800-1835) now comprises—

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|------------------------|
| (a) Earls Terrace | } | Kensington Village |
| (b) Edwardes Square | | |
| (c) Pembroke Square | | |
| (d) Brompton Square | } | Brompton |
| (e) Alexander Square, etc. | | |
| (f) Elm Place, etc. (late in date) | | |
| (g) Bedford Gardens | } | Kensington Gravel Pits |
| (h) Campden Hill Square | | |

Beyond the two groups mentioned under the previous heading there are no longer any substantial remains of 18th century Kensington. The terraces which grew up along the High Street, between the church and the gate to Holland Park, later in the century, have all gone. During the first third of the 19th century, however, before Kensington was engulfed by London and completely lost its rural character, there were some extensive suburban developments which still remain and which appear to us today as particularly attractive. Each of the component villages or hamlets—Kensington Village, Brompton and Kensington Gravel Pits—had its own additions in this phase. These took the form of comparatively modest brick terraces, still with essentially late 18th century characteristics, and showing once again the restraint and undemonstrative urbanity which was the London contribution to house building at this period. Like Kensington Square they make no concessions to their rural situations, but carry town forms right into the fields. The houses are economical of site area and even more so of frontage, being generally of three storeys above a basement and two windows wide on the front. Their modest size and distinguished character, together with their low maintenance costs, make them much sought after and accordingly well inhabited. The layouts follow the traditional 18th century forms of terraces grouped around communal square gardens.

(iii) *The early Victorian "Urban Village"* (say 1830-45) now comprises—

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| (a) Launceston Place | } Kensington Village |
| (b) Victoria Grove | |
| (c) Canning Place | |

One of the pre-metropolitan developments should be mentioned separately from those given under heading (ii) above, since by virtue of its rather later date, it shows the specific characteristics of post-Regency design in the stucco facades of its houses. In these three streets, all grouped together, south-east of Kensington Square, the urban house forms are no longer simply transposed out into the country as in the earlier examples, but are transformed into something a little softer and more self-consciously "pretty". In pairs or little terraces, they are part of a sophisticated suburban environment appropriate amidst the modest gardens and orchards on the outskirts of London.

(iv) *The early Victorian Metropolitan Developments* (say 1835-50) now comprise—

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| (a) Egerton Crescent | } South Kensington |
| (b) Pelham Crescent | |
| (c) Thurloe Square | |
| (d) Onslow Square | |
| (e) Kensington Gate | |

- (f) Walton Place
- (g) Hereford Square
- (h) Drayton Gardens

The greater part of the Kensington heritage, at least in terms of bulk and area, is not comprised in the remains of the pre-Victorian village, valuable and attractive as these parts are, but rather in the later metropolitan developments which contain the essential and unique character of the place. The earlier period of this growth, broadly the first 15 years or so of the Victorian era, shows similar characteristics to those of the Regency epoch. It is an extension on a somewhat more modest scale of the Belgravia development, which as the new "court district" established both the architectural fashions and the acceptability of Kensington as the next adjoining area ripe for development.

This phase is mainly represented in the Brompton neighbourhood which was of course the next available building land beyond the barrier of the earlier Hans Town. The groups of houses on the Smith Charity and Thurloe (Alexander Estates), whilst not repeating the grandeur of Belgrave Square, were connected with the same celebrated architect, George Basevi, who gave them a balanced grace and an urbanity which makes them amongst the finest domestic developments in London. These estates remain today perhaps the best preserved of their time; indeed there is hardly anywhere else in London where the satisfactory effects of estate control and care for architectural detail are so well demonstrated.

Whilst the earlier examples in South Kensington follow Regency precedent closely, the somewhat later group of houses in Kensington Gate (circa 1847) takes a definite step towards high Victorian opulence with its less pure Italianate forms.

(v) *The "Garden Estate" Ideal* (say 1840-65) represented by

- (a) The Ladbroke Estate
- (b) The Norland Estate
- (c) Holland Park
- (d) Pembridge Square, etc.
- (e) Addison Road, etc.
- (f) The Phillimore Estate
- (g) The Boltons

Whilst the metropolitan estates of South Kensington were still under construction, a somewhat different ideal of town building was being given expression in other parts of the parish, more particularly in the northern areas around Notting Hill, which until the second quarter of the 19th century had remained completely rural.

The balance between the architecture and the planting in the gardens of the squares had already become a hall mark of the London

tradition in Bloomsbury, Belgravia and the other major areas of large scale estate development, but in our present examples the emphasis begins to change so as to bring gardens and planting into a closer, and at the same time, more commanding relationship to the buildings, at the expense of urbanity and sometimes of architectural clarity and order.

The dividing line between this and the preceding group is shadowy and difficult to draw, but seen in terms of polarities the distinction is a real one. The rigid lines of the earlier terraces begin to break up and single and paired villas are favoured, although in some of the cases quoted this may be no more than the repetition of a standard house (as in Holland Park and Pembridge Square). The Ladbroke Estate, which is the biggest and clearest example of the class, has paired villas in much of the earlier part of the layout but reverts (against the original intentions) to terraces in the later parts. Throughout the estate, however, the growing informality of treatment is still based on the firm framework of its extensive geometrical layout.

(vi) *The Aristocratic Villas* (circa 1844-60) comprising—
Kensington Palace Gardens.

In one particular example the garden city ideal becomes aggrandised to an aristocratic scale. This is in the estate laid out on the site of the kitchen gardens of Kensington Palace by Pennethorne in 1843, the houses being built over the following 15 years or so. Here private palaces were built for wealthy and noble clients by the leading architects of the day, including Sir Charles Barry himself. No two houses were alike (with the exception of one enormous Italianate pair by Barry) and the designs, mainly Italianate but with some Gothic and Eastern influences, merit careful individual study.

Each house stands in a large garden, and heavy planting prevents them being seen together as an architectural entity, although they are still integrated within the landscape into a highly distinctive environment. This is a more lavish form of the garden estate ideal than was possible on the much denser Ladbroke Estate, although a comparison of Kensington Palace Gardens with some of the larger pairs of houses in Lansdowne Road reveals how similar the intentions were in the two cases.

(vii) *Mid-Victorian Metropolitan Development* (circa 1850-70)

- (a) Onslow Gardens/Cranley Gardens, etc.
- (b) Queen's Gate
- (c) Queen's Gate Terrace
- (d) Queen's Gate Place
- (e) Queen's Gate Gardens
- (f) Stanhope Gardens
- (g) Cornwall Gardens
- (h) Emperor's Gate, etc.

- (i) Ovington Square
- (j) Redcliffe Square
- (k) Ashburn Gardens
- (l) Courtfield Gardens and Road
- (m) Collingham Gardens and Road

As time went on the metropolitan terraces of South Kensington became heavier and grander in intention. They lost much of the elegance of the earlier schemes and, when invention failed, could be dull and oppressive (as they increasingly were in the area towards Earls Court). In the examples given, however, (and most particularly in such houses as Nos. 47-52 Queen's Gate), the intended grandeur is realised. These layouts again show the characteristic Kensington virtues of order and urbanity. It is architecture appropriate to a capital city.

(viii) *The Artistic Resurgence* (circa 1865-1914) comprising—

- (a) Melbury Road
- (b) Palace Green

The reaction against the triumph of urban order which we have surveyed in Kensington brought the final break-up of the stucco terrace tradition, the first appearance of the new "reformed" architecture was with Phillip Webb's redbrick No. 1 Palace Green in 1861, but Melbury Road in the 1870s produced the prime example of the artistic suburb with houses by William Burgess, Norman Shaw, Professor Aitcheson, Phillip Webb (and until recently by F. P. Cockrell). Here lived Lord Leighton, G. F. Watts, William Burgess in his own tower house, Holman Hunt, Luke Fildes, Marcus Stone, Hamo Thornycroft and other artists. Although the picture is of a number of detached houses of highly individual design set in gardens with trees, nevertheless taken together they form a characteristic and distinctive pattern. Much damage has been done in Melbury Road in recent years by redevelopment of some of the sites, particularly following the failure of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government to confirm a Building Preservation Order in 1961, but much of outstanding interest still remains. At Nos. 8 and 11 Melbury Road are characteristic examples of Norman Shaw's "Queen Anne" style, which was to influence the whole course of English domestic architecture, whilst Leighton House and Tower House are unique specimens of international interest.

(ix) *Late Victorian and Edwardian Urban Architecture* (circa 1880-1914) represented by—

- (a) Collingham Gardens
- (b) Southern part of Hornton Street
- (c) Evelyn Gardens

The fashionable red brick picturesque forms were perhaps more obviously suitable for the detached houses of Melbury Road than for

urban street architecture, but in Harrington and Collingham Gardens that most skilful architect, Sir Ernest George, built a complete townscape of such houses with fluent terra cotta ornament drawing on early Renaissance Flemish precedent. The late H. S. Goodhart-Rendel, who described them as almost amounting to "a little Dutch town" went on to express the view that they demonstrate "very perfectly the reaction in taste among mid-Victorian Londoners from the formal stucco terraces in which hitherto their lives had been spent."

These are the principal categories which are distinguished broadly on the accompanying maps. We have attempted to select those areas of Kensington which demonstrate most clearly the particular virtues and characteristics which have been mentioned. There are within the area boundaries some smaller unmarked areas which do not fall neatly into the above categories, or are composed of a more intimate mixture of the various architectural types. These have been included where they form the linking tissue of a natural topographical area of particular and definable character such as Campden Hill. The Museum/Brompton Oratory/Holy Trinity precinct is marked on the map because, although it may fall outside the true scope of this exercise we attach great importance to these buildings and their place in the Kensington scene.

Thomas Henshaw and
The Manor of West Town, Kensington,
in the Seventeenth Century

Abridged version of a lecture given by
Dr. Stephen Pasmore

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THE MANOR OF WEST TOWN

The ancient manor of West Town, which was one of the four manors of old Kensington, must have occupied the site that now lies between Holland Park Avenue on the north and Kensington High Street on the south, and between Holland Walk on the east and Holland Road on the west. The old manor house, which was at one time known as "the ould house at Kensington" stood just to the east of St. Barnabas' Church in Addison Road, and close by it were some large fish ponds, which later became known as "The Moats."

There is mention of this manor in 1284 when Robert de Vere, Earl of Oxford, who then owned most of Kensington, granted lands called "The Groves" at West Town to Simon Downham, "his dear and faithful chaplain." The manor passed through many hands till 1581 when it came into the possession of Christopher Barker, Queen Elizabeth's printer. Ten years later the manor was purchased by a Kensington resident, Walter Cope, then Gentleman Usher to Lord Burghley and living on Campden Hill in a house where old Campden House used to stand.

The fish ponds at West Town, which are marked on the old maps of Kensington, were planned by Walter Cope in 1602 to serve the great house he was to build farther up the hill, known in his time as Cope's Castle and later as Holland House, after his son-in-law, Henry Rich, 1st Earl of Holland. In the Salisbury MSS there are two letters written to Sir Robert Cecil, one referring to a Mr. Gough "who made Mr. Cope's ponds,"¹ and another hoping that Cecil's newly created ponds at Theobalds would "look trim like Mr. Cope's ponds"² should Queen Elizabeth pay Cecil another visit.

The presence of Cope's fish ponds at West Town explains a letter in the Public Record Office written in 1609 from Dudley Carleton to his friend John Chamberlain—"Sir . . . I was the last week with my wife at a solemne dinner at Kensington (Holland House) . . . where we encountered much good companie and besides good cheere and the fair shewe of the house newly trickt and trimmed for the purpose. We had a morrice dance and the King's Cormorant to entertain us. . ."³

King James kept a pair of cormorants at his Court and their throats were bound in such a way that when they surfaced after diving their prey could be recovered from their mouths⁴.

The fish ponds at West Town were still full of fish in September 1772, for Mr. Machin of Little Holland House, which had been built nearby, offered a reward of five guineas through an advertisement in the press for information concerning the stealing of the fish by dragging the ponds with nets one September night⁵.

In the old days the Manor of West Town consisted of the Manor House, with its farm buildings situated round the bend of the present Melbury Road, together with the surrounding fields and an Inn, called the "Horse and Groom," facing the present High Street. In a large room in this inn the Lord of the Manor used to hold his "Court Baron" to deal with the affairs of the tenants on his estates. The inn later became known as "The White Horse." Today there is still a public house on the site, called "The Holland Arms."

The house called Little Holland House first appears on a map of 1745 by John Rocque near the site of the farm buildings. It was to this house in March 1804 that the eccentric Lord Camelford was brought after being fatally injured in a duel with Mr. Best in a neighbouring field. By the middle of the same century a model dairy called the Holland Park Farm and Dairy appeared near there, while the area became an artists' quarter with George Watts living in a rebuilt Little Holland House and other artists, such as Lord Leighton, Holman Hunt, William Burgess and Luke Fildes, taking up residence nearby.

THOMAS HENSHAW

On the 14th October 1675 John Evelyn records in his diary "Dined at Kensington with my old acquaintance, Mr. Henshaw, newly returned from Denmark, where he had been left resident after the death of the Duke of Richmond, who died there Ambassador."

Who was this great friend of Evelyn's? Henshaw himself gives the answer to this question in his will dated 1697 where he expresses his desire to be buried in his parish church of St. Mary Abbots and to have a small marble monument erected, with mention made in the inscription that he married Anne Kippin by whom he had six sons and two daughters and that his only surviving child Anne was married to Thomas Halsey and that "I had the honour to be French Secretary and Gentleman in Ordinary of the Privy Chamber of King Charles the Second and King James the Second and that I was by the former employed for some years as his Envoy Extraordinary to Christian the Fifth King of Denmark and Norway. That I was born the fifteenth day of June 1618 and that my dear and virtuous wife departed this life October 4th 1671." It is a remarkable fact that his "entirely beloved son-in-law Thomas Halsey" carried out these instructions to the letter, so that this handsome memorial can still be seen gracing the south aisle of the church.

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Henshaw also gives a lot of information about himself in a beautifully written letter dated "Midsomer" Day 1693 which is preserved in the Bodleian Library. This letter is addressed to Anthony à Wood who wished to include Henshaw's name in his biographies of Oxford writers under the title of "Athenae Oxonienses." "Worthy Sr . . . I am I confesse somewhat surprised wth yr resolution to debase ye 3rd vol; of so good and usefull a booke . . . I was born of a Citty family in Cheapside . . . (When) I was 15 and a half years old (I) was . . . sent to Oxford . . . to University Coll: . . . where I continued near 5 years but took no degree because my freinds did design me for a common Lawyer . . . I was sent . . . to Mr. Will Oughtred, Parson of Albury in Surrey . . . (to study) Mathematicks . . . (Then) I was entered a Student at ye Middle Temple, but when ye unhappy difference between ye King and Parliamt grew to that distance that both Partys were in Armes, my youthful zeale carried me wth a brother . . . to York to ye King where I stayd some time, but being not sufficiently provided of mony and Armes I came privately to London to recruit myself: but it seems not so privately but a Messenger had me in his custody ye next morning and carried away not only mee and my horse, but my masters coach, horses, jewells, plate, and what else they could find: nor could I recover my liberty onely, till by ye intercession of ye Earl of Northumberland and Holland. I gave security never to goe into ye Kings Army again and to take their passe to travell out of England, from whence I went into Holland . . . France . . . Spaine . . . thence into Italy . . ." Then after mentioning his return to England, his appointments as French Secretary to Charles 1st, etc., and his 2½ years diplomatic post in Denmark, Henshaw ends "The translation (from the Italian) of Smedo's History (of the Great and Renowned Monarchy of China) was a trifle I was ashamed to owne . . . That wch I value most of what I have published is ye History of Saltpeter and Gunpowder imposed on me by the Royal Society and printed in Dr. Sprat's History of that Society."⁸

Now a deed in the Kensington Public Library shows that Henshaw lived in the manor house of West Town, Kensington, while a will of his father, Benjamin Henshaw, drawn up in 1631, shows that his father also had the lease of the house. Thomas Henshaw lived at West Town for 50 years till his death in 1700, and it was here that Evelyn had paid him a visit. He had made friends with Evelyn at Oxford, had travelled with him for over a year in Italy when he had been forced to leave England for his Royalist sympathies in the Civil War, and with Evelyn had been one of the first 20 Fellows elected at the formation of the Royal Society in 1662.

Henshaw was proud of his connection with the Royal Society. He had a high reputation amongst his friends for his studies in chemistry and alchemy as well as in other matters such as natural history and philosophy. This is shown by an amusing letter in the Soane MSS at the British Museum where a Dr. Power writes him at his chamber in the Middle Temple. "Worthy Sr . . . The short though

hugely satisfactory enjoyment I had of you last at London makes me desirous today not only to continue but to promote my acquaintance with you . . . to embolden me to discourse with you about the new hypothesis of Copernicus . . . etc."⁷

There is another writer who was often in touch with Henshaw and may well have visited him in Kensington and that is John Aubrey. It is amusing to find the source of Henshaw's beautiful handwriting in Aubrey's brief life of William Oughtred, who "could not endure to see a scholar write an ill hand: he taught them all presently to mend their hands. Amongst others Mr. T. Henshaw who when he came to him wrote a lamentable hand, he taught to write very well."

No doubt Henshaw was glad of this training when he took up his post as secretary to the Embassy in Denmark, led by Charles Stuart, Duke of Richmond and Lennox. After a few months the Duke died suddenly and Henshaw was asked to take his place, but after a year he found Copenhagen "one of the dullest places that ever mortalls layd out their pretious minutes in"⁸ and wrote Henry Coventry, the Secretary of State, for leave to return, giving as an excuse that he wanted to get married again. Coventry replied "I have had some discourse with his Majesty, who will hardly admit your plea, being of the opinion that it would be more reasonable for a man that had a wife to seek forraign imployment to leave her, than having imployment to leave that to seek a wife."⁹

While on this embassy Henshaw wrote to his friend Elias Ashmole, the Windsor Herald and Founder of the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, saying that he had heard Ashmole had just published his "History of the Garter" and that he could easily present a copy to the King of Denmark. Again in the Bodleian Library¹⁰ there is some delightful correspondence between Henshaw and Ashmole, concerning their joint effort to get the book to Denmark, then to present it to the King, and then to secure a "worthy ring or medal" as a reward. Henshaw was successful with his project, for under the entry for 20th July 1674 Ashmole in his diary noted "Thomas Henshaw . . . returned home brought me a gold chain and a medal hanging thereat as a present from the King of Denmark." The chain can still be seen preserved with other insignia in a small case under the portrait of Ashmole at the head of the stairs in the Ashmolean Museum, though the medal is missing.

After his return from Denmark Henshaw returned to his house at Kensington where he lived, according to Evelyn "with the reputation of an extraordinary person, dying 1700 and leaving a considerable estate to his philosph: daughter, married to a worthy gentleman of Essex." In 1674 his friend, Robert Paston, Viscount Yarmouth, paid him a visit and recorded the occasion in a letter which he wrote to the famous doctor, Sir Thomas Browne, at Norwich. "Mr. Henshaw . . . has brought over with him many curiosities the principle of which lies in the unicorn's horn in which he has as much as he prices at four or five hundred pounds . . . many rarities of amber etc. . . The King

Constitution of the Kensington Society

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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.
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.

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.

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THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

Statement of Accounts
for the year
1964-65

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY—STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR 1964-65

1963/64	Income	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
	Balances at 1st October,						
486	1964				509	11	7
	Subscriptions :						
21	Life	—	—	—			
375	Annual	472	4	0			
					472	4	0
	Other Income :						
	Interest on Post Office						
	Savings Bank Ac-						
13	counts	12	7	6			
10	Sales of Xmas Cards	30	6	0			
					42	13	6

£905

£1,024 9 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.

1963/64	Expenditure	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
	London Meetings:						
	Lectures, Hire of Hall,						
23	Lantern etc. ...	28	17	1			
	Printing, Typing, Sta-						
	tionery and Xmas						
82	Cards	108	7	6			
	Postages and Telephone						
	Calls other than						
88	Public Meetings ...	89	7	3			
8	Bank Charges ...	5	16	6			
14	Donations	2	2	0			
	Producing Annual Re-						
146	port and Leaflet ...	217	4	0			
12	Sundry Expenses ...	5	7	2			
3	Book Prizes	3	3	0			
—	Advertising	3	9	4			
					463	13	10

Coach Visits :

	Net Cost of Hire, Meals						
20	etc.				36	15	7

Development Plans and Borough Council Minutes

7 15 0

Balances at 30th September, 1965

13	Martins Bank Ltd. ...	7	13	1			
	Post Office Savings						
	Bank Accounts:						
440	Life Subscriptions ...	450	10	7			
56	Prize Fund	58	1	0			
					516	4	8

£905

£1,024 9 1

WRIGHT, STEVENS & LLOYD
Chartered Accountants

50 Cannon Street,
London, E.C.4

1st February, 1966

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 January 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.

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

I, _____
(Full name)

of _____
(Address)

HEREBY COVENANT with THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY, c/o 18 Kensington Square, W.8, that for a period of seven years from the 1st day of _____, 19____, or during the residue of my life, whichever shall be shorter, I will pay annually to the said Society from my general fund of taxed income such a sum as after the deduction of income tax at the rate for the time being in force will amount to the net sum of £1 : 1s. : 0d. or any part thereof.

IN WITNESS whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal
this _____ day of _____ 19____

Signed sealed and delivered by the above-named COVENANTOR
in the presence of

WITNESS _____

ADDRESS _____

OCCUPATION _____

SIGNATURE

K. S.

PLEASE NOTE

- 1 The date to be inserted as the beginning of the seven years period should not be earlier than the date on which the covenant is executed.
- 2 Unless your first subscription under the covenant is paid on or after the date when the above period begins, the Society will not be able to reclaim the Income Tax on such payment.
- 3 The document should be returned as soon as possible after completion, in order that it may not be out of date for stamping.

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[Faint, illegible text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side.]

