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Commercial and Industrial Departments

Annual Report

1970-71



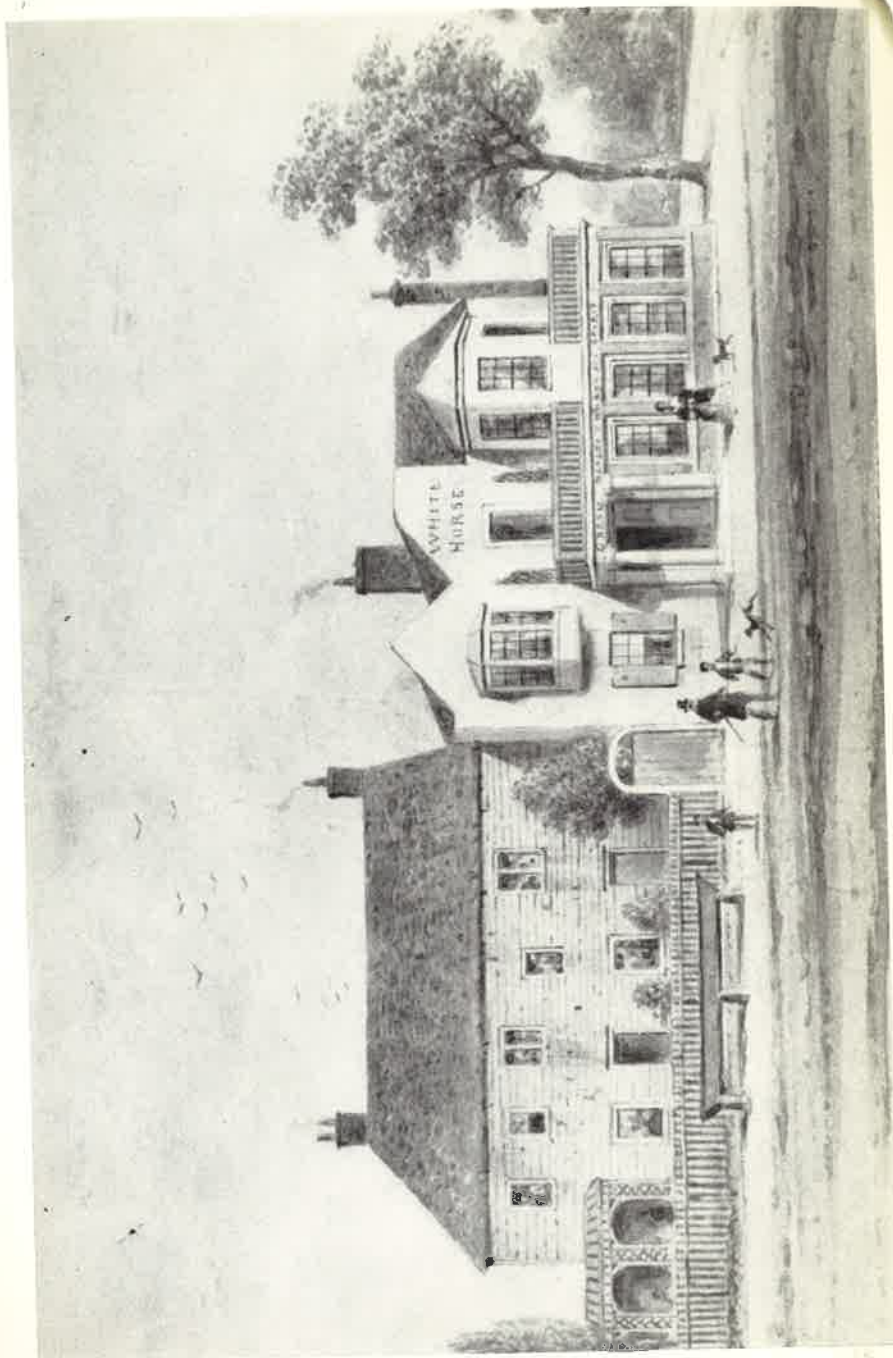
YOUNG STREET, LOOKING NORTH, JUNE 1890

THE
**Kensington
Society**

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

Annual Report

1970-71



WHITE HORSE INN, c. 1850. T. Hosmer Shepherd.

The Kensington Society

PATRON

H.R.H. PRINCESS ALICE, COUNTESS OF ATHLONE

PRESIDENT

THE RIGHT HON. LORD HURCOMB, G.C.B., K.B.E.

VICE-PRESIDENTS

THE DOWAGER MARCHIONESS OF CHOLMONDELEY

THE RT. REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF KENSINGTON

THE LADY STOCKS

COUNCIL

Miss Jean Alexander

Mr. Hardy Amies

The Hon. Mr. Justice Barry

Mr. W. W. Begley, F.R.HIST.S., L.R.I.B.A.

Sir Hugh Casson, R.D.L., F.R.I.B.A.

Mr. Alec Clifton-Taylor

Sir Trenchard Cox, C.B.E., F.S.A.

Mr. S. J. L. Egerton

Mr. William F. Grimes, V.P.S.A.

Sir John Pope-Hennessy, C.B.E., F.B.A., F.S.A.

The Hon. Mr. Justice Karminski

Mr. Oliver Messel, C.B.E.

Lady Norman, J.P.

Sir Duncan Oppenheim

Lord Spens, K.B.E., Q.C.

Prof. Arnold Toynbee, D.LITT., D.C.L., F.B.A.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN: THE LADY STOCKS

VICE-CHAIRMAN: MR. EDWARD SEELEY

Mr. Geoffrey Agnew

Miss Balian

Mr. D. Chesworth

Mrs. G. Christiansen

Mr. P. E. Clarke

Mr. G. F. Dearbergh

Mr. H. Gandell

Mr. C. H. Gibbs-Smith, F.M.A., R.E.S.

Mr. Ian Grant, F.R.I.B.A.

Mr. Keon Hughes

Dr. Stephen Pasmore

Sir Allan Quartermaine, C.B.E., M.C.

Mr. Edward Seeley

The Lady Stocks

Mr. R. T. D. Wilmot

HON. TREASURER: Mr. Keon Hughes

HON. SECRETARY: Mrs. G. Christiansen

18 Kensington Square, W.8

AUDITORS: Messrs. Wright, Stevens & Lloyd

This illustration, together with those on the front cover and on page 22, by kind permission of the Kensington and Chelsea Public Libraries.

Foreword

4 Each year's work of an active amenity society seems to consist of one controversy after another, one battle after another, and not all of them can be won. But, in the Royal Borough, our argument about the Orangery in Holland Park was amicably settled by the reasonable approach of the Greater London Council to the new situation created by an accidental fire in the Belvedere Restaurant. Although the experimental use of one of the lawns for a limited number of tables after 7 o'clock in the evening will need to be closely watched, the new plan proved generally acceptable and does not interfere with the use of the Orangery by the public. A proposal—and at present it is no more than a proposal—to excavate a new car park in Kensington Gardens is likely to be strenuously opposed. Apart from any other interference with visual amenity above ground, any encroachment—however small—by approach roads upon the pleasant meadows across which the Palace is splendidly viewed is more than could be afforded and should not be tolerated.

The policy of the Society in regard to further hotel development merits the study and support of all residents in the Royal Borough. Our policy is not, of course, one of blind opposition to any new hotels or to any expansion required to meet tourist traffic, as is shown by our attitude to several such proposals mentioned in this Report. But any new hotels should be placed at appropriate points and their height and proportions should have full regard to the scale and character of the areas in which they are allowed. Private interests should not be permitted to exploit further our public spaces, and the general public's opportunity to enjoy our parks and squares should not be further diminished by the erection of high walls of buildings hedging them in on every side. We are glad that our views have so often coincided with those of the Borough Council.

Local societies continue to spring up for the defence of particular areas of the Royal Borough. We welcome the vigorous support which those directly threatened by bad development can give to the wider cause. But we regret it when such individual bodies rob us of membership, as has recently happened.

We appeal to those concerned to renew their individual support and, at least, to ensure affiliation with us. We suggest that the Borough, the Greater London Council and Ministers themselves are likely to be better assisted and certainly most influenced by the concentration of opinion behind a society which, like our own, can speak for the residents as a whole.

HURCOMB.

Annual General Meeting

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING was held at the Orangery, Holland Park, on 2nd June, 1970, at 6 p.m.

The Rt. Hon. Lord Hurcomb, G.C.B., K.B.E., President of the Society, was in the Chair.

5 The Chairman, in opening the meeting, thanked H.R.H. Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone, for attending and then announced, giving great pleasure to all present, that Her Royal Highness had graciously consented to become the Society's first Patron.

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.

The Lady Stocks, Chairman of the Executive Committee, moved the adoption of the Report, saying that this excellent Report—beautifully produced—was one of the few reports which are both interesting and read. Seconded by Mrs. Milbourne and carried.

The adoption of the Accounts was moved by the Honorary Treasurer, Mr. Keon Hughes, seconded by Miss Bird, and carried unanimously.

The re-election of Officers and Executive Committee *en bloc*—no new nominations having been received—was moved by Miss Blackie, seconded by Miss Dunn, and carried unanimously.

The Dowager Marchioness of Cholmondeley expressed her very real pleasure at having been elected a Vice-President of the Society, and in this capacity had been a member of the party which had been received at County Hall to discuss the future of the Orangery, Holland Park. After this meeting the Society was assured that any change in the use of the Orangery had been postponed pending a close examination of the whole question. Mr. Robert Vigars, Chairman of the Planning and Transport Committee of the Greater London Council, promised to do everything he could to make known the strength of local feeling that the Orangery should be retained for its present use.

A member complained that the Society had not objected to the display of a specific advertisement. He was assured by the Hon. Secretary that had objection not been lodged by the Society the advertisement would have been floodlit. The member was given every encouragement to undertake recruitment of younger members to the Society.

The Chairman then closed the meeting proper and introduced Professor Peter Hall, who gave a most interesting and informed talk on the subject of 'Conservation in Kensington'.

OBITUARY

We report with deep regret the deaths of the following members: Miss W. Starkey, a life member from 1955; Mrs. John Henderson, a founder member who attended most of the activities arranged by the Society; Mrs. Florence Turtle, aged 97 years. Mrs. Turtle was a founder member and until she moved to the country in recent years attended all our activities. She continued her interest after she left Kensington; she has been very generous to the Society over the years. Mrs. E. Watson, also a long-standing member who was very interested in local history.

SQUARE GARDEN RAILINGS

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We suggested in our Report last year that more square garden committees, where the square gardens still retained the wartime chain-link fencing, should apply to the local council for grants towards the cost of restoration of railings. We understood that the council had powers to make loans or grants for this purpose.

A member of the Society, Mr. C. W. A. Millar, Chairman, Royal Crescent Gardens Committee, applied to the council for such a grant. The Council replied: 'We are unable to make any financial contribution where the garden, as in the case of Royal Crescent, is divorced from listed buildings by public highway'. The Society discussed the matter with the Council. The Council agreed that the private garden squares formed an essential part of the conservation areas and said: 'It is our opinion that, in order to pursue our policies of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the areas, this power to assist in the restoration of the surroundings is one that should be available to the Council. We have, therefore, made representations to the London Boroughs Association suggesting that a suitable amendment should be made to existing legislation to enable this assistance to be given'.

In the Borough Council's minutes of 24th March, 1971, they report: 'The Association agree with the Council's views that garden squares play an important part in conservation areas and they have, therefore, requested the Greater London Council to consider the introduction of suitable clauses in their next General Powers Bill. These would enable financial assistance to be given to garden committees, etc., to ensure that railings of garden squares are restored in keeping with the character of the area, in the same way as assistance is already provided by the Council for the restoration of those railings which enclose gardens and forecourts of listed buildings.'

BRING AND BUY SALE

A sale was organised by the Honorary Secretary and held at 18 Kensington Square at the beginning of December, with the help of Miss Balian, Miss Bird, the Hon. Pamela Hurcomb, Mrs. Milbourne, Miss Parks and Miss H. Stopein. A very generous donation was received from a member who wishes to remain anonymous. I hope if she reads this

she will realise how very grateful we are. Mrs. Christiansen hopes to arrange a similar sale this year. Will members please start making their collections! The annual sale has proved a successful way of increasing the revenue of the Society and we are grateful to members who participate.

We gratefully acknowledge the donation from the Nathan Trust towards expenses incurred by the representation made by the Society at the London Development Plan Inquiry.

The costs of the Society have greatly increased—the more work we do the more money we require. Printing and postage costs are particularly heavy—compare the present postage of 3p (7d.) with the 2½d. of 1953. A large number of our members are Life Members who paid £10 10s. in 1953, the year the Society was founded. We were very grateful for these ten guineas then, they helped to get the Society off to a good start. Our membership is still much too low. The Civic Trust recently reported that membership to amenity societies throughout the country is 3 in 1,000 persons. It must be considerably less in Kensington. Our financial position would be greatly helped if each member could persuade one friend to join the Society. Maybe there are members who would like to remember us with legacies?—and so help to continue the work of trying to preserve Kensington as a place to live in. The Society is registered as a charity and the objects are:—

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.

ADVERTISING

The advertisements in this Report help considerably towards the cost of production. A full page costs £12, a half page £5.

We should be glad to hear from any member who would like to advertise in the 1971/72 Report.

The Secretary would like to take this opportunity of expressing her gratitude to the printers for the immense trouble they take in printing this Report.

PLANTING OF TREES

The Society donated £10 during the year for tree planting in the Borough and £10 to the Brighter Kensington Scheme.

PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORDS

Photographs have been taken of a number of buildings scheduled for demolition. We would welcome any help members can give in keeping a photographic record of the Borough and would be delighted if any member would like to resuscitate our Photographic Group. This was run by the late Mr. Boxall, one-time Reference Librarian. Much useful

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work was done by the Group, many photographs of streets and houses being taken by members, thus helping to make the photographic survey of the Borough complete. Some old and fading photographs in the local collection were re-photographed and the Group was responsible for having micro-film copies made of the Court of Rolls of Kensington.

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

This has been a disappointing year. Membership has remained small and the amount of research carried out has justified few meetings. There is no 'standard' history of Kensington and there are plenty of topics that the amateur historian can tackle and, in so doing, make a real contribution to local history. Very little, for example, has been done on 19th century Kensington, and subjects such as local administration, public health, the growth of public amenities, education and the social make-up of the population await the researcher.

Any interested member of the Society should contact the honorary secretary of the Group, Mr. B. R. Curle, the Central Library, Hornton Street, W.8. There is no extra charge for becoming a member of the Group.

CONSERVATION AREAS

Further conservation areas have been designated by the Borough Council during the year; the complete list is as follows: 1. Thurloe Estate—Smith Charity; 2. Kensington Square; 3. Ladbroke Estate; 4. Norland Estate; 5. Pembridge Estate; 6. Royal Hospital (Chelsea); 7. Cheyne (Chelsea); 8. Queen's Gate; 9. Sloane Stanley (Chelsea); 10. Kensington Town Hall; 11. Kensington Village; 12. The Boltons; 13. Edwardes Square and Scarsdale; 14. Holland Park; 15. Aubrey House with Campden Square and surrounding properties; 16. Kensington Palace; 17. Hans Terrace (Chelsea); 18. Phillimore Estate; 19. Campden and Bedford Gardens; 20. Chelsea New Church; 21. Milner Street (Chelsea); 22. Markham Street (Chelsea); 23. Elm Park (Chelsea); 24. Carlyne Square (Chelsea).

HOTELS

Hotel development in the Borough has been our major concern during the year. Conservation areas of a residential character, near the centre of London, are particularly vulnerable to this type of development.

Kensington is the borough suffering from the brunt of hotel fever, which has been encouraged by the Government grant of £1,000 per bedroom. To qualify for this grant work must have been started by 31st March, 1971. The following statistics were given to the Secretary by the Planning Department, Kensington and Chelsea Borough Council:—

1968 Planning permission given for 2,669 bed spaces (16 hotels);
1969 Planning permission given for 1,515 bed spaces (24 hotels);
1970, Jan./Oct. Planning permission given for 10,284 bed spaces (20 hotels).

During this time 58 hotels have been refused planning permission. The Leader of the Council has said that commercial development in the Borough is an essential to its economy and that 'properly designed hotels can improve the environment'. The Society feels that if the trends of applications and permissions are allowed to continue the interest of the tourist will have crazily been preferred to residents—residents who wish to preserve and enhance their areas.

The Society's London Development Plan subcommittee, under the chairmanship of Mr. Geoffrey Dearbergh, has produced a memorandum—'Planning Policy for Hotels'. A copy was sent to the Minister of Housing (under the last Government), to the Greater London Council and to the Kensington and Chelsea Borough Council. A copy has also been sent to members of the Society. Following the application for planning consent for the hotel on the Odeon Cinema site, the Society asked the Secretary of State for the Environment to call in all current planning applications for large hotels, so that they can be determined without haste and after a proper public inquiry has been held. A copy of our 'Planning Policy for Hotels' has also been sent to him. We still have a few copies left. If any new member would like a copy please send a stamped addressed foolscap envelope to the Honorary Secretary.

The greatest concentration of hotel development has been in the area south of Cromwell Road, from South Kensington Station to Earl's Court Road. The Society is concerned that residential hotels, long a feature of South Kensington, are being replaced or developed into tourists' hotels, which means a further reduction of residential accommodation. Hotel developments opposed by the Society will be found under 'Cases Dealt With' on the following page.

A selection of cases dealt with

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HOTELS

Thorney Court.—An application was made to demolish this block of fully-tenanted flats and to build a hotel.

The Kensington and Chelsea Borough Council refused planning permission, the developer appealed to the Minister, which resulted in a public enquiry. Lady Stocks gave evidence for the Society, supporting the Borough Council in their refusal of planning permission. The Minister has upheld the Council's ruling.

An application has also been made to demolish the present building and build a new block of flats.

100/107 *Queen's Gate, Clareville Street, Manson Mews, Old Brompton Road.*—Application for hotel building, proposing to retain facades of the listed buildings in Queen's Gate, with an 11-storey tower behind. The Society thought this was undesirable and registered their objection. This application was refused planning permission by the Council. A modified scheme is now before the Council omitting the tower block. This is not opposed by the Society.

South Kensington Station Hotel.—The Society objected to this scheme. It was felt that the main block of 12 storeys—135 ft.—would impinge unpleasantly on the conservation areas Thurloe and Onslow squares. Strong representation was made that the traffic serving the hotel should not be routed into or from Thurloe Square.

Golley's Garage Site.—Hotel development proposed, height 125 ft. The height was opposed by the Society and safeguards requested that the service traffic should be routed back into Earl's Court Road and not into Redfield Lane/Childs Street/Kenway Road (a residential area).

Emperor's Gate.—Application for 750-bedroom hotel. Society opposed this application as over-development of the site. The planning authority rejected this scheme. A modified scheme has since been given outline planning permission.

Holland Park Hall, 177/199 Holland Park Avenue.—Application for a 597-bedroom hotel of 12 storeys. A second scheme was also produced, but the planning authority felt unable to accept either scheme. The Society opposed both schemes.

A considerably modified scheme, which was an improvement on the previous schemes though considered by the Society still to be too high in relation to Royal Crescent, has been given planning permission.

Holland Road and Upper Addison Gardens.—Application for planning permission for a 30-storey hotel, with the demolition of 14 houses and displacement of 120 people. Strongly objected to by the Society and local residents. Subsequently refused by the planning authority.

Hotel—131/161 Holland Park Avenue, 17/19 Holland Park Gardens.—Opposed by the Society, refused planning permission by the Kensington and Chelsea Borough Planning Committee.

25 *Ashburn Place, 15/47 Courtfield Road, 20/26 Harrington Gardens.*—Application for 940-bedroom hotel. 20/26 Harrington Gardens listed as buildings of architectural and historical interest. Opposed by the Society.

233/253 *Kensington High Street, 1/25 Earl's Court Road, Warwick Chambers, Paten Street and 16 Abingdon Road.*—This was a very extensive scheme. The tower block was 255 ft. above pavement level. The whole scheme seemed a gross over-development of the site and this area was considered to be particularly sensitive to the impact of high buildings. Opposed by the Society.

Earl's Court Road, Kensington High Street, Odeon Cinema Site—Hotel Development.—The Society felt that this site should be developed for residential purposes. It opposed the bridging of Earl's Court Road as closing the view of trees and the entrance to Holland Park and considered that it was a gross over-development of the site. Application was refused by the Council.

Gloucester Road Station and adjacent sites.—There have been a number of applications for this site; it has been difficult to ascertain the current situation, but the position appears to be that outline planning permission has been given for a 760-bedroom hotel, of 25 floors, 250 ft. high, on the Cromwell Road, Ashburn Gardens, Courtfield Road site. An outline planning permission has also been given for two hotels—one for 1,000 bedrooms, 14 floors, 140 ft. high, and the other 240 bedrooms, 7 storeys, 78 ft. high. The three hotels will make up 2,000 bedrooms. We understand that a new application is expected for this site.

121/127 *Kensington High Street and Wright's Lane.*—Outline planning permission has been given for two hotels on this site. The Aer Lingus, which has been started, is for 850 bedrooms and is 113 ft. high. The other hotel was for 1,250 bedrooms, but we understand that a new application has been submitted for offices, shops and flats on this site.

21/22 *Stanley Gardens.*—Change of use from residential to hotel opposed by the Society.

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OTHER CASES

Infilling of Gardens between Houses.—As reported last year, the Society has been greatly disturbed by the increasing applications and permissions under the Town and Country Planning Act for infilling on open ground between pairs of early Victorian houses, especially in the Ladbroke Estate and adjacent area. Last year we appealed to the Minister for greater Listing of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, which is the main safeguard for any building against demolition, alteration or mutilation.

During the past year the Ladbroke Association prepared a survey of buildings in the Ladbroke Conservation Area. They requested, and this request was supported by the Kensington Society, that the Council should formulate a policy criteria on the infilling of gardens between houses, in particular Clarendon Road. The Council agreed and a survey was made by the architectural department, which resulted in a Policy Criteria by the Council.

This, and the listing of further houses in the area, has been largely the result of the Ladbroke Association's work in preparing a survey of their area. We think this work has already proved to be of tremendous value and we would like to suggest to other chairmen of conservation areas that they undertake a similar task.

Kensington Square.—In spite of a Preservation Order (one of the last preservation orders to be made before the 1969 Act came into force) and the designation as a conservation area, threats to the Square continue. A forecourt wall has been removed on the south side of the Square, pediments have been removed from first-floor windows but left on second-floor windows. A house which had permission by the Minister of Housing and Local Government (in the last Government) to be used as a hostel until September 1970 has been allowed to continue as such.

The Kensington and Chelsea Borough Council has given permission for part of the premises of the National Car Park to be used as a health club, with a Sunday morning opening. This in spite of representations made by residents, and the Society, against Lulu's Club (also in Young Street).

We have endeavoured, over the past year, to persuade the local council and the Greater London Council to evolve a traffic management scheme for the Square. Noise and traffic conditions have become intolerable over the past few years. Mr. R. Vigars, local member of the Greater London Council, met residents and agreed to press for a management scheme. We have requested that Derry Street should be closed and Victoria Grove controlled by a one-way working system.

The Orangery, Holland Park.—In January this year the Orangery was badly damaged in a fire which gutted the adjoining Belvedere Restaurant. It will be remembered from our last report that these buildings were the centre of a lengthy controversy last year, when Messrs. J. Lyons & Co. Ltd. sought permission from the G.L.C. to

use the Orangery as an extension to their restaurant. The Society vigorously opposed the plan and arranged for a deputation to be sent to County Hall. The result was that the G.L.C. 'deferred decision on the Orangery's future for the time being'. A question was asked in the House of Lords by Lord Balfour of Inchrye, a member of the Society, supported by the Lady Stocks, Chairman of the Executive Committee, and Lord Hurcomb, President of the Society. In February 1971 Mr. Sebag Montefiore, Chairman of the G.L.C. Arts and Recreation Committee, invited the Kensington Society to attend County Hall to discuss the future of the Orangery. The deputation included the Dowager Marchioness of Cholmondeley, Lord Hurcomb, Lady Stocks, Mr. Seeley, Mr. Andrew Porter and Mrs. Christiansen, for the Society, and representatives of other local bodies. The proposals from the G.L.C. were that the Orangery should be retained for use by the public, apart from one bay, nearest the Belvedere Restaurant, which would be conceded to Messrs. J. Lyons & Co. Ltd. as an extension of the restaurant. The Orangery would then be separated from the restaurant by a solid permanent wall. A new entrance would be formed on the north side and the old entrance removed. The G.L.C. also favoured, for what they termed an experimental period during 1971, the use of the lawn by patrons of the restaurant from 7 p.m. onwards on such evenings as the Orangery is not let for special functions.

The Society was in agreement with regards to the bay being given over to the restaurant, mainly at society & gardens at wisley.

25th May—6.30 p.m.—

The Annual General Meeting will be held at Leighton House, Holland Park Road, W.14. *Chairman:* The Dowager Marchioness of Cholmondeley.

The meeting will be followed by a musical programme with poetry reading. *Pianoforte*—Mr. Frank Merrick; *The New Viola d'Amore*—Mr. S. Montagu Cleeve; *Poetry reading*—Miss Marie Ney.

There will be a silver collection to help to cover the cost of hiring the hall and piano.

The artists have generously given their services free.

15th June—1 p.m. from Kensington Square—

A visit to Penshurst Place.

19th June—

Tea in garden at 18 Kensington Square; tickets are required.

20th July—1 p.m. from Kensington Square—

A visit to Boughton Monchelsea Place, near Maidstone

14th September—1 p.m. from Kensington Square—

A visit to Clandon Park, Guildford. This house has been closed for two and a half years, and has now been completely renovated by the National Trust. Mrs. Gubbay's famous collection of furniture and china is on display.

Full details of the above visits was given in the Programme Card sent to members in March.

car park under Kensington Gardens. We understand that the Council have written to the Minister of Works and to the Minister of Transport for their approval.

As we go to press we have no further information about this, but we have written to the Minister of Works and to the Secretary of State for the Environment strongly opposing the scheme.

Other Cases with which the Society has been concerned, and taken action, during the year included: Redevelopment Princes Place; 49 Holland Park Mews; 8 Ladbroke Terrace; 7 Cambridge Place; 18 Norland Square; 104 Gloucester Road; 12 Pembridge Villas; 1 Pembroke Square, 55/57 South Edwardes Square; 87/91 Ladbroke Road; 14/16/18 St. Ann's Villas; 36 Pembroke Square; 72/73 Holland Park; 7 Horbury Mews; 29 The Boltons; 65 Drayton Gardens; 45 Victoria Road; 28/29 Lansdowne Crescent; 59 Clarendon Road; 19 Kensington Palace Gardens; 180 Cromwell Road; Lex Garage Site; 55 Cornwall Gardens; Development at Brompton Hospital; 86/87 Campden Street; 29 Edwardes Square; 5 Stanley Gardens; 5 Kensington Park Gardens; 19 Young Street; 3 Stanley Gardens; 24 Ladbroke Road; 13 Pelham Crescent; 18/25 Waldgrave Terrace; 25/27 Ovington Square; 47/47A Lansdowne Road; 45/46 Queen's Gate; 72/73 Holland Park; 7/8 Hyde Park Gate.

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Other activities and future arrangements

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Visits have been made to the following: The Baltic, Mercantile and Shipping Exchange; St. Barnabas Church, Addison Road; St. Paul's School, Lonsdale Road, Barnes; the Donaldson Museum of Musical Instruments, Royal College of Music; Inner Temple; London International Hotel, Cromwell Road; Southwark Cathedral; Brompton Oratory.

FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS

21st and 24th April—

A visit to Knightsbridge Barracks.

1st May—2.30 p.m. from Kensington Square—

A walk round conservation areas south of Kensington High Street.

4th May—1 p.m. from Kensington Square—

A visit to the Royal Horticultural Society's Gardens at Wisley.

25th May—6.30 p.m.—

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Local Societies

The following local societies have been invited to report on the formation and activities of their society. Some of these societies are affiliated to the Kensington Society and we are glad to give them any support we can.

We would like to see a local group or society in each conservation area and we would welcome them as corporate members. (Subscription £5.25 per annum.)

ADDISON ACTION GROUP

Addison Action Group was formed at 24 hours notice in October 1970 by residents near the new Shepherds Bush roundabout when it was learned that a company had submitted plans for a 300 ft. high hotel on a site to the south-east of it, causing serious loss of good homes. The Group, having helped to quash the plans, is continuing with the long-term objective of concern for the environment and quality of life in the neighbourhood, in consort with other amenity groups. It represents residents in Upper Addison Gardens, Addison Gardens to the east of Holland Road and Holland Road residents to the north of Addison Gardens. Activities with which it has since become concerned include: the Orangery rebuilding, the Westcross motorway extension, and declaring the district a conservation area.

Officers: *Chairman*, Patrick Rivers; *Deputy Chairman*, Major L. A. Gordon; *Treasurer*, Mrs. D. Tremayne; *Secretary*, Miss N. Dawson. Address for correspondence, The Garden Flat, 27 Upper Addison Gardens, W14 8AJ.

THE BOLTONS ASSOCIATION

The Association was formed in November 1970. *Hon. Secretary*, Mrs. I. Austin-Smith, F.R.I.B.A., 10 Priory Walk, S.W.10.

THE CAMPDEN STREET PRESERVATION SOCIETY

The Society was gratified to be consulted by the Council on the boundaries of the Campden conservation area. The Street has now been 'designated' and it is hoped that this procedure will ensure that its character will be 'preserved and enhanced' in accordance with the aims of the Civic Amenities Act 1967. The preservation of the character of, as it were, a village street in an urban area is one of the aims of this Society.

A detailed study of the Borough's street parking scheme in conjunction with the Traffic Committee suggested that there could be a better utilisation of the parking space available and the Society's recommendations have finally been implemented, with the result that the residents' parking space in the street has been increased. Representations to the Council have secured the replacement of a flowering tree in the pavement in the room of one which had perished. During the dustmen's strike the existence of funds enabled the Society to organise emergency collection of refuse to be made.

Throughout the year the Society has maintained a watch on suggested developments and those already under way, and has kept members informed of progress on the Metropolitan Water Board site and applications for development of the Rowley Gallery site at the western end of Campden Street.

One of the problems which afflict a local amenity society is how far its boundaries should extend. There is currently an application to develop the Lex Garage site in Campden Hill Road where it is felt that a high building would make an impact on Campden Street. The Society had declared its interest in this. The Orangery in Holland Park is even more remote from Campden Street but special circumstances had associated the Society's name with the protests last year. As the Secretary had been invited to attend the deputation to the G.L.C. he took the opportunity, having contacted secretaries to other local groups, to express the views of members which the groups themselves, in some cases, felt beyond their terms of reference.

The Society has maintained throughout the year close liaison with the Kensington Society and with various departments of the Borough Council, and through its Committee continues to exert vigilance in matters which affect Campden Street. *Secretary*: John D. Williams, 51 Campden Street, W.8.

THE EDWARDES SQUARE AND SCARSDALE ASSOCIATION

A civic amenity society for residents in and around the Edwardes Square and Scarsdale Conservation Area has been formed under the chairmanship of Mr. David Cole. Anyone interested in further details should contact the *Hon. Secretary*, Mrs. B. S. Lansdown, 21 Scarsdale Villas, W.8. Telephone: 937 5090. The annual subscription is £1.

NORLAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY

It has been a busy year. Membership of the Society has risen and participation in matters affecting the conservation area has been encouragingly eager and strong.

The many proposals concerning hotels on the periphery of the area have caused a great deal of anxiety; a public meeting organised by the Society to hear Professor Peter Hall speak incisively about hotels in West London generally was packed to the doors. Meanwhile, matters of a more immediately local nature have been discussed and

dealt with; there have been petitions against new street lighting in Addison Avenue and against the parking of cars on the forecourts of houses in the Avenue; there have been meetings with the Borough Council over parking control measures and about the need to make permanent the closures at Clarendon Cross; the Society has urged that the closed roads be paved over and the whole setting made a really attractive place in which to shop, so that the traders as well as local residents may feel some benefit from the measures.

With the Society's help, four owners of adjoining houses in Norland Square have acted together to obtain grant aid from both the Borough and the G.L.C. for the repair and restoration of the facades of their houses; the final effect now gives a hint of just how splendid the Square could be if it were given uniform treatment.

Finally, one anxiety has remained with us throughout the year and this concerns the machinery the Borough has provided for making known the policies to be followed in designated areas and for the proper expression of societies' views; the present machinery is a far cry from that suggested in ministerial circulars. *Hon. Secretary:* Mr. Clive Wilson, 52 St. James's Gardens, W.11.

THE LADBROKE ASSOCIATION

The Ladbroke Association was founded and registered as a charity in 1969. It is the conservation society serving that part of Kensington known as the Ladbroke Estate, which is one of the districts designated a conservation area by the Borough Council in the same year.

The alliance of architecture and landscape which distinguishes the Ladbroke Estate needs no introduction to Kensingtonians. Contained between Blenheim Crescent and Holland Park Avenue, and between Clarendon Road and Kensington Park Road, its features on the map today retain almost exactly the delineation of the original spacious layout of crescents, streets and gardens of the early 19th century.

The objects of the Association are:

- To encourage high standards of architecture and town-planning within the Ladbroke Estate conservation area;
- To stimulate public interest in and care for the beauty, history and character of the neighbourhood;
- To encourage the preservation, development and improvement of features of general public amenity or historic interest.

The Association's principal activities in support of these aims comprise:

Information.—A newsletter is circulated free to members periodically, informing them of current activities and topical plans affecting the neighbourhood. The intention is to develop an information service which will make available to members advice on specific aspects of conservation.

It is also hoped to arrange lectures from time to time, and other opportunities for members to meet and discover more about the neighbourhood and conservation.

Planning.—The Association receives notice of planning applications in the Borough and it inspects, comments on and discusses with the Council those which affect the Ladbroke area in any significant way. Members are kept informed of such matters through the newsletter.

Surveys.—The Association has completed an architectural survey of the whole conservation area. This is a record of buildings according to their age and state of original construction; as such it has already proved useful in discussions with the planners.

Photographic records of the external appearance of buildings are already being compiled by the Borough Council and are contained in the reference section at the public library. The Association hopes, in due course, to supplement this work with a survey of notable features inside some of the local houses.

Traffic.—The Association has set up a steering committee to consider the implications of traffic in the area. The G.L.C.'s Greater London Development Plan contains recommendations aimed at eliminating through traffic from local roads in environmental areas—the corollary of the policy being implemented for London's primary and secondary road system. The Association's intentions is to urge and assist the authorities to act on these recommendations.

Special Action.—The Association may also find itself having to take swift action to avert some particularly disastrous planning decision—such as the one a few years ago to fell many of the fine plane trees in Ladbroke Grove. A contested planning decision often involves heavy costs and the resources of a strongly supported conservation society can then become essential to the success of the local cause.

Organisation.—The work of the Association is directed by a committee of three officers (chairman, hon. treasurer and hon. secretary) and up to ten other members, who are elected at the annual general meeting. The Association is affiliated to the Kensington Society and the Civic Trust. It is the committee's policy to co-operate on matters of common interest with the Norland Conservation Society and with other amenity societies.

An illustrated leaflet describing the Association's work, together with application forms for membership, can be obtained from the *Hon. Secretary*, 48 Clarendon Road, W.11. If you are in sympathy with its objectives and enjoy living in the Ladbroke neighbourhood, you can greatly help and strengthen the Association by becoming a member.

The Greater London Development Plan Enquiry

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After a short procedural session in July this inquiry was resumed on the 6th October, 1970, and there began the detailed consideration of the objections to the plan on the topics of Population, Housing and Employment. This occupied the attention of the panel until the end of the year. The Society made no objection on any of these topics. The Kensington and Chelsea Borough Council made objections relating to the population, employment and office floorspace; these were dealt with on the 27th October.

The Borough Council wished the plan to provide for a larger population in the Borough than the figure of 165,000 to 167,000 which the plan contemplated; the accuracy of the G.L.C.'s estimates was questioned. The Borough Council also argued that the plan should give encouragement to the building of more offices in the Borough. The G.L.C. and the panel questioned the Borough Council's witness on the effect that the Borough Council's suggestions would have on the present acute housing shortage and lack of open space. In his closing remarks counsel for the Borough Council described the Borough as having 'a large proportion of single persons, a large proportion of young people; very few children, little need for open space, if open space is for children to play on and for persons to walk amongst'.

In January 1971 the Panel moved on to the consideration of Town and Landscape, Areas of Special Character, Areas of Architectural or Historic Interest, London Squares, and High Buildings. The Society had made written objections on these matters, aimed at having Holland Park treated as an area of special character, at discouraging the building of car parks under the squares and at safeguarding the Borough from the intrusion of high buildings in unsuitable places. The Borough Council also submitted an objection on the subject of high buildings, arguing that the plan needed to give more emphasis to the benefits to be obtained from high buildings in appropriate situations and suggesting that some of the criteria in the plan for high buildings should be omitted. The criteria that the Borough Council wished to see taken out of the plan included the following: 'That the proposal would not harm the essential character of the surrounding area' and 'That the amenities and development possibilities of surrounding sites and buildings would not be impaired'.

The Society, in its objection, argued that these criteria should be retained; if the Borough Council intended to apply these criteria their presence in the plan could do no harm; if that was not the Borough Council's intention the inclusion of these criteria was essential. The witness for the Borough Council said that the Borough Council would be likely to include the criteria in its plan but that they were not of sufficient strategic importance for inclusion in the Greater London plan; Counsel for the G.L.C. referred specifically to the Society's objection and said 'In our submission, the Society is right to regard the G.L.C. as the wise and dependable protector from the advances of the more wildly ambitious developers, because a London borough is likely to be more amenable to the pressure of developers, whereas on the other hand the G.L.C. is likely to be able to take a more objective view'. His suggestion was that the criteria would be applied less stringently by the Borough Council than by the G.L.C.

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Counsel for the Borough Council, in his closing remarks, said: 'Might I take Counsel for the G.L.C. to task when he says our local society has criticised this. Of course it is only half, because there is a Chelsea Society and a Kensington Society, and it may be the historical anomaly of two joining in one means that one often disagrees with the other. I am sure you would not think any matters we have canvassed today should be judged because one half of our local societies have objected'.

This statement puzzled the Chelsea Society as much as it did this Society. The Chelsea Society's own objection, to which attention was specifically drawn in the Kensington Society's objection, asserted that 'Special care should be given to the low-built character of the streets and squares in the area'. There is no disagreement between the societies on this point and this fact has been drawn to the authorities' attention.

Later in January the Panel went on to consider objections on Metropolitan Open Land, The Green Belt, Open Lands and Waterways. The Society submitted a written objection under the head 'Open Lands—Parks', designed to ensure that Holland Park is permitted to remain in its present undeveloped state.

The major topic of Transport began at the end of January. The Society has submitted a written objection to secure that environmental benefits will in fact result from the building of Ringway 1 and, in particular, the West Cross Route.

This topic is likely to take up a considerable time. One of the topics remaining to be dealt with after this is Central London. Under the heading of 'Tourism' the Society has submitted a written objection designed to introduce into the plan certain criteria to be applied in relation to proposals for hotel developments.

G. DEARBURGH.



J. C. Nattes "Garden front of Scarsdale House, Kensington" c. 1800-1815



PONTINGS, 1971

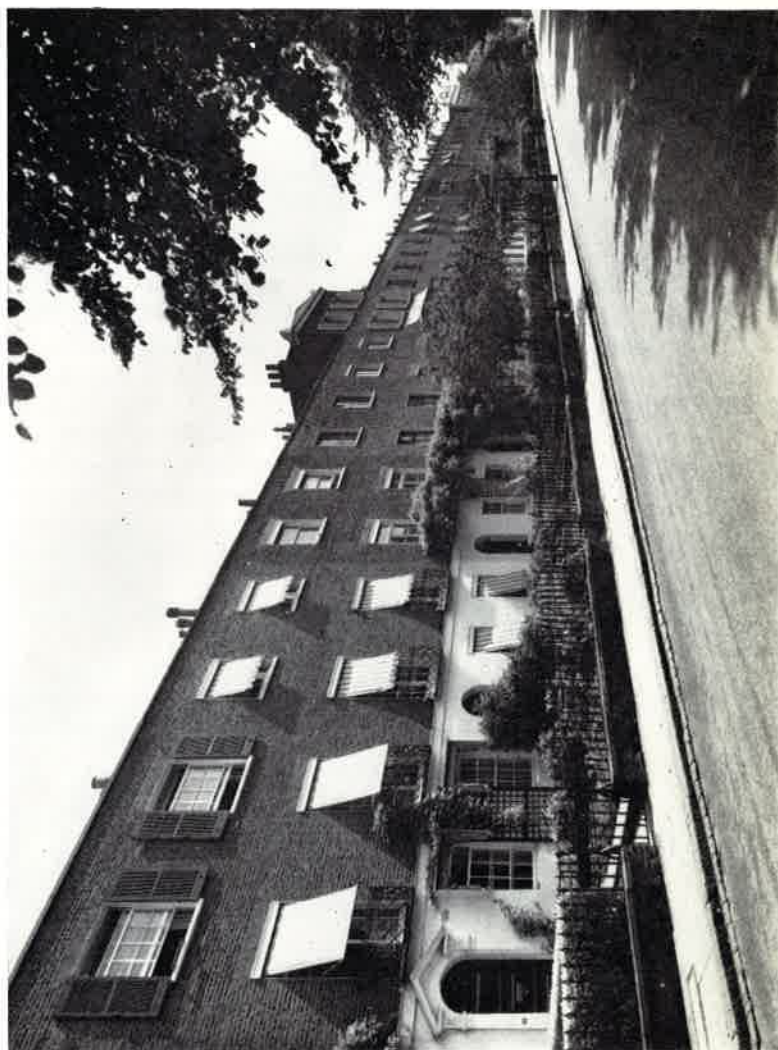
Pontings and Scarsdale House

Pontings, founded in 1873, and whose long history of trading on the Wrights Lane site came to an end on 15th February, was itself the successor of a house of some antiquity. The narrow frontage and great depth of the Pontings building was dictated by the shape of Scarsdale House and its grounds which formerly occupied the site. This house appears to have been built towards the end of the 17th century by John Curzon who named it after the Derbyshire home of his ancestors. Its occupants included Lord Barnard and a Mrs. Winnock who ran a boarding school for young ladies there between about 1806 and 1844. This fate seems to have been a common one for large houses in Kensington, although in this case the house returned to the Curzon family before its final sale to Pontings in 1893.

Scarsdale House was incorporated into that expanding store and after its take-over by Barkers in 1907 and subsequent rebuilding it would be hard to find any traces of the earlier house which had itself suffered modification at some date in the 19th century. The drawing by J. C. Nattes, reproduced here, probably dates from c. 1800-15 and shows the garden front before alteration. Later photographs show the pediment and door hood much modified, while a mansard roof has been introduced and windows altered.

Few will grieve at the loss of the present building, but it is to be hoped that it will be replaced by something more distinguished than the current style in monolithic blocks totally out of scale with the surrounding buildings.

B. R. CURLE.



Country Life

EAST SIDE OF EDWARDES SQUARE, 1954

The History of Edwardes Square, Kensington

by H. Stephen Pasmore

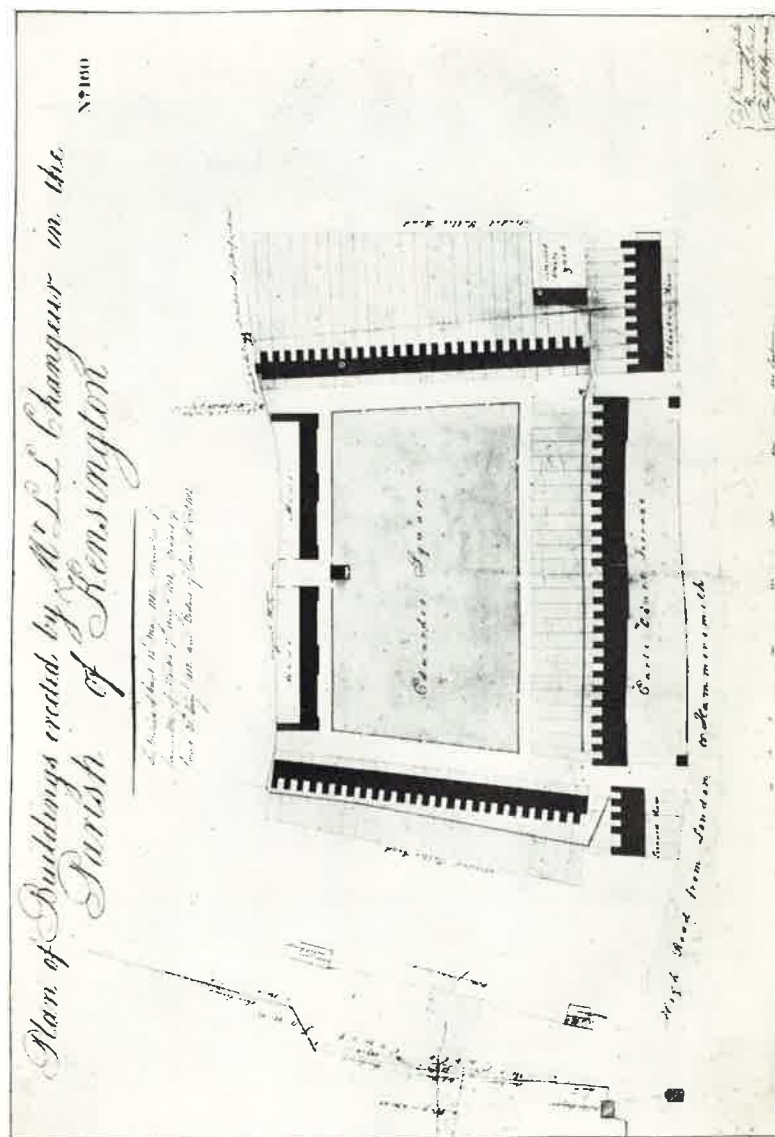
Based on a talk given to the Kensington Society on 25th November, 1955

THE SQUARE

The Earl's Court Road joins the Kensington High Street opposite the main gates to Holland House; and just to the west of the road and to the south of the High Street lies Edwardes Square, which has the reputation of being one of the most attractive residential squares in London.

This Square has long been the subject of a rumour that it was built by a Frenchman for the officers of Napoleon's army in anticipation of their successful invasion of England, but in the course of conversation at the Scarsdale Arms or the Holland Arms the rumour takes other forms. 'Wasn't the Square built by French prisoners from the Napoleonic wars?' 'I believe the Square was built for *émigrés* from the French Revolution'. 'Did I hear you say the Square was built for the widows of Waterloo?'

It was Leigh Hunt, who lived at No. 32 Edwardes Square from 1840 till 1851 and who was the author of that delightful book on Kensington, *The Old Court Suburb*, who was responsible for keeping the Napoleonic rumour alive. After describing the garden walls of Earls Terrace on the north side of the Square and the tenements and coach-houses, attractively overgrown with ivy, on the south side, Leigh Hunt wrote: 'But what chiefly surprises the spectator when he first sees the place is the largeness, as well as the cultivated look of the Square, compared with the smallness of the houses on two sides of it . . . and there is such an unexpected air of size, greenness and even elegance in the place, especially when its abundant lilacs are in blossom, and ladies are seen on its benches reading, that the stroller, who happens to turn out of the road and comes upon the fresh-looking sequestered spot for the first time, is interested as well as surprised, and feels curious to know how a square of any kind, comparatively so large, and, at the same time, manifestly so cheap (for the houses, though neat and respectable, are too small to be dear) could have suggested itself to the costly English mind. Upon enquiry, he finds it to have been the work of a Frenchman. The story is that the Frenchman built it at the time of the threatened invasion from France; and that he adapted the large square and the cheap little houses to the



Greater London Record Office
The original plan of Edwardes Square drawn up by D. I. Brunning, Arch., of Bernard Street, Russell Square, though not necessarily designed by him.

promenading tastes and poorly-furnished pockets of the ensigns and lieutenants of Napoleon's army; who, according to his speculation, would certainly have been on the lookout for some such place, and here would have found it. Here, thought he, shall be cheap lodging and *fête champêtre* combined; here, economy indoors and Watteau without; here, repose after victory; promenades; *la belle passion*; perusal of newspapers on benches; an ordinary at the Holland Arms—a French Arcadia in short, or a little Palais Royal, in an English suburb. So runs the tradition; we do not say how truly, though it could hardly have entered an English head to invent it'.

The only fact on which this tradition appeared to be based was that a Frenchman named Louis Léon Changeur did start to lay out the Square at the beginning of 1811, at a time when the Napoleonic situation was such that the main threat of a French invasion of England was over. This threat had extended from December 1797, on Napoleon's return to Paris from his first Italian campaign till October 1805 when Nelson beat him at Trafalgar. Changeur started to build the Square when the Peninsular Wars were being fought, but he was unable to finish his project because he was made bankrupt fifteen months later, on 2nd November, 1812 for debts of £10,000 at the time that Napoleon was retreating from Moscow.

Tangye Lean has traced this story about the Napoleonic connections of the Square to its source in his recent book, *The Napoleonists*, with its fascinating references to Edwardes Square, where he used to reside. He found in the minutes of the Board of the Kensington Turnpike Trust held on the 3rd June, 1811, that one of the road surveyors mistakenly reported that a Col. Charmilly, who was building opposite Lord Holland's house, had stopped up a part of the watercourse, and that he claimed the Ditch as his own property. The Board suggested that a sub-committee looked into the matter and this committee, which met the same week at the White Horse public house (now the Holland Arms), inspected the ditch and reported back to the Board that Léon Changeur, Esq., was the owner of the ground concerned and that he had been mis-called Charmilly at the last Board meeting. It was this chance muddling up of the two names by the surveyor that started off the Napoleonic rumours about the Square, for Col. Venault de Charmilly had been denounced by Earl Grey in a debate in the House of Lords in April 1809 as an agent of Napoleon. During this debate, which was held on the defeat of the British Army at Corunna with the loss of Sir John Moore and 7,000 soldiers, Earl Grey pointed out that the British Minister in Madrid, the Rt. Hon. J. Hookham Frere, had tried to interfere with the conduct of Sir John Moore by sending him false intelligence through Col. Charmilly. Earl Grey thought it incredible that Mr. Frere should have employed this Colonel, who was an immigrant to England in consequence of the French Revolution, who had pretended he represented the Government of St. Domingo, where he had started a revolution, who was a notorious moneylender, and who had been a fraudulent bankrupt.



The Square garden, facing east.



The Gardener's Lodge, known as 'The Temple', on the south side of the Square with an old hand pump against its wall.

To discover Changeur's motive in building the Square it is necessary to recall the site as he must have found it in 1811. At that time the houses lining the main highway through Kensington did not extend further west than Earl's Court Lane (now the Earl's Court Road), at which junction there was a toll-house which stood by the main gates to Holland House, where control of the western entrance to Kensington was achieved by means of a toll-gate across the highway and of the southern entrance to Earl's Court Lane by means of a toll-bar.

The ribbon development along the main road through Kensington towards Hammersmith had reached this junction in 1789, when George Wightman completed Porden's fine terrace, called Phillimore Place, on the north side of the road as far as Holland Lane. From there onwards, apart from the boundary wall of the Holland House Estate and the White Horse Inn, there were hedges bordering the main road to Hammersmith with open fields on either side.

Little building was carried out from 1793-1815, due to the rising cost of materials and the shortage of timber resulting from the war with France. But speculative building did occur during this time along some of the main roads out of London and the open road between Kensington and Hammersmith was an obvious site, as Phillimore Place must have proved a financial success.

So Louis Léon Changeur, known to have been building in England for some years, and described as an Esquire in the Minute Book of the Committee of Trustees of the Kensington Turnpikes etc., and as a Builder, Dealer, and Chapman, of Hammersmith in the reports of his bankruptcy case in the Public Record Office, signed an agreement on 30th May, 1811 with the Rt. Hon. William Lord Kensington, permitting him to build on 11 acres of the latter's estate south of the main road. William Edwardes, Lord Kensington's father, after whose family the Square was named, had been created the first Lord Kensington in 1776, and had previously disposed of the family estates north of the High Street (which included Holland House and Park) to the Rt. Hon. Henry Holland in 1767.

A week after signing his agreement with Lord Kensington, Changeur was given leave by the Trustees of the Turnpike Roads to build a brick drain to replace the ditch and watercourse in front of his proposed Earls Terrace and to make four openings from the turnpike road into his grounds and buildings. The building of Edwardes Square was therefore well in hand by June 1811. Eight months later, in February 1812, the surveyor for the Westminster Commission of Sewers reported to his Committee that Changeur had built some sewers to drain the west and north sides of the Square without first obtaining their consent, and so Changeur was summoned to appear before the Court of the Committee. Changeur appears to have attempted to gain the consent of the Committee by writing, but was informed in March that the Court could not go into the consideration of the sewers to be erected by him unless they were furnished with the plan required by the Committee. Changeur finally attended the Court in May, after

a further summons, and presented the plan of his proposed buildings. Changeur was then ordered to mark on the plan the line of the drainage which he proposed to make, but as he seems to have failed to do this by the end of July, the Committee set out on 7th August to inspect his buildings. Then the Committee, being advised by Mr. Blizard, one of the surveyors of the Turnpike roads, that the ancient water-course which drained the south side of the hill below Holland House was now underneath several of the houses built by Changeur, ordered Changeur to construct a regular sewer to their specifications and at the same time recommended the destruction of the sewer he had built in Earl's Court Lane without their leave and not according to regulations.

It may well be that all this delay and extra expense played a part in Changeur's early bankruptcy in November of the same year.

The twenty-five large houses of Earls Terrace were built first, set back and separated from the main highway by an elegant carriageway which was flanked at either end by a porter's lodge. The lodges are still there to challenge the 20th century surroundings and so are the empty lanthorn frames at the top of the piers of the entrance and exit gates.

Five houses to the east of the Terrace were next built and called Leonard Row or Place, but these were pulled down in 1926 to make room for the block of flats known as Leonard Court. At the same time the east side of the Square was developed and called Kensington-place East. Then followed the west side of the Square, called Kensington-place West, and the five houses to the west of Earls Terrace, called Edwardes Place. In the original plan it was intended to build ten houses there and call them Elderton Row. Stables and mews were then added to the south side of the Square, which was completed in 1819.

By 1820 the Square garden had been laid out and the gardener's lodge, called 'The Temple', completed. The lodge was in fact designed to look like a miniature Grecian temple with the Doric columns of its austere portico facing the garden. This was in keeping with the classical revival in garden architecture at that time. A hand-pump, encased in wood, can still be seen standing against the south wall of The Temple, while another pump can be found behind the east lodge of Earls Terrace. In 1818 the Royal Horticultural Society laid out their first experimental garden abutting on to the west side of Edwardes Square.

On the 2nd July, 1819, an Act of Parliament was passed for Paving, Cleansing, Lighting, Watching, Watering, Planting and otherwise improving Edwardes Square. Twenty-two trustees were appointed to administer the provisions of the Act and were chosen from those who resided in the houses connected with the Square.

The Act enacted 'That the said Trustees or any Five or more of them shall, within twenty-one days after the passing of this Act, meet together at the Tavern or Coffee-House called "The Adam and Eve", in Kensington, at such time as they shall think proper, and proceed

in the Execution of this Act'. Further that 'they should appoint a Clerk and a Collector of the Rates, and also a Treasurer. That they should erect suitable Lamp Posts, Lamp Irons, and Lamps for the lighting of the Square, and appoint and employ a competent number of fit and able-bodied Watchmen by night, and an Inspector or Inspectors by day, and give such directions concerning their duties, how they should be armed and stationed, and what allowances should be made to them. That it should be lawful for these Watchmen and Inspectors to apprehend and secure all Malefactors, Rogues, Vagabonds, and other disorderly persons, who shall be found loitering, wandering, or misbehaving themselves . . . and secure them as soon as conveniently maybe in the Watchhouse of the Parish of St. Mary Abbots, Kensington or delivered into the custody of a Constable or other Peace Officer'. Further, that the Trustees should be responsible for the sinking of wells and pumps for the use of the Square Garden and front of the Terrace, and for the general upkeep of the railings, gravel walks, lodges, etc.

The Act, having kept the Trustees busy, then set about the residents. Section XXII stated that the Occupier or Tenant of every house in the Square 'shall once in every day, before the hour of Nine o'clock in the Forenoon, cause the Footway before his or her House or Tenement to be swept and cleansed, and in default thereof shall for any such offence forfeit and pay the sum of Five Shillings'. Section XXIII further stated that 'No person or persons shall cause any annoyance within the said Square by beating or dusting of carpets, or laying or casting any Stones, Timber, Filth, Dung, Ashes, Dust or Rubbish therein or opposite to any of the houses, and no Hackney Coachman shall stand with his coach and ply for fare, and no person shall use the Square for the purpose of breaking horses, or of airing or exercising them, and no person shall carry, run, or drive any wheelbarrow, or any wheel; whether affixed to any carriage or not, or shall wilfully ride, drive, or lead any horse or other beast or cattle along any part of the said footways, or suffer any swine to wander upon the said Footways or Carriageways or shall place or set any Goods, Wares, or other things upon any part of the said Footways or Carriageways, so as to obstruct or incommode the passage thereof . . . and if any Person shall offend in any of the cases aforesaid . . . he or she shall be liable to forfeit and pay any sum not exceeding Five Pounds . . . and in case any such Offender shall not upon conviction pay the said penalties . . . that person shall be committed to the House of Correction, there to be kept to Hard Labour, for any time not exceeding Three Calendar Months, nor less than twenty-one days, unless such penalty be sooner paid'.

Further, the Act stated that the Trustees should contract with suitable persons to carry away the Dust and Rubbish, and scavenge and cleanse the streets.

Section XXXVI enabled offensive residents to be excluded from the use of the Square Garden, but generously exempted them from paying

the garden rate during the time of their exclusion.

The remaining sections of the Act dealt with the financial administration of the affairs of the Square.

The provisions of this Act naturally involved the Clerk of the Trustees in a lot of correspondence, and it was Mr. William à Beckett of 1 Leonard Place who had to deal with it, as he was chosen Clerk at the first meeting of the Trustees at the Adam and Eve Tavern. Fortunately, some of this correspondence has been preserved, and the following is a selection from it:—

‘Gentlemen, I propose to give fifteen Guineas for one year for the dust sinders ashes etc. made in your district and give security for performing the same. Gentlemen, I am

your very Humble Servant Geo. Tunks’.

This letter from Mr. Tunks of George Place, Kensington, written to the Trustees on 17th August, 1819, did not secure him the contract as he was beaten by Mr. Jon. Hamston of 11 Kensington Square, who wrote his letter in better English and offered £30.

On the 7th September, Mr. Hughes of 50 High Street wrote:—

‘Sir, understanding that your Committee . . . are about appointing a Person to collect their Rates, I have taken the liberty to offer myself to your notice for that purpose—As having sufficient time to pay every attention to their Business—should I receive their appointment it shall be my study to give satisfaction, and what security may be required.

I remain, Sir, your most obt. Servant’.

While two days later Mr. Wridle of Russell Place wrote:—

‘Gentlemen, I purpose to trim and light your lamps in Edward Square etc. for six months at 24s Pr. Lamp and for twelve months at 40s Pr. Lamp. I remain yours sincerely Wm. Wridle’.

On the 17th November, Mr. Lee of Hammersmith sent this testimonial:—

‘Sir, the Bearer Alexander Ogston is a very steady character & a sober honest man who has seen better days & whom I think would suit the situation as Gate Keeper to the Lodge, if you would be so kind to explain to him what is required of him’.

The following day Charles James Hamston of 4 Kensington Square, signed a contract with the Trustees for paving Edwardes Square, etc., making up the footpaths and roads, and draining and gravelling them, and for carrying out similar work on the carriageway in front of Earls Terrace, all for the sum of £65.

The next year the Trustees were raising money for the upkeep of the Square, for in June 1820 a Major Naylor of Portland Place wrote that he proposed to advance £200 for an annuity of £14 for 60 years.

Seats were ordered for the Square garden, for Mrs. Burne of Chelsea ‘begged leave to present her duty to Sutton Esq. and informed him according to desire, that the price of garden seats, good strong plain rail back with footboard made of the best deals painted 3 oils, six foot long £2 : 10 or nine foot £3 : 13’. There was clearly keen competition

for work in those days, for Mrs. Burne added ‘Webb & Burne will be very happy to execute the order if Sutton Esqr should he favour them with it, and the greatest pains will be taken to give satisfaction. I am with the greatest gratitude for the smallest favor Your Humble servant, for Webb & Burne, Mary Burne. P.S. They shall be put in hand the moment we receive the order and made as soon as possible’.

In March 1827 Lord Kensington informed the Trustees of his intention of continuing the road on the east side of the Square into Pembroke Square, where building had started in 1824. Up till that time Edwardes Square had been closed on the south side.

On July 31st, 1832, Mr. Thomas Edge of the Gas Light Office in Westminster had a bright idea.

‘Sir’, he wrote the Clerk of the Trustees, ‘As the winter is approaching I take the liberty respectfully to enquire if the Trustees of Edwardes Square, Earls Terrace, etc., wish to have these lamps lighted with gas in future, instead of Oil lamps. Gas Light will be much more efficient than oil, as they would continue to burn with equal brilliancy all the night, a circumstance which renders the Houses much more secure than when badly lighted even though Watchmen should be employed.

I need not inform you how universally Gas Lights have recently superseded oil lamps. I have fixed the Standards, Lanterns, etc. in most of the Parishes on this side Temple Bar, and have now in a state of progress the new district between Grosvenor Place and Chelsea, in fact the oil lamps now in use in the places in question are almost the only ones between Hyde Park Corner and Hounslow’.

In spite of this dig at the Trustees, the final contract for gas was not signed till three years later, in September 1835.

Finally, two letters from dissatisfied residents deserve to be mentioned. One dated 1833 from Mrs. Bliss of No. 22 refusing to pay the rates because, as her neighbour, Miss Jennings, put it, ‘her solicitations to the Gentlemen of the Committee to remove the posts in front of her house to the boundary line to enable carriages to draw up to her door as well as to extend the road and pavement in front of her house had not met with their compliance’; and the other dated 1836 from Miss Ford of 3 Earls Terrace—

‘Miss Ford has this day received a letter from the Clerk of the Trustees of Edward’s Square stating that some individuals of her family “have infringed an act of Parliament by gathering flowers and injuring the trees and shrubs in the said Square.”

‘Miss Ford admits that the individuals alluded to have sometimes gathered a few flowers, but that any person belonging to her house has at any time in the slightest degree injured the trees, shrubs or any other property of the Square, she has no hesitation in saying is wholly untrue. Miss Ford, having resided for twenty years in Earls Terrace and having during that period contributed her full share towards the improvements of the Square and the maintenance and support of the labourers employed in it, has quite as great an interest as the Trustees can have in preserving good order in the locality. She therefore con-

siders "the report" as frivolous and impertinent and she requires that the Trustees do reprimand Mumford for asserting what is in the chief part incorrect and for being wanting in the respect and civility due to an old inhabitant and contributor to the Square.'

A significant date in the history of Edwardes Square was the 25th March, 1910, when the 99-year leases for the Square garden and Earls Terrace fell due. Six years previously in February 1904 a private Bill, called the Edwardes Square Protection Bill, had been given its first reading in the House of Lords, but unfortunately it was not proceeded with as its second reading had not been given within the time limited by Standing Orders. Then in 1908 some of the Edwardes Square property was offered for sale, and Allen Brothers, representing Amalgamated Estates Ltd., bought the freehold of Earls Terrace together with that of the Square Garden as they were sold in one lot. The property was bought for the purpose of pulling down Earls Terrace and rebuilding over the whole site of the Terrace and Square Garden.

Now the famous Article XXVI of the 1819 Act provided that the garden of the Square was for the use and enjoyment of persons occupying houses in the Square or Terrace; but it was the generally accepted opinion in 1908 that the rights of those persons to the use of the garden would expire with the garden lease in 1910 and that there was nothing in the Kensington Improvement Act of 1851 to alter that situation.

The garden sub-committee, representing the residents, did not carry out any garden maintenance after 1908 in view of the expected building over the site, but instead accumulated funds to meet any possible claims for dilapidations.

Early in 1910 Allen Brothers made the mistake that must have deprived them of a fortune, by serving dilapidations notices on the sub-committee in the hope of securing a small sum of about £200. The sub-committee had already sought Counsel's opinion about their liability against a possible claim for dilapidations and had been advised that they would not be liable; but when they received the actual notice they sought a further opinion and received the same advice that Article LI of the 1851 Act upheld Article XXVI of the 1819 Act in giving the Committee rights to look after the Square Garden, etc., on behalf of all the surrounding residents regardless of the fact that the latter did not hold the freehold. In the light of this opinion, the Garden Committee went to Court to uphold their rights and as a result preserved the Square for us today.

This was the sequence of events. By March 1910 Earls Terrace was practically empty, while the houses in the Square were rapidly emptying as a result of the anticipated loss of amenities. At the same time, the garden sub-committee had Ernest Bird as its Secretary and Treasurer, and amongst its members Professor A. H. Bradley, a former Professor of Poetry, H. Ford, that delightful illustrator of Andrew Lang's Fairy Books, and H. C. Bickmore, a barrister, who

had just been elected Chairman and who played an important part in the legal actions that followed.

On 21st March the sub-committee, acting on Counsel's opinion, decided to take any action necessary to assert their rights to the Square garden. On 21st May events took a dramatic turn, when Allen Brothers seized and closed the gates of the Square Garden. The Chairman, Mr. Bickmore, was wired for advice as he was away, and he telegraphed back, 'Keep possession of remaining gate; take gate off hinges if necessary; employ watchmen day and night to guard; instruct Bird take action Monday'.

The advice was acted on, but the gate was soon lost. At the same time the Company tried to close the gates and carriageway in front of Earls Terrace, while the Borough Council disputed their rights to do so, and nightly destroyed the barricades which the Company erected during the day.

On 23rd May, after further conference with Counsel, the sub-committee planned a counter-attack by deciding to apply to the Courts for an injunction to restrain the Company's action in closing the Square gates. The Committee also secured financial support from the freeholders of the other parts of the Square, including Sir Arthur Bignold, the freeholder of the whole of the east side of the Square. £218 11s. 8d. was raised, so that the Committee were able to start legal proceedings on 7th June, by applying for an Interim Injunction to secure access to the Square Garden until the hearing of the action; to put forward the claims of those resident householders whose terms did not expire till Lady Day 1911; and to obtain access for the protection of the flowers and property.

The injunction was granted on 17th June, but in spite of this the Company brought their heavy artillery into action on 22nd June, as can be seen from the following letter to the Committee from the Company's solicitors:

'Dear Sirs,

Our clients inform us there is a man, whom they believe to be the Beadle, still living in the Lodge on the ground of which our clients have taken possession.

Our clients do not wish to go to the extent of having to turn this man out forcibly, but they must insist on his leaving at once . . . to which the Garden Committee replied:

'Attempt to eject the Beadle by any overt act and we shall apply immediately to the Court'.

On 26th July the action came for trial before Mr. Justice Warrington, who found for the Garden Committee. The barricades were then removed and the Square garden re-opened to the residents. The Company had to pay damages. On 7th November, 1910, their appeal was heard, but dismissed with costs. On 22nd January, 1912, their appeal to the House of Lords was also dismissed with costs. Mr. Bickmore's prestige rapidly declined before this last appeal, because

he favoured a compromise which the Company proposed rather than risk an adverse decision in the House of Lords.

'When the result of the Appeal became known', stated a report in the local newspaper of the time, 'the garden committee set to work to celebrate the victory. Fifty cartloads of timber fuel were taken to the middle of the garden, and a bonfire 40 ft. high was built. This was well saturated with oil, and at 9 o'clock, amid the beating of gongs and the cheers of a crowd, it was set alight. Later there was a display of fireworks and a procession around the grounds, headed by a band of pipers. All the houses in the Square were lit up with electricity or fairy lamps'.

A further proposal to redevelop the Earls Terrace site was put forward in January 1914, when it was proposed to build two blocks of flats on the site and make alterations to the roadway in front and behind the Terrace. Again the garden sub-committee took Counsel's opinion and made their representations against the proposal to the Borough Council. Fortunately, the Committee found a firm supporter in Alderman Sir Aston Webb, a distinguished architect, who was on the Borough Council at that time, and nothing came of the scheme.

The history of the Square would not be complete without a description of some of the well-known residents who have lived in it, but unfortunately lack of space does not permit a mention of them in this Report.

However, the above history does show that when residents living round a square with a central garden are given special rights and responsibilities by an Act of Parliament, they will preserve those rights and carry out their responsibilities with credit. After 150 years of trustee control Edwardes Square remains one of the most delightful squares in London, and it is to be hoped that the charm of the Square will not be spoilt by unsightly or excessive development of the property surrounding it.

Acknowledgements and References.

I am indebted to the Garden Committee of Edwardes Square for access to the records in their care; to the Public Record Office for the bankruptcy case of Mr. Changeur (Ref. B.1.126 & 127); to the Record Office of the Greater London Council for the plan of Edwardes Square appearing in the books of the Westminster Commission of Sewers, and to Mr. Greenacombe for his help in interpreting it; to Miss Ensing and Mr. Curle in the Kensington Reference Library where the records of the Kensington Turnpike Trust are kept as well as the Report on the *Bird v Allen* case about the fight for the Square in 1910, and to numerous people who have helped me, especially Mr. Tangye Lean whose book *The Napoleonists* gives full biographies of some of the residents of the Square.

Statement of Accounts for the year 1970

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY—STATEMENT OF

31.12.69	Income	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
510	Balances at 1st January, 1970 ...				681	12	2
Membership Subscriptions:							
32	Life	78	15	0			
537	Annual	582	12	0			
					661	7	0
Other Receipts:							
Fighting Fund:							
	Receipts from Sale of Work and Christmas Cards ...	181	5	2			
	Deduct: Expenses of Sale, less Stock on Hand	46	15	3			
109		134	9	11			
29	Bank Deposit Interest	30	10	11			
	Income Tax recovered on Covenant Subscriptions	55	12	6			
108	Receipts for Visits	154	0	0			
67	Advertising in Annual Report ...	51	9	0			
61	Donation for Typing Expenses...						
—	Donation for Greater London Development Plan	100	0	0			
					526	2	4

Hon. Treasurer K. E. HUGHES

£1,509

£1,869 1 6

We have prepared the above Account from the books and vouchers of the Society submitted to us and certify that it is correctly drawn up in accordance therewith. We have obtained verification of the balances at Bank at 31st December, 1970.



Daisy, Daisy, give me a sandwich, do!
Don't be lazy, give me a Guinness, too!
For lunch isn't lunch without it,
So hurry up about it!
It's nice to drink
And it's nice to think
That a Guinness is good for you!

You'll feel better when you've had a GUINNESS