THE CHELSEA SOCIETY
REPORT

2004

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The wood engraving of Chelsea Old Church on the title page is by Hugh Krall

THE CHELSEA SOCIETY

founded by Reginald Blunt in 1927
to protect and foster the amenities of Chelsea

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The Annual General Meeting of the Chelsea Society

held at
Chelsea Town Hall, King's Road, Chelsea SW3
on Monday 15 November 2004

The President, the Marquess of Salisbury, took the chair at 6.30pm and welcomed everyone, particularly the Mayor, Councillor Barry Phelps. He also welcomed, as guests of the Society, the Deputy Leader of the Council of the Royal Borough, Councillor Daniel Moylan; the Executive Director of Planning and Conservation, Mr Michael French; Mr. Robin Price, Chairman of The Kensington Society and Mr. Roy Anderson representing the Knightsbridge Association..

The President signed the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 17 November 2003 as a correct record.

There were three vacancies on the Council of the Society, for which there had been two applicants. Michael Bach and Jonathan Wheeler, having been proposed and seconded, were elected unanimously.

No resolutions had been received.

The Hon. Treasurer, Mr Ian Frazer, presented his Report and Accounts for the financial year ending 30 June 2004. There were no questions from members about the accounts or the Treasurer's Report.

The Chairman, Mr David Le Lay, delivered the Council's Annual Report to Members.

Questions were then invited from the floor. Mrs Penny Perrin asked why there was not more in the report concerning the proposed extension of the congestion charge zone and whether it was likely to come about. The Chairman replied that the Chelsea Society had reserved its energies, in the knowledge that active opposition campaigns had been mounted by the Royal Borough and other bodies. At present, it seemed likely that the Mayor of London would, in spite of considerable opposition, proceed with the extension.

Gemma Piquerez-Cunningham asked if it was possible to dissuade motorcyclists from parking outside the Cooper's Arms in Flood Street. The Chairman suggested that she take this matter up with the Royal Borough Council.

Major General Jonathan Hall (Lieutenant Governor, The Royal Hospital Chelsea) in response to the Chairman's comments about open spaces in Chelsea, stated that the Royal Hospital is aware of sensitivities concerning the commercial use of its grounds. However, he pointed out that the Royal Hospital has been operating for 320 years and will need to raise £35 million to function in the future. While stressing that the Royal Hospital is a community within itself, and a care-home for old soldiers, the Lieutenant Governor explained that letting the grounds is financially essential to the Royal Hospital's survival, and begged local residents to be sympathetic and understanding. With regard to the planning application for the new infirmary, to be submitted soon, the Lt. Governor said that a reception was to be held on Thursday 25 November, at which the new plans would be presented to the Council of The Chelsea Society and other residents' groups. The President said that, as the Patron of the Royal Hospital's forthcoming Appeal, he assured the Society's Members that every effort will be made to ensure that the new infirmary will be a building worthy of its site in Chelsea.

Rebecca Lingard asked what had happened to the W.H. Smith store in Sloane Square. The Chairman stated that they had apparently ceased to trade there, but pointed out that the ongoing plans for the Square he had referred to were in respect of traffic movements and street furniture, rather than the surrounding commercial premises.

Mrs Penny Perrin asked if traffic will in future be directed straight through Sloane Square. The Chairman reported that two options had been considered: (i) to improve the square but maintain the existing traffic routes; and, (ii) to revert to the original eighteenth-entury layout of a crossroads in the middle of the square. In response to the fact that in a public consultation exercise conducted by the Royal Borough, over 60% favoured a radical rethink, the Royal Borough are now working on the details of such a scheme but further public consultation will be undertaken in January 2005.

Miss Ann Richardson asked if the Society's lectures could be held on a different night of the week, so as not to clash with the National Trust's Monday-night series on the South Bank. The Chairman explained that this was not possible, because the Society's hire of premises in Chelsea Town Hall was so advantageously reduced on Monday nights.

Jill, Duchess of Hamilton asked about the whereabouts of the statue of Sir Hans Sloane, formerly in Sloane Square. From the floor, Mr Michael French (Executive Director of Planning and Conservation,

RBK&C) explained that the statue had been removed because it was eroded and unstable. He also reported that a new statue has been commissioned, and this will be erected on a suitable site, once Sloane Square has been reorganised.

Mrs Laura Day asked if it would be possible to introduce good food shops onto the King's Road. The Chairman responded by saying that, while this is beyond the control of the Chelsea Society, it seemed to him that there were now more good food shops in Chelsea than in former years, with Waitrose on the King's Road and several excellent more specialist shops on the nearby Chelsea Green and in the Fulham Road.

Rebecca Lingard asked about the Society's opinion on the loss of the Chelsea School of Art. The Chairman responded that this was indeed a great loss and was yet another development that resulted from government pressure upon military, university and hospital institutions to capitalize upon Kensington and Chelsea's high residentia l land values.

The Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea wished to say how much he always enjoyed coming to Chelsea and to meetings and events of The Chelsea Society. He announced that in future the November Remembrance Services will rotate between Kensington and Chelsea, the last – on Sunday 14 November 2004 – having been held at Holy Trinity in Sloane Street.

The President drew the meeting to a close by thanking the Chairman, Officers and members of the Council of the Society for the work they had done during the year, all of it on a voluntary basis.

There were around 130 members present and after the meeting, wine and soft drinks were served.

Chairman's Report

The President

Lord Kelvedon, having completed his three-year term as our President retired during the course of the year. The Society is most grateful to him for having served us well and I in particular have valued his advice and the keen interest he has shown in the affairs of the Society.

The Council of the Society agreed to invite Lord Salisbury to succeed Lord Kelvedon as President and we were delighted that he was able to accept. The Salisbury family's London home has been in Chelsea for many years, so Lord Salisbury knows Chelsea well and his distinguished political career makes him an ideal President. I know he will receive a warm welcome from the Society.

The Council

One member retiring from the Council this year, Dr. Paul Knapman, has not sought re-election. Paul has been on the Council for eight and a half years and we are extremely grateful to him for the contribution he has made to our deliberations and for his enthusiastic support for the Society, which we know will continue.

During the course of the year Sarah Jackson retired from the Council; she was an especially valued member of the planning committee and we thank her for the contribution she made to the work of this important part of the Society's work.

Membership

The membership of the Society is currently 1,342, an increase of 53 on last year.

Affiliations

The Society is a member of the Civic Trust, the London Society, the London Forum of Civic and Amenity Societies, the River Thames Society, the West London River Group and the Heathrow Association for the Control of Aircraft Noise.

The Chelsea and Kensington Societies are represented by Celia Rees-Jenkins on the Steering Group of The Kensington and Chelsea Partnership.

Publications

The Report for 2003 was another bumper edition and we are grateful to our Hon. Editor, Jane Dorrell, who works hard not only to keep up this important tradition of the Society but to improve upon its quality and interest.

The main publishing event of the year is our own book *Here is Chelsea – Reflections of The Chelsea Society*. This is a *pot-pourri* of articles that have appeared in previous annual Reports giving a contemporary insight into events of the past. The articles were selected by our Honorary Editor, Jane Dorrell, an introduction to the book was provided by Tom Pocock and the front cover is a painting by Hugh Krall. Jane Dorrell has master-minded all the details of this publication and we are most grateful to her for doing this. We would like to also thank Lesley Lewis who generously sponsored the publication of this book; without her help we would have not been able to contemplate the whole undertaking.

Our *Newsletter* is improving all the time, thanks to Michael Bach, its editor. He produced two excellent *Newsletters* during the year. The *Newsletter* is widely read, it stimulates much discussion and debate on current issues and the last edition was even used as evidence in a recent Planning Inquiry, and, according to his report, the Inquiry Inspector would appear to have placed considerable reliance upon it.

We have published a new card for this Christmas, which features another panoramic view of the Chelsea riverside beautifully drawn and painted by Hugh Krall. This is the third card that has featured a painting by Hugh and the Society is indebted to him for this. The sale of these cards now makes a significant contribution towards the income of the Society.

In the course of the year we published a new postcard of a watercolour by Henry and Walter Greaves of a circus troupe in Old Church Street. We are grateful to Mr. Michael Bryan for giving his permission to reproduce this jolly painting.

Activities

1. Winter Lectures

Our twenty-fifth season of winter lectures was held in the Small Hall of Chelsea Old Town Hall. The lectures were arranged by Tom Pocock, to whom we are most grateful.

On 16th February Ben Jones, an art historian and lecturer at Tate Britain, gave us a lecture entitled 'Whistler of Chelsea: The Man and his Art' in which he drew our attention to Whistler's view that paint-

ing should be as lively as music; this being symbolised by his use of terms such as 'symphony', 'variations' and 'nocturne' to name his works.

On 1st March Jeremy Lewis lectured on 'Tobias Smollett : The Chelsea Novelist', of which he had recently published an acclaimed biography. We learnt much about this important eighteenth century Chelsea writer.

On 22nd March we had a lecture on the Royal Hospital Chelsea given by Sir Jeremy Mackenzie, its Governor. It was some years since we had had a lecture on this subject and it was good to hear the present Governor's particular slant on the history of this important Chelsea institution and its future.

2. *Visits*

On 26th February we visited the Queen's Gallery at Buckingham Palace for a special evening viewing of an exhibition from the Royal collection of over 300 of the finest works by Carl Fabergé.

On 25th March we made another visit to the Lord Chancellor's Residence at the Palace of Westminster.

On 23rd September we visited the 98th Chelsea Antiques Fair at Chelsea Old Town Hall when there were special tours and talks about various aspects of eighteenth-century furniture and artefacts.

On 5th October we visited the Mansion House, the official residence of the Lord Mayor of London.

These visits were superbly organised by Valerie Hamami-Thomas and we are grateful to her for all of the work she does to make them such a success.

3. *Chelsea Residents' Associations Meeting*

This public meeting, organised and chaired by the Chelsea Society, was held in Chelsea Old Town Hall on 28th June. Councillor Daniel Moylan, Cabinet Member for Transport and Planning and Mr. Michael French, Executive Director of Planning and Conservation, answered a series of interesting and probing questions from the floor. About 130 people were present and wine was served after the meeting.

4. *'Sporting Chelsea' exhibition*

This exhibition formed part of the 2004 Chelsea Festival. It ran from 20th June to 10th July and was held in a temporary gallery space at Duke of York Square. The exhibition was organised by a special subcommittee of the Council of the Society, chaired by Stuart Corbyn. Help with the design of the exhibition was provided by Jackie Herald from Chelsea College of Art.

The exhibition was generously sponsored by Zurich, Friend & Falcke and Cadogan. The Cadogan Estate also paid for a champagne reception at the private view of the exhibition on the evening of 21st June. On 3rd July the Rugby World Cup, known as the Webb Ellis trophy and won by England, was on display and a number of quizzes were organized, with prizes donated by the King's Road Sporting Club.

The Society organized an extensive programme of sporting events to coincide with the exhibition, most of them being held on the open space in front of the Duke of York's. These included archery, fencing, ballooning, cycling and cycle polo.

On 22nd June a cricket match was held on Burton's Court between the Chelsea Arts Club Cricket Club and the Friend & Falcke Marauders; in a closely fought match, the Arts Club won. It was good to see the open spaces of Burton's Court open to the general public and we were delighted that the Mayor of the Royal Borough, Councillor Barry Phelps, graced the occasion with his presence. We thank David Maddocks, the Arts Club captain, who helped with the arrangements and are most grateful to Friend & Falcke who so generously sponsored this most enjoyable event. We hope that this might become an annual occasion.

5. *Summer Meeting*

This was held on 7th July in the main foyer of the new Cadogan Hall at 5 Sloane Terrace. Our special guests were the Mayor of the Royal Borough, Councillor Barry Phelps, and the Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress, Councillors Iain Hanham and the Baroness Hanham.

Conducted tours were organised over the building including to the back stage areas and wine and an excellent buffet supper were served.

We are grateful to the Cadogan Estate for making this event possible and for subsidising its cost and also to our events secretary, Valerie Hamami-Thomas, for making the arrangements. About 90 members were present.

6. *Doggett's Coat and Badge Race*

The race, one of the oldest competitive sporting contests in this country, took place this year on 19th July, a fine day, with even more people than previous years at Cadogan Pier to cheer on the contestants. The Mayor of the Royal Borough, Councillor Barry Phelps was there to present a bottle of champagne to the winner, Robert Dwan. Beer was provided for everyone by Fullers of Chiswick. The Society is

also grateful to Arnold Stevenson, a member of the Society and to John Everett, the owner of Cadogan Pier, for all their help with the arrangements.

Local History Competition for Schools

This competition, which is open to children at both state and private primary schools, was given a significantly higher profile this year having been superbly organized by R. Alexander Porter, with help from Diana Hall from the Royal Borough's Schools Inspectorate. The cash prizes were presented by the Mayor of the Royal Borough, Councillor Barry Phelps, at a special ceremony at Chelsea Town Hall on 21st June.

It was good that one or two new schools entered this year but disappointing that more schools do not take advantage of this opportunity to improve their pupils' knowledge of local history, an obligatory subject in the national curriculum, in an interesting way that brings them into direct contact with the local community. Anything that members can do to encourage more schools to participate would be much appreciated.

Planning

Our representative on the panel of assessors for the Royal Borough's Environment Awards for 2004 was Dr. Serena Davidson and it is good to be able to report that several awards were won for developments in Chelsea, notably, the rebuilding of Petyt Hall adjacent to Chelsea Old Church and the refurbishment of Peter Jones.

The Society's planning committee comprises Michael Bach, Patricia Burr, Jane Dorrell, David Foord, Nigel Stenhouse and Samantha Wyndham, under the chairmanship of Terence Bendixson. The work carried out by this committee requires them to make judgements and to exercise their taste and discretion in ways that are often difficult and demanding. We are most grateful to Terence and his team who do this job very expertly and successfully.

Over the past year the committee met seventeen times, reviewed many hundreds of applications, made representations to the Royal Borough on seventy of them and, in the case of appeals, supported the Council on eight occasions. Finally, I gave evidence in person at the public inquiry into proposals for the redevelopment of the Power House (the old electricity transformer station) in Alpha Place.

Much of the committee's work is concerned with details. Two aspects stand out from the generality of the applications seen by the Society. One is that residents, in seeking more house room, are constantly seeking permission to expand their houses and flats upwards, downwards, sideways and backwards. The ingenuity being applied to this quest for space is, in itself, a matter of some fascination. The other is the steady replacement, particularly at the rear of houses, of 1960s steel and timber casement windows by sliding sashes of exactly the kind that, forty years ago, residents were ripping out.

The purchase of various convenience store chains by Tesco explains the mushrooming of four Tesco shops in Chelsea or on the Kensington side of the Fulham Road. As members of the Society will have noticed Tesco, like Esso or McDonald's, has a house style which it seeks to apply, with the minimum of amendment, to all its premises. In Tesco's case the house style may be appropriate to, say, the Sidcup bypass but it is ill-suited to the architectural integrity and restraint of Chelsea. The Society worked particularly hard on the proposed store at the corner of Tite Street and Royal Hospital Road. In the end, thanks to strong support for the Society's case from the Lieutenant Governor of the Royal Hospital, and hard work by the Royal Borough's conservation staff, the company agreed to break its shop front into two bays and to tone-down its colours. It is still too brash, as are all the other stores. Why should Britain's most successful grocery chain, as it expands into the conservation areas of Chelsea and Kensington, deploy weapons of mass disfigurement? This is an issue to which the Society will return.

Amongst the major applications on which we made representations were:

South Kensington Underground Station

This long running case reached a climax in 2004. The Society became involved when Stanhope plc, with Sir Terry Farrell as architect, applied to deck over the District line platforms, rebuild the station and erect on top of it an 11-storey office 'gasometer'. As the gasometer would have been visible from many viewpoints in Chelsea, and as it would have interfered with views of the cupola of the V&A and the spires of the Natural History Museum, the Society joined the Brompton Association and the Kensington Society in opposing the scheme. Joint representations were made to the Royal Borough and, when conflicts of interest were identified involving Stanhope and the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, the Society lobbied the Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport. In the end Stanhope withdrew their scheme while, at about the same time, the Secretary of State listed the station arcade on account of its historical importance. (It is, amongst other things, the earliest known Underground Railway station shopping arcade.) The Society continues with its sister organisations to press for a mod-

est upgrading of the station itself and for improvements to the public realm around it.

New Infirmary, Royal Hospital

An application was submitted to demolish the existing Infirmary at the Royal Hospital and to replace it with a new building. We considered the proposals to be hardly better than the existing Infirmary – inoffensive but undistinguished – and just not good enough for such an historic site that comprises a complex of buildings and landscape that are of national importance. When the application was withdrawn we suggested to the Royal Borough that the Royal Hospital be encouraged to employ a distinguished architect to try to redeem what we saw as a lost opportunity. The Royal Hospital asked Quinlan Terry, an architect well known as a practitioner in the classical style, to oversee the design of the project and we look forward to viewing his proposals shortly.

The V&A 'Spiral'

The year also saw the dashing of the V&A's hopes to deconstruct the skyline of Albertopolis by building Daniel Libeskind's 'Spiral'. Sticking up, like Sir Terry's office tower, it would have juxtaposed a jagged mass to the museum's fine, wedding-cake silhouette. Although planning consent for this building was renewed by the Royal Borough, the Heritage Lottery Fund, with commendable judgement, declined to contribute to the egotistical deconstruction of an important Victorian skyline, by refusing to provide funding.

The old Chelsea Public Library, Manresa Road

The old library, listed Grade II*, has been empty for years while awaiting a new use. Recently, an application was made to convert it into a private primary school for 340 pupils. This would have involved making major alterations to the fine reading rooms, introducing new windows and adding a lumpish mansard to the building at the back. The Society opposed the application because it would have interfered too much with the fine Edwardian interiors and because it represented over development of an historic building. We also urged the Royal Borough that if consent were to be given, it should be conditional upon the provision of bus services for as many of the children as possible. The application was refused.

Lots Road

The Society has begun to prepare for a public inquiry into the redevelopment of Lots Road power station which is due to begin next

February. The Society's case will be that too much is being put onto a site with poor accessibility and that the two slab blocks of 37 and 25 floors would be bad neighbours for nearby residents and unwanted additions to riverside views.

The inquiry will be complex, lasting at least four weeks, with the principal parties, apart from the applicants, being the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and the Greater London Authority. At the pre-inquiry meeting held last week, the Inspector expressed surprise that none of the authorities, including the Royal Borough, appeared to have any concerns in respect of traffic generation and transportation issues. We share his surprise.

354-372 King's Road

The Sloane Stanley Estate's proposals for this single-storey parade of shops just to the west of Beaufort Street (and the former Roebuck Public House) raises questions about the shape of streets. Does it matter if part of the King's Road is lined by low buildings or should the frontages of streets be of more or less continuous height? The Society supports development to three floors but it has concerns about the survival of the fine plane trees that are situated in the gardens of adjoining houses, very close to their boundary with the proposed development, which is to include forming a new basement floor. The application has now gone to appeal.

Open Spaces

One of the most informative aspects of the Society's 'Sporting Chelsea' exhibition was the perhaps obvious fact that the amount of sport possible within an urban area such as Chelsea is directly related to the open space available for that sport to take place. Chelsea is fortunate that, in spite of the onward march of development throughout the nineteenth century, a large swathe of open space stretching from King's Road down to the river remains; it comprises the open space at the Duke of York's, Burton's Court, the South Grounds of the Royal Hospital and Ranelagh Gardens. This swathe is in fact a miniature version of the famous linked open spaces formed by the Royal Parks that stretch from Kensington to Whitehall. Chelsea's open spaces, like the Royal Parks, are probably preserved forever from development but, unlike the Royal Parks, they are generally in private ownership and this restricts their use for recreation and outdoor sports.

One feature of these open spaces is that in recent years they have increasingly been used for trade shows and the like. This has been

done in some cases in the belief that planning law permitted the erection of temporary structures, such as marquees, on any open land for up to 28 days per year. However, in a recent appeal decision relating to a possible established use of the open space in front of the Duke of York's for some trade fairs, it was decided that these were not lawful, nor was the use of the land for sporting activities lawful.

The Inspector appointed by the First Secretary of State ruled that the sort of structures generally used for these trade shows were not traditional marquees but were buildings and they should be treated as such. He concluded that full planning permission was required for these structures. The Society fully concurs with the opinion of this Inspector. The consequences of his decision will be far reaching and we look forward to seeing planning applications for structures associated with trade shows and similar events at the Duke of York's and elsewhere in the Royal Borough.

The benefits of outdoor sports and recreation are more widely accepted than ever. We would ask the Royal Borough to use its powers and every opportunity that is presented to it, to encourage the private owners of Chelsea's open spaces to improve the facilities and to make them more available for sport and recreation.

House of Commons inquiry into CABE

Partly as a result of the acknowledged conflict of interest of the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment that arose in respect of the proposed redevelopment of South Kensington Station, but also a wider concern as to the role played by this government advisory body, the department of Housing, Planning, Local Government and the Regions set up a House of Commons Select Committee to review its role and effectiveness. The Society submitted evidence to this inquiry and was one of just three conservation bodies subsequently invited to give oral evidence to the Select Committee, which was given by the Chairman of our Planning Committee, Terence Bendixson, on November 1st. The case put forward by the Society was as follows:

a) Much greater emphasis should be placed upon the context of any new building and how its design responds to that context.

b) In the case of new buildings whose context is of national importance, CABE should initiate public meetings and debate about the suitability of the design to its setting.

c) CABE's Design Review Panel should be enriched with members knowledgeable in the work of civic societies and in architectural history.

Sloane Square

Much technical work has gone on behind the scenes into the practicality of changing Sloane Square from a roundabout for vehicles into a space with broad pavements extending out in front of the Royal Court Theatre and Peter Jones. Residents will have a further opportunity to express their views on this during the coming year. The Society has hitherto expressed a preference for a more people-friendly square with trees, high-quality paving, the existing monuments and no municipal flowers or clutter. We have also drawn attention to the unifying effect on a space by having pavements and carriageways at the same level – as can be seen in New Palace Yard between the Houses of Parliament and Westminster Abbey.

Public Art

The Royal Borough has introduced two draft Supplementary Planning Guidance documents, one on artists' studios and another on public art. The Society welcomes both of these and has made constructive comments.

The SPG on public art includes a proposal that a Public Art Advisory Panel be established to advise the Planning Services Committee on all matters related to public art. We welcome this too, but were most alarmed to find that one of the terms of reference of the proposed Panel was to especially promote the erection of 'contemporary' works of art within the public realm. We assume that by 'contemporary' what is meant is 'abstract' as opposed to 'figurative' works of art. We consider that to restrict the possible range of public art in this way is wholly inappropriate; what is required is that works of art are of the highest quality, be they figurative or abstract.

A recent example of public art is the new statue of Bela Bartok, by the distinguished Hungarian sculptor Imre Varga, recently erected outside South Kensington Station. This is a figurative work, in bronze, and very fine it is too.

Major applications committee

There is a general perception by ordinary householders wishing to carry out minor alterations to their own dwelling that their planning applications are scrutinised by planning officers and the planning committee to a much greater degree than are major applica-

tions. The decision of the Royal Borough to form a special committee to decide upon major planning applications will in our view reinforce that perception.

Local Studies Library

During this summer, the local studies section of the Reference Library at Chelsea Old Town Hall was moved to join its counterpart at the Central Library in Kensington. Many will see this as the final nail in the coffin of Chelsea's independence and indeed it is. It will be inconvenient for Chelsea residents to have to go to Kensington to carry out historical research; however, for the many people from outside the Royal Borough who carry out research into this historic area, it will be less confusing to have the archive in a single location, as is the case with every other London Borough.

We hope that Chelsea's archives will at last be properly and expertly cared for in Kensington and that sufficient staff and resources will be available to ensure this happens. Unfortunately, this is far from the case, for the combined local studies library is currently only open on four afternoons per week, which is completely unacceptable.

The Mayor is initiating a project for a 'virtual museum' for the Royal Borough and I have agreed to join a small committee that has been formed to help with setting objectives for this potentially exciting project.

Congestion Charging

The Society supported the Royal Borough and the West London Residents' Association in their fight against the introduction of congestion charging to most of our Borough. The view of the Society is that congestion charging is not appropriate to a predominantly residential area such as Chelsea.

Chelsea's new Secondary School

The Royal Borough's intention to provide a new secondary school on a site, part of which it owns, near Lots Road seems to be progressing apace. The Society considers that it must be an essential part of these plans that the Ashburnham Community Centre, which would be displaced by the new school, is re-located in suitable premises within the Chelsea boundary. However, the Heatherley School of Fine Art, which is the only independent art school left in Chelsea owns its freehold, which is to form part of the school site; the Society is concerned that the Royal Borough's negotiations with Heatherly's will ensure that it continues to flourish in Chelsea.

'Fostered amenities'

The Chelsea Society, like all good amenity societies, gains in credibility if it does not only deplore what it considers bad or ill-judged but also praises what it considers to be progressive and of benefit to our neighbourhood. Some of the events and improvements that have taken place over the past year which the Society wishes to applaud are the following:

Cadogan Hall

The completion of Cadogan Hall, whose first concert coincided with the opening of the 2004 Chelsea Festival, represents a major milestone in the cultural life of Chelsea. The Society can claim to have been partly responsible for the inspiration of this venture, for it was at our Millennium Conference of 1998 that the idea of a concert hall for Chelsea was first mooted. When the Cadogan Estate decided to acquire the former Christian Science Church for use as a cultural centre it seemed to them that the main space, with its raked floor, would make an ideal concert hall.

The new hall is provided with 'state of the art' equipment, every aspect of the facilities is to a luxurious standard and the auditorium, though it can accommodate up to 900 people, still manages to have an intimate atmosphere. This is a good example of a redundant listed building being put to a suitable and beneficial new use. The Hall is fast becoming a popular venue and we have no doubt that it will greatly increase Chelsea's importance on the cultural map of London.

The completion of Cadogan Hall also represents a remarkable act of generosity and public-spiritedness on the part of the Cadogan Estate who have provided this splendid new facility entirely at their own expense.

Peter Jones

This listed building has just undergone a four-year refurbishment, including creating substantial additional floor space, at a cost of about £104m. The result, in the words of the citation of the Borough Environment award it has received, has been to make a good building even better.

Especially commendable has been the way in which the John Lewis Partnership made their plans as public as possible during the planning process, they kept the public informed by means of special evening functions at crucial stages during the complicated building process and they celebrated the completion of the project by inviting customers and other local people to a superbly organised and wonderful concert, in aid of the charity Whizz-Kidz, at Cadogan Hall, at

which the Waitrose champagne flowed freely. This was an object lesson in good public relations which other developers could do well to follow.

Streetscape

The Royal Borough has produced a new 'Streetscape' Guide. This is a comprehensive design guide in respect of every aspect of the street scene, sometimes called the 'public realm'. The most important point about this guide is that it shows the Royal Borough is conscious, as it never has been before, of the importance to civic pride of having an acute visual awareness of such things as street clutter, quality of materials and workmanship and the design of street furniture. This message is being reinforced by a campaign to 'Love the streets you live in'.

Once again, the Chelsea Society can claim some credit for this transformation of attitude; for in my reports to the AGMs of 1989 and 1990 I was complaining about the public realm of Chelsea being characterised by 'visual chaos, meaningless variety and a complete lack of design discipline' and urging that a design guide be produced. The result was the 1990 'Details in the Street Scene', the precursor of the new guide. That was a more limited document, produced by the Royal Borough with much less enthusiasm than the new guide; which was launched, with much trumpeting, at a party at Leighton House in July, at which the guest of honour was Sir Terry Farrell.

Conclusion

I have now completed 17 years as Chairman of the Society, which is the same time for which Basil Marsden-Smedley served; and he was the longest-serving Chairman in the history of the Society. Assuming that the Council want me to, I intend to continue as Chairman for a while yet, so that minor distinction will pass to me. However I hope that they and ordinary members will tell me if they believe the Society is stagnating, not initiating new ideas or just not growing in its membership and influence. As soon as that happens will be the time for me to go.

This is the Report of the Council of The Chelsea Society in its seventy-seventh year

David Le Lay

Smollett in Chelsea

by Jeremy Lewis

Tobias Smollett moved to Chelsea in 1750 on the proceeds of *Roderick Random*, his first and most successful novel. He was thirty-nine, and after several false starts – including a spell as a ship's surgeon in the West Indies during the War of Jenkin's Ear, unsuccessful practice as a medical man in Downing Street, and a futile attempt to set himself up as a playwright – he was beginning to make his mark in the literary world. While in the West Indies he had married a Jamaican heiress, and with his wife, his daughter and his rather tiresome old mother-in-law he moved into part of Monmouth House in Lawrence Stret.

Built around a three-sided courtyard, Monmouth House was a three-storeyed red-brick building, made up of self-contained houses; according to *Humphry Clinker* – Smollett's last and most admired novel, published in 1771, the year of his death – it was a 'plain, yet decent habitation, which opened backwards into a very pleasant garden, kept in excellent order.' The garden contained a 'small, remote filbert walk', where Smollett paced up and down, brooding on his next sentence or the vicious feuding and sniping of the literary world. Every now and then he was joined by Dr Johnson: they were never close friends, but when Johnson tired of scribbling he liked to try his hand as a potter at the Chelsea China Manufactory, next door to Monmouth House, and would call into see Smollett, his only rival as an all-round literary man. Less elevated company was provided by the bibulous, scrounging, ill-natured Grub Street hacks whom Smollett invited to lunch every Sunday: after guzzling his roast beef and dumplings, and swilling down pints of Calvert's beer, they hurried home to their garrets and reviled their benefactor, so feeding a paranoia that all to easily flared into life.

When not consorting with ungrateful hacks, Smollett attended Masonic meetings at the White Swan pub, visited the Chelsea Bowling Green Society, and put in an appearance at Don Saltero's fabled Coffee House. Don Saltero's was a museum of the kind that flourished in an age of antiquaries: its benefactors included Sir Hans Sloane, immortalised by the Square and other Chelsea landmarks, whose collection formed the basis of the British Museum, and Smollett's friend William Hunter the anatomist, famed in his day for his collection of bones, fossils, pickled bodily parts and other curiosities, and its contents included petrified rain, the feet of a

Muscovy cat, an elf's arrow (but not his bow), a pin-cushion owned by Mary Queen of Scots, two arrows once fired by Robin Hood, and Queen Elizabeth's chamberlain's hat.

Then as now, Chelsea was favoured by literary and artistic types, and Smollett's near-contemporaries there included Fielding, Ben Franklin, Lord Bolingbroke and Richard Steele of *Tatler* fame: eight years after Smollett had settled there, a Swedish traveller reported that 'The place resembles a town, has a church, beautiful streets, well-built and handsome houses, all of brick, three or four storyes high.' Although London proper remorselessly inched its way westwards during the eighteenth century – Grosvenor and Berkeley Squares date from this time – Chelsea was still a self-contained village, and its Embankment would not come into being for another century. 'I was last night robbed of my watch and money in the stage coach between this and London, and am just going to town to enquire about the robber,' Smollett wrote to a friend in 1754, while the *Public Advertiser* reported that 'On Wednesday even, between five and six, the passengers in the Chelsea stage were robbed near the water-works going to Chelsea, by two footpads in sailors' habits.' A steady supply of potential victims for highwaymen and muggers could be depended on when the pleasure gardens at Ranelagh were opened in 1742.

Smollett was descended from a long line of Lowland soldiers and lawyers, and like most of the Scots who had surged over the Border after the Act of Union of 1707 – he was proud to be both a Scot and a Briton, and unhappily aware of the prejudice felt towards his fellow-countrymen by the English, who ridiculed the 'Sawnies' for their liking for kilts and porridge, and claimed that they took all the best jobs, not least in Smollett's chosen field of medicine. Most of Smollett's closest friends were Scots and medical men. 'I am heartily sick of this land of indifference and phlegm where the finer sensations of the soul are not felt, and felicity is held to consist in stupefying port and overgrown buttocks of beef, where genius is lost, learning undervalued, and taste altogether extinguished, and ignorance prevails to such a degree that one of our Chelsea club asked me if the weather was good when I crossed the sea from Scotland,' he wrote to an Edinburgh friend in 1753. Scottophobia reached a climax after George III's old tutor, the Scottish Lord Bute, was appointed First (or Prime) Minister: the attack on Bute was led by Smollett's old friend John Wilkes, a cross-eyed reprobate whose daughter, Polly, attended the same school in Chelsea as Elizabeth Smollett, and relations between the two men were acrimoniously severed.

Like most freelance writers, Smollett was for ever running out of money. 'I have been last week threated with writs of arrest, and some

tradesmen of Chelsea have been so clamorous that I actually promised to pay them at the beginning of the week,' he told a friend in 1756. Old Mrs Leaver, his mother-in-law, was well-heeled and an occasional source of funds; Smollett found her a tiresome old thing, but we know little about her except that she once suffered a fearful attack of diarrhoea ('Our gentlewoman had such a scouring in my absence that my wife thought she could not have lived till my return'). She died in 1762, and is buried in Chelsea Old Church; as is Smollett's daugher Elizabeth, who died the following year from consumption at the age of fifteen. Elizabeth is quite as shadowy a figure as Mrs Leaver (and, indeed, the long-suffering Mrs Smollett); all we know about her is that she once suffered from whooping-cough, that she attended a school run by Mrs Aylesworth and Madame Beete, and that Smollett – who never stopped working, and wore himself out in the process – once wrote of how 'Many a time do I stop my task and betake me to a game of romps with my Betty, while my wife looks on smiling and longing in her heart to join in the sport; then back to the cursed round of duty.' Already in poor health, and ground down by overwork and the vicious in-fighting of Grub Street life, Smollett was devastated by her death. He decided to give up his home in Chelsea, travel in France and Italy, and possibly settle abroad to conserve his failing health. Chelsea, he told a surgeon friend at the Royal Hospital, would always remain 'a second native place, notwithstanding the irreparable misfortunes which happened to me while I resided in it. I mean the loss of my health, and of that which was dearer to me than health itelf, my darling child, whom I cannot yet remember with any degree of composure.'

Smollett's fondness for Chelsea was reciprocated, and his release from the King's Bench Prison – he had been incarcerated for libelling an admiral – had been celebrated with the pealing of bells. He never lived there again, but some years later – after he had published his wonderfully coarse and xenophobic *Travels through France and Italy*, and written *Humphry Clinker* – he wrote to a Chelsea friend from Bath to say how he would 'never forget the cheerful hours I have spent in your company', and begged to be remembered to old companions. He and Mrs Smollett settled in Livorno (or Leghorn, as it was always known to the English) on the Italian coast, and he died there at the age of fifty.

Jeremy Lewis's biography of Tobias Smollett is published by Jonathan Cape at £20; a paperback edition is available from Pimlico at £8.99. His biography of Cyril Connolly, another one-time Chelsea resident is also available in paperback from Pimlico. He is now writing a biography of Allen Lane (never a Chelsea resident, alas), which will be published by Penguin in August 2005 to coincide with the seventieth anniversary of the firm.

The Duchess and the Duck Keeper

by Jonathan Keates

One of the saddest acts of vandalism ever committed in Chelsea was the destruction, in 1906, of Paradise Row. This was the elegant range of two-storey brick houses, each with its canopied porch, built as a speculative development in 1691 by the contractor George Norris. Standing on the north side of what is now Royal Hospital Road, the terrace, one of London's earliest, was fronted by little gardens with tall wrought-iron gates onto the street. Though Chelsea in the reign of William and Mary was still very much a village, the new row, far from encroaching on the rural atmosphere, would doubtless have been seen as the Baroque equivalent of those prestige residential complexes, complete with gym, swimming pool and offstreet parking, so lavishly advertised by modern property companies.

That it was indeed 'sought after' is shown by a roster of distinguished residents. Moving into Paradise Row during its earliest decades, we might have found ourselves having to listen to the rambling memories of the elderly Sir Frank Wyndham, who had helped King Charles II to escape after the battle of Worcester, or feign rapt attention while the diplomat George Stepney declaimed the latest of those indifferent verses with which he hoped to make his name as a poet. Further along the Row, we could have watched the royal physician Dr Mead busy over his apparatus for freshening the air in the noisome holds of merchant ships or completing his pioneering treatise on the symptoms of rabies.

For one tenant at least, more dashing, romantic and bizarre than all these, Norris's neat brick boxes guaranteed not only a smart address but a refuge from an increasingly hostile and unsympathetic world. Chelsea has always serenely absorbed the presence of celebrities, great or less, but Hortense Mancini, Duchesse de Mazarin, was a bird of very exotic plumage indeed, connected to some of the most powerful figures in the Europe of her day. Her uncle was Cardinal Mazarin, chief minister to the young Louis XIV of France, her cousin Princess Maria Beatrice of Modena eventually became Queen of England, one of her sisters married into the ducal house of Savoy, and another, the wife of a Roman prince, was a power

behind the throne at the court of the half-mad King Carlos of Spain.

A no less glittering career seemed ready for Hortense when Mazarin brought her from Rome to Paris, aged eight, in 1653. By her fourteenth birthday she had caught the eternally roving eyes of both Le Roi Soleil himself and his cousin the exiled Charles II, but the envious intrigues of her two elder sisters thwarted her hopes of becoming a queen. Instead she made do with the fortune-hunting Marquis de Meilleraye, whom the dying Cardinal had chosen for her with the proviso that he adopt the Mazarin name in return for a ducal title from King Louis.

The match was predictably disastrous. Meilleraye, already showing signs of insanity, was now free to indulge his madness in high style, forbidding the peasant women on his estates to milk cows in case such an activity led to lascivious thoughts, and giving orders that a collection, inherited from Mazarin, of several hundred antique nude statues should be destroyed for their indecency. In this light, Hortense, flirtatious and hedonistic, hardly made a suitable consort, and in 1668, after presenting her husband with three children, she made her escape. After uneasy sojourns with her sisters in Rome and Savoy, she finally came to rest in London, where her former suitor King Charles had now regained his kingdom.

Among the seraglio of mistresses surrounding the monarch, the reigning sultana was Louise de Keroualle, whom he nicknamed 'Fubs' and created Duchess of Portsmouth. Suspected of spying for her native France, she was seen by several courtiers as a genuine menace to security. If the king wanted a foreign mistress, who better than 'the Duchess Mazarin', attractive, entertaining and with no obvious political allegiance, to set up as Portsmouth's rival? Soon enough she secured a £4,000 royal pension, taking her place alongside Louise and the far more popular Nell Gwynn as one of Charles's most favoured companions. Yet her role at the English court seldom seems to have been more than merely decorative, that of a glamorous accessory designed to highlight the king's success as an acquisitive connoisseur of fine women.

Hortense, never prudent with money, soon gained a reputation as a gambler, squandering huge sums at fashionable card games like ombre and basset and not above cheating the king, for all his generosity to her. In this context she forms one of the figures in a famously rueful last glimpse of Charles and his court given us by the diarist John Evelyn. Writing of the king's death on 6 February 1685, he looks back to a Sunday evening two weeks earlier and the atmosphere of 'unexpressable luxury & prophanesse, gaming & all dissolution, and as it were total forgetfulnesse of God' prevailing at Whitehall. There he saw 'the King sitting & toying with his Concubines', among them

'Mazarine', with 'a French boy singing love songs in that glorious Gallery', while '20 of the greate Courtiers and other dissolute persons' sat gambling 'with a bank of at least 2000 in Gold before them'. It was, says Evelyn, 'a sceane of utmost vanity, and surely as they thought would never have an End: six days after was all in the dust'.

Not quite everything was dust and vanity for Hortense after Charles died. Her cousin Mary Beatrice, Duchess of York, now became queen, and the new king James II's chief ministers continued to court La Mazarine's favour. As a Catholic (nominally) she was invited to witness the birth of the royal couple's long-desired male heir James Edward, Prince of Wales, while the Protestants turned out of the queen's bedchamber began a rumour that the baby was a changeling smuggled into the room inside a warming pan. When the Glorious Revolution of 1688 sent James and Mary into exile, however, Hortense preferred trusting to luck and stayed behind. Her beauty had worn well and the new monarch William III, a former admirer of her-sister Olympe, saw to it that the royal pension was renewed when officious civil servants tried to cut it off.

At the court of St James's, nevertheless, Hortense's face, whatever its lingering allure, no longer quite fitted. Few roles can be as unenviable as that of a *ci-devant* royal mistress, and she had the good sense to move house while her credit, social and financial, was still good enough. First she went to Kensington, which proved too expensive, and at length settled on the village of Chelsea, where the living was cheap but the country air was healthy, her neighbours were select, and the journey from London could be made as easily by river as by coach.

Some professional beauties retire gracefully. Hortense was not of this kind. Moving into the newly-built number 4, Paradise Row, she was clearly determined to live up to her colourful past rather than try to live it down. Though her debts grew heavier (by 1699 she owed the hefty sum of £7,000) her lifestyle remained that of the princess Cardinal Mazarin had always wanted her to be. She had her French chef, her English steward, her Turkish page, her resident musicians and a family of servants occupied in looking after a menagerie of pets. These included several finches, a nightingale, a starling and a parrot, as well as cats, chief among them 'Monsieur Poussy', and dogs called Little Rogue, Boy and Chop.

Beguiled by her animals and birds, she was grateful for human society, and no visitor was more welcome than the elderly, ugly Frenchman whom her neighbours in Paradise Row observed calling on her daily with ceremonious assiduity. Like Hortense, Charles de Marguetel de Saint-Denis-le-Guast, seigneur de Saint-Evremond-sur-l'Oson, was a refugee, but far more serious reasons prevented him

from ever returning to France. A Norman nobleman nearly 30 years her senior, Saint Evremond had studied as a lawyer before joining the army, where his reputation for gallantry kept pace with his fame as a poet and wit in the Cyrano de Bergerac vein. It was his indiscretion as a letter-writer, however, which put paid to any hopes of a brilliant career at the Sun King's court. In 1657 his friend and patron the treasurer Nicolas Fouquet, seemingly invulnerable, fell victim to the monarch's envy and impatience and the intrigues of his rival Jean-Baptiste Colbert. Among papers seized after Fouquet's arrest was a detailed and withering critique of several prominent political figures, written by Saint Evremond several years earlier and definitely not meant for general circulation.

Warned just in time that a spell in the Bastille at His Majesty's pleasure was looming, Saint Evremond fled to Holland, which bored him to death, before finding a permanent refuge in England. Charles II and his courtiers were enchanted with the Frenchman's 'fine Genius, delicate Taste & nice Discernment', and in their rare moments of seriousness devoured his mordant essays and the extended meditation of ancient Roman greatness designed as his literary monument. In order to keep this guest intellectual afloat financially, Charles, doubtless fully aware of the intrinsic absurdity, appointed him Keeper of the Decoy Ducks in St James's Park, with a £300 annual salary.

The arrival in London of Hortense Mancini offered the elderly duck-keeper more than a mere *douceur de vivre*. Saint Evremond fell seriously but by no means hopelessly in love with her. Though she failed to respond in kind and often took shameless advantage of his good will, Hortense shared many of his literary enthusiasms and his passion for music, and the pair of them presided over a sort of Parisian salon in her St James's apartments. She was touched by the melancholy beauty of the old man's letters. 'There never was so disinterested a Passion in the world as mine,' he wrote. 'I love those you love, nor do I love less those who love you; I consider your Lovers as your Subjects, instead of hating them as my Rivals'. By degrees he became an unofficial father confessor to her, more valued in this respect as her fortunes declined following King Charles's death and King James's exile.

With her move to Chelsea, Saint Evremond offered a vital link between Hortense and the world she was forced to leave behind. When she started to drink more heavily to deaden the boredom of her 'dreadful Retirement', he warned her to 'leave off beer, drink your wine' and altogether renounce absinthe and whisky. They sent each other presents, a haunch of venison, six rabbits, a knuckle of veal, some choice peaches, and when Hortense went to Bath to take the waters, Saint Evremond did his share of house sitting and made

sure the pets were properly looked after. She began to need him more or less constantly beside her, and their contemporaries saw nothing odd in the fact that one of Europe's foremost savants, whom both French and English writers took as a model of 'polite learning', should be spending precious time on hiring a flautist for her Chelsea concerts or writing a condolence letter on the death of her favourite bullfinch.

When Hortsense died from alcohol poisoning on 2 July 1699, Saint Evremond, who had sat at her deathbed dosing her with brandy, was inconsolable. 'The extremities to which she was reduced are not to be conceived', he told a friend. 'She had such indifference to life, that there is reason to believe she was not sorry to part with it'. He praised her resignation and resolve as much as he marvelled at the endurance of her beauty, whatever her 'intemperate drinking of strong spirits'. Though he himself lived on for another four years, existence without her was singularly flat. Who, any longer, could share his fondness for truffled partridges, harpsichord music and poking fun at the more solemn excesses of the *Academie Francaise*?

Saint Evremond was buried in Poet's Corner, Westminster Abbey, the first foreigner to receive such an honour. He would surely have been happier lying in the Old Church, amid *'le bon air de Chelsey et le repos de la solitude'* which he had commended to Hortense when she first moved there. Spare a thought for them both as you pass along what was once Paradise Row. Fugitive Franco-Italian courtesans and refugee Norman intellectuals may yet be entertaining one another at the bottom of Tite Street or Ormonde Gate, but I doubt, somehow, that any of them will be quite as colourful or engaging as the duchess and her duck-keeper.

Jonathan Keates's forthcoming book The Siege of Venice *will be published by Chatto and Windus later this year.*

Yvonne Green: A Name to Remember

Tom Pocock

Every so often Penelope Nichol, a Canadian, attends a service at Chelsea Old Church. She always has a talk with the vicar, Peter Elvy, who knows who she is and who her mother was. She also looks out for Winifred Bottley, who is probably the only parishioner who knew her mother. Others attending the Old Church will also know her mother's name: Yvonne Green.

In 1940, Yvonne Green, a thirteenth-generation Canadian, was living in London. Recently divorced from Tryou Nichol, a British actor, she had had a baby, Penelope; she had since been remarried to Leonard Green, also a Canadian, who had volunteered for the British Army. Her family was of French and Scottish descent, living in Montreal, and to her mother, who was caring for her baby, she wrote regularly, initially in French, addressing her as *'Maman cherie'* and signing herself with the American Indian word for baby, 'Papoose'. Then, in July 1940, as the air war began overhead, her writing switched to English in the middle of a letter: "*... à offert de rester à son flat à Londres* with a nice safe shelter below it... We are now living there in a state of moderate discomfort and less personal danger." Her mother, reading pessimistic newspaper accounts of the fall of France and the beginning of the bombing of the British Isles, was worried and kept pleading with her daughter to return home.

But Yvonne continued, "London is the best place to be in... So stop fretting about me because there is nowt one can do about it now. Anyway, my blood is up and I'm dying to take a poke at the Germans. If one has the mischance to land in the garden, he's going to have a hot time before I'm through with him. I'm glad to be johnny-on-the-spot with a chance of taking a crack at them complete with saucepans of boiling water aimed with great precision from the kitchen window... Don't believe people who say British morale is low. We're just spoiling for a fight".

A few days later, she wrote again, "The British spirit is not a bit like anybody else's. We're not going to let the damn Boche do as he likes with us and if you can't think of anything optimistic to say, say

nothing. Moisten your lips and look pleasant".

Leonard was serving with the Royal Tank Corps as a trooper but was hoping to be commissioned in the Canadian Army, which was building up its strength in Britain. He was currently stationed near London, so Yvonne continued to live at 34 Old Church Street, Chelsea, an eighteenth-century house that had once been a tobacconist patronised by Thomas Carlyle. The early summer of 1940 must have been quiet in Chelsea for she wrote, "I ate some home-grown lettuce last night and it was delicious – the most tender I've ever eaten... Here I am sitting peacefully in the garden endeavouring in the fitful sunshine to get a bit of a tan, something that seems almost impossible in London's polluted atmosphere."

In August, the bombing of London began and she joined the Auxiliary Fire Service as a driver, writing to her mother, "Papoose fulfils her destiny by driving around the area, visiting wardens' posts, seeing that fire-alarms are undamaged and going up and down every single street looking for incendiary bombs, which may have been dropped – so far I have drawn a blank. In case you're worried, let me tell you that I do not perform those convolutions while the raid is in progress but immediately after the all clear. With my tin hat and my gas mask at the ready, I feel an efficient member of the community but I'm afraid it's an optical illusion. I've found a fine quick way of getting a headache – just to wear my battle-bowler for more than 10 minutes – it's infallible. Having discovered that, I always keep a supply of aspirin.

"I was on duty for the seven-hour raid and let me tell you, in spite of what you may hear to the contrary, that those damn planes aimlessly cruising around do *not* strike terror into the British heart... Just as I am writing this the ruddy sirens go again. I thought they couldn't leave us alone for much longer, so I'm off to report on duty".

So far, Chelsea had been little affected and she wrote, "We've had lots of warnings, sometimes two a day but, so far, no bombs near us and life goes on as usual. It's surprising how little they upset one and everybody seems very matter-of-fact about them, we haven't been disturbed by fat Hermann's [Goering] efforts to make our flesh creep".

The heavy bombing began in September and Yvonne told her mother, "The Blitzkrieg on London started on Saturday last... I spend my nights in comparative safety and comfort at the Fire Station, thus killing two birds with one stone: helping the men out and, believe me, they need every ounce of help, and getting over the business of being all by myself... I can't give you juicy details of damage in Chelsea, which hasn't been considerable as yet but a little disorganising to traffic – you find bus routes in the strangest places these days..."

Yvonne Green in 1931

In October, Yvonne went to see her husband at his camp near Farnham before he left for training as an officer. On her return, she found the house "still untouched by enemy action, so far. the only casualty being a pane of glass in the kitchen window with a neat hole in it from our own shrapnel – so, you see, so far, so good! I take no chances, believe me, and when I'm not on duty sleep downstairs very snugly in the basement". On the 10th she wrote, "The flag still flies and Church Streeet is as yet undamaged... Most of the damage is roofs and windows from blast, so I'm hoping that 34 Old Church Street will survive practically intact". But it was getting worse and a fortnight later she was writing, "They apparently gave us quite a doing last night but I wouldn't know – I slept very nicely and peacefully".

That was the winter of the Blitz and, in February 1941, as it continued, Yvonne volunteered for firewatching at Chelsea Old Church. She met the incumbent, the Rev. Ralph Sadleir, and his team of firewatchers, amongst them Winifred and Percy Bottley, who were dealers in geological specimens with a showroom glittering with quartz and crystals in Old Church Street, and Michael Hodge, a boy of eighteen, waiting to join the Black Watch. the firewatchers slept at Petyt House and patrolled the streets around the Old Church, looking for incendiary bombs and trying to extinguish them, or call the Fire Service.

On the 23rd she wrote, "I had quite an exciting experience on Wednesday night – my first night on duty as a firewatcher. I was as high up as one can get in Chelsea Old Church tower, being shown around where the buckets of sand, stirrup-pumps and water were. And the bombs dropped! I tell you I never descended a flight of spiral staircase so fast in all my life! It was a stick of bombs in the next street, which luckily did little damage and only one man hurt – a broken leg – so my experience was not disastrous luckily but it's going to take a lot to inveigle me up to the top of that tower again while a Blitz is in progress. I never did have a head for heights anyway.... What the future holds in store for us we don't yet know..."

On 26 March, she wrote again, "We had a fine Blitz again last

Wednesday night around the docks... but strangely enough there wasn't much to be seen from our part of the world. It was my night on duty as a firewatcher and I patrolled the streets until 2.30am and, apart from flares and flashes and a helluva noise, there was nothing to be seen".

In mid-April, two of her fellow-firewatchers, Winifred and Percy Bottley, asked if they could swap shifts with two of their employees as they had a sudden order for geological specimens to be collected from Wales. This was agreed and on the night of Wednesday 16 April, Yvonne joined Michael Hodge, Arthur Mallett, Henry Frankland and the Bottleys' substitutes, Fred Winter and Sidney Sims, at Petyt House. That evening, Ralph Sadleir called and told them that, when a raid began, two of them should patrol the streets and the others remain under cover.

Then the sirens sounded. Soon it was apparent that the raid was to be heavy and the firewatchers decided that they should all go out. Soon after midnight, in the darkness of Cheyne Walk, they saw, lit by flashes, a warden they knew, Max Nicholson, who lived in Upper Cheyne Row and he wished them goodnight before walking on towards Cheyne Row. Then Arthur Mallett, who had walked ahead on to the Embankment, shouted, "For Christ's sake, run!" He had seen, in the night sky a large cylinder floating down beneath a parachute, followed by another. They were parachute mines, designed to cause maximum lateral blast. One exploded; then the other.

Arthur Mallett survived, amazingly; all the others died instantly.

* * *

Yvonne Green was buried in the churchyard of St Margaret's, West Hoathly, Sussex, amongst English relations, the Kindersley family. Of Chelsea Old Church, only the More chapel in the south-east corner stood above the rubble. The terrace of houses which stood where Roper's Garden is now, and houses at the southern end of Old Church Street, were also wrecked. The church was, of course, to be rebuilt and reconsecrated in 1958. Inside the west door is a memorial to Yvonne and her four companions; a second memorial plaque presented by Mrs Winifred Bottley, is in the vestry.

Yvonne Green's letters to her mother are in the archives of the Imperial War Museum.

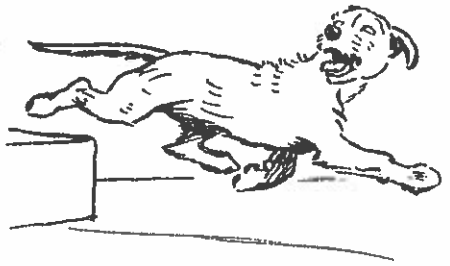
Tom Pocock's latest book, Stopping Napoleon, *published by John Murray at £20, won the Mountbatten Maritime Award.*

He was also the co-author with Alan Russett of Chelsea Old Church: the church that refused to die, *published by the Old Church in 2004, price £25.*

Chelsea's Dog Day

by Lesley Lewis

The Chelsea Society's splendid exhibition 'Sporting Chelsea', for the Festival, recorded many activities which are now, sadly, only a memory since the loss of public open space in the last century or so. It is therefore the more delightful that dogs, under a Chairdog and Executive Canine Committee, held their third Dog Day on 6 July in the Royal Hospital grounds in aid of Macmillan Cancer Relief. It was a huge success and looks like becoming an annual fixture.



The 'Arena Events', from 4 to 6pm included such classes as 'The Dog with the Waggiest Tail', 'The Perkiest Pup' and 'Flyball' events., immensely enjoyed by competitors as well as spectators, involving a race over hurdles, and pressing a pedal on a stand to release a tennis ball to race back with. Occasionally an excited dog would miss out on the return jumps and turn on a rival but otherwise all dogs were on leads and squabbles averted. The inevitable minor dog misdemeanors were quickly checked.

The spectators largely consisted of whole families with children leading dogs and taking part in events with enjoyment, much laughter and the barking of dogs. There followed an evening party from 7 to 9pm, with a sumptuous supper and drinks. Some more events included such classes as 'Most Elegant Dog' and, finally, 'The Best in Show'. Throughout the proceedings delicious refreshments were available in a tent, while ices and strawberries and cream were brought round the seats. Stalls with dog playthings and accessories were doing a brisk trade.

Altogether a wonderful entertainment for humans and dogs.

Illustrations by Cecil Aldin, from Puppy Dogs' Tales, *published by Souvenir Press.*

The Chelsea VCH

by David Brady

The *Victoria County History*, Middlesex, Vol. XII: Chelsea. Price £90.

When particularly aggravating or boring interlocutors ask at parties where it is that I live, this reviewer has been known to respond: "a little village some way to the west of London." Gratifyingly these are, more or less, the opening descriptive words of the latest volume of the *Victoria County History*; its investigation of 'Chelcehithe'.

As readers of this journal are local historians, the VCH project needs no introduction. The new volume represents a serious contribution to historical studies of our area. Not quite as gigantic and heavyweight as some previous VCHs, this quarto-sized one weighs in at 298 pages, split into sections on the buildings (about 90 pages), land ownership (38), economic history (19), social history (35), local government (33), and religious history (38). As usual – perhaps a little more than usual – this volume is well-illustrated with maps, diagrams and photographs, some even in colour.

Given the venerable age of the four *Survey of London* volumes on Chelsea, it is a shame that there should be a tacit standing rule at the VCH to soft-pedal questions of architectural history in London volumes. Surely a judicious bending of that rule would not have gone amiss in this case? Nevertheless, this book makes a usefully rounded contribution to bringing up to date the story of building in the area. Building information is distributed among the different chapters, rather than truly concentrated in one part of the book.

Never a stronghold of industry, Chelsea developed as a district of market gardens. Produce was vital to nearby London, with its burgeoning population of hungry mouths. Apart from the famously short-lived silk production venture, other industrial efforts included those of the celebrated Edwardian sanitary ware manufacturer Thomas Crapper. To tremendous anticipatory disapproval Crapper set up his showroom at 120 King's Road in 1905. Fainting ladies failed to materialise however. Sloane Rangers are made of sterner stuff.

Social history would, of course, be expected to be prominent in such a book, and the authors do not disappoint, though Jasper Conran is not given his proper credit for the coinage of the particular socio-

logical label mentioned above. From the days when 'Chelsey' was a hamlet of 13 houses by the river, to seventeenth and eighteenth century grand houses and places of amusement, the story is well-presented. More detail is surely available about the bohemian days of Chelsea as an area of cheap lodging houses, chronicled by Arthur Ransome. In fact neither the *Sloane Ranger's handbook* nor *Bohemia in London* is mentioned. Conran's father naturally gets a look in; Terence's very first Habitat Store sold its very first chicken brick in 1964 on Fulham Road between Draycott and Sloane Avenues, the site of Joseph Ettegui's present-day flagship store. One of a series of alarming footnotes occurs here: the reference is to the Habitat *website*, a here-today-gone-tomorrow electronic source, rather than a stable printed one. To continue in a picky vein for a moment, there are a few misprints. These tend to be of the missing word species rather than mis-spellings or typos. In the interests of terseness the body text in the chapter on religion includes many irritating abbreviations.

Those in need of amusing trivia will be in luck; residents will no doubt be glad to be reminded that the value of the entire Manor of Chelsea was appraised at £9.00. That was in 1066 though. This salutary fact, from the section dealing with economic history, leads me to suggest a diverting non-board game; would the same sum carry one in a taxi from Sloane Square to the World's End today?

More economics: a gloomy note is struck in the acknowledgements: work on completing Middlesex was begun in 1979 with funding from Hackney, RBK&C, and Westminster. By the time of publication they had all dropped out, except for Westminster which had reduced its contribution. The Cadogan Estate office is thanked for their intervention to bring the book to publication. The above-named boroughs continue to send representatives to the committee, along with Camden, which seems never to have made a financial commitment.

Priced at rather over eight times the value of the 1066 Manor of Chelsea, this is by no means a cheap book. However, it is comparable in price with recent volumes of the *Survey of London* and should exercise an appeal independent of its cover price.

Rather more affordable is Here is Chelsea, *a beautifully produced collection of essays from the archives of The Chelsea Society. It is published by Elliott & Thompson for the Society. The list price is £14.99 but it is available to members for £12.00 (contact Jane Dorrell on 7352 2761, or email wdwd@waitrose.com.)*

John Simpson and the Battle of the Styles

by Terence Bendixson

For anyone interested in architecture, the bottom of Old Church Street has, for the last few months, offered a ringside seat for the battle of the styles. Close at hand and nestling by the church is John Simpson's brand new, neo-classical parish hall and rectory. Next to them, also by Simpson, is a row of houses in pink brick and stone all carefully and variously detailed in the Georgian way.

This neo-classicism is what people like Professor David Watkin at Cambridge, and probably Prince Charles, regard as England's indigenous style of architecture. Chelsea has not seen much of it since 1945 but Chelsea Square, designed by Darcy Braddell and Humphrey Deane in about 1930, shows how, seventy years ago, the tradition was alive – even though Peter Jones at Sloane Square was being built at the same time in its then ultra-modern clothes.

Now turn and look across the Thames at Albion Wharf in Battersea. There, gleaming and glistening like some newly arrived galactic space station, is a recent work by Norman Foster. In front of the flats rears a piece of abstract, day glo orange sculpture by Mark di Suvero. This is the other architecture which, when the styles are being debated, tends to be called 'modernism'.

The argument between the two sides is often heated and always colourful. Who does not remember the Prince of Wales calling one design in the competition for a National Gallery extension 'a carbuncle on the face of a much loved friend'? The Prince was, as it turned out, successful in administering cosmetic surgery to the growth and the result is the neo-classical Sainsbury Wing, designed by the Americans, Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown. (Students of architecture might add that the new wing is also a mite post-modern. But that is another story.)

Sometimes it is the modernists who hurl insults. Richard Rogers once castigated the neo-classicists for their 'Disneyland approach' to architecture. Maxwell Hutchison, when President of the Royal Institute of British Architects, was ruder and damned John Simpson's work for 'bowing and scraping our way backwards with a neo-classicism which ignores technology'.

John Simpson himself, architect of the sumptuously classical Queen's Gallery at Buckingham Palace, deals with such barbs with twinkling eyes, guffaws of laughter and huge charm. (He wears, incidentally, not the crumpled denim of modernism, but impeccably related off-white cottons and linens accentuated by a dark bow tie.)

Modernist buildings, with their stripped down facades, look, he said, as if they have been 'designed by computers and built by robots'. He thinks that this aesthetic, derived from heavy industry, may have been necessary after 1945 when many people had nowhere to live and vast numbers of houses were needed. 'But nowadays nearly everyone has got the basic things. They want nice houses.'

Contemplating the glass and steel of the modernists, he says. 'They are building not to a place but to a time.' The result is internationalist buildings that leave you uncertain whether you are in Swindon or Dallas. Is this what people want? John Simpson doubts it. In his view they want buildings that help to create towns, cities and places that are distinct and different.

He goes on to argue that builders too like individuality and want to do things with their hands. 'I think that is where the future is and not with rebuilding images created by Le Corbusier which date from the age of biplanes and battleships.' He sums his case up with a neat, if not totally satisfactory, paradox. 'Modernism is perpetuating an aesthetic that grew out of early 20th century ideas and technologies that are now irrelevant'.

Never mind the paradox, John Simpson's work at the bottom of Old Church Street clearly illustrates his skill in creating buildings that create a strong sense of place. I always thought Walter Godfrey's 1960s rectory was a decent example of the domestic architecture of that time. It was a well-mannered building in brick and tile and, apparently, expensive. But because it was set back a bit from Old Church Street, it weakened the space in front of it. Was it part of an 18th century street or was it part of some looser, indeterminate, suburban kind of place?

All that uncertainty has now gone. John Simpson has brought the rectory and the new houses forward to the original building line at the back of the pavement. This not only emphasises the line of the street but has created the bonus of extra space. Petyt Hall, the new parish room, benefits from this addition.

He has also reworked what is now called Painter's Yard, the site of Frazer & Ellis, the former plumbers' merchants. Indeed it was the prospective redevelopment of this part of Old Church Street that created an opportunity for the rector, Peter Elvy. He went to Peter Collins, the developer, suggested that they combine their adjoining sites, and so created the development value which has financed the

new hall and rectory. Peter Collins, an expert at working in historic settings, then proposed John Simpson as architect of Painter's Yard and the new buildings for the church.

A key characteristic of architecture in the 18th century was, of course, the pecking order that marked buildings. Churches, town halls, customs houses (as at King's Lynn) and other public buildings were usually treated as monuments. They were located at the end of vistas and set apart from the repetitive street architecture composed of houses and other more run-of-the-mill buildings. This ranking was reflected in turn by building materials (brick for the houses and stone for churches) and by the detailed design of entablatures and entrances.

And so it is in Old Church Street. As one walks down past the rectory and looks across at Petyt Hall, it is immediately apparent that here is a building, even though it is tucked away in a corner, of civic importance. Everything about it is bolder and more theatrical than in the houses. The windows are bigger: the entablature is deeper and marked by chunky tryglyphs. Petyt Hall speaks by its design: it is a public building.

For me, going inside was entry into a time machine. Stairs up to offices and a curate's flat go away on the right. The door to the hall

This photograph shows how the rectory and the new houses next to it have been brought forward to the original building line of the street.

lies ahead on the left. As you go towards the hall you therefore move through a small but complex space enriched by carved joinery, plaster mouldings and brass work. It looks wonderful and yet ... in some way it seems odd.

Only a few seconds elapsed before I realised the cause of the oddity. The definition of every banister rail, mullion and architrave in Petyt Hall is pin sharp. The outlines of the architectural devices have not been blurred by layers of paint and emulsion. They do not, as in buildings dating from the 18th century, look like pudding covered with custard.

This reminded me that Le Corbusier once mused on how it might have been 'when the cathedrals were white'. Has John Simpson, I wonder, created a time machine for visiting Chelsea 'when Cheyne Walk was new'?

Turning to the technology question, I asked him whether neo-classical architects are neglecting to grasp new, 21st-century opportunities. With more laughter and twinkling he drew my attention to what look like black lines along the sides of the shallow coffering of the church hall ceiling. I was flummoxed. I had no idea what I was looking at. In fact, the lines are slits through which state-of-the-art air conditioning ventilates the room. And it is the same with all the other services. It is a reminder that for buildings to be high-tech they do not have to have their pipes, ducts and lifts on the outside, as Richard Rogers and Renzo Piano famously put them at the Centre Pompidou. As in automotive design, so in neo-classical architecture, new technology can be fully exploited but, in deference to form and beauty, tucked tidily under the bonnet.

It remained to discuss the criticism that modernists build 'to a time', by which is meant our time, whereas neo-classicists are said to ape the past. One way to think about this is to take a journey backwards through architectural history. What becomes clear is that architecture has sometimes been shaped by new technology and sometimes by old forms.

Medieval gothic, for instance, was a family of new styles made possible by progressive refinement of the technology of masonry walls, mullions and vaults. What began, in England, with the massive walls and drum columns of Durham Cathedral reached its ultimate floating lacework conclusion in King's College Chapel.

Technological innovation continued in buildings like Paxton's Great Palm Stove at Kew and the Crystal Palace but Scott was, roughly at the same time doing the Foreign Office in classical dress and St. Pancras Station hotel in Gothic.

However no one is fooled when architecture is based on old forms. Just as no one thinks that St Pancras is medieval, no one is likely to

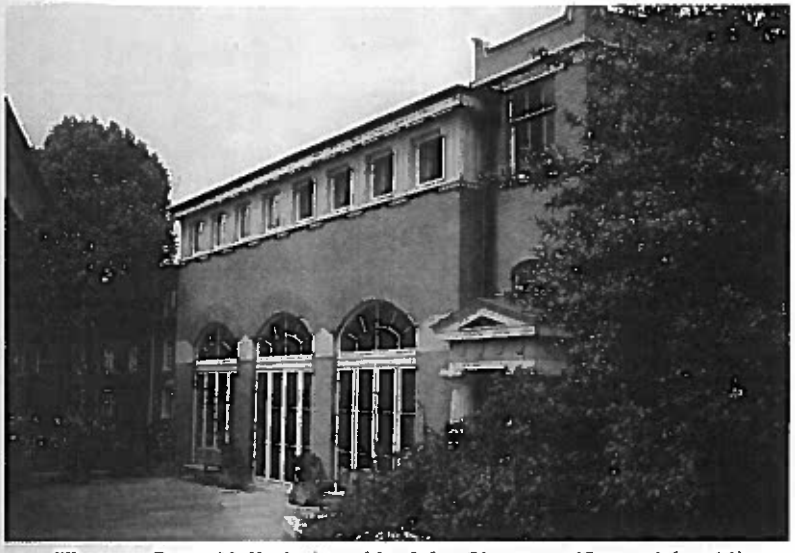
think that John Simpson's work in Old Church Street is anything but 'made in 2004'. Architects, whatever style they choose to work in, cannot help but build 'of their time'. Whether their buildings help to create memorable places is the real test. Or, to put it another way, technology may create opportunities but designers then use them to create that elusive quality called beauty, not just in their buildings, but in the places of which they are part.

How well, by these measures, does Lord Foster's Albion Wharf score? And how many points should one give to Petyt Hall, the rectory and Painter's Yard? I am sad to admit it but, in my view, the gleaming, galactic space station on the Battersea waterfront is one of a series of completely unrelated blocks. Do they form a pattern? Do they help to make the stretch of the Thames between Battersea and Albert Bridges into a unified place? Not for me.

Now walk downstream and look at the part of the river between Albert and Chelsea Bridges. Thanks to the side streets, red brick houses and mansion flats that make up the building line of the Chelsea Embankment, and the wall of trees in Battersea Park on the other, it is *rus in urbis* on a grand scale. It is one of the great delights of the Thames tideway.

John Simpson may have had a smaller, easier job than Norman Foster but he has, in my view, brought it off more successfully. He has designed his buildings to relate to their surroundings and to create a modest but memorable place. The result is something that, once seen, could never be confused with Hampstead or Chiswick Mall or some other part of 18th-century London.

But the question must be asked whether, given the right architect, a modernist could not have made an equal success of Old Church Street? I believe the answer is yes. Think how old and new have sometimes been masterfully juxtaposed at colleges at Oxford and Cambridge. It can be done. What counts is the presence of those hard to define qualities of excellence in design and fitness to place. When building in a city both are essential. *(See colour pages 49 and 50)*



The new Petyt Hall, designed by John Simpson. (See article p44)

The impressive doorway to the new Petyt Hall

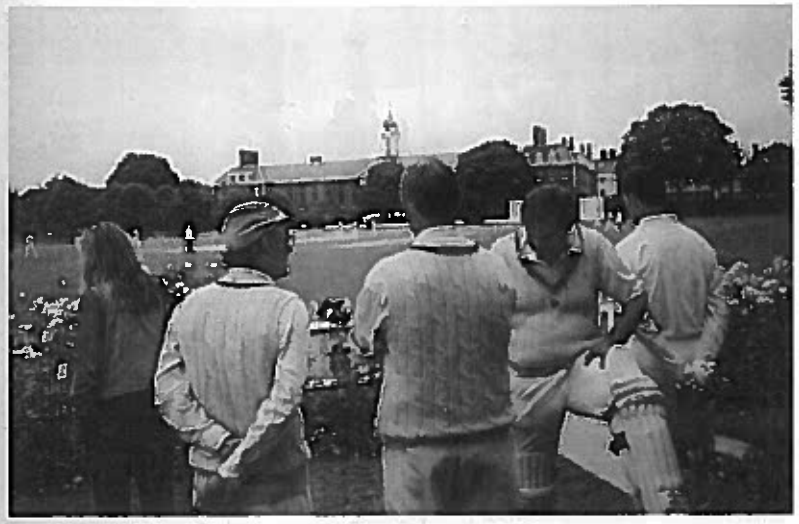
Map showing the extent of development by Chelsea Old Church with the new Petyt Hall, vicarage and residential housing.

Watercolour of Old Church Street, showing the new housing built in association with the Petyt Hall development.

The Mayor's Summer Garden Party at the Royal Hospital.

Who's won? The prize-giving at the Chelsea Schools' Competition.

Chelsea's Local Studies department has been decanted to the Central Library at Kensington and, sadly, David Walker (above), who has been an inspiring source of information and help to readers and researchers since the mid 1980s, is going with it. Below, the empty shelves bear witness to our loss.



Chelsea Festival cricket. A match between the Chelsea Arts Club and the Friend and Falcke Marauders.

The Mayor, Cllr. Barry Phelps, surrounded by stalwart oarsmen, celebrating after the Doggett's Coat and Badge Race in 2004. The winner, holding the champagne, was Robert Dwan

A rapt audience at the Punch and Judy Show at the Mayor's Garden Party at the Royal Hospital.

David Le Lay, Chairman of the Chelsea Society, makes a welcome to the Exhibition speech at the opening of 'Sporting Chelsea' at the Chelsea Festival.

Convivial glasses and meetings at the opening party for the Society's 'Sporting Chelsea' Exhibition.

Chelsea scenes attractive and annoying. Above, a lifeboat on the Thames, and a magnificent lamp standard on the Embankment. Below, the numerous motorbikes which clutter the view of the new Duke of York Square.

Chelsea House

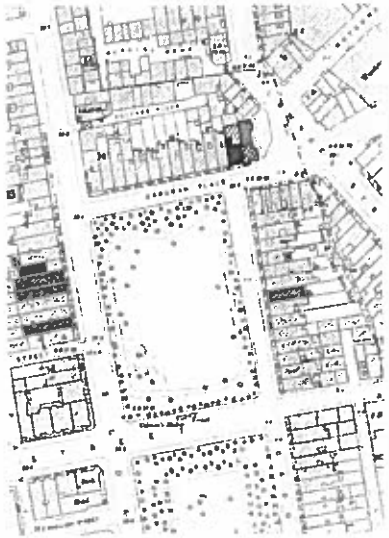
by David Le Lay

The Cadogan family came into their Chelsea estate in 1753, upon the death of Sir Hans Sloane, the second Baron Cadogan having married Eliza, one of the daughters of Sir Hans. It might have been expected that Lord and Lady Cadogan would move into Chelsea Manor House, the home of Sir Hans originally built by Henry VIII; but they did not; they remained in Mayfair, perhaps preferring their elegant classical house to the old and dingy Tudor manor house. It is said that in the late 1770s the second Baron lived in the mansion that occupied the site of the present day Duke of York's buildings but there is no documentary evidence for this. No; although they owned most of Chelsea, it was not until the middle of the nineteenth century that the Earls Cadogan actually lived there; their London homes being firstly in Whitehall and then later on in Mayfair.

It was the fourth Earl who in 1850 decided to live at 13 Cadogan Place, a large house built for Lady Sarah Napier, in the north-east corner of the square, looking down the length of its east side. It is perhaps significant that this house, although on the estate, was situated as close as possible to Belgravia and Mayfair. His son, the fifth Earl Cadogan, had very grand ideas and set about providing a substantial country house and a London home for himself and his family, as befitted the wealth, influence and importance of his inheritance. This high point in aristocratic self-confidence was to be brought to an abrupt and catastrophic end by the horrors of the First World War.

The country house that the fifth Earl purchased, in 1889, was Culford Hall in Suffolk, originally designed by James Wyatt and enlarged out of all recognition by the Earl to some 50 bedrooms and 15 bathrooms. For his London home he similarly enlarged his father's house, 13 Cadogan Place, which became known as Chelsea House.

He set about rebuilding Chelsea House immediately upon inheriting the earldom in 1873, with the transformation being completed by 1875. He chose William Young (1843-1900) as his architect. Young was from Glasgow but early in his career he moved south where he worked in the office of the Surrey County Surveyor. One of the projects with which he was entrusted was to erect a temporary struc-



Part of Ordnance Survey map of 1894-6 showing the growth of 13 Cadogan Place into Chelsea House.

The Rt. Hon. George Henry, 5th Earl Cadogan, K.G., P.C. Photograph by Dickinson of New Bond Street.

ture to seat 1,000 people at a celebratory banquet on Wimbledon Common for the National Rifle Brigade. This brought him into contact with Lord Wemyss, who was so impressed with Young's energy and resourcefulness that he introduced him to other members of the nobility, including Lord Cadogan, and from this flowed various commissions for grand houses both in London and in the country. Chelsea House was one of the first such commissions and he was also employed by Lord Cadogan to carry out the improvements and extensions to Culford Hall. A contemporary of Young's, J. M. Brydon, architect of Chelsea Town Hall and Chelsea Library, said of him *'No man knew the requirements of a great house or how more effectively to carry them out.'*

All of Young's buildings are classical in style which, with the advent of the twentieth century, became the accepted style of the Edwardian period. He went on to design important public buildings, winning the competition to design Glasgow Municipal Chambers in 1883, which were to influence the design of many a subsequent town hall, including that of Belfast, built in 1903, and also J. M. Brydon's 1886 design for Chelsea Town Hall. His last great commission was the 'new' War Office in Whitehall which occupies a whole block just to the north of Inigo Jones's Banqueting House; once again, Lord

Wemyss was influential in his being awarded this prestigious project.

George Henry Cadogan, the fifth Earl (1840-1915), was described as *'a clear-eyed, level-headed, straight-forward gentleman, with frank manners and firm convictions, who has ever seen his duty with clear vision and done it thoroughly'*. His youngest son, Sir Edward Cadogan, described him as *'Not being of nimble mind but of meticulous habit, he was a very deliberate worker'* and *'a willing slave to routine'*. These dependable qualities were spotted at an early age, for when he was at Eton he was one of four boys chosen to accompany the Prince of Wales on a walking tour of the Lake District. This led to a life-long friendship with the Prince, later Edward VII, and to the Earl being counted as belonging to the very highest social class. In 1865 he married Lady Beatrix Craven, a daughter of the second Earl Verulam; they had 6 sons and 2 daughters.

At the end of the nineteenth century the extent of the Cadogan Estate was at its zenith. Not only did it comprise many acres of working-class housing, including all of the area around Chelsea Green and Sloane Avenue, but in 1875 the Earl sold long leases to the Cadogan and Hans Place Estate Company whose aim was the improvement and redevelopment of eastern or 'Upper' Chelsea, the effect of which was to convert this part of the estate into one of the most fashionable residential districts of the metropolis. Cadogan Square, the site of which had been occupied by Henry Holland's 'Pavilion' and its extensive gardens, was developed with some of the grandest and most substantial houses ever built in London and this was followed by a whole rash of new red brick, Queen Anne Style, architecture from Knightsbridge to the river. The culmination of this transformation was the rebuilding, entirely at the Earl's expense, of Holy Trinity Church, Sloane Street, in 1890.

Most of the remainder of the estate was occupied by working-class tenants and the Earl was very much concerned with their welfare. The Housing of the Working Classes Act of 1890 relied upon land being given, or sold for a nominal sum, to social landlords for redevelopment as purpose-built social housing. During the 23 years that this Act was in force, more such housing was provided in Chelsea, one of the smallest metropolitan boroughs, than any other – and that was principally due to the fifth Earl Cadogan's generosity in providing land for this worthy cause. He also gave land for public buildings, including for Chelsea's Town Hall and Public Baths, the Public Library in Manresa Road, the adjoining Polytechnic School, the Chelsea Hospital for Women and the Hall of Remembrance in Flood Street. He was elected the first Mayor of the newly formed metropolitan Borough of Chelsea, serving for the year 1900-01.

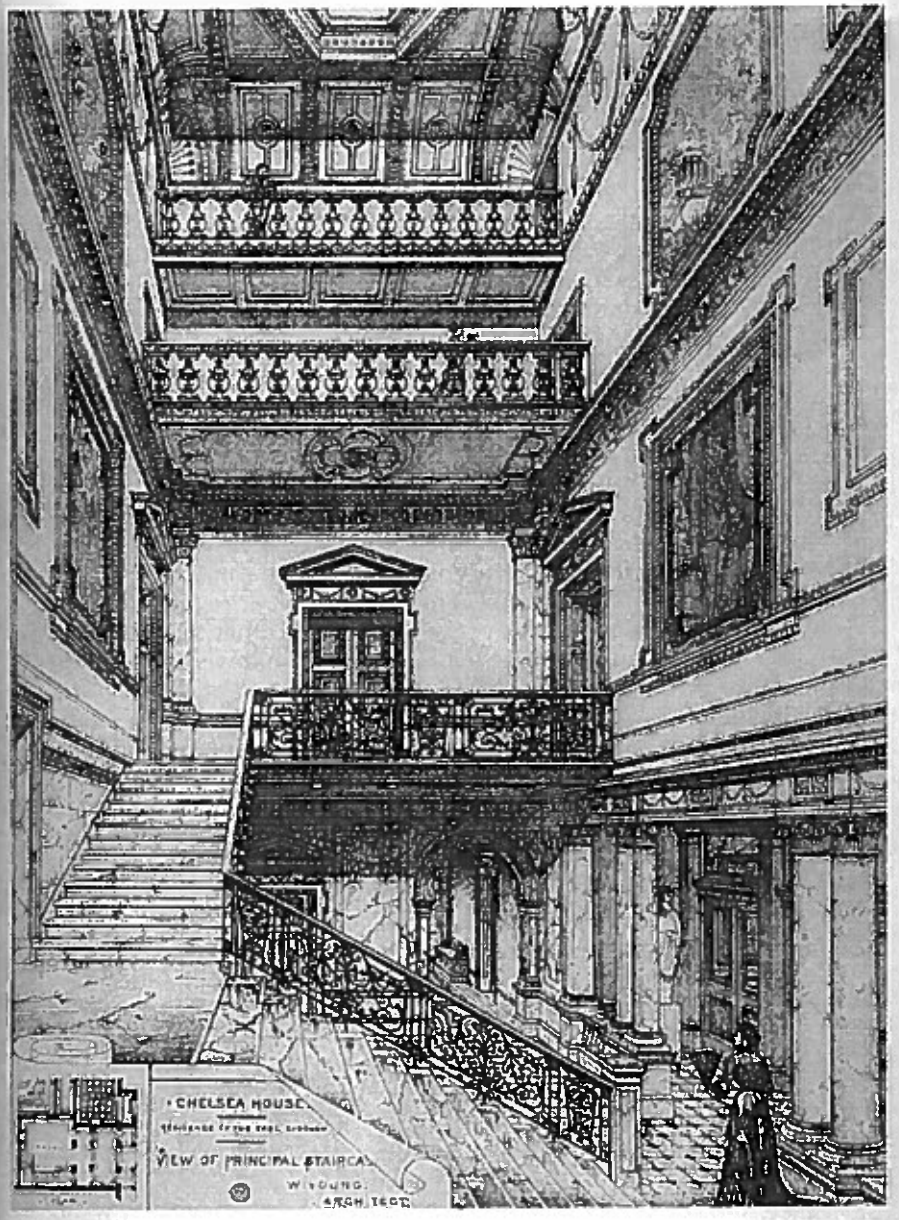
Lord Cadogan, when still Viscount Chelsea, was elected Conserva-

tive MP for Bath but as he inherited the earldom just a few weeks after the election, he had to stand down. That did not prevent him from having a highly successful political career; he was Under Secretary for War, Under Secretary for the Colonies; he became Lord Privy Seal, serving in the cabinet of Lord Salisbury and in 1895 he was made Viceroy of Ireland which was already at this time not exactly a comfortable appointment. He became a confidant of Queen Victoria, including acting as an intermediary between the Queen and the Prince of Wales, a task demanding the utmost tact. In recognition of his friendship and service to the crown, he was made a Knight of the Garter in 1891.

Lady Cadogan, as well as supporting her husband and taking an interest in all his work, also concerned herself with the welfare of the working class. A journalist for *The Ladies' Field* remarked in 1899 how she *'nobly fulfilled the very onerous duties of her position'* and *'had widespread sympathy with many causes'*. She mostly occupied herself with the welfare of young women and children. She was also said to have been a formidable huntswoman and enjoyed the races just as much as her husband. When the family were in residence at Chelsea House, which was only during the London Season of May, June and July, the Countess would lead her family for a ride in Hyde Park every morning, along what was known as the 'tan ride'. This was followed by social visits and, after lunch, she would visit Hyde Park again but this time in her barouche carriage, resplendent with horses and grooms in full family-crested livery. When the family were in residence, 30 staff would be needed to serve their needs and vast hampers were delivered to the house every day from Culford Hall containing fresh produce for the kitchens and flowers for decorating the house.

The north side of Cadogan Place was originally built in 1807 when this part of Cadogan Place was known as Cadogan Square, it comprised a terrace of 13 houses, with number 13, the end house, being slightly wider than its neighbours. Some time later, probably in about 1830, when Lowndes Square was built, spare land to the east of number 13 was added to it, providing it with a large side garden and allowing for the house to be extended to the north over what had been its rear garden. Later in the century, probably about 1860, substantial additions, in the form of two large bays were added on the east side.

It would seem that when William Young came to transform the house for the fifth Earl he retained the structure of the basement floor and possibly also some of the ground floor of the house; for the main rectangular shape which includes the grand staircase follows the outline of the house as it was in 1835 and the southern bay follows the outline of the bay added in 1860. The smaller northern bay



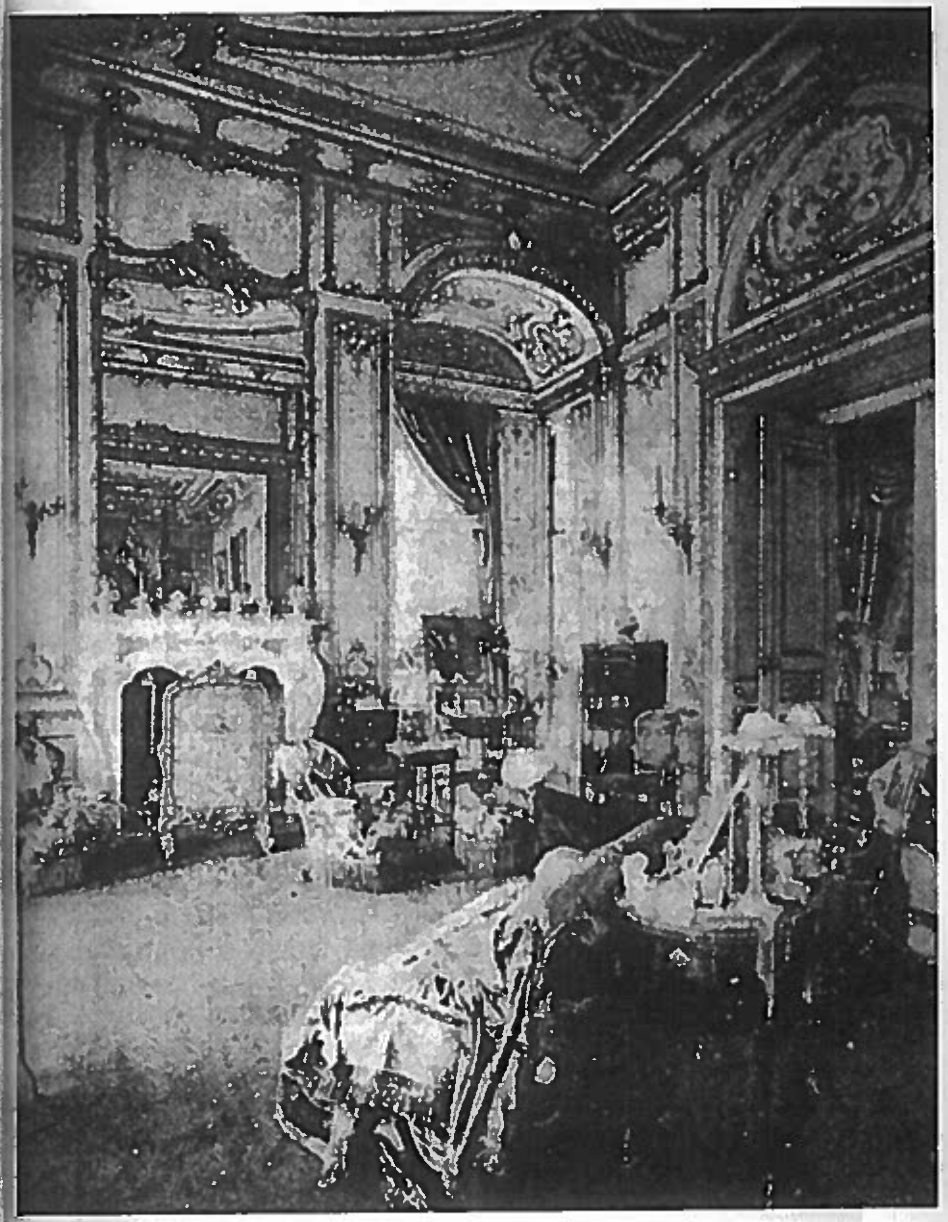
Chelsea House – View of principal staircase. Photo-litho print by Thomas Kell of Covent Garden. Plate 13 of a set of prints published in 1879. This is a view looking east, with the front door from Cadogan Place to the right.

of 1860 was demolished and replaced by a substantial extension, with a matching bay. The interior of the house must have been completely replanned and the upper floors rebuilt, for the principal staircase and the storey height of the first floor are far too grand for even a large house of 1860.

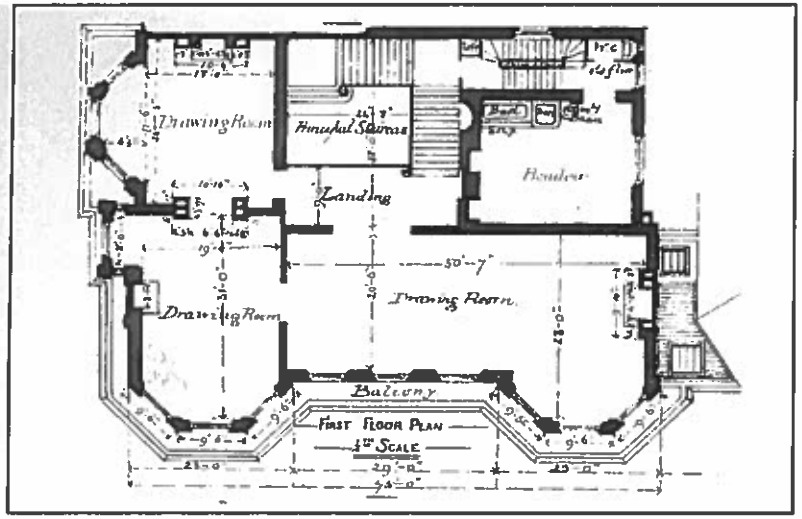
It is likely that when the house was extended in 1860 the whole building was clothed in a classical 'coat' of stucco as happened to the majority of the east side of Cadogan Place. William Young followed this classical design, even though by 1873 it would have already been considered 'old fashioned'; the style of the moment being the picturesque red brick 'Queen Anne' which was universally employed by the Cadogan and Hans Place Estate Company in their development of Cadogan Square and East Chelsea. In contrast, the whole of the new Chelsea House was faced in Portland stone.

The plan of the house, as with all of Young's houses, was dominated by a grand full-height staircase hall. The ground floor entrance hall and the stairs themselves were entirely clad in polished white marble and although the main staircase only extended up to the 'public' rooms on the first floor, the void extended up through a further two storeys with dramatic balconies at the upper levels allowing people to cross from one side of the house to the other. Above, was a huge octagonal lantern in the main roof which allowed daylight to penetrate throughout the whole of this awesome space. On the ground floor were the library, dining room and Lord Cadogan's study, whilst the first floor mostly comprised three large inter-connecting drawing rooms, the largest of which was also used as a ballroom. These main rooms were planned on a huge scale and decorated in successive 'Louis' styles, with the Ballroom being Louis Quatorze, the Yellow Drawing Room, in Louis Quinze style and the White Drawing room in Louis Seize. *The World* of June 1912 said of the interior '*Sumptuous magnificence and gold-gleaming splendour meet the eye at every turn...*' There was also fine and authentic French furniture to match each of the styles as well as more comfortable 'modern' furniture. The use of baroque and rococo French styles was somewhat old-fashioned as there was at this time an awakening of interest in English art and architecture epitomised by the birth of the Arts and Crafts Movement. Contemporary photographs show how all the rooms of the house were crowded with furniture and cluttered with innumerable objects, in the fashion of the Victorian period. The fifth Earl Cadogan was interested in innovation and technical advance, and so Chelsea House was one of the first houses in London to have electric light and in one of the drawing rooms Mr. Marconi gave a demonstration of wireless communication.

To the north of the house were the stables which were situated at



Chelsea House – The Yellow Drawing Room. Photograph from The Gentlewoman, *16 August 1890.*



First-floor plan – photo-litho print, part of plate 8 of a set by Thomas Kell of Covent Garden, published in 1879. The drawing room at the top of the plan is the White Drawing Room, that on the corner is the Yellow Drawing Room and the large drawing room was also used as a Ballroom.

Chelsea House. Photograph taken from the east. Note the Regency houses on the north side of Cadogan Place, where the Carlton Tower hotel now stands, and the later extension to Chelsea House on the right-hand side of the photograph.

first floor level with a curved ramp leading down to the mews at the rear of Cadogan Place, then known as Cottage Place. There was no garden but the house enjoyed an open aspect to its principal south and east elevations. In the early years of the twentieth century, a terrace of houses immediately to the north and facing Lowndes Street, was demolished to make way for an extension to Chelsea House, designed in matching style and materials.

In his memoirs, Sir Edward Cadogan relates how on the 22nd June 1887, the day of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee, the Queen asked Lord Cadogan if he would entertain her guests to dinner, prior to the State Ball at Buckingham Palace, so as to allow Her Majesty to enjoy a brief respite from the demands of the celebrations. Sir Edward was only 7 at the time but he remembered that *'There was little rest that night in our nursery at the top of the house. It opened on to a gallery from which we could peer down through the interstices of the balustrade at the social drama unfolded before our eyes. From here we could listen to the luscious and seductive melodies of the Blue Hungarian Band ensconced among the forest of palms at the foot of the great staircase'*. The guests at that dinner, which was held in the first floor ballroom, included the Prince and Princess of Wales, the Kings of Belgium, Denmark, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Saxony, Prince William of Prussia, Crown Prince Rudolph of Austria, the Grand Duke Serge of Russia and the Duke of Sparta. As Sir Edward later remarked, *'rarely have the representatives of so many foreign dynasties met round one table in a private dwelling'* and he went on to reflect that few of these dynasties, let alone the individuals present, were to survive the impending *'evil destiny'* of the First World War.

The Countess died in 1907 and although the Earl married again, in 1911, to Countess Adele Palagi, it is with his first wife that he is buried at Culford Hall, both of which could be described as his 'first loves', for he always preferred life on his country estate at Culford to that at Chelsea House.

The sixth Earl did not live at Chelsea House, preferring to remain at his own much more modest house in Grosvenor Street; so it was leased to Sir Owen and Lady Mai Philipps. The seventh Earl inherited in 1934, when only 19 years of age, and faced massive bills for death duties in respect of both his father and grandfather. One of the actions the Estate took to help pay these duties was to demolish Chelsea House together with 12 Cadogan Place immediately adjoining it to the west and to replace them with a block of flats designed by Thomas S. Tait (1882 -1955) in what is a very early example of the Modern Movement in architecture in this country.

Thomas Tait was an important architect of the inter-war period; he was of Scottish origin and one of his most important buildings

was St. Andrew's House, Edinburgh which for many years was the UK Government's administrative offices in Scotland. He was also overall designer of the Glasgow Empire Exhibition of 1938 and he later joined the well established practice of Sir John Burnet which eventually became known as Sir John Burnet Tait and Lorne. The new building, which still bears the name Chelsea House, provides for no fewer than 10 shops and 36 flats; it is a building that is largely ignored by architectural historians yet it is an early example of the work of one of the most interesting architects of the period.

The block of flats erected on the site of Chelsea House in 1934, and also known as Chelsea House.

One can just imagine the scene in 1934 when the demolition contractor's ball and chain smashed into all that polished white marble and ornate gilded decoration to be replaced by those starkly utilitarian and minimalist flats, heralding a brave new equalitarian age in contrast to the privileged and glittering lifestyle of the fifth Earl Cadogan. As Sir Edward Cadogan remarks *'What a serene business it was! It all seemed so durable, so secure, so timeless. There was nothing to warn or to challenge the supremacy of the aristocratic caste of the eighties.'*

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Acknowledgements

Stuart Corbyn of the Cadogan Estate for his help and assistance.

Cadogan Estate for kindly agreeing to the reproduction of the photo-litho prints published by Thomas Kell and the photograph of the exterior of the house.

Ordnance Survey for reproduction of an extract of the 1894-6 O.S. map of London.

British Library Newspapers for reproduction of the photograph from *The Gentlewoman* magazine.

Justice Walk, the Jewish Legion and Israel

by Jill Hamilton

Today the Israeli Defence Force is regarded as one of the most formidable armies in the world. But this would hardly have been predicted by anyone who saw its humble beginnings in 1917. For the Israeli army can trace its history back to the First World War to a special unit, known as the Jewish Legion – the 38th, 39th and 40th battalions in the Royal Fusiliers, London Regiment – and to a campaign conducted in the quiet leafy streets of Chelsea. Letters filed away in the Public Record Office confirm that the headquarters of the man responsible for the formation of this historic military unit was 3 Justice Walk, the narrow pathway linking Lawrence Street and Old Church Street – within walking distance of the newly opened synagogue in Smith Terrace. The exterior of the two storey former workman's cottage has hardly being altered from the time when, in 1916 and 1917, it was a hot house of political activity.

Inside was not only the man agitating to form the Jewish Legion, Vladimir (Ze'ev) Jabotinsky (1880-1940), but Dr Chaim Weizmann (1874-1952), the Russian-born lecturer in biochemistry at Manchester University, who was carrying out vital research for the war effort at the nearby Lister Institute (now the Lister Hospital). Both men were passionate Zionists and Weizmann played the largest part of anyone outside the War Cabinet in securing the Balfour Declaration. He later became the first president of Israel. Weizmann, who had discovered a method of fermenting starch into acetone, the key ingredient in making cordite needed to maintain a high output of explosives, was working in London at the request of the Ministry of Munitions.

Throughout the bitter winter of 1916/17, Jabotinsky continued his efforts to raise a combat unit of Jews to fight in Palestine. Jabotinsky, then an energetic 36-year-old journalist and one of the most colourful characters in modern Jewry, translated Dante's *Inferno* into Hebrew in his spare time, and a couple of his essays had won praise from Tolstoy. Short in stature, excitable, earnest and a

3 Justice Walk.

Chaim Weizmann.

non-stop talker, in conversation he could switch quickly between English, Russian, German, French and Hebrew.

He walked from Chelsea to government offices, including the War Office, in Whitehall, knocked on doors, handed in his beautifully printed visiting card and delivered the letters he typed in Justice Walk. Born politician that he was, Jabotinsky would not have succeeded without the support and connections of Weizmann, who wrote in his memoirs, 'It is almost impossible to describe the difficulties and disappointments which Jabotinsky had to face. I know of few people who could have stood up to them, but his pertinacity, which flowed from his devotion, was simply fabulous. He was discouraged and derided on every hand . . . The Zionist Executive was of course against him; the non-Zionist Jews looked on him as a sort of portent.'

Working with Jabotinsky was Joseph Trumpeldor, living nearby at 29 Shawfield Street, off the King's Road. Trumpeldor, from the northern Caucasus, after losing his left arm fighting during the 1904 Russo-Japanese war, had become one of the tsar's first Jewish officers. He studied law before joining the new wave of young idealistic socialists coming to start a new life in Palestine in the agricultural commune of Degania (cornflower). After Turkey entered the war in November 1914, like other Russian Jews, he was exiled to Egypt. While visiting a refugee camp in Alexandria he met Jabotinsky.

In early 1915, both men decided to persuade the British to form a Jewish legion to join the forces that were about to invade Gallipoli. In the end, all they achieved was the Zion Mule Corps, comprising 600 muleteers and their mules. Jabotinsky, disgusted at the Jewish unit being downgraded into 'a donkey battalion', left for England complaining that both its name and its role were demeaning and asked, 'Will Jews enter Zion on mules?'

Immediately on arrival in Chelsea he started exerting pressure on the authorities for a separate battalion of Jews. After the evacuation of Gallipoli, he was joined by Trumpeldor. But requests for these men to become a separate troop in the 20th London Regiment were continually refused. Then, suddenly, with help from a Conservative MP Leo Amery, they presented a petition to Lloyd George who responded to their request.

Finally, a paragraph appeared in the *London Gazette* on 23 August 1917 – the first tangible outcome of the Lloyd George coalition's commitment to fostering a Jewish National Home in Palestine. The role of the Jewish Legion was historic. They were the first Jewish military unit taking part in the reconquest of Israel for nearly 1,800 years.

Among the soldiers who enlisted in the Jewish Legion and later held prominent positions in Israel were Israel's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, Israel's second president and Levi Eshkol Israel's third prime minister.

Jill Hamilton's paperback of God, Guns & Israel, Britain, the First World War, (Sutton, 2004, £10.99) is being published in December.

Chelsea Synagogue, originally known as the Victoria & Chelsea Synagogue, dates from 1916, when a former artists' studio, the Red House, and a builder's yard, were purchased by a small committee of Jews in London. The actual synagogue was created on the first floor – with the women sitting on the right hand side, separated by an ornamental grille. The ground floor was used as a Hebrew School, for Library Society meetings and for various social activities. In the 1930s refugees from Germany were brought by boat directly to Cadogan Pier, from Tilbury. The freehold of the Red House was purchased for £500 along with the adjacent site for £3,500 in 1949, and eighteen years later the present synagogue was erected on the site.

Judy Campbell

Judy Campbell, the actress, or Judy Birkin as she was known in Chelsea, who died on 6 June 2004 at the age of 88, was the last *grande dame* of the 20th-century theatre. Her stage career stretched back more than 60 years and she was still acting in the last year of her life. A protégée of Noel Coward's and the first to sing the haunting wartime song *A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square*, she was familiar on the stages of the West End, cinema and television screens and finally, as a very old lady, charmingly and successfully at a pub-theatre, the King's Head in Islington, and the tiny Jermyn Street Theatre. But in Chelsea she was known as the matriarch of a clever family that embodied the best in the *haute-bohème*. A regular attender at Chelsea Old Church, she was a member of the Chelsea Society and the Chelsea Arts Club.

Born at Grantham, Lincolnshire, into a theatrical family (her father was a theatre-owner; her mother, an actress) she followed them on to the stage, working in repertory and touring companies before joining the cast of the revue *New Faces* in London. This was in 1940 and she recalled looking out of the stage door of the Comedy Theatre to watch German bombers overhead. She was to be remembered for the *Nightingale* song in that show although she protested, with some reason, that she could not sing. Instead, she, beautiful, tall and dark, wafted about the stage in a ball gown, speaking the works in her husky voice. Afterwards, Noel Coward took her to dine at the Savoy and said, "It takes talent to put over a song when you haven't got a voice".

Thereafter she was one of Coward's favourite actresses and she was to play leading parts in his *Present Laughter*, *This Happy Breed*, *Blithe Spirit* and *Relative Values*. The critic Harold Hobson wrote that she was "radiantly lovely with her copper-coloured hair: not only pre-war but Pre-Raphaelite". Her long career was dazzling and would eventually earn long and admiring obituaries.

In 1943, she married David Birkin, a gallant naval officer, engaged in running agents into and out of occupied France, amongst them the young François Mitterand, who, when President of France, awarded him the *Legion d'Honneur*. They were to have three talented children, two of whom caught the public eye, Andrew as a writer and Jane Birkin as the *chanteuse*, even more popular in Paris, where she lives, than in Britain. The Birkins lived in Old Church Street and when David died in 1981, Jane arranged that at his funeral in Chelsea Old Church a choir of children from a Parisian school should sing *Le Chanson des Partisans*.

As her stage career continued into her late eighties, Judy Campbell also continued in her role as head of the Birkin family and a kind, lively-minded neighbour in Chelsea. In looks distinguished, still beautiful and with an undimmed zest for life and friendship, the happiness she spread around her still resounds.

T.P.

Lord Gibson

Richard Patrick Tannentyre Gibson, known as 'Pat' to his friends, was born in 1916. He went to Eton and Magdalen College, Oxford and then joined his father as a stockbroker. He served in North Africa in the Second World War, until he was captured; but he escaped whilst being held prisoner in Italy. After a period for recovery, he joined the Foreign Office and it was there that he met Dione Pearson, a cousin of Lord Cowdray; they married in 1945 and had four sons.

He then joined the Pearson organisation and was drawn to their newspaper publishing activities, which were then local and small scale. He started as a sub-editor of the *Oxford Mail* and rose to become Chairman of the *Financial Times* which Pearson acquired in 1957 and he was for many years a director of the *Economist* newspaper. In 1960 he joined the main Pearson Board, becoming Chairman of the Pearson Group from 1978-83. Under his chairmanship it became a leading industrial conglomerate.

It was however his wide range of cultural interests that made him such an admirable President of the Chelsea Society. Throughout his life he was fascinated by and derived great pleasure from music, gardens and buildings. He was Chairman of the Arts Council, a member of the board of Covent Garden, and a Trustee of Glyndebourne. From 1977-86 he was Chairman of the National Trust, during which time membership of the Trust doubled.

When I became Chairman of the Chelsea Society, at the end of 1987, it was with the knowledge that the President, Sir Marcus Worsley would be retiring after the 1988 AGM; so the appointment of a new President was an early challenge. When, after discussion with the Council of the Society, I approached Lord Gibson and he agreed to succeed Sir Marcus, I knew we had made a wise choice. Lord Gibson was our President from 1989-94; which for me were perhaps the most formative years of my chairmanship. Whenever I sought it, he gave me sound and prudent advice; which was just what a new chairman with often extreme opinions needed. As *The Times* obituary noted, when Lord Gibson said 'I suppose that is a point if view' you knew he disagreed with you. I had the privilege of getting to know both Lord and Lady Gibson well, they were a devoted couple, with Lady Gibson sharing and participating in her husband's interests.

Over the years Pat and Dione Gibson generously supported countless good causes, including the Chelsea Society. Their house in Swan Walk was a haven of elegance and charm and they created a wonderful garden at their country house at Penn's Rocks, near Tunbridge Wells. When he was created a peer in 1975 Lord Gibson chose the title Baron Gibson of Penn's Rocks and it was there that he died, surrounded by his family, on 20 April 2004.

David Le Lay.

The Treasurer's Report

Last year's accounts covering an 18-month accounting period showed a loss of £3,738. This year I can report a surplus of £11,044. Because 2003 was an 18-month period it is rather more difficult to give a totally clear explanation for this dramatic change, but by taking two-thirds of the 2003 figure as a comparison, I can comment as follows:

First, our recurring income showed an increase in most areas, but particularly in the income from lectures and meetings and from the sale of postcards and Christmas cards. Donations and advertising were also up to quite an extent.

Secondly, we had two special items of expenditure in the previous accounting period, namely the cost of producing the promotional video and the net cost of our 75th Anniversary dinner which altogether came to approximately £7,500. This saving, together with the increase in income, matched the turnaround between the two periods.

The Balance Sheet reflects the surplus for the year of £11,044 and accumulated funds at £39,138 at 30 June 2004. Over the years our retained funds have fluctuated and this flexibility I believe adds to the strength of the Society and allows the Council, within reason, to take on causes in which it seriously believes.

I should now like to turn to another aspect of the Society's affairs. As you know it was formed in 1927 as an unincorporated charitable body, has operated as such ever since and is registered with the Charity Commission. Unfortunately, more and more rules and regulations have been introduced by Parliament, as a result of which the Society's Trustees (Members of its Council) are considerably more vulnerable to financial loss than before. It is for this reason that Stephen Kingsley, a member of the Council, and I are examining the possibility of incorporating the Society so that the Trustees have more protection. Of course, any change would require the approval of the Members, so you will be well informed beforehand and will have the opportunity of approving or rejecting the proposals.

My Lord President, I beg to present my report and accounts for the year ended 30 June 2004. I shall be pleased to answer any questions that our Members may have.

Ian Frazer
Hon. Treasurer.

THE CHELSEA SOCIETY

Registered Charity Number 276264

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

The Trustees present their report and accounts for the year ended 30 June 2004.

Constitution and Objects

The Chelsea Society was founded by Reginald Blunt in 1927. The Society's objects are to protect and foster the amenities of Chelsea particularly by:

* stimulating interest in the history, character and traditions of Chelsea;
* encouraging good architecture, town planning and civic design, the planting and care of trees, and the conservation and proper maintenance of open spaces;
* seeking the abatement of nuisances;
* making representations to the proper authorities on these subjects.

The full Constitution and Rules of the Society, together with the Annual Accounts, are printed in the Annual Report, published in January each year, a copy of which is sent to every member.

Trustees

The Trustees of the Society are the Council constituted under the Society's Rules, which is responsible for the day-to-day work of the Society. The Council appoints Officers for certain posts. The current Officers and other Members of the Council are:

Officers

David Le Lay RIBA, FRSA (Chairman)
Nigel Stenhouse (Vice-Chairman)
Samantha Wyndham (Hon. Secretary)
Ian Frazer FCA (Hon. Treasurer)
Terence Bendixson (Hon. Secretary, Planning)
Patricia Sargent (Hon. Secretary, Membership)
Valerie Hamami-Thomas (Hon. Secretary, Events)
Jane Dorrell (Hon. Editor)

Other Members of the Council

Michael Bach BSc, MSc, MS
Richard Ballerand BSc
Nicola Braban
Patricia Burr
Stuart Corbyn FRICS
Dr Serena Davidson
David Foord FRICS
Leonard Holdsworth
Sarah Jackson
Stephen Kingsley
Dr Paul Knapman FRCP, FRCS, DMJ
Hugh Krall
Tom Pocock
R Alexander Porter
David Sagar
Jonathan Wheeler MA, BSc, FRICS
Helen Wright

Review of the year's activities and achievements

The Chairman's Report, published in the Society's Annual Report, contains a full description of the activities and achievements of the Society during the year.

Review of the Accounts

At 30 June 2004, the Society has total funds of £39,138, comprising £27,013 on the General Fund and £12,125 on the Life Membership Fund. These are considered available and adequate to fulfil the obligations of the Society. The reserve of funds is held to meet a need to fund any particular action required to protect the Society's objects, as thought appropriate by the Council of the Society.

Approved by the Council of the Chelsea Society on 20 September 2004.

D R Le Lay
Chairman

THE CHELSEA SOCIETY

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT EXAMINER TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE CHELSEA SOCIETY

I report on the accounts of The Chelsea Society for the year ended 30 June 2004, which are set out on pages 75 and 76.

Respective Responsibilities of the Trustees and the Independent Examiner
The Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of Section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act) does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under Section 43 (7)(b) of the Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of the Independent Examiner's Report
My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiner's Statement
In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(i) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements

* to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 41 of the Act; and
* to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Act

have not been met; or

(ii) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Angela Ktistakis
GMAK
Chartered Accountants
5/7 Vernon Yard, Portobello Road
London W11 2DX
11 November 2004

THE CHELSEA SOCIETY
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2004

	Year ended 30 June 2004	Eighteen months ended 30 June 2003
Income and Expenditure		
Incoming resources		
Annual membership subscriptions	14,249	20,734
Donations received	1,645	1,150
Advertising revenue from annual report	2,005	1,755
Interest received on General Funds	137	369
Interest received on Life Membership Fund	305	344
Income from lectures, meetings and visits	11,325	10,231
Income from sale of Christmas cards and postcards	5,917	3,439
Income from sale of promotional videos	40	268
Income from the 75th Anniversary Dinner	—	11,700
Total incoming resources	**35,623**	**49,990**
Resources expended		
Direct charitable expenditure:		
Cost of annual report	6,120	6,911
Cost of newsletters	2,603	4,959
Cost of lectures, meetings and visits	8,681	11,589
Cost of Christmas cards and postcards	1,951	3,369
Subscriptions to other organisations	187	508
Cost of maintaining the website	235	24
Cost of Schools' local history competition	1,161	760
Advertising in local Festival programmes	470	786
Cost of the 75th Anniversary Dinner	—	12,775
Cost of producing the promotional video	—	6,449
Costs re the Society's Exhibition at the Chelsea Festival	—	464
	21,408	48,594
Other expenditure:		
Management and administration of the charity:		
Stationery, postage and miscellaneous expenses	1,695	3,267
Cost of annual general meeting	475	182
Insurance	446	1,186
Independent examiner's fee	555	499
	3,171	5,134
Total resources expended	**24,579**	**53,728**
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year/period	**11,044**	**(3,738)**
Balances brought forward at 1 July 2003	28,094	31,832
Balances carried forward at 30 June 2004	**£39,138**	**£28,094**

THE CHELSEA SOCIETY

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 JUNE 2004

	30 June 2004	30 June 2003
Current Assets		
Debtors	728	1,763
Balance in National Savings Bank account	12,125	11,820
Balance on bank current and deposit accounts	40,482	27,452
	53,335	41,035
Less Liabilities: amounts falling due within one year	14,197	12,941
Net Assets	**£39,138**	**£28,094**
Funds:		
General Funds	27,013	16,274
Life Membership Fund	12,125	11,820
	£39,138	**£28,094**

Approved by the Council of The Chelsea Society on 20 September 2004.
D. R. Le Lay, *Chairman*
I.W. Frazer, *Honorary Treasurer*

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of Accounting

The accounts are prepared under the historical cost basis of accounting, and in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting & Reporting by Charities, and applicable United Kingdom Accounting Standards.

Incoming Resources

Membership subscriptions, advertising revenue, and income from events and the sale of Christmas cards are time-apportioned and credited to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period in respect of which they are receivable

Donations are credited to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period in which they are received, unless they relate to specific future projects.

Resources Expended

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis.

CONSTITUTION AND RULES

1. The Chelsea Society shall be regulated by the Rules contained in this Constitution.

OBJECTS

2. The Objects of the Society shall be to preserve and improve the amenities of Chelsea particularly by:-
   (a) stimulating interest in the history, character and traditions of Chelsea;
   (b) encouraging good architecture, town planning and civic design, the planting and care of trees, and the conservation and proper maintenance of open spaces;
   (c) seeking the abatement of nuisances;
   (d) making representations to the proper authorities on these subjects.

MEMBERSHIP

3. Subject to the provisions of Rule 7, membership of the Society shall be open to all who are interested in furthering the Objects of the Society.

THE COUNCIL

4. (1) There shall be a Council of the Society which shall be constituted in accordance with these Rules.
   (2) The Society shall elect not more than twelve members of the Society to be members of the Council.
   (3) The members of the Council so elected may co-opt not more than four further persons to be members of the Council.
   (4) The Officers to be appointed under Rule 5 shall in addition be members of the Council.
   (5) In the choice of persons for membership of the Council, regards shall be had, amongst other things, to the importance of including persons known to have expert knowledge and experience of matters relevant to the Objects of the Society.
   (6) The Council shall be responsible for the day-to-day work of the Society, and shall have power to take any action on behalf of the Society which the Council thinks fit to take for the purpose of furthering the Objects of the Society and shall make and publish every year a Report of the activities of the Society during the previous year.
   (7) The Council shall meet at least four times in each calendar year.
   (8) A member of the Council who is absent from two successive meetings of the Council without explanation which the Council approves shall cease to be a member of the Council.
   (9) Three of the elected members of the Council shall retire every second year, but may offer themselves for re-election by the Society.
   (10) Retirement under the last preceding paragraph shall be in rotation according to seniority of election.
   (11) Casual vacancies among the elected members may be filled as soon as practicable by election by the Society.
   (12) One of the co-opted members shall retire every second year, but may be again co-opted.

OFFICERS

5. (1) The Council shall appoint the following officers of the Society, namely:-
   (a) a Chairman of the Council,
   (b) a Vice-Chairman of the Council,
   (c) an Honorary Secretary or Joint Honorary Secretaries,
   (d) an Honorary Treasurer, and
   (e) persons to fill such other posts as may be established by the Council.
   (2) The terms of office of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall be three years and those of the other Officers five years from the date of appointment respectively. Provided nevertheless that the appointment of the Chairman shall be deemed to terminate immediately after the third Annual General Meeting after his appointment.
   (3) The Officers shall be eligible for re-appointment to their respective offices.
   (4) Nothing herein contained shall detract from the Officers' right to resign during their current term.
   (5) By Resolution of a majority of its members the Council may rescind the appointment of an Officer during the term of office for reasons deemed substantial.

PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENTS

6. (1) The Council may appoint a member of the Society to be President of the Society for a term of three years, and may re-appoint him for a further term of three years.
   (2) The Council may appoint persons, who need not be members of the Society, to be Vice-Presidents.

SUBSCRIPTIONS*

7. (1) The Council shall prescribe the amount of the subscriptions to be paid by members of the Society and the date on which they are due, and the period in respect of which they are payable.
   (2) Membership of the Society shall lapse if the member's subscription is unpaid for six months after it is due, but may be restored by the Council.
   (3) Members may pay more than the prescribed minimum, if they wish.
   (4) Members may pay annual subscription by banker's order or by Direct Debit.
   (5) The Society may participate in the direct debiting scheme as an originator for the purpose of collecting

subscriptions for any class of membership and/or any other amounts due to the Society. In furtherance of this objective, the Society may enter into an indemnity required by the Banks upon whom direct debits are to be originated. Such an indemnity may be executed on behalf of the Society by officials nominated in an appropriate resolution.

GENERAL MEETINGS

8. (1) In these Rules 'General Meeting' means a meeting of the Society open to all its members.
(2) The Council shall arrange at least one General Meeting every year, to be called the Annual General Meeting, and may arrange as many other General Meetings, in these Rules referred to as Special General Meetings, as it may think fit. Notice of the date of such meetings shall be given not less than 35 days ahead.
(3) General Meetings, the agenda for which shall be circulated not less than 21 days in advance of the meeting, shall take place at such times and places as the Council shall specify.
(4) The President shall preside at any General Meeting at which he is present, and if he is not present the Chairman of the Council or some person nominated by the Chairman of the Council shall preside.
(5) Any election to the Council shall be held at a General Meeting.
(6) No person shall be eligible of the Council unless:-
(i) he or she has been proposed and seconded by other members of the Society, and has consented to serve, and,
(ii) the names of the three persons concerned and the fact of the consent have reached the Hon. Secretary in writing at least 28 days before the General Meeting.
(7) If the Hon. Secretary duly receives more names for election than there are vacancies, he shall prepare voting papers for use at the General Meeting, and those persons who receive most votes shall be declared elected.
(8) The agenda for the Annual General Meeting shall include:-
(a) receiving the Annual Report, and
(b) receiving the Annual Accounts.
(9) At the Annual General Meeting any member of the Society may comment on any matter mentioned in the Report or Accounts, and may raise any matters not mentioned in the Report, if it is within the Objects of the Society.
(10) The President or Chairman of the meeting may limit the duration of speeches.
(11) Resolutions by members may be made only at the Annual General Meeting or at a Special Meeting as permitted under sub-section (12) of this Section of the Constitution. Any member who wishes to make a Resolution shall give notice of such Resolution by sending it to the Society to reach the Honorary Secretary at least 28 days before the date of the meeting. The Resolution, if seconded at the meeting by another member, will be put to the vote.
(12) If any 20 members of the Society apply to the Council in writing for a Special Meeting of the Society, the Council shall consider the application, and may make it a condition of granting it that the expense should be defrayed by the applicants.

AMENDMENTS

9. (1) These Rules may be amended by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting at an Annual or Special General Meeting, if a notice in writing of the proposed amendment has reached the Hon. Secretary at least 28 days before such a Meeting. Provided that nothing herein contained shall authorise any amendment the effect of which would be to cause the Society at any time to cease to be a Charity in Law.
(2) The Hon. Secretary shall send notices of any such amendment to the members of the Society 21 days before the General Meeting.

WINDING-UP

10. (1) The winding-up of the Society shall be subject to a Resolution proposed by the Council and approved by a two-thirds majority present at a Special General Meeting.
(2) In the event of the winding-up of the Society the available funds of the Society shall be transferred to such one or more charitable institutions having objects reasonably similar to those herein before declared as shall be chosen by the Council of the Society and approved by the Meeting of the Society

* The current rate is £15 annually payable on the 1st January. The annual husband-and-wife rate is £20.

List of Members

An asterisk denotes a life member. The Hon. Membership Secretary should be informed of correction or changes in name, address or title.

*MRS. A. ABELES
MISS J. ABEL SMITH
MISS INESSA AIREY
PAUL V. AITKENHEAD
R. ALEXANDER
MRS. R. ALEXANDER
MRS. ROSEMARY ALEXANDER
C. ALLAN
MRS. C. ALLAN
*LT-COL. J. H. ALLASON
MRS MARGARET ALLEN
MRS. ELIZABETH AMATI
*ANTHONY AMBLER
C. C. ANDREAE
MISS SOPHIE C. M. ANDREAE
MARTIN ANDREWS
*THE MARQUESS OF ANGLESEY
MISS MARY APPLEBEY, C.B.E.
P. ARBON
MRS. P. ARBON
J. N. ARCHER
MISS J. ARMSTRONG
*DAVID ASCHAN
M. ASHE
MRS. M. ASHE
MISS C. ASSHETON
THE HON. NICHOLAS ASSHETON
MRS. ROMA ASHWORTH BRIGGS
*MRS. PHILIP ASTLEY, O.B.E.
MRS. LISA ATKINS
J. ROBERT ATKINSON
MISS KATE ATTIA
MISS CHRISTY AUSTIN

MICHAEL BACH
LADY BAILLIE
DR. B. M. BAIRD
MRS. B. M. BAIRD
DR P. CLAIRE BAKER
MARTYN BAKER
MRS. MARTYN BAKER
RICHARD BALLERAND
MRS. RICHARD BALLERAND
MRS. MICHAEL BARKER
DR. R. BARKER
ROGER BARKER
MRS. VALERIE BARKER
*D. H. BARLOW
J.C. BARNARD
MRS ISABELLA BARONOVSKA
SIR JOHN BARRAN, BT.
LADY BARRAN
JULIAN BARROW
MRS. JULIAN BARROW
SIMON BARROW
ADRIAN BARR-SMITH
MRS. ADRIAN BARR-SMITH
*MRS. DEREK BARTON
G. N. BATTMAN
MRS. G. N. BATTMAN
MISS LINDSAY BATTY-SMITH
PATRICK BATY
SIR PETER BAXENDELL
LADY BAXENDELL
GERALD BEALE
ROBERT BEALE
MRS. ROBERT BEALE
*E. V. BEATON
K. L. S. BEAUCHAMP-KERR
MRS. A. E. BEAUMONT-DODD
MRS. P. M. BECKER
ROBERT BECKETT
MRS. ROBERT BECKETT
MRS. M. K. BEDDOW
HUGO BEDFORD
MRS. HUGO BEDFORD
MRS. PATRICIA BEHR, M.V.O., M.B.E.
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