

THE CHELSEA SOCIETY



1948-1949 REPORT

Price: THREE SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE



HER GRACIOUS MAJESTY QUEEN MARY

Her Majesty Queen Mary on the occasion of her visit on 25th May, 1948
to the World's End Exhibition of Old Chelsea. [See page 28]

With acknowledgments to Associated Press Ltd.

THE CHELSEA SOCIETY

(For protecting and fostering the amenities of Chelsea, Founded April, 1927)

President:

MAJOR THE EARL CADOGAN, M.C.

Vice-Presidents:

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BRIGADIER GENERAL LIONEL BANON, C.B.
HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR OF CHELSEA.

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MISS M. D. SHUFELDT
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GRAHAME B. TUBBS, ESQ., A.R.I.B.A. (Chelsea Arts Club)

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RICHARD STEWART-JONES, ESQ., 97, Cheyne Walk, S.W.10.

Assistant Honorary Secretary:

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Secretary: MISS WICKHAM LEGG.

Hon. Treasurer:

R. W. ELLISTON, ESQ.,
Cheyne Hospital for Children, Cheyne Walk, S.W.3.

Bankers:

Barclay's Bank, 348, King's Road, S.W.3.

Hon. Auditor:

R. J. V. ASTELL, ESQ.

THE OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY ARE TO AID:—

- (1) in the maintenance of all features of Chelsea having beauty or historical interest, unless a proved necessity requires their removal;
- (2) in the preservation of the open spaces for the health of the community;
- (3) where clearances are necessary, in the construction of substituted buildings that will be a credit to Chelsea;
- (4) in preventing the disfigurement of streets and open spaces by ugly advertisements or otherwise;
- (5) in preserving the residents from smoke, noises and other nuisances arising from industrial premises; and generally,
- (6) in protecting and amplifying the amenities of Chelsea for all classes of its people.

Early information is of the greatest importance for any effective action, and members are asked to inform the Council at once, through the Secretary, of any plans or proposals which seem to come within the scope of the Society, of which they may hear.

The Council would consider such matters, obtain further information, and, if thought advisable, make such suggestions or protests on behalf of the Society as might seem to them desirable.

MEMBERSHIP.

There is no annual subscription to the Society, but members must, on election, pay a minimum Entrance Fee of £1. Should further funds be needed to carry on the work of the Society, it is proposed to raise them from time to time by voluntary subscriptions amongst the members and others.

Residents and art students in the Borough who wish to be associated with the Society, but who do not feel able to join under the usual membership terms, are cordially invited to approach the Secretary.

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*The Annual General Meeting
of the Chelsea Society was held at the Town Hall
on October 27th, 1947, at 5.45 p.m.*

MINUTES AND APOLOGIES :—

The Minutes of the last Annual Meeting were approved and signed. Apologies for absence were received from Lord de L'Isle and Dudley, Mr. W. H. Godfrey, Miss Macnamara, and Mr. Nicholson, the Town Clerk. A message was received from the Duke of Wellington congratulating the Society on its work in connection with the Old Church and urging it to increase its efforts.

MAYOR'S ADDRESS :—

The Chairman called upon the Mayor of Chelsea, Councillor H. Gwynne Evans, to address the meeting. The Mayor stressed the need for close co-operation between the Borough Council and the Chelsea Society for the general good of the Borough. He thought this was particularly important because successive governments might pursue changing policies, incorporating some measures detrimental to the Borough. He illustrated this point with a reference to the rebuilding of the Old Church, saying that had it not been for the vigilance of the Chelsea Society permission to rebuild the Church might never have been granted, the authorities being unaware of Chelsea's opinions on the subject.

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS :—

The Chairman, in thanking the Mayor for his speech, mentioned that later in the meeting a proposal would be put forward which would have the effect of linking the Society more closely with the office of Mayor of Chelsea. Referring to the work of the Society he said that its strength lay in the fact that it was a non-political body representing all sections of the

community, capable of expressing its views upon matters of importance in Chelsea. He referred with regret to the deaths of Mr. St. John Hornby and Sir Edmund Phipps. He mentioned the increased work and interests of the Society and thanked the Honorary Secretary for his work, also those members who had given so much help in the past year, without which the work of the Society could not have been carried on.

With regard to the rebuilding of the Old Church, permission for which had recently been granted, he said that this work would be carried out at some date in the distant future, but there was much to be done in the meanwhile, and as soon as possible it was hoped to put up a temporary building on the site. There were, however, many difficulties to be overcome before this could be achieved, but it was hoped that it would soon be possible to carry the work a stage further.

ELECTION OF A VICE-PRESIDENT :—

The Hon. Secretary proposed, and it was unanimously agreed, that the Mayor of Chelsea should, during the term of his office, be a Vice-President of the Society.

REPORT AND ACCOUNTS :—

The Hon. Secretary gave an account of the heavy expenditure during the last year which had led the Society towards financial difficulties, and he mentioned specifically the architect's fees for the plans of the Old Burial Ground, and the rising cost of printing which had made the production of the Annual Report a very costly item. No. 3 Cheyne Walk had also involved certain expenditure. He thanked those members of the Society and his neighbours in Cheyne Walk who had given so much assistance in the arrangement of No. 3 Cheyne Walk, and had lent some of their most valuable possessions. The Chairman moved the adoption of the Report and Accounts, which was unanimously agreed.

JAMES II : CAPTAIN DEAN'S ADDRESS :—

Captain Dean gave a most interesting address on the subject of James II and the Royal Hospital (see article on page 31). A general discussion followed in which Miss Collum, Mr. Bool and General Banon spoke in favour of moving the displaced Grinling Gibbons statue of James II to Chelsea. Miss Gerda Morgan pointed out that an additional claim could be based on the fact that Tobias Rustat, who commissioned the statues of both Charles II and James II, was a Chelsea resident and benefactor. Professor de Beer felt that as the Royal Hospital was originally built as a college for the refutation of heresy, it would be singularly appropriate to place a statue of James II in its grounds.

Mr. Richards proposed, and Miss Pickford seconded, a resolution that the Society should make recommendations to the appropriate authorities that the Grinling Gibbons statue of James II should be placed within the precincts of the Royal Hospital.

The Chairman thanked Captain Dean for his most interesting address, and the Mayor for the use of the Town Hall.

THE CHELSEA SOCIETY

Founded in April, 1927 to protect and foster the
amenities of Chelsea

Report of Chairman and Council

Her Majesty Queen Mary lent Chelsea China from her collection to the World's End Exhibition of Old Chelsea and graciously visited it on the opening day, May 25th, 1948.

This Exhibition was sponsored by the Chelsea Society, and a full account of it appears on page 28.

The activities and day-to-day work of the Chelsea Society have increased so rapidly that it is no longer convenient to recount them as part of this report as has hitherto been the custom. So the more important amongst them are listed at page 15 under the heading ACTIVITIES.

Many of these were events in which the Society as a whole was asked to take part. Among them the Summerson Lectures, the Paul Oppé Exhibition of pictures, the World's End Exhibition of Old Chelsea and the Electors' Meeting to approve proposed legislation for the provision of studio accommodation in Chelsea.

The Society has actively, though unsuccessfully, followed up the resolution agreed to at the last Annual General Meeting, that the Grinling Gibbons statue of James II should be placed in the grounds of the Royal Hospital. An article on this subject appears on page 31.

Professor de Beer has lectured to the Upper Norwood Athenaeum on the history of Lindsey House, and your Hon. Secretary has lectured to a Church Family Club in Kensington on the history of Chelsea.

Lambeth citizens invited your Chairman to address a Conference and tell them about the Chelsea Society, as one of the oldest Civic Societies, on the occasion of the formation of a Lambeth Civic Society.

We record with deep regret the death of Mrs. Cockburn, a Member of the Council, to whom a tribute by Miss Maud Pelham appears on page 22. And we mark, too, the passing of a member of the Society, Mr. Coles, the owner of a celebrated collection of water-colours.

We welcome many new members, listed below, a number of whom joined as a result of the World's End Exhibition, and we thank those members who have enabled the work of the Society to be carried on by annual or by other donations.

Finally, we wish to thank Mr. John Pennington for an interesting fragment of Chelsea China found in his garden at 14 Lawrence Street (at the site of the Chelsea Kiln), which has been added to the collection now at No. 3 Cheyne Walk.

BASIL MARSDEN-SMEDLEY.

New Members

S. R. C. ALDERSON, ESQ.

MISS BARRIE

MISS M. BEALE

MRS. BEDDALL

MISS BEVAN

W. BONWITT, ESQ.

H. BROOKE, ESQ.

MRS. H. BROOKE

SIR NORMAN BROOK, K.C.B.

LADY BROOK

J. BROWN, ESQ.

LADY BULL

MISS CAMPBELL

MISS M. CAMPION

MRS. F. A. CARDEW

MRS. CHARLES

D. COHEN, ESQ.

F. A. L. COLLIS, ESQ.

G. COLLMAN, ESQ.

MISS A. COLLUM

MISS K. CROMBIE

E. K. CROSS, ESQ.

MISS V. DALE

LADY DALRYMPLE WHITE

A. H. DIXON, ESQ.

MISS E. M. DIXON

THE LORD DUNBOYNE

T. V. DURRANT, ESQ.

J. EASTWOOD, ESQ.

MISS D. ELDRIDGE

MRS. K. ELDRIDGE

LADY ALATHEA ELIOT

P. ELIOT, ESQ.

T. S. ELIOT, ESQ., O.M.

THE VISCOUNTESS ESHER

D. RUTHVEN EVANS, ESQ.

New Members—continued

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R. FULFORD, Esq.
MRS. ROGER FULFORD

MISS M. V. GIBSON
LT.-COL. R. H. GLYN
SIR NOEL GOLDIE, K.C.
LADY GOLDIE
E. C. GOLDRING Esq.
MRS. F. GORE.
J. A. GRANT, Esq.
L. M. GRAY, Esq.
MISS J. GREIG
A. G. GRIMWADE, Esq.
H. S. H. HAY, Esq.
J. HAYWARD, Esq.
J. HEAGERTY, Esq.
A. D. HIPPLESLEY-COXE, Esq.
MRS. HIPPLESLEY-COXE,
CANON MORRIS O. HODSON
MISS N. M. HOLLEY
MRS. W. HUNTER
GODFREY JAMES, Esq.
MRS. B. M. KENYON
C. H. KING, Esq.

JAMES LAVER, Esq.
H. A. LAWRENCE, Esq.
MISS H. D. LEMAN
LADY LETHBRIDGE
BENN W. LEVY, Esq., M.P.
MISS I. DE B. LOCKYER
MAJOR LUMSDEN
MRS. LUMSDEN

MISS MCDUGALL
S. A. MALDEN, Esq.
L. MARSDEN-SMEDLEY, Esq.
A. A. MARTINEAU, Esq.
M. K. MARTYN, Esq.
K. MILLER-JONES, Esq.
MRS. C. M. MOORE
MRS. L. MORGAN

MISS M. G. V. NAISH
CDR. A. NOBLE, D.S.O., D.S.C., R.N.,
M.P.

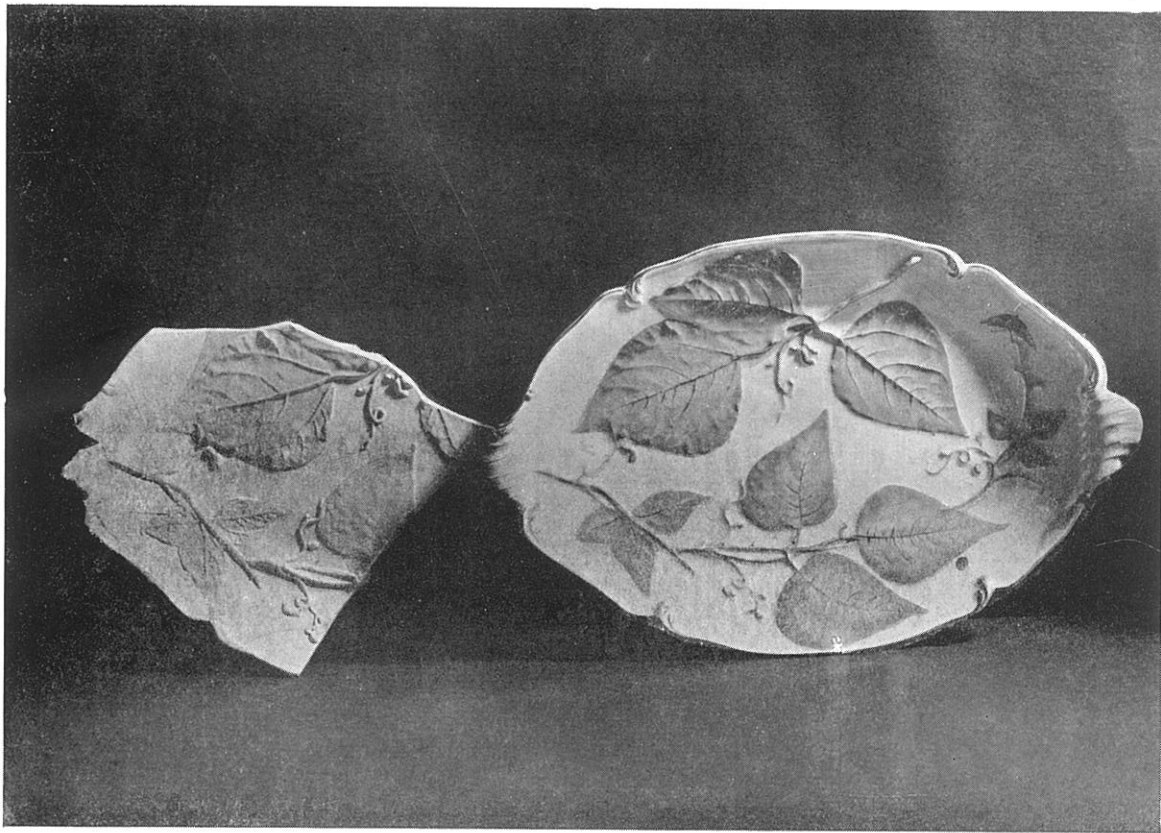
MRS. ALLAN NOBLE
MRS. PAUL OPPÉ
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G. W. OSBORN, Esq.
H. V. MAITLAND PENDOCK, Esq.
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L. PERRY, Esq.
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MISS H. RAWSON
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H. W. ROTHSCHILD, Esq.
MISS A. RUSSELL
MRS. V. RUSSELL
THE MARQUIS OF SALISBURY
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F. S. SAVORY, Esq.
MISS H. M. STRUTHERS
W. J. M. SYNGE, Esq.

MRS. TANDY
J. TERRY, Esq.
MRS. G. L. TUNBRIDGE
MRS. C. TURNOR
R. C. TWEEDALE, Esq.
S. WATTS, Esq.
MRS. V. WESTERMAN
C. COSTLEY WHITE, Esq.
MRS. C. C. WHITE
B. S. WHIDBORNE, Esq.
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G. H. WIGGLESWORTH, Esq.
MISS M. WILSON
W. WILSON, Esq.
MRS. W. WILSON
R. WIMBUSH, Esq.
MISS K. M. WOODHOUSE
C. WRIGHT, Esq.
MISS F. M. YOUNG

Donations

MISS ATKINS
MRS. ALLHUSEN
F. E. F. ADAM, ESQ., C.M.G.
MISS ANDREWS
E. BATESON, ESQ.
W. BONWITT, ESQ.
MISS BEVAN
MISS M. BRECKLES
MISS M. BOND
A. L. COWTAN, ESQ.
THE MARCHIONESS OF CREWE
D. COHEN, ESQ.
G. COLLMAN, ESQ.
THE CADOGAN SETTLED ESTATES
T. E. ELIOT, ESQ., O.M.
MISS E. ELSEY
J. EASTWOOD, ESQ.
MISS D. ELDRIDGE
MRS. GUNN
MRS. GORE
MRS. N. HOBHOUSE
MISS M. HASTINGS
J. HAYWARD, ESQ.
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W. B. KENNETT, ESQ.
MISS F. M. LANGTON
MISS M. LANGTON
MISS H. D. LEMAN
A. V. LAWES, ESQ.

MISS M. LYALL
MISS H. LYALL
H. A. LAWRENCE, ESQ.
MISS I. DE B. LOCKYER
MISS A. MOFFATT
DR. M. K. MARTYN
MRS. K. MACKENZIE
MRS. G. MADAN
LADY MEIKLEJOHN
MRS. L. MORGAN
G. W. OSBORN, ESQ.
THE HON. DOROTHY PICKFORD, O.B.E., J.P.
MISS M. PELHAM, O.B.E., J.P.
MISS L. H. PORTER
MISS P. ROPES
THE BARONESS RAVENSDALE
MISS H. RAWSON
THE HON. MRS. VICTOR RUSSELL
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MISS E. SANDS
MRS. SCOTT-ELLIOTT
J. TERRY, ESQ.
MRS. G. L. TUNBRIDGE
MRS. D. TOUCHE
MISS M. WINSOR
L. WHITEMAN, ESQ.
B. S. WHIDBORNE, ESQ.
MISS M. WILSON



CHELSEA CHINA

An unglazed fragment of a Red Anchor dish, 1750—1755, unearthed with other fragments in the garden of No. 14 Lawrence Street, and presented to the Society by the then occupant Mr. John Pennington, and beside it a completed dish from the same mould recently acquired from Tilley & Co. This fragment has been exhibited by the Ceramic Circle.

[See page 11]

Some Activities, 1948-1949

CHELSEA OLD CHURCH

Substantial progress has been made in the rebuilding of a temporary church on the site of the Chelsea Old Church. This work, together with the important developments under the Diocesan Reorganisation Scheme, is dealt with in a separate article on page 23.

DOVEHOUSE STREET BOMBED SITE

The Society protested against the L.C.C. proposal to build a fire station on a site in King's Road facing Oakley Street. This site has always been residential and has also held studios. It faces Argyll House and the only remaining row of 18th century houses in the King's Road. It is flanked by the Old Burial Ground. The Society has, therefore, suggested that the proper use for this site would be residences, studios and possibly an extension to the Polytechnic. The Chelsea Council supported the Society's representations, and it is hoped that the L.C.C. may find it possible to meet the Society's views.

EXHIBITION OF PICTURES ARRANGED BY PAUL OPPE

This very charming and successful exhibition is referred to in an article on page 24.

GRAMOPHONE CONCERTS

A series of gramophone concerts was most kindly arranged by Mr. and Mrs. H. L. Harbour at the end of September. The recitals took place in 96 Cheyne Walk, and included a complete performance of "Le Nozze di Figaro," by Mozart, sung by the Glyndebourne Company.

INDUSTRIAL ENCROACHMENTS IN OLD CHURCH STREET

The Society protested to the Chelsea Council about the noisy industrial encroachments near the Old Church in Old Church Street. The Chelsea Council made representations to the L.C.C. and as a result the Solicitor to the L.C.C. has been instructed to take action to ensure that certain premises in Old Church Street are not used for industrial purposes.

JAMES II

Representations regarding this statue were made—though unsuccessfully—to various authorities, and the matter is more fully dealt with in the Chairman's report and in the article on page 31.

LEGISLATION FOR STUDIO ACCOMMODATION

The Chelsea Council invited the Society to notify its members to attend an Electors' meeting to approve the inclusion of a clause in the L.C.C. General Powers Bill. This clause would empower the Borough Council to provide studio accommodation in Chelsea, by building new studios, constructing studios in existing buildings, and by acquiring existing studios and equipping these with artists' fittings. Many members of the Chelsea Society and a notable gathering of Chelsea artists were present in the crowded hall. The Society's Chairman was among the Speakers and dealt with the many questions asked.

OLD BURIAL GROUND

In its 1947 Report the Society gave details of its proposals, with illustrations, for an improved layout for the Old Burial Ground. The Chelsea Council had asked for and accepted these proposals and it seemed that there was every reason to expect that the work would be carried out in accordance with

the Society's plans. Subsequently, the Council modified the Society's plans in certain respects but added to the overall expenditure on layout by repairing the original central pathway which the Society had sought to preserve. New brick gate-piers have also been erected by the Miller obelisk. Work is still in progress.

PARKING PLACES

The Society enquired the views of its members and other residents in Royal Avenue and St. Leonard's Terrace as to the Chelsea Council proposal to turn these streets into an authorised car park, and supported an appeal of these residents against the suggestion. The Society's views were endorsed by the Chamber of Commerce. The Chelsea Council acceded to representations made to it, and have temporarily fenced the central part of Royal Avenue to prevent it being used as an unauthorised car park.

PHYSIC GARDEN

At the suggestion of the Council of the Chelsea Society, the Hon. Secretary went to see Mr. Allen, Clerk to the Committee of Management of the Chelsea Physic Garden, to enquire into the possibility of the Garden being opened to the general public on a specified number of occasions during the year. Mr. Allen explained that the terms of reference under which the Garden is administered and financed by the London Parochial Charities include the following clause: "the Charity and its endowments shall be administered exclusively for the promotion of the study of botany." This clearly precludes general public access, but it is understood that applications to the Clerk to the Committee of Management of the London Parochial Charities, 3 Temple Gardens, E.C.4, from societies and individuals who can show special interest, will continue to be considered sympathetically.

POLYTECHNIC COAT-OF-ARMS

At the request of the Chelsea Polytechnic, the Society made suggestions for symbols which might represent "Chelsea" in a coat-of-arms to be granted by the College of Heralds to the Polytechnic. The Society recommended that this should contain symbols of the river and a device indicating Art and Letters. Among the suggestions submitted by the Society was a design by Mr. Walter Godfrey containing emblems marking Chelsea's situation on the Thames, the King's Road, and a lamp to symbolise the Polytechnic itself.

SLOANE SQUARE FOUNTAIN

The Chelsea Council have accepted the offer of a fountain from the Royal Academy of Arts. The suggestion for a fountain for Sloane Square was first mentioned by the Royal Arts Commission in 1929. The Society has always supported the project and has taken a lively interest in its position, scale and design. The Society, at the invitation of the Chelsea Council, has made several suggestions, among them mentioning the trees in the Square, now reaching maturity, and which should be considered a permanent feature. Also as the improved layout cannot be carried out for some time, the Society suggested that flower boxes, which had been there before the war, should be returned. It is understood that the Royal Academy of Arts has inaugurated a competition, and the Society has asked for permission to see the designs when they become available.

SUMMERSON LECTURES

In conjunction with the London University Extension Courses, the Chelsea Society organised, during the autumn of 1948, a series of six lectures at Crosby Hall on London Architecture from the Great Fire to the Blitz, by John Summerson, Curator of Sir John Soane's Museum. Mr. Summerson is a lecturer of great distinction, and he dealt with a number of subjects, such as Victorian Architecture, which are not usually the subject of architectural study. At every lecture the hall was packed with an enthusiastic audience.

TREES

Attention has again been drawn to the pruning of plane trees by the Chelsea Council, particularly those in Tite Street. It may be remembered that there was a debate on the care and pruning of trees at the Annual Meeting of the Chelsea Society in 1937. The correct method is to thin by cutting off superfluous branches at the stem, so that the bark subsequently occludes over the wound. This method retains the graceful branch growth of the plane whereas the wrong method (akin to pollarding) results in dense unnatural sprouting.

TURNER'S HOUSE

Since the Society's last report, the position with regard to Turner's house has changed. At that time the Society was asked for its views on preserving the house as an isolated unit in a proposed development area. It recommended that the exterior, which had remained unchanged since Turner's time, should be retained if possible. Subsequently the preservation of the terrace or row of houses in Cheyne Walk west of Milman's Street was strongly recommended by the Society. This subject is dealt with on page 34 in an article on the West Chelsea Development Scheme.

UPPER CHEYNE ROW

During the war the garden wall of the Holy Redeemer Church, Upper Cheyne Row, was damaged by bombing, and the Roman Catholic authorities handed over to the Chelsea Council the strip of garden between the church and Upper Cheyne Row for highway improvements. The Chelsea Council at first proposed to widen the road and thereby do away with the garden. The local residents were strongly of the opinion that the garden should be remade and its wall repaired. The Society supported this view and sponsored a petition to the Chelsea Council who partially accepted the Society's views. A little garden will remain, divided from the church wall by a footpath.



TURNER'S HOUSE

Taken from a nineteenth century water colour of Nos. 118, 119 and 120 Cheyne Walk. J. M. W. Turner, the artist, lived at No. 119 during the latter part of his life and died there in 1851. [See page 19]

With acknowledgments to the Chelsea Public Library

WAR MEMORIAL

The Amenities Committee of the Chelsea Council have considered a suggestion made by the Society that the memorial for the 1939 to 1946 War should be placed in West Chelsea. The Society have asked for particulars of open spaces in the World's End area, which might become available in the areas under development. In the meantime, in order to arouse public interest, a model was made at the Society's request by Mr. James Ellis, of a re-designed "World's End Square" and was on view at the World's End Exhibition in Chelsea Week, 1948, where it aroused great interest. It was subsequently shown at the World's End Public House, where numerous useful suggestions were placed in the suggestion box, including the following: "Dear Sir, As to my view of your model as to the World's End as a man being a neighbour to the world's end for sixty years I think it is most extra."

WORLD'S END EXHIBITION

The Exhibition, which was held from 25th to 29th May, 1948, is mentioned in the Chairman's report and forms the subject of an article on page 28.

JACQUELINE COCKBURN

In May of last year one who was much loved by many in and beyond Chelsea, died. To write fully of the work that Jacqueline Cockburn did might read too much like a dull list of Committees, but there was nothing dull in her doing of it and her intense interest in each individual was never submerged by a multitude of meetings.

She was the elder daughter of the late Lieut-Colonel Sir Henry Trotter and of Lady Trotter. In 1933 she married Archibald Cockburn, K.C., and came to live in Chelsea. And to Chelsea she gave herself in full measure. In 1937 she was elected to the Borough Council, became Chairman of the Public Health, Maternity and Child Welfare Committee, Conservative Whip, Honorary Secretary of the Chelsea Housing Improvement Society, a Director of Crosby Hall, a School Manager, a Member of Chelsea Society Council, to mention only some of the causes to which she devoted her undoubted wisdom and ability. She had a clear mind, a firm grasp of each problem and was an admirable speaker. She had travelled much abroad and her understanding of foreigners helped to make her a valuable member of two Committees set up by the Home Office during the late war to deal with aliens and with 18 B cases. She was a Justice of the Peace and took a special interest in her work at the Juvenile Courts.

At the time of her death a fellow-Councillor said: "Mrs. Cockburn just lived for others." It is equally true to say that in living for others she not only gave but received happiness. For one of Jacqueline's endearing qualities was her power of enjoyment of people and of things. She delighted in new experiences and in making any kind of discovery, whether it were a new country walk, a new book or some plan to help a friend, and then it was her joy to share her discovery with others. There were no limits to the trouble she would take to help people, and often her slightly disconcerting silences proved eventually to mean that her active brain was planning some generous action. In her honour the Embankment Gar-

den at the foot of Cheyne Gardens, where she lived, has been replanted with the help of a large number of her friends.

This happiness, the outcome of her perfect home life, and her selfless courage when the shadows came, are enduring memories of one who did indeed "serve her own generation by the Will of God."

M.K.P.

CHELSEA OLD CHURCH

The Society's last Annual Report dealt very fully with the issues involved in the rebuilding of Chelsea Old Church. The Diocesan Reorganisation Scheme for Chelsea had then agreed that the site of the church should be retained, and the surviving portion of the building maintained and preserved. Further, that when conditions permitted, a church should be built on the site, capable of holding the salvaged monuments and memorials, and of providing a worthy setting for them.

Since then, a start has been made, and the ruined vestry has been rebuilt by voluntary labour. This is an achievement of which Chelsea may well be proud. Although to date no paid labour has been employed, the present building restrictions prevent even voluntary work from being undertaken without a building permit. The allocation of licences is controlled by the Diocesan authorities who have many demands on them. The rate of progress is, therefore, dependent upon the issue of the necessary licences rather than the supply of voluntary labour.

During the rebuilding of the vestry much of the debris from the churchyard has been cleared, and the garden reinstated and enlarged. Several thousand visitors have come to inspect and encourage. In the More Chapel, containing the famous Holbein columns and the great alabaster effigies of the Elizabethan Dacres, is a donations box, which has yielded £200 towards the rebuilding fund. This has made it possible to purchase materials for the temporary rebuilding which is now

being carried out. No war damage grant is available until, in the future, the permanent building takes place.

The Ecclesiastical Commissioners propose that the Old Church should become a separate parish, which shall comprise those parts of the parishes of St. Luke, St. Andrew and St. John which lie south of the King's Road and west of Oakley Street. These proposals will be put into effect under the New Parishes Measure, 1943. With several thousand additional parishioners it is, therefore, all the more urgent that the work on the temporary, and soon, it is hoped, the permanent, re-building of the church shall proceed. At the time of printing, the promised further allocation for the permanent re-roofing of the More Chapel and the temporary re-roofing of a section of the chancel is eagerly awaited.

It is a matter of great satisfaction that the salvaged monuments in the vaults of St. Luke's are in excellent condition. Recent inspection has verified the fact that the recumbent statue of Lady Jane Cheyne, by Bernini, the figures from the Stanley tomb, the tablets to Henry James, the Four Chelsea Women and a host of others miraculously escaped unscathed from the bombing. Before the Society's next Annual Report is issued, many of these Chelsea treasures will be reinstated in their appointed places in Chelsea Old Church.

D. H. A. WILLIAMS.

EXHIBITION OF EARLY ENGLISH WATERCOLOURS

An exhibition was held for ten days in October, 1947, of a selection of drawings and watercolours from the collection of Mr. Paul Oppé. Unlike previous exhibitions held by the Society it was not composed of views of Chelsea in the past. Its local interest consisted in its being one of three collections of drawings which have been formed in the last half-century entirely in Chelsea and, from the date during the 1914-18 war when the owners first came into contact, in houses which were within a stone's throw of each other. The oldest of the collections, that of the late Mr. Randall Davies, has now



RECUMBENT EFFIGY OF LADY JANE CHEYNE, 1669

Photograph taken in 1949 in the vaults of St. Luke's Church of the beautiful Cheyne monument made in Rome by Bernini the younger and removed from Chelsea Old Church with many other memorials after the bombing in 1941. These monuments are in good condition and are to be reinstated in Chelsea Old Church. [See page 23]

With acknowledgments to the West London Press

been dispersed; the other was formed by the late Mr. Horsman Coles. As Mr. Oppé's collection is largely unframed and scarcely known to the public except in so far as several drawings from it have been exhibited in special exhibitions, it was thought that an opportunity to see some of the outstanding works would be appreciated by his fellow-citizens of Chelsea. The ballroom at No. 96 Cheyne Walk was, therefore, converted into a gallery, largely by closing in bookcases with curtains in such a way as to provide panels, and proved very suitable, especially in bright weather. Nor did the expectation that the exhibition would be appreciated meet with disappointment. It was well attended, largely by members of the Society and their friends from the locality, but also, since a notice was inserted in "The Times" during the last week, by visitors from much further afield. One enthusiast from Cumberland arrived on the last day, too late to see more than a fraction of the drawings on the walls, but in time to lend a most willing and helping hand in the urgent work of dismantling!

The exhibition was confined to the English portion of Mr. Oppé's collection, excluding the drawings of Alexander Cozens because the chief of these had recently been shown at the exhibition of that artist's work at the Tate Gallery earlier in the year. The first of Mr. Oppé's acquisitions included in this selection was the early *Llangollen* by J. S. Cotman. It was bought at Christie's in 1904, and its huge box-frame, with brass handles for lifting, bronze feet for standing on a table, and hinges for turning to the light when on a wall, is still preserved, at some inconvenience, as a disproof of the common notion that the work of Cotman was disregarded in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. This purchase, made with the proceeds of a series of lectures on Greek sculpture, was on too considerable a scale and not of a nature to lead to the formation of a large collection of English drawings. That was the consequence of the discovery, in 1910, in one of the smaller auction rooms, of a "pocket" of Swiss and Italian watercolours by Francis Towne, which provided the majority of the panel devoted to that artist in this exhibition. At that

time Towne's name was barely more than an entry in lists of English artists. There was one example at South Kensington and another in Mr. Horne's collection (now Sir E. Marsh's) while a number were hidden in large books at the British Museum. The exhibition at the Grafton Galleries of two of those acquired in 1910 led, through the strangest of chances and Towne's affinity to Cotman, to the discovery of the bulk of his work in the possession of the Merivale family in Devonshire to whom Towne had left it, and thus to the publication of all. Two of the best drawings in the selection at Whistler's house were a gift, on this publication, from the Misses Merivale, while another, the surprisingly free *Neptune's Grotto*, which hung on their walls, was acquired after their death by Messrs. Agnew and ceded to its present owner on very generous terms.

The acquisition of a large series of Roman landscapes by John Downman, a selection from which formed the other panel in this exhibition, together with the now famous head of a *Sleeping Girl*, followed that of the Townes just before the 1914 war. Downman's visit to Italy in 1774, though mentioned in some of the published letters of Wright of Derby, had hitherto entirely escaped his biographers and, so far, no other landscapes by him have appeared except a much later sketchbook with small views of the Lakes which, after several vicissitudes in the auction room, is now safely lodged in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Those exhibited at Whistler's house have not yet been published; they proved a surprise to all with their freshness, delicacy and strength.

Of other memorable drawings exhibited we may mention two by John Cozens: *The Cloud*, which is astonishingly spontaneous for him and forms a pendant to the well-known and often reproduced similar subject by his father in the same collection, and the unfinished *Via di Sopra* which, with its dead limb of a tree and delicate distance, is more effective than the other versions of the subject. The early drawing by Turner of *Wycombe* came from the Tatton sale in 1929, at which his drawings reached prices unequalled before or since. It is

4

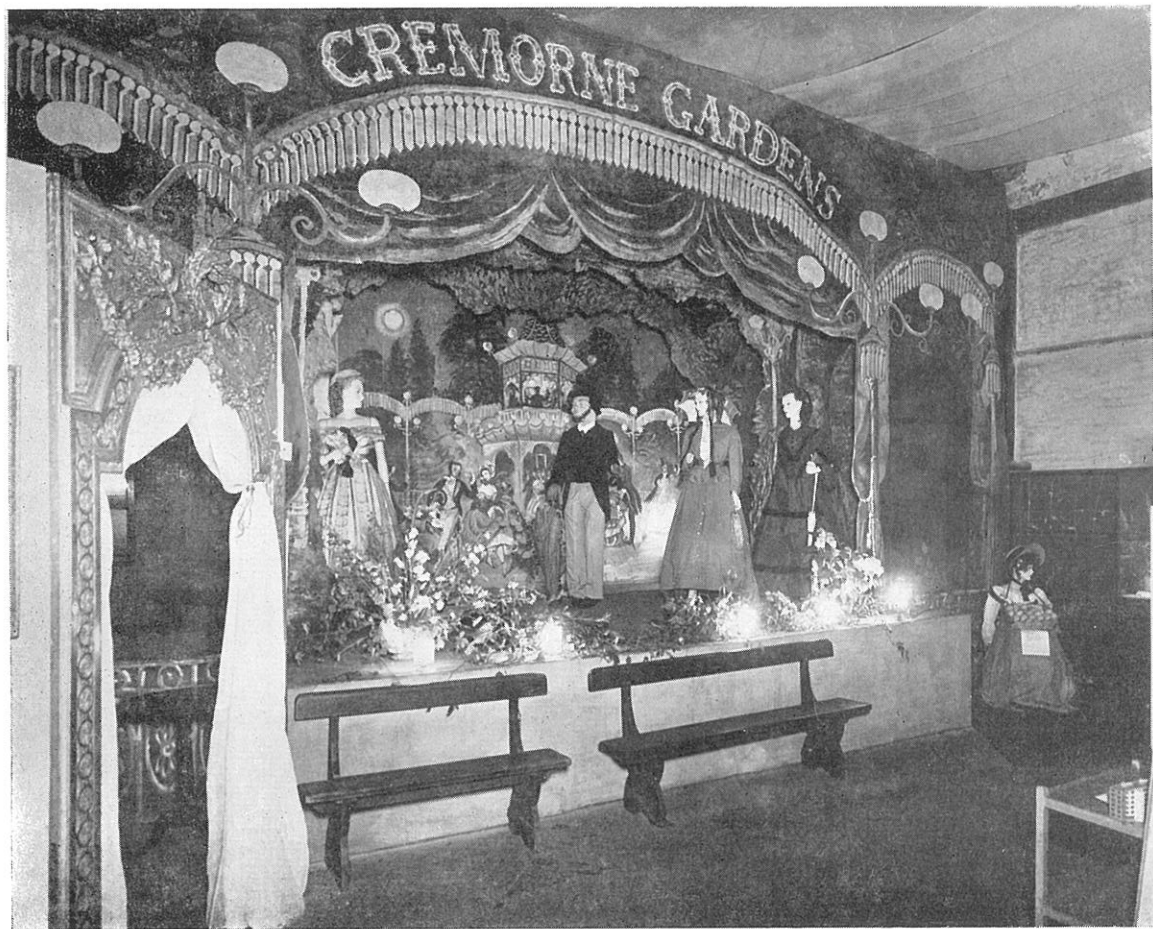
familiar, as the epitome of his earlier manner and a whole tendency in English watercolour art, from a reproduction in colour in the large *Studio* publication of 1902. An unusually clean and effective "Warwick" Smith of Tivoli and a Swiss waterfall by Pars (which also has its story) accompanied the landscapes of their friend Towne, while a drawing by the Scottish miniaturist, Skirving, aptly showed the British tourist or artist, with his family, sketching or taking notes among the ruins of Rome. Of later drawings, one by William Hunt proved him to have a quite modern interest in light which might not be suspected from his better-known birds' nests, and an interior by J. F. Lewis possesses a special interest because of the picture by Bonington represented in it against a chair, while an *Escorial* by the same artist and a *Delphi* by Richardson provided a relapse into topography, but that was because, apart from their merit as drawings, one recalls the most impressive building, and the other the sublimest landscape, that the collector happens to have seen.

The Society is greatly indebted to Mr. Oppé for arranging this much-appreciated exhibition.

WORLD'S END EXHIBITION OF OLD CHELSEA

When the Chelsea Society was asked by the Organising Committee of the first Chelsea Week what their contribution would be, thoughts turned at once to World's End in West Chelsea. This part of the Borough is linked with so much in history, grandeur and gaiety though to-day it is drab and war scarred. But its people form a typical part of Chelsea's warm civic life. They eagerly co-operated in planning, preparing and supporting what came to be known as the World's End Exhibition of Old Chelsea and which Queen Mary visited with interest and appreciation upon its opening day.

A representative Committee, under the Chairmanship of Alderman Mrs. Steele, dealt with the Exhibition itself, while another, under the Chairmanship of Mr. H. T. Knight, ar-



SCENE FROM CREMORNE GARDENS—Shewn at the World's End Exhibition

[See page 28]

ranged the decoration of World's End Square and nearby streets which were hung with flags and bunting, while every window had a hand-painted green box, gay with flowers.

The blitzed St. John's Mission Hall was lent by the Vicar. Voluntary labour—beginning in March—repaired, partially reglazed, scrubbed, swept, decorated and transformed this almost derelict hall. Long strips of coloured muslin hid the damaged ceiling, while at either end arose replicas of Old Cremorne, one of its Booths (complete with Music Box and Mirrors) and the Chelsea Bun House. Local artists, including three from the Chelsea Polytechnic School of Art, designed and carried out the work from odds and ends of material, consulting old prints but adding modern skill and imagination. The Directors of Peter Jones lent wax figures to be dressed in period clothes to stand or sit among furniture from Chelsea homes. On one side, real Chelsea buns—warm and fresh daily—were served. And on the other, Nell Gwynn sat with her oranges. Down the centre were stands bearing pictures and prints by Turner, Whistler and Greaves, and photographs and plans of famous Chelsea landmarks. These last were of intense interest to local visitors, some of the older ones remembering the streets as they had been and adding stories of gardens and farms where now are houses—or rubble.

The present and the future were represented in models lent by the Chelsea Council of housing projects and a suggested "Re-designed Model of World's End Square" (as a memorial of the second World War) carried out by a local artist.

But the greatest of all sights for visitors from every Chelsea street and other parts of the world, were cases of Chelsea China, including the seven pieces lent by H.M. Queen Mary. Never before has there been collected together such a valuable and varied display of this china—made between 1745 and 1769 in the Kilns by Church Street and Justice Walk.

All the famous "Anchor Marks" were there. Fruit and flowers, human figures and animals, fine large vases and minia-

ture scent bottles. These were so set out and cleverly labelled by Frank Tilley that even experts could learn as well as admire.

It would be invidious to add other names to those here given and there is no room in this report. The exhibition catalogue with its coloured cover of a Chelsea figure, was bought and will be treasured by many. This catalogue contains acknowledgements and thanks to those who worked so wonderfully and with such results.

The Exhibition was opened at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, May 25th, by Dame Sybil Thorndike and remained open (by popular request) until 11 p.m. on the Saturday evening, May 29th. During that time over 7,000 visitors came in, of every age, many countries and occupations, and all it is hoped went away with an added knowledge and appreciation of Chelsea and particularly its western end.

JAMES II

Chelsea lost the struggle for the Grinling Gibbons statue of James II. Shortly before the Society's Annual General Meeting in October, 1947, it was learnt that the Ministry of Works proposed to re-site the displaced statue of James II on a small plot outside the National Gallery. Captain Dean, Adjutant to the Royal Hospital, addressed the meeting and stressed the importance of the part James II played in building the Hospital.

It is often assumed that Charles II, who founded the Hospital in 1682, also built it. In fact, owing to the shortage of funds, little had actually been accomplished before his death. Not only was it unfinished, but it was without any endowment or source of revenue. On succeeding to the throne, James II, faced with more projects on hand than money to pay for them, might well have abandoned the Royal Hospital. He did not do this, but cut down expenditure on other buildings, notably Winchester Palace, which had also been begun by Charles II.



STATUE OF JAMES II

Grinling Gibbons was commissioned by Tobias Rustat of Chelsea to make this statue as a companion to that of Charles II now in the Royal Hospital. The Office of Works resited the displaced statue in Trafalgar Square instead of in the grounds of the Royal Hospital as suggested by the Chelsea Society.

With acknowledgments to the Royal Commission

He was a good administrator and applied himself not only to the provision of funds, but also to seeing that the buildings were suitable.

It is sometimes assumed that the Hospital was designed as a whole; but this is not so. The original design was for the central block only. It was discovered that this was inadequate, and James II thereupon approved and put in hand two new courts, now known as Light House and Infirmary Courts, for the accommodation of an additional eighty pensioners and their staff. He also took a personal interest in approving the furnishings and hastening their provision so that waiting pensioners could the sooner enjoy the benefits of the accommodation.

The Grinling Gibbons statue of Charles II at the Royal Hospital is magnificently sited in Figure Court. It is the sole statue set in the middle of a noble court of almost contemporary architecture. Every year it is decorated on Oak Apple Day and forms part of the pensioners' impressive ceremony. The Charles II statue was cast in 1676, six years before the Royal Hospital was founded. It was originally gilded and set up in the Palace of Whitehall. When the Royal Hospital began to take shape, the obvious suitability of the surroundings to contain such a statue no doubt became apparent. The donor, Tobias Rustat, himself a Chelsea man, thereupon commissioned Grinling Gibbons to make a companion statue of James II. This replaced the Charles II statue in Whitehall, the latter being brought to its present site in Chelsea.

In both statues the Kings are shown in the dress of Roman Emperors. This treatment is interesting because it was done at the express wish of the monarchs themselves, the models being chosen from a selection. The folds of the togas and other features clearly indicate that the statues were intended to occupy some central position where they could be seen to advantage from all sides.

Unfortunately, the James II statue has never been as suitably sited as its Charles II companion. Poorly placed at the

back of the Banqueting Hall, it was moved in 1897 to Whitehall, near Gwydyr House, and in 1903 to St. James's Park near the Admiralty. These surroundings, however, were not ideal, for there was no defined court, avenue or vista in which the statue could fill the place of honour. These requirements, it was widely felt, would not be met by placing the statue on a small plot of ground outside the National Gallery.

The Society sent a reasoned statement of the case for placing the statue in the grounds of the Royal Hospital to the Minister of Works and a number of interested bodies. Support was given to the Society's views by Lord Lloyd and Lord de L'Isle in the House of Lords, and Mr. Strauss and Commander Noble in the Commons. Chelsea's claim to the statue was ably presented by the Mayor of Chelsea and others in correspondence in "The Times" which published a leader on the subject.

Although the Minister has been unable to accede to the Society's representations, he has stated that the National Gallery site is a temporary one and that the matter will be reconsidered at a later date. It is evident that the controversy has demonstrated a widespread appreciation of good statuary. In the words of "The Times" leader: "Sculpture and architecture are interdependent, and the most appropriate site for any statue with a claim to sculptural distinction is that which best sets off its qualities and which it, in its turn, can most suitably embellish."

WEST CHELSEA DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The West Chelsea Development Scheme was designed to deal with slum clearance in the area west of Milman's Street, bounded by the King's Road on the North, and the river on the South; the eastern boundary being Cremorne Road.

When it was generally known that the Borough Council had prepared a flexible plan which envisaged rebuilding the entire



Drawing Room at 109 Cheyne Walk for 50 years the home of Wilson Steer, O.M.

[See page 34]

With acknowledgments to the National Buildings Record



WEST CHELSEA RIVERSIDE—showing Nos. 105 to 119 Cheyne Walk

[See page 34]

With acknowledgments to the National Buildings Record

area in due course—with the exception of the flats in the World's End Passage—the Society decided to make a survey of the 18th and early 19th century terraces in Cheyne Walk.

The Society is greatly indebted to the National Buildings Record, with whose help a complete photographic record was made of the exteriors and interiors of these excellent houses, and also to Mr. John Britten-Catlin for his notes on the history of this lesser known end of Cheyne Walk.

Representations were made to the Borough Council by this and other amenities societies, culminating in a correspondence in "The Times" of which your Secretary's contribution is printed below.

Sir,

Several months ago the Chelsea Borough Council approached the Chelsea Society for its views on the preservation of the bomb-damaged Turner's house and other Cheyne Walk property which was within the area of the West Chelsea Development Scheme. The Society considered that Turner's house (No. 119 Cheyne Walk) was well worth preserving in its contemporary setting, and a survey of Nos. 105 to 119 Cheyne Walk revealed that the interiors of many of these charming eighteenth and early nineteenth century houses possessed features of architectural merit, and that they had been well maintained by their owner-occupiers. The views of this Society on the permanent preservation of Nos. 105 to 119 Cheyne Walk are shared by the London and other societies, and they are promised sympathetic consideration by the Chelsea Borough Council, which has itself always been interested in the preservation of Turner's house.

Lindsey House, scheduled as an ancient monument, which was mentioned by Mr. Sands and included in the photograph in your issue of March 3, is not threatened by the West Chelsea Development Scheme itself. If, however, the scheme as envisaged by the architect is car-

ried out in its entirety, it would make the Lindsey House block, in effect, a highway obstruction upon a redeveloped Cheyne Walk. For this reason, in addition to the others which have already been put forward, the gravest consideration must be given before disturbing the character of any section of this long, uneven frontage. There is every indication that the Borough Council is fully alive to these considerations and will succeed in reconciling the claims of vital slum clearance with those of an historic Borough. The Chelsea Society has reason to believe that the Council will make an early statement which will remove all grounds for anxiety.

Yours faithfully,

R. L. STEWART-JONES.

Honorary Secretary, Chelsea Society.

7th March, 1949.

On 27th April, 1949, the Chelsea Council agreed that Nos. 107-110 and 113-119 be omitted from the scheme and recommended for preservation.

THE CHELSEA SOCIETY — GENERAL FUND ACCOUNT

Statement of Income and Expenditure for the Year ended 31st March, 1949

39

INCOME	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
To Balance brought forward 1st April, 1948				217	6	8
„ Entrance Fees of Members and Associates				71	9	0
„ Donations				39	10	0
„ Interest on £200 3½% War Stock 1952/aft.				7	0	0
„ Summerson Lectures Receipts				54	11	0
„ World's End Art Exhibition Donations ...				25	5	0
„ Chelsea Borough Council (photographs) ...				6	8	0
„ Sales:—						
Annual Report ...		2	9			
Old Church Guides	1	3	0			
Postcards	3	10	0			
				4	15	9
				£426	5	5

EXPENDITURE	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
By Clerical Assistance ...				109	5	0
„ Stationery				13	12	9
„ Postages				5	6	9
„ Council of Civic Societies				4	4	0
„ Summerson Lectures ...				34	16	6
„ World's End Art Exhibition:—						
Chelsea Soc. Donat'n				25	0	0
Donations (per cont.)				25	5	0
„ Postcards Account ...				14	14	6
„ Sundries				15		0
„ Balance at Bank ...	192	8	4			
„ Cash in hand	17	7				
				193	5	11
				£426	5	5

NOTE.—The Certificates for £200 3½% War Stock 1952/aft. in the name of The Chelsea Society are held by Barclays Bank, Ltd., 348 King's Road, Chelsea, S.W.3.

May 30th, 1949.

WILFRED ELLISTON,
Hon. Treasurer.

Audited and found correct.

R. J. V. ASTELL,
Hon. Auditor.

THE REGINALD BLUNT MEMORIAL FUND ACCOUNT 1947—1948

INCOME		£	s.	d.	EXPENDITURE		£	s.	d.
To	Balance brought forward as at Apr. 1, 1947	13	5	3	By	Repayment to General Fund Account for Stationery & Postages, 1947	4	2	6
"	Post Office Savings Bank Deposit Interest, Dec. 31, 1947 ...	3	3	0	"	Balance, Dec. 31, 1948	16	11	3
"	Post Office Savings Bank Deposit Interest, Dec. 31, 1948 ...	3	4	6					
"	Transfer from General Fund Account ...	1	1	0					
		£20	13	9			£20	13	9

NOTE.—The sum of £125 0s. 0d. remains upon Deposit with the Post Office Savings Bank.

CHELSEA OLD CHURCH RESTORATION FUND ACCOUNT 1947—1948

INCOME		£	s.	d.	EXPENDITURE		£	s.	d.
To	Donation, July, 1947 ...	100	0	0	By	Transfer to Post Office Savings Bank, July, 1947	100	0	0
"	Post Office Savings Bank Deposit Interest, Dec. 31, 1947 ...	1	0	10	"	Balance, Dec. 31, 1948	3	11	4
"	Post Office Savings Bank Deposit Interest, Dec. 31, 1948 ...	2	10	6					
		£103	11	4			£103	11	4

NOTE.—The sum of £100 0s. 0d. remains upon Deposit with the Post Office Savings Bank.

May 30th, 1949.

WILFRED ELLISTON,
Hon. Treasurer.
 Audited and found correct.
 R. J. V. ASTELL,
Hon. Auditor.

THE CHELSEA SOCIETY

Statement of Income and Expenditure for the Year ended 31st March, 1948

41

INCOME				£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	EXPENDITURE				£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.					
To Balance brought forward 1st April, 1947							235	3	8			By Clerical Assistance ...				48	0	0						
„ Entrance Fees of Members and Associates							89	14	0			„ Stationery ...				17	7	6						
„ Donations ...							84	12	6			„ Postages ...				8	13	6						
„ "The Hat" (Collection)							26	5	0			„ Annual Reports ...				94	3	9						
„ Interest on £200 3½% War Stock 1952/aft.							7	0	0			„ Annual Meeting & Tea				29	9	4						
„ Sales:—												„ Autumn Exhibition ...				20	16	2						
Annual Report ...	2	0	9									„ Burial Ground Plan ...				31	10	0						
Old Church Guides		5	0									„ Balance at Bank ...	215	3	4									
Autumn Exhibition Catalogues ...	18	3	6									„ Cash in hand ...		2	3	4								
							20	9	3															
„ Reginald Blunt Memorial A/c refund							4	2	6															
							£467	6	11															

£467 6 11

£467 6 11

NOTE.—The Certificates for £200 3½% War Stock 1952/aft. in the name of The Chelsea Society are held by Barclays Bank, Ltd., 348 King's Road, Chelsea, S.W.3.

May 30th, 1949.

WILFRED ELLISTON,
Hon. Treasurer.

Audited and found correct.

R. J. V. ASTELL,
Hon. Auditor.

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