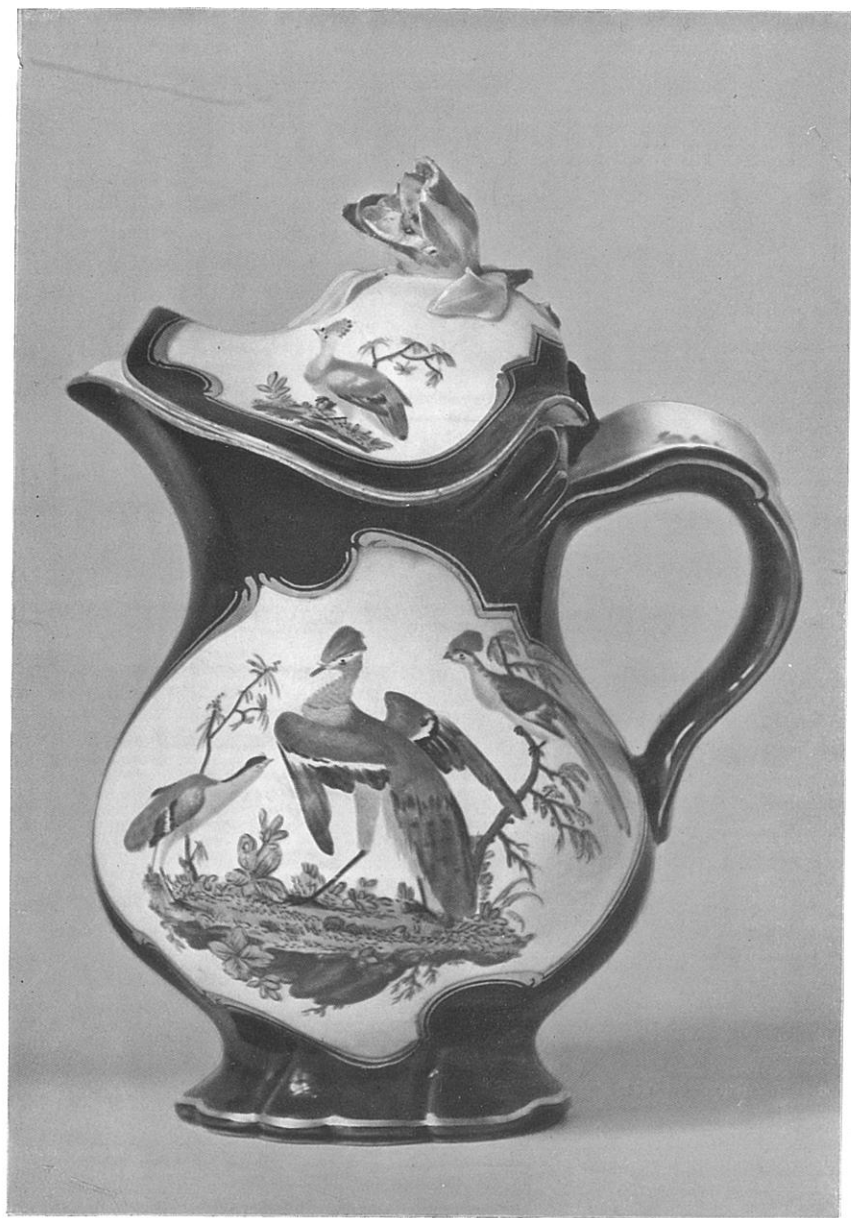


THE CHELSEA SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT 1953



Price Five Shillings



COVERED TOURNAI MILK JUG with rounded body showing the metal workers' influence. Very deep *bleu de roi* ground with rococo gilt-edged white reserves containing coloured *oiseaux imaginaires* on *terrasse* or perched on branches. Gilded rococo handle and a coloured flower knob on the lid. Height 13 cm. From the collection of Baron R. Gendebien, several of whose pieces were shown at the Loan Exhibition of Tournai and Chelsea Porcelain, 1953.

See pages 8-9 and 32-40.

Reproduced by courtesy of
Les Etablissements Casterman de Tournai

THE CHELSEA SOCIETY

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

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OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY

- (1) To maintain all features of Chelsea having beauty or historical interest, unless a proved necessity requires their removal.
- (2) To preserve the open spaces for the health of the community.
- (3) Where clearances are necessary, to promote the construction of substituted buildings that will be a credit to Chelsea.
- (4) To prevent the disfigurement of streets and open spaces by ugly advertisements or otherwise.
- (5) To protect the residents from smoke, noises and other nuisances arising from industrial premises; and generally.
- (6) To preserve and amplify the amenities of Chelsea.

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

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

CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to all who agree with the objects of the Society, on payment of either

- (a) a life subscription, without an entrance fee, of £5 5s. 0d.; or
- (b) an entrance fee of 10s. and annual subscription of 10s. which, it is requested, might be paid by banker's order.

It is hoped that, whenever possible, more than the prescribed minimum subscription will be given.

The subscription years runs from the 1st February.

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THE CHELSEA SOCIETY

Chairman's Report for 1953

DEATH OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN MARY

Late on the evening of 24th March, 1953, Her Majesty Queen Mary, the Queen Mother, passed peacefully away at Marlborough House. Members of the Chelsea Society felt a deep sense of loss for Her late Majesty, who had always shown a gracious interest in their work and had expressed appreciation of some of their Annual Reports. On the following day your Chairman on behalf of the Society recorded an expression of sympathy by signing the book at Buckingham Palace provided for the purpose.

HER LATE MAJESTY QUEEN MARY'S INTEREST IN THE WORK OF THE SOCIETY

Her late Majesty Queen Mary's interest in the work of the Society extended over a long period, and was an inspiration to the whole cause of fostering and preserving the things of beauty which give pleasure to the locality. In June, 1924, the Society's Founder, Reginald Blunt, organised the first important Exhibition of Chelsea China at the Town Hall and edited the *Cheyne Book of Chelsea China and Pottery* (to become a standard book on its subject). The book was prefaced by these words :—

To
THE QUEEN
by Her Majesty's gracious permission
This Record
of an Exhibition in which
she was keenly interested
is loyally
Dedicated.

Most of those responsible for this exhibition and its record formed the nucleus from which the Chelsea Society was founded three years later in 1927. At the first meet-

ing of the Council of the Society after their foundation, it was decided to hold an exhibition illustrative of Chelsea, past and present. His Majesty King George V headed the list of Exhibitors and Her Majesty Queen Mary visited "The Chelsea Exhibition 1927", as it was called, on 16th June of that year, making many interested enquiries about the pictures and Chelsea China. (See *Annual Report* 1928). In 1948 Her late Majesty graciously lent seven pieces from her famous collection of Chelsea China to the Worlds End Exhibition of Old Chelsea and visited it upon its opening day. She also lent to the Loan Exhibition of Chelsea China at the Royal Hospital in 1951 some remarkable pieces including 53 little Chelsea seals. She visited the Exhibition and spent a long time examining the exhibits, and later graciously accepted from the Society a copy of Dr. G. C. Williamson's *Imperial Russian Dinner Service*, describing the famous Dinner Service decorated in Chelsea at the workshop which Thomas Bentley, partner of Josiah Wedgwood, established in 1770 and which continued to 1785 on a site now occupied by Glebe Place.

The Chelsea Society will miss the gracious interest of Her late Majesty and the influence she had upon the popular regard for those things of beauty, dignity and historic importance which it is the aim and object of the Society to preserve.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

In the afternoon of 24th March, 1953, the Annual General Meeting of the Chelsea Society for 1952 took place at Crosby Hall. Minutes of the meeting are to be found on pages

TOURNAI AND CHELSEA PORCELAIN EXHIBITION

His Royal Highness the Prince de Liège graciously attended the *vernissage* of the Tournai and Chelsea Porcelain Exhibition on 3rd June, 1953 and expressed great interest in the porcelain of both factories. The Exhibition was the Belgian Institute's contribution to the celebrations

of Coronation summer and was sponsored by the Belgian Ministry of Education and the Anglo-Belgian Cultural Convention in close association with the Chelsea Society. It was organised by a Committee in each country. The Chairman in Belgium was Madame Faider-Feytmans, Ph.D., Conservateur of the Musée de Mariemont (Hainaut), who also wrote the article on Tournai porcelain for the catalogue. The Hon. Secretary in Belgium was Madame Kitty Rueff and the Advisor to the Exhibition Monsieur Lucien Delplace. In England the Chairman of the Committee was Monsieur Jean Nieuwenhuys, Counsellor (now Minister) at the Belgian Embassy, with Professor J. Dechamps (President of the Belgian Institute) as Vice-Chairman. Monsieur Jacques Wauters was Hon. Treasurer, and the Hon. Secretary Mrs. Basil Marsden-Smedley. The Chelsea Society was represented on this Committee by your Chairman. The catalogue, which was copiously illustrated, was edited by Mr. William King, who also wrote the article in it on Chelsea Porcelain. His Excellency the Belgian Ambassador in London, the Marquis du Parc Locmaria wrote the foreword in which he paid tribute to the work of the Chelsea Society. The blocks for the Tournai illustrations were lent by Monsieur Louis Casterman of Tournai, a member of the Belgian Committee and publisher of the standard work on Tournai porcelain, namely Soil et Delplace *La Manufacture Impériale et Royale de Porcelaine de Tournay*. Monsieur Casterman has generously allowed the use of two of these blocks in the present Report. (See Frontispiece and page 36).

The private view was held on 4th June, and the Exhibition was open to the public from the 5th June to 4th July. During that time, M. Nieuwenhuys gave two parties after the Exhibition had closed for the evening. About 3,000 people visited the Exhibition. There were excellent Press reviews, and some pieces were shown on a Television programme.

Several members of the Society loaned exhibits, and many acted as stewards. A full account of the Exhibition with illustrations appears on pages 32 to 40.

PORCELAIN DECORATED WITH SIR HANS SLOANE'S PLANTS

It is a point of some interest to know how the variously decorated products of the Chelsea porcelain works originated and were described and sold in the eighteenth century. After considerable research on behalf of the Society a photograph has been obtained of an advertisement in *Faulkner's Dublin Journal* July 1-4, 1758, and is here reproduced for the first time. The descriptive term "Sir Hans Sloane's plants", applied to Chelsea china decorated with botanical specimens, is familiar nowadays in every exhibition and sale catalogue. A very fine pair of "Sir Hans Sloane" flower plates, belonging to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, and lent to the

EXTRACT FROM FAWKENER'S DUBLIN JOURNAL
1st July, 1758.

JUST imported, to be sold by Auction, at Mr. Young's Rooms opposite J. Lucas's on Cork-hill, on Tuesday the 4th of July, and the following Days, a curious Collection of ornamental China Figures of the best Models, Baskets, Leaves, Fruit, &c. all beautifully enamelled; a most magnificent Eparange in three Parts, on Looking-glass Frames, ornamented with fine Flowers, made and enamelled from Nature, with Fruit Figures, &c. for a Desert; some of the most curious Branches and Gerandoles, ornamented with Flowers and Figures, yet exposed to Sale, three very fine Tureens of the Chelsea China, one of the Model of a Boar's Head, and one in curious Plants, with Table Plates, Soup Plates, and Desert Plates, enamelled from Sir Hans Sloane's Plants, some beautiful Essence Pots in a new Taste, with Jars, Beakers, &c. &c. — Note, Sundry Sorts of useful China. The Sale to begin at 12 o'Clock. Catalogues to be had at the Place of Sale.

Text as follows:

Just imported, to be sold by Auction, at Mr. Young's Rooms opposite Lucas's on Cork-hill, on Tuesday the 4th of July, and the following Days, a curious Collection of ornamental China Figures of the best Models, Baskets, Leaves, Fruit, &c. all beautifully enamelled; a most magnificent Eparange in three parts, on Looking-glass Frames, ornamented with fine Flowers, made and enamelled from Nature, with Fruit Figures, &c. for a Desert; some of the most curious Branches and Gerandoles, ornamented with Flowers and Figures, yet exposed to Sale, three very fine Tureens of the Chelsea China, one of the Model of a Boar's Head, and one in curious Plants with Table Plates, Soup Plates, and Desert Plates, enamelled from Sir Hans Sloane's Plants, some beautiful Essence Pots in a new Taste, with Jar, Beakers, &c., &c. — Note, Sundry Sorts of useful China. The Sale to begin at 12 o'Clock. Catalogues to be had at the Place of Sale.

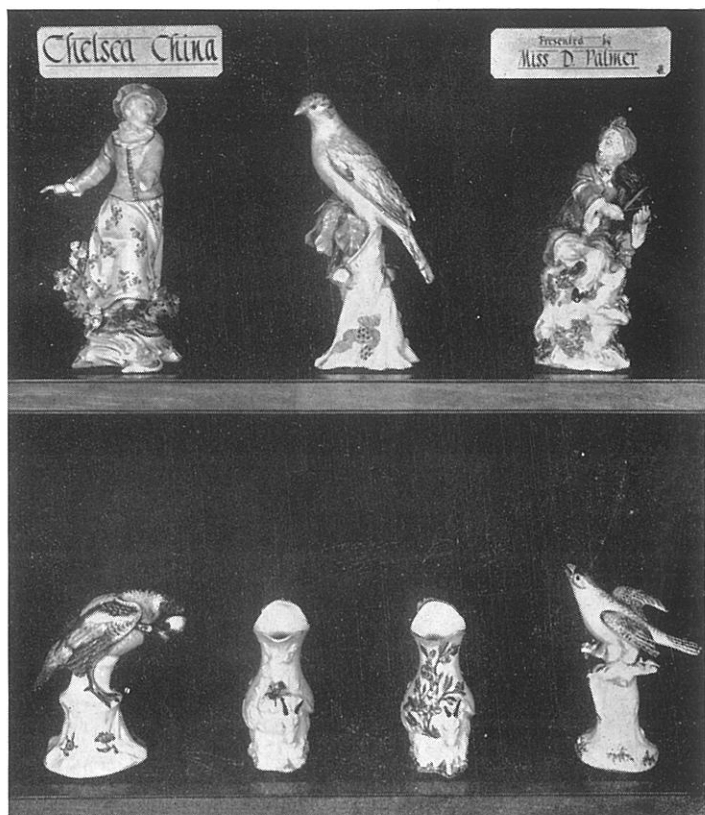
Chelsea China Exhibition, 1951, was illustrated in the *Annual Report*, 1952, on page 24. Its re-introduction as a modern descriptive term is doubtless due to the research of Mr. M. S. Dudley Westropp, formerly of the National Museum of Ireland. He passed the information on to the late Dr. Bellamy Gardner who included it in a Paper read to the English Porcelain Circle on 19th January, 1931 (*Transactions* No. IV 1932, page 22). Hard by the Chelsea China factory there were not only the Sir Hans Sloane collection of botanical specimens (after 1753 transferred following his Will and an Act of Parliament to a new institution created for this purpose, namely the British Museum), but also the famous Physic Garden. In 1722 Sir Hans Sloane had shown himself the patron of botanical study in protecting this garden by converting the tenancy into a perpetual lease, subject to conditions ensuring the growth and collection of botanical specimens. The Physic Garden under his patronage flourished and became a centre of botanical study. In 1736, Linnaeus visited the Garden. In the *Rambler*, No. 19 for Tuesday, 22nd May, 1750 Dr. Johnson described the visit of Polyphilus to the Garden to see a new plant in flower. It was used by many celebrated flower painters. It was from Physic Garden botanical specimens that Elizabeth Blackwell laboriously compiled her exquisitely illustrated *Curious Herbal*, 1737. Dr. Bellamy Gardner mentioned in his paper, referred to above, in 1724 Philip Miller, "Gardener to the Worshipful Company of Apothecaries at their Botanic Gardens at Chelsea, published a compendious *Gardener's Dictionary* which obtained a European vogue; and later on, with the assistance of Sir Hans Sloane, two folio volumes entitled *Figures of Plantes*, containing 300 coloured pictures of examples in the Physic Garden, many of the engraved plates being dated 1755." Comparing certain Chelsea plates from the collection of Colonel and Mrs. Dickson with the engravings, Dr. Bellamy Gardner went on to say "one, the *Acanthus spinosus*, Plate IX, was discovered to have been copied in every detail, including the dissections of the plant, from Plate VII (engraved by T. Jefferys, and published according to

the Act by P. Miller April 29th, 1755) Vol. i, of Miller's later book." One of the few surviving copies of this book, the full title of which is *Figures of the most Beautiful, Useful and Uncommon Plantes* [1755-]1760, was shewn at the Chelsea China Exhibition, 1951, open at the page illustrating the *Acanthus spinosus*. An Acanthus plate has been acquired by the Victoria and Albert Museum and is at present on view in room 139. The paintings on the other Chelsea plates examined by Dr. Bellamy Gardner "were found to be portions of plants blended into very beautiful sprays, but not capable of botanical classification, nor corresponding with Philip Miller's illustrations." Dr. Bellamy Gardner then suggested that "the probable explanation of this want of precision is that Philip Miller supplied the portions of the fresh plants from the garden to his own artists, G. D. Ehret, R. Lancake, and others, and to the painters of the Chelsea porcelain factory about the same time, and that the latter grouped them into designs without regard to botanical classification or the future difficulties of research."

MISS DOROTHY PALMER'S GIFT OF CHELSEA CHINA TO THE BOROUGH

Miss Dorothy Palmer, a member of the Society, has most generously presented seven pieces of Chelsea China to the Borough, to enable them to be permanently on view to the public. These were the pieces which she lent to the Society in 1947 to be shown in the former Chelsea "show" house at Number 3 Cheyne Walk. They are now to be seen in the Victoria Gallery at the Chelsea Public Library. The Society may recall that in 1952 regret was expressed at the decision of the National Trust to close this "show" house and dispose of the freehold (see *Annual Report*, 1952, page 19). It will be remembered that the Society had undertaken responsibilities through Mr. Stewart-Jones, the then Honorary Secretary, in the collection and arrangement of suitable 18th century *objets d'art* including examples of Chelsea China, notable among which were Miss Palmer's seven pieces. But for Miss Palmer's generosity, there would

have been no place in the Borough where Chelsea's most famous product was on view to the public. It is now possible to see at close quarters specimens of the Chelsea factory's finest work. Two goat and bee jugs are coloured and of very fine modelling. There are three birds of brilliant



Miss Dorothy Palmer's gift of Chelsea Porcelain

plumage and two figures. One of these figures is a gracefully posed girl in coloured dress. The other, a very rare model, is a blue-clad boy playing the violin. It was lent by the Borough Council to the Tournai Chelsea Exhibition, where it was the subject of outstanding interest.

THE CHELSEA POTTERY

Members of the Society will remember the occasion when Mr. and Mrs. Rawnsley and Mr. Buchanan kindly entertained them soon after the Chelsea Pottery first opened in Radnor Walk (*Annual Report*, 1952, pages 16, 41 and 43 with illustration at page 42). It was then thought that the pottery would develop as an *atelier libre* similar to those so well known to artists and students in Paris. In fact it is the production side that has developed furthest. A new



Earthenware plate, diameter 7", with engraved decoration of fern foliage, painted in colours. Mark incised, E. II R. Chelsea Pottery. 1953.

Chelsea industry has begun. The emporia of London display Rawnsley pottery in great variety. Cases for export trundle away from narrow Radnor Walk. The Victoria and Albert Museum acquired and is showing four pieces of pottery. Other acquisitions have been made by Museums in New York and Amsterdam. For those who like pottery as distinct from porcelain, and they are by no means everyone, the products of the Chelsea pottery will prove of

great interest. The thick and rustic appearance characteristic of so much pottery has been avoided; some of the dishes and bowls are miraculously thin. Like all similar establishments, the Chelsea Pottery has its own secrets of glaze. Again, like all Chelsea ventures into the world of ceramics, the mainspring of the enterprise is the availability of Chelsea artists. The eighteenth century Chelsea china works made use of the concentration of potential decorators in Chelsea and it was largely this same plentiful supply of artists that brought Thomas Bentley, Josiah Wedgwood's partner, to set up a Wedgwood decorating establishment in 1770 on a site now occupied by Glebe Place. As with all pottery and porcelain establishments, the quality of the design depends on the quality of the artists; some are good and some not so good. It is too early yet to say much about the quality of the work of the different artists; but there is no doubt that many of the productions of the Chelsea Pottery show great promise. The Chelsea Pottery Dish illustrated opposite was made in 1953. The glazing is peculiar to Mr. Rawnsley's establishment and is described by him as "inlay and overlay process." The design consists of the following wild ferns, Black Spleenwort *Asplenium adiantum-nigrum* and Hart's Tongue *Scolopendrium vulgare* on a speckled ground.

PROPOSALS TO BUILD ON THE CHEYNE WALK BOMB SITE

The residents in Petyt Place have complained to the Society and to the Town Planning Authorities that their view across the Cheyne Walk bomb site to the river will be obstructed if the demolished houses are rebuilt. The sites of Nos. 65 to 77 Cheyne Walk and 2 and 4 Danvers Street were at first intended to be laid out as open space. There was much to be said for this course as there is a shortage of open spaces in the locality. Moreover, there is something to be said for surrounding the old Church with open space so that it can be better seen and also providing a view of Crosby Hall. The Society's *Annual Report* 1951,

LOMBARD
STREET,
LOOKING EAST,
IN 1862.

Drawing by
Walter Greaves
in the possession
of the
Chelsea Society,
and now on
permanent loan
to Crosby Hall

(See page 19)



page 14, shews among the gifts to the Society, a war-time drawing by A. S. G. Butler, F.R.I.B.A., illustrating suggested proposals for rebuilding the environs of the old Church. It was reproduced as a frontispiece to the late Mr. Geoffrey Hobson's *Art after the War*. In the drawing a substantial area of open space is shewn immediately opposite the old Church. On the other hand, it should be remembered that, until the bomb fell, the site provided homes for many Chelsea people and, at the present time, it must be the wish of the Society to see that as many similar homes as possible are restored, provided it can be done with suitable regard to the amenities of the locality. The draft *Administrative County of London Development Plan*, 1951, at first shewed the whole bomb site zoned for open space, but, on reconsideration, the London County Council re-zoned it for residential purposes. At a later stage when the draft plan came to be deposited with the Minister of Housing and Local Government, he made a Direction, the effect of which was to postpone any rebuilding on any part of this site pending his decision as to its future use. He has in fact withheld consent to an application to build 2 houses and 2 flats on the sites of Nos. 67 to 70 Cheyne Walk, opposite the West Door of the old Church and immediately in front of Petyt Place.

CHEYNE WALK BOMB SITE GARDENS

One of the happiest transformations in Chelsea has been the flower gardens that replaced the rubbish-strewn bomb site in Cheyne Walk between Danvers Street and Old Church Street. It will be remembered that in 1948 the Society suggested to the Chelsea Borough Council that if they could come to an arrangement with the Sloane Stanley Estate and provide some soil, the Society would undertake to find volunteers to convert the derelict bomb site into a garden. Thereupon the Borough Council arranged to lease part of the Cheyne Walk bomb site at a nominal rent from the Sloane Stanley Estate, first for three years from 29th

RIVER FRONT
OF THE
HOUSES ON
THE SOUTH
SIDE OF
LOMBARD
STREET IN
1860

Drawing by
Walter Greaves
in the possession
of the
Chelsea Society
and now on
permanent loan
to Crosby Hall

(See page 19)



September, 1948, and thereafter for the same term from 29th September, 1951. During this period the original area was enlarged. The Society has been very fortunate in their selection of volunteer gardeners. Each has a separate plot and the show of flowers during the season has been phenomenal. The arrangement has suited all parties. The Borough Council have had the bomb site brightened up at negligible cost, the ploholders had the fun of making the gardens, and the public enjoyed the fine show of flowers.

HISTORY OF THE CHEYNE WALK BOMB SITE

Proposals about what to do with the bomb site serve as a reminder of controversies that have raged about "this most beautiful corner of Old Chelsea", as Sir William Orpen described it, writing to *The Times* in 1928 in a fruitless attempt to avert the destruction of Lombard Terrace. Lombard Terrace was the old name for the picturesque row of houses the destruction of which was begun in 1929 to make way for the very undistinguished Terrace later known as Nos. 65 to 77, Cheyne Walk, so soon to be destroyed by the bomb in 1941. The Terrace faced on to Lombard Street, which was incorporated into the widening when the Chelsea Embankment was built. One of the Walter Greaves pictures presented to the Chelsea Society by Mr. George Cross, and now on loan to Crosby Hall, shows old Lombard Street painted from somewhere by what is now the Cheyne Walk frontage to Crosby Hall, then called Duke Street. A reproduction of this picture is given on page 16. Another Walter Greaves' picture reproduced on page 18, also given to the Society by Mr. George Cross and also on loan to Crosby Hall, illustrates the river frontage of the buildings on the South side of Lombard Street. These picturesque riverside buildings were pulled down to make way for the embankment in 1872. Protests against the destruction of Lombard Terrace were referred to in the *Annual Report*, 1928 at page 6, and the *Annual Report*, 1929 at page 8, with illustrations at pages 4 and 9.



CHEYNE WALK BY THE OLD CHURCH IN 1817

From an etching by W. W. Burgess of a painting by Mrs. Eglington Margaret Pearson (d. 1823), Nos. 62 and 63 Cheyne Walk are the two houses next to the Old Church referred to below.

Reproduced by permission of Chelsea Public Library

CHEYNE WALK HOUSES BY THE OLD CHURCH

Great tribute is due to the Regional Hospital Board and the other Hospital Authorities for improving the dilapidated appearance of the two bombed houses, Nos. 62 and 63 Cheyne Walk, to the east of the old church. These two houses became part of the Cheyne Hospital for Children in 1908, which, in turn, was taken over with other hospitals by the Ministry of Health. The view was expressed in the *Annual Report*, 1952, that with the old church rising from its bombed ruins, it would be desirable that something should be done about the neighbouring buildings. The

two houses were built in the late seventeenth century, but had since undergone many architectural changes and finally had sustained bomb damage. Towards the end of 1952, the Hospital architect advised that both houses should be pulled down, since No. 63 was already largely demolished and, it would be a very expensive and uneconomical undertaking to repair No. 62. The Society then consulted the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, and together they decided to call in Mr. John MacGregor, F.S.A., F.R.I.B.A., to inspect the premises. His report, for which the Societies are much indebted, showed that the roof and walls of No. 62 were sound, and that there was no reason why demolition need take place. As an immediate measure the building was made weatherproof, and steps were taken to see that it was repainted and the blank party wall with No. 63 was properly rendered. Thus the original melancholy proposals gave way to meeting the Society's wishes in full with the utmost good will on all sides. The houses as they appeared in 1817 are illustrated opposite.

PROTECTION OF THE GARDEN STRIP IN UPPER CHEYNE ROW.

The Society, at the instance of Dr. de Beer and others, made representations to the Borough Council about guard-posts for the recently constructed garden strip by the Holy Redeemer Church in Upper Cheyne Row. It was explained that the Society was concerned to see that this garden, now that it has been laid out, was not spoiled. It will be remembered that Dr. de Beer gave the Mountain Ash *Pyrus Aucuparia*, now planted in the garden, the remainder of the trees, (of which the Japanese Witch-Hazel *Hamamelis Japonica*, has died), coming from the Borough Council. Hitherto the garden had been protected by low concrete guard-posts which had been broken, presumably by motor cars. The Society felt that, if this garden was to remain a garden at all, it would have to be permanently protected against parking cars by guard-posts. It was not considered

that the temporary concrete guard-posts were suitable either in strength or appearance. It was suggested that the old "cannon" guard-post at the corner of Glebe Place and Upper Cheyne Row was both substantial and suitable to the character of the locality. The Borough Council later installed guard-posts of the kind suggested along the frontage of this garden.

CHRIST CHURCH ORGAN RESTORATION FUND

The Council of the Society have considered the plight of the 1779 George England Organ removed to Christ Church, Chelsea, from St. Michael's, Queenhithe, in 1876, and think it important it should be preserved. They support the appeal for £5,000 to restore the Christ Church Organ, including modernising the action. Cheques should be made payable to the Christ Church (Chelsea) Organ Fund and addressed to :—

The Treasurer, The Hon Sir Albert Napier, K.C.B., Q.C.,
16, Cheyne Gardens,
Chelsea, S.W.3.

An article by Sir Albert Napier appears on pages 41 and 42.

BI-CENTENARY OF SIR HANS SLOANE— MEMORIAL PLAQUE

It will be recalled from the *Annual Report*, 1952 page 12, that the Society had asked the London County Council if they would consider placing a plaque on the King's Road front of the Old Burial Ground to commemorate the bi-centenary of Sir Hans Sloane on 11th January, 1953.

The London County Council are to be congratulated on at once accepting the suggestion. As a result a plaque has been placed on the brick pier at the south east corner of the Old Burial Ground. The inscription is as follows :—

The ground to the West of this building was given to the Parish of Chelsea in 1733 by Sir Hans Sloane, President of the Royal Society. Born 1660, died 1753.

UNVEILING OF MEMORIAL PLAQUE TO SIR HANS SLOANE

On 8th October, the Chelsea Society in co-operation with the Welfare Committee of the London County Council arranged an open air meeting, in the Old Burial Ground in the King's Road, to commemorate the Hans Sloane bi-centenary and unveil the plaque.

The Society issued invitations to their members, members of the Borough Council, prominent Chelsea residents, all the old people of Kingsmead (the large L.C.C. home adjoining the old burial ground), the Trustees of the British Museum and other distinguished Museum representatives. Members of the Society welcomed the guests among whom were Professor and Mrs. A. V. Hill, the former a Trustee of the British Museum and a Fellow of the Royal Society who had kindly undertaken to unveil the plaque, and the latter a notable worker for the welfare of the elderly; the Marquess of Cambridge, Sovereign's Trustee of the British Museum; Mrs. Iris Bonham, Chairman of the L.C.C. Welfare Committee; and Mrs. Noble, wife of the Member of Parliament for Chelsea. Among the members of the Society were Earl Cadogan, the President, who is also a descendant of Sir Hans Sloane and a Trustee of the British Museum, and Dr. de Beer, the Director of the British Museum, South Kensington, and author of *Sir Hans Sloane and the British Museum*, reviewed below.

Speaking from a platform at the east side of the Old Burial Ground, well away from the noise of traffic, Captain Townsend, Deputy Mayor of Chelsea, first explained the origin of the plaque. Your Chairman then welcomed the company, and Professor Hill gave an address, an account of which occurs at page 43. The company then processed

to the plaque, and Professor Hill pulled the cord which unveiled it. Afterwards Professor and Mrs. Hill, some members of the Society, and distinguished guests were entertained to tea by the Matron at Kingsmead, which they afterwards inspected. No account would be complete without a word of praise to Mr. Waspe, the Warden of Kingsmead and his staff for their unstinted efforts to ensure that this commemoration was suitably acclaimed by the public. It was a happy thought to include all the old people from Kingsmead, for in giving the land for a burial ground Sir Hans Sloane, with due regard for the needs of the living as well as the dead, had also included the land on which Kingsmead now stands. The visitors and the old people chatted to one another, and together paid tribute to the Chelsea benefactor who died 200 years ago. The occasion will be remembered for the friendly gathering as well as for the plaque.

SIR HANS SLOANE'S BIOGRAPHY

Dr. de Beer's life of Sir Hans Sloane fortunately far exceeds in scope the limitations of its title *Sir Hans Sloane and the British Museum*. It is, as one would expect, a scholarly work and gives a complete picture of the diverse interests of this great Chelsea figure of the eighteenth century. It shows Sloane the botanist, the scientist, the traveller and the collector; Sloane the Chelsea landlord and humanitarian, championing the grievances of neighbours and donating property for public purposes; Sloane the physician. Dr. de Beer illustrates this biography with fascinating stories from contemporary correspondence and other original sources. Indeed, Dr. de Beer deserves the special thanks of the Society for his scrupulous habit of giving properly referenced documentary proofs of his statements, which will prove indispensable to future Chelsea historians. For its Notes and Appendices alone this biography would prove valuable; for the rest, it is an extremely readable work of particular interest to Chelsea people.

DEMOLITION OF MARKHAM SQUARE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

The destruction of Markham Square Congregational Church removes one more notable feature from the Chelsea landscape. In the past this religious centre held a great place in the Chelsea community, and the tall spire of this Church emphasised to the neighbourhood its importance



CHELSEA NEW CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, MARKHAM-SQUARE.

and its meaning. The Foundation Stone of the Church was laid on 5th October, 1858, and the Church was opened in 1860, the first pastor being a Rev. Clifford Hooper. The Building was designed by John Tarring of Bucklersbury and built by Myers of Lambeth. (See illustration above). It was in the Gothic style, and cruciform in plan, the transepts

extending some five feet beyond the nave. There was accommodation in the main church for a congregation of 1,150, and a gallery for the choir and organ. The overall height of the spire was 138 feet. The basement below ground level was intended for Sunday school rooms and general church purposes. Recently the proprietors offered it for sale. After several attempts to attract purchasers who would use the building for some commercial or scholastic purpose, it was finally disposed of as a building site. It is always sad to see a landmark which has worked its way into the affections of the community disappear. It seems a pity that at least the spire could not have been preserved.

PLANS FOR NEW HOUSES IN MARKHAM SQUARE

The new proprietors, having demolished the Markham Square Congregational Church, proposed to build a row of six houses on the site. If development had to take place at all (and it is assumed it did) rebuilding with a row of houses would appear to be the most suitable use to which the site could be put. Nevertheless the Society took exception to the first detailed plans and elevations for such houses. This site is one of the most desirable in Chelsea since, though centrally situated, it is quiet with a southeasterly outlook over the Square. The Square itself consists of small manageable houses which are much in demand at the present time. The Church site has the additional advantage that underground accommodation for cars is possible with access from the street behind. The Square garden, though long and narrow, is attractive and well kept, and any buildings on the Church site must close the vista and consequently be of architectural importance. The houses, as first planned, were of two storeys, and it was the view of the Society that the proportions appeared mean and constricted and were unsuitable for the locality. They also took exception to the external elevation. Too much attention appeared to have been paid to conformity with

the rest of the Markham Square houses. It was felt that these were desirable for their size, convenience, location, quietness and the Square garden, but to a less extent for their appearance. Moreover, the Church site was sufficiently separated from the buildings on either side to be suitable for a design in contemporary idiom. The skyline could well have been as high as the other houses in the Square. These considerations were referred to the Town Planning Authority and, at a later stage, more satisfactory plans were submitted with houses of three instead of two storeys, and more commodious internal planning.

SLOANE SQUARE FOUNTAIN

On 26th October, 1953, Sir Gerald Kelly, P.R.A., inaugurated the fountain in Sloane Square which had been designed by Mr. Gilbert Ledward, R.A. Sir Edward Maufe, R.A. designed the moulding of the retaining wall of the pool. Members of the Society attended by invitation of the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of Chelsea together with a representative gathering from the Royal Academy, The Chelsea Arts Club and many distinguished Chelsea people. Unfortunately, Sir Gerald's opening address could not be heard above the noise of the traffic, because the loudspeaker broke down. On the following day *The Times* paid tribute to the charm of fountains and this one in particular in a fourth leader entitled *Water Bewitched*. Among the impressions gained from the comments of those present was a feeling that the scale and colour of the fountain was well suited to its setting among the trees in Sloane Square at the axis of the approach roads. The white film of water falling over the lip of the vase gave a much needed sense of movement to the otherwise lifeless expanse of pavement. Sir Gerald expressed appreciation of the way in which the sculptor had overcome the difficulties of designing a figure to be seen from all sides. Lastly all concerned are to be congratulated on having, by laying out the square with pavement and by choosing a fountain,



FOUNTAIN IN SLOANE SQUARE

Sir Gerald Kelly, President of the Royal Academy, speaking at the
inauguration ceremony (See page 27)

Reproduced by courtesy of Sport and General Press Agency Ltd.

and in particular this fountain, as the central feature, retained its essential difference from other squares in London, namely its continental character. An account of how this came about was given in the *Annual Report 1952* on pages 13 and 15. *An Architect's appreciation of the Fountain in Sloane Square* by Mr. Howard V. Lobb, C.B.E., F.R.I.B.A. occurs on page 44 and an illustration on page 28.

VANDALISM IN SLOANE SQUARE

Some members have expressed concern that the original green *patina* of the bronze figure and base of the Sloane Square fountain turned brown a day or two after the inauguration ceremony had taken place. It appeared that on the night of 5th November, 1953 some person or persons unknown, possibly misguided Guy Fawkes celebrants, threw some chemical into the pool. Somehow or other, either by being thrown there, or by percolating through the pump, which circulates the water over and over again, some of the chemical found its way on to the bronze, removed the green *patina*, which had been artificially prepared at the foundry, and caused the present unpleasant discolouration. Experts have no experience of the effect of this chemical on bronze statutory and the best course would seem to be to wait and see what effect the atmosphere will have in course of time. It is possible that the green *patina* may return of its own accord; more likely, however, the London atmosphere will turn it black. Few would support leaving the statue in its present brown state or in a state blackened by London atmosphere. There are, however, strong advocates for polishing the statue, as an alternative to restoring the green *patina*, until it becomes a rich, shiny brown like the lovely Japanese bronzes. Periodical polishing would, of course, add to the cost of maintenance. On the other hand, the green *patina* could be restored at no great cost and no maintenance. An experienced expert could probably do the work in two days. Members of the Society are invited to express views on how they think the

bronze surface of the fountain should be treated in order to give some guidance in the event of the Society making representations to the Borough Council on the subject. There would seem to be a regrettable failure by members of the public who should know better to distinguish between, on the one hand, marking festive occasions by harmless demonstrations and, on the other, "celebrating" by wanton acts of vandalism. Too often acts of vandalism are tolerated, if not "excused" on the grounds that they are all part of the Guy Fawkes or Boat Race tradition. It is most important to arouse public resentment against the damaging of public monuments by way of celebrating festive occasions.

FOUNDATION OF THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

The Chelsea Society was consulted by the promoters of the new Kensington Society about the organisation and running of a local Amenity Society. The Kensington Society held its inaugural meeting on 13th October, 1953. Before the meeting took place, the good wishes of the Society for the success of their venture were conveyed to the Kensington Society.

MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

The Society was represented by Captain Dean, as guest speaker, at a luncheon of the Rotary Club of Camberwell on 11th February, and by your Chairman at the Annual General Meeting of the Council for Visual Education on 13th April, 1953.

NEW MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OF THE SOCIETY

Mr. A. C. Richmond, C.B.E. and Captain E. L. Warre have accepted invitations to join the Council of the Society.

HONOURS AND APPOINTMENTS

Among members of the Society to receive Honours and Appointments, Mary, Duchess of Devonshire, C.B.E., has been appointed Mistress of the Robes; Sir Arthur Salter, G.B.E., K.C.B., has been raised to the peerage as The Lord Salter; Sir Norman Brook, G.C.B., has been sworn of the Privy Council; Miss, now Dame Catherine Fulford, L.C.C., has been honoured with the D.B.E., Mr. John Hayward has been awarded the C.B.E., and Mrs. Ernest Gillick the O.B.E.

OBITUARY

The Society will have heard with deep regret of the death of Lord Aberconway, Bt., C.B.E., L.L.D., J.P., Hon. A.R.I.B.A., President of the Royal Horticultural Society.

Loan Exhibition
of
Tournai and Chelsea Porcelain
June, 1953

by HESTER MARSDEN-SMEDLEY

The Belgian Institute is housed at 6 Belgrave Square in premises built for days of spacious entertaining. The two first floor rooms, with their wide windows and high ceilings, made a fine setting for the Exhibition of Tournai and Chelsea Porcelain. Son Altesse Royale le Prince de Liège, attended by Their Excellencies The Belgian Ambassador and the Marquise du Parc de Locmaria, Monsieur Janssens, Belgian Minister of Finance, Monsieur Jean Nieuwenhuys, Counsellor at the Belgian Embassy and Chairman of the Exhibition Committee, and many representative Belgians, visited the *vernissage* on June 3rd, 1953. There were also present : Monseigneur Cento (representing the Apostolic See at the Coronation), The Mayor and Mayoress of Westminster, The Deputy Mayor and Mayoress of Chelsea, the Marquess of Reading (Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs), Commander Allan Noble, M.P., and Mrs. Noble, members of the Arts Council, the British Council, the English Ceramic Circle, the Council of the Chelsea Society, lenders of exhibits and other distinguished persons.

The first room contained the seventy-six Tournai exhibits. All but four of these had crossed the Channel from Belgium. Two of those already in England came from the collection of Major W. H. Tapp, M.C., to whom tribute must be paid as one of the first enthusiasts to establish the links between the artists of the Tournai and Chelsea Porcelain Factories in the 18th Century, and whose researches among the archives of the town of Tournai are so important, as they were made before the war during which the

town suffered two bombardments and many records and much porcelain were destroyed.

The Tournai Factory began in 1751, six years later than the Chelsea Factory, but continued right into the 19th Century. Many artists and sculptors worked at both.

In this country Tournai is largely known for charming simple blue patterns. These, in a surprising variety, could be seen on the table ware exhibited (*Musée de Mariemont*). These blue patterns continued till the Factory closed, and can still be seen to-day, copied on modern mass produced Belgian ware.

Changes in fashion and ideas could be traced through the exhibits. Early Oriental influence was shown on two plates—one imitating the Chinese pattern *à la feuille de Genipi* (*H. Delattre collection*) and another of flowered panels and pink poppies of Chien Lung design (*Madame du Bois de Roest collection*) may have been made at Tournai to replace pieces in original Oriental sets. Another in fine *camaieu vert* would have been inspired by contemporary chinoiserie style from engravings by Pillemont (*H. Delattre collection*).

Shape was very important in Tournai plates. The early deep gadroons change gradually to delicate gentle moulding and then disappear altogether. One British owned exhibit was a particularly fine example of early moulding—large gadroons separated with coloured flower bouquets on a puce ground with much gilding (*S. Goldblatt collection*). The gradual conquest of the art of gilding reached perhaps its finest example in the magnificent large plate with gold thread border, its four reserves and centre panel each containing realistic pictures of horsemen in battle. The ground was of deepest blue, the panels and reserves framed in intricate gold chased branches and trellis work (*Baron R. Gendebien collection*).

Tournai factory marks puzzle many, and indeed marking was arbitrary. An early mark was crossed swords in

blue. The tower mark in gold or colour, or crossed swords in gold, appeared between 1756 and 1762, and can be found right up till 1780 when they disappeared. Statuettes and groups were never marked.

The letters I.D. and two little dots on the back of a plate (*Musée de Mariemont*) were the signature of Joseph Duvivier, one of the three artists of that surname, all of Tournai origin and all working at some time in England, notably at Chelsea and Worcester.

Many who visited the Exhibition carried away a bright memory of five plates in *camaieu rose*, possibly by Duvivier, arranged to catch the light—and especially the afternoon sun—which picked out the delicate moulding, brilliant gilding and exquisite designs of river scenes, rocks, ruins and figures (*Musée de Mariemont*).

Later classical cameos and *Trompe l'oeil* effects of wood, marble and sealing wax reflected contemporary fashion. As a contrast the sudden simplification of thought following the influence of Jean Jacques Rousseau could be seen in a wild buttercup, flung as it were, upon a plate (*Madame M. Rueff collection*).

Joseph Mayer was a great Tournai artist. His painted plaque with which he earned promotion from 'élève' to 'maître' was admired by all who saw it. Oddly enough it was found in England many years ago fixed into a piece of furniture. This plaque, in brilliant colours and superb drawing, showed a busy seaport with sailing ships and graceful buildings in the background (*Madame du Bois de Roest collection*). Mayer was also the painter of a famous service ordered—so the story goes—by Philippe of Orléans in 1787, to show that Tournai equalled Sèvres. It was called the *Service aux Oiseaux de Buffon*, and the birds were copied from illustrations in Buffon's Natural History, published about that time. An immense bowl (*Madame L. Solvay collection*) and interestingly shaped teacaddy (*Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, Brussels*) were exhibited from this Service.

The accurate ornithology of the Buffon birds was interesting to look at after the much earlier *oiseaux imaginaires*—one of the favourite lighthearted designs of both Chelsea and Tournai. A Tournai cup showed such a bird upon the wing (*Major W. H. Tapp collection*). A diminutive *oiseaux imaginaire* topped a handful of fruit upon a deep plate (*Musée de Mariemont*). The exotic birds of Chelsea stalked in brilliant plumage across a green edged dish (*Sir Alexander Cadogan collection*). See also Frontispiece.

Cut fruit was a popular theme on Tournai ware. A gilt and blue jug had a lovely cut peach among coloured flowers and foliage (*Madame L. Solvay collection*), and a cut pear lay among other fruit on a red bordered plate (*Musée de Mariemont*), while in Chelsea paste two dessert plates patterned, with other fruits, showed on one a brightly coloured cut lemon, on the other a halved apple (*Sir Alexander Cadogan collection*). These were of red anchor period (one alone was marked). A charming little gold anchor cup and saucer had a delicate decoration of several cut fruits (*J. J. Tufnell collection*).

Les Fables de la Fontaine and the original Aesop's fables inspired ideas for design on Tournai and Chelsea porcelain. A Tournai set of teapot (*Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, Brussels*), milk jug (*Madame du Bois de Roest collection*) and cup and saucer (*Major W. H. Tapp collection*) grouped together made a charming exhibit, with various fables upon them. The teapot had an unusual picture of Aesop himself talking to all the creatures of his stories. The drawing and accurate featuring of the well-known fables could be compared with a Leopard and Fox on a Chelsea vase (*Mr. and Mrs. Eric Morgan collection*) and with the magnificent dish (17 inches in diameter) from the so-called Warren Hastings service (*F. V. C. de Costa Andrade collection*).

The pretty conceit of insects and butterflies appeared on many Tournai and Chelsea pieces. Cupids on the Tournai barrel-shaped mustard pot (*Baron R. Gendebein collection*)



COLOURED TOURNAI STATUETTE

A Boy leaning against two tree trunks carrying a magic lantern on his back and playing a hurdy gurdy. Shown at the Loan Exhibition of Tournai and Chelsea Porcelain, 1953. (See page 37)

*Reproduced by courtesy of
Les Etablissements Casterman de Tournai*

*Madame du Bois de Roest
collection*

closely resembled those on the Chelsea dish (*J. J. Tufnell collection*) and bowl (*Major W. H. Tapp collection*) both in red monochrome, and were probably by the same hand.

The most remarkable pieces for comparison and probably the most interesting in the whole Exhibition, were the *Descente de Croix* of Tournai (*Madame du Bois de Roest collection*) and the *Pietà* of Chelsea (*J. J. Tufnell collection*). The Tournai group, mounted upon a metal plinth, was in biscuit with a tall cross at the foot of which the Virgin receives the body of the dead Christ while an angel kneels beside. The Chelsea group was coloured, on a flower patterned ground and without the Cross. The modelling of both groups, with the distinctive turn of the Virgin's head and outstretched arm, was almost identical. They would both have been inspired by a contemporary picture, but they are too alike in feeling and detail to be anything but by the same hand. Experts disagree about this. In Belgium the *Descente de Croix* is often attributed to Nicholas Lecreux who never came to Chelsea. But the sculptor Gauron worked at Chelsea and his touch is so like that shown in these groups that both are very likely his work. But some consider Joseph Willems who also worked at Tournai and Chelsea might have made the model.

Other charming Tournai groups and statuettes probably showed the work of Gauron and Willems. An outstanding piece was the boy figure with magic lantern and hurdy gurdy (*Madame du Bois de Roest collection*), which formed the catalogue cover illustration, (reproduced on page 36), and which, with two fine Hans Sloane Chelsea plates (*J. J. Tufnell collection*), was shown on the Television programme. Three little Cupids (*Madame du Bois de Roest collection*) had much in common with the "Cupid for dessert" of Chelsea (*Dr. Severne Mackenna collection*). These charming models were used as table decorations and were generally copied from Meissen work.

Glazed white and biscuit groups and figures were often made at Tournai and several were exhibited, notably the

Amours Pêcheurs—two Cupids with a basket of fish among rocks and shells—(*Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, Brussels*) and *Le Saut de Mouton*—children at a spirited game of leapfrog (*Baron R. Gendebien collection*). A glazed white bust of Monseigneur d'Oultremont, Prince Bishop of Liège, (*Musée de Mariemont*) most probably modelled by Gauron aroused particular interest, and two people who owned similar pieces were able for the first time to identify them.

Little Tournai boxes, decorated inside and out and often bound in gold and silver gilt (*Madame du Bois de Roest and Madame L. Solvay collections*), showed the appreciation of the age for miniature objects. There were also exquisite small Chelsea exhibits, including peapods, flower posy, asparagus needle box, rose shaped toilet box and silver mounted bonbonnière in the shape of a man's head (*all J. J. Tufnell collection*).

In the Chelsea room were fifty-one exhibits. Emphasis, of course, was on those already mentioned and others which could profitably be studied in comparison with those of Tournai. But certain typical pieces were shown to illustrate Chelsea technique. An exquisite goat and bee jug and white crayfish salt (*Mr. and Mrs. Eric Morgan collection*) and little painted Hawk Owl (*Miss Dorothy Palmer collection*) came from the early days of triangle and raised anchor. There were several animal figures—realistic as the large Pugdog and Pup, ruminating Cow, delicately coloured Sheep, or imaginative as the fable group of Leopard and Fox forming a candlestick (*all S. Goldblatt collection*), and the greatly admired Peahen in brilliant colours marked with a raised red anchor (*A. G. Morris collection*).

Clever animal painting was seen on the pair of large dishes (*J. J. Tufnell collection*) and in most interesting grouping and colouring on the magnificent two-handled covered bowl (*Mr. and Mrs. Eric Morgan collection*). There

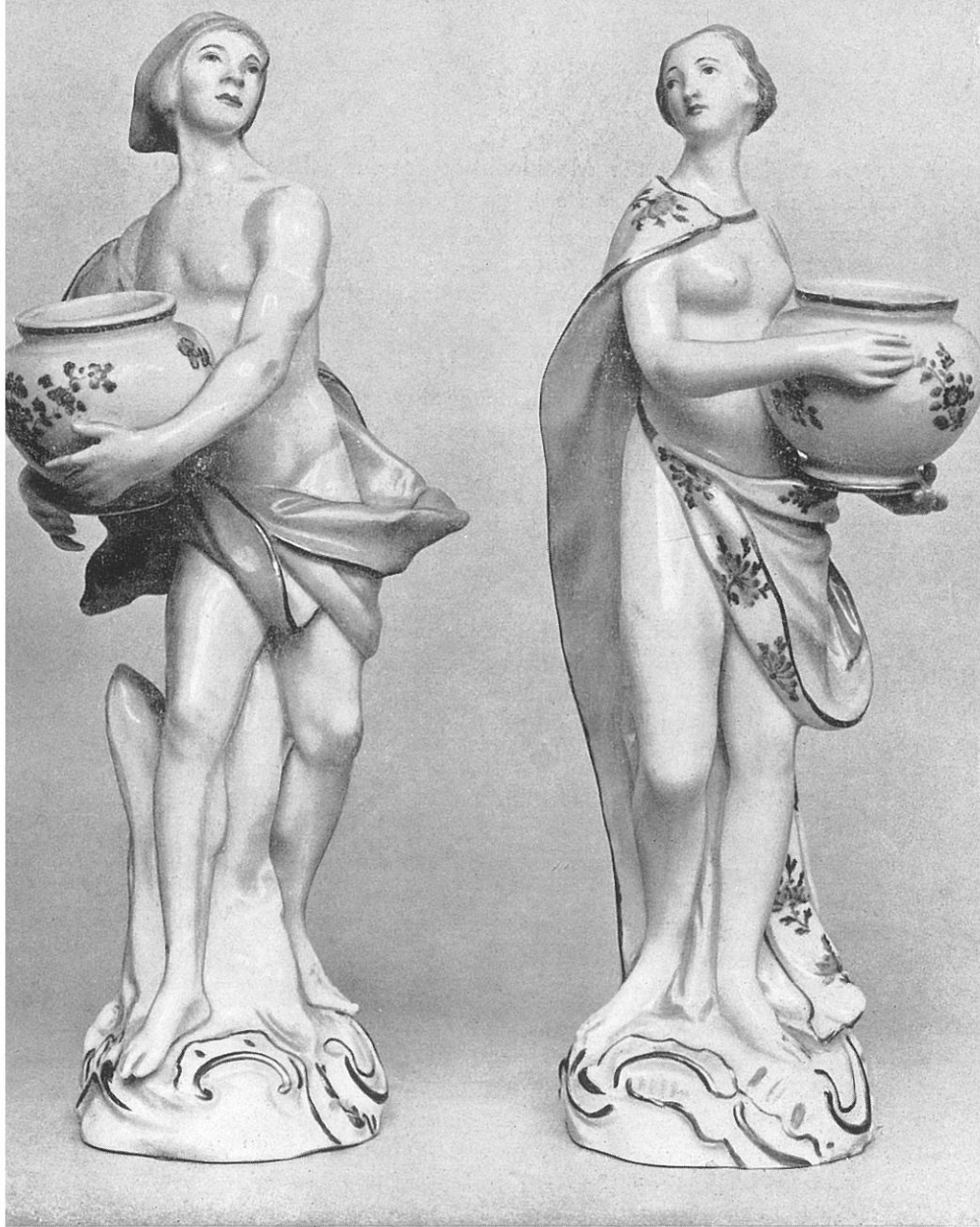
was a plate from the Mecklenburg Service (*General Sir Beauvoir de Lisle collection*), two from the famous claret service (*Lord Kinnaird collection*) and three grosbleu custard cups with coloured figures (*I. O. Chance collection*) and a very interesting vivid green teapot (*Major W. H. Tapp collection*) almost matched a beaker shaped cup and saucer in colour and design (*Lady Heilbron collection*).

Among Chelsea figures of outstanding interest were the little blue clad boy playing a violin (*Chelsea Borough Council*), a pigtailed gardener with basket and flywhisk (*S. Goldblatt collection*) and two rare slim figures holding bowls (red anchor marked) their exquisite modelling akin to that of the *Pietà* (*Mr. and Mrs. Eric Morgan collection*). See illustration on page 40.

Two more Chelsea figures (gold anchor marked) came from a set '*Apollo and the nine Muses*', standing 16 inches high and in brilliant colour. Many people considered them to be by the hand of a Tournai sculptor, most probably Willems—(*J. F. Tomas collection*).

Six tall vases showed a different type of work to that usually associated with Chelsea. Three had masks in relief and ornate paintings upon them—one a fortune telling group after Watteau. Two were square shaped, with Oriental design and the last, 12 inches high, had a claret ground with Cupids after Boucher. The two last were gold anchor marked (*all R. Palumbo collection*).

It is interesting—and satisfactory for the organisers—to hear from many sides that not only was real pleasure given by the Exhibition but an impetus to further study. The name of Chelsea was fairly well-known in Belgium, but the insular English were mainly ignorant about Tournai. Since June 1953 many people have looked at the collections of Tournai porcelain in this country. One museum at least in Belgium reports that an unusually large number of visitors have called to see their collections, and many went to the war-scarred town of Tournai itself.



PAIR OF CHELSEA FIGURES, drapery painted in colours. Each holding a bowl decorated with sprays of flowers. Height $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Red anchor mark. Shown at the Loan Exhibition of Tournai and Chelsea Porcelain, 1953. (See page 39)

*Reproduced by courtesy of
the Belgian Institute, London*

*Mr. and Mrs. Eric Morgan
collection*

CHRIST CHURCH ORGAN

By SIR ALBERT NAPIER, K.C.B., Q.C.

One of the lesser known historic monuments of Chelsea is a church organ built by George England in 1779.

For more than a century competition for the favour of cultured and critical patrons had been stimulating the efforts and ingenuity of a succession of organ-builders who had to be skilled artists in the production of musical sounds if they were to be successful. From the reign of Charles II, when Father Smith and Renatus Harris were militant rivals, the organs built by them and their successors in the 18th and early 19th centuries have never ceased to be admired. There were many developments in the 19th century, and the Victorians who built new organs or re-built old ones increased the volume and variety of the tones produced. It is said by some modern critics that in doing so the Victorians were too ready to sacrifice quality to quantity, and the earlier organs seem to be appreciated more than ever, perhaps for their superior definition and their special suitability for the works of pre-Victorian composers.

George England flourished between 1740 and 1788. He learnt his trade under Richard Bridge whose daughter he married. Amongst other builders of his century George England was specially noted for the silvery and sparkling character of his 'chorus', due largely to the care and skill with which he balanced and harmonised the several pipes of his 'mixtures'.

After his death his business was carried on by George Pike England, his nephew (or, as most books say, his son), who, besides building many good organs himself, kept careful notes of his predecessors' methods and results as well as his own.

Soon after 1800, Henry Leffler, who had access to these notes, wrote in manuscript a discriminating study of many organs of his day. His manuscript is no longer extant, but

it was used by Dr. Pearce in his book on London City Churches, written about 1907. He quotes Leffler as saying that the instrument about which I am writing was 'a very good organ all through', and Leffler's comments on other organs were by no means always so favourable.

The organ, when built, had three manuals, Great (10 stops), Swell (6 stops), and Choir (5 stops). These 21 speaking stops, including four mixtures, contained 1,342 pipes altogether. There was no Pedal organ, pedals being rare in this country at that time.

A Pedal organ by Gray was added in 1837 while J. T. Cooper was organist. Among the later organists was Sir Joseph Barnby before he became Precentor of Eton.

In 1876 the Wren church for which the organ was built (St. Michael's, Queenhithe) was declared redundant and demolished, and the organ was transferred to Christ Church, Chelsea, an early Victorian church near the junction of Flood Street and Royal Hospital Road.

In 1890 the organ was re-built by Abbott and Smith of Leeds. It was considerably enlarged and re-arranged and the old tracker action was replaced by a tubular-pneumatic action, then a fairly recent invention.

Of the original stops (and pipes) more than half, i.e. 15 stops (about 800 pipes) survive. The old sound boards are still there, and so is the case. As far as I can discover, there exists no other organ built by George England (senior) which contains so much of the original material.

On a re-building, the stops could be re-arranged at no great expense so that the organ would become, in all essentials, a real George Edwardian organ. This however would not be worth doing unless a new action were put in at the same time. The 1890 action is worn out. The response is unreliable and slow, and ciphering is not infrequent. The organ is still worth hearing and its further deterioration may

be gradual, but sooner or later a new action is essential if the organ is to remain capable of preservation. The longer this is postponed, the more expensive it will be; for wages and therefore prices are always rising. To instal a modern (electric) action would now cost about £3,000—a large sum for a parish to raise in a short time—and nothing would be saved by reverting to an older type of action.

Members of the Society may like to know that this historic instrument is still in use, and can be visited on any day—like a patient on the danger list.

An appeal by the Council of the Society for support in raising £5,000 is referred to in the Chairman's Report on page 22.

HANS SLOANE BICENTENARY

Address by Professor A. V. Hill, C.H., O.B.E., F.R.S., at the unveiling of a Memorial Plaque to Sir Hans Sloane, in the Old Burial Ground, King's Road, Chelsea, on the 8th October, 1953.

Professor Hill recalled that it was 274 years since Sir Hans Sloane had come to London from Killyleagh in Northern Ireland to study medicine, botany and chemistry, and 200 years ago since he had died, in his 93rd year, at Chelsea. Five months later the large collection of material and books which he had acquired was constituted by Act of Parliament the nucleus of what is now the British Museum. It was as a trustee of that foundation that the speaker was to have the honour of unveiling a plaque provided by the London County Council, on the initiative of the Chelsea Society, to record the fact that the ground on which his hears were standing was given by Sloane in 1733 to the parish of Chelsea.

Sloane, so Professor Hill observed, was a shrewd man of affairs, besides being a great physician. He was also an ardent collector and a pioneer of scientific botany; and the seed which he planted has grown into the twin Museums of

Bloomsbury and Kensington. Here in Chelsea he is remembered for his connection with the Physic Garden of the Society of Apothecaries, where he studied in his early days in London. Many years later, after he had become lord of the manor, he conveyed this Garden to the Apothecaries in perpetuity for a small rent. In recognition of this benefaction, the Society, with a nice sense of gratitude, erected his statue there twenty years before his death. Yet another gift was that of the land upon which they were then standing, to provide an additional burial ground and the site for a workhouse, now a home for elderly people. Sloane, who had devoted much time and care to his property in Chelsea, and to the village in which it lay, came to live there in 1742; and both he and his wife are buried in the churchyard of the Old Church.

Sloane's greatest memorials are the two famous Museums built round his collections, but it is fitting that he should also be commemorated in Chelsea. He should be remembered as an understanding, kindly, friendly person, who wanted to help his fellow citizens. His name is recalled in Sloane Street and Hans Place, and his descendants still live in the Borough. As the founder of the British Museum he was a citizen of the world; as the donor of the land upon which they were standing, as the owner of the manor house, and as the benefactor of the Physic Garden, he was a citizen of Chelsea.

AN ARCHITECT'S APPRECIATION OF THE FOUNTAIN IN SLOANE SQUARE

By HOWARD V. LOBB, C.B.E., F.R.I.B.A.

The unique character of Sloane Square, paved throughout and surrounded by plane trees which have still many years' growth before reaching maturity, has been greatly enhanced by the fountain completed to the designs of Gilbert Ledward, R.A., and handed over to the Borough of Chelsea in November 1953.

Of all the London squares probably Sloane Square is the most continental in character and the addition of this fountain has increased this flavour. Its position in relation to the Upper and Lower Sloane Streets is ideal and the figure and the surrounding hexagonal base are completely functional in marking the roundabout. Chelsea is to be heartily congratulated on this addition to its amenities which will be particularly felt during the summer months when the gentle ripple of water from the lip of the bronze vase will be added to the noise of the London scene.

The cost of circulating this water is only a few pence a day and the reflection in the basin of the figure and the plane trees tipped with the flowing cloud shadows is a real joy.

Mr. Gilbert Ledward, R.A., who was born in Chelsea, has appropriately recorded the romance of Charles II and Nell Gwynne as a frieze around the vase supporting the bronze figure.

It is not clear to me whether the figure is intended to be a representation of Nell Gwynne herself, but if this is in any way authentic she can surely have had no difficulty in selling oranges !

The fountain was presented to the Borough of Chelsea by the Royal Academy of Arts through the Leighton Fund, a Trust founded by two sisters of Lord Leighton for the purpose of placing pictures, statues and other works of art in or near public buildings. In these days when our buildings, streets and town planning are so utilitarian it is refreshing to hear once again of this Trust as an example which could be well followed by public or private bodies with benefit to our townscapes.

I hope that other Metropolitan Boroughs will follow this example.

The Annual General Meeting

of the Chelsea Society was held in Crosby Hall

Cheyne Walk, Chelsea

on Tuesday, 24th March, 1953, at 5.30 p.m.

Mr. Marsden-Smedley opened the proceedings before a notable gathering of Chelsea people by welcoming both the Members and their guests.

In moving the adoption of the *Chairman's Report*, 1952 on pages 12 to 23 of the *Annual Report* 1952 the Chairman first referred to the presence in the body of the meeting of Mr. Gilbert Ledward, R.A., who had designed the fountain in Sloane Square, and Mrs. Ernest Gillick, who had been a member of the Society for many years and who had recently designed the Queen's Head on the coinage.

The Chairman then referred to a matter which had been the subject of wide public interest, namely the proposal to demolish Nos. 62 and 63, Cheyne Walk. The utmost sympathy had been shown by the authorities concerned to the efforts of the Chelsea Society, and, through them, other interested bodies, to prove that No. 62 at least could and should be preserved. He explained how the Society had consulted the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, and they had called in a well-known architect and expert on saving old and valued buildings, Mr. John MacGregor, F.S.A., F.R.I.B.A. Mr. Marsden-Smedley said he thought that instead of jumping to unauthoritative conclusions on whether the balance of interest lay in pulling down houses or preserving them, it would be far better, as a general rule, to follow the reasonable course of obtaining proper expert reports on the condition of buildings. This would at least provide a persuasive case to be put to the owners. In the case in question, expert advice shewed that the roof and back wall were in perfect condition. The

floor boards on the upper floors had been removed, presumably for first aid repairs elsewhere during the war, but that revealed thoroughly sound timbers underneath. Although this particular building was sound and worthy of preservation, it would be for the Hospital Authorities to say how far it was possible for them to meet the views of the Society, having regard to financial restrictions and plans for the future use of the site. The Chairman said he would very much like to commend the various authorities for considering the matter with reason and true appreciation.

Mr. Marsden-Smedley then referred to the proposal to hold a Tournai Chelsea Exhibition in the summer, which he hoped would be as successful as the Chelsea China Exhibition in 1951.

The Exhibition was to be the Belgian Institute's contribution to the celebrations of coronation summer. The comparison between the work of the Tournai and Chelsea porcelain factories would be a great contribution to scholarship. The links were many, and more might be discovered through the Exhibition. The Society was contributing something of what it had learned about Chelsea porcelain through much research, past Exhibitions, contact with collectors, and connections in Chelsea. Similar researches were being undertaken in Belgium. The Exhibition could not be held in Chelsea owing to the difficulty of obtaining accommodation for so long a period as a whole month; but the Belgian Institute had a magnificent suite of rooms at No. 6 Belgrave Square, which had been put at the disposal free of charge of an Anglo-Belgian Committee responsible in close association with the Society for organisation. He felt sure the Society would agree that the Belgian Authorities concerned had earned the gratitude of everyone for their generosity.

Mr. Marsden-Smedley then asked for the adoption of the *Chairman's Report* for 1952 and Mr. Adam seconded the motion.

Lord Cadogan moved that the re-appointment of the Council be confirmed, with the exception of Lord Lloyd who had resigned from the Society on leaving Chelsea. This motion was seconded by Captain Warre, and duly carried. The list of members of the Council, with the above exception, therefore stands as printed in the Annual Report.

The Hon. Treasurer was then called upon to present the accounts of the Society for the year ended 31st December, 1952. The accounts had been audited and circulated to members in the Annual Report. In his summary of the financial position the Treasurer stated that income was very nearly £270 last year as against £277 in 1951. In 1951 expenditure amounted to £212 whilst last year it was £290. In both years the chief item of expenditure was the Annual Report. The income from subscriptions during the year amounted to £170 and the Treasurer said that, in his view, the Society could always do with a much larger membership. A motion that the accounts be agreed was proposed by Major Halton and seconded by Captain Edwards.

In reply to the Treasurer's plea for a larger membership to assist the finances of the Society, the Chairman said that it was always desirable to get new members but not merely for financial reasons. He thought that too much money made members lose interest in a Society, and for this reason it was better to be too poor than too rich, but the Society must have enough to keep going. The Report was the chief item of expenditure, and the Society could always produce a cheaper work at the sacrifice of quality, but this it was not proposed to do. Alternatively, the subscriptions could be increased, but Mr. Marsden-Smedley did not think this was either necessary or desirable. He supported the motion moved by Major Halton and seconded by Captain Edwards.

The Chairman then moved a vote of thanks to Mr. Astell, the Hon. Auditor, which was carried unanimously.

He called then upon Dr. G. de Beer to give his address on Sir Hans Sloane. Dr. de Beer very wittily expanded and illustrated the story of this great eighteenth century figure, who left his mark indelibly in so many spheres including the Chelsea landscape. In his article *Sir Hans Sloane and Chelsea* printed in the *Annual Report* 1952, pages 27 to 31, Dr. de Beer had already outlined some outstanding features of Sir Hans Sloane's life in Chelsea, and to these he added many anecdotes and quotations from correspondence. He also drew extensively on the material collected for his work *Sir Hans Sloane and the British Museum*, which he said was shortly to be published. (Now published. A review occurs at page 24).

The meeting then terminated.

GENERAL FUND ACCOUNT

Statement of Income and Expenditure for the Year ended 31st December, 1953

INCOME		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
To Balance brought forward							
1st January, 1953	...				73	2	10
„ Members:—							
Life Members	...	63	0	0			
Annual Subscriptions	...	175	4	6			
Donations	...	27	8	0			
Entrance Fees	...	10	11	0			
		<hr/>			276	3	6
„ Sales of Annual Reports					2	10	4
„ Interest on £500 of 3½%							
War Stock	...				17	10	0
„ Interest on Deposit in							
P.O.S. Bank	...				4	13	0
					<hr/>		
					£373	19	8

E. HALTON,
Hon. Treasurer.

10th January, 1954.

EXPENDITURE		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
By Annual General Meeting					30	0	0
„ Annual Report	...				174	11	11
„ Architect's Plans	...				5	5	0
„ Bank Charges	...				10	6	
„ Clerical Assistance	...				43	14	0
„ Photographs	...				3	0	0
„ Postage	...				21	18	1
„ Stationery	...				21	10	5
„ Subscription to Council of Civic Societies	...				1	1	0
„ Balance:—							
Cash in hand	...	8	10				
At Barclays Bank	...	44	8	8			
P.O.S. Bank	...	27	11	3			
					72	8	9
					£373	19	8

Audited and found correct.
R. J. V. ASTELL, A.C.A.,
Hon. Auditor.
18th January, 1954.

NOTE.—The certificates for £500 3½% War Stock in the name of The Chelsea Society are deposited with Messrs. Barclays Bank, Ltd., 348, King's Road, Chelsea, S.W.3.

REGINALD BLUNT MEMORIAL FUND ACCOUNT

Statement of Income and Expenditure for the Year ended 31st December, 1953

INCOME	£	s.	d.
To Balance brought forward 1st January 1953	44	7	5
„ Interest for 1953	1	2	0
	<u>£45</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>5</u>

E. HALTON,
Hon. Treasurer.

10th January, 1954.

EXPENDITURE	£	s.	d.
By Balances in P.O.S. Bank	45	9	5
	<u>£45</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>5</u>

Audited and found correct.
R. J. V. ASTELL, A.C.A.,
Hon. Auditor.
18th January, 1954.

CHELSEA OLD CHURCH RESTORATION FUND ACCOUNT

Statement of Income and Expenditure for the Year ended 31st December, 1953

INCOME	£	s.	d.
To Balance brought forward 1st January 1953	120	2	1
„ Interest for 1953	3	0	0
	<u>£123</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>

E. HALTON,
Hon. Treasurer.

10th January, 1954.

EXPENDITURE	£	s.	d.
By Balance in P.O.S. Bank	123	2	1
	<u>£123</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>

Audited and found correct.
R. J. V. ASTELL, A.C.A.,
Hon. Auditor.
18th January, 1954.

ANALYSIS OF POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK ACCOUNT

As at 31st December, 1953

	£	s.	d.
General Fund Account	190	10	9
Reginald Blunt Memorial Fund Account	45	9	5
Chelsea Old Church Restoration Fund Account	123	2	1
	<u>£359</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>

List of Members

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

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