



CHELSEA GARDEN SQUARES

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Introduction

Until the early 19th century, the heart of Chelsea village lay by the river Thames. Surrounding the old Church, a small fishing and boating community arose, while the surrounding area was taken up with large stately homes and country houses for the elite. In fact, Chelsea was once known as the ‘Village of Palaces’, with former residents including Sir Thomas More, Henry VIII, Elizabeth I and Hans Holbein, all with palatial riverside homes. A newspaper article from 1886 stated that “half of the distinguished persons of the time of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I lived here” and that during the early 18th century a “third of the most notable people in the country resided in Chelsea.”

Further to the north, today’s Kings Road was the King’s private road, solely for royalty to travel between London and Whitehall Palace to the royal palaces at Kew and Hampton Court. The road was only open to residents if they purchased a token and almost the entire road was surrounded by fields and market gardens. One of the paths between the gardens was commonly referred to as ‘Butterfly Alley’ for the number of

butterflies going from field to field. However, in 1830 the king’s private road was opened to the public and almost immediately the opportunities for property development spread across the area. Up until this time, the only buildings were a scattering of farm houses and small cottages, with a few homes built up facing the King’s road. But, with the opportunities of open land so close to London, timed with the popularity of the garden square design across London, Chelsea was ideal for this kind of building.

In this brochure, I will look at the history of seven of Chelsea’s most prominent and highly sought-after garden squares, tracking their development and enduring popularity through the centuries. Keep reading for the history of Chelsea, Carlyle, Tedworth, Paultons, Markham, Wellington and Queen’s Elm squares.

The history of Chelsea Square

Chelsea Square sits between the Kings Road and Fulham Road and was one of the first squares to be laid out for building after the Kings Road became public. It was originally known as 'Trafalgar Square' before the more famous one was built off the Strand. Despite the desire for new homes, development was slow and by 1836 only the northern side and the northern part of the eastern side were completed.

Unusually, the square was also laid out around a pre-existing country house, Bath Lodge, built in around 1800 and later renamed Catherine Lodge, which sat in the south western section of the square. By the early 1850s, very little further building had been completed as a recession had affected many of the building projects across London. By this time, Bath Lodge had also

become a girls' school run by Mrs Field and Miss Lowman. It was Mrs Field who renamed the house Catharine Lodge after her granddaughter, Catharine Johns.

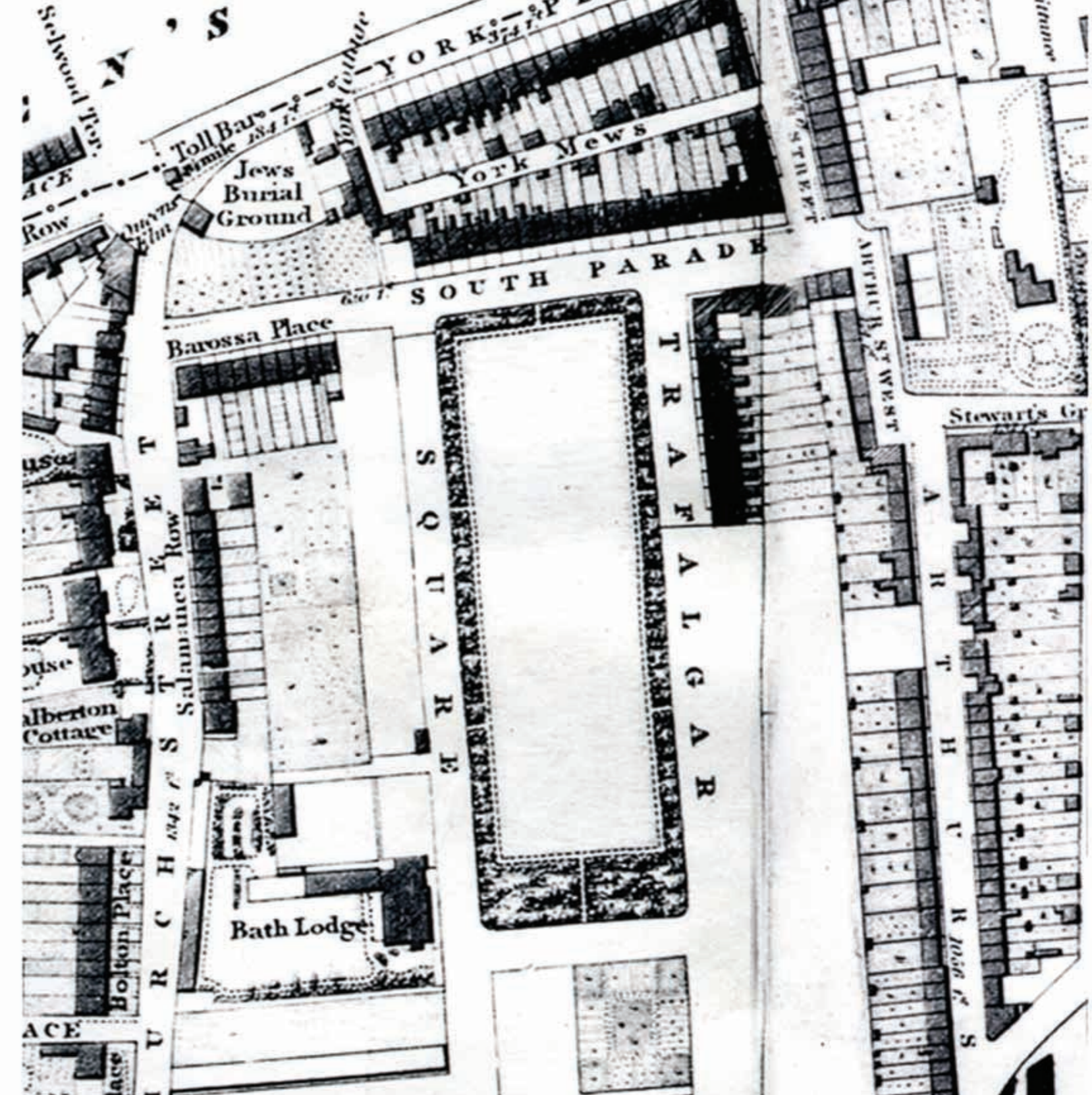
Over 30 years after the initial burst of building had begun in Trafalgar Square, very little more had been completed by the time of the first Ordnance Survey map in 1865. This slow progress explains why there is no uniform design and why the square was subject to a mix of projects and architectural influences. By the late 19th century the southern half of the square still featured a joinery works and a stone yard. It was also at this time that Chelsea Square was chosen as the site for a new fire station, on the northern side, which opened in 1893.

The 1891 census reveals a broad variety of residents in Trafalgar Square, ranging from an organ builder, a number of medical students, stockbrokers, banking and commercial clerks and engineers, but a few of the houses had also become lodging houses and other professions included a policeman and fireman, as well as a professor of music, accountant, dressmakers, sculptor and a retired army Colonel.

In 1896 Catharine Lodge changed once again and became a cycling club, although this did not last long and by the turn of the 20th century, Catharine Lodge had once again become a private home, leased by Mr. Albert Gray, K.C., who was apparently well known for his garden parties in Trafalgar Square during the early 1900s. The central garden of Trafalgar Square, covering 2 & ½ acres, was one of its prominent features and in fact during the early 20th century it was sub-let to the Chelsea Lawn Tennis Club

By the late 1920s, Trafalgar Square was set to see great change. The leases on the Cadogan Estate were falling due and it was decided, along with other large sections of Chelsea at this time, to redevelop the square. Many of the original homes were deemed 'nondescript' and unable to be adapted to modern standards. The homes were demolished, along with Catharine Lodge, to make way for new building by Darcy Braddell and Humphrey Deane, who designed new homes in an early Georgian design.

On the site of Catharine Lodge, two distinct homes were completed by Oliver Hill. Today, No. 40 is Grade II* listed and its neighbour, No.41 is Grade II listed. The two homes were designed to complement each other externally, but with two different owners, the interiors were constructed to different needs and tastes. No.40 was completed first for Lord Vernon, in 1930, and today still retains much of the original interiors, giving it a higher II* listing. No.41 was completed a few years later, in 1934, for Freda, Lady Forres.



By 1938 the rebuilding of the square was complete, along with additional homes on part of the central gardens, and it was at this time that it was officially renamed 'Chelsea Square'.

Chelsea Square has long been a popular place to live and can boast many notable residents, including artist and hostess, Ethel Sands, who lived at No.52 Chelsea Square, which was hit by a bomb in 1941, only a few years after being built. Sands later moved to No.18, where she lived until 1962. No.22 Chelsea Square was the home of Lady Adeane, widow of Lord Adeane, private secretary to the Queen and No.8 was formerly the home of George Herbert Hyde Villiers, 6th Earl of Clarendon.

Actor and playwright, John Osborne, along with his actress wife, Jill Bennett, formerly lived at No.30 Chelsea Square. Writer, Rose Macauley lived in Chelsea Square, as did Clarenceux King at Arms at the Royal College of Arms, Sir Anthony Wagner, who lived at No.68. Some more recent residents have included financier and industrialist, Sir Nigel Broackes, as well as, Bernie Ecclestone and for a time Hugh Grant when he lived with Jemima Khan.

The history of Carlyle Square

Carlyle Square was another of Chelsea's squares that was laid out for building after Kings Road was made public in 1830. It was constructed on the site of a market garden and farmhouse owned by a Mr Hutchings. The square was originally named 'Oakley Square', as with Oakley Street this originated from Charles Cadogan, 2nd Baron Cadogan of Oakley, who married the youngest daughter of lord of the manor, Sir Hans Sloane, and who later inherited the lordship when his Sloane passed away in 1753.

By 1840, the first sections of Oakley Square were completed, with two terraces of three houses each, built facing each other closest to the Kings Road (today's Nos. 1, 2, and 3 along with Nos. 40, 41 and 42, which are all Grade II listed). These late Georgian terraces feature stuccoed ground

floor with continuous first floor balconies, while the centre has four Ionic pilasters and French casement windows. Shortly after these first houses were completed, the building recession affected the progress of the square and by the time it was possible to continue, in the 1860s, the idea of a continuous terrace was abandoned for semi-detached houses. The remainder of the square was completed by 1867.

By 1872 Oakley Square was renamed Carlyle Square in honour of the famous Chelsea resident, writer Thomas Carlyle, who lived a few streets away in Cheyne Row.

The 1891 census shows that the majority of the residents of Carlyle Square were from the professional social classes. Most households had an average of two servants and occupations varied from artists to solicitors, merchants, clerks, a Lieutenant-Colonel, a retired fine art publisher, photographer, and a number of residents were on independent means.

Carlyle Square has been a prominent and highly sought after Chelsea address for many years and has been the home of many famous residents. Journalist and historian (and the inspiration behind the Manchester School of Art), Mr. William T. Arnold lived at No.4 Carlyle Square. Associate and co-author with Bertrand Russell, Mr. Alfred Whitehead, lived at No.17, where Russell would often visit and meet with Lady Ottoline Morrell. Whitehead later also lived at No.14 during the 1920s. Writer, poet and advocate for the Georgian Group, Osbert Sitwell (1892-1969) lived at No. 2 Carlyle Square for 40 years, and where young composer, William Walton and poet, Edith Sitwell (1887-1964) produced their first private performance of *Facade*.

Carlyle Square has also been the home of theatrical couple, Sybil Thorndike and Lewis



Courtesy of Mr. Philip Richards

Casson, who lived at No.6 in 1921-1932. The spy, Kim Philby lived at No.18 Carlyle Square from 1944 before he defected to Moscow in 1963. American actress, Ruth Draper (1884-1956) lived in Carlyle Square, as did diplomatic hostess, traveller and writer, Lady Kelly (wife of British Ambassador, Sir David Kelly), who lived at No.27.

A number of creative and professional residents have lived in Carlyle Square, with writer, Edna O'Brien, formerly at No.10; journalist and author, Sir Ignatius Valentine Chirol at No.34; naval officer and author, Henry Mangles Denham at No.8; palaeontologist and museum curator, Robert Etheridge at No.14; sculptor, Francis Derwent Wood at No.18; and campaigner for women's rights, Emilie Venturi also lived in Carlyle Square.

Carlyle Square appears to have been a popular address with diplomats, with many choosing it as their London address, including Victor Frederick William Cavendish-Bentinck, 9th duke of Portland, who lived at No.21 Carlyle Square. Other diplomats in Chelsea Square have included George Humphrey Middleton at No.1; Sir Clifford John Norton at No.21A; and Robert Swinhoe at No.33.

Carlyle Square has also been the home of Felicity Kendal, as well as Sir David Frost, who lived at No. 22 Carlyle Square. David Frost was the creator of one of the best parties of the summer season, holding garden parties in the square with celebrity guests ranging from Prince Edward, Lady Thatcher and Sir Denis, Sir Edward Heath and Richard Branson, through to Billy Connolly, Stephen Fry, Ronnie Corbett and Elton John and David Furnish.

The history of Markham Square



Courtesy of Mr Philip Richards

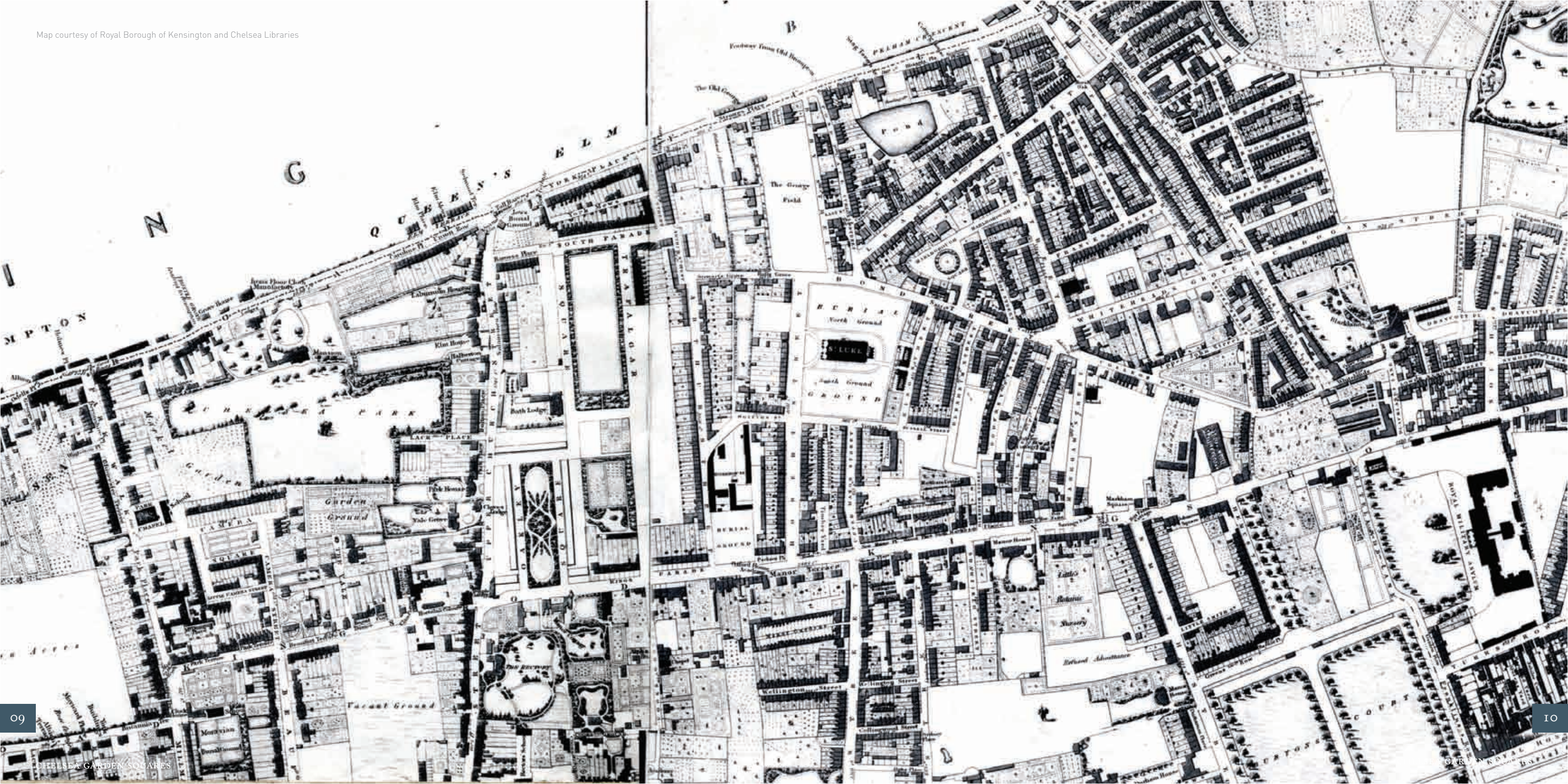
Markham Square was laid out for building in 1836, a few years after the Kings Road was opened to the public. The 1836 map of Chelsea by F.P. Thompson (see next page) clearly shows the early stages of development. It was built on the site of the orchard of Box Farm which was formerly owned by the Markham Evans family, who had in fact been on this spot since 1588. The original farmhouse had formerly sat on the corner of Kings Road and survived until 1900 when it was replaced with the Classic Cinema.

Similarly to the other squares started in the 1830s, progress was slow and building leases were still being sold in 1846. Most of the square was completed by 1852, although some sources say it was not entirely completed until the 1860s. The 1851 census shows quite a mix of early residents, ranging from a retired army captain, bankers, merchants, surgeons, a professor of music, artist and a number of residents on independent means. Kelly's 1887 London Directory also shows a solicitor, dressmakers and that No.49 Markham

Square was formerly 'St John's Hospital for Diseases of the Skin'.

The northern section was originally the site of the Chelsea Congregational Church, built in the gothic style with a spire of 138ft, by John Tarring. It was demolished in 1953 when new houses were built on the site.

The 1950s saw other changes to Markham Square, with the central gardens redesigned by head gardener of the Royal Hospital as a private country garden. The most prominent redevelopment of Markham Square during the 1950s was the alteration to Markham House, on the corner of Kings Road, in 1955. The house had a shop front added to face Kings Road and became the iconic 'Bazaar' boutique shop of Mary Quant, who was at the heart of the 'swinging 60s' social revolution. Her shop, inspired by rebellion against the past, was to make the mini skirt famous and was one of the first shops that made the Kings Road the popular fashion shopping destination it is today. The building also had a restaurant in the basement, run by Mary Quant's husband, Plunket Greene.



The history of Wellington Square



Courtesy of Mr Philip Richards

Prior to the building of Wellington Square, the area to the south was the location of a floorcloth factory, built in the 1790s for John Morley. The factory was later sold to Thomas Downing, who continued to run the factory into the early 19th century. However, by the 1830s, and the opening of the Kings Road, this area was soon marked out for new building and by 1836 the factory had been demolished.

The first section of new building was constructed facing the Kings Road by the late 1830s, with two rows of three house terraces constructed with an opening named 'Johnsons Square'. Wellington Square was built by Francis Edwards around 10 years later, completing in around 1852. This coincided with the death of the hero of Waterloo, the Duke of Wellington, whose brother was rector of Chelsea. The Duke of Wellington's

body was brought to Chelsea Hospital for his lying in state and it was this close association which inspired the naming of the square.

The 1861 census records that the first residents of Wellington Square were of the affluent professional classes, with a clerk in the Admiralty, banking clerks, merchants, fund holders and those on independent means, as well as photographers, a retired actress and an 'author on political matters'.

Today, Wellington Square is Grade II listed and includes stucco exteriors with iron first floor railings, along with triglyph frieze over the second floor windows and some houses also include ionic porches.

Wellington Square has been the home of a number of notable residents, including the author of Winnie the Pooh, A.A. Milne who lodged at No.8 Wellington Square; No.11 was the home of writer and curator at the Victoria & Albert museum, James Laver, and later it was the home of London correspondent for *Journal de Debats*, Paul Villars, who lived in the house for 40 years, where he was visited by writer, George Moore.

Artist, Charles Condor lived at No.14 in 1902 after his marriage to Stella Maris Bradford. American novelist, Thomas Wolfe stayed at No.32 in 1932 where he worked on his book, *A Portrait of Bascombe Hawke*. Painter and art historian, Sir Lawrence Burnett-Gowing (1918-1991) lived at No.24 Wellington Square and naval officer, Sir William Frederic Wake-Walker (1888-1945) lived at No.2 Wellington Square. Joan Wyndham, author of her war time diaries lived in Wellington Square for 30 years and another writer, Jan Struther (pen name of Joyce Maxtone Graham), author of *Mrs Miniver* lived in Wellington Square. Lastly, Wellington Square is also understood to be the fictional home of James Bond!

The history of Paulton Square



Courtesy of Mr Philip Richards

Paultons Square was one of the first of Chelsea's garden squares to be initiated after the opening of the Kings Road and also one of the only to be fully completed at that time, whereas many of the others took a number of decades to be fully completed. The name of Paultons originates from another family connection with lord of the manor, Sir Hans Sloane. This part of the manor had been passed to Sloane's daughter, Sarah, who married George Stanley, whose country seat was Paultons in Hampshire.

Prior to the building of Paultons Square, the area was part of the gardens to one of the early Chelsea palaces, Danvers House, which was the former home of Sir John Danvers in the 16th and 17th centuries. The northern section was also linked with the kitchen gardens of another of the large country houses, Beaufort House, which had been the home of Sir Thomas More during the 16th century. However, by the early 19th century, this area had become Shepherd's nursery garden.

The 1851 census shows that early residents of Paultons Square were from the affluent professional classes, with lawyers, merchants, engineers, surveyors, government clerks and military men, as well as civil servants, house agents, a surgeon and an 'artist on glass'.

Today, Paultons Square is Grade II listed and features stucco on the ground floor and cornices, arched ground floor windows and wrought iron balconies. The western row of terraces facing the Kings Road was called Stanley Terrace, and still retains the plaque 'Stanley Terrace 1840'. During the 1960s it was threatened with demolition, but fortunately was saved through a London County Council preservation order.

Paultons Square has been described as 'one of the most gracious of Chelsea squares' and has been preserved as a complete late Georgian Square. In 1961, shortly after it had received a preservation order, former president of the Royal Academy, Sir Albert Richardson, described Paultons Square as "practically unspoilt and constitutes one of the most pleasant features in the district".

Paultons Square has been the home of artist and etcher, William Walter Burgess; official war artist, Paul Nash, who lived at No.19 until May 1912; writer and lexicographer, Henry Watson Fowler (1858-1933) who lived at No.14 Paultons Square; and historian, Mary Dorothy George lived at No.51 Paultons Square until 1971.

The square was also the home of painter and art historian, Sir Lawrence Burnett Gowing, who also later moved to No.25 Wellington Square; novelist and translator, Wilhelmina Johnston Muir (pseudonym Agnes Neill Scott) (1890-1970) lived in the basement of No.47A Paultons Square; poet and literary scholar, Kathleen Jessie Raine lived at No.47 Paultons Square; and sculptor, Sir Eduardo Luigi Paolozzi (1924-2005) lived in a flat in Kathleen's house.

The history of Tedworth Square



Courtesy of Mr Philip Richards

Tedworth Square was laid out for building later than those facing the Kings Road. The area had continued as a market garden until the 1870s, however, by this time building land was becoming scarce and along with Redesdale and Redburn Streets, Tedworth Square was built over the gardens during the 1880s. The name Tedworth originates from the daughter-in-law of William Sloane Stanley, Laura Webber, who married George Sloane Stanley and came from Tedworth in Hampshire.

The census returns from 1901 show the square was home to many independent wealthy residents, along with military men, barristers, owners of industry, architects and also a journalist, a violinist, and at this time No.15 was the home of actress, Lillie Langtry.

In the 1960s, Tedworth Square was the subject of much controversy regarding plans for redevelopment and conservation. In 1965 there were plans for a massive redevelopment of 9 &

½ acres of the Cadogan Estate with new tower blocks that would be built over parts of Flood Street, Radnor Walk and Tedworth Square. There was plenty of debate over the development, but it never eventuated. However, the freehold of the northern section of Tedworth Square was sold to a developer and the mid Victorian terraced row was subsequently demolished.

Tedworth Square has altered many times during its history, creating an eclectic mix of architectural styles. The western side is the only remaining section of original Victorian terraced homes with exteriors of stucco and brick by Edward Wright. The southern and eastern parts of the square feature later Victorian building featuring the bold red brick designs that were popular in the late 19th century. As mentioned, the northern part of the square was rebuilt during the 1970s, but a small remnant of the original terrace has been retained on the north eastern side.

The prime location of Tedworth Square in the centre of Chelsea has meant that it has always been a popular address, but Tedworth Square has also been the home of a number of celebrity residents, in particular No.15 (sadly now demolished) which was the home of Lillie Langtry, then cricketer Sir Pelham 'Plum' Warner, who then passed it to actress Mrs Patrick Campbell.

No. 22 was the home of author of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Mark Twain in 1896-1898 and other residents have included writer and lecturer, Hester Marsden-Smedley, actress Ellen Pollock and her husband James Proudfoot and photographer, John Bignell. No.38 Tedworth Square was the home of educationalist, Olive Margaret Willis, who was the founder of Downe House School and its headmistress from 1907 to 1946. No.19 was the home of adventurer and politician, Colonel Sir Dermot McMorrough Kavanagh; No.16 to journalist and writer, Percy Greg and No.5 to diplomat, Sir Edward Thornton. Finally, Tedworth Square was the home of Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava, Vicereine of India; Harriot Georgina Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood.

The history of Queen Elm's Square



Queen's Elm Square was one of the last squares to be built in Chelsea. It sits to the north, off Church Street, near Fulham Road and tucked behind a row of trees and stone gates.

The name 'Queen's Elm' originates from early history when it was said that Elizabeth I was walking through the fields of Chelsea with Lord Burghley, who had a house nearby in Brompton, when it began to rain. The pair took cover under a large Elm tree and the story says that the Queen declared 'let this hence forward be called the Queen's tree'. It is understood that this is more than mere myth as maps from Elizabeth's time do show the name 'Queenes Tree'.

As building began to stretch across Chelsea in the 18th and 19th centuries, this part of Church Street was built up with houses facing the street with large gardens to the rear. However, in 1904 the Edwardian Queen's Elm Square was built on the site of these houses, in a mock-Tudor design, featuring bold gables and balconies. It has been described as a 'fine example of an Edwardian concept development'.

The 1911 census shows that many houses were still to be occupied. At this time, No.2 was occupied by Mr and Mrs Arnold and their 13 year old son. Head of the house, 63 year old Charles Arnold, was recorded as a 'motor assistant'. No.3 Queen's Elm Square was the home of the newly married Mr and Mrs Dekkers and their two servants. Mr Dekkers was recorded as a surveyor from Belgium. However, at this time Nos.5-14 Queen's Elm Square were not yet occupied.

THE HISTORIAN

MELANIE BACKE-HANSEN

At Chesterton Humberts we understand the importance of national heritage, with our own history dating back to 1805.

Chesterton Humberts greatly value the history of houses and the insight they give to the lives of our ancestors and our nation's social history. As well as being property experts we believe that it is important to understand our history – to support this we employ our own in-house historian to bring the history of property to life. Chesterton Humberts is the only UK estate agent to offer this unique service.

The Chesterton Humberts historian is responsible for uncovering and bringing to life the stories behind each house, as well as giving insight into the history of local areas and streets.

On homes where the history is deemed particularly valuable, historical information is

made available within property details. Historical information such as former residents, when the house was built, how the area developed, and even any significant events in the house are used to give insight into the history of the house and the people who have lived there.

Along with providing an historical overview of the house, the Chesterton Humberts historian works closely with our marketing team and journalists with a view to generating additional publicity for the property. Whether the home of a famous resident, striking architecture or an association with an historic event, the historian can offer a unique perspective that may generate further media coverage.

People are increasingly interested in knowing more about the history of their house or the house they hope to live in. Most people have walked along a street and noticed a blue plaque



or a particular building and wondered how long it has been there or what it may have been hundreds of years ago. The Chesterton Humberts historian can give an insight to these mysteries and an overview of the life of a house and the people who have called it home.



MELANIE BACKE-HANSEN

Specialist in researching the history of houses. Work for Chesterton Humberts - the only UK estate agent to employ a full time house historian.

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