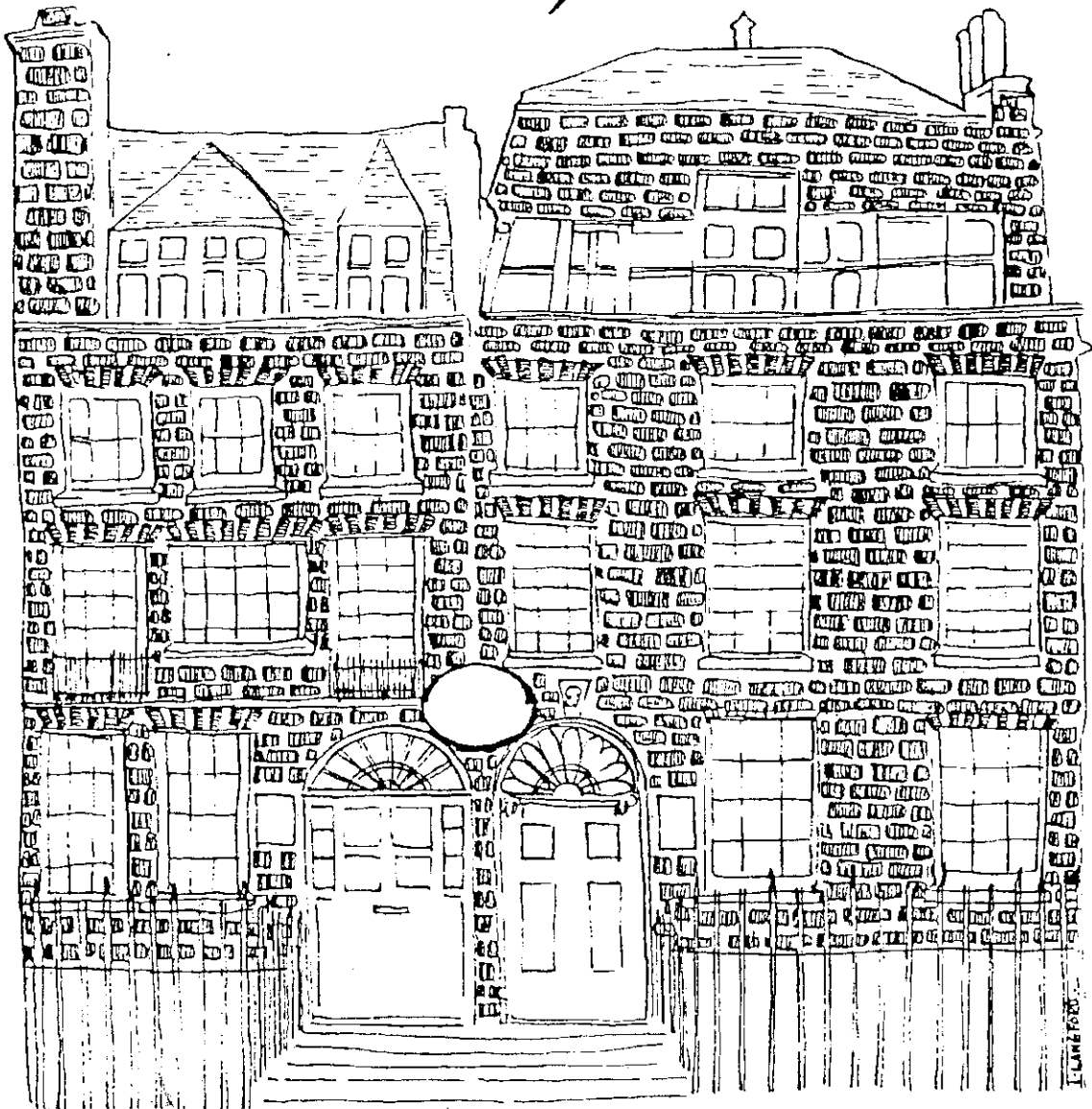


42-43, QUEEN SQUARE London, W.C.1.



THE MARY WARD CENTRE

NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF QUEEN SQUARE

Although Queen Square, Bloomsbury, lies just behind the busy junction of Southampton Row and Theobalds Road, it retains a quiet dignity preserved since the time of its creation during the reigns of Queen Anne and Queen Charlotte.

The Square today is mainly occupied by Hospitals and various Educational Institutions and Societies. The Church of St. George the Martyr, near the Mary Ward Centre, was one of the earliest buildings in the original Square.

In Georgian times the Square was the home of many distinguished and fashionable citizens: musicians, writers, painters and printers among them.

Queen Anne's sickly son, the Duke of Gloucester, was sent to stay in a house on the south side of the Square (the side where the Mary Ward Centre now stands), so that he could benefit from the fresh air of The Bloomsbury Neighbourhood, then on the extreme outskirts of London.

Dr Charles Burney, musician, author and friend of Dr Johnson, also lived on the south end of the Square; his daughter Fanny wrote her reminiscences "A beautiful prospect of the hills ever verdant of Hampstead and Highgate", at the time an unobstructed view, faced the Doctors dwelling in Queen Square.

A celebrated school for girls, sometimes called the "Ladies Eton", flourished in the middle of the 18th Century at No. 31. When the pupils attended St John's Chapel, Bedford Row, (since pulled down) they went in relays in a stately old coach. The coach was later installed in an upper room at the school so that they could practice the art of getting in and out in a becoming manner.

Queen Square became a less fashionable and wealthy area during the 19th Century.

William Morris, socialist, craftsman and poet, regretfully left the Red House, Upton, Kent in 1865 and established his home and workshops at No. 26 Queen Square.

Esther Maynell in her book 'Portrait of William Morris' writes "A large ballroom had once been built at the end of the yard and it made an admirable workshop. In the long corridor that led to the ballroom, the glass painters worked, and there was a kiln. Above dwelt the family, in rooms made as bright and gay as possible with white-wash and white paint, lovely embroidered hangings and cushions, and painted furniture. Queen Square had undoubted attractions. There was a fine garden with immense plane trees, where the two little Morris girls spent much of their time. Needless to say, they also haunted the workshops to watch what was going on there whenever there was a chance."

William Morris's interest in reviewing the Crafts resulted in the formation of the Art Workers Guild which was established and still exists at No 6 (the house is typical of the original houses built in the Square in the early 18th Century). A friend of William Morris, the Rev. F D Maurice, who lived at No. 21 was the founder of the Working Men's College.

The electric lamp, in the middle of the road immediately outside the Mary Ward Centre, is on the site of the original pump. It was a sight to see the procession of jug-carrying servants from the great houses, and the children from the poorer houses, making their way to the pump.

A HISTORY OF THE HOUSES - Nos 42-43 Queen Square, London
Borough of Camden

Queen Square was first projected by Nicolas Barbon, a speculative builder, and Richard Kent, a financier, in 1686. Barbon had acquired this ground with money borrowed from Kent, who in turn had borrowed it from Sir Nathaniel Curzon of Kedleston in Derbyshire. Great Ormond Street was at first called Kent Street. Kent died in 1690 and Barbon in 1698.

Curzon eventually foreclosed on his mortgage, and took over a development in which hardly any houses had been completed, and probably none in Queen Square.

The first leases of Nos. 42-43 Queen Square were granted on 19th June 1703 by Sir Nathaniel Curzon to William Hawkins.

Normally the building lease reflects the dates at which the house is finished in carcass, but there is evidence for Queen Square that Curzon was experiencing as many delays in his development as Barbon and Kent had done in theirs. Hawkins was Curzon's London Agent for the development, and the leases to him may represent a legal manoeuvre rather than the completion of houses on the sites. Strype's edition of Stow's survey published in 1720 but written a little before, refers to Queen Square as "a designed square having the foundations of some houses laid", but it is probable that at least some houses were furnished by this time. The Square was certainly fully built by the time of the first ratebook in 1729.

Nos. 42-43 Queen Square have been extensively altered, but the surviving patches of early brickwork on the front and side walls show that they have never been entirely rebuilt. They were obviously considerably remodelled towards the end of the 18th Century, when the front elevation took its present form, and a number of interior features were inserted.

The houses were intended to be, and remained for over a century, private residences. But towards the middle of the 19th Century Queen Square was taken over by a number of institutions.

By 1856 the College of Preceptors was based at No. 42 and by 1861 the School of Art for Ladies was at No. 43. Both these institutions continued there until 1887 when the College of Preceptors moved to its premises in Bloomsbury Square.

The Ladies School of Art then seems to have taken over No. 42 as well, and to have continued in both houses until 1908. For all of its existence the school appears to have been headed by a Miss Lorrissa Gann.

From 1910 Nos. 42-43 were the L.C.C Day Trade School for Girls, transformed some time during the 1930's into a Technical College for women, in existence until the late 1950's. The buildings were for a short time a secondary school before becoming part of the Stanhope Institute.

The Stanhope Institute disappeared in 1981 following a re-organisation of adult education in Camden and the building became surplus to the ILEA's requirements.

At the same time the Mary Ward Centre had to move from its premises in Tavistock Place and seized the opportunity of acquiring a new home in 1982. And what a new home it is. Its character and scale have made it an ideal setting for adult learning and the Centre has flourished within its walls.

The two houses, both listed Grade 2, are owned by the Royal Female School of Art, a charitable trust.

Residents of Nos. 42 - 43 Queen square as extracted from the ratebooks:

	No. 42	No. 43
1729	John Baker	Sigismund Trafford
1734	“	“
1739	“	“
1750	Hugh Campbell	Elizabeth Trafford
1754	“	Sire John Morgan, Bt.
1760	Dr. Turner	“
1774	Dr. Burney	-. Gifford
1780	-. Alten	“
1785	Capt. Todd	J H Warne
1791	John Fryar	“
1795	John Taylor	“
1800	Baron Chambre	Edward Dickinson
1805	(Judge) Chambre	“
1810	Edward Issacs	Thomas Morris
1815	“	Benjamin Burchell
1820	Elizabeth Willan	“
1825	L S Baxendale	J C Pike
1830	“	“
1835	H N Soloman	Empty
1840	William Newton	William Hayes
1845	“	“
1851	“	Miss Hayes

The Principal, Ceri Williams, and the staff of the Mary Ward Centre welcome you.

Drop in for a prospectus or to use the café.

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