

With the rest of England, London suffered grievously when Thomas Cromwell suppressed the monasteries in order to steal their goods, houses and income.

The first theatres were built in London during the reign of Elizabeth—the theatre in Shoreditch, the Globe on Bankside, where Shakespeare acted—and half-a-dozen others.

The River played a large part in the life of that time. Falstaff, it was related, was often at the "Boar's Head" in Eastcheap, and the famous "Mermaid" on the south side of Cheapside was often the meeting place of Beaumont, Marlowe, Ben Jonson, and even Shakespeare himself.

When the Great Plague of London broke out on the eve of 1664, Samuel Pepys records:

"This day, much against my will, I did in Drury Lane see two or three houses marked with a red Cross upon the doors and 'Lord have mercy upon us' writ there, which was a sad sight to me being the first of that kind that, to my remembrance I ever saw. It put me into an ill conception of myself and my smell, so that I was forced to buy some roll-tobacco to smell and to chew which took away the apprehension."

According to the diarist, as many as 7,400 people died in the city in one week in the autumn of 1665. By the end of the year the Plague was stayed, and in September, 1666, the Great Fire of London broke out in Pudding Lane. The fire lasted for three days, and old wooden London was largely destroyed.

There is one note in the Pepys diary that throws a curious light on the habits of Londoners in the seventeenth century:

"River full of lighters and boats taking in goods, and good foods swimming in the water; and only I observed that hardly one lighter or boat in three that had the goods of a house in, but there was a pair of virginals in it."

The virginal was a spinet, and apparently London was a musical city long before the gramophone was invented.

After the Restoration, the population of Greater London vastly increased—but the City of London itself remained much as it had been a hundred years before—just a series of narrow winding streets of wooden houses dominated by St. Pauls.

With the beginning of the eighteenth century London's growth was accelerated, and in the enthusiasm of the short religious revival that bridged the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, many churches were built in what are now the inner suburbs. Social life continued to move steadily west, and Soho Square was for a generation the centre of fashionable London.

At the beginning of the Hanoverian period Piccadilly had become a fashionable and frequented thoroughfare as far as Kensington Palace.

London was growing weary of dirt. The Fleet ditch was covered over, the Mansion House was built, and the City began to push itself northward to the hills of Hampstead and Highgate.

(To be concluded.)

CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

AT THE FIRST MEETING of the reconstituted Central Midwives Board the Board resolved to place on record its high appreciation of the services of the retired members of the previous Board, Miss E. E. Greaves, O.B.E., Miss K. V. B. Coni, O.B.E., Mr. J. P. Hedley, F.R.C.P., and Mr. J. M. Wyatt, F.R.C.S., not only to the Board, but to the maternity services of the country.

Mr. Arnold Walker, the Chairman of the Board, referred particularly to the unique services of Miss Greaves, who had served as a representative of the Minister of Health since April, 1925. Miss Greaves' membership of the Board was remarkable, not only for its long duration but for the interest, energy and wisdom which she contributed to the work of the Board. Having been Chairman of the Approvals and Examinations Sub-committee for some 20 years Miss Greaves

had guided and controlled the development of the training of midwives to its present high standard throughout England and Wales.

Miss Coni served as a representative of the Royal College of Midwives from December, 1936, and had contributed a wide knowledge of training schools and personalities throughout the country, and particularly in the North East of England when she was Matron of the Hull Maternity Hospital.

Mr. Hedley, representative of the Society of Apothecaries since July, 1938, had been Vice-Chairman of the Board since February, 1946. He brought the wisdom of a very senior obstetrician to the deliberations of the Board.

Mr. James Wyatt, representative of the Royal College of Surgeons since November, 1947, had been especially useful in the work of the Board since the National Health Service Act.

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