

EAST LONDON HISTORY GROUP BULLETIN

Bulletin no:2

August, 1963

The aim of this bulletin is to inform those interested in East London's history of the material available in the libraries of the area, and of research work in progress. Any relevant material should be sent to: The Editor, East London History Group Bulletin, Queen Mary College, Mile End Road, E.1. In subsequent issues it is hoped to provide bibliographies of material in local collections on particular topics.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS by libraries and museums include:

BETHNAL GREEN

Typescript: broadcast of Wilfred Pickles' children's party, Queen Elizabeth Hospital for Children, Hackney Road, E.2., on Christmas Day, 1962.

Photographs and drawings: aerial photographic survey of borough, 26 photographs, May 1963.

24 pencil sketches of Bethnal Green scenes by A. E. Turpin.

Medal: silver medal commemorating Bethnal Green Volunteer Infantry, 1803-14.

EAST HAM

Books: P. Morant, The History and Antiquities of the County of Essex, extra-illustrated with original water-colours by Katherine Fry.  
O. Tapper, The Other Stratford.

Maps: Great Eastern Railway, official maps, Liverpool Street to Bethnal Green Junction, and Bow Junction to Stratford.

GUILDHALL LIBRARY

Manuscripts: three documents relating to the public house and hereditaments known as 'The Baker and Basket' (formerly 'The Buffalo') situate at the corner of Appold Street, Shoreditch and Skinner Street, Finsbury, 1886-1887. MS 10948.

St. Paul Shadwell: diocesan transcripts of parish register, 1663-4, in MS 10952.

Photographs, drawings, etc: 2500 London photographs by the late J. D. Willis, including material on Stepney and Shoreditch.

Guildhall interior, wash-drawing by Dennis Flanders, and two pen drawings by G. S. Fletcher.

City and East London scenes: five water-colours and four oil paintings by the late S. H. Hancock.

### POPLAR

Deed: Manor of Poplar: admission of John Coker, aged five, son of the late John Coker, cowkeeper, of Stepney, to a messuage or tenement with the outhouses, gardens and appurtenances thereto, dated 21 March, 1744.

Photographs: East India Dock Road in 1897 showing arch erected on borough boundary, by Stainsby Road, through which the Prince of Wales must have passed to open Blackwall Tunnel, 22 May, 1897.

Spratt's Patent Ltd., Bow Road Office (now being vacated).

Books: Messrs. Spratt's also deposited a number of catalogues, price lists and miscellaneous publications, 1900-1939.

Journal of the Duff (1799) - see next.

Model: The London Missionary Society presented a model of the missionary ship Duff, which sailed from Blackwall, 10 August, 1796, to Tahiti.

### WEST HAM CENTRAL LIBRARY

Microfilms: Stratford Times, 1855-66.  
Stratford Express, 1866-1933.

Books: O. Tapper, The Other Stratford.

### WEST HAM PASSMORE EDWARDS MUSEUM

Photographs: The museum has begun its photographic survey of the Angel Lane area of Stratford, scheduled for development. A photographic survey is being carried out of the Chapel Street, E.15. area now being demolished - an interesting section of Late Georgian (1830-8) artisan dwellings and shops. It is hoped to recover dated plaques, sections of brickwork, mouldings, etc. In this, the museum is closely associated with the Building By-laws Department.

### BOOKS RECEIVED

The Other Stratford, Oscar Tapper, published by the West Ham Public Libraries Committee, 1962 (duplicated). 110 pp. 4 plates, appendices.

This account of the vicissitudes of the Theatre Royal, Stratford, E. contains a complete list of productions at the theatre since its opening in 1884. The story at times reflects political struggles in the district; and xerographic reproductions of programmes with their advertisements add to its interest to the local historian.

## ENQUIRIES AND RESEARCH

### BIOGRAPHICAL

Stewart Headlam (Bethnal Green)

James Gordon (d. 1780), nurseryman of Bromley St. Leonard, who cultivated some nine acres in the 1750's, approximately on the site now covered by the area between Merchant Street and Arnold Road, extending southwards to Cemetery Row and Archibald Street. (Poplar).

William Oakley, ironfounder, of Bromley-by-Bow, resident from 1861 to c.1879. Member of Poplar Board of Works (resigned 1878); trustee, vestryman and guardian, St. Mary's Parish Church. (Poplar).

John Bonas, shipowner, lived at Tredegar Place, Bow Road, from December 1825 to early in 1833 when he moved, it is believed, to Maryland Point. (Poplar).

Gerard Manley Hopkins, the poet. Birth-place proved to be 87, The Grove, Stratford, E. (demolished during the war).

### TOPOGRAPHICAL

A cutting for a gas connection to the new fire station in Romford Road, West Ham, exposed a good section of medieval road superimposed on Roman road foundation. This is the first confirmation that Romford Road is a Roman alignment, although the fact had long been suspected. The modern road is aligned dead centre of the ancient one, which is only some 16 ft. in width. (Passmore Edwards Museum).

Oxford House (University Settlement) Bethnal Green - history of (Bethnal Green).

### INDUSTRIAL

The Calico printing industry in West Ham now appears to have been established at a date earlier than that hitherto accepted in the 1690's. (West Ham).

## THE LONDON MUSEUM

The plan to amalgamate the collections of the London Museum and the Guildhall Museum, and to house them in a new building has made it possible for the London Museum to consider extending certain sections which hitherto have been unduly restricted through lack of space. It is hoped, for example, to collect and exhibit more examples of domestic interiors; and it is proposed to reconstruct a London street of shops and workshops, mainly of the period c.1780-1850. In this particular field East London will have much to offer in the next few years, and the London Museum would welcome the chance of acquiring tools etc. of characteristic (and often disappearing) London crafts, and early architectural features such as shop-fronts and items of street-furniture. Members who can assist the Museum to collect such items, should write to the London Museum, Kensington Palace, London, W.8.

## EAST LONDON HISTORY GROUP

### Recent Meetings and Visits

The Annual General Meeting of the Group was held in November, when Mr. M. H. Port spoke on Church Extension in East London 1700-1850. This period embraced the work of the two commissions for building new churches set up by Parliament in 1711 and 1818, both of which were active in East London; and saw the establishment of a Diocesan Church Building Society, and of local funds, such as that which promoted the building of ten churches in Bethnal Green in the 1840's.

There were two meetings in January and February on Domesday East London - one on Stepney and one on Ham. One unusual feature was the large number of mills to be found in both villages, suggesting the beginnings of industry in East London. Ham's population, too, was considerably more than that of the average village.

In April a visit was paid to St. Anne's, Limehouse, conducted by the Rector, the Reverend C. E. Watts, who gave a short talk about the history of the parish. The church, designed by Hawksmoor for the 1711 Church Building Commission, was completed in 1724, when Limehouse was already a populous district with ropemaking and ship-building trades. Tea was followed by a walk through the older parts of the parish, down Three Colts Street to Narrow Street, Ropemakers Fields, and into the Regents Canal Basin, and then back to the 'Bunch of Grapes', a riverside pub. supposed to be the original 'Six Jolly Fellowship Porters' of Our Mutual Friend.

A visit to an exhibition on Old West Ham at the Passmore Edwards Museum took place in May. The Museum has a large collection of photographs and prints of the Hams and other parts of Metropolitan Essex, which is supplemented by that of the nearby West Ham Central Library.

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