



**EAST LONDON HISTORY SOCIETY
BULLETIN**

Number 31

December 1974

EDITORIAL

Once again we greet you from Hackney and it is our pleasure to produce these few pages in our "old-new" cover (still from Rocque's map of 1746 but depicting another section). In many ways it has been another eventful year for our local communities with redevelopment continuing to threaten many East London buildings, large and small, domestic and industrial and much discussion ensuing in order to preserve the best.

One of the most encouraging events of the year has been the inauguration of the Inner London (North) Archaeological Unit. Hackney and Tower Hamlets are among the seven Boroughs who have agreed to contribute towards this project and the Department of the Environment also has promised to pay a share of the costs of the unit. Great credit is due to Mr. Ralph Merrifield and the Research Committee of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society for their initiative in approaching the Boroughs in the first instance.

We welcome John Hinchcliffe, Director of the Unit and Graham Black, Field Officer for this area, and we in East London look forward to a long and fruitful co-operation with them. A more detailed note appears elsewhere in this Bulletin.

Finally, and with thanks to the Hackney Borough Librarian for co-operation and to the staff of the Administration Department for producing these pages year by year - may I wish all members a Happy and Peaceful Christmas and some satisfying research in 1975.

S.C. TONGUE
Archivist
Library Services
Hackney.

NOTES

Kindly note that the January illustrated lecture by Mr. J. H. Boyes on "Aerial Photography on the East London Perimeter" will be on Tuesday, 21st January 1975 at East Ham Central Library, East Ham Town Hall at 7.45 p.m., and not as shown on the provisional programme. This will be the joint E.L.H.S./Newham History Society Meeting for 1975.

Members are advised that consideration is being given to forming an archaeological Unit. Anyone interested in this proposal is invited to notify Mr. French at 36 Parkland Road, Woodford Green, Essex. This is not a matter of digging (unless you feel energetic!) but of assisting in many other ways.

The annual subscription is now due. It is £1 per member and this should be sent to Mrs. Thomas at 7 East Road, West Ham, E.15. Old Age pensioners and students will continue to pay at present rates.

The East London History Society

Chairman: A. H. French, M.B.E., 36 Parkland Road, Woodford Green, Essex.
Secretary: Miss A. J. Sansom, B.A., F.L.A., 18 Hawkdene, London, E.4.
Treasurer: Mrs. E. Thomas, 7 East Road, London, E.15.

PROVISIONAL NOTES
TOWARDS A STUDY OF
THE GIRLS OF THE HACKNEY FREE AND PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS
1817 - 1835

This work grew out of a search for material to illustrate for children social conditions in the decade following the end of the Napoleonic Wars; the minute book of a committee of ladies running the girls' section of a charity school in Hackney seemed a promising source. As I read through the accounts of their meetings, year after year, they seemed to offer far more than the occasional glimpse of the family circumstances of the pupils and the social conditions in which they lived. Historians of English education tend to pass over the education of the poor in the early nineteenth century with a nod to the existence of many church and other charity schools, but remarking that little is known about the children who attended, how long they stayed and what they learned. The routine notes of the Hackney ladies, recording admittances and leavings, absences for sickness and other reasons, could reveal information of this sort. I decided to concentrate on the girls admitted to the school during the first ten full years covered by the minutes, 1818 to 1827, and see what emerged. I made an index card for each name as it appeared, adding further details through the years. Later I added information from the minutes of the general committee running the whole school and from the parish registers. I succeeded in reconstructing the school lives of about two thirds of the girls recorded as having been admitted in the ten years. At the same time I have been trying to gather together a picture of the Hackney of the period against which the life of the charity school can be set. The following notes are a preliminary report on some of the information which has emerged so far.

In the early nineteenth century Hackney was evidently an exceptionally well-organised and well-run parish. (1) The rector, John James Watson, was an energetic and far-seeing man, who had recently built at his own expense a large new church for the growing population. His younger brother, Joshua, was one of the leading High Church laymen, treasurer of the S.P.C.K., co-founder of Kings College and involved in many other Church of England educational and missionary endeavours. The brothers were the nucleus of an influential group of like-minded men known as the 'Hackney Phalanx'. The National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church originated at a meeting in Joshua Watson's house at Clapton in 1811. In the same year the Hackney Free and Parochial School which had existed in some form since the early sixteenth century moved into new premises in Chatham Place. Three years later it joined the National Society and so was committed to the monitorial system of teaching. The girls under examination were attending a school run by men and women very much aware of the latest trends in education for the poor although the minutes do suggest that they had considerable difficulty in applying them. The master Mr. Hugill was unable to maintain discipline and was asked to leave in 1818; his successor, Mr. Mathiason and his wife, who was mistress of the girls' school, do not seem to have been much more successful.

- (1) There were only two petitions against Peel's Metropolitan Police Bill in 1829; one of them came from Hackney which already had its own efficient watch.

The school was financed by legacies and by subscribers who had the right to nominate children to places, the number of nominations depending on the size of the yearly subscription. It was controlled by a committee of subscribers who met monthly, usually under the chairmanship of the rector. To obtain admittance, the children had to be residents of the parish, to produce proof of baptism and be nominated by a subscriber. A number of children were nominated by the governing committees but the economics of this practice is not clear.

The pupils were taught, firstly, the catechism of the Church of England, then reading, writing and the rudiments of arithmetic with the addition of sewing for the girls. The education was free and a number of children also received free clothing and shoes. The pupils were admitted at the age of six and over and were expected to stay until they were fourteen; those who did so and who had behaved well, were rewarded with the gift of a Bible and Prayer Book and, from 1831 onwards, with clothes worth 10/-. The older children who taught the younger ones apparently received a little pay; a minute of the general committee recorded, on 7th December, 1819, that there should be an allowance of 3/- per quarter to the teacher, 18 pence to the assistant teacher of each class, and 6/- per quarter to the usher of the school 'to commence after the Christmas vacation'. There is only one mention of a girl being a teacher; in the minutes for 2nd November, 1818 when Elizabeth Ketteridge was taken out she is described as 'a teacher and a very good girl'. The girls sewed for the local tradesmen and the school allowed them 2d in each shilling of the payment for their work.

Good behaviour could be financially rewarded during a school career; a daughter's merit could influence the gift of one of the parish charities to her parents. From 1820 onwards, under the will of a former churchwarden, Harry Sedgwick, medals and a money prize of 10/- were awarded to seven boys and eight girls for 'conducting themselves the most meritoriously and orderly in the Hackney Charity School'.

The managing committee met in the evening of the first Monday of most months of the year; the ladies usually met earlier on the same day and their minutes were presented to the evening meeting and were frequently incorporated into the general minutes, sometimes with interesting alterations or additions. The earliest minutes of the Ladies' Committee in the G.L.C. Record Office begin on 4th August, 1817; the committee had evidently existed earlier, perhaps not for very long, and with little responsibility except for the domestic running of the school. On 6th October, 1817, the general committee resolved 'that the Ladies Committee be empowered and requested to receive admissions into the Girls School and to hear and determine finally on such complaints, relative to the discipline of the school, as may be brought before them'. A further resolution, on 7th June, 1819, added the right 'to order such things as they think necessary for the Girls' School without the necessity of applying to this board'. Later minutes reflect a growing independence on the part of the ladies and an increasing reliance on their advice on the part of the gentlemen.

In 1817, the Ladies Committee consisted of Mrs. Watson, the Rector's wife, Mrs. Joshua Watson, his sister-in-law, Mrs. and Miss Duval (David Duval was treasurer of the management committee), Mrs. Hunt and Miss Powell, Mrs. Watson's sister. These ladies remained in office for the next ten years after which other names begin to appear. They did not attend every month but over the years they all obviously contributed a lot of time to the running of the school. The minutes of their meetings are written in different hands and the quality of the information varies accordingly. Some of them were much better at guessing how to spell the girls' names than others.

The early minutes are fragmentary and mainly concern the receipt of payment for the sewing and domestic matters but by the beginning of 1818 the Ladies were keeping reasonably full records. They noted the names of the girls admitted, and the names of their sponsors', the girls who came with their parents to 'return thanks' for their education before leaving, with their ages; the reason for leaving if it was before the age of 14, and sometimes the type of 'place' to which the girl was going. They also recorded cases of persistent non-attendance at school, summoning the mothers for reprimand (frequently the mothers refused to come) and they considered requests for leave of absence, perhaps for a set number of weeks to cover an event such as a mother's confinement, or perhaps for regular leave of a whole or half day each week, again usually to assist the mother.

There is much social information of this kind to be quarried from the minutes, but for the time being I have concentrated almost solely on numbers, counting the admissions from January 1818 to December 1827 and following as far as possible the careers of the girls who arrived in the school during these years. This involved recording also the names of those already there at the beginning of 1818 and of those who arrived after 1828 as both groups overlapped with the girls being studied but they are not included in any of the following calculations.

During the ten years, 255 girls are recorded as being admitted into the school, 6 are recorded as leaving and 3 are mentioned in 'mid-course', that is, 9 girls were there without being formally admitted (this situation was recognised and rectified in a minute of the General Committee dated 5th April, 1830, 'No child in future to attend unless duly admitted by the General Committee or the Ladies Committee'). Altogether, the combined sources show that 264 girls entered the school in the period. Of these it is possible to follow the whole school career of 164 (62.1%); that is to determine at least the date on which they entered the school and the date on which they left, or died, and thus the length of their attendance. For 91 girls only the date of admittance is known and for 66 of these this is the only mention; many of them probably never really started school life (the baptisms of 7 were queried on admittance and they may finally have been disqualified) but it is probable that a number of them attended for several years without ever earning a mention in the minutes and neglecting the formalities of 'taking out'. It is evident that some girls who were absent from illness never returned, and that others who were re-proved for unauthorised absences just stopped coming at all.

The first thing to establish about the girls is how long they stayed at school. The Reverend Tindall Thompson Walmsley, secretary of the National Society, told the Parliamentary Committee on the Education of the Lower Orders in the Metropolis and Beyond, in 1816, that he considered a two year attendance at school 'abundantly sufficient'. On this criterion the girls of Hackney did not do badly. 135 (82.3%) of those whose whole school career is known stayed at school two years or more; 14 others were still at school two years after admittance; in all, at least 149 girls had two or more years of schooling. Only 40 (15% of the whole entry) are known to have left the school in less than two years and of these 1 died, 2 went to other schools, 13 left the parish with their families and may have continued their education elsewhere and 8 were several years above the minimum entry age at admittance, were baptised outside the parish and so perhaps had been at school already elsewhere.

However, educationalists writing about the fight against illiteracy in underdeveloped countries today maintain that a child needs four years schooling to ensure no reversion to illiteracy in later years. Taking this as a basis, Hackney still has quite a good record. 112 (68.3%) of those whose whole school career is known stayed at school four years or more; 6 others were still at school four years after admittance; in all at least

118 girls had four or more years of schooling. 78 (29.5%) are known to have spent less than four years in the school and of these 2 died, 2 left to go to other schools, 15 left the parish with their families and 10 girls were several years above the minimum age on admittance and were baptised outside the parish.

A considerable number, 75, stayed six, seven, eight, nine and in one case, 10 years at school. These presumably were the girls who acted as teachers and assistant teachers. More than two-thirds of them were baptised in the parish and a number of them came from families who seem to have had particularly close ties with the church (this needs further investigation). Long school attendance seems to run in families; for instance, Elizabeth, Diana and Harriet or Hannah Edwards were admitted in 1820, 1822 and 1827 respectively and all stayed the full time. An older sister, Mary Ann, who had been admitted in 1816, left at the age of 12, perhaps to look after the younger children. Other Edwards girls arrived after 1827. Their father Henry was described in the Baptismal Register as a gardener and it would be interesting to trace his employer.

I attempted to discover how many of the girls were natives of Hackney. Matching names and ages in the Register of Baptisms was not entirely satisfactory but it seems almost certain that at least 152 of them were born in the parish, another 15 were baptised in the parish some years after birth, 8 were baptised so close to the date of admittance to the school that presumably one was a prerequisite of the other, 2 were baptised after admittance and 1, Maria Smith, was recorded in the register as having been baptised at birth at Colchester and re-baptised at the time of her entry to the school. There is some evidence in the minutes that parents from outside the parish often found it difficult to prove baptism because of the cost of obtaining a copy of the certificate. The percentage of baptisms in the parish was slightly higher, 66.4%, among the girls with a complete school record than among the others, 58%. Perhaps this reflects a more ordered life, better employment or more sense of obligation to the church among the settled inhabitants of Hackney than among the families moving into the growing parish in search of work.

These are only the first results of studying the minutes and relating the information in them to that available elsewhere. I am at work on other aspects which may prove interesting, including:-

the relationship of early leaving to the fluctuating economic situation,

the age of leaving in relation to the child's position in the family - did the older children leave early to look after the younger or to contribute to the family budget while the later arrivals enjoyed longer at school because their elders at work made more money available,

a similar analysis of the boys in the school over the same period which is also helping to complete the family picture, how many of the parents who were married in the parish were literate and did this relate to the length of their children's schooling,

some sort of analysis of the occupations of the fathers of girls baptised in the parish related to the length of schooling, the subsequent careers of some of the girls - were they literate at marriage and did they marry men with occupations of a higher status than their fathers,

the connection of the girls and their families with other parish activities and charities - was father a gravedigger, did 'Gran' live in an almshouse, and so on.

It would be possible to make a similar study of the girls entering the schools in periods before and after the one analysed here to see if the patterns were different but the results are unlikely to be so satisfactory because only one school source would be available; before 1818 only the General Committee minutes are extant while in the later years the gentlemen had delegated most of the responsibility for the girls to the ladies and there are few references to them in the general minutes. It is the existence of two substantial sources for the period from roughly 1817 to 1835, corroborating, amplifying, correcting or contradicting each other that has made possible any sort of study in depth. Records may still exist in the school itself or in the archives of the National Society which will furnish further details. An extension of the work to other charity schools with surviving records of a similar nature, such as Shoreditch, over the same period might be more rewarding.

Betty Smith.

.....

BOOKS FOR CHRISTMAS

Elsewhere in these pages Ken Worpole has written of the Centerprise/Hackney Library Services publications, all of which are excellent value for a very modest outlay. Members may like to know of three other publications, diverse in content but all relating to Hackney:

'TIS A MAD WORLD AT HOGSDON by Tony Coombs

48 pages (illustrated) for 25p. From Hoxton Hall, 128A Hoxton Street, N.1. or from Shoreditch District Libraries.

HE'S MUCH BETTER HE CAN SMILE NOW by Tom Wakefield

Published by David & Charles £3.25. Tells of the superb work being done with deprived children by this man and his equally dedicated staff at Downsvew School, Hackney.

SAY GOODBYE: YOU MAY NEVER SEE THEM AGAIN Jonathan Cape £2.50

About thirty paintings of the East End by Hackney primitive John Allin; text by Arnold Wesker. "What they've done with the East End is diabolical".

** P.S. Don't forget Hackney Camera, 1883-1918. About 90 photos for 75p. from Centerprise.

170 years on: historical notes on
Clapton Park United Reformed Church
(continued from ELHS Bulletin Dec., 1973)

The first part of this narrative brought the story down to the retirement of the Revd. John Davies, in 1867, and the institution of James Spence as Pastor.

On 26th March, 1868 a special Meeting of the Church was held to consider the question of a new place of worship. It was resolved to proceed to build anew and a further resolution revealed that "a group of members have privately secured a site in the Clapton Road." A Committee was appointed which included Matthew Rose (the draper, of Mare Street) and Charles Reed (local resident, philanthropist, and Member of Parliament for Hackney Central).

At the Church Meeting of 30th July, 1868 the Pastor reported that a further piece of land has been acquired "which would prevent the annoyance of shops being erected adjacent" and it may well be that this addition to the site inspired the architect to the enlightened and pleasing design which earned this building the appellation of "The Round Chapel". The Meeting of 11th February, 1869 approved the plans of Mr. Henry Fuller and he was thereby appointed Architect for the new Chapel. An appeal for an increased level of subscription resulted in promises totalling £1300. The final cost of the building was, in fact, £21,294.

It is noteworthy that Church membership was growing all the time, largely by transfer from other parts of London, including the City. In the period 1841-1871 the population of Hackney rose from 38,000 to 115,000 and the ensuing thirty years were to see this total very nearly doubled. This was land hunger with a vengeance.

Locally, the death of Samuel Berger in 1855 and his brother John five years later hastened social change. Their estates were sold to developers such as The London and Suburban Land Society and the adjacent Alderson property was sold shortly afterwards and it was thereon proposed to build the Clapton Park Estate down to the boundary of the old field path which later became Chatsworth Road. Subsequently, the developers acquired Cranbrook Farm, to the east of the thoroughfare, and this additional 61 acres enabled them to extend their operations almost to the banks of the Lea by about 1872.

A large acreage was also purchased in 1867 from the Trustees of the London Orphan Asylum who, alarmed by the deaths of several children in a typhoid epidemic and the continuing encroachments of the suburban developers, removed the Institution to Watford in 1871. It is of interest to note that, between this date and 1881 when the Salvation Army purchased the premises, the buildings were used for a time by the Metropolitan Asylums Board. During building preliminaries in 1867 a Roman sarcophagus of white marble was discovered behind the Orphan Asylum grounds on the generally accepted line of the former Roman road to the Lea. It is a very fine example and may be seen today in the crypt of the Guildhall. The coffin was found on the natural gravel two feet six inches from the surface with the foot to the east. There was no lid but the skeleton was intact - although much decayed.

It was under the pastorate of the Revd. James Spence that the present building was erected but, alas, he was not to preach in it. In his letter of acceptance from Poultry Chapel in September, 1867 he had intimated that his health was undermined by the demands of that pastoral charge. In fact, he had visited the Holy Land in 1865 and, as was not unusual, had contracted a severe fever in that treacherous climate.

Thus, it is clear that in accepting the call to Clapton Park he assumed - quite wrongly - that he would find a quieter life in the suburbs. In consequence, he revealed to Church Meeting on 2nd March, 1871 that he had a heart disorder and could not, therefore, continue the Ministry into the new

Chapel. In fact, he celebrated Communion once in the new building, on 7th May. He lived on, at Buccleugh Terrace, Clapton Common, for six years.

The last public service was held at the Old Gravel Pit Chapel on 23rd April, 1871 and the inaugural service in the new Chapel was held on Wednesday, 26th April. (The tenancy of the Old Gravel Pit passed to the Independent Chapel under the Ministry of the Reverend De Kewer Williams). The usual difficulties consequent upon finding a new Pastor were encountered until the Reverend Samuel Hebditch of Bristol was inducted in September, 1872 - a Ministry that was to last for thirteen years.

In 1880 Hebditch obtained the leave of the Church to spend one year in charge of a church in Melbourne because of concern for his son's health. Writing his first letter to Clapton Park, in October, 1880, he described his departure at the end of July in the s.s. Sorata. Their arrival was delayed by some ten days on account of the grounding of the ship in a gale within sight of the coast of Australia. In a graphic letter Hebditch describes how with the ship in danger of breaking up, they were relieved to see another arrive and they transferred to her at midnight in an open boat - only to find that the weather conditions nearly sank the erstwhile rescuer also. They passed the rest of the night on the deck of a crowded corn ship and the second night on the P. & O. mail packet Assan. Great anxiety was felt in Melbourne also but, as Hebditch writes, "we had a very cautious Captain and by God's Blessing we at length, through the wild winds and waves and mist found our way into Hobson's Bay and at nine o'clock on Monday, 13th September stepped ashore in Victoria and were soon conducted to the city of Melbourne itself." His son appeared none the worse for this experience although the writer adds with true English sang froid "I am afraid it somewhat increased his cough!"

Hebditch returned uneventfully, but left his son in the South of France ("a far off land"). During his sixteen month absence his friend Sir Charles Reed had died and plans had been executed for new Schoolrooms (subsequently postponed because of the high cost). In 1885, the Revd. Samuel Hebditch accepted a call to the Melbourne congregation, principally on account of the health of his son and, to some extent, his own. His son died two years later, aged 26 and Hebditch senior died in 1888.

Again, for almost two years, the Church was without a Minister and it was during this interregnum that the plans were finalised to build the Grove Mission in Brooksby's Walk. The fifth Pastor, William J. Woods, was inducted on 23rd June, 1887. His first pastorate was served at Leamington Spa between 1874 and 1881; thence he went to Manchester. Woods was a most successful Pastor and brought a much needed strength at a critical time in the development of the Clapton Park Church. Critical because of the many and growing crises within the social community for, as today, whilst prosperity increased in the Victorian heyday the poor became even poorer and there was considerable social unrest beneath the urbane Clapton exterior.

Woods inaugurated the Young Men's Meeting when he wanted local lay preachers to evangelise such depressed districts as Hackney Wick and he reshaped the former Young Men's Society into a Literary Society, which flourished from 1891-1928. The congregation were much grieved when he became Secretary to the Congregational Union in May, 1892. Both he and his retired father - also a clergyman - continued to live locally. At the farewell he was presented with a piano and a travel bag which may have inspired his parting line - "I leave you in a condition of harmony".

This survey of Clapton Park Church during the last century concludes with a brief account of the Reverend Henry Harries. He came to Clapton Park from Stockport in September, 1893. In his acceptance he had said "... I was much interested in your Mission Stations (The Grove and Glyn Road) and to note your thought and care for the poor and needy in your neighbourhood. It will be my endeavour to foster these valuable agencies."

His ministry lasted for 27 years during which the changed composition of the population was most apparent. In his first year 75 names were erased from the roll of church members and although Harries worked so valiantly that, within five years, the number has lifted again to 734 in 1898, the trend was nevertheless a falling one in most churches at this time.

The Church Centenary was celebrated in 1904 and the tablet to the first Pastor, Dr. John Pye Smith, was then placed in the church, where it is still to be seen. In 1906 the exterior was refaced with Ancaster stone at a cost of £4,000.

On every side this Church had been well served. Its history within the twentieth century must needs be related at some later date but, whenever that may be, it will surely be a proud retrospect.

S. C. Tongue.

ABOUT HACKNEY

Community publishing at Centerprise

Centerprise is a bookshop, coffee bar and community centre in Hackney. It has now been operating for four years in the borough and because of a greatly increasing use of the premises by book-buyers and many community groups who have taken advantage of the free meeting room facilities there, it recently moved to much larger premises at 136/138 Kingsland High Street, London, E.8. (Tel: 254 9634).

This unique project is administered by a local body of people who elect a Council of Management to run the business of the project, which has charitable status. The project is partly financed by the I.L.E.A. although it is always badly in need of long-term financial support as a project that could not be expected to make a profit or run without subsidy.

One of the most interesting developments to happen over the past two years has been the involvement of Centerprise in its own publishing programme, a natural development really in a community project based on a bookshop. At first we concentrated on producing materials that could be used in schools, a reading book called 'Hackney Half Term Adventure', two books written by local children, and two collections of poetry by local young people. Of more interest to the adults, though, was the pack of historical and social documents about Hackney called 'If it wasn't for the houses in between..', a loose leaf pack containing three old maps of the borough, a wide selection of photographs, extracts from local novels and reminiscences, and general material covering the history of the area and its people up until the Second World War. Sadly, this folder is now out of print, selling an astonishing number of 2,250 copies within 18 months.

In the past year this publishing venture has worked closely with a local W.E.A. class which has been tape-recording the memories of elderly Hackney residents. In conjunction with this class a number of very interesting books have been published, all of them as cheaply as possible, with some financial assistance from the Borough Libraries Committee. The first publication was the autobiography of a Hackney shoe-maker, 'Years of Change' by Arthur Newton, originally tape-recorded but later transcribed and written up by Mr. Newton himself. This paperback book containing a number of photographs, covers many interesting and often quite shocking incidents from local working class history, and the response to it locally has been very good indeed.

The second book was 'A Licence to Live' written by a Hackney taxi driver, again covering his own life, but this time from the point of view of a younger man, evacuated during the Second War and subsequently spending a very unhappy childhood and early manhood due to ill-health and a lack of decent educational and working opportunities available to him. Many local people have not only bought these books but come back into the bookshop to talk about them and say how much they enjoyed or shared the writers' experiences and also many people come back with writings of their own which hitherto they have not regarded with any seriousness.

Another unusual publication was a small pamphlet about the well know eccentric doctor of Hackney in the early days of this century, Doctor Jelley, the Threepenny Doctor. This pamphlet was made up of reminiscences by Hackney residents who had been treated by the Doctor and gives an unusual insight into health provision in a working class area before the National Health Service.

The most ambitious publication is the collection of old photographs of Hackney which has just been published, 'A Hackney Camera, 1883-1918', the result of an appeal to residents who had old photographs and who were willing to lend them to be published. This is an excellently produced book containing about 90 photographs, printed on high quality paper. We hope that this will bring much pleasure to residents of the borough, which is really what community publishing is about, enabling people to become published writers themselves and at the same time providing other local people with a sense of the importance of local life.

If you haven't yet been to Centerprise, please feel welcome to come along, have a coffee and browse through the books. The shops are open during the usual business hours, although we do close on Monday mornings. If you have been before, come again; there are plenty of new publications which have come out since you last visited us.

Ken Worpole

THE INNER LONDON ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

The Inner London Archaeological Unit has been formed to handle archaeological work in the Boroughs of Tower Hamlets, Hackney, Islington, Camden, Kensington and Chelsea, and Hammersmith. The Unit's permanent staff will be responsible for carrying out a programme of excavation on sites threatened with destruction by development, and the subsequent publication of reports, as well as advising the Planning Departments of the seven Boroughs on the archaeological implications of development schemes within their boundaries. The team is headed by a Director who will be responsible to a committee composed of representatives of all the contributing Boroughs, the Department of the Environment, and the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society; under whose auspices the Unit has been established.

It is envisaged that the work of the Unit's professional staff will be complemented by the work of part-time helpers in all aspects of the Unit's activity, particularly in the pre-excavation phases of site-assessment and in the watching of development work in progress. With this in view, the Unit is in close consultation with the East London History Society in the establishment of an Archaeological Research Group of the Society.

The Unit's offices are situated in Tower Hamlets, at:-

1/2 Steward Street,
London, E1 6AL. (01-247 9296).

and enquiries and information will always be welcomed.

John Hinchliffe
Director.