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NEWHAM LIBRARIES NEWSLETTER

NEWSLETTER - January 1989

FORTHCOMING PROGRAMME

19 Jan	Thur	MEMORIES OF NEWHAM - SWEET & SOUR	Stanley Reed
15 Feb	Wed	EXCAVATIONS AT THE ROYAL MINT	Peter Mills
16 Mar	Thur	JEWS & POLITICS IN E LONDON 1918-1939	Elaine Smith
12 Apr	Wed	THE P.L.A. & DOCKLANDS Past & present	Bob Aspinall
16 May	Tue	HACKNEY - Victoria County History (Stanley Tongue Memorial Lecture - Venue to be announced)	Tim Baker
26 June	Sat	REGENTS CANAL WALK	Led by Ann Sansom

Don't forget to write these items into your new diary - and come along to enjoy the evening. Why not invite a friend as well!

EAST LONDON RECORD Nr. 11 (1988)

by Colm Kerrigan

The latest copy of the Society's annual magazine, the EAST LONDON RECORD, came out at the end of October as usual. The cost this year is £1.80 (or £2.10 inc. postage/packing from Doreen Kendall, 20 Puteaux House, Roman Road, London E2. Tel: 981 7680). We have the usual 46-page format, except that the book reviews have been done in slightly smaller print in order to make space to publicise the large number of books that have recently appeared, dealing in part at least with our area.

George Howell, the subject of the first article, was M.P. for Bethnal Green at the end of the last century. He was well-known as a trade unionist and reformer during the second half of the nineteenth century. Harold Finch, who wrote the article, was Area Youth Officer until his retirement, which he devotes mainly to history. For a future edition of the RECORD, he is planning an article on Thomas Buxton, the philanthropist and abolitionist, who has many local associations.

The second article has interest for our American cousins. In it, Mrs Maitland explores the Shadwell of Jane Randolph, mother of Thomas Jefferson (President of U.S.A.), and also traces her journey to, and life in, America.

Mrs Heffer's article, 'Memories of Canning Town', is located slightly further east of Aldgate than any previous 'memories' we have published but for all that, they are truly East End material. Howard Bloch, of Newham Libraries, who also read them before publication, agreed with me that they seemed particularly honest and unsentimental in their description of life at the time (the author was born in 1914). The article published is part of a much longer manuscript which, were money available, I would very much like to see appear in book form. I have a copy of the complete manuscript at present.

Stephen Mason's article on local government in East Ham at the end of the last century formed part of the work he did for a university degree. It is particularly relevant at present, amid the controversies about the role of local councils in relation to central government.

The final article is a short one by Dr Melvyn Brooks. It concerns the claim of a man from Clapton that he was Jesus Christ. If you want to know what happened to him, get out your £1.80!

MURDER BY FILM by L T Archer

The Centenary of the Whitechapel murders of the Autumn of 1888 has seen the publication of at least a dozen books, all of them going over the same ground in the factual presentation of the crimes, and most of them suggesting a different person as the murderer and going to some lengths to prove their point. In addition, a film was produced for Independent Television that had been publicised in 1987 as a researched documentary which would reveal the identity of the killer from records at Scotland Yard, when they became available for public inspection the next year

The book or the film, by Mark Daniel, was published by Penguin before the television showing in October. In order to preserve the secret of the identity of the miscreant the book has four different endings, with a selection of four different persons as the murderer!!

Prior to the film being made, American television companies stepped in to finance it and insisted on the script being largely re-written and the original cast replaced to suit the tastes of American television audiences. We are told that the film cost six million pounds to produce and is accordingly a very lavish and spectacular effort. It contains some very serious allegations and one of these I take exception to.

In October 1886, a group of local businessmen formed the Whitechapel Vigilance Society to assist the police in their search for the murderer because they felt that police efforts were not being pursued vigorously enough.

George Lusk, a well-known building contractor of Alderney Road, Stepney Green, was appointed Chairman of the Committee. In the census of 1881 he was shown to be the employer of 20 men. Among the works he carried out was the redecoration and regilding of Wiltons Music Hall in 1869 and 1873. He was a Freemason, a Vestryman and a Member of the Metropolitan Board of Works. In October 1888 he was the recipient of a parcel containing half a human kidney, allegedly from the perpetrator of the crimes. In the film however, he is shown as a rather rough, uncouth and unshaven anarchist, described as a "builder from Cheltenham", who, one dark night, leads a large mob of men and women bearing blazing torches, from Whitechapel to Whitehall. Unnoticed by the police, they break into Scotland Yard and create mayhem there.

But worse is to follow. One of the four endings in the book reveals him to be the murderer! He is not the final selection though - this is Sir William Gull, Queen Victoria's physician. Were the four names put into a hat and first one to come out awarded the prize?

The film asks us to believe that the murderer thundered through the narrow streets of Whitechapel in a four-wheeled carriage, drawn by two horses with black plumes on their heads, when he is seeking his victims. All this escapes the notice of the police, the vigilantes, or any member of the public. One critic has described the film as an up-market Western and it is indeed a parody of the events of 1888.

I want to put the record right so far as it concerns George Lusk. I saw him on a number of occasions, when he was an old man living in Caxton Street, Bow, to where his business had been moved. I can remember him as a kindly old gentleman, quite unlike his portrayal in the film. He was my grandfather.

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PASSING ON

In the way of all things we all eventually 'pass on', a popular East End euphemism for our final departure from this world... and you could say that that in itself is another euphemism. What it really mean is that we die.. Unfortunately, its the only thing we can be certain of in this life. However, this is not a doom-laden little item but a plea for the preservation of any work you may be doing or have done in the past.

To use the phrase in its proper context, I ask members if they have made any provision for 'passing on' their writings, books, photographs, etc. It seems such a pity that for the sake of a sentence or paragraph in a will, or even a short note left with the work, a lot of very valuable historic items are disposed of. Lovingly and thoughtfully assembled through life, they are thrown out with the rubbish when we die. Please don't delay. Do something now!

If you hear of anything that needs a home, let US know.

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POPLAR WALK report by Doreen Kendall

Rosemary Taylor has done a lot of research into 'Women in the East End', so our walk around Poplar on 17 September 1988 was very interesting. We started at Poplar Recreation Park, by the Angel Memorial to 18 children killed in an air-raid on their school in 1917.

The adjacent land, belonging to the Manor Lodge, was bought in 1810 by Mrs Mary Wade, a woman with five spinster daughters. Many of the streets bear their names. Rosemary is also very proud of our royal connections, the manor of Poplar belonging at one time to the family of Lord Darnley, who married Mary Queen of Scots (1567), and was the father of James I.

At St Leonards Road, where the gates of the East India Docks once were, history tells us that Melvina Walker (a docker's wife), Nellie Cressall and Annie Besant were invited to address the dockers during the 1889 docker's strike. Ben Tillet's daughter, Jeanette, was thrown into the mud by the side of the docks during the 1912 strike.

All Saints Church was built in 1820 on land belonging to Mrs Anne Newby, and hence the name of the street, Newby Place. Elizabeth Stirling (Mrs Bridge) was organist here from 1839 to 1858 and is buried by the railings in Newby Place. Poplar Town Hall was close by and it was outside here that suffragettes held their meetings. Minnie Lansbury, Julia Scurr, Nellie Cressall, Susan Lawrence and Jennie Mackay were all taken to Holloway Prison from here in the Poplar Rates Dispute on 5 September 1921.

Via Canton Street, and in Stainsby Road, Luke House is now part of Queen Mary College. It was built for the East London Nursing Society in 1933. This was founded in 1868 by Mrs Wigram. Miss Harriet and sister Eliza Wigram worked for the Society for 40 years. Two prominent women who were regular visitors were Lady Attlee and Edith Ramsey. In the garden is a mulberry tree over two hundred years old. It is said that Lord Nelson entertained Lady Hamilton to tea under this tree.

At various points, Rosemary imparted items of information on Amie Hicks, Eleanor Marx, Julia Scurr, Annie Barnes, Melvina Walker, Stella Brown, Dolly Scannell, Minnie Lax and Mary Hurley. The walk ended in Salmon Lane, with details of the Irish stew dinners at The London Cottage Mission, supervised by Miss Napton, for up to a thousand starving children at a time.

A fascinating Saturday afternoon walk left me looking forward to future walks organised by Rosemary.

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WELLCLOSE SQUARE by the late Harry Moss (c1972)

Some relics of a once highly respectable residential quarter of the Metropolis may be seen within a stone's throw of Leman Street, in what may seem an out-of-the-way place, was long ago a scene of a busy social family life. There remains still a number of 18th century houses, several of which, including the old Court House, were built in 1700. These, which have been re-fronted in later times, have exteriors that conceal their real age.

The line of houses will not fail to please the eye and to engage the imagination, while the little cottage and other wooden house that stands behind it, will be observed with interest. Two houses can be seen with decorations in relief, symbolising the Arts and Sciences, were once occupied by the Danish Embassy.

Now the general everyday aspect is that of dullness, if not dejection, but ninety years ago it was very different. A writer then referring to the cheerful scenes of life and animation to be seen in London said, "This is especially the case with Wellclose Square"; probably the elastic spirits of the gallant tars, who were the earliest occupants, lent a light-heartedness to the very atmosphere that has never deserted it.

The square once possessed the distinction of being within the precincts of Well Close, a liberty of the Tower of London. Its origin as such can be traced in its having been in the early times an area deemed to be outside the County of Middlesex, and in the suburb of Portsoken Ward, over which the City of London exercised control.

By letter patent in 1688, James II definitely separated the Precinct from the City and included it among the Tower liberties, although the Tower had no tenure of land therein. To the Governor of the Tower was granted authority for the maintenance of law and order, to try by appointed magistrates sitting with the Governor. It was also a court of Record and Request which had functions similar to those of our modern County Courts, for the recovery of

small debts. According to custom, Well Close, with other liberties, was preambulated triennially on Ascension Day, the last occasion being 1897.

The square had already been founded in 1694, for it was alluded to as Well Close now known as Marine Square. The description, Wellclose Square does not appear until forty years afterwards. A notable occurrence was the building of a church in 1690/7 at the expense of King Christian V of Denmark, for the use of Danish people, many of whom lived in the riverside neighbourhood. The edifice which stood in the middle of the square has been described as a commodious and elegant structure and although the architect (Colus Gabriel Cibber 1630-1700) appears to have understood ornaments, he has not been too lavish in the use of them. The site of the Danish Church is now occupied by St Pauls School Nursery and Mission.

On the south side of the Square is the Old Court House, now occupied by a business firm. The building, which contains its original staircase of a date about 1700, has no outward feature to attract attention. In the 19th century it served the purpose of several official functions connected with the Tower Hamlets. Here, for instance, that important body, the Commissioners of Rattoiffe Pavement, held meetings, and the revising Barrister sat to revise the parliamentary electorate. More closely associated with it however, were the sessions of the Bench of Licensing Magistrates of the Tower Division. Adjacent to the Court House, and inter-communicating with it, was a public-house, known as "The Cat and Neptune", the landlord of which acted as gaoler to the Court when the Justices were sitting.

The square fell from its place of high esteem in the middle of last century, owing to the influence of foreign shipping at the London and St Katherine Docks. In its happiest years, a watchman went his rounds all through the night, and hourly cried "All's Well" to those abed, to whom the sense of security was made the more by the knowledge that the fire engine, kept on the north side of the church, sat ready at the first alarm.

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EPPING FOREST Report by Doreen Kendall

Stan Newens, M.E.P. Gave us a talk on Epping Forest, dealing with the ordinary man's involvement, leading up to the Parliament Act of 1878. This gave Epping Forest to the people.

Hunting was a popular royal pastime in the forest but after the death of Charles II, this diminished. The forest became the haunt of the destitute and poor, of whom there were many. Some of these took to the highways to gain a living and crossing the forest was a hazardous business for most of the 17th and 18th centuries.

During this time the manors and smallholders kept enclosing common land. In the 19th century came the population explosion. This led to meetings, which often ended in fights, being held, demanding that the forest should be made accessible to everyone. Large rallies in the East End, with many marches of a thousand or so people, ended in Victoria Park, helping to show local feelings to Parliament. The City of London Corporation had bought Aldersbrook Farm in 1854 and this became the City of London Cemetery. Through this, they became "commoners" of the forest and this involvement led them to take a leading part in the preservation of the forest, buying out owners of the manors. They then, in an act of great generosity, presented them to the people. The Forest, now managed by the City, is there for us all. Through the vision of our forefathers we can all enjoy it.

Mr David Wilkinson, who is an active member of the Lord Shaftesbury Society, then showed us photographs of how, in the early 1900's, this organization involved the rich upper-classes in raising money so that the poor children of the East End could have a day out in the forest at Loughton. Each day, whole schools of up to a thousand children would make their way by train to the forest. They would then walk to a 'Retreat' where they were provided with a huge lunch of sandwiches, etc. Also laid on were games, walks, talks, etc., before wearily catching the train home. Unfortunately, all this would be cancelled if the weather was bad. The cost was sixpence a child, all raised by the Lord Shaftesbury Society.

I was fascinated by the sheer volume of work involved; the special trains laid on, the mountains of sandwiches, cake, etc, needed to feed so many, plus the games, talks, toilets, first-aid and suchlike, all of which could be cancelled at very short notice.

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RECEIVED IN THE POST

Mrs M H Martin - Guernsey - Our family name is Daltrey and my sister and myself are researching it but to date do not know where the London line comes from. We have large containers full of papers, all very interesting but all proving conclusively 'who we are NOT'. We are of Huguenot descent, so we are told - certainly true on the female side but the spear still shrouded in mystery.

Robert Base - Iddesdon, Herts - My interest is with family history and I have traced my family back to 1333 in Stepney, and to a birth in Germany in 1792. A couple of items in the newsletter may help; Member Mr H Read could be connected with us, and our ancestors were cowkeepers. Are there any records of cowkeepers? The trade directory (Ficot) has no reference prior to 1832 for 'Milk Sellers, Dairymen, Cowkeepers'. Can anyone help please.

Base family connections in East London are:- Teitgen or Teityen, 1822m female, Reed/Read 1802b male, Gibbs 1843m male, Medway Winn 1853m male, Jones 1855m female, Ward 1859m female, Dobson 1877m female, Digby Green 1883m male, Harwood 1884m male, Michie 1897m male, Clarke 1905m male, Gibbs 1910m female, Hill 1913m female, Adams 1924m female, Frampton 1938m female.

Mr A L Hellicar - Benfleet, Essex - Rosemary Taylor will find mention of the Five Bells dry public house in the Poplar local history cuttings. I am certain that I extracted a photo and brief details from a newspaper, relating to its opening as a dry pub in the 1920s, or maybe early '30s. It should be with other material about taverns. I remember passing the Five Bells daily. It stood in St Leonards Street, Bromley, just about where the boundary line separates Poplar and Bromley. It was empty for a long time and I never saw it in use as a public house. Just a few feet away was the Woodman, or Woodman's Arms. I imagine the closeness of the two pubs was the reason (lack of trade) for the closing of the Five Bells.

There was a link between Poplar & Bromley (Baptist) Tabernacle, Brunswick Road, and Berger Hall, Empson Street, and they eventually amalgamated as the 'Poplar and Berger Tabernacle'. The dry pub stood about mid-way between the two places of worship, and I believe those running Berger Hall also managed the Five Bells.

The reference to my scouting days had me wondering. Did I really say that I joined a Queens Troop? If so, then I must have wandered a little, for the troop was one of the Kings Scouts, and I apologise for the error.

Andrew Palazzo - London, E7 - The pavement outside our offices (at 122 Mile End Road) is regularly occupied by tourists and guides being told about Charles Chaplin's first public appearance at the music-hall opposite and other tales of the Charrington family. I think its a great pity that so much of historic East London and its old alleyways and our immigrant quarters have been destroyed or neglected.

For our part we are placing pressure on the local authority to do something about the appalling litter problems in these streets and are hoping desperately that the Council might do something to improve the dismal state of the environment. In particular, we are hoping to persuade the Council to remove the modern street-furniture and install replacements more in keeping with the surroundings. For its part, the Council is encouraging us and our neighbours to restore our shopfronts which we, at least, are trying to do.

Bob Vickers - Braintree, Essex - A sad link between East London and Braintree, found in the minutes of Braintree Vestry, (a self-elected body, incidentally, called 'The Four and Twenty') dated 7 January 1621:-

"Imprimis it was agreed that Toplands sonne that is frantique shall be sent to bedlam at the charge of the parish..."

Bedlam was an institution in East London that catered for the insane, and stood on part of the site of Liverpool Street Station.

A happier link is found in the parish of Downham, Essex. The foremost manor was Downham Hall, anciently held by the deVeres. This manor was purchased in 1714 by Osmond Beauvoir, who came from Hackney. The deBeauvoir family were here until well into the 19th century. The house is marked on the Chapman & Andre map of 1777. In memory of the family, the village pub is called the Debeauvoir Arms. . . and could Downham be remembered in Downham Road, Hackney, which lies close to deBeauvoir Road? I hope so.

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Mr Alex Gander writes:-

I was very interested in two articles in this month's Newsletter, regarding the walk that Mr Welch's father made in 1878 and the old "Cable" picture palace.

With regard to the walk, I made that journey many times in the 1920's and 30's and things had not changed a bit except that Lusby's Music Hall was called The Paragon. Here, for sixpence, one could see all the famous music hall turns, some from the 19th century. I worked nearby, in the vaults at Mann, Crossman and Paulin's Brewery at Whitechapel, counting the hogsheads, barrels, kilderkins, firkins and pins as they were filled in the racking room. My hours were from 6am to 5pm and wages were 14 shillings per week, six months after I started at 12 shillings.

Now for the "Cable". I lived in Cable Street and visited it every week. I think it cost twopence. There was a doorkeeper in a lovely blue uniform with gold-rimmed hat and with epaulettes on his shoulder pads. He was quite an imposing figure, who was also the "chucker-out". I remember a film called "The Hooded Terror" and cowboy Art Accord in his western films.

There were many people of German ancestry in the area, including Freimuller the butcher, Kreamer, the blind music seller and piano-tuner, Schloss the publican, Schmidt the barber, Haagemann, who had a shop full of oddments near Sutton Street. Near my house was Pfeiffer, another butcher, and the pub on the corner of Hardinge Street was owned by Mr Seimann. Both these had their windows broken by the anti-German demonstrations in the 1914-18 war. Most of these people were no doubt descendants of the German Sugar-refiners who came to the area in the early 18th century.

[Mr Gander also enclosed copies of two articles which are lodged at Bancroft Road Library, and which he gives us permission to print. Here is one]

THE OLD SUGAR REFINERIES OF ST. GEORGE'S - IN - THE - EAST

In the last century sugar-refining was the leading industry in the parish of St. George's in the East. In 1850 the last but one closed down. From my parents and other locals who remember them I have heard many a tale and such names as Hall & Boyd J & C Bowman, John Davis, Kuck, Dames, Wackerbarth, Schroeders, Wainwright & Gadesden and John Martineaus. These were some of the refiners.

One of the largest refineries stood in Christian Street, on the site where the school now stands. It belonged to Martineau and boasted the tallest chimney stack in London. Twice in thirty years it was urred down with a loss each time of more than £50,000, quite a colossal amount in those far off days. The same firm moved to Whitechapel (King Edward Street, now Kingward Street) and carried on business until a year or so ago, when it merged with Mambre and Garton and moved to Hammersmith. There is still a Peter Martineau in the sugar-refining business in the north of England, he being a descendant of the founder.

In those times, St. George's and Shadwell were full of life. From early morning till late at night, wagons could be seen delivering hogsheads and bags of raw sugar to the refineries. Buyers from Mincing Lane in the City could be seen walking round the warehouses of the Highway and Cable Street, with samples of sugar in purple bags under their arms, calling at the many counting houses to bargain.

The finished products from the raw cane-sugar were known in the trade as 'Titlers', 'Loaf', 'Crushed', 'Pieces' and 'Eastard's Treacle'. These were carted up from the London and West India Docks.

As to be expected there were many allied trades. The firm of Martineaus had their own horses and vans to collect the sugar from the docks and when I was working in the port, I have loaded their vans with charcoal from the Continent. In the district were cooperages, string and paper merchants, coppersmiths and engineers. Across the Shadwell Dock Basin, where the Riverside Mansions now stand, was a large charcoal-burner's factory, and in the Highway, which was originally St. George Street, were several paint manufacturers and stencil-ink merchants. Above all were the so-called 'Spice' men. They dealt in bullock's blood which was used in the clarifying process when refining the sugar.

To look down the areas of the refineries one would see half-naked sugar-bakers (as the workers were called) scurrying about the basements and pouring boiling sugar from the copper pans into the sugar-moulds. Many of these bakers lived in the warehouses so that they would be on hand in case of the

dreaded fires which were always a hazard. The work on the stoves was very hot indeed, reaching 140 degrees Fahrenheit. The staff were all Germans and mostly came from Hanover. It was said that they could stand the heat better than the 'locals' but it was more probable that as it was a German industry, they wanted to keep the work for their own colony because there was much poverty and distress in the parish. Although they were called 'bakers' the technical name for them was 'sugar boilers'.

There was no doubt that sugar-boiling was a very thirsty job and it was said that each man, on an average, drank two gallons of beer a day. This was a local brew costing three farthings a pint. They called it 'sixpenny'. These Germans were very hard working and jolly men, their wages were good and they fied well, and it was a common sight to see these chaps stripped to the waist, standing at the doors of the refineries, having a breather.

These were the good old days of the trade but with the increased manufacture of beet sugar in Europe, the trade became more competitive and over the years, one by one, refineries closed down. It was an unequal struggle to compete with the French subsidised sugar, and apart from all questions of duty (customs) 'bounty' fed sugar was being sold in Paris at higher prices than it was on the English market.

Another great factor which helped in the decline of the local industry was the opening of a refinery on the Thames-side at Plaistow by a Mr Henry Tate. He had been a very successful refiner in Liverpool, an astute businessman and millionaire. Even in those days, Mr Tate had acquired a patent from Henry Bessemer (who had worldwide renown for his invention of a process for hardening steel). This was for a sugar crystallising machine which revolutionised the industry. It enabled Mr Tate to produce sugar in cubes in far greater quantities in less time, at a cheaper rate, and of course, because the ships came right down the Thames to the Tate refinery, there were no cartage expenses like the up-town refiners had to bear.

My father lived in a court in Denmark Street and his family was the only English one there, the others being German. He used to tell me that the Germans had their meals every day on bare white, scrubbed sycamore tables and, at week-ends, the German bands would come round and play their music.

Some of these Germans used to return to their native land but many more were absorbed into the local community. Some opened shops such as butchers, barbers, bakers and publicans. I remember most of them along Cable Street and St George's Street. Names such as Hagermann, who had a toy shop; Schloss, the publican; Schmidt, the barber; and Schmieden, the baker, who supplied us with many a stale cake or roll when we came out of Betts Street Baths after a swim or a hot bath.

There was also Kreamer, the blind piano-tuner who kept a music shop close to Watney Street. I remember him well when he visited the Children's Hospital. He gave me encouragement as both my eyes were covered after an operation there. Two doors from my house in Cable Street was the butcher, Mr Pfeffer, who gave tick to many a poor person. In the Great War his shop window was broken by a local woman who had received news that her eighteen year old son had been killed. Next door, on the corner of Hardings Street, was a pub owned by another German, a Mr Siemen, and there were many others in the district. On the honours board at the 'Paddy's Goose' and Broad Street boys clubs were several German names. There was a German gymnasium, where Jim Wright and Bill Downing of the above clubs considered it an honour to compete.

In the London Dock I worked with several men whose grandparents came from Germany to work in the refineries. The Demmel brothers told me that their grandfather kept the 'German Flag' pub by Princess Square, the name of which was changed to the 'Harp of Erin' during the anti-German trouble. Old Mr Demmel was the first to introduce German lager to England. Other men I worked with had names such as Kreuder, Oschmann, Schroeder, Ruppert, Giele and Mueller.

A cooper friend of mine who worked in the Crescent Vault was Fred Bose, who served his apprenticeship at Martineaus, where his grandfather was chief boiler. Close by the dock was a large pub in Ship Alley, called the 'Prussian Flag', kept by old Jack Mueller the antique dealer. He told me that during the 1914 war he put a ladder up to the sign and chipped out the 'P' to make it the 'Russian Flag'.

The German colony had their own church which is still in Great Alie Street. There was also the German English school next door, which is now a clothing factory. Many of the pianists and violinists who played in the 'Cable' and other picture-houses were of German descent, and today they are the only reminders of the palmy days of the Sugar Refiners of St Georges-in-the-East.

ACTIVITIES FOR YOU!

BOW WALK - As members should know, a group of ELHS members is getting together to research and prepare a BOW WALK. There have been a number of meetings and the ground has been walked several times. It is hoped to publish a pamphlet or leaflet and the text matter is being prepared. This involves archive research, writing ability, etc. The final details of the end-product are not known at the time of preparing this newsletter. If you are interested in becoming involved, ask a committee member, who will then put you in touch.

PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORDING - A new group has been set up in Waltham Forest. The intention is to form a photographic archive for the future, with pictures of the borough as it is today. A general order of priorities has been decided, these being:- Buildings and/or areas in imminent danger of being demolished or redeveloped in any way; buildings and/or areas likely to change use or character; the Nationally 'listed buildings'; the Locally 'listed buildings'; People, with stress on possibly disappearing trades/services; streets and/or buildings of a general nature; etc.

The group meets fortnightly at Vestry House Museum in Waltham Forest. Film for the first year's activities has been generously provided by Ilford and the processing is being arranged by the local museum. For those who are not photographers but are interested, there are other activities, such as administration, recording, etc. Anyone wishing to take part can telephone 520 4808 and ask for Waltham Forest in Focus.

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NEWS FROM

NEWHAM LIBRARY SERVICE, Water Lane, E15

A successful Exhibition of "Hopping Down in Kent" was held. A few of the comments made were, "Brought back good memories and made us relive the happy times we had in the hopfields". "Memories of past years - grim but happy!" "Modern people don't know what they missed".

The exhibition, with photographs and reminiscences of the East Londoner's working holiday, was shown for the first time in September 1988 at West Ham Town Hall. It went on to other venues. Over 150 local residents contacted the Library through an appeal in the local newspapers and a major addition to the archives ensued.

New Local Studies Notes.

- No.65 A Walk through Victoria and Albert Docks, 1914.
 - No.66 Girl Labour in West Ham, 1914.
 - No.67 Amongst the Hops and Hop-pickers, 1908.
- (A list of other titles is available on request)

PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE

BLACK SATURDAY, The first day of the blitz. Memories of 7 September 1940.95p

WEST HAM 1836-1966 £4.50 (+£1 Postage)

ORDNANCE SURVEY MAPS (REPRINTS)

North Woolwich 1869	Leyton 1894	Plaistow 1894
Silvertown 1893	Stratford 1893	Wanstead Flats 1893
Beckton 1894	Forest Gate 1894	

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

AIR RAIDS - Few people realise that Newham was bombed by German airships and aeroplanes during the First World War. John Hook has spent several years researching the raids and has produced a detailed account which draws on primary sources and includes information about the affect of each of the local raids.

POSTCARDS. A history of the Hersom and Plummer families of Stratford is told through an album of postcards which was recently donated to the Library. Using the messages on the backs of the 250 cards, written from all over the country and collected by his mother, Mr Hersom (who now lives in Bishop Auckland, County Durhan), has combined them with reminiscences and research to produce a fascinating record of social life between 1903 and 1918.

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VICTORIA PARK SOCIETY

"WHERE I LIVE" - Project & Exhibition

Victoria Park Society would like people to tell them about their memories of the East End and how life has changed. Dig out your old photographs and tell V.P.S. about them. An Exhibition will be held in March 1989.

This is in memory of Israel Renson (late member of East London History Society), a keen local historian, who died two years ago. Last year a very successful exhibition was held at Friendship House in Hackney. On show were paintings, photographs, poetry and school projects, all about the East End. This was followed by a buffet and prize-giving. Why not join in this year?

The project is supported by The Victoria Park Society, The Hackney Society, and Friends Anonymous. The closing date for entries is 31 January 1989 and is open to all age groups living in the East End. Any enquiries, please telephone, P Temple on 985 8172 (after 10am).

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THE MILL YARD CONGREGATION

GOODMAN'S FIELD by Alfred French.

In Mill Yard (now Goodman Street) off Leman Street, there existed from 1693 until 1869, a Meeting House for Dissenting Protestants. There were burials there from 16.2.1707 until 27.6.1782

The house was a residence acquired by one John Davis, born in August 1627 at Chipping Norton. He came to London and opened a Linen Draper's shop on Tower Hill. He was a dissenting Protestant and a colleague of John Bunyan (then in prison).

In 1855 it is recorded:-

"A Congregation of Dissenting Protestants that keep and observe the Seventh Day Sabbath, commonly called Saturday, meeting in a certain house in Mill Yard founded by the said congregation in or about the year 1693; that the said Congregation is a regularly constituted Christian Society which has existed in uninterrupted succession as such separate Society in the Parish of Whitechapel for 200 years".

It seems that John Davis, a Thomas Slater and others, opened the meeting house (which was originally Davis's residence) by extending it and acquiring land around it for burial and other purposes. It must have occupied virtually the whole of Mill Yard. After the death of the founders, a Trust was formed to look after the Estate and one Harriet Slater Black was one of the members, being a descendent of Thomas Slater.

In 1825 all the trustees were dead, but a certain Joseph Slater took control (a descendent of Harriet Slater Black and William Henry Black, an Elder and Pastor). He disclaimed membership of the religious practices of the Congregation and confirmed to the Church of England. Then followed 30 years of persecution and oppression for the Congregation from the unscrupulous companions of Joseph Slater, whom he had appointed to the Estate, of whom it was said some were Swedenborgians.

A legal settlement of the Estates was effected in 1869 in the sum of £1,300, presumably shared by the liquidating Trustees.

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CONTRIBUTIONS & DISTRIBUTION

Members are reminded that contributions are always welcome for publication in this newsletter. Others like to hear of your activities, enquiries, etc. Your compiler reserves the right to edit but does this as sparingly as possible. If you insist on a verbatim reproduction, please say so. Members do not always want their addresses included and this is respected. All mail can be sent through me, John Curtis at 9 Avon Road, London, E17 3RB.

There have been times when members say they have not received a copy of the newsletter. If you think this has happened with you, or you know of someone who hasn't received a copy, please let me know.

Comments and suggestions about the newsletter contents are always welcome.

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THESE MAY INTEREST YOU

PASSMORE EDWARDS MUSEUM, Romford Road, Stratford, London, E15.

Special Exhibition WATERCOLOURS by Eric Dawson: until 25 February: His current watercolours concentrate on nostalgic and humorous observations of life in East London in the 1930's and 40's. He was born and grew up in Forest Gate and has recently searched through the Newham section of the Essex Pictorial Survey for views of familiar local scenes. Subjects such as 'The Forest Gate Steam Laundry' and 'Public Baths, Balaam Street' will be shown as a major part of this show.

Open Mon-Fri 10am-6pm, Sats 10am-1pm & 2-5pm, Bank Holidays 2-5pm.

THE HOUSE MILL, Three Mills, London E3.

This remarkable building was constructed in 1776 by Daniel Bisson. It is the largest tide mill known to have been built in this country. Constructed on a timber frame it is weatherboarded on the north side and clad in brick on the south side. The roof is of Welsh slate. The mill was last used as long ago as 1941 but is in a surprisingly good state of repair. Much of the basic machinery remains and six of the twelve pairs of mill stones and their associated equipment have also been preserved.

The Passmore Edwards Museum Trust is now planning the restoration of the House Mill as a museum of 18th-century social and industrial life. The trust hopes to provide limited public access to the Mill at an early stage and visitors will be able to see the progress of restoration. The work will take a number of years to complete and will be expensive. More money is needed. Any gifts will be gratefully received and anyone interested in helping in any way or requiring further information can contact Passmore Edwards Museum, Romford Road, Stratford, London E15 4LZ.

WAREHOUSE VISITOR CENTRE, Royal Victoria Dock, London, E14:

This museum in Docklands is planned to open in the summer of 1992. Using a wealth of different material, it will tell the story of London as the nation's leading port, industrial and commercial workplace and the communities which grew up around it.

The Visitor Centre at W Warehouse is *open by appointment*. It offers an exciting preview of exhibits, including a rigger's workshop, a printing workshop, cooperage, shipwright's display, cargo handling and boats. A variety of special activities, tours and workshops are available for *primary* and *GCSE* students through the museum's education programme. Details from The Museum in Docklands Project, Unit C14, Poplar Business Park, 10 Prestons Road, London E14 9RL. Tel: 01 515 1162

GEFFRYE MUSEUM, Kingsland Road, London, E2 3EA:

Exhibition, Mr Footers's London - until 26 February 1989 - 'The Diary of a Nobody' was first published in Punch in 1888. This exhibition celebrates George and Weedon Grossmith's classic humorous novel. As well as being a comic tour de force, the book provides a surprisingly detailed account of lower middle class life a hundred year ago. The exhibition sets out to test the Footers's fictional existence against the reality of bourgeois life in North London in 1988, taking such themes as housing, interior decoration, domestic arrangements, work and leisure. You don't have to read the book to enjoy the show.

MUSEUM OF LONDON, London Wall, London EC2.

A sparkling new gallery incorporating new exhibits and information on 18th century London should now be accessible. It was promised for mid-December 1988. Members are reminded that this museum is *closed on Mondays BUT open on Sundays from 2-6pm*. This Sunday opening is ideal if you go by car... there being plenty of parking space in the surrounding streets - but don't forget to park on a meter... even though you don't have to pay!

USEFUL ADDRESSES

CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION - Mr T Cressell, 55 Helmsdale, Greenmeadow, SWINDON, Wilts SN2 3RA

THE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION 59a Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4JH

GRAND EASTERN RAILWAY SOCIETY - North Woolwich Old Station Museum, Pier Road, London, E16 2JJ

CAMERAWORK 121 Roman Road, London, E2 0QN - (Darkrooms, exhibitions, etc) telephone 980 6296 for current exhibition and/or further details.

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BOOKS, etc.

Dirk Nishen Publishing, 19 Doughty Street, London WC1N 2PT, have published a list of books in the past year, all of which are eminently collectable. This firm specialise in 'history in photograph' books, placing great emphasis on quality printing. Here is part of their list :-

- A Yarmouth Holiday by Paul Martin - 32 pages/29 photographs. £2.95
Island Women by Eve Hostettler - 32 pages/29 photographs. £2.95
London in the thirties by Cyril Arapoff - 32 pages/30 photographs £2.95
Shelters by Bill Brandt & others - 32 pages/29 photographs. £2.95
Working River Thames - 32 pages/29 photographs. £2.95
Mrs. Broom's Suffragette Photographs - 32 pages/29 photographs. £2.95
George Reid River Thames - 32 pages/29 photographs. £2.95
The London Blitz, Arthur Cross & Fred Tibos - 32 pages/29 photographs. £2.95
Wolf Suschitzky Charing Cross Road - 32 pages/29 photographs. £2.95
George Reid Streets of London - 32 pages/29 photographs. £2.95
Edith Tudar Hart The Eye of Conscience - 128 pages/100 photographs. £5.95
The Photograph of John Muir Wood - 96 pages/70 calotypes. £9.95
William Henry Fox Talbot - Time Reprieved, Time Retrieved - 160 pages/150 calotypes: colour, tritone and duotone printing on special paper. £30
You push the button, We do the rest - 144 pages/130 photographs. £4.95
George Rodger Magnum Opus - Fifty years in Photojournalism. - 120 pages/100 photographs. £12.95 softcover - £19.95 hardcover.

All these, and others, can be bought at bookshops or, by adding £1 p/p, from the publishers.

Glimpses of Globe Town by Anne Cunningham & Harry Watton. Produced by staff from Globe Town Libraries, this is a photographic history, with 47 illustrations and 'Crutchleys' 1829 map on the front cover. £2.99 plus 30p p/p from Local History Library, 277 Bancroft Road, London E1 4DQ.

Furnishing The World by Pat Kirkham, Rodney Mace and Julia Porter. Published by Journeyman Press. £10.95. Paperback; 11" x 8", 100 B/W and 8 Colour reproductions.

As the first book ever to examine the social history of furniture productions, this will be of tremendous value to those interested in the history of furniture and design. At the same time it documents an under-researched area of east London's industrial past. Fully illustrated, the book draws upon the collection at the Geffrye Museum, archive material from many East End companies, and personal accounts by furniture-makers.

Reviewing the book, Carolyn Merion says "A rich collection of information about the branches of the Craft, people's working conditions and the trade unions they set up - with many illustrations. Best of all are the personal stories at the back of the book from the workers themselves, bringing us close to the reality of their lives."

Yesterday is history - A list of groups and individuals involved in local history in Tower Hamlets and beyond. Compiled by Maggie Hewitt at Oxford House History Project. Copies are available from I.H.A.P. Bookshop, 178 Whitechapel Road, London, E1 or by post from The Arts Workshop, Oxford House, Derbyshire Street, London, E2 6HG. - 25p plus 15p p/p. - Bulk orders cost £2 (p/p inc) for 10 copies & £9 (p/p inc) for 50 copies.

EAST LONDON RECORD - Reviewed elsewhere in the newsletter... but members are asked to publicise this, the society's own publication, at all possible times. Always look out for it in booksellers and if they haven't got copies, make them aware of its existence and ask them to stock it. Thank you.

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* STOP PRESS -- LATE ITEMS

Programme item on 16 May: The venue is Hackney Urban Studies Centre, 6-8 Lower Clapton Road, London E5 (next to Hackney Police Station). Buses 52, 22a, 228, 35, 56, 106 & 253 (ask for Hackney Baths); nearest rail. Hackney Central or Hackney Downs.

Walk, led by Rosemary Taylor: This will start from Bow Underground Station at 1.30pm, Saturday, 15 April. To refresh your memory, the walk will place emphasis on "Bow Women". Needless to say, both sexes are invited to the walk.

Study Holidays: Summer Academy is a consortium of nine British Universities offering week-long study holidays in summer. Now entering its fourth year, it provides stimulating holidays, combining serious study with an enjoyable holiday, matching course to leisure opportunities. The holidays are fully inclusive of tuition and course-related visits as well as seven days full board and accommodation.. from £189, depending on course. Courses are held at Chester, Norwich, Edinburgh, Exeter, Sheffield, Canterbury, Durham, Southampton and Swansea.

An attractive brochure is available from Mrs Janice Jenkins, Summer Academy, School of Continuing Education, The University, Canterbury, Kent, CT2 7NX. Telephone (0227)470402

RAGGED SCHOOL MUSEUM TALKS

All at Bethnal Green Library, Cambridge Heath Road, E2, Time 7-9pm.
£1 for series of six talks (only three talks mentioned on pamphlet)
Free to unwaged and members of the Ragged School Museum Trust

- 13 Jan COMMUNITY HISTORY ON THE ISLE OF DOGS by Eve Hostettler
- 9 Feb THE 1899 DOCK STRIKE (The Docker's Tanner Strike) by Bob Aspinall
- 9 Mar ARCHAEOLOGY IN DOCKLANDS - CAUSE FOR CONCERN? by Alex Werner

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SPRING COACH TRIP

This will be on Saturday 6th May 1989 to Ely. This is a small and charming market town, dominated by its magnificent cathedral, but with many other historic buildings, on the River Ouse. We shall have a conducted tour of the city and cathedral, and there is also a stained glass museum to look round. There will also be a visit to the village of Soham, noted for its fine church.

The coach fare will be £5.70. There is a charge for the tour, about £1.50 (1988 price) or a little more, which includes entry to the cathedral. The Stained Glass museum was 40p this year (party rate). I will be collecting these charges on the coach.

Lunch and tea are available at various places in Ely, so these will not be pre-arranged. Please include your phone number on the booking form in case there is a need for contact.

Please send booking on the form below to Ann Sansom, 12 Hawkdene, London E4 7PR

Name Tel. No.:

address

COACH TRIP: I would like seat(s) for the trip on 6th May. I

enclose cheque/P.O. for £..... made out to East London History Society

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