
EAST LONDON HISTORY SOCIETY



Newsletter.

Autumn

HACKNEY

TOWER

HAMLETS

1990

NEWHAM

FIFTY YEARS AGO
SHELTERS MUST BE UP BY JUNE 11th,

If you have an Anderson shelter and have not yet erected it and covered it with earth, you MUST do so before June 11th,--or give a good reason in writing to your local authority.

This order was announced last night by the Ministry of Home Security under a new Defence Regulation. Failure to comply with it renders you liable to substantial penalties. If a householder is unable to erect the shelter himself, the local authority may help him if a good reason is given. If not the shelter will be taken away and penalties will be imposed.

"Covering the shelter properly"
covering the top to a depth of 15ins and 30ins on sides and back.

GAS MASK DRILL IN SCHOOLS

All schoolchildren are to have practice in wearing gas masks, which they should carry with them on all occasions.

Practice periods will begin with five minutes at a time extended by degrees to ten minutes or a quarter of an hour once a week or fortnight.

TOWER GUNS FOR SCRAP

Arrangements have been made to scrap the old French and English guns now acting as bollards on Tower Hill and pass them to the breakers for use in munition making. They are all over 100 years old, and most came from wooden men-of-war. By mid-day on Tuesday eight of the fifty available had been removed from the kerb. Only those marking corners will be left. Eight guns inside the Tower have also been lifted, and will be removed by scrap merchants. In all about 150 tons of metal will be recoverable.

The old trophies, cannon and mortars, along the river frontage and Tower walk inside the Tower, have been ear-marked for scraping, but will be retained until the last possible moment at the discretion of the Master of Armouries, in whose charge they are. Most of the trophies are bronze, and some date back to the 16th century.

Gathered together by John Harris from
East End Newspapers of the 1940s.

EAST LONDON RECORD 1990

The 1990 issue of the East London Record will be available in October, and will be our thirteenth one. While sales of the magazine have never been enough to cover costs, and we now receive no funding from Tower Hamlets Libraries, we have been able to struggle along financially without going too much into debt. The circulation manager, Doreen Kendall and the Treasurer, Jennifer Page, combine to keep us out of serious debt. Be nice to them so they can't find an excuse to leave!

We continue to receive an enormous amount of material for publication from all over the world. Already this year, for example, with the 1990 space for articles already allocated, I have received a long article on nineteenth century East London from an Australian academic and the offer of reminiscences from a woman in New Zealand who spent part of her youth in the Isle of Dogs. They will both be considered for 1991 along with several others in the "in tray".

Returning to the 1990 issue, the main articles will be on the following subjects:

- * Memories of life in Poplar High Street
- * A tribute to F C Mills, founder of the Broad Street Boys Club
- * A study of the German Settlement in East London
- * A contribution on Thomas Buxton, the nineteenth century philanthropist with many East London associations.
- * A short piece on Dick Turpin in Hackney

There will be also be the usual reviews of books of local interest and a list of recent publications relating to East London.

It is hoped that every member of the society will purchase his/her individual copy - the majority do so already. The Record makes a nice Christmas gift for East Londoners who have moved away from the area. At £1.90 plus 30p for post and packing it's a bargain for a well-illustrated 48 page magazine - even if I say so myself!

COLM KERRIGAN

The a-rat-ocracy of East London

It is almost forgotten that in former times, rat catching was a dignified profession. In 1749 when Colley Cibber was drawing £200 per annum as Poet Laureate, one John Gower was included in the list of his Majesty's Household as rat-catcher at £48 3s. a year - it is difficult to account for the odd 3s. but perhaps each year's salary was based on an average of heads or tails taken.

The trade however appears to have been invariably held by a man; but the existence of a woman rat-catcher has been revealed by an entry in the new catalogue of a second hand bookseller in the Minories, Mr Henry Davies, who sets forth as his leading item the original warrant appointing one Elizabeth Wickley to the office and emoluments of rat-catcher to the Tower of London, signed by Sir Thomas Chicheley, Master-General of the Ordinance to Charles II. The document recites (inter alia): "Whereas Elizabeth Wickley imployed in Killing of Rattes and other vermin in and about his Ma'te's stores and house her ye sum of Eight Pounds p. Annum. Thos. Chicheley, 30 March, 1672".

(Transcribed from The Miller Vol 33 6.1.1908 No. 1511 p.733b.)

CHRIS LLOYD

Letters from our Members

(Members wishing to respond to letters or who have information should write in the first instance to Mrs Doreen Kendall, who will be pleased to pass on replies.)

Gwen Squire of Pulborough, Sussex writes:

My grandfather, David Joshua Jessop was landlord of the Sussex Arms in Upper North Street in Poplar, in the 1890's and for a few years after that. He was a big strong man of Jewish descent and had black curly hair and a large black handle-bar moustache. The dockers called in for their early morning coffee with rum, and later on, at about eight o'clock, the little girls came for "three pennyworth of gin for mum". My mother said that these children were very poor indeed and very hungry and her father gave them buns which they ate ravenously. She could never understand how threepence could be spent so readily each morning on gin when that money could have bought a breakfast for several children, eggs being a halfpenny each and bread a penny a loaf.

The pub was always packed and the noise was so great at night that my mother and her brother, David Reuben, couldn't sleep. My mother's name was May Eliza, and she used to hear her father shouting "Time gentlemen please" and soon the street outside was filled with men - and women - fighting. Mother remembers seeing women stripped to the waist, fighting ferociously - "worse than the men", she said.

The potman and his wife, Soloman and Maud, were sitting in the yard one night and jumped to their feet when they thought they saw a ghost rushing from the rear of the pub to a shed. They cautiously investigated and found my mother wandering around inside the dark shed. She was sound asleep and they carried her indoors. She said she often had awful nightmares and thought it was due to all the noise downstairs.

Grandma worked in the pub too. She found the life very hard, as she was rather small and suffered from bronchitis. Her long skirts were always soaked with beer and she used to wring them out with her hands and just go on working.

My mother went to Davies Lane School, and later on, West Ham High School, when Grandpa had the Grove Tavern in Walthamstow. After she left school, she studied to become a secretary, and worked at Doctor Barnardo's in Stepney Causeway.

Maybe one of you knows of a photograph of the Sussex Arms - maybe there is a picture of Grandpa at the pub. If you know of one, please let me know - or send me a copy. I will gladly pay any costs. Is there a

picture of children at Davies Lane School around the turn of the century? Do let me know. I really would be so grateful. I will reply to all letters and refund your postage.

(ED.NOTE: The Sussex Arms was at 71 Upper North Street (west side) on the corner of Sussex Street, which is now Lindfield Street. The street to the north of this, Suffolk Street is partially visible at the perimeter of Bartlett Park. Philip Howard School occupies the site of what was the Roman Catholic Church on Gates Street, as well as Stainsby Street and Hind Street, and the Sussex Arms. There is a Davies Lane School in Leytonstone. David Joshua Jessop is listed as the Landlord of the Sussex Arms in the Directory for 1902, for the first time, and again in 1905. He apparently ceased to be the Landlord by 1908. There is a David Jessop in the Directory of 1894, Landlord of the Half Moon and Seven Stars, St George St, Wapping.)

Mrs D Sherwood, Rickingham, Norfolk:

I write on behalf of the Heritage Circle, Rickingham, in South Norfolk. Our group is attempting to have an open day next year (1991) so that old 'children' who were evacuated to our village during the 1939 - 45 war can visit us, and meet with some of the local folk who were here during that time.

I understand the children came from Dagenham and East Ham mainly. It's rather a long shot, but we wondered if you could help us make contact or perhaps suggest some way we can bring people together. Any ideas from you would be appreciated, as we are rather at a loss as to how to approach this get-together. The children lived with local families, and schooled in the village school and later in the now unused church in Rickingham Superior.

Mr Mark Diamond, Purley, Surrey writes:

I will be greatly obliged at your forwarding to me 2 copies of the recently published book on local "History of East End of London" (East London Record No. 12). My interest is the Old Five Bells article in which your mention of Mr Alfred Rogers, this should be Mr Albert Rogers.

Having been the Hon. Treasurer of the Poplar and Berger Baptist Tab. for 50 years I now am enjoying my retired existence being now in my 24th year of retirement at the age of 88 years, having lived my boyhood days in Poplar, leaving the district during the Blitz of September 7th 1940. My best wishes to you and all concerned.

Letters contd....

(Mr Diamond is correct - it should be Albert Rogers. I misread the note on the back of an envelope written by Mr Rogers, the only piece of paper on which he had used his christian name. He always signed himself A E Rogers. Rosemary Taylor).

Miss V J Walker of Chiswick, London W4 writes:

My great grandfather had a pawn shop at Custom House. I do have a photo of him and his shop should you be doing an article about Custom House. This is a request as a result of notice in this month's Family Tree in case you want to keep a check!

John Bevan, 21 Roland Way, London SW7 3RF, writes:

CHARLES ANTHONY DEANE 1796 - 1848 - I am researching the above person who was the original inventor of the diving helmet 1823. I have come against a brick wall in trying to find his place of burial and whilst visiting the Greater London Record Office I was recommended to contact you to see if your Society could be of any help. The information I have to date on his death is as follows:

He died on Tuesday 7 November 1848 at his home address of No. 5 Providence Place Commercial Road East, Limehouse, by committing suicide by cutting his throat with a razor. An inquest was held in the LORD HOOD public house in Rich Street on the 9th November 1848 under the direction of Mr W Baker, Coroner for the Eastern Division of Marylebone who produced a verdict of "Temporary Insanity". I have tried all the usual places over a period of about twelve months and have drawn a blank everywhere. There is not even any record of his death at St Catherine's House. And so I come to you to humbly beg your assistance.

Since Charles Dean was an "Eastender" I was hoping that his story might be of interest to the Society especially when I eventually publish. I hope that you will be able to help and look forward to hearing from you in due course. Thank you.

Burial Site Records searched:

Brompton Cemetery
Camberwell Registration District
Chancery Lane PRO for Wills
City and Tower Hamlets Cemetery
City of London grassed in burial grounds incl.
Deptford & Lambeth

City of London & Southwark inquests 1838-1860
Deptford, removal of graves and tombstones
Guys Hospital
Highgate Cemetery
Kensal Green Cemetery
Nunhead Cemetery Camberwell
St Annes Limehouse
St Catherines House for indexes and Death Certificate
St Georges Camberwell
St Giles Camberwell
St Mary Newington burial register index
St Mary's Southwark
St Nicholas Deptford
St Thomas's Hospital (no records)
Tower Hamlets Registration District
Tower Hamlets, removal of graves and Tombstones
Trinity Church Southwark
Victoria Park Cemetery
West Norwood Cemetery, Lambeth

(ED NOTE: Here's a challenge for our members. Can anybody help?)

Mrs Margaret Wiltshire, Ingatestone, Essex, writes:

Many thanks to all concerned in producing a very interesting Newsletter.

The first item, Fifty Years Ago, had us all saying "Oh Yes". My memories of school in the 40's was being taught first in King Georges Hall, for a short time and then at the School of Engineering and Navigation. How grand that sounds! Those of us who had not been evacuated were gathered up to be given some education somehow. We attended the school in Poplar High Street and were taught by Mrs Bixley, a teacher from Woolmore Street, Mrs Hopkins, from Gill Street, Mr Hewlitt from I don't know where, Mr Hizar and others that I can't now name.

Mrs Hopkins obtained some khaki wool from the Red Cross and had us girls knitting comforts for soldiers, (not sure how much comfort they were). There was no playground so we spent our breaktime in the large gymnasium. Mr Hizar could be sidetracked so that the lesson was forgotten and he would tell us all sorts of exciting stories. On the whole it was an interesting time.

Some of the names I can recall are, Lillian Duncan, Rene Laver, Peggy Carrington, Barbara Coombes, Derek Redgwell, John Sullivan, two sisters called Priscilla and Rossetta (I think Smith) and Rene Morris.

An Appeal

ABNEY PARK CEMETERY

Friends of Abney Park Cemetery have launched a Save Abney Park Cemetery appeal. A 150th Anniversary Event was held on Sunday 3 June, and the programme included guided walks around the cemetery, which contains monuments to honour men such as Isaac Watts, father of the English hymn, and General William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army. There was also a parade of hearses, a Gospel Choir and the Salvation Army Band and singers.

Abney Park Cemetery was opened in 1840, one of the seven great cemeteries built to replace the overcrowded and unhealthy London churchyards, on the site of the 17th century Abney House and Fleetwood estates. The cemetery continued the tradition of Bunhill Fields as a focus for religious and social dissenters, the non-conformists. The 31 acres of Abney Park were never consecrated, so people of all denominations are buried side by side. Overcrowding led to the decline of the cemetery, and by 1974 vandals had defaced the monuments and ruined the chapel. During the years of neglect wildlife flourished, and now the cemetery provides a unique natural habitat, not usually associated with Inner London.

If you would like to find out more about Friends of Abney Park Cemetery Community Trust contact: Peter Salter, 12 Kinburn St, London SE16 1DN.

Anchors Away....

(The following letter appeared in the Island History Newsletter in April 1990. Can any of our members throw any light on this mystery?)

Mr Edward Harrison, Hornchurch, Essex:

When the West India Docks road entrance was widened in 1932 the large model of the West Indiaman, the HIBBERT, from above the old narrow gate was installed on a stone pedestal in Poplar Recreation Ground. In front of this pedestal was an anchor from the Royal Yacht, VICTORIA & ALBERT II. To complete the ensemble was the angel memorial to the schoolchildren from Upper North Street School who were killed by a German bomb in World War I. On visiting the site after the war I found to my dismay that the HIBBERT and the anchor had disappeared and the memorial had been turned round through 180 degrees.

Nobody I spoke to had any idea what had happened, so as a last resort, in 1978, I contacted Tower Hamlets Council who blandly informed me that the "HIBBERT being made of concrete had deteriorated beyond repair" and had been removed.

This model, which had been in existence since 1803 was almost certainly made of bronze. I well remember seeing the green stains down the stone work. Arthur Mee in his King's England mentions the "beautiful bronze model atop the Dock Gate."

The Council deny any knowledge of the anchor, and said such matters, being prior to 1965, did not concern them. I know I'm not dreaming, but would like confirmation of the facts. Incidentally, the main mast of VICTORIA & ALBERT II is still to be seen in front of the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich. It is in use as a flag-staff. A facsimile of the HIBBERT can be seen in the Museum of London, and a photograph of the original over the Dock Gate can be seen in Pudney's 'London Docks'.

I Remember, I Remember

(In our last newsletter we printed a letter from Colleen Richards, who was researching her family name Verlander, and mentioned the Fern Street Settlement)

I read the copy of Eighty Years on Bow Common on the train going up to London, and the photo of Clara Grant in it I remembered seeing before, and lo and behold when I got home I looked through all the old photos I had inherited from my father, and it was there. I have tried many times over the years to find out who this lady was, but none of my aunts and uncles could tell me. I might add I have now written her name on the back of the photo.

Oh, to be able to do that with all the rest I have. Once again, many thanks.

Mr A Grove, Bracknell, Berks:

I read the account of A Bethnal Green Childhood in the No. 12 issue. I went to St Simons Church in Morpeth Street (destroyed in the last war). It was the Church Lads Brigade that attracted us boys. But what I remember about St James the Less is the Clinic alongside, and the awful experience of having your teeth out, "Please bring a towel". A line of children would finish sitting in front of bowls, recovering from the effects of the gas. My mother told me that often mothers would be out in the street looking for their child, who had run out, terrified.

Memories of Meath Gardens

Comments re. Meath Gardens caused me to think back on my boyhood, and how I played in this park, then on reflection, I realised that I used it probably from a few years old, until I moved to Bracknell in Berkshire in 1955.

I was the youngest of a family of six and had three elder sisters to take me off my mother's hands, and so my sister tells me, was taken to Meath Gardens, "to be got out of the way" usually, she said, with a bottle of home made sherbet water. Living in Bancroft Road, which was Devonshire Street then, near the junction with Morpeth Street, it was under the Railway arch, round by the Railway Goods Yard, only minutes away.

My first recollection of the park, and it was a park to me, not a garden, was when I was at Portman Place Junior School, and the school played other schools on the football pitch there, the ground not being of grass, but a reddish grit substance. I never played football, but sometimes went as a spectator during the dinner break. Invariably we spectators would soon leave watching the game, to play amongst the rough undergrowth bordering the playing field, keeping a wary eye open for the park keepers. I remember seeing grave stones around the walls, but never did any of us ever question why they were there. There was also a couple of large tombs surrounded by railings in the older boys playground, yet we just ignored them, never wondering why, nor why such a small park should have such a large ceremonial entrance, by Usk Street.

By the time I was using the park frequently, I was too old to use the Girls and Infants playground, but the attraction in that playground was the sand-pit (flea-pit). Often during the school holidays or summer evenings, we would creep into a corner further away from the small brick building, where I believe was the girls toilet, which always had a matronly lady in attendance. If we kept quiet and behaved ourselves, nobody took any notice of us, but we would always want to dig as big a hole as possible, usually down to the earth, and boisterously jump into it, which meant the attendant would soon be on her way around, and we would be out, "Go to the boys swings," helping ourselves to a drink of water from the granite like fountain, situated between the girls and boys playgrounds.

As time progressed and getting older, so we would be on the swing next to the fence, separating the girls playground from the boys. On the other side of the fence would be a triangular swing, with bucket seats at either end, where you stood up to reach a better height, and here the boys would dally on the swings, waiting for the girls, who as they swung higher, would appraise, or give a derisive toss of the head. And older still, the hut next to the football pitch, where a group of girls and

boys would engage in a game of Truth or Dare, the height of daring being a quick peck on the cheek.

After the War, and demobilisation, when I was able to say a sweet goodnight, not a melancholy goodbye to my fiancée, then it was a walk home, from Lyal Road, just off Roman Road, and a short cut through Meath Gardens. I think I would have taken the long way round, if I had known that there were so many bodies buried there. The gardens then, seemed to be open all night, although as a boy, I always remember there being gates, perhaps they had been removed, like our front railings, to help the war effort.

After the marriage, and the children arrived, we were living in Lyal Road a couple of rooms off the wife's mum, and then it was a walk through Meath Gardens with the children to see their Grandmother, and always a stop at the swings. So a full circle had come about.

Alas, now, no house in Bancroft Road, pulled down to make way for flats, and soon no Meath Gardens.

A G GROVE

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Dr Bob Holman travelled from his home in Scotland where he works as a youth and community worker on the Easterhouse estate in Glasgow and spoke to about 75 people attending the Tower Hamlets Annual History Lecture. This was held at Bethnal Green Library on 28 June. The 2 hour meeting moved along at a comfortable pace and was supported with a showing of slides. Peter Shore, our local MP was one who attended the meeting.

The talk was academic in approach and not without a little humour. Questions at the end, on contentious issues such as comparisons between poll tax non payment and the Poplar Council's defiance of the LCC in 1921, were answered with some agility as this lecture was treated as a tribute to George Lansbury rather than as a political occasion. The Chairman, the Acting Globe Town Neighbourhood Chief Executive admitted to some nervousness about talk of non payment of poll tax. (Would there be enough money to hold any more Annual History Lectures, one wonders, if the Council receives insufficient income from the poll tax!).

Our Lecturer says that some time ago a local resident who knows him visited the Local History Library and his report of the books, pamphlets, news clippings and photographs in the collection brought him over to this part of the East End. The Lansbury Archives at the LSE Library was the basis of his research. Other primary sources used included personal interviews with many people who were Lansbury's associates and acquaintances. Dr. Holman showed a depth of knowledge about his subject; he admitted he was *not an historian* (he had in the past been a professor in Social Administration and had lectured at Bath and Warwick Universities). His biography and assessments of Lansbury's work, heard by the audience, were an excellent precursor to the book, "Good old George", to be published in October by Lion Publishing. It is the first major re-evaluation of Lansbury's life; the last biography which was in 1951, was less objective, being written by his son-in-law, Raymond Postgate. Now, of course, many of the government's records have been released to researchers for examination.

We heard of Lansbury's work in re-organising Poplar Workhouse's practices and his council work in house building and in developing many public services for the deprived population. A considerable time was devoted to the reasons for the Poplar Rates Dispute and how it was resolved.

Bob Holman's talk revealed that Lansbury's abiding passions were about the concept of the family unit, about socialism, and about the christianity he was

introduced to by Reverend Fenwick Kitto of St Mary's Whitechapel. He had no desire to create personal wealth. Holman said Lansbury's integrity, equality and fraternity made him an outstanding socialist practitioner but he was careful to also balance our impressions with some of Lansbury's faults; his lack of activity in the important organisational reforms within the Labour Party and his ineffectiveness as a policy maker on the National Executive. He had made political mis-judgements when he resigned his seat and probably, also when he advised Labour to form minority governments. As a journalist he presented too rosy a picture of what was happening in Russia and in speeches he was rather repetitive. In later years he completely over-estimated the effect he might have on Hitler and Mussolini.

During question time a member of the audience said he thought that one of the reasons why Lansbury's work was not appreciated and revered enough was that he had strong differences with Dalton and Bevan who, when Lansbury died, were both major policy thinkers and writers of the time. They avoided such reverential expressions of Lansbury and such old style socialism and pacifism. Dr Holman said Dalton disliked Lansbury's rather loud East End bonhomie. He believed that the coincidence of overwhelming news of the war-time air raids diverted people's attention from a proper appreciation of Lansbury, his death coming in fact in May 1940. By the time war had ended, when Attlee was leader of a very different Parliamentary Party, Lansbury's beliefs were considered quite unfashionable.

Bob Holman, who was born in 1936 and was brought up in Ilford, often heard his parents (who were regular readers of the Daily Herald) talk about Lansbury.

Half a century after the politician's death Bob Holman, through his lecture has re-kindled an interest in this East Ender; a man of some historical, social and political influence.

C J LLOYD

Tower Hamlets Local History Librarian

JOHN TRAVERS CORNWALL/V.C.

John Cornwall was born on the 8th January 1900, at Clyde Place, Leyton. His father Eli, originated from Cambridge, and had served for 14 years in the Royal Army Medical Corps, seeing active service in Egypt and the South African War. On leaving the Army he had several jobs, as a male nurse, a milkman, train and cab driver. In 1910 the family moved to 10, Alverstone Rd, Manor Park. Jack, as he was called, became a Boy Scout with the St, Marys Mission Troop at East Ham. He attended Walton Rd School, which after his death was renamed the Cornwall School. He left school at Christmas 1913, and worked for a while as a "dray boy" at Whitbreads Brewery depot in Manor Park.

He volunteered for the Royal Navy on 31st July 1915, joining the Training Ship, H.M.S. 'Vivid' at Devonport on 9th August where he served until 1st May, 1916. His Certificate of General Efficiency shows----Gunnery 84%, Seamanship 70%, Physical Training----Good, Swimming----Very Good, Character---Very Good. His height and weight on leaving H.M.S. 'Vivid' was respectively 5ft 3ins and 7st 12lbs.

On the 2nd May he joined H.M.S. 'Chester' a Light Cruiser, attached to the 3rd Battle Cruiser Squadron of the Grand Fleet at Scapa Flow. Boy (First Class) John Cornwall was appointed gun-sighter on the fo'c's'le gun and on the 31st May 1916, the first day of the Battle of Jutland when 'Action Stations' was sounded he reported to his gun. His duties required him to stand by the gun with earphones on and to relay orders from the Gunnery Officer to the guns crew. Early on in the battle the 'Chester' was badly hit several times, and all but two of the crew were killed or wounded, and Jack Cornwall was mortally wounded. Remembering his orders he stayed by his useless gun.

When night allowed the wounded to be carried below the Surgeons could see that there was little hope for him. He was taken ashore to a hospital in Grimsby. He died on 2nd June and a quiet funeral took place in the City of London Cemetery, Manor Park, on the 8th June, 1916.

When Admiral Jellicoe wrote his official report on the battle, he added these words-----"A report from the Commanding Officer of the 'Chester' gives a splendid instance of devotion to duty. Boy 1st Class John Travers Cornwall of the 'Chester' was mortally wounded early in the action, his age was under 16½ years. I regret he has since died, I recommend his case for special recognition in justice to his memory, and as an acknowledgment of the high example set by him"

The prompt award of the postumous Victoria Cross only partially satisfied the general desire to pay homage to the 'dead boy hero'.

In addition to the V.C. he was also awarded the Bronze Star of the Boy Scouts, and the Russian Order of St,George.

His body was exhumed, and reinterred with full Naval Honours, a vast crowd attending the funeral, which was at the public charge, on 29th July, 1916, at Manor Park Cemetery.

Later the same year his father died and was buried in the same grave as his son. Although well over age, he had joined the 2/6 Essex in March,1915, and had contracted a bronchial infection while on active service. He died on 25th October,1916. Jacks brother, Arthur, was killed in action on 29th August,1918, in France, and was also buried in the grave.

As a result of a general public subscription a portrait of the boy was hung in every Elementary School in the United Kingdom, while his memory was further perpetuated by the endowment of beds bearing his name in many hospitals and hostels.

The Jack Cornwall Memorial Committee was set up on 20th July,1916. It was registered as a Charity Trust in 1921. Hornchurch was chosen by the Trustees after inspecting several sites for the Cornwall Cottages. They were opened on 31st May,1929, by Earl Jellicoe.

Beds were also dedicated to his memory at the Queen Mary Star and Garter Homes, Richomd.

MEMORIALS

In order to keep his memory alive, the Cornwall Scout Decoration was instituted by the Scout Movement. It is a plain letter 'C' in bronze and is awarded to scouts who show exceptional courage in facing danger, illness, etc. It is the highest that can be won by a scout.

A plaque was unveiled at Walton School by Lady Jellicoe in his memory, on July 17th,1917.

Shortly after his death the East Ham Education Committee announced they would be asking all scholars in East Ham schools to make contributions to a fund to raise a Memorial Stone over the heros grave. The necessary money was collected, but it was not until 28th December,1920, that the Memorial was unveiled by Dr MacNamara in Manor Park Cemetery. The Memorial was in the form of a Cross and Anchor with its chain intertwined about it. It fell into disrepair and was altered during repairs in 1957. His parents and brother are also commemorated on the memorial.

His memorial inscription reads-----
IN MEMORIAM
FIRST CLASS BOY JOHN TRAVERS CORNWALL V.C.
BORN 8th JANUARY 1900
DIED OF WOUNDS RECEIVED AT
THE BATTLE OF JUTLAND
2nd JUNE 1916.

This stone was erected by Scholars and
Ex-Scholars of Schools in East Ham.

It is not wealth and ancestry
but honourable conduct and a noble
disposition that makes men great.
Ovid.

POSTSCRIPT.

At the end of the War it was discovered
that Jack Cornwall's mother, now a widow, without
two of her sons, was living in penury with only
a small pension, and was in fact working in a
Sailors Home to earn money.
At this time none of the Memorial Fund had been
allocated, and there was an outcry at the
treatment she had received at the hands of the
Navy League. After her death in 1919,---her
remaining children had to apply to a charity
in order to emigrate to Canada---the Memorial
Fund was approached for assistance, but refused
to help, the passage money was provided by
concerned friends.

Acknowledgements and thanks to the Records Dept.,
Local Studies Library,
Stratford Reference Library. E15 4NJ.
Also thanks to the Western Front Association.
Essex Area
for their permission to reproduce this article.

HELP WANTED

Is there any members who know of any 1914-18
War memorials in the East End, tucked away in
forgotten corners, In particular the following
districts, Ilford, Romford, Leyton, Whipps Cross,
Barking.

The memorials could be outside or inside
buildings, such as Churches, Schools, Public
buildings.

Any information, please let the society know.
A national list of memorials is being made up,
and we would like to help with this project.



THE ORIGINAL PAINTING OF JACK CORNWALL AT HIS POST BY FRANK O, SALISBURY. THE ARTIST WORKED ON THE 'CHESTER' ITSELF USING A BOY NAMED KNELLER, WHO HAD KNOWN AND TRAINED WITH JACK AS A MODEL, AND ALSO IN THE STUDIO WITH ERNEST, JACKS BROTHER, AS A MODEL.

EAST LONDON HISTORY SOCIETY

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BETHNAL GREEN. E2.

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CROWNS Rd, COLCHESTER. ESSEX. CO4 5AD.

EDITOR OF EAST LONDON RECORD, Colm Kerrigan,
38, RIDGDALE St, BOW E3 2TW.

and About

ACH OUTING TO ST OSYTH

Forty-four members of the History Society had a memorable day out on Saturday 12 May, ably organised by Anne Sansom, who arranged a programme which went through without a hitch.

St Osyth's Priory on the Stour Estuary in Essex has a rich history which takes us back to the beginnings of the Norman Conquest. St Osyth the Abbess of a nunnery, the daughter of the first King of the East Angles, was the victim of a marauding band of Danish pirates. Being tortured the pious lady, the pagan captain of the robber band cut off her head. The martyred Abbess was later credited with numerous miraculous cures, and in 1108 a religious house was built in the honour of Cic, which was later raised to the rank of an abbey.

The Gatehouse and Archway are the finest examples of medieval architecture to be found in this county and date to 1475. The Priory is Tudor and Georgian, and all that remains of the medieval abbey are the cellars and the 13 Century chapel. This was one of the great Abbeys dissolved by Henry VIII. Much of the old abbey was rebuilt about this time, the Abbot's tower of chequered stone and septaria, was built by Richard D'Arcy c. 1558. The view from this tower of the surrounding countryside, and the sea in the distance is unforgettable.

We all enjoyed lunch in the Priory gardens, with peacocks, before visiting the Church of St Peter and Paul in the village. Built on an earlier Saxon church, it has evidence of Norman masonry in the tower, as well as beautiful stained glass windows and stone monuments.

Our next stop was at Mistley to see the swans which populate the area, the stone swan fountain, and the craft centre. The main historical curiosity at Mistley is the twin church towers, remains of a church built in 1170 by Robert Adam.

A well earned tea break at Manningtree a little Georgian port followed, where we were booked into a charming tea shop which closed its doors to its regular customers in order to give us their full attention.

Our final stop was at the 15 Century Church of St Mary in Lawford, a delightfully unspoilt corner of the county, with a wonderful view across the River Stour. Here we were treated to an organ recital (not intentional) and a charming lecture by the vicar's young son, on the history of the church, and of medieval craftsmen who built the chancel and the windows.

As we made our way home, we were all in agreement that Anne deserves a special thank you not only for arranging the coach outing but also for the time and trouble she took to ensure a perfect day's outing.

VISIT TO CARDINAL POLE SCHOOL

On 9 June Joan Harding gave a lecture and walk around the French Protestant Hospital. South Hackney has its own French chateau in the remarkable Cardinal Pole School annexe opposite the Bedford Hotel, Victoria Park Road, on the edge of Well Street common.

The Huguenot community received financial assistance from both Charles II and later Queen Mary, to alleviate the poverty of the refugees who fled to England in 1685. The old hospital in Bath Street (Old Street/City Road) was built from the will of Jacques de Gastigny, Master of the Hounds to William III, who left a Thousand Pounds in 1708 to improve the lot of refugees, many of whom were weavers. By 1736 there were 220-230 inmates. From the 1830's it became a refuge for the old and infirm and finance was a problem. About this time the authorities began looking for a more suitable building.

The new hospital was built on 3 acres of land belonging to Revd Henry Norris. In 1857 L. Roumieu, the architect produced a design based on a French chateau, free of charge. The hospital was intended to accommodate forty women and ten men, and contained dormitories, library, committee rooms, a chapel and extensive kitchen, scullery, larder and wash-house arrangements.

Discipline was strict in the hospital with prompt attendance at meals, no one could leave the premises without permission or bring in alcoholic drinks and swearing, blasphemy, drunkenness or dishonesty would result in expulsion.

In 1939 the hospital was evacuated to Horsham. The present hospital in Rochester is run on modern lines with residents living in self contained flats. The building in Victoria Park Road was taken over by the LCC and today it is a Catholic School. This listed building contains some fine tiling, fireplaces, doors and panelling and the chapel, balconies and tall windows are still in perfect condition, a tribute as much to the craftsmen of 1863 and the care the school takes to preserve this historic building.

The garden contains two large mulberry trees, amongst other mature trees, also listed, and awaits the interest of English Heritage in restoring it to its former glory.

DOREEN KENDALL

Programme 1990 - 1991

Please Note:

All the Talks are held at Queen Mary and Westfield College, Mile End Road E1 (Close to Stepney Green and Mile End Stations). Time: 7.30 pm.

1990

Thursday 27 September

George Godwin, Visitor to the London Slums (Illustrated) - Dr Ruth Richardson.

Thursday 25 October

Annual General Meeting followed by Members Evening - Queen Mary & Westfield College 7.30 pm.

Thursday 29 November

The Political and Communal Careers of M H Davis - Prof. Geoffrey Alderman.

Thursday 6 December

History of Indians in East London - Rozina Visram.

1991

Thursday 24 January

Yarrows (Illustrated) - Sarah Palmer

Thursday 14 February

Dean Colet (Illustrated) - Prof. J B Trapp

Thursday 7 March

School and Sport in Mile End in the 1930's - Stan Shipley

Thursday 9 May

St Matthias - Robert Baldwin

Saturday 18 May

Up and Down the Bow Road

Walk led by Rosemary Taylor - Mile End Tube Station - 2.00 pm.

Sunday 2 June

Visit to Bevis Marks Synagogue, Bevis Marks EC3

(To be Confirmed. Please ring 071 790 7071)

Programme Preview

On Thursday 27 September, Dr Ruth Richardson will be giving us a talk entitled "George Godwin, visitor to the London Slums."

The following notes have been compiled from the archives of BUILDING magazine, which I hope will serve as a taster for what I am sure is going to be a very interesting and informative talk.

George Godwin was Editor of THE BUILDER, a magazine founded by Joseph Hansom, Architect and inventor of the Hansom Cab, from 1844 to 1883.

Godwin was deeply concerned with matters of social reform, particularly with the public health movement, building legislation and poverty. All through his editorship he fought for an improvement in the quality of urban life, healthy homes and prevention of overcrowding. He saw about him the depraved state of working-class housing conditions and often tainted water which swept away thousands a year in preventable disease. In London alone there were no fewer than 5,414 cesspools, which 600,000 were living in houses whose basements were foul with sewage water. He reported on the conditions in Bethnal Green of a typhus stricken family of eight living in one room on poor relief of one shilling and a loaf of bread a week.

In 1859 he published his book Town Swamps and Social Bridges, which was a collection of articles previously published in THE BUILDER. Godwin's swamps were not only crime, poverty and disease, but also ignorance, overcrowding and pollution through noxious industries, and 'that fateful swamp' drink. His bridges the improvement of the entire social infrastructure of urban society, lowcost housing, ragged schools, hospitals, public playgrounds, training schools for women, homes for working girls and homes for the destitute.

Godwin's efforts were not merely confined to criticism. He made practical suggestions, such as advocating concrete for houses, wider streets and better ventilation for hospitals. He was the first to publicise and advocate the building of high-rise blocks of flats, as well as the mass production of doors and windows as a means of reducing the cost of working class accommodation.

Alfred Waterhouse, announcing Godwin's death in 1888, said: "Probably the cause of sanitary science owes more to him than to any other man."

ROSEMARY TAYLOR

On Thursday, 29 November, Professor Geoffrey Alderman will give us a talk on "The Political and communal careers of M H Davis."

Professor Geoffrey Alderman will speak on his research into the career of M H Davis, who was Labour Leader of Stepney Borough Council and Mayor in 1930. He was also President of the Federation of Synagogues from 1928 to 1944.

Thursday 6 December is the date for Rozina Visram's talk entitled: "History of Indians in East London."

Rozina Visram's book on Indians in Britain, from 1700 to 1947 is called, "Ayahs, Lascars and Princes."

There was an Ayahs (Indian Nannies) Home in Hackney, and of course homes for Lascars (Indian seamen) in Stepney and Poplar. There were no Princes in East London, but the first Indian conservative MP was elected for Bethnal Green in 1895!

Hear the talk - read the book.

DAVID BEHR

JUNE 7th 1940
EAST END TRAMS TO STOP SOON

The last London tram routes north of the Thames, with the exception of services running through the Kingsway Tunnel to South London, will be replaced by trolley-buses this month.

The routes affected are number 65, Bloomsbury-East Ham, number 67, Aldgate-Barking.

The new trolley-bus routes which will replace them, will be 565, Holborn-East Ham (rush hours only), 567, Aldgate-Barking, and 665, Bloomsbury-East Ham and Barking.

The completion of this section of London Transport Board's tramway conversion scheme is the first half of the plan. Conversion of the South London section has been postponed until after the war.

STOP PRESS

Below is a cutting from the
Docklands Recorder 20th July, 1990.
It is self-explanatory.

HISTORY BUFFS FIGHT 'AXING' OF LIBRARIES

HISTORIANS fear there are plans to close one local library and sell-off another.

The East London History Society are gearing themselves up for a major campaign to keep the libraries open.

They have written to Tower Hamlets councillors and intend to lobby the next Globe Town Neighbourhood Committee meeting.

The society expect the Neighbourhood to sell Mile End's Bancroft Library and its local history archives to Queen Mary and Westfield College and to close Bethnal Green Library.

The Neighbourhood say a "rationalisation" of library facilities is being considered.

They also say that before any decisions

are made, steps will be taken to ensure public access to the history archives is maintained.

The group fear local people will only be able to visit the archives during restricted times.

Society member Doreen Kendall said: "The libraries belong to all of Tower Hamlets, not just Globe Town."

NAME.....

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PLEASE FIND ENCLOSED £.....DATE.....

MAKE CHEQUES/P.O.s PAYABLE TO E.L.H.S.

SUBSCRIPTIONS £2. O.A.P.s and STUDENTS £1.

POST TO JOHN HARRIS, 15, THREE CROWNS Rd,
COLCHESTER, ESSEX. CO4 5AD.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1990/91

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I wish to remind all members that subscriptions become due in September, will all members make sure they are paid up for the year.

Subs. remain at £2, full membership, this will give you entry to some historic walks, many talks, lectures, two newsletters a year, and a couple of coach outings per year, (for which you have to pay) The newsletter belongs to all our members, if you wish to have any item published, a particular, memory, problems with research, or just something you would like to share, send it in, it will be published.

Autumn Coach Trip

Saturday September 29, to the Canal Museum, Stoke Bruerne, Northants.

The museum is attractively situated in old warehouse buildings by the Grand Union Canal, close to the Blisworth Tunnel, the longest on the canal network, and a fine flight of locks. We shall be having a slide show, and boat trips should be available at extra charge.

The pick up will be at Mile End, opposite the station, at 9.30 am. We shall be going first to the old coaching town of Towster, here there will be a stop for lunch and to look round. Dickens made Mr Pickwick stay at one of the inns here, and the church is also interesting. You can buy lunch, or have a picnic.

Tea is available at the Canal Museum. The coach fare is £6.40, entrance to the museum £1.00 full rate or 70p for senior citizens. Entrance will be collected on the coach.

Please send booking to me on the form below.
Miss Anne Sansom, 18 Hawkdene, Chingford,
London E14 7PF. Tele: 081 524 4506



Booking form for Coach Outing 29 September '90

Please print your name and address
All cheques should be payable to the
EastLondon History Society.

Tickets £6.40 each for the coach only. Entrance
to the museum will be collected on the coach.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

NO. OF TICKETS _____

TELE. NO. _____