



**Clement Attlee statue restored and moved to Queen Mary, University of London, see John Rennie article**

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## Editorial Note:

The Committee members are as follows: Philip Mernick, Chairman, Doreen Kendall, Secretary, Harold Mernick, Membership, David Behr, Programme, Ann Sansom, Doreen Osborne, Howard Isenberg and Rosemary Taylor.

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As always we are indebted to the contributors of this edition of the newsletter. Letters and articles on East End history and reminiscences are always welcome and we make every effort to publish suitable material. Items of interest, and any queries can be emailed to Philip Mernick, who has provided us with a very interesting and varied selection from his mailbox.

David Behr, our Programme Organiser, has finalised the lectures for 2011. We are appreciative of the time and effort David puts into contacting potential lecturers, and arranging the programme.

The Newsletter is edited and typeset by Rosemary Taylor with assistance of Philip Mernick, and an editorial team comprising, Doreen Kendall, David Behr, and Doreen Osborne.



## Cemetery Notes and News

If you would like to join Doreen and Diane, and other volunteers of the East London History Society in the Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park, on the second Sunday of every month, recording memorials off gravestones, you would be most welcome, but be warned – it can become addictive! The thrill of discovering another fascinating nugget of information and uncovering yet another facet of history hidden within the walls of the cemetery keeps our members working away.

Other activities in the Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park include **Open City London (formerly Open House)** which takes place this year on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> September, from 11 am to 4 pm.

In September the cemetery will be 170yrs old and the Friends 21yrs. Diane has been busy researching the cemetery's history with a little help from Doreen, for the next Stone Stories.

So on 18<sup>th</sup> September Open House weekend there will be walks, games, cakes etc with everyone involved dressed up as Victorians. Guided walks start at 11 am, 12 noon, 1.00 pm and 2.00 pm.

The A.G.M will be at four with Jeremy Batch, the lock keeper giving us lecture on "Twice the height of Canary wharf". All are welcome.

**Doreen and Diane are still hoping to put together a walk around Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park highlighting graves or memorials with a sporting connection. The project needs to be completed before the opening of the Olympics in 2012, so this has now become a matter of some urgency. To date they have come up with six, but they need a lot more to make this a viable project.**

**If any members have information on anyone with a sporting connection buried or connected to the cemetery, please email them at [amvod03-thcp@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:amvod03-thcp@yahoo.co.uk) or write to Doreen Kendall, address at the front of the newsletter.**

**East London History Society  
Programme 2011 - 2012**

**Thursday September 22**

**The Tower: the epic history of the Tower of London**

Speaker - Nigel Jones

**Thursday October 6**

**Images of the East End: the photographic collections of Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives**

Speaker - Malcom Barr-Hamilton

**(preceded by AGM at 6.10pm.)**

**Thursday November 17**

**East London cholera and the beginnings of sanitary reform**

Speaker - John Marriott

**Thursday December 8**

**Early and East London county courts**

Speaker - John Bradbury

**2012**

**January & February to be confirmed**

**Thursday March 1**

**Stepney Green since the Great Fire Speaker**

- Isobel Watson

**Thursday April 26**

**Excavations of King John's Tower and Court - Worcester House a late medieval? and Tudor mansion at Stepney Green**

Speaker - Dave Sankey

**Thursday May 17**

**East End film night**

Introduced by Ray Newton and John Tarby

**The lectures are usually held on Thursday evenings at 7.30 pm in the Latimer Congregational Church Hall, Ernest Street, E1. Ernest Street is between Harford Street and Whitehorse Lane, off Mile End Road (Opposite Queen Mary and Westfield College). The nearest Underground Stations are Mile End and Stepney Green. Bus No. 25.**

Suggestions and ideas for future topics and/or speakers for our Lecture Programme are always welcomed. If you can suggest someone or indeed if you would like to give a talk yourself, please get in touch with David Behr, our Programme co-ordinator, either at one of our lectures or, alternatively, email our Chairman Philip Memick with your comments and suggestions. Email: [phil@memicks.com](mailto:phil@memicks.com)

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**2012 update**

The structures associated with the 2012 Olympic games and the new Westfield Shopping Centre have received plenty of publicity but something that has opened quietly is the revamped Three Mills Green. It was used to house the practice area for the Millennium Experience (Dome) acrobatic show then went back to sleep as just another open space. It has just reopened after a major make-over and looks really good. The vandalised monument to the four men who died in 1901 has been replaced by a modern design and its northern section has been reshaped and laid out with large sculptured blocks of stone that I suspect could be the fragments of the demolished Euston Arch recently dredged from the Bow Back Rivers.

## OBITUARIES

The East London History Society has lost two highly regarded members, and it is with deep regret that we announce the deaths of the Rev Michael Peet and Mrs Jennifer Worth.

### Reverend Michael Peet

1944 – 9 April 2011

The Rev Michael Peet, Rector of St Mary's & Holy Trinity Church in Bow died on April 9, at Barts Hospital, after battling cancer over the past 18 months.

Born in Hertfordshire in 1944 Reverend Peet was ordained priest and served at Battersea, Peckham, St Dunstan's in Stepney and Stamford Hill before coming to Bow. Mr Peet was vicar of Holy Trinity, Mile End and All Hallows Devons Road from 1989 until 2006 when Holy Trinity merged with St Mary's to form the present parish of Bow. The success of the merger was said to be down to his "enthusiasm and energy and his wholehearted commitment to the people of Bow."

His commitment to the community and love of London led to his interest in local history, and he was well known for his encyclopaedic knowledge of events in and around Bow. An avid historian, the rector was also an authority on the past events of the area and wrote a book, **Seven Parishioners of Bow**, charting seven centuries of goings-on in the area.

Two years ago Mr Peet organised a weekend celebration of the life of former Poplar mayor and Bow & Bromley MP George Lansbury, who was a member of the St Mary's congregation for 40 years. Sadly Rev. Michael Peet did not live to enjoy a ceremony on the 7<sup>th</sup> May unveiling a memorial plaque to the politician. He was also denied the opportunity of leading the celebrations, this year, of the 700th anniversary of Bow Church.

He was a leading figure in pushing inclusive rights for all and he helped form the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement.

Reverend Peet leaves behind a partner, very many friends and a thriving, active, parish. Bow Church bellringers rang a special quarter peal in the rector's memory at 6pm on Friday 14 April.

The Funeral was held on 5<sup>th</sup> May at Bow Church.

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### Jennifer Worth -

25 September 1935 - 31 May 2011

Jennifer Worth, author and musician, died on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2011, aged 75.

Many of you have no doubt enjoyed reading her bestselling Call the Midwife series, a trilogy based on her own experiences of working as a midwife in the East End of London in the 1950s, now being made into a television series for the BBC.

At the age of 22 she moved to Poplar as district midwife attached to an Anglican order of nuns. The area still bore the scars of the Second World War: one in four houses had been demolished, and the overcrowding — she often found 12 people living in two rooms — was appalling.

Jennifer's job was to deal with some of the 50 per cent of babies born at home, often by gaslight and with the aid of little more than water heated in the "copper", towels and words of encouragement.

Yet despite the squalor, she found that the East End of the 1950s still retained a sense of community. Front doors were left unlocked, and extended families lived round the corner from each other. Her narrative was full of tales of resilience and good humour even in the grimmest conditions.

In her trilogy - *Call the Midwife* (2002), *Shadows of the Workhouse* (2005) and *Farewell to the East End* (2009) - Jennifer Worth described a world before the contraceptive pill and legalised abortion. Her trilogy sold almost a million copies in Britain alone. Last year she published *In the Midst of Life*, a call for a re-evaluation of the way our society treats death and the unnecessary suffering caused by the resuscitation of the elderly and terminally ill.

Jennifer Worth was born Jennifer Lee on September 25 1935 at Clacton-on-Sea, while her parents were on holiday, and grew up in the Buckinghamshire town of Amersham. She was educated at Belle Vue School in Little Chalfont, but left at 14.

After taking a course in shorthand and typing she became secretary to the headmaster of Dr Challoner's Grammar School, Amersham. She then trained as a nurse at the Royal Berkshire Hospital in Reading, subsequently moving to London to train as a midwife.

After working in Poplar, Jennifer became a staff nurse at the Royal London Hospital, Whitechapel, then ward sister at the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital in Euston and later at the Marie Curie Hospital in Hampstead. Jennifer Worth always loved music, and in 1973 she left nursing in order to devote herself to her passion. She gained the Licentiate of the London College of Music in 1974 and was awarded a fellowship 10 years later. She taught piano and singing for about 25 years and sang in choirs across England and Europe.

Jennifer Worth, who died on May 31, is survived by her husband Philip Worth, and her two daughters.

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## COCKNEYS AND THE MUSIC HALL

The poet T S Eliot reputedly admired Marie Lloyd. My mother, a factory girl from Bethnal Green, thought she was vulgar. Later, in the days of radio, Mum would not go to see Max Miller for the same reason.

By the nineteen-twenties, singers and comedians were popularised by film and the BBC. Before that, people learned songs and catch-phrases from printed sheet-music, or simply by hearing them everywhere, in the pubs and in the street. If you could afford a piano – and only the poorest could not get one on hire-purchase – someone would bash out the latest numbers at parties, or on Sunday evenings when the family came round to tea. Many of these songs emanated from the music hall. The *Musical Herald* (1.1.1910) reported that

London children can get a gallery seat at a music hall (early performance) for twopence, and that they carry home the songs and sing them. At twelve L.C.C. Schools in London, the favoured songs of the playground are "Boiled beef and carrots," and "Has anybody here seen Kelly?"

If, around the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, you had asked any member of the public to name two music-hall stars, they might well have said Marie Lloyd and Albert Chevalier. While Marie Lloyd is still remembered, and has TV programmes made about her, Chevalier is largely forgotten. But Chevalier, 'the Costers' Laureate', was a major figure, not only because he was well-known, but because he played an important role in making the music hall respectable, professional, and commercial. This was already evident in 1893, when an article appeared in *The Morning Leader*: (30 May 1892):

But to Mr Chevalier, I take it, belongs the credit of having raised music-hall songs to the highest level they can attain. He is the Kipling

of the music-hall, for he takes the common clay of Whitechapel, and fashions it into real works of art.

Music hall had its origins in places where people met to eat, drink, and be entertained. By the middle of the nineteenth century, halls were being built specially so that large audiences could listen to singers and comedians. The crowd joined in with the choruses, and went on drinking. There were 31 such halls in London in 1871.

By the mid 1890s, the London County Council (LCC) existed, and its regulations, along with parliamentary laws, began to control such things as safety. At much the same time, empires of theatres were being built up by a few management syndicates, such as Stoll and Moss. In reaction against this, the Variety Artists Federation was set up. Major artists, such as Marie Lloyd, could earn large sums of money, but performers were expected to rush around London sometimes to four or five theatres in a night, and undertook provincial tours. The halls where they performed became the 'Palaces' and 'Empires' many of us remember.

Marie Lloyd came from a poor family; she would have had few opportunities in life without her performing abilities. Not so Albert Onesime Britannicus Gwathveoyd Louis Chevalier, born in 1861 of a Welsh mother, and a father who taught French in Kensington. At 16 Albert became an actor on the 'legitimate' stage. He evolved character sketches, which he wrote himself, and was persuaded to try them out in the music halls. Initially reluctant, he gave in and made his first appearance as an entertainer rather than as a serious actor in 1891 at the new London Pavilion, Piccadilly Circus. His coster character was an immediate success not only in England, but also in American vaudeville.

He married Florrie, the daughter of 'Champagne Charlie', and it is supposed he dedicated his most famous number, 'My Old

Dutch', to her. ('Dutch' is said to be Cockney rhyming slang of the period: Duchess of Fife = wife.)

Chevalier's act was sentimental, but not without a critical bite to some of the lyrics. 'The Workouse Man' begins:  
 There's a refuge for all as is broke to the world,  
 Where one looks like another perhaps at first sight,  
 Where the dresses ain't smart, an' the 'air isn't curled,  
 Where the heart's mostly heavy, an' diet is light ..

Later on in the lyric, the wife says:

They're kind as they can be to paupers like us,  
 So long as we makes neither bother nor fuss

Chevalier must have imitated the cockney dialect well. His popularity with the London crowd would have meant that he affected their own image of themselves, and young men probably imitated his dress and mannerisms, and even some of his ways of speaking. A lot of what the English thought of as London speech stemmed from a very stylised written dialect evolved first from writers such as Dickens and his imitators, and then from such performers as Chevalier. 'The Workhouse Boy' was published around 1837, and so predates the rise of the music hall. It is an attempt at imitation of London speech of the day:

The towels were spread in the Vorkhouse hall,  
 Our tiles were hung up on the vity-brown wall,  
 [sic]  
 Ve'd hoshens of soup, and nothing to pay,  
 keeping our Christmas holy day.

The song is not sentimental, as might be supposed from its chorus of 'Oh, the poor Vorkhouse Boy!'. The verses pun on 'go to pot' and 'in the soup' (one boy drowns in the soup). The workhouse was known and feared (and consequently joked about) in all the

working-class communities where music halls flourished.

We also find songs that mentioned London districts such as Poplar, Bethnal Green, and so on. As Londoners were performing all over the country, presumably they sang some of them in other parts of the country. 'The Wild Man of Poplar' would not have been very revealing if audiences were hoping to learn something about the place and its inhabitants, as it was a simple ditty that builds up in the same way as 'Ten Green Bottles'. 'Dancing to the Organ in the Mile End Road' makes the Mile End Road sound a lively but dangerous environment. It tells of a blue-eyed Irish girl who takes a sailor's fancy while they are dancing in the street. Inevitably, he gets robbed.

It was probably the newspapers rather than the crowds at music halls who dubbed Albert Chevalier as 'The Costers' Laureate', but his gimmick of the coster character caught on. Other singers followed suit, among them Alec Hurley, who became Marie Lloyd's second husband in 1906. Before going on the stage he had worked as a tea-packer in the London docks, and as a boxer. He is buried in Tower Hamlets Cemetery.

Marie Lloyd famously sang in the witness box to prove that her songs were innocent. She was called to appear before the Vigilance Committee after being dramatically accused from the stalls in the Empire Theatre Leicester Square by Mrs Ormiston Chant.

Laura Ormiston Chant has had a bad press, speaking as she was against the ever-popular Marie on behalf of the unattractively named National Vigilance Association. She is frequently portrayed as an ultra-puritanical busybody, but in fact she was a strong and intelligent woman, a feminist and a Christian, with some ideas ahead of her time, who campaigned vigorously for what she believed was right. She denied wanting to close music halls down. It was the sale of alcohol in the

auditorium she disapproved of. She also wanted the Promenade closed at the Empire Theatre in Leicester Square, as she claimed it encouraged vice. She is almost certainly right that prostitutes patrolled the Promenade there. The Empire closed for a short time in 1894 as a result of her campaigning, but the Promenade stayed open, and the halls had had their licences renewed by 1896.

Music hall was perhaps the only place where the working-class population could feel they saw aspects of their own lives reflected back at them, in something like their own ways of speaking and behaving. There were of course many teetotallers in East London, and individuals whose moral convictions would have made them more in sympathy with Mrs Ormiston Chant than with the acts they saw on the stage. There were romantics in London, and those who had aspirations towards gentility. Nevertheless, many people found relief from hard lives in the halls in their heyday. But from the last years of the Victorian era, music halls changed in nature. First there came the move towards making acts appeal to a wider audience, by making them more sentimental, less coarse and vital, a change in which Albert Chevalier, 'the Costers' Laureate', played a leading role. Although Alec Hurley's roots lay genuinely in the kind of people he was singing about, some of his songs are pretty and moralising. (He mostly performed other people's material, unlike Chevalier.)

The Barrow in the Mile End Road', for example, begins:

There is nothing like contentment  
When a man has got to live  
He should always be contented with his lot,  
There are lots of other lots for which my own I  
wouldn't give,  
For I'm happy with the little bit I've got.  
I'm a humble sort of fellow, but I've got a tidy  
home,  
And what is more, a little tidy wife,

And the landscape from the window where I'm  
sitting with the kids  
Is the prettiest I've seen in all my life.

The scenery is of course his barrow in the  
Mile End Road.

Another change in the halls was official discouragement of drinking on the premises. Alcohol was prohibited in all new halls by 1909. In 1914 the LCC banned eating and drinking altogether. Meanwhile, the difference between straight theatres and the halls was diminishing. Theatres frequently featured variety shows, and both theatres and halls made use of the new media, incorporating short films and (bizarrely, to us) gramophones in their shows. The cinema was to prove one of the means for communities to look beyond their own locality in their understanding of the world, and in their amusements.

The Daily Mail (25.11.1913) carried an article by Charles E Hands headed 'A Common person's complaint. Music-halls improved out of existence'. 'If you look into it you will find', he says, 'that the improvement of the entertainment amounts to no more than the exclusion from the auditorium of the vulgar working-class population'. He goes on: 'We see people driving up in their motor-cars to the reformed places that used to be our little music-halls. The seats which we used to occupy at a cost of a shilling or so are now booked by telephone at half a crown with something extra for booking fee. ... [the Middlesex, formerly the Mogul] was a too dreadful place, because it was infested by the masses, reeked of their beer and their coarse sense of humour and their even more offensive sentimentality.'

He concludes that the working man 'wants music and songs and fun at his price and within his comprehension. He has no objection to art in moderation, but he will insist on its being decent'.

And so music hall was transformed into the variety show; by the Second World War, the old entertainers were known chiefly through radio, and later television used the format of variety to some extent. But the days of the music hall as the hub of a locality were over.

*The songs mentioned can all be found in the Printed Music Reference section at the British Library.*

Pat Francis

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### **Overshadowed by Churchill, but now Attlee takes pride of place**

For many years it made a sad sight at the side of the Commercial Road. Crawling by in traffic, out to Stratford or in to the City, you would see the boarded up façade of Limehouse Library and, out front, the neglected and bird-spattered statue of Clement Attlee. What a contrast to the monumental bulk of Winston Churchill, massive in bronze on his plinth in Parliament Square. When Churchill's statue was defaced during the May Day riots a decade ago, there were howls of protest from the press.

Yet, Attlee, the man who shared power with Churchill during World War II (Churchill handling the military side of government, Attlee the civil), could be daubed with graffiti and forgotten on an East End trunk road and nobody seemed to care. If you asked passers-by who that moustachioed figure was they probably couldn't have told you. Indeed Attlee himself was largely forgotten by a younger generation. But an unveiling this week will begin to put things right.

Clem has been cleaned up and moved to a new home at Queen Mary, University of London in Mile End. The statue will be unveiled by Peter Mandelson, grandson of Herbert Morrison, one of Attlee's colleagues both in opposition and in government during the 1940s and 50s.

(Attlee didn't like or trust Morrison much, but it's a link with Labour's past nonetheless). And the occasion will be marked by a speech from Peter Hennessey, historian and student of the Labour movement. Attlee was born into privilege in 1883, but was politicised by coming to the East End.

After prep school, public school and Oxford University, it was coming to manage Haileybury House in 1906, a descendant of the old middle and upper class 'missions' to Tower Hamlets, that formed his politics. He combined his charitable work with his career, lecturing at the London School of Economics before military service in 1914. It caused a rift with his pacifist brother, and Attlee detested war himself. But he did his bit in the worst of it, Captain Attlee fighting at Gallipoli, at Suvla Bay and then getting his reward in the the dying months of the conflict on the Western Front.

'Major' Attlee emerged from service even more determined to build a new world fit for heroes to live in. He was elected mayor of Stepney in 1919 and in 1921 voiced his support for his friend George Lansbury and the Poplar rates strikers, who would be sent to prison. It brought him into conflict with other London Labour leaders and was the beginning of a simmering feud with another rising Labour man – Herbert Morrison, mayor of neighbouring Hackney.

Attlee entered Parliament in the 1922 General Election, winning the Limehouse seat, and in 1924 he took his first Cabinet position, under prime minister Ramsay MacDonald's short-lived government. Labour would hold power for just 11 months.

In May 1929, in the wake of the General Strike, with industry in decline, an Exchequer struggling to pay for the Great War of a decade before and many fearing social collapse, Labour were re-elected. Within months, the Wall Street Crash would precipitate a worldwide financial crisis – and

Britain, along with the rest of the world, would lurch into the Great Depression.

Attlee entered MacDonald's beleaguered government, soon replacing Oswald Mosley as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. Within two years, that Labour government would fall too, with the cabinet split down the middle over how to tackle the budget deficit. At the urging of King George V, MacDonald formed a national government (or coalition), bringing Conservatives into the cabinet.

He was immediately expelled from Labour by a furious party, and so began a confusing and unstable era of British politics, with the Labour PM no longer head of the party. That role passed to Arthur Henderson, who would in turn make way after losing his seat in Labour's near wipe-out in the 1931 election. Now the Labour leadership passed to Lansbury, an able politician and much-loved within the party and the country, but a pacifist increasingly at odds with the mood of his colleagues. Amid arguments about disarmament and appeasement, Lansbury went in 1935, with Attlee beating off the challenge of Arthur Greenwood and Herbert Morrison to lead the party. He would head Labour until 1955. Ironically, when government came to Labour, it would be as part of another national government.

In 1939 Neville Chamberlain resigned and Churchill formed a wartime coalition with Attlee as deputy PM. And in 1945, with Churchill expected to return to power, there was a Labour landslide. Many (including the Royal Family and Fleet Street) were outraged that Britain had turned from Churchill, the man who had saved the country. It's a view that ignores Labour and Attlee's huge role in that wartime administration. Neither is it correct to see the huge strides made by that post-war government as simply Labour achievements. This would be the government that created the welfare state but, after all, the foundations had been laid by the Beveridge Report, commissioned under Churchill and Attlee. But what were Attlee's achievements

before Labour lost power (to Churchill) in 1951?

His administration set up the NHS, the social security system and the welfare state, nationalised steel, coal, the canals, wireless and telecommunications, and railways. It pushed forward independence for India, Burma, Ceylon and many others, dismantling the last of Empire. Attlee the man was no less impressive. He continued to support Britain's war effort when many were for settling with Germany in the dark days of 1940. And most of all, he believed in the necessity of government to engineer the big social changes in society.

One wonders what Attlee would have made of a Britain struggling out of recession, reeling from stock market and financial collapse, and struggling to deal with the cost of war – and attempting to fill the welfare gap with a 'Big Society'. The celebration of a refurbished Clem couldn't be more timely.

#### John Rennie

This article first appeared in the April 4<sup>th</sup> 2011 issue of East End Life and is reproduced with the author's permission. John's weekly history page will be familiar to all residents of Tower Hamlets receiving the Council published free newspaper. Members living outside Tower Hamlets are still able to read many of his very informative articles as they are available on the internet at [www.eastlondonhistory.com](http://www.eastlondonhistory.com)

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#### Whitechapel 1600 – 1800

The next book in Derek Morris's series on early East London, *Whitechapel 1600 – 1800*, should be going to the printer very soon. Hopefully it will be available in time for our next Newsletter.

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## Correspondence

Philip Mernick has received the following correspondence, which we thought might be of interest to our members -

#### From Peter Moss, 44 Wood Avens Way, Wymondham Norfolk NR18 0XP

Thank you for the continued receipt of the East London History newsletter.

I was sorting out some family history papers of my father recently, and came across the (attached) letters together with a map of detail of a dig undertaken prior to the WW2 at Wapping Stairs, supervised by a Mr Gent the superintendant of the Wharf there. I have lodged the letters and map in the Bancroft Road Library. If they are of interest to you for the Newsletter you may use them, I will also attach the letter to the Library.

My father Harry F Moss initiated a number of "Walks" around East London in about 1974 the last of which was taken by my younger brother Laurence after his death in 1978. I should be interested to hear from anyone who went on one of these walks and what their response was. The detail of these walks has been lost to the family.

#### From Chairman A H French, East London History Society to Harry F Moss dated 4 February 1974

Dear Mr Moss, Thank you for your letter. I am not concerned about expenses or putting my name in the programme. In both these cases I think you should predominate. They are after all your idea and will be "supervised" by you. Proposed plan:-

#### Walk No 1 Limehouse.

Meet St Ann's Limehouse 2.15 pm Saturday November 2<sup>nd</sup> 1974.

Suggested Itinerary:- Limehouse Church / Newell St / Oak Lane/ Northey St/ Narrow St Limehouse causeway/ MingSt/ Saltway St. Finish Junction Upper North Street/ East India Dock Road 4-4.30 pm.

**Walk No 2 Poplar**

Meet All Saints Poplar 2.15 pm Saturday  
November 16<sup>th</sup> 1974.

Suggested Itinerary:- East India Dock Road/  
Robin Hood Lane/ Blackwall Way /  
Coldharbour/ Prestons Rd/ Poplar High Street/  
Hale St. Finishing East India Dock Road,  
roughly the same time as the Limehouse walk.  
I therefore suggest, if you can arrange it, that  
the look around St Ann's should be at about  
2.15 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November and round St  
Mattias at about 3.30 – 3.45 on the 16  
November

**Letters between Bryant Pears and Hector  
Gent and Harry Moss**

**To Bryant Pears (London Appreciation  
Society) from Hector Gent dated Nov 12  
1975.**

Dear Sir, A few months ago I went on one of  
your "Two Cities Tours" and have just come  
across your souvenir booklet again. As I spent  
over 30 years as Superintendent of a wharf  
near Wapping Old Stairs I thought that you  
might be interested in one or two little matters  
which you may not be known to you. When  
we built our Air Raid shelter we dug down to  
the wharf's foundations and although we were  
about 25 ft below high water level the millions  
of oyster shells we were now standing on were  
quite dry. This was rather strange but  
understandable as you will see from the  
enclosed rough drawing.

Years ago, I understand the river used to flood  
right up to the Highway, before London Dock  
was constructed and oysters were to be had for  
the taking. Opposite the Wharf- Orient Wharf-  
was the Old Vestry Hall owned by the local  
council people. This we rented and until it was  
destroyed in the Blitz was used by us as  
offices. We owned some houses adjoining,  
which were also destroyed and when we built  
new offices after the war, we found many clay  
pipes. These were probably relics of the

plague and used to a great extent to ward off  
any infection.

Adjoining the vestry Hall was a school, then  
two houses, then St Johns Church. The school  
was seriously damaged and the church except  
for the tower destroyed in the Blitz. The tower,  
although badly damaged, was considered to be  
worth saving as it was, with the rest of the  
church, constructed by our old friend Sir  
Christopher Wren. Therefore, the powers that  
be had three wide steel bands put around the  
top to prevent collapse and this was at the time  
we were losing our iron gates and railings for  
the war effort.

Up to the time of my retiring in 1967, the  
school frontage was also being preserved. It  
amused me very much when I first went to the  
Wharf to hear the operator of one of the sight  
seeing motet boats say as they passed by "On  
my left you will see Wapping Old Stairs where  
Judge Jeffries escaped from, and where they  
used to hang Pirates for three tides, until they  
was dead!" I think Judge Jeffries was caught  
and ended his days in the Tower and I should  
imagine one tide was enough to polish off a  
pirate, but expect he allowed to hang (them) in  
chains for three days as an example to others.

Another interesting fact is that up to about  
1950 or even later, one could obtain a pint of  
fresh milk from real live cows from a dairy in  
Swedenborg Street. This was a turning off the  
Highway and I imagine that the two cows  
were walked around when it was quiet in the  
evening and replaced with others every week  
or two. I expect that this is about where cattle  
used to graze along the edge of the river at  
high tide before the building of the St Kath's  
and London Docks. I have always understood  
that the walls of these docks were constructed  
largely by convict labour, with the help of  
prisoners from the Napoleonic Wars.  
In your booklet you mention W W Jacobs.  
Apparently he was brought up in the house  
adjoining a small wharf and these were just  
near the entrance of St Katherine's Dock. I  
expect his father was the Wharf Manager and

W W J got his local colour from this spot and the small Inn nearby. See Sketch. This wharf etc., came into the possession of my Company and the house was used as offices. It was the practice in the Old Days for the Manager or owner of the small Wharves to live in a house adjoining or in very close proximity. I know of several places where these homes were destroyed in the Blitz. It seems that most of the Old property was destroyed then (in the blitz) , but the flats etc; erected just before the war seemed to escape, with relatively minor damage. Are you aware that the bulk of the inhabitants of Wapping settled there at the time of the potato famine in Ireland? Well sir I could ramble on and on but I feel that you will know most of what I could talk about, but if you wish to have a chat with me, please phone me up any time. I am very interested in all sorts of things and it grieves me to think that so little will be remembered of this particular area in a few years time for people like your good self. With all good wishes I am yours Sincerely Hector Gent.

**To Hector Gent of Thornton Heath from Bryant Pears dated 20 November 1975.**

Dear Mr Gent, How very kind of you to send me such an interesting and informative letter, I am glad that you enjoyed the tour with me, but while I do know a lot about London, I am not an expert on the east side, although I school mastered in Fairclough and latterly in Jubilee Street for almost 20 years.

In addition to my work, whereby I earn my bread, I run this London Appreciation Society, syllabus for your interest herewith. One of my Council Members and Vice Presidents is Alderman Harry Moss and he is most interested in your letter and map which I have passed on to him. I think you and he might have a lot in common and if you care to drop him a line his address is Alderman (in fact he is now retired and whilst fully entitled to the title, he is such a modest chap he drops it). Mr Harry Moss 74 Elms Farm Road Elm Park Hornchurch Essex.

## Book Reviews

### **SEVEN PARISHIONERS OF STRATFORD BOW.**

**Michael Peet.** Price £7.50 88 pages, paperback with many sketches and photos of the area..

This book produced by the author before his death with the help of his parishioners and his partner Raymond Port is based on his lectures which tell the history of Bow. Research into the history of this area was complicated by their being two Stratford and two Bow churches.

The name Stratford is the name of the old Roman ford across the Lea. In time the Middlesex side became Bow after the shape of the bridge. The Essex side became Stratford Langthorne after the near by abbey. St Mary Le Bow Cheapside was the church of the medieval curfew bell hence the Bow bells connection.

Next year , 2012 Bow will become the important Gateway to the Olympic Games. Chapters capture the lives of our outstanding members of the community from Mary Tudor riding through to take her crown, Samuel Pepys enjoying his drinking and wenching, the cork screw inventor Rector Samuel Henshall, George Lansbury our east end member of Parliament. The there was the rector George Townend Driffield and Priscilla Coborn the benefactor who founded schools in the area, and Bow china.

We are indebted to Michael for working so hard through his illness to ensure we can enjoy his lectures through his book and leaving all his research for posterity. Members of local societies enjoyed Michael's lectures which had been so thoroughly researched by him, which he delivered in a loud booming voice with great passion. We have truly lost a great local historian and friend

### **DIVIDED BY THE BOUNTY .**

**Alan Adams ISBN 978 0 956 7732 0 3**  
Price £8.00, paperback, 132 pages with many illustrations and author's photos

I have for many years been fascinated by different accounts in articles and books on the voyage of H.M.S. Bounty in the search for the bread fruit, and the mutiny of the ships crew. For in Bow cemetery we have a memorial to Hannah Purcell widow of William Purcell who was loyal to Captain Bligh.

The author set out over eight years ago to research his family history, many of the family seem to have lived in the area from Spitafields to the river. Among them watermen, lightermen, river police men, carmen, firemen and beadles.

Alan also found some disturbing facts - a lunatic who committed suicide and a philanderer with four wives and twelve children. The trail led back to his Gt Gt Grandfather Jonathan Adams (1767-1829). Orphaned at an early age, he was brought up with his brother John in a Hackney orphanage. Through Alan's interest in Captain Cook he bought a booklet by Madge Darby called "Captain Bligh in Wapping" and found they had both sailed together, and on the last page a reference to John and Johnathan Adams saying goodbye as John under the name of Alexander Smith sailed from Deptford under the command of Captain Bligh in search of the bread fruit and became a mutineer in 1789. Alan visited Norfolk Island near Australia and met the descendants of John Adams.

This book is fascinating to read with all the twists and turns of an east end family including social history of the time, and after over 200 years the fate of H.M.S Bounty and the ships crew can still be researched and throw new light on the outcome of the mutiny.

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### **PIETY AND PIRACY**

**Madge Darby**, Paperback 96 pages . ISBN 078 1 87 3086 06 3. Price £9.95.

The author is well known to us all for her research into the lives of people who resided in Wapping from the Roman occupation to the selling of the Hermitage riverside by the LDDC in 2000 for privately owned tall bocks blocking out the river to local people. Wapping Trust have produced a book with the help of John Tarby the photographer and extra research by Ray Newton. The book is beautifully illustrated with the text clearly printed

Whatever your interest in the area from Saxon times, Queen Matilda's hospital, The Tidal Mills, the first docks and their closure later, Judge Jeffries, Dr Johnson, Charles Dickens, the destruction of St Katherines Dock, the Blitz, as well as our well known sailors are all researched in this book. I hope that Madge and Ray will come along and give us a lecture on this book and the history of Wapping.

### **Doreen Kendall**

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**STEPNEY: Profile of a London Borough from the Outbreak of the First World War to the Festival of Britain, 1914-1951**  
ISBN (10): 1-4438-2582-4 ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-2582-5. Published 2011 by CSP

A new and exciting addition to academic work on Stepney and the East End of London!

Stepney: Profile of a London Borough from the Outbreak of the First World War to the Festival of Britain, 1914-1951 is the first single volume of Stepney in modern times. It sets out to provide a vivid and yet scholarly portrait of an iconic London borough situated in the heart of the East End. Stepney is an area with very many well known associations and images, from the horrifying murders of "Jack the Ripper" to the soaking up of the heavy bomb damage during the Blitz, from the classical confrontation between Mosley's

fascists and the socialist left at the "Battle of Cable Street" to the dramatic "Siege of Sidney Street" when Liberal Home Secretary Winston Churchill rooted out an anarchist cell. Beyond these dramatic episodes, Stepney witnessed the perennial struggle for subsistence among the many poor, the rise and fall of the great local docks, the immigration of large numbers of Jewish refugees from Eastern Europe and elsewhere, the growth of the Labour party and the surprising local ascendancy of the Communists, the desperate drive to improve public housing, the evacuation of a large proportion of its children at the start of World War II, and much more besides.

This is a truly ground-breaking, very readable book that fills a surprising gap in our knowledge and greatly enhances our understanding of London, urban, working-class, inter-ethnic, industrial and British 20<sup>th</sup> century history.

Two eminent historians, Professor Denis Judd and Professor Chris Wrigley both strongly recommend this book.

**Dr. Samantha L. Bird**  
[s\\_birdv24@hotmail.com](mailto:s_birdv24@hotmail.com)

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### **BEYOND THE TOWER - A History of East London.**

**John Marriott** . 384 pp. 50 b/w illustrations  
£25.00. Published by Yale University Press,  
tel. 020 7079 4900 [www.yalebooks.co.uk](http://www.yalebooks.co.uk)

From Jewish clothing merchants to Bangladeshi curry houses, ancient docks to the 2012 Olympics, the area east of the City has always played a crucial role in London's history. The East End, as it has been known, was the home to Shakespeare's first theatre and to the early stirrings of a mass labour movement; it has also traditionally been seen as a place of darkness and despair, where Jack the Ripper committed his gruesome murders, and cholera and poverty stalked the Victorian streets.

In this beautifully illustrated history of this iconic district, John Marriott draws on 25 years of research into the subject to present an authoritative and endlessly fascinating account. With the aid of copious maps, archive prints and photographs, and the words of East Londoners from 17th-century silk-weavers to Cockneys during the Blitz, he explores the relationship between the East End and the rest of London, and challenges many of the myths which surround the area.

John Marriott is Professor in History at the Raphael Samuel History Centre, University of East London, and author of *The Culture of Labourism: The East End between the Wars* and *The Other Empire: Metropolis, India and Progress in the Colonial Imagination*.

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### **New book on J Passmore Edwards**

**Funding the Ladder: The Passmore Edwards legacy**, about the life and work of John Passmore Edwards, the Cornish philanthropist who also funded buildings in Tower hamlets, notably Limehouse and St Georges's in the East and Whitechapel libraries as well as the Whitechapel Art Gallery. Available from Francis Boutle Publishers, 272 Alexandra Park Road, London N22 7BG

The book can be viewed on their web site  
<http://www.francisboutle.com>

## Man's Rents, Bromley St Leonard

### Introduction

Bromley in east London, now in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and usually called Bromley-by-Bow, was formerly known as Bromley Saint Leonard after the ancient priory first recorded in the 12th century. After the Dissolution the Manor passed into private hands and by the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was still a largely rural area dominated by farming and with market gardens and nurseries serving the ever growing demands of London. However, the area experienced great changes during the 19<sup>th</sup> century with rapid industrialisation. The population of Bromley grew from little more than 1500 in 1801 to nearly 25 000 by 1861. The rate of growth was not uniform. After an initial spurt at the beginning of the century the rate dropped until rising again dramatically after about 1840, with the population doubling in the decade around 1850.

Where did all these people live, and who provided the houses? There were a few charitable concerns, like almshouses, but little or no publicly funded housing at this time.

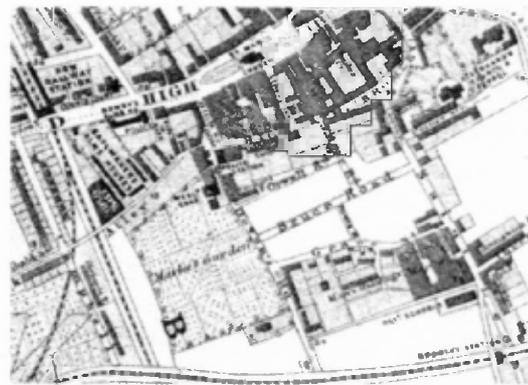
### Man's Rents, Bromley

What triggered my interest in this question was the birth certificate (figure 1) of one of my ancestors, born in 1852. The certificate was a copy made some 70 years later by the local Registrar in Poplar. The birth was registered by the mother, and the birth place was transcribed twice, on each occasion appearing to be "Mari's Rents", Bromley. It took me some time until I eventually identified the address as Man's Rents, more formally known as Man's Buildings. With subsequent redevelopment and changes of street names, by 1922 all memory of the area had been lost, even by the Registrar, who would have been expected to have considerable local knowledge.



*Copy of 1852 birth certificate made in 1922*

Man's Rents were situated in Bromley between Devon's Lane (later Devon's Road) on the west and Four Mills Street (later St Leonard's Street) on the east, south of Grace's Lane (sometimes called Starch Lane and later Grace Street) and north of Love Lane (at least part of which was called Prospect Place and later Talwin Street). Colloquial names were often used for the streets in a neighbourhood. For example Man's Rents was probably a local usage. Stanford's map of 1862 (figure 2) shows them as Man's Buildings, next to the starch factory, north of the site of the Stepney Union Workhouse (opened in 1863).



*Stanford's map of 1862 showing position of Man's Buildings*

What then were Man's Rents, and who was the man, Mr Man, who owned them? Initial enquiries showed that little or nothing is now known about the area, and no contemporary photographs seem to exist. When were they built, who lived in them, and for how long? The 1862 map showed an area still partially

undeveloped, with market gardens and open space. Earlier maps, for example Greenwood's map of 1827 (based on a survey 1824-1826), shows several buildings abutting Devon's Lane and two parallel rows of buildings running east-west with the appearance of back-to-back terraces. Individual plots are marked. The southernmost row appears to have gone in the 1862 map, perhaps indicating a phase of redevelopment.

A more detailed map of the area, drawn by J Walker in 1812 (figure 3), shows the layout more clearly.



*Walker's survey of 1812  
reproduced by permission of Tower Hamlets  
Local History Library and Archives*

Laurie and Whittle's map of 1809-10 shows no buildings in the Man's Rents area, but a few buildings along Devon's Lane. William Faden's extended version of Richard Horwood's 1799 map, published in 1813 but dated 1807, shows a similar layout to Walker's 1812 map. Thus the houses called Man's Rents would seem to have been built no later than 1812, and possibly date from a few years earlier, perhaps responding to the initial surge in population at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is difficult to be more exact, as contemporary maps were often dated and published some time after the surveys they were based on. Many were not particularly accurate, the area being on the periphery of London.

#### Four men called William Man

The land on which Man's Rents were built was that described in the will of William Man, written in 1792. William Man was the first of four generations bearing the name that I have identified. It might be helpful to briefly tabulate their dates:

William Man I	Farmer	?-1793
William Man II	Farmer & "Gentleman"	c1751-1820
William Man III	Landed Proprietor & "Gentleman"	1789-1882
William Man IV	Merchant & "Gentleman"	1818-1881

William Man I was a farmer who lived in a house called Homestead Garden. His will includes some rather confusing instructions for the division of the house and the adjoining land between his sons Robert and William. However his farm is clearly stated to be "...bounded on the south by a lane called Love Lane". William Man I also bequeathed two cottages in Devon's Lane to his son William.

William Man II was also a farmer, at least for the early part of his life, and he was described as such in the baptism records of his children over the period 1777-1785. Both he and his father were mentioned numerous times in the Land Tax Assessments, and he also branched out into property development. In 1808 he leased land abutting "Devins Lane" for 45 years to a bricklayer, Samuel Ellis of Bow, and this may refer to the same plot. It certainly indicates the beginnings of housing development in the area. William Man II, in his will of 1812, left all his property to his son, also William, and in a codicil of 1820 mentioned 12 tenements at or near Bow Common on land purchased from John Liptrap.

In 1802 William II had acquired the rectory, advowson and tithes of Bromley from the Lloyd and Booth families. Lysons' *Environs*

of London (1795) gives an account of the manor of Bromley:

*The manor of Bromley belonged to the ... convent...of St. Leonard, Bromley... After the dissolution it was granted, with the site of the priory and advowson of the church, by Henry VIII to Sir Ralph Sadler...*

Dunstan in his *History of the parish of Bromley St Leonard* (1862) described the successive owners of the tithes and the Lords of the Manor. At one time there were two manors in Bromley, but by William Man's time they had been reunited. Ashbee (1900) described the two manors and their various owners and concluded:

*After passing through several hands, and being divided and re-united, the manor was purchased by Mr. William Mann [sic], whose descendant Colonel Mann, is the present lord of the manor.*

In fact the Lordship of the Manor had been bought by George Johnston and James Humphreys, and only the tithes were owned by the Man family. They passed via William Man III's son William Man IV in 1847, and then in William Man IV's will in 1881 to his half-brother Colonel Man.

William Man III was one of the major property owners in Bromley. In the Bromley Poor Rate Book of March 1821 he was mentioned several times, as was his widowed mother (Elizabeth, wife of William Man II). In all he paid over £57 in rates for the final quarter of 1820, including £8 15s for the "Great Tythe". The majority of the rating was for property listed under High Street. Man's Rents were not specifically mentioned, but this entry may refer to them, but listed under William Man's main residence. In a later rate book (1834) he was listed as having 13 cottages in High Street East, 31 in Dyer's Lane, 5 more in High Street East, 6 in Three Mills Lane, 108 in High Street West and 28 on Bow Common.

William Man III was clearly a prominent citizen, and was one of the three men who countersigned the rate assessment in 1821.

Later that year he was elected as churchwarden. There are numerous mentions of William Man in the Bromley St Leonard parish documents, for example on the Michaelmas Quarter Day 1831 receiving nearly £40 from the Overseers of the Poor to pay the rents of people receiving poor relief. On another occasion he was paid £15 12s for "employing sundry men 6 months".

### Man's Rents and the census

The earliest reference to Man's Buildings I have found was as the address of a man enrolled as a substitute in the Second Royal Regiment of Tower Hamlets Militia in 1826. None of the rate books I examined (up to 1836) specifically used the term *Man's Rents* or *Man's Buildings*, but they are mentioned as such in the enumerator's description in the 1841 census return:

*All that part of Bromley which lies from the eastern end of Grace's Lane to the pound including **Man's Rents** and the cottages in Devon's Lane.*

The occupants were decidedly working class, the enumerator describing 34 out of 47 of the working age males as L[abourer] or *Ag Lab*. Other trades included: rigger, pillbox maker, sawyer, starch maker, shoemaker and apprentice, engineer, seaman, brushmaker and boilermaker.

By 1851 the enumerator covered a slightly different area:

*All that part of the Parish of Bromley which includes the Imperial Crown Public House the west side of High Street by William Claridges to Graces Lane and the whole of **Mans Buildings** including Prospect Place and those in Graces Lane but not those in Devons Lane*

Of the men living in Man's Rents (now referred to as Man's Buildings) 31 out of 43 were recorded as labourer of one sort or another, including 8 *Ag Labs*. The enumerator was more informative, and mentioned coal, rail and dock labourers, as well as reflecting employment in the local starch works, calico printers and chemical works. More women

were recorded as employed. The enumerator marked some of the houses as *Man's Buildings, Middle Row*.

Again in the 1861 census detailed street names are given. It is interesting to relate them to contemporary maps, for example Stanford's map of 1862:

*All that part of the parish which lies in Burdett Place, Cambridge Place, Sim's Cottage, Love Lane, Nottingham Garden, Devons Road to Grace Street, Grace Street to Starch Factory. All Man's Buildings, Love Lane East and National and Infant Schools*

The enumerator had reverted to the simpler description: 23 out of 31 males were labourers. No agricultural workers were recorded, perhaps indicating the changing nature of the area. The main feature was the continued reduction in the number of inhabitants in Man's Rents.

A simple summary of the number of people, houses and the density of occupation (the average number of people living in a house) in Man's Rents is given in the table

year	Number of people	houses	density (persons/house)
1841	172	35	5.2
1851	141	32 (1 empty)	4.4
1861	102	26	3.9

It is interesting to note that both the number of inhabitants and the density of occupation in Man's Rents were declining, whereas they were increasing in Bromley as a whole. Data in Dunstan's *History* shows that occupation density had reached over 7 persons/house in Bromley by 1861. Thus when the population was increasing most rapidly and putting strain on the available housing stock, the occupation levels in Man's Rents were falling. Perhaps the houses were not in great demand. The oldest were nearly 50 years old and probably in poor condition and near the end of their useful life. The reason for the decline in the density of occupation is not altogether clear. There may have been a higher proportion of

older couples with fewer children living with their parents. Considerable analysis of the census data could be done.

### Redevelopment

*...Wiv a ladder and some glasses  
You could see to 'Ackney Marshes  
If it wasn't for the 'ouses in between*

Shortly after the 1861 census the whole area of Man's Rents was redeveloped. Powis Road was extended and two new streets of terraced houses, Egleton Road (laid out in 1862) and Greetham Road (later called Stratfield Road), were built running north to south across the Man's Rents site, as indicated in the 1871 enumerator's description:

*That part of the parish which lies and include Love Lane from the east end of the Edinburgh Arms, Crown Place, Grace Street, Cottage Place, the whole of Powis Rd, Egleton Rd and Stratfield Road*

The comprehensive redevelopment of the area, with widespread, densely packed housing, can be seen from a later OS map of 1893 (figure 4).



*OS map of 1893 showing redevelopment of the "Man's Rents" area reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland.*

An indication of the poverty or wealth of an area can be found in the so-called Booth's Poverty Maps, published around 1898-99. Charles Booth graded streets on a scale ranging from yellow (*upper-middle and upper*

*classes, wealthy) down to black (lowest class, vicious, semi-criminal) and published colour-coded maps. Most of the redeveloped "Man's Rents" area was graded dark blue (very poor, casual, chronic want) or light blue (poor 18s. to 21s. a week for a moderate family). Fortunately both the maps and descriptions survive for the area:*

*North again over the railway bridge & past the Bromley station. On the west side a set of blue streets leading down to the Stepney Workhouse – many of their occupants on their way there too. Powis & Stratfield Streets [sic] being a dark shade of light blue in character & Eggleton Road between them decidedly dark blue (as map). Eggleton Road [sic] on the west and Hancock Road on the east of St Leonard's St are noted thieves resorts. But all these streets bear a better police reputation than Devas St.*

The area suffered bomb damage during the Second World War and has been redeveloped again in modern times. The parish church of St Mary Bromley St Leonard is no more and is now, according to a recent study, one of London's most damaged and neglected monastic and historic church sites.

### **The end of an era**

The Man family had left the area by the early 1860s. William Man III was living in High Street Bromley in 1861 but he married for the third time in 1863 and moved to Reigate. He was over 50 years older than his third wife, and in 1871 she petitioned for divorce on the grounds of cruelty and desertion, and the family split up. William still lived on the proceeds of his property, with "income from lands" in 1871 and "income from landed property" in 1881. Almost certainly some of his property was passed to his son William IV during his lifetime. William IV, long since widowed and childless, lived in Walthamstow and later in Woodford. Thus they still had interest in property, but not it seems in land itself. Neither was listed in the Return of Owners of Land in 1873 for any of the counties they were known to have lived in: Middlesex, Essex, Surrey or Sussex.

William Man III died in Reigate in 1882 leaving a will. Any remaining property he still owned was placed in trust for his three sons by his third wife, but was not specified in the will. His son William Man IV had predeceased his father, dying in 1881. In his will he similarly arranged for a trust for his half-sister, the daughter of his father's third wife. He also left to his half-brother Colonel John Alexander Man:

*all the tithes tithe rent charge arising from lands and tenements situate in the said parish of St. Leonard Bromley aforesaid which still belong to and are now vested in me under or by virtue of the conveyance thereof from my father*

### **Conclusion**

Man's Rents were but one small part of the history of Bromley St Leonard. Many similar studies could be carried out on a neglected area of research. As a study into the social history of the area considerably more could be found out about the inhabitants of Man's Rents, what they did and how often they moved. Did the inhabitants see themselves as a community, or were they mainly transient? How many were born locally? Did they marry within the local families, or more widely? Of particular relevance to this study is where they went after the redevelopment of Man's Rents: they needed to be rehoused, or more likely they had to find new homes for themselves. I could illustrate all of these questions with examples, but I have not attempted a comprehensive reconstruction of family groups and their movements.

**Robert Barber**

[rwbarber@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:rwbarber@tiscali.co.uk)

### **Acknowledgments**

My thanks for help and advice to Malcolm Barr-Hamilton and the staff at Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives (THLHLA), to Philip Memick of the East London History Society and to Mike Elliston

for his encyclopaedic knowledge of the topography of Tower Hamlets.

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**Footnote**

A version of this article with a fuller set of source citations can be supplied as well as more information on the Man family. William Man III in particular has proved on investigation to be an interesting character, and I hope to publish a brief biography of him.

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**Former Jewish Maternity Hospital or Mother Levy's Maternity Home.**

**Tom Ridge writes:**

I am writing to as many organisations and individuals as possible so that we can all write to the Chief Executive of Peabody asking for some of the above buildings to be retained and

adapted for residential use.

Peabody purchased the buildings from Tower Hamlets Council earlier this year and I understand it intends to demolish all the buildings for a new residential development at 22-28 Underwood Road.

**As JMH was the only Jewish Maternity Hospital in England and represents the pioneering achievements of Alice Model MBE, it seems to me that the buildings facing onto Underwood Road should be retained and adapted for residential use. And the buildings at the back replaced by blocks of flats to achieve the required number of residential units.**

Because English Heritage's refusal to list these buildings will be used by Peabody as a justification for demolition, it is very important that in writing to the Chief Executive you emphasise the historic significance of the buildings,-----.

Please write to:-

Stephen Howlett  
Chief Executive  
Peabody  
45 Westminster Bridge Road  
London SE1 7JB  
or email: [stephen.howlett@peabody.org.uk](mailto:stephen.howlett@peabody.org.uk)

Rosemary said on hearing about this from me:

Your news has shocked and saddened me - so many peoples' memories are going to be swept away with the rubble from the demolition - until it can be halted! " I am sure many of you will agree.

Lack of space prevents us from publishing Tom's historical evidence sent in support of his EH application, but it can be found on the internet at <http://residents-first.co.uk/?p=760>.

**Philip**