



---

# NEWSLETTER

---

Volume 4 Issue 10

Spring/Summer 2018



## MALCOLM IS LEAVING

### CONTENTS

Editorial Page	2	Ken Long No Longer Stalls out at Chrisp St.	15
Cover Picture	2	The Pig Club in Bow	18
Programme Information 2018	3	A Bell from South Hallsville School?	19
What's On	3	London History Day 2018 Historic England	19
Gunmakers and Gunpowder in the East End	4	History Enquiries	20
Book Shelf (including Booth Notebooks)	7		

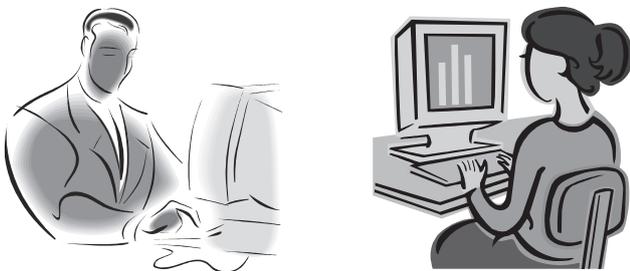
## Editorial Note:

Philip Mernick, Chairman, Doreen Kendall, Secretary, Harold Mernick, Membership, David Behr, Programme, Diane Kendall, Sigrid Werner and Rosemary Taylor.

All queries regarding membership should be addressed to Harold Mernick, 42 Campbell Road, Bow, London E3 4DT.

Enquiries to Doreen Kendall, 20 Puteaux House, Cranbrook Estate, Bethnal Green, London E2 0RF, Tel: 0208 981 7680, or Philip Mernick, email: [phil@mernicks.com](mailto:phil@mernicks.com). Check out the History Society's website at [www.eastlondonhistory.org.uk](http://www.eastlondonhistory.org.uk).

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



**GDPR** (General Data Protection Regulation). Most of you will have heard of this, it is a new European protocol for data protection. We have to hold some information on members to enable us to send out Newsletters and keep track of subscriptions. We hold name & address and also email and phone details if supplied. If you don't want us to hold some/all of this information, please let us know. Under GDPR we have also had to create a privacy statement which can be found on our web site at <http://www.mernick.org.uk/elhs/ELHS.htm>

## The Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park

The Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park are always seeking to augment their store of information on the burials in the cemetery, and any history related to the area.

If you have information or memorabilia you would like to share or allow the FTHCP to copy, please contact [friendsthcp@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:friendsthcp@yahoo.co.uk) or contact Diane Kendall c/o The Soanes Centre Southern Grove London E3 4PX.

Join Doreen and Diane Kendall and assist in recording monumental inscriptions in Tower Hamlets Cemetery on the second Sunday of each month, from 2-4 pm.

All volunteers welcome.

## Cover Picture

**East London History Society  
Lecture Programme 2018**

**Our 2017-18 programme has now finished but we have a number of ideas for the 2018-19 programme which will start in September**

Potential subjects are:

Discovering Stratford Village  
Lower Clapton  
St. Katherines Foundation  
Tate Institute in Silvertown  
Gentle Author & Adam Dant Maps  
Christian Dorley Brown  
David Granwick's, Stepney in colour

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 Mernick with your comments and suggestions. **Email:** [phil@mernicks.com](mailto:phil@mernicks.com)

**New exhibition at Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives, Bancroft Road. The Women's Hall**

The very successful exhibition Stepney in Colour based on David Granick's colour slides has now finished and they are now setting up their next one. The Women's Hall will run from May 30th to October 20th and will tell the story of The Women's Hall, located at 400 Old Ford Road in Bow and home of the East London Federation of the Suffragettes (ELFS) from 1914 to 1924.

Enquiry recently received.

Dear ELHS,

I am researching a woman who was born in Beaumont Square in 1868 and am trying to work out where she might have been educated. She was the only daughter of a customs officer and I get the impression that she would not have attended a local board school. She might have gone to a girls private school for instance. After she left school she claims she came into contact with Henrietta Barnett who was a great influence on her and so she might at that point have had something to do with Toynbee Hall or one of the other settlements. By 1881 I believe the family had moved to Amherst Rd.

The man she married, also the son of a customs officer, grew up in Stepney Green. He went to Oxford University and became a church of England vicar.

I am wondering if any of your members might have a particular interest in education, or indeed the possible social life of their families, and might be able to suggest possible schools in the area.

The woman was Sarah Francis Annabel Hall, after her marriage known as Annabel Dott and she became an architect (self taught) with a number of projects in several parts of the country as she followed her husband from living to living.

I am also in touch with Tower Hamlets Local History Library but thought that members of local history societies often have some really detailed knowledge about the local area.

Thank you, Lynne Dixon 02/05/2018

**Turks Head Trust Wapping Summer Shindig, Saturday July 7 12-7pm**

Our annual summer festival on Wapping Green with singing and dancing and eating. Stalls are available, so please get in touch if you are interested. We will be publishing the full programme by the end of May

## Gun Makers and Gunpowder in the East End, Derek Morris

John Causer's article Gun Makers of the East End,<sup>1</sup> provided a useful summary of some aspects of a complex industry that was important in Whitechapel and adjoining parishes for over three centuries and where local families developed the many skills that made them famous and recognized by royalty. This article concentrates on gunmakers in the eighteenth century and the problems caused by storing gunpowder in local warehouses.<sup>2</sup>

*The reason that gun making developed in the area was that the King's armourers were based in the Tower of London, and it was here that the Office of Ordnance was based. This was the government office responsible for the supply of weapons to the Army, using a wide number of contractors and sub-contractors. In the 1550s this important market attracted Dutch gunmakers to settle in St Katherine's and East Smithfield. In 1562-63 the Office began a period of re-organisation and expansion, when it took over buildings near the Minories for use as additional magazines, store houses and workshops.*

The industry grew over the centuries and by the middle of the eighteenth century there were hundreds of gun makers in this area of London, and many local tradesmen became Masters of the Gunmakers' Company including:<sup>3</sup>

	Henry Bleamire	1686
	Charles Kipling	1709
	Richard Loder	1714
	John Hawkins (2)	1711,
1722		
	Thomas Phillips	1731
	John Hawkins (4)	1734,
1745		
	George Halfhide	1736
	William Wilson (1)	1760-
1774		
	Richard Wright	1783
	Joseph Loader	1784

	Robert Barnett (2)	1785
	John Pratt	1787,
1791		
	William Wilson (2)	1794,
		1796, 1817, 1830
	Charles Chambers	1798
	Samuel Pritchett	1800,
1812		
	Henry Nock	1802

The trade continued to grow during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and by 1851 over fifty per cent of gunsmiths in London were in the three parishes of St-George-in-the-East, Stepney and Whitechapel. A total of 547 out of 1048, and other tradesmen were to be found throughout the eastern suburbs. For the most part these were small enterprises with workshops and storehouses and with a great deal of 'out-sourcing' and sub-contracting of specialist skills, such as gun-stock cleaners, gun makers, gun lock makers, gun barrel borers, gunpowder flash makers, gun engravers, gun case makers, and setting-up contractors. Some of the local firms did manage to grow and John Hirst employed thirty-four workers in 1755. Women were also to be found in the gun making trades and Mary Payne, a gun ramrod manufacturer, was living in Whitechapel area between 1832 and 1841.

The famous gun maker, John Purdey, was born in Whitechapel in 1784, and christened at St. Mary's. His sister Martha had married a well-known gun maker Thomas Keck Hutchinson and the young Purdey was apprenticed to him in 1798, and worked at various workshops around Moorfields, the Minories and Southwark. When Purdey completed his apprenticeship in 1805 he went to work with the great English gun maker Joseph Manton, who had his shop and workshop at 314-315 Oxford Street. Some nine years later Purdey opened his own shop off Leicester Square and was known for his single and double flint lock guns. The company developed throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and continues to the present day.<sup>4</sup>

One of the leading local families of gun makers was that founded by Henry Nock, whose workshop was in Castle Alley, Whitechapel in 1779, with factories in Moses and Aaron Alley, at 27 Goulston Street, and at 9 Castle Alley. His brother Richard was a gunsmith at 15 Fieldgate Street, MEOT, from 1793 until his death in 1800.

The royal family always showed a great interest in their guns and several of their suppliers were men from the Whitechapel area. Samuel Nock, nephew of Henry, became Gun Maker in Ordinary to George III, George IV, William IV and Queen Victoria. George Mellor of Greyhound Lane, Whitechapel, made a shotgun for the Prince of Wales in 1789 and Ezekial Bailey, a gun maker who lived in Little Alie Street 1791-1804, became Gun Maker in Ordinary to George IV, and had worked with Henry Nock.



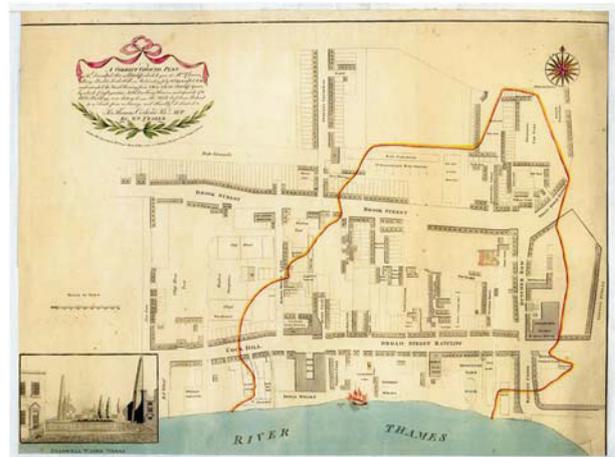
There was a strong demand for guns from the Hudson Bay Company and the East India Company and many of the tradesmen in St-George-in-the-East and the adjoining hamlets worked for these important companies. John Hawkins (2) was proof master to the HBC, 1717-1721, and Alexander McCorest was an armourer at Fort York on Hudson Bay in 1779, while William Horton, a gun maker from Mile End New Town had sailed on the East India ship the *Pigot*.

Amongst the wealthy gun makers was James Waller, who lived in Mansel Street for he left £4000 of stock to his nephews Richard and Thomas Waller. He also left £4000 of stock and all his household goods, plate and furniture to his housekeeper Mrs. Jane Ward, who lived with him. Richard Waller also lived in Mansel Street and in 1768 rented a house at

£28 and his personnel estate was valued at £100.<sup>5</sup>

*Of intermediate wealth James Reynolds of Little Prescot Street who had just £600 of Bank of England 3% stock to leave to his wife. Less well off was William Pursell, a gun maker in Glass House Yard, Goodman's Yard, who ensured that each of his daughters inherited "one feather bed and a bolster".<sup>6</sup>*

It is possible to trace many links between gun making families through their wills. So the executors of Thomas Sherwood were Michael Memory, gun maker at 50 Prescot Street, and William Brooks, Tower Hill. Similarly, William Debenham selected as his executor William Brooks, of George Street, a gun maker.<sup>7</sup> In the will of Joseph Knock he refers to his brother Henry Knock of Ludgate Hill, gun maker, and Joseph Knock was in turn witness to the will of William King at the Tower of London.<sup>8</sup> Within families there was some continuity from one generation to another but perhaps Joseph Green was more optimistic than most when he hoped that his wife and son Samuel Green would continue the business "in full reliance that perfect harmony will subsist between them".<sup>9</sup>



Stan Cook's on-line comprehensive index to gunmakers and allied trades, from the earliest times to 1902, and the Survey of London's current study of Whitechapel, particularly its ground-breaking on-line interactive map, are essential resources for studies of this topic. We now need detailed studies of the lesser-known East London gunmakers.<sup>10</sup>

## ***Gun Powder and Fire***

***In January 1692 the House of Commons received a petition from the inhabitants of Wapping drawing their attention to the large quantities of gunpowder stored in the area by private individuals, which read:<sup>11</sup>***

*That of late, divers Storehouses, wherein are constantly kept great Quantities of Powder, have been erected within the Hamlets, and not far from the Tower of London, for the use of private Persons dealing in Powder; among which, should any one blow up (being so near each other), would occasion the Blowing-up of the rest; and thereby not only endanger the said Tower, but many Hundreds of Houses, besides the Death of many hundred People: And praying, That, for the Prevention of such Dangers, as may arise from the Continuance of such Powder-houses, where they are erected, a Clause may be inserted in any Bill for their Security, as to the House should seem meet.*

Another petition in 1718 stated that 7154 barrels of gunpowder were stored in twenty-two warehouses in Wapping, and there was also a problem with barges laden with 300 or 400 barrels of gunpowder unloading at the wharves, while the bargemen walked round with *lighted pipes*. In 1740 in St George-in-the-East Thomas Sanders and Gardner were paying rent on five *Powder Houses* and later in 1755 William Taylor was described as a gunpowder maker in Wapping in spite of the built-up nature of the area.

The EIC saltpetre warehouses were built in Ratcliff in 1755, deliberately sited well away from the City because of the inflammable nature of the crystals which were used as the chief constituent of gunpowder. The Ratcliff warehouses were destroyed by fire in 1794 as was the naval store warehouse leased by the EIC at Stone Stairs, Ratcliff. 'Both properties were rebuilt in 1795-6 with the EIC taking the opportunity to buy the copyhold of the naval

store and to enlarge the saltpetre warehouse and construct an adjoining embankment on the Thames. 'In 1835 the EIC divested itself of a substantial amount of commercial property ... including Hayden Square, ... the naval store warehouse at Ratcliff and the spice warehouses at Blackwall. The Ratcliff saltpetre warehouses were sold in 1837 but two of the Company saltpetre warehouses still stand at Ratcliff as part of the Free Trade Wharf complex.<sup>12</sup>

On the 13 July 1794 a severe fire broke out at David Cloves' wharf, Cock Hill, Ratcliff. It consumed more houses than any fire since the Great Fire of London. It was started by the boiling over of a pitch kettle on the shore, the flames spread to a barge laden with saltpetre and other government stores, and several other nearby barges and vessels were set alight. The blowing up of the saltpetre barge caused flakes of fire to fall on the warehouses of the East India Company, which were destroyed. The flames continued to the houses, on both sides of the High Street and nearby streets, spreading to the ships and craft on the river. At Whiting's wharf, sugar to the value of £40,000 was destroyed.<sup>13</sup>

Out of 1200 houses in the hamlet only 570 were saved; the distress among the poor inhabitants was very great, and the disaster resulted in a wide range of support quickly becoming available. St Dunstan, Stepney, was opened for their reception, but upwards of 1000 persons were in the fields all night. The government quickly supplied tents and waggons for the lodging of the homeless. Large public subscriptions for their relief were made, which ultimately amounted to £16,000, the East India Company subscribing £250. Subsequently, the land tax registers reveal that many of the tenants affected by the fire became 'exempt' when they established themselves elsewhere in the area.<sup>14</sup>

**Derek Morris**

## **References**

1. ELHS *Newsletter*, vol. 4, issue 09, Winter 2017
2. D. Morris and Ken Cozens, *Wapping 1600-1800, A social history of an Early Modern London Maritime Suburb*, 2009, pp. 137-139, The East London History Society; J. Kelly, *Gunpowder: A history of the explosive that changed the world*, 2004
3. Guildhall, Gunmakers' Company, Masters and wardens lists, Ms 5226/2-6; H. L. Blackmore, *A Dictionary of London Gunmakers, 1350-1850*, 1986; H. L. Blackmore, *A Dictionary of London Gunmakers, Supplement, 1350-1850*, 1999
4. R. Beaumont, *Purdey's: The guns and their makers*, 1984; <https://www.purdey.com>
5. TNA PROB 11/1076, 27 March 1781, James Waller
6. TNE PROB 11/1249, 11 September 1794, James Reynolds; TNA PROB 11/1118, 10 June 1784, William Pursell
7. LMA, Ms 11936, vol. 397, 628687, 1794, Sun Fire Office; TNA PROB 11/1043, 26 June 1768, Thomas Sherwood
8. TNA PROB 11/1189, 10 March 1790, Joseph Knock
9. TNA PROB 11/1347, 4 September 1800, Joseph Green
10. <http://www.genuki.org.uk/big/Gunmakers>; <https://surveyoflondon.org>; P. Guillery, *The Survey of London in Whitechapel, Newsletter*, London Topographical Society, 83, November 2016
11. D. Morris and K. Cozens, *Wapping 1600-1800, A social history of an Early Modern London Maritime Suburb*, 2009, pp. 137-139
12. M. Makepeace, *The East India Company's London Workers: Management of the Warehouse Labourers, 1800-1858*, 2010; D. Morris and K. Cozens, *London's Sailortown, 1600-1800: Shadwell and Ratcliff, a social history*, 2014, pp 109-110
13. J. Marriott, *Beyond the Tower: A History of East London*, 2011, pp. 58-59
14. H. Humpherus, *History of the origin and progress of the Company of watermen and lightermen*, 1981, vol. 2, p. 401; D. Morris and K. Cozens, *London's Sailortown, 1600-1800: Shadwell and Ratcliff, a social history*, 2014, p. 150

## Book Shelf

The East London History Society is responsible for the publication of a book this month (May 2018) which describes how people in East London - from Whitechapel to the Isle of Dogs via Hackney to Stoke Newington - lived in the late 19th Century. Not very well by the river. Much better further north.

Jess Steele, when she was doing post graduate work at the London School of Economics in the early 90s, came across notebooks written by George Duckworth, secretary to Charles Booth, a rich businessman with a social conscience, who organised a poverty survey of the whole of the capital city.

This was done by men on foot, each accompanied by a police officer whose role was to protect them from rough people and provide very useful local information. Their work was then converted by Booth into a 17 volume study "Life and Labour of the People in London" published between 1889 and 1903.

All the work in East London was done by Duckworth who was the half-brother of Virginia Woolf and who ended up a knight. Jess typed out all the notes relating to South East London where she lived and in 1997 published "The Streets of London – The Booth Notebooks – South East". In the Editors Preface she promised, rather boldly, to publish another seven volumes, covering the whole of London. It was always intended to do East London next. Jess and her colleagues had typed out all the Duckworth notes for the area and she, her father Mike Steele, and two others were directors of Deptford Forum Publishing Ltd which had published the SE book.

They had the editorial material but no money to print the book so the project went into abeyance until a meeting between Mike and Phil Mernick in 2015.

Mike sells books including Booth SE at Greenwich Market on Saturdays. Phil, paying a visit across the river, called at his stall bought the SE book and said ELHS might be interested in paying for the printing of Booth East. That was eventually agreed.

Mike had a limited editorial role with Booth SE but is joint editor with Jess of Booth East, copies of which are expected to be available at the ELHS meeting on May 17.

The book reprints all the notes made by George Duckworth about his 68 East London walks in 1897-98. In the two following years he shared 81 walks in SE London with two fellow researchers.

Duckworth was struck by the comparatively new, and in 1897 growing, presence of Jews in East London. He had an ambivalent attitude to them and expressed himself in a

way that would be quite unacceptable to readers of the Guardian and no doubt other publications today. Mike has an article in Booth East about this. The book also contains a revised version of a long introduction to Booth SE by the late David Englander and his wife Rosemary O'Day who were directors of the Charles Booth Centre at the Open University. They write about Booth and his work.

Duckworth walked in Whitechapel, Wapping and Limehouse, Bow, Bethnal Green, Hoxton, Haggerston and Dalston. He also had 12 of his walks in Hackney, Homerton and Stoke Newington. There he found and describes a rather different scene from the grinding poverty and criminality of the areas by the river.

Here are extracts from two walks:

George H. Duckworth. WHITECHAPEL

### **Booth 350 Walk 9**

Walk with Inspector H. Drew 25 January 1898

bounded N by the Whitechapel Road, E by Bedford Street, (see note above) S by Commercial Road East and W by New Road; being part of the parishes of St Philip and St Mary. Starting at Nelson Street.

Very poor Jews, 2 st., hoby curtain, paper litter, straw in street, doors open. LIGHT BLUE, on map PINK, but worse now.

Cameron Place on the north side marked on map LIGHT BLUE, is respectable. 2 st., 11 houses, only on west side of street, trees between wall of the back of Bedford Street and the paring in Cameron Place. Should be PURPLE. "Decidedly better than Nelson Street."

Into Varden Street. Poor Jews. 2 st. houses, well-built 1820-1830's type. The road between Turner Street and Bedford Street is poorer than the bit between, Turner Street and New Road as LIGHT BLUE to PURPLE.

Then S down Gray Street, west side poorer than east through at bottom. House on east side is a family of Italian ice-cream makers.

W into Philpot Road. A very broad road with the Land Hospital at the north end. PINK as map, some parts better. Hospital nurses in house at corner of Oxford Street, northeast end. Midway Medical Mission on east side, large buildings, several poor Jewesses sitting on steps outside with sick children, waiting for it to open. "Medicine given them with a prayer, only the very poorest go, don't think any are really converted" said Drew. North end of Philpot Street, part of Varden Street, is quite PINK-barred in character.

W into Rutland Street. 2 st, PURPLE rather than the PINK of the map, "rather better than Bedford Street". Several Jews.

N into Newark Street, late New Street, more Jews, PURPLE rather than PINK. The large red-brick church of St Philip is here. "Built by the present rector at a cost of £40,000, but as the parish becomes more Jewish, is less necessary each year, has poor congregation" said Drew. Oxford Street, also PURPLE. Jews.

Into Turner Street. 2 1/2 st. Medical students living at north end. PINK as map. Much homework carried out in the houses. Tailoring. Jews.

N into Green and Mount Streets. Green Street PURPLE to LIGHT BLUE. Not PINK. Poor Jews. "Nearly as poor as Bedford Street." Mount Street, 3 st. and a cellar. "Probably 5 or 6 families in each house, many workrooms. PURPLE to PINK.

E Mount Street. 3 and 2 st. Less good, north of Raven Row. But PINK lower down as map.

Cotton Street behind it hardly looks as poor as LIGHT BLUE. Mixed class. Many Jews. Stables and workshops on the east side. The west end of Raven Row. To the north of it looks poor. LIGHT BLUE rather than PINK of map. Drew said "very poor". Goakleys

Buildings on the north side (apparently the servants alms houses marked in the map), built 1804. Inhabitants quiet, poor, children clean though pinafores and clothes rather ragged, all with good boots. 2 st. cottages. PURPLE to LIGHT BLUE. Not coloured on map.

The west end of Nelson Street, but Turners Road (means Turner St) and the New Road, is better than the east end. PINK to PURPLE, with the exception of the first house on the northeast side, which is dirty, poor and evil looking.

General remarks. Jews coming in already in most of the streets spoken above. In consequence great difficulty in distinguishing between streets that should be PURPLE and those that should be PINK. Drew said that the better streets had gone down in character in the last 10 years because of the Jewish influx but that none of them were rough. In the Jewish house with its greater crowding there is no china pot with an evergreen plant in the front window on a round table which in North London seemed to be the sure mark of a "pink" character. Again there is a greater visible dirt in a fairly well to do working class Jewish home than in an English one. As far as outward looks are concerned, nearly all the streets belonged to the "purple" category.

No complaints Drew said as to people sleeping in the streets. Jews here are not so poor as those that crowd into the inner circle of Whitechapel. All children seen looked well-fed and were well-booted.

As to warning publicans not to serve men on the verge of drunkenness, Drew said magistrates now thought it was the police's duty as much to prevent as to detect crime, therefore they had to warn publicans. But he admitted it was a counsel of perfection and in practise was not often carried out.

### **Booth 351 Walk 10**

A Walk with Sergeant French, 22 March 1898

Bounded N by Bethnal Green Road and Church Street, E by Vallance Road (late

Whites Row and Nottingham Street), S by Buxton Street and W by Shoreditch; being part of the parishes of Trinity Shoreditch, St Stephen's Spitalfields, St Matthias' Bethnal Green, St Matthew's Bethnal Green and St Philip's Bethnal Green.

Starting at W end of Sclater Street.

Walk with Sergeant French round district bounded on the north by Bethnal Green Road and Church Street, on the east by Vallance Road (late Whites Row and Nottingham Street), on the south by Buxton Street and on the west by Shoreditch; being part of the parishes of Trinity Shoreditch, St Stephen's Spitalfields, St Matthias' Bethnal Green, St Matthew's Bethnal Green and St Philip's Bethnal Green.

Starting at the west (east end surely, MMS) end of Sclater Street. DARK BLUE in map and still DARK BLUE. Known in the locality as Club Row. 3 and 4 st houses, shops underneath, centre for bird fanciers, larks, thrushes, canaries, parrots, rabbits, etc, in cages. Small square cages wrapped up in pocket handkerchief, outside windows "for new birds to pick up the right note from their fellows". Long weavers windows in top st.; no weavers now, nor prostitutes, simply rough class. "All thieves or receivers of stolen goods. They go out 'dipping' on Sunday morning what we call larceny from the person", said French. At the corner of Brick Lane an elaborate stone shield in a red brick niche. "This is Sclater St". 1778. South into St John Street (late King Street), not coloured on map. 3 st, rough. Broken patched windows, Jews beginning to come in. Their first step into an otherwise typically rough English district, said French. It was almost possible to tell where the Jews were by the houses which had unbroken windows. LIGHT BLUE to DARK BLUE. Better at the corner turning into Sclater Street. LIGHT BLUE to PURPLE, houses on the west side only. E along Hare Street, DARK BLUE as map. Some Jews, shops underneath, the rest rough, thieves.

S down 3 Colt Corner. BLACK in map, now DARK BLUE on west side only. The E side in a factory, it leads to a bridge across the Great Eastern Railway main line. To Pedley street, out of which on the south side is Brably Street. 2 st, rather rough, poor, drunken, some Irish, but not so notoriously bad as Sclater Street or Busby Street. In map LIGHT BLUE, now LIGHT BLUE to DARK BLUE.

E along Pedley Street. French knew no reason for the BLACK at the east corner, it looks like the rest, poor, rough, LIGHT BLUE to DARK BLUE. Into Weaver Street. 2 st, narrow, only 15 ft between house and house, some Jews, others thieves. Poor. "Not so good as Underwood Street, a drift class \*\*\*\*\* altogether" said French. Underwood Street is marked LIGHT BLUE in map. The west end past Fleet Street is better than the rest and PURPLE as map, the rest being LIGHT BLUE to DARK BLUE. Fleet Street. LIGHT BLUE to DARK BLUE, on map LIGHT BLUE. 2 st, a child here with only one shoe, all children very dirty.

N up New Church Street, which looks rather better but French said was the same as Weaver Street. Into Pedley Street, some thieves and prostitutes from Boundary Street area, cab yard. LIGHT BLUE to DARK BLUE. On the south side going west is Eckersley Street, a paved 2 st passage. Jews, broken and patched windows. Run right through into Buxton Street, LIGHT BLUE to DARK BLUE, in map LIGHT BLUE.

Colhers' Court. West of it stops short, does not run through as map. 2 st, 4 roomed houses, letting for 12/- a week, messy, LIGHT BLUE to DARK BLUE.

S down Code Street. 6 new 3 st houses on west side. Jews, LIGHT BLUE to PURPLE, in map DARK BLUE. At the east side of the road is Whites Court. 8, 2 st houses, with weavers windows, looks poorer but is of the same class as Pedly Street. Very messy, tap in court. DARK BLUE as map. Butlers' Buildings S of it, about 13, 2 st houses, Jews, children ragged but well-fed. Shoe makers,

LIGHT BLUE to DARK BLUE, messy.  
 LIGHT BLUE to DARK BLUE, in map  
 BLACK.

W along Buxton Street. Rough. Across Brick Lane, on the north side is Sheba Street, late Queen Street. 4 st, Davis' Buildings, poor Jews. LIGHT BLUE to PURPLE. The west side of Sheba Street to the east side of Wilkes Street (late Hope Street) are buildings put up by the Great Eastern Railway in which some of their employees live. PURPLE as map on east side, LIGHT BLUE to DARK BLUE on west side. 3 st houses, broken windows, rough. W to the end of Grey Eagle Street 1 house on the west side, on the east side 3 st, poor Jews, costers. LIGHT BLUE, furniture factory on west side. Just here Quaker Street on the north side is rough. DARK BLUE in map. PURPLE.

E along Buxton Street to Vallance Road (late Bakers Row), N to Selby Street. Broader street, more air, working English labourers, houses 2 st, 4 rooms, 12/- per week. Doors open, bare armed women at doors, a few but very few windows broken and patched. PURPLE to LIGHT BLUE, in map PURPLE, macadam road instead of the usual cobbles. Like it are Anglesey, Clarence and Artillery Streets and Nottingham Street, now called Vallance Road. All PURPLE to LIGHT BLUE, a few thieves, no prostitutes.

N up Vallance Road into Winchester Street. 2 and 3 st. small shops, Great Eastern Railway building on south side. LIGHT BLUE to PURPLE as map, on the north side, not marked or coloured, is a small court. DARK BLUE on west side and LIGHT BLUE on east, rough. On the south side is Carlisle Street, a short street ending in the railway. No way through, G.E.R. stables on east side, 2 st houses on west side, PURPLE as map. The court west of it in map DARK BLUE, also been swallowed up by G.E.R. stables. This court still exists, entered through wooden lattice gate. 8 houses (4 each side). LIGHT BLUE to DARK BLUE, in map DARK BLUE.

W along Hare Street, DARK BLUE as map, by French's account, tho' it looks better. On the south side is Hare Marsh. Houses on the west side only, LIGHT BLUE rather than DARK BLUE of map.

N up Church Row. 2 1/2 and 3 st. PURPLE to LIGHT BLUE. On map PURPLE on south end. W into Wood Row. PURPLE as map, S down. Wood Street. 2, 3, and 4 st., doors open, windows dirty, broken, PURPLE to LIGHT BLUE. On map PURPLE.

E past the south end of Hereford Street, a court just on the north side not marked in map. Just E of Hereford Street called Hereford Buildings. 2 st, poor, weavers windows, ragged children, 2 st., LIGHT BLUE.

N up Hereford Street. The south end of which is LIGHT BLUE rather than PURPLE of map. North end better, PURPLE, doors open, built 1844. E to Sale Street, 2 st, not better than PURPLE, in map PINK. "All these streets are rather poor and a bit rough, some queer customers in all of them" said French. On the south side is Ramsey Street. 3 st, messy, PURPLE in map, PINK.

N up Tavistock Street into Derbyshire Street. 2 st, poor, in map LIGHT BLUE, worse east side than west, broken, patched windows. DARK BLUE east side, LIGHT BLUE west. Into Derbyshire Street, PURPLE as map. 3 and 2 st.. S down Abbey Street. 2 st, mess, LIGHT BLUE between Derbyshire and Sale Street on the east side. Very poor looking this bit, the rest PURPLE not PINK.

E to Vallance Road, late Whites Row. 2 st, PURPLE rather than PINK of map. N into Bethnal Green Road, on the west side is Granby Row. Marked BLACK in map, new houses, dwelling houses at east end west ends only, stables in middle and all along south side. Poor, not worse than LIGHT BLUE.

W along Busby Street, into the DARK BLUE patch shown in map. No part of the triangle. Formed by Bethnal Green Road on the north, Fullers Road on the east, Celater (Sclater

presumably MMS) Street on the south, is now PURPLE. All a rough class of costers, thieves, prostitutes. Bird fanciers mixed with here and there a chair or cabinet factory. All a sporting set of men "who bear no ill-will to the police as long as we take them fairly." Streets look very rough, no Jews, yet much life in the street, several boys boxing with gloves on, only a few onlookers. The triangle lives together as a happy family. When any of them gets into trouble there is at once a whip around for money for bail or defence and it is always forecoming. A great part of the Old Boundary Street has come here but has not been bettered by its move in the same way as those in the Dellow Street area. Most of it was DARK BLUE before. Now it is all DARK BLUE with some additional BLACK. Children all looked sturdy ruffians, well-fed.

Fuller Street as map, PURPLE to the north and BLACK on either side at the south end where are very rough buildings ("3 rooms 7/6"). Busby Street rough, criminal, the DARK BLUE should have a line of BLACK. Kerbela Street, late Edward Street, DARK BLUE, in map PURPLE. 3 st. Out of the southwest end is a court called Edwards Place. Not in map, very poor, very rough, like Dorset Street. 5, 3 st houses, BLACK.

N up Kerbela Street, W along Granby Street. 3 and 2 st, houses look better at northwest end but French gave them all the same character. S down Granby Court. 2 st, houses on the east side only. Weavers windows, DARK BLUE as map. Opposite the south end of it are two courts, Busby Square. 2 st, vicious, children all clean and with good boots, windows broken. DARK BLUE to BLACK, BLACK in map. Byders Buildings. 4, 2 st houses, DARK BLUE, in map BLACK. Into Bacon Street. 3 st and 4 st buildings. Thieves, prostitutes, mess, ragged children, between Chilton Street and Brick Lane, Bacon Street may be fairly coloured BLACK, in map DARK BLUE. Into Chilton Street. No part worse than the other, all DARK BLUE. 3 and 4 st houses, the BLACK between Busby Street and Bacon Street on the east side has disappeared.

S into Hare Street and west just before coming to Brick Lane is a small unnamed court of 5, 3 st houses. Rough, vicious, BLACK, not in map. Across Brick Lane. A very busy market here. Shops with stalls in front, strings of shoes and clothes over poles sticking out from shop walls. Across sidewalk, as in pictures of old London, much life and good humour. S under the railway bridge are more shops and restaurants, in one on the west side took place the Brick Lane tragedy of which French has charge. W along Sclater Street, N up Cygnet Street, late known Swan Street, a great market for goats on Sunday.

W across Bethnal Green Road and down Church Street. 4 st, PINK in map, now DARK BLUE and BLACK. Some shops, thieves, prostitutes, "inhabitants from Old Nichols Street have come here". S down Club Row, which gives its name to the whole of Sclater Street locally, W into York Row. No dwelling houses till west of Chance Street, then all BLACK. Thieves, etc, rough looking, in map PURPLE. N up Chance Row, also BLACK, at the corner of which and York Row on the east side is a public house, The Blue Anchor. "The most noted thieves' resort in London", "we could but we do not often betake them there". Every Sunday they congregate here from all parts of London.

W along Church Road. "The shops on either side are receivers", French pointed out, especially a fish shop on the south side and a furniture shop on the north. At the corner of Ebor Street was a quiet sad looking man with a grey moustache, black bowler hat, brown coat, dark trousers, good boots, well-brushed and gentlemanly looking, "a well-known thieves' tutor".

Then S down Ebor Street, all thieves. 3 st, BLACK rather than the PURPLE of the map. There is no court now (PURPLE in map) between Ebor Street and Shoreditch on the south side of Church Road.

General Remarks. General worsenment noticeable, owing apparently to rough immigrants from Whitechapel and other parts

of Bethnal Green, especially the Boundry Street area.

The Sclater Street area is a remnant of Old London with outer Board School traditions and habits. French said the majority of them would not know how to write their own names. In this bit the change of locality has had no visible influence for the better on those who have moved. The men have not the wastrel good for nothing look of the loafers in Commercial Street and the women more of the flower-girl roughness, feathers, horseplay, etc, than the absolute vicious degradation of the Dorset Street inhabitant.

He again said that Publicans did not now offer either drinks or money to constables. "They do not like us enough."

**Mike Steele**

**Historic England: London's East End, Michael Foley, Amberley Publishing, 2017, ISBN 978-1-4456-7664-7, 96 pages, £14.99**

A familiar format from Amberley using images from the Archives of Historic England, known until 2015 as English Heritage. One or two images per page and a short piece of descriptive text. This book has chapters from Tower Hamlets in the west to Havering in the east and has a high percentage of proper photographs rather than the reproduced post cards found in most similar books. These are well printed and contain much fine detail. When I first read the book I rather took against the book and pointed out to the publisher a few points that peevd me, such as including Southwark in the East End and misdescribing an image of Canning Town as Limehouse. However, I have got over it now!

**Historic England: City of London, Michael Foley, Amberley Publishing, 2018, ISBN 978-1-4456-7732-3, 96 pages, £14.99**

The latest book from Amberley using images from the archives of Historic England. A similar format as the previous book but with many more colour images. Here chapters are thematic rather than geographical. Churches,

public buildings, trade & commerce, markets, River Thames, parks & open spaces, the blitz. According to Mike Elliston's (unpublished) Topography of Tower Hamlets, the City of London boundary originally ran down the middle of Middlesex Street (Petticoat Lane) but road widening now places it on the west side of the road, so they may be land grabbing by including their first few markets images! Nice pictures anyway. The churches look a bit samey but the blitz images really illustrate how damaged the City was.

Philip Mernick

## **The Wedding Girls**

**Kate Thompson**

I was brought up living just off the Roman Road and usually reserve fiction books for holidays but when asked to review Kate Thompson's book 'The Wedding Girls' based on the lives of childhood friends who live in and around Green Street (now Roman Road) just before the Second World War I couldn't resist.

Published on the 9<sup>th</sup> March 2017 by Pan Macmillan, 'The Wedding Girls' is a well-researched book and the long list of acknowledgements many to names known to the East London History Society is testament to the amount of research that has gone into this book. It is quite easy to recognise local characters like Clara Grant and the streets and markets that still exist today. The characters stories and tales of the community spirit are familiar to those I know from my own family history even to the fond memories of my Grandmothers cross over pinny.

The story revolves around 3 likeable teenage girls Stella and Winnie who work in a photographer's studio & Kitty who works for a dressmaker. All are involved in the wedding business and while far removed from the lavish weddings that are the norm nowadays they make every effort to ensure every bride's dream of a perfect wedding day comes true. Along the way we learn about the history of wedding dresses, the beginnings of wedding

photography and how wedding traditions have evolved.

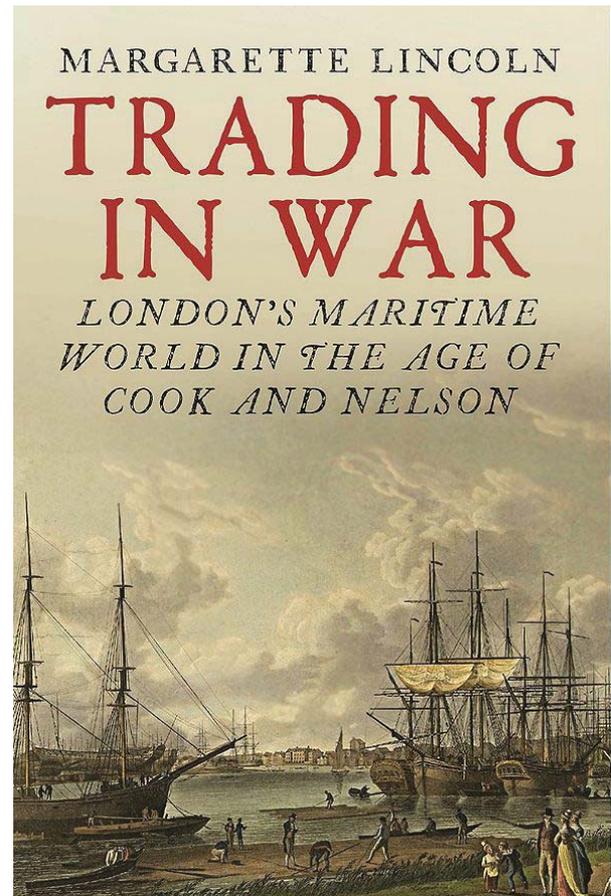
However, it is not solely a rosy romantic read as the book covers often in graphic detail the trauma and hardships faced after the First World War, including the rise of fascism with references to Oswald Mosley, his 'Blackshirts' and the Battle of Cable Street, the prospect of another war on the horizon, and the hopes and dreams of the girls as they struggle to do something with their lives and their desires to make a difference. The descriptions of the housing conditions, unremitting poverty and no national health service remind us how fortunate we are today to be able to take so many things for granted.

Maybe it is because I'm over familiar with the locality in which this book is set that I found the repetition of subjects like community spirit a little artificial and there is the usual predictability of a historical romance. However, the stories from real life people and notes on wedding traditions many of which are now forgotten, at the end of the book were a nice surprise. Although I could recommend this book for the research alone I did enjoy reading this book and will be hunting out another of Kate Thompson's books the next time I'm looking for holiday reading.

Diane Kendall

***Trading in War: London's Maritime World in the Age of Cook and Nelson*** by Margarete Lincoln is published by Yale University Press, price £25.00, 304 pages. ISBN: 978 0 300 22748 2

Here is a vivid account of the forgotten citizens of maritime London who sustained Britain during the Revolutionary Wars. In the half-century before the Battle of Trafalgar the port of London became the commercial nexus of a global empire and launch pad of Britain's military campaigns in North America and Napoleonic Europe. The unruly riverside parishes east of the City of London



seethed with life, a crowded, cosmopolitan, and incendiary mix of sailors, soldiers, traders, and the network of ordinary citizens that served them. Harnessing little-known archival and archaeological sources, Dr Lincoln recovers a forgotten maritime world. Her gripping narrative highlights the pervasive impact of war, which brought violence, smuggling, pilfering from ships on the river, and a susceptibility to subversive political ideas. It also commemorates the working maritime community: shipwrights and those who built London's first docks, wives who coped while husbands were at sea, and early trade unions. This meticulously researched work reveals the lives of ordinary Londoners behind the unstoppable rise of Britain's sea power and its eventual defeat of Napoleon.

Publishers description

## Ken Long no longer stalls out at Chrisp Street

*Based on a blog in The Gentle Author's Spitalfields Life blog first published on March 30th 2018 and used with the permission of the Gentle Author and Ken Long.*



Ken Walton

For the past thirty years, Ken has been setting up in the dawn, after he has been to the wholesale market to buy fresh produce, wheeling out the old wooden barrows and arranging his stall in the traditional manner with the vegetables to the right and the fruit to the left. On his stall sit black and white photographs of those who preceded him, as a reminder of this long-standing family endeavour, which Ken has maintained through his daily ritual out of loving devotion to those who are dead and gone.

While we chatted, Ken popped across the square to place a few bets on the horses, just as he did every day, and our conversation was interrupted by long-standing customers coming to buy. Although Ken made a good living and his work kept him fit and wiry at sixty-one years old, I learnt from him that being a greengrocer is a way of life and a way of understanding the world, as much as it is a business – as much culture as it is commerce.

In 1951, they moved into the Lansbury Market (as it was then) on the newly-built Lansbury Estate and we've been here ever since. When Uncle Freddie passed away two weeks after his sixty-fifth birthday, my mum took over. By then, I was already working on the fruit stall. My dad, William Long, was a docker and he died when I was eight in 1965. He got killed in the docks.

In Chrisp St Market, Ken Long was the overseer of time passing and the custodian of history.

“It all stems back to before the Second World War when my great-grandmother, Ellen Walton – old granny Walton they used to call her – she had a greengrocer's shop in Violet Rd in the thirties. My great-grandfather was a merchant seaman and in those days you could bring anything home, and he brought my mum a monkey and they used to have the monkey swinging about in the shop.

When the shop got bombed during the War, they moved onto a stall in Chrisp St Market. Old granny Walton passed the business on to my grandmother, Nell Walton – her name is on my barrow – and from her it went to her son, Freddie Walton and his sister, my mum Joanie Long, worked on the stall fifty years.



Ellen Walton, known as 'Old Granny Walton'

He got killed in the docks.



Nell Walton and Uncle Freddie

In 1951, they moved into the Lansbury Market (as it was then) on the newly-built Lansbury Estate and we've been here ever since. When Uncle Freddie passed away two weeks after his sixty-fifth birthday, my mum took over. By then, I was already working on the fruit stall. My dad, William Long, was a docker and he died when I was eight in 1965. He got killed in the docks.

As a child I was up here all the time, I used to come up to my nan on a Saturday and I used to run around the market. I would stay with my nan on a Saturday night and my dad would come and pick me up on a Sunday morning and take me home.

Eventually, I took the stall over from my mum and the licence changed from my uncle into my name but - as far as I was concerned - as long as my mother worked here, she was in charge because I had to do what I was told. At first, I got involved with the vegetable end of the stall, which my aunt used to run with my uncle until she had to have her leg off and couldn't do it no more. My uncle was going to rent it out but I overheard my mum talking about it and I said, 'Don't rent it out to no stranger, keep it in the family. I'll try it for a couple of years and see how I go' - and the rest is history. I was thirty-one when I started and this year it will be thirty years that I have been here.



Ken's mother Joannie

When I started, my uncle let me have the vegetable end of the stall and work it for myself, and I gave him the rent to pay to the council. After about two years, he dropped down dead indoors so we shut the stall up for a week and I had to decide what I was going to do, and I decided to take it on. I had been up to the Spitalfields Market with uncle and seen what he bought and what he didn't buy. There were four of us working here then - me, my mum, my daughter and a girl. You needed at least three then, but now trade is not what it used to be, so I get by on my own.

For a while now, my stall has been the longest-established here in the market. We've been here every day, every week for as long as this market has existed. Traditionally, people bought their bread, their meat, and their fruit and veg for the weekend on a Friday. Everybody used to cook a roast dinner on a Sunday but there's not a lot of people that do that anymore. We had customers queueing up from half past six - seven o'clock in the morning and we'd have a queue at either end of the stall. They'd buy their vegetables at one end and pay for them, and then go up to the other end and queue up to buy their fruit. My mum would be serving here, I'd have a girl serving there and I'd be serving in the middle.

It was like that all the time, from seven in the morning until four in the afternoon. People who knew me would say, 'Ken, you know what I have.' Ten pounds of potatoes, a cabbage, a cauliflower, carrots, onions and parsnips - the whole lot for their roast dinner.

Now you get customers who come on a Saturday and ask for two pounds of potatoes, a carrot and a parsnip just to get them by. Working like I do is a dying trade, serving customers individually and weighing out fruit and veg. On the other stalls in this market and you'll see 'pound a bowl' and 'pound a bag' - everything is pre-packed. I am a traditional greengrocer and, although I can get everything all year round now, I know when the seasons are and I know when to buy, and there's times when I won't buy certain things because it ain't proper.

I know greengrocers who have worked in Roman Rd, Watney Market, Bethnal Green and Rathbone Market, packing up and nobody ever replaces them, whereas once upon a time it was family and people came in to the business, taking over from their mum or dad. That's not happening now.

You don't have to serve an apprenticeship, you just have to go the wholesale market with whoever you are going to take over from and you have to have some experience to know what you are selling. There's ten different oranges I can buy, but I know to buy seedless Spanish navels because they are best oranges. Elsewhere in this market, you can buy cheaper oranges and people think it's better value, but only because they do not understand what they are buying. The soft fruit I sell will ripen nicely, whereas much of the fruit you buy in a supermarket will not ripen until it rots because they select varieties to have a long shelf life.

You don't always buy with your eyes. Most of my regular customers know me and they say, 'They look lovely, what are they like?' and I'll say, 'Don't have them, have these.' I've been doing this long enough to know which people will trust me. I look after my loyal customers.

I enjoy it. I've earned a good living. It's been good to me and it's been good to all the family over the years.

Fifteen years ago, I said 'When I'm fifty-five, I want to be out.' That would have been after twenty-five years in the market. But I got to fifty-five and it was still a good living, but by

then all my family who worked the stall were dead and gone, and I couldn't walk away from it. I wouldn't walk away from a floating ship and it was still is a living to me, but the main reason I carried on was because my conscience told me I could not walk away from it. I could not pack it in because of all the people who came before me. If they saw me walk away for no reason at all, I could see my mum giving me dirty looks, I could see Freddie turning in his grave and I could see my nan. So, I thought, 'No, I've got to stick it out.'

In the last couple of years, they have been refurbishing the market and everything is coming down for redevelopment, so I am going now. I've got two sheds round the corner which I put these stalls in every night, they're coming down first before the work starts and that puts me out of a job. There's nothing I can do about it. I'm being pushed out but it suits me, I'm sixty-one this year. I have been trying to find reasons to go. They've offered me alternative accommodation but it won't be in the vicinity. It only takes me fifteen minutes to pull all these stalls round every morning at present. We've had these old barrows hired off Hiller Brothers since 1951 when we came into the market. I have always paid thirty-seven pounds sixty per month, it never goes up and they maintain them for me at no extra charge. I'm doing my own thing here. Since my mum's been gone, and my daughter's been gone and the girl's been gone, I did what I liked! As much as I was running the stall, doing the buying and sorting the money out, when they was here I was still 'the boy.' It was still - 'Ken, make us a cup of tea?' - 'Ken do this!' - 'Ken do that!' - 'Ken, go round the shed and get some orders' There was three women telling me what to do. It was lovely and I did it because I thought I was supposed to, so I didn't mind.

I have been serving people I have served for thirty years but I have had new customers come along too. I like the variety. I like being outside. I prefer the winter to the summer, because I don't want to be here in the summer I want to be somewhere else nice. The hot

weather doesn't help all this stuff, you have to be careful what you buy and how much you buy – it makes the job a little bit harder. In the winter, you can buy a little bit more because it will keep an extra day or two, and in the winter you sell an even amount of fruit and veg, whereas in the summer you don't sell a lot of veg because people don't eat so many hot dinners.

I enjoy the job but – if I am honest – nowadays if I had a shop, I'd be shut at one o'clock because that's when I start packing up, by two o'clock I am closing down and by three o'clock I am gone. I like getting away in the afternoon. I like getting up in the morning. I like going to the New Spitalfields Market. I like the buzz up the market, buying and running around. Things change all the time with the seasons, so you are always looking around for something different."

## **THE PIG CLUB IN BOW**

My brother John was 3 years older than me and at the appropriate time in 1940/41 was summoned to the Labour Exchange in Burdett Road to register for the armed services. In consequence to this, his medical followed shortly after and is when I think the "Balloon went up" for he was declared 'Unfit for Military Service'. John was having none of this and presented himself to various clinics to prove them wrong, it wasn't until my father, who had experienced the First World War gave him a good talking to, that he accepted the fact.

By some means or other, John became an Air Raid Warden [ARP] his post being in Alfred Street which was just around the corner from where we were living in Electric House. He took to it like a duck to water and every night he would sign in at the Post and carried out whatever was requested of him. "PUT THAT LIGHT OUT" fitted John to the tee.

No doubt through conversation at the ARP post, John became aware that the Battersea Dog Home Kennels in Fairfield Road had been evacuated and the premises had been handed over to the Police for their use, but who later found it to be

unsuitable and that the premises were now vacant. It seems enquiries were made via the Poplar Borough Council and the Dogs Home and it was leased to become The Pig Club at an annual peppercorn rent of £1. Needless to say, brother John became Chairman of the club and was held responsible for the whole undertaking. The rules laid down by the Council governing their use were very strict, the cleanliness of the habitation part of the kennels being the most important. Unannounced inspections by the Council being quite common.

As was inevitable, I got roped in as a member of the club but I wasn't involved in the administration of it, anything that I needed to know I learnt from brother John. I wasn't on the scene when the first Piglets arrived having been purchased from a small-holding in Billericay but we had a club member who was the caretaker of the bank on the corner of Fairfield Road, opposite the Town Hall and I believe lived in the flat at the top of the building. He was a very handy man to have on board for it seemed he could be available during the day to accept any deliveries like straw etc., although I suspect there were other members of equal value.

The kennels as a building were ideal for the purpose of keeping pigs, each individual kennel had an inner and outer enclosure plus a partial covered yard. Drainage, which was important, wasn't a problem. Vacant kennels were used for the storage of materials etc: and the whole place was 'yard broom' cleaned on a daily basis. My role in this enterprise was to collect the swill from various sources, I had a dustbin like contraption on wheels that I trudded around collecting from such places as local cafes, but in particular the canteen at the Bus Garage in Fairfield Road and the so called 'British Restaurant' on the corner of Devons Road and Bromley High Street. We had already purchased a large upstanding pressure cooker that stood in the yard under the canopy, and the fuel came from the factory next door, The Three-Ply Box Company, from whom we took all their scrap—and there was plenty of it. The government at the time encouraged enterprises such as Pig Clubs, so 'meal' to add to the cooked swill was made available.

As the pigs grew and fattened they became earmarked for the abattoir and the ruling was that for every three pigs sent, one would go to the Ministry, the other two the club members. A butcher was engaged to joint the meat and it would be distributed according to the register so that all the cuts were allocated equally. Over time the membership grew and somehow caught the eye of the then newspaper 'The Reynolds News', a journalist writing an article on how ARP Wardens had become Pig Keepers.

In November 1943 I got called to the colours so my obligations to the club came to an end, but whilst in the service I learned of its well-being via letters from brother John. At the wars end in 1945 it disbanded, I guess that might have been one of the conditions of the kennels lease, for when I came home in March 1947 the kennels were an empty space.

I have asked the Battersea Dogs Home if they have any archive material of those days, but unfortunately not. In these my adult years I often reminisce on such happenings, wondering if there were any members still about of those days. I have heard it mentioned a few times, but stories of this kind do get embroidered. There couldn't have been many people at that time able to enjoy half a leg of Pork!

It so happens I do attend a Farmers Market once a month, it's held on a farm in Dunmow - a pig farm! Happy days.

**George Donovan**

### **The Brady Club**

If you were a member of Brady you might like to look up one of the Gentle Author's recent Spitalfields Life Blogs where he illustrates a hoard of photographs from the 1950's and 1960s, that were recently found.

<http://spitalfieldslife.com/2018/05/03/at-the-brady-clubs/>

### **A bell from South Hallsville School?**



This battered bell, bought from an East London dealer in militaria, is said to have come from South Hallsville School, Agate Street, Canning Town, the scene of one of World War Two's greatest home-front civilian disasters. The school received a direct hit on the 10<sup>th</sup> of September 1940 while being used as an assembly point for people due to be evacuated from the area. Expected buses didn't turn up (it has been suggested that they were sent to Camden Town instead of Canning Town) and the building was crowded with men, women and children. The official casualty figure was 77, but it has been suggested that it could have been as high as 600. As with the Bethnal Green tube disaster the authorities covered up the losses at the time, but unlike Bethnal Green the true number of casualties doesn't seem to have been determined. The bomb site was asphalted over and Hallsville Primary School built on top in 1948. The seller of the bell said he had bought it from a local refuse collector who had himself got it from an elderly ex-teacher who always kept it by the side of his bed. The bell once had a leather handle and its damage is consistent with it having been in an explosion. Most of us can probably remember being called back into class from play by a teacher ringing such a bell.

**Philip Mernick**

## **London History Day 2018 Historic England**

“London History Day is back and it's bigger and better than ever. On Thursday 31 May 2018, more than 70 of London's museums, galleries and cultural spaces will open their doors to reveal special behind the scenes tours, rarely seen exhibits and one off events, celebrating the capital's unique identity. 2018 is the year of courage, with many special events for London History Day touching on the pioneering spirit, heroism, initiative and kindness layered in our history.”

### **History Enquiries to Philip**

Good morning Phil, do you know anything about a strikers' gathering in Victoria Park in 1951 - something to do with workers from the Festival of Britain site? Thanks in advance,  
Jim Crouch

Philip

Dear Jim, I am afraid that I don't know anything about the strike you mentioned. I would suggest you try Tower Hamlets Local History Library (Bancroft Road). They have copies of local newspapers. The only 1951 strike meeting, in Victoria Park, that I could find in the British Newspaper Archive was a meeting (February) of Dock Workers in support of a strike by Liverpool dock workers

Jim Crouch

Thanks anyway Phil - perhaps it was just a bit of poetic licence.

From Graham Swinton

I live in the far west of Cornwall so trips to London are difficult. I wish to obtain any details of an inquest that took place shortly after 26 April 1904. It was performed in Bethnal Green and concerned one Moses Moss who died in Whitechapel aged approx.. 40. I understand that the Tower Hamlets Archive has records of the local newspapers published at the time. Is there someone in the Society who would be willing to visit the archive and look for a report?

Philip

Dear Graham, Tower Hamlets does have copies of the local newspapers but I know from previous enquiries that very few inquests are reported. I visit the archives fairly frequently and would be willing to have a look.

Philip

Sorry about the long delay Graham, but I did have a look through copies of The Eastern Argus & Hackney Times which covered the area. I looked at all issues to June 4 but found no mention of Moses Moss. I am sorry that I couldn't be of more help.

Was he Jewish? Jews seem to receive very little mention in the local papers of the time. I suppose their deaths were more likely to have been recorded in the Jewish Chronicle or local Yiddish language newspapers.