

London Borough of Hackney  
Archives Department

*The Terrier*, the Archives Department's newsletter, has now reached issue 4, and articles have included 'Holiday Camps, Rats and Wicked Ladies' (no. 2) and The Hackney Cuttings Book (no. 3), the latter a description of a scrapbook of newspaper cuttings relating to Hackney 1684-1900.

Malchow, H. L.

'Public Gardens and Social Action in late Victorian London' in *Victorian Studies*, vol. 29, no. 1, Autumn, 1985.

Matthews, Derek

'Rogues, Speculators and Competing Monopolies: The Early London Gas Companies, 1812-1860' in *The London Journal* vol. 11 (eleven) no. 1, Spring, 1985.

Newman, Aubrey

'A Note on Recent Research on the Jewish East End of London' in *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, December, 1985.

#### Some recent additions to archives

##### (a) Hackney Archives Department:

Records of Glovers (dyers and cleaners) Ltd., 1935-1984  
Pamphlets and other items relating to Charles Bradlaugh  
Records of Workers' Circle (a Jewish Friendly Society), 20th Century  
Drainage plans of Hackney and Stoke Newington houses from 1855 (Shoreditch to follow)  
Records of Dothridges (Shoreditch undertakers), 20th Century  
Methodist Records, Hackney Circuit, 19th - 20th Century  
Records of Newington Green Unitarian Church, 18th - 20th Century.

##### (b) Tower Hamlets Local History Library

Mann Crossman and Paulin Brewery drawings  
1880s and 1890s  
Christian Friendly Benefit Society rules and orders,  
1755 (with signatures to 1790)  
Middlesex Society (Charity School) Minute Book  
1806-1819

*Thanks are due to:*

*D. Behr, H. Bloch, C. Lloyd, J. A. Wait and H. Watton for help in compiling this list.*

### The East London History Society

The programme of talks for the session 1986/87 will include: The history of Bow Creek (John Allen), Tower Hamlets Joint Annual Lecture — The history of the Co-operative movement in East London (Stan Newens), The development of the London Hospital estate (Jonathan Pepler), The history of Wapping (Madge Darby), The East End, the internment of the 'aliens' and the Blitz (Di Parkin), East End lives and songs at the turn of the century (Jaki Leboff), Hackney Archives Department Stanley Tongue Memorial Lecture — Estate development in South Hackney (Isobel Watson).

The East London History Society exists to further interest in the history of East London, namely the London Boroughs of Hackney, Newham and Tower Hamlets.

For further details about the Society, contact the Membership Secretary, 9 Avon Road, London E17.

£1.30

ISSN 0 141-6286

Printed by Aldermans of Ipswich.



# EAST LONDON RECORD

No. 9

1986

## EAST LONDON RECORD

Editor: Colm Kerrigan

The East London History Society publishes the *East London Record* once a year. We welcome articles on any aspect of the history of the area that now forms the boroughs of Hackney, Newham and Tower Hamlets. Articles, which need not be in their final form, may be handed in at the Local History Library, Tower Hamlets Central Library, Bancroft Road, London E1 4DQ, or sent by post to the editor at 38 Ridgdale Street, Bow, London E3 2TW.

Numbers 1 (1978), 2 (1979), 4 (1981) and 5 (1982) of the *East London Record* are out of print. Copies of number 3 (1980), price 60p + 25p post and packing, numbers 6 (1983) and 7 (1984) at 95p each + 25p post, and number 8 (1985) at £1.15 + 25p post are still available from the circulation manager, Mrs. D. Kendall, 20 Puteaux House, Cranbrook Estate, London E2 0RF, who can also supply further copies of the present issue (1986). Photocopies of issues 1 (1978), 2 (1979), 4 (1981) and 5 (1982), costing £1.80 including post, can also be supplied on request. All cheques should be made payable to East London History Society.

We are grateful to Tower Hamlets Libraries for assistance in many ways with the production and distribution of this magazine, and to the following people without whose assistance it could not have been produced: Mr. D. Behr, Mr. H. Bloch, Mrs. B. Boyce, Mrs. V. Crouch, Mr. J. Curtis, Mr. A. H. French, Mrs. D. Kendall, Mr. C. Lloyd, Miss A. McGrath, Mr. A. Searle, Miss A. J. Wait and Mr. H. Watton.

Cover illustration: Relf's Music Hall, Victoria Dock Road, Canning Town, c.1884: see Cyril Demarne's article for its history up to the 'thirties. (Local Studies Library, Newham Library Service).

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## STEPNEY MEMORIES

M. E. Carrington

MONDAY morning, bad enough but wet and cold with it. My Mum poked her head round the door, the first cigarette of the day already between her lips. 'Come on out of that bed, I've called you once.' I stretched my legs as far down the bed as they would go and buried my nose under the fusty bed clothes. Another five minutes before I dragged myself out of my warm cocoon and made the swift dash down the freezing passage to the kitchen. 'Kathleen are you up?' The words came more sharply and I slipped from the bed in my knickers and vest and hurried to the only warm room in the house.

The kitchen was an odd shape, it had a large bay window that looked into a narrow back yard. The window space had a bench seat and against this was a huge table. The table was not only for meals. My Mother ironed on it, rolled pastry on it and carried out all her household tasks. We children painted our pictures, did jigsaws, played schools and post offices, every stamp being drawn by hand. When relatives came, for a penny, we could be persuaded to stand on it and sing a song. Covered with a blanket it was a tent, a fortress and a safe refuge from parental wrath. In the far corner was a large stone sink with a gas geyser that always lit with a bang and next to that was the gas stove. In the alcove of the chimney breast was an enormous dresser that reached almost to the ceiling and held in its cavernous depths nearly all our household possessions. Whatever was lost, from an odd sock to a missing button, one was instructed to look on the dresser. In the other alcove was the larder for food, and between both was the most important feature of the room, especially on a raw November morning. This was the huge cast iron range. It was very black and shiny and stood on short fat legs on a white leaded surround and was enclosed by a railed fire guard that hooked to the wall. The range was the source of all comfort, its small but efficient fire box kept the room delightfully warm, there was always a large kettle of water simmering on top. It had two ovens, the larger one cooked to perfection, the small one warmed not only food but on cold days socks and shirts ready to put on, and the fire guard aired the weekly wash in no time at all.

The rest of the house had on the ground floor a small back bedroom and a front room, cold and uncomfortable and used only for company, and there were two bedrooms above. Outside in the yard was the toilet and two sheds, in one of which the coal was kept. The other was a wash-house that had a copper built into the corner. You lit a fire underneath and stirred the boiling contents with a huge wooden stick and pounded the clothes against a board with ribs. There was also a sink with running cold water and a great mangle that needed two arms to turn the wheel.

That was my home, shabby indeed and often untidy, but always clean. By fair means or foul we always had sufficient to eat, wore an odd assortment of second-hand clothes and rarely had money for extras, but we were loved and that was sufficient. We had no need to feel discontented, our neighbours had nothing we desired. In fact, compared to some households with

*The author as a child*



numerous children and parents who drank away the money, we were considered well-off.

School was only a short distance away. A large Victorian building with two gates and two playgrounds, one for girls and infants and one for boys, and we never mixed. I didn't dislike school, only some parts of it. I could work if I wanted and usually hovered around the top dozen at exam time. Mostly I remember the teachers. There was Miss Harris, deputy head and very strict, she sang the hymns with her eyes tightly closed and her mouth wide open which showed a mauve tongue. It fascinated me, quite convinced as I was that she had some incurable disease. Then there was Miss Cole, patient and kind who taught us sewing and knitting. She knitted socks on four needles — I thought her terribly clever. Mrs. Jivatoski was a small, dark Jewess of Eastern European descent. She was very excitable and could inflict cruel pinches and slaps to the head. When I reached the top of the school I was in Mr. Bernstein's class. He was also a Jew but portly with a red face and a fringe of ginger hair. He was somewhat stern but kind at heart as he proved one sultry

summer's day. It involved a boy called Cornelius that we called Connie. He was a dreamer, forever gazing into space and paying no attention to the lesson. He had incurred Mr. Bernstein's wrath and was summoned to the front of the class. In the midst of ticking him off Mr. Bernstein became aware that Connie was not only wearing a heavy tweed jacket but had a muffler tucked into the neck. 'No wonder you are half asleep' roared Mr. Bernstein, 'You are too hot, remove your jacket Cornelius'. A slow flush mounted Connie's face and he backed away. 'No, no I'm not too hot sir,' he said. 'Of course you are,' contradicted Mr. Bernstein, 'Remove it at once lad'. And he fixed Connie with a stern glance. Slowly, Connie undid the jacket and removed it to reveal his pale white torso with only his braces to prevent its total nakedness. Connie hung his head. There was a moment of stunned silence. There was not one in the room could boast of his or her own attire, but here was poverty indeed. Before there was even the beginning of a titter, Mr. Bernstein flashed an eye of terrible rage upon us and hissed between his teeth, 'The first to laugh will be thrashed within an inch of his life'. No one laughed and Mr. Bernstein tenderly buttoned Connie back into his jacket.

Leisure hours were spent roaming the streets in a gang playing tin can tommy, knock down ginger and hopscotch. Games came around in cycles, everybody played spinning tops or gobs or marbles, whichever was the rage at the time. Bicycles were not very common but scooters were easily made if you could beg, borrow or steal a couple of wheels. Another favourite game was hanging on the back of the huge brewers' drays that were frequently up and down since there was a pub on almost every corner. A ride fraught with danger since the driver had a habit of flicking his long whip over his shoulder especially if he suspected hangers on. We played also in the derelict houses that were awaiting the bulldozers. We were in fact forbidden to go in them for fear they should collapse upon us, but this only made them more attractive. Most of them had their roofs open to the sky, but one or two were comparatively whole, and in these the wives and mothers among us built our nests. We fashioned tables and chairs from bricks and boards that lay around in plenty. With diligent searching we would unearth broken pieces of crockery that served as plates, and once to my joy I found the bottom half of a blue glass vase that I proudly stood in the middle of my table filled with weeds that grew in profusion through the floor boards. The house was dark and smelly but away from prying adult eyes and ears. Here we lived our pretend lives inviting each other for tea, each 'housewife' outdoing the other in the splendour of her tea table. At tea we would discuss the bits of information we had gathered regarding the facts of life. What we didn't know for sure we made up, and our theories of procreation were mind boggling. We also thought it very grown-up to swear and our conversations were peppered with most of the four-letter words we knew, until my brother in a fit of vindictiveness squealed to my Dad and I was tanned good and hard. In these ramshackle ruins I day-dreamed of the cottage in the country I would have one day, complete with roses round the door, a handsome husband, beautiful children that were always clean and a kitchen that smelled of my delicious baking.

Social life centred around the pub on the corner where the men gathered as often as they could afford it. The women only usually joined them

at weekends and on fine summer evenings the kids played around the open doors fortified with crisps and Tizer. The only other excitement was to visit various members of our huge family that were not really very far away, but some involved a bus ride, and one lived in the far reaches of Dagenham. It seemed an endless train ride to me. The houses backed on to marshland that could not be built on. In my eyes it was real countryside. It sometimes seemed to me that every adult woman I met was my Aunt and I once counted that I had thirty-two first cousins. I never bothered to count their children. There was a strong sense of security in belonging to a clan of warm-hearted people with little to give in the material sense but a great deal in affection and family loyalty.

The basic needs of our daily lives were served by the local shops, mostly Jewish. The most important of these shops to us was 'Harry Stores', run by Harry and his blonde wife Lily and as far as I can remember it never closed. No matter how early or late, Sundays, holidays, whatever you needed, whenever you needed it, Harry Stores could provide it. Of course we were subject to rationing for necessities but there were many items to be had if one had the cash; and there was the drawback, we never had any. But there was an apparently simple remedy for that. When our meagre rations were portioned out on the counter and we ruefully shook our heads at the temptation of broken biscuits or Australian jam, Lily with a bright smile would produce the book. Then it seemed anything was ours, a lick of the pencil, an entry in the book and off we went with our goodies. Every Friday evening most of Dad's pay went to cancel out the debt and since there was no money left we would be back in the stores first thing Saturday morning and a fresh page in the book. We were, it seemed, bound to Harry Stores for all eternity.

I had been born into a Catholic family and had been duly baptized, but my parents were indifferent about their faith and the label Roman Catholic meant very little to me. Except that every now and then came gentle knocking at the front door which would be opened to reveal two heavily robed nuns with pale faces and gentle smiles. Long veils flowed from their tightly fitting bonnets and heavy silver crucifixes hung on their breasts. I found them both strange and fascinating. They came at least two or three times a year to plead for my immortal soul. The nearest Catholic school was a long way from my home and involved crossing a busy main road that thundered continuously with heavy traffic, so my mother was adamant that I should not go. The nuns always accepted her refusal with resignation, never failed to bless me on leaving, and returned full of optimism several months later.

Then fate, or whatever you will, took a hand and much to everyone's surprise I passed the eleven plus and was offered a Grammar School place. The nuns descended in triumph. I had a scholarship in my pocket that entitled me to a place at an exclusive Convent school. I resisted fiercely. My gang who had failed the exam departed in a cheerful bunch to the local secondary modern school and I wanted desperately to go with them. But beneath their gentle exterior the nuns had a firm determination. They waved aside protests from my parents about costs of uniform. They would help. Bus fares? I should be given a pass. Most of all I would get a sound religious education. They blessed me with extra favour. My fate was sealed.



*Stepney Way, 1939, looking towards Sidney Street. (Tower Hamlets Libraries)*

Came the day when wearing my new school beret and badge somewhat self consciously and with knees knocking I arrived for my first day at St. Victoire's Convent School for girls, staffed by the Faithful Companions of Jesus, and several lay teachers. The only member of the opposite sex that I ever saw during my stay was the crabby old gardener (who seemed to be at least one hundred and five), an annual visit by the Bishop and occasionally a young, handsome and forever-out-of-reach missionary.

The school building itself was very handsome. It had previously been a private nursing home and had beautiful panelled walls and floors. Inside the great hall was a huge winding staircase that led to long corridors and spacious rooms. The house stood in its own grounds and beautifully kept lawns and stately trees gave it a very grand air. I was already overwhelmed as I walked up the stone steps and into the great hall for the first time and was immediately brought to a standstill by a truly wonderful sight. In a natural alcove made by the curve of the stairs was a life-size figure of the Virgin Mary. She wore long pale flowing robes, her tiny bare feet stood fearlessly on the head of a serpent, she held her lovely hands out in a pleading manner and held her head slightly tilted forward in a listening attitude. Her eyes were calm and wide and her smile was of such sweetness that I fell in love with her completely and utterly. She stood among bowers of flowers and tall white candles, and I could not understand how everyone rushed past her so heedlessly. However, I discovered that although she was to become a very large influence on my life I had other things to do rather than stand and stare. I was staggered by the timetable, and decided they were trying to pour a gallon into a pint pot. I rushed from room to room summoned by bells that seemed to chime every five minutes, each with a different message. A bewildering number of women introduced me to Science, French, Latin, as well as Maths, English, History and Geography. There was drama, elocution, deportment, cookery, on and on. Even at break there was no respite. Whereas the most energy I had needed before was evading the boys in kiss chase, I was now expected to play tennis, netball, rounders and swimming, and overriding all this gently but persistently was the doctrine of the Roman Catholic faith. Like all converts I went completely overboard, developed an idolatrous love of the Virgin Mary that I saw, always, as my lady in the alcove, and spent hours on my knees in fervent prayers. The nuns smiled kindly on me and once when I keeled over from kneeling too long I was allowed to recover in the headmistress's study. An honour indeed.

I marched home in the evenings to impress my family with my piles of homework, my smattering of French, and gave them lengthy lectures on their fall from grace. Altogether I was a first-class creep. It was a somewhat strange life I led at this time. At school I enjoyed being part of a well-ordered and disciplined existence. With purely feminine influence I shed some of my rougher edges. The mistress of elocution and deportment took great pains with me and my cockney accent although never quite disappearing took on softer tones. But most of all the English teacher on whom I had a crush introduced me to literature and the beauty of the English language. I read anything and everything I could lay my hands on. It opened my eyes and my mind and I remain forever grateful to her. I loved the Holy days when the convent, after Mass in the chapel, sung by three hundred female voices, took

on a festive air and special little treats were handed out. I liked parents day when I escorted my proud parents around and nonchalantly pointed out my work displayed here and there. We always put on a show of speech and drama and one year I recited a very long poem about St. George. From my place in the centre of the stage I saw the little drama coach clapping loudly, smiling and nodding to herself in self congratulation.

At home I was part of the general hubbub of family life with its squabbles and tensions, the pitting of wits to avoid the worst of the poverty that surrounded us. I had become aware that there was a great deal more to life than that which existed in our four walls and just beyond, and I waited impatiently for my chance to sample it.

As soon as I reached the age of fifteen my Father decided I had received sufficient education. It was time I worked and helped to supplement the family income. I left my convent with mixed feelings of regret and anticipation. I was found a job as a junior clerk in the local Gas Board. It was considered a very good job indeed, offering security, an annual increase and a pension at the end. I hated it. What did I want with a steady routine and security? My head was full of romance, I dreamed of travel, I wanted to see the places I had read of, capture the sights, sounds and magic of far away places. And when I had tired of travelling I wanted a home in the country, a kind husband, a family, yes, and even a dog. Incredible as it seemed then it all came to pass. I write this in the garden of my neat suburban home, and look back on the child I was with amusement and affection and even a rather smug disapproving shake of the head.

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## CONTRIBUTORS

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## VANISHED CHURCH, VANISHED STREETS: THE PARISH OF ST. SAVIOUR'S, HOXTON

John M. Harwood

### Introduction

WHEN Charles Booth began his massive investigation into the life and labour of the people of London, he used the boundaries of Church of England parishes to conveniently focus on particular parts of working class London. Within these small areas, he talked and walked with policemen, clergymen and charitable workers. Inner north and east London at the turn of the century was extremely overcrowded so that most of these parishes had populations of between 6,000 and 14,000. This is the story of one of them.

The parish of St. Saviour's, Hoxton was one of the last parts of the ancient civil parish (later borough) of Shoreditch to be built-up. Hoxton was, and still is, a district 'village' neither quite the east nor quite 'north'. Once there existed a north-east postal area and this accurately represented a part of London with a character of its own (think of the boroughs of Hackney and Waltham Forest today). Hoxton was part of this entity.

Most of the southern part of Shoreditch had been built-over by the end of the eighteenth century, and development had begun in the Hoxton area. By 1821 the population of Shoreditch was already 53,000 (greater than today) served by one parish church, St. Leonard's. In the 1820s the parish was divided and St. John's was built for Hoxton and St. Mary's (destroyed by bombing in the Second World War) for Haggerston. In the following decades the population grew further, reaching its peak at around 130,000 and many further parishes were carved out to serve the new districts.

By 1900 no less than 21 Anglican churches stood in Shoreditch.

### The building of the parish

Hoxton grew in piecemeal fashion. The old settlement was around Charles and Hoxton Squares and up Hoxton and Pitfield Streets. Then came the building of the Regent's Canal (which defines the northern border of Hoxton) and the laying out of a network of streets including New North Road. In the 1820s, typical Georgian terraces were built along the canal to form a cluster of small streets north of Hyde Road and centring on Felton Street. This was the first part of St. Saviour's parish to be built; the area south of Hyde Road remained as fields until the 1850s. The fields were owned, as was most of Hoxton, by the Sturt family and must have looked a grim sight as they were let to a dust contractor as brickfields and great ash heaps of the kind described by Mayhew and Dickens. In 1856, these 'fields' were built-over and a grid of streets laid out (see notes at the end for a list of all the streets which comprised St. Saviour's parish).

The new houses, quite different from the late Georgian terraces along the canal, were small, quite attractive terraced cottages of two-storeys, often with basement as well and five steps leading up to the front door. They were well-built and nearly all lasted well into the 1960s. You would think these

houses of the 1850s were intended for respectable lower-middle class shopkeepers and clerks but not at all. Right from the beginning overcrowding set in and two, three or even four poor families occupied the houses. The Sturt agents were quick to evict families occupying too much living space.

The explanation for all this is that much of Hoxton, i.e. the area bounded by Old Street, City Road, Regent's Canal and Hoxton Street, 130 acres including 2,500 houses and shops, 36 pubs and many factories and warehouses, formed the Alington estate. The ground rents of the houses alone amounted to £50,000 per annum at the beginning of this century. This would not have mattered so much if the Sturts (later barons Alington) had been good landlords. They were not. Henry Gerard Sturt (the 1st baron Alington) was chiefly interested in horses, his country estate in Dorset and his rents. There is a description of the second baron (who died in 1919) in the memoirs of Sonia Keppel whose mother was an Edwardian society beauty. She once insisted that he take her to Hoxton to see where his rents came from. The poverty they saw on the three hour drive made Lord Alington speechless and he promised that something would be done. Nothing ever was.

This is not an unfair picture, though many smaller landlords of the area were by contrast considerate and took an interest in their properties. On the other side of Hoxton Street, was a narrow street leading to Kingsland Road called Lyncedoch Street (formerly Mary Street) with great gates at each end (does any reader know anything about these mysterious gates, by the way?). The houses here were owned for many decades by two spinster sisters who maintained their humble properties well and organised popular window-box competitions. There was little overcrowding and tenants stayed for long periods. The Alington estate, however, was an enormous black spot on the face of London until its sale in 1917. Subsequent improvements were only slight and overcrowding certainly continued.

### Poverty and people

St. Saviour's parish was divided into two parts by Hyde Road. The smaller and older area between Hyde Road and the canal was also the poorer. Charles Booth (in his 1902 maps) marks it all blue, with thin black lines in several of the streets. These represent the lowest class in his categories ('degraded poverty with criminal elements'). There is no need to agree with him (and in the case of one Hoxton thoroughfare where my family once lived I certainly don't!). Nevertheless, it was certainly a poor quarter and only equalled in Hoxton by the Wilmer Gardens area and Britannia Street (both outside St. Saviour's parish).

South of Hyde Road was the bulk of the parish as built by the Sturts. Booth marks this purple ('poverty and comfort mixed') but my impression (if you can measure such things) is that until the 1930s it was nearly as poor as the northern part. Certainly both parts of the parish were shockingly overcrowded and much the same sort of people practising the same trades lived in each. In 1866 the population was approximately 6,000. This rose to 9,000 by 1900 and remained stable until the 1920s. At the beginning of the blitz St. Saviour's parish still contained 7,224 souls and this is almost certainly an underestimate because of unofficial subletting.

Who were these people? Like many inhabitants of north-east and east London they moved about a lot. A typical St. Saviour's inhabitant in the 1900s might have had five or six Hoxton or Bethnal Green addresses in the previous twenty years but he or she rarely moved right out of the area and rarely originated from outside London. Hoxton, Haggerston and much of Bethnal Green was cockney English and quite unlike Whitechapel and Stepney and other districts nearer the Thames with their large Jewish and Irish-descended populations. Very many Hoxton families over the generations had a history of residence rather like this: in the 1800s living in the northern parts of the City of London; 1820s and 1830s Clerkenwell or Saffron Hill; 1840s and 1850s St. Luke's (Finsbury) or south Shoreditch; 1860s onwards, Hoxton.

### Occupations

The census returns of the streets of St. Saviour's for 1861, 1871 and 1881 reveal an astonishing variety of occupations. The people may have been equally poor but they rivalled Birmingham in their number of trades (again in marked contrast with the fewer large industries of Stepney). There are of course the traditional Shoreditch callings of cabinet maker, woodcarver and milliner but in addition one finds harness-makers, cabmen, bricklayers, bookbinders, porters and such exotic crafts as fancy cap makers, feather curlers and pianoforte cast makers.

Many men worked outside the parish and a lot of the work within was traditional 'women's work'. In fact St. Saviour's contained no large factories or shops, though Hoxton market lay just on the borders. There were many little shops, mostly struggling and short-lived. The street directories show few businesses which lasted more than two decades. These coal-merchants, dairies, butchers and eel shops rose and fell, and in the twentieth century a number of the more eccentric (including one antique shop dealing in occult carvings) became bakers or fishmongers.

### Pubs and schools

Other than churches and schools, the public buildings with the longest continuous history are the pubs. There were seven public houses (some too poor for a spirit licence) one of which, the Prince of Wales, still exists, though rebuilt. Some like the Flint House, opposite St. Saviour's and bombed with it, were grim indeed.

The only school was Gopsall Street Council (between this street and Grange Street). St. Saviour's church schools in Felton Street did not survive the early education acts. Gopsall Street School (now Whitmore Primary School) still exists and like many 'Board Schools' of the 1880s its red brick bulk dominates the surroundings.

Apart from St. Saviour's there was one other place of worship in the parish, Highbury Mission Hall, usually called Harvey Street mission. This was a Presbyterian settlement with numerous charitable institutions (often called 'pauperizing' by opponents) whose workers came from well outside

Hoxton. Much social work was done here between 1869 and 1940, but the overwhelming emphasis on 'temperance' tended to put off most adult Hoxtonians and led to a gradual concentration on Sunday Schools.

### Recent times

Such, in bare outline, was the parish of St. Saviour's, Hoxton between 1861 and 1941. There was a slight decline in population and therefore of overcrowding in the 1930s but much poverty remained. Health, however, certainly was improving between the wars. After the war and the bombing, the parish never again became its crowded self.

*Gopsall Street, c. 1966. (Hackney Archives Department)*



In 1951, its population amounted to 2,870. In the 1950s and early 1960s Hoxton generally did regain something of its lively pre-war appearance. The subsequent demolitions soon put paid to this and even larger numbers of people left than had during the war years. The present population of St. Saviour's parish is now probably about 600 persons. What happened to the streets I shall leave to the epilogue.

### The church

At the centre of St. Saviour's parish lay the church of that name. It was nearly as old as the streets south of Hyde Road, grew up with them and was demolished when the decision to clear the streets was made.

Unlike its neighbour, St. Anne's on Hoxton Street which was simply 'dumped down' on an already built-up area, St. Saviour's church was planned to serve a new part of Hoxton. This district was a rough parallelogram and the church was at the junction of Penn Street, Hyde Road and Northport Street.

Rev. John Jeffcock was appointed to this mission district in 1861 and acquired a loft above a crucible makers and amid pungent fumes the first service was held with twenty-five persons present. Numbers soon grew however, and an iron church was built in Northport Street, opened in 1863 for a regular congregation of 300, and a round of parish activities was started. Finally, in 1866, a large brick church was built which was to last until the 1950s and can be remembered by many.

The architect of the new church was James Brooks, who built three other new churches and enlarged one older one in the borough of Shoreditch. Of these five, Haggerston parish church was totally destroyed by enemy bombing, St. Saviour's was slightly damaged and demolished later whilst the other three, St. Chad's, St. Columba's (the best of all Brooks' churches) and St. Michael's still survive. Only St. Chad's, however, is still used for Anglican worship. They were all fine churches and as a group dominated the low terraces of Hoxton and Haggerston with their steep roofs and high brick walls.

St. Saviour's church was a Gothic building in Early English style with a short nave of 98 ft., a 75 ft. high roof (the average height of an English Cathedral!) and a semi-circular apse at the east end. One early vicar commented that local people didn't mind attending the occasional special service as the church was so dark they couldn't see each other anyway.

The church as we shall see was totally transformed at a later period.

### The clergymen

Jeffcock was succeeded as vicar in 1867 by Rev. John Oakley, St. Saviour's only incumbent to find his way into the Dictionary of National Biography. He laboured faithfully among the poor of the parish for fifteen years (a period which included a cholera outbreak) and became a prominent 'Christian socialist'. He was also a convinced tractarian and although there was little ritual in his services he did bring Anglican sisters to work in the parish. These established themselves next to the church and did much catechetical and social work in this and the neighbouring parish of St. Columba until the last war.

Oakley's successor, William Goddard, need not detain us. His period as vicar seems to have been very successful and probably more regularly attended services at St. Saviour's then, than before or since. He also started daily celebrations of holy communion (though still without ritual). St. Saviour's was, however, getting dreadfully respectable. It was well known for its music, social activities and cultured clergy. Many wealthier parishioners who had moved out of the area still returned on Sunday to worship. Others came who had no connection with Hoxton at all. The inhabitants of the parish were rarely seen and were regarded mainly as recipients of charity.

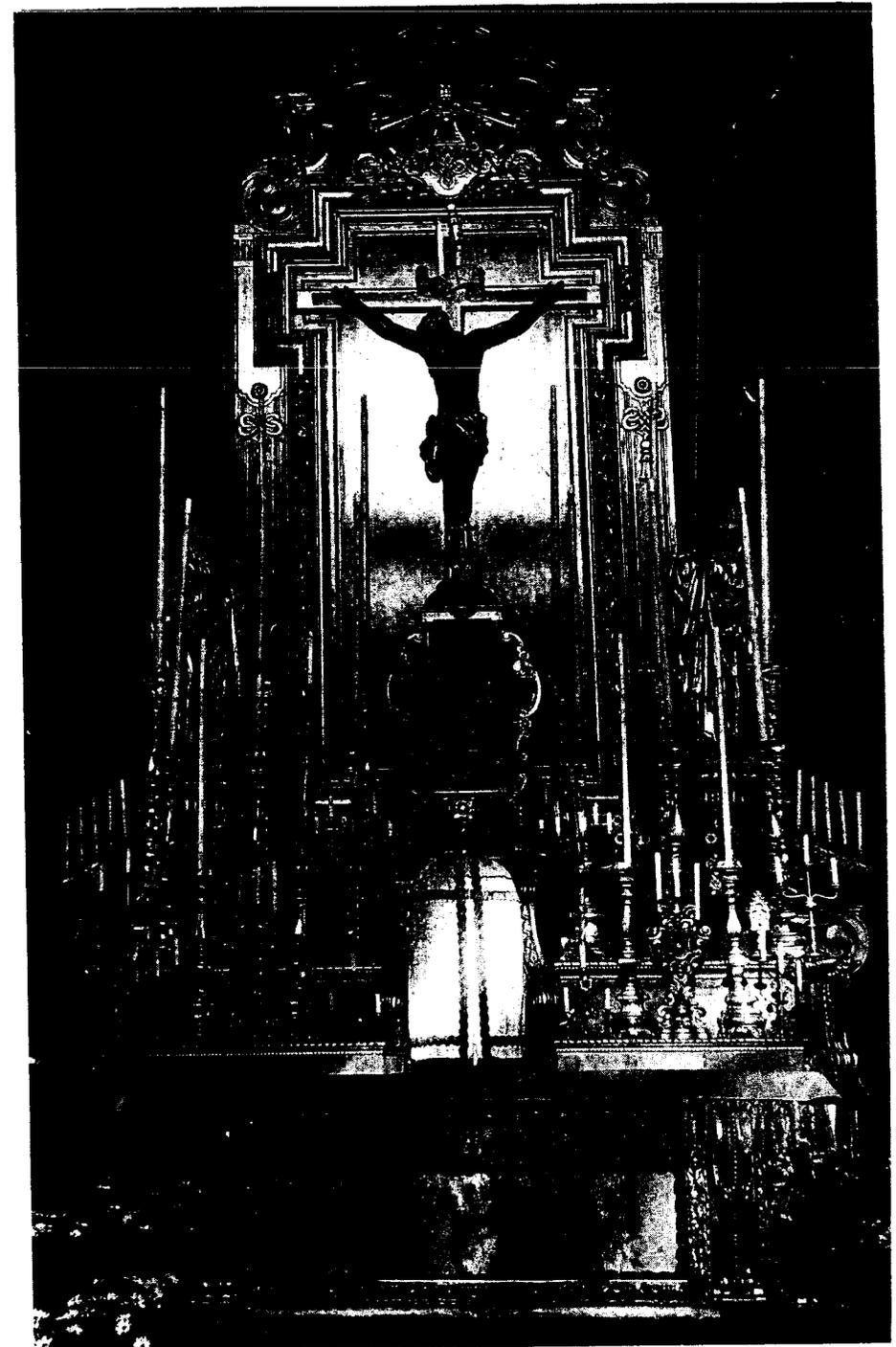
The next vicar, Neville Dundas, carried on the 'respectable' tradition. He heartily despised both extremes of Anglo-catholicism and evangelicalism. He also despised the parish, preferring his old haunt of St. Dunstan's Stepney. It is interesting to compare this outspoken man's estimate of the criminality of his parish with that of Fr. Kilburn twenty years later.

Dundas thought there was a lot of crime in his parish with much receiving of stolen goods. In one appeal he described his people as 'a real degraded London population, without backbone'. Kilburn, however, maintained that this kind of talk was exaggerated nonsense: 'we do not spend all our time murdering policemen and beating wives . . . along our streets you might walk, serene and unmolested, from end to end'. Kilburn was admittedly a man of great charitableness who identified closely with his parish, but almost certainly his was the more accurate picture.

After Dundas, in 1898, came Rev. Robert Carrick, a keen cricketer. Booth describes a Hoxton Sunday morning during his incumbency. Outside St. Saviour's, he says 'there was dirt and squalor and the vulgar, noisy bargaining of a low-class market; inside there was nothing but respectability'. By now St. Saviour's church had lost all contact with its real constituency.

### Father Kilburn

After a short period (1906-1908) under the well-known high-churchman Guy Hockley, Fr. Ernest Kilburn began his famous association with the church (though he had once been curate under Dundas from 1891 to 1896). Even Kilburn's appointment started with drama. Hockley had been appointed to the important living of St. Matthew's Westminster. The Crown (i.e. Mr. Asquith) nominated the chaplain of a Leeds iron foundry, an apostate Roman Catholic priest of fanatical Protestant convictions, to St. Saviour's. At the last minute, when Hockley and the Bishop of London were before a huge congregation at St. Matthew's, the bishop announced that Fr. Hockley would return to St. Saviour's rather than see a man who refused to celebrate a weekday service, even on Good Friday, go to St. Saviour's. This dramatic gesture was not necessary. With the agreement of 'the Crown', the bishop appointed Fr. Kilburn, an obscure Birmingham curate, to St. Saviour's. But the Protestant faction of the Church of England never forgot the incident and kept a close eye on St. Saviour's from then onwards.



*High Altar of St. Saviour's, Hoxton*

Ernest Kilburn had two aims, both of which he achieved. One was to bring the working people of Hoxton back to St. Saviour's and the other was to match the existing Catholic teaching with the externals of Catholic worship. Within a few years he had introduced vestments, wafer-bread, reservation of the Sacrament, incense, devotions to Our Lady and the service books of the Roman rite (though in English). The celebrated choir and many of the respectable members of the congregation walked out. But the poor, drawn by Kilburn's obvious sanctity, started to come in. Of all the documents, letters and reminiscences I have consulted, I have never seen any other word than 'saintly' applied to him.

When the First World War began, he served on a hospital ship and in his absence his two curates, Laing and Holland, took the ritual to greater extremes. In particular they introduced the use of the Latin language — all official Anglican service books were banished from the church — and the service of Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament (then practically unknown in the Church of England). Eventually, nothing in the church recalled in any way the fact that it was Anglican. At one period the notice board even bore the words 'Catholic Church of St. Saviour's, Hoxton.'

The Protestant faction was up in arms and constantly bombarded the Bishop of London with protests and petitions. In 1917 things came to a head. Fr. Kilburn had returned to his parish, approved of what his curates had done, and organised a huge outdoor procession of the Blessed Sacrament through the streets of the parish on the Feast of Corpus Christi. Large numbers of Anglo-Catholic supporters came from outside (as did Protestant demonstrators) but the people of the parish certainly took part as well. Many decorated their windows with flowers and hangings. Everyone except John Kensit, the Protestant agitator, agreed that the behaviour of the crowds of onlookers was entirely reverent.

This was too much for the normally long-suffering Bishop of London. He stated that as long as Benediction and other unauthorised services continued at St. Saviour's he would neither visit the church nor license curates to it nor let any diocesan grant be made to it. St. Saviour's had been disowned by the Church of England authorities.

Fr. Kilburn, aided by the generous response to a nation-wide appeal, carried on regardless. All services continued in Latin using all the Roman Catholic liturgical books. The Corpus Christi procession was repeated in subsequent years and the church redecorated completely to house shrines, statues, altars and relics.

Fr. Kilburn also continued to serve his people. He fought for safer roads, better housing conditions (he intervened when Alington estate came on the market), wrote in favour of local women's industries (such as artificial flower making) and improved sanitation. He welcomed the slow decrease in poverty (in spite of rising unemployment) which followed the First World War. To his amazement an 'expensive' furniture shop opened in the parish in 1920.

By 1922, Fr. Kilburn was worn out by constant money worries, the persecution by Protestant groups demonstrating against his 'shameful idolatry and Romanism', the continuance of his bishop's ban, and nagging doubts about his position in the Church of England. He resigned. His last

remaining curate, Fr. James Holland, also left and joined the Roman Catholic Church. Fr. Kilburn followed him soon after and both became well-known priests and preachers at the London Oratory. Fr. Kilburn died in 1933 and over his deathbed was found a photograph of the high altar of St. Saviour's, Hoxton. Modern visitors to the Oratory may be interested to know that its guidebook was originally written by Fr. Kilburn.

### His successors

The rest of the story of St. Saviour's can be briefly told. The Bishop of London quietly appointed John Bloxam, who stayed until his death in 1928. He continued with the same services as Fr. Kilburn and so the ban on the church remained in force. In August, 1923, Bloxam went so far as to invite the Bishop of Zanzibar (who was visiting England) to hold a Confirmation service at St. Saviour's. This aroused the Bishop of London to fury but was soon hushed up.

Fr. Douglas Ross became vicar in 1928. This time the bishop insisted there would be changes. In particular, services in Latin must cease. Apart from the change of language, however, there was little alteration in the liturgy at St. Saviour's for the rest of its life. Even the Roman Catholic Westminster Hymnal was used at all popular services. The ban was lifted, though.

Numbers of communicants and regular attendants dropped gradually, each crisis resulting in defections to Rome or driftings away. In the mid-1930s an unofficial survey of the churches of Shoreditch found that, although St. Saviour's still had the largest attendance at the 'principal Sunday service', this only amounted to 68 persons. The local people came less and less and their place was taken by Anglo-Catholic enthusiasts from the suburbs. Fr. Ross was a hard-working priest but could do little to stop this trend. The blitz drove the congregation into a small chapel in the presbytery. They fitted it easily.

It was sad that so few local people ever saw the inside of St. Saviour's before the Second World War. The interior was dominated by the sanctuary and high altar, as redesigned and decorated in the 1920s by Martin Travers, in scarlet and gold. Some idea of the baroque effect can still be seen in the churches of St. Mary's, Bourne Street, S.W.1, and St. Augustine's, Queens Gate, in South Kensington.

The accompanying photo can give only a dim impression of the beauty of our vanished church.

### The destruction

In the great night air raid of 15-16 October, 1940, a land-mine fell on Holt Place (off Hyde Road) devastating a large area and severely damaging the church. It was never again re-opened for worship and neither the diocesan authorities nor the County of London plan of 1943 included St. Saviour's in its schemes for a new Shoreditch. Yet many churches far worse damaged and far less important architecturally or spiritually were restored. Almost certainly St. Saviour's very extreme Catholic tradition had something to do with this but already most of the parish was planned for complete obliteration.

Many of the larger furnishings inside were ruined but the smaller items, statues, plate, candlesticks and vestments were dispersed by gift to different Roman Catholic churches and convents before the London diocesan authorities could prevent it.

The vicar of St. Anne's, Hoxton Street was put in charge of the parishes of St. Saviour's and of St. Andrew's, Canal Road (now Orsman Road). In 1953 these parishes were formally amalgamated with St. Anne's. In the spring of 1954, St. Saviour's church was finally demolished. There were protests from enthusiasts for Victorian architecture but these groups were much weaker then than now and were ignored.

In the last 30 years of its existence, St. Saviour's church stood for 'full catholicism' in the Church of England and for the traditional services of the Latin Rite. Such services are now disused not only by Anglicans but by Roman Catholics too. Such reverence and beauty in worship is rarely seen today but that does not mean that St. Saviour's witness was in vain. It can act as a reproach and a warning to us in these days of the cult of 'simplicity' and ugliness.

### Epilogue

As has been pointed out by many writers, Hoxton today with its dull flats, which often ignore the old street lines, is a sad sight compared with the bustle of even 20 years ago. St. Saviour's parish is particularly sad. North of Hyde Road the once elegant but flimsy Georgian terraces were demolished soon after the war and four-storey red brick flats were erected in 1948. The well built houses occupying the remaining streets remained until the early 1970s. They are now all gone. A little-used park occupies the entire southern part of the parish. Apart from the Britannia Leisure Centre, the whole area is strangely silent, as though with the death of the little streets the heart of this corner of London was removed.

### NOTES

#### 1. Streets of the parish

Branch Place  
 Bridport Place (East side)  
 Felton Street  
 Gopsall Street  
 Grange Street  
 Harvey Street  
 Holt Place  
 Hutley Place  
 Hyde Road  
 Kenning Terrace  
 Mintern Street (North side)  
 Newton Street  
 Norris Street  
 Northport Street  
 Penn Street  
 Pitfield Street (West side — northern section) (formerly St. John's Road)  
 Rushton Street  
 Wareham Street  
 Whitmore Road (West side)

Witham Street (formerly Francis Street)  
 Worgate Street.

(In addition a small part of De Beauvoir Crescent, north of Regent's Canal was technically in the parish but by agreement served from St. Peter's, De Beauvoir Town).

#### 2. Vicars of St. Saviour's

John Thomas JEFFCOCK	1861 - 1867
John OAKLEY	1867 - 1882
William Ward GODDARD	1882 - 1891
Neville DUNDAS	1891 - 1898
Robert Mallabar CARRICK	1898 - 1906
Guy Wittenoom HOCKLEY	1906 - 1908
Ernest Edward Edmund KILBURN	1908 - 1922
John Francis BLOXAM	1922 - 1927
Douglas Alexander ROSS	1927 - 1948

#### 3. Sources:

I have used a large collection of letters, notes and parish magazines which the late Lawrence Jack (died 1985) assembled over the years for a projected history of St. Saviour's. He was its last surviving churchwarden. In addition, I have drawn on his reminiscences and those of some of my own family. My father, for instance, was helped as a poor orphan by Fr. Kilburn.

Of published material, I have consulted *Post Office Directories* of various dates, Charles Booth's *Life and Labour of the People of London* (all editions), Walter Besant's *Children of Gibeon* and the *Kensitie Churchman's Magazine*. Also several local and ecclesiastical newspapers, and the early Census returns.

## MILE END OLD TOWN RESIDENTS AND THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

D. B. Morris

### Introduction

IT has long been recognised that Stepney was, as H. Llewellyn Smith put it, 'the natural home of the owners and masters of merchant ships of all kinds, as well as the sailors by whom they were manned'. In the eighteenth century Stepney Green and Mile End Old Town provided a centre for men attracted by the many advantages of living close to the Thames and the City of London.

In a short walk along the road it would have been possible to meet merchants trading with Hudson Bay, Greenland, Virginia, the Levant and Africa, but dominating discussion would have been the affairs of the East India Company (EIC).

As the EIC completed its dockyard at Blackwall in 1612, with the building of dwelling houses and offices near the dry-docks, stock-houses and other buildings, so many residents of Mile End Old Town developed connections with the Company throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Several had been Mates or Masters of East Indiamen, others were husbandsmen, and some were owners of ships chartered to the Company. Undoubtedly there were many supplies of tar, dye, ropes, sails, masts and other merchandise needed on the East Indiamen. Throughout the eighteenth century, the Company sent between ten and twenty ships every year to the East, and so provided many opportunities for employment, investment and trade. The Company gave pensions to some of its employees and also made donations to the London Hospital.

Given the prospects of making a fortune by trading with the East, it is no surprise that many Mile End families maintained connections with the EIC for two or three generations before moving 'up west' or to country estates in Essex and Hertfordshire, when they had acquired sufficient wealth.

### The Brown Family

Three members of the Brown family held East India Company stock and lived in Mile End Old Town between 1716 and 1758. Captain Leonard Brown had taken the East Indiaman *Benjamin* to the east in 1689 and in 1719 he lived in Mile End and held £1,000 of East India Company stock. Grace Brown, also of Mile End, held over £2,000 of East India Company stock between 1716 and 1728, and held £1,000 until 1733.

A merchant of some importance, Thomas Brown lived in Mile End Old Town from at least 1723 until his death in 1756; perhaps he was the son of Grace and Leonard Brown? His wealth can be judged from his shareholding of £6,900 in the East India Company in 1723, which he increased to £8,000 by 1738. He evidently felt this was adequate for he did not buy any further shares, but was under no compulsion to sell, as he retained the holding until 1755. There is no evidence (yet) on the nature of his business, but the Mile End Old

Town rate-books show him as having stock of value £200 in 1714, and this was the maximum value for any merchant. From 1738 he is described in the Middlesex Freeholder lists as Thomas Brown 'on the Green', where his neighbours were Thomas Heath and Stephen Martin Leake.

### The Fitzhugh Family

In the 1720s Mary Pyne of Stepney married Captain William Fitzhugh, a Commander of East India Company ships and a ship's husband, and they lived in Mile End. Fitzhugh made several voyages between 1714 and 1730 to Batavia, Bengal, Madras and Calcutta in the *Derby*, and thus his wife is representative of the many women in Mile End Old Town whose husbands were away for one or two years at a time. William Fitzhugh prospered and by 1717 held £500 of East India stock. Lady Mary was widowed about 1730, and she then held £1,000 of East India Company stock. This increased to £9,000 in 1738, but she reduced her holding to £4,000 by 1742 and sold up completely a year later. She continued to live in Mile End, for in 1765 it was recorded that 'a foreigner drowned in a pond behind her house'.

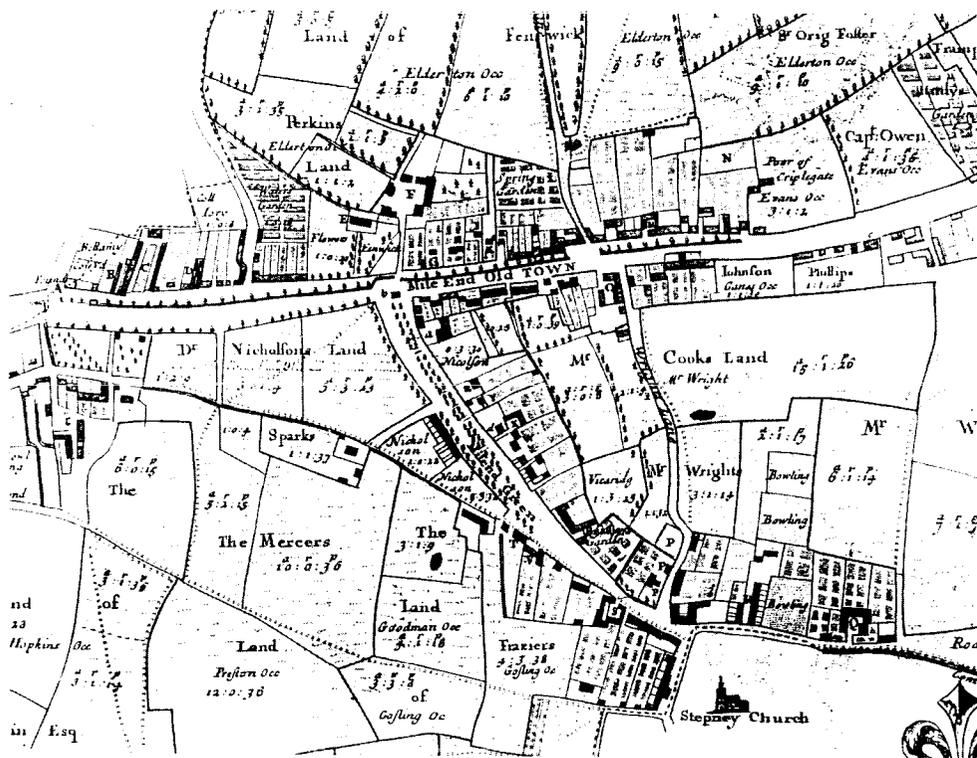
Their son, Thomas Fitzhugh, was born in 1728 and in 1746 was appointed writer or clerk to the Supercargo on the *Sandwich* which sailed to the East. Two years later he became a Supercargo, and served the East India Company in this role for thirty years, when he retired with a reputed fortune of £60,000. He lived in London in the 1770s but returned to China. By 1794 he was a member of the East India Company with two votes, and lived in Portland Place until his death in 1800.

### The Heath Family

William Heath was an East India captain in the seventeenth century who was favourably mentioned in Dampier's *Voyages*. One of his sons was Thomas Heath, born in Stepney after 1674, who became a prosperous East India merchant and was a director of the East India Company between 1713 and 1721. Thomas married the daughter of Arthur Bayley of Mile End Green, who was a Virginian merchant, and thus inherited considerable land in Essex. He also owned the Manor of Rumbolds in Bethnal Green, which included 130 acres of meadow, 150 acres of pasture and 30 acres of marsh.

Both Thomas Heath and his brother Edmund Pike Heath (1675-1749) became Whig M.P.s, Thomas for Haslemere and Harwich (1713-1722) and Edmund for Calne (1723). In 1733 Thomas applied to Walpole for the government interest at Harwich, but his reputation as a 'lousy fellow' led to his being unsuccessful. Thomas lived in Stepney until 1740 and died a year later at his estate at Stanstead Mount Fitchet in Essex.

His son, Bailey Heath, lived in Grays Inn and in 1749 he owned messuages and land in Mile End, ten acres of which he sold to the Governors of the London Hospital. Bailey Heath is frequently mentioned in Mile End Old Town deeds. In 1753 Adam Richardson advanced £10,000 to Bailey Heath in order to enable Bailey to 'pay off the Fortunes of the younger child of his late father'. This child, Frances, was to marry the Hon. Henry Knight with a considerable dowry, so her brother released land in the parishes of



Part of the Hamlet of Mile End Old Town, from Gascoyne's 1703 map. (Tower Hamlets Libraries)

Stanstead Mount Fitchet and Manorden, near Bishop's Stortford. Also included in the transaction were 'sixteen acres more or less lying in two Closes of ground in London Fields'.

### Thomas Lane

The stockholders books of the East India Company clearly show that at any time in the eighteenth century between ten and twenty Mile End residents held stock; however, only one man was an active trader in stock.

Thomas Lane left Christ's Hospital School in 1724 and was apprenticed 'to serve John Caswell of London, Merchant, or his brother, Henry Caswell, in Boston in New England, Merchant, for 7 years'. By 1735 Lane was a partner in a company which eventually became Lane, Son & Francis. By 1757, he was shown in the the East India Company as living in Mile End, and he stayed there until 1769, when he moved to Bedford Row. Lane was a major trader in stock purchasing £33,000 of stock in 1761, and in 1763 he carried forward a balance of £7,500.

### Stephen Martin Leake

Leake lived in Mile End Old Town from 1718 until his death in 1773, and was closely associated with the College of Arms and was appointed Garter King of Arms in 1754.

Leake arranged for his children to go to school and to have private tutors who taught them French and Latin 'three times a week, two hours each time at two and a half guineas per month'. He then made every effort to secure a good future for his sons; John was appointed a Chester Herald at the age of 14 in 1752, the expenses totalling £84 13s. 0d. He retained this office until 1791, when it passed to his younger brother George Leake. His brother Stephen was created Norfolk Herald Extraordinary in 1761.

In view of the many former sea captains living in Mile End Old Town, it is not surprising that an ambitious parent should wish his son to be given the chance to go on a voyage to India or China and perhaps begin the building of a small fortune. So it was that Stephen Martin Leake on 19th January 1757 paid Mr. Chalmers three guineas to teach navigation to his son Tommy, who was then 14 years old. This was the beginning of a period of preparation, which culminated on the 26th August, when Leake went to 'The Tavern' with Captain Hunt and Captain Mainwaring, and spent 14 shillings on 'ale and porter', whilst they discussed the forthcoming voyage to Bombay of the *Tilbury*. Thomas Hunt had commanded the *Marlborough* on two voyages to India in 1731-3 and 1734-5 for the East India Company, and had then settled in Mile End Old Town as a merchant and as a Churchwarden at St. Dunstan's.

Captain Roger Mainwaring was preparing for his first voyage to India as a captain and the *Tilbury* was being built at the East India Company's Dock at Blackwall. Together the three men probably drew up the following list of items that Tommy Leake would require on his two year voyage:

	£.	s.	d.
Sea chest	1.	5.	0.
Padlock, hasp and Painting	00.	4.	0.
Wiggs	2.	2.	0.
Linen Drapery	14.	16.	0.
Powder	0.	9.	0.
Shoes	1.	10.	0.
Stockings	2.	19.	0.
Books	1.	4.	0.
Taylors Bills	12.	8.	0.
Payd upon Tommy's account and for his own use	20.	0.	0.
1 lot of charts for India	0.	10.	0.
A Journal book	0.	10.	6.
6 Quire of paper	0.	3.	6.
One hundred pens	0.	2.	0.
Two papers of ink	0.	2.	0.
A Pr. of scissors	0.	1.	0.
A dinner knife and fork	0.	1.	6.

A clasp knife	0.	1.	6.
A small knife	0.	1.	0.
3 combs and comb brush	0.	1.	8.
A Quadrant		17.	6.

In addition, his chest contained a clothes brush, wash ball, pocket glass, pencils, razors, a slate and pencils, a case of instruments and wax.

### The Voyage

On Sunday, 16th October, 1757, Captain Mainwaring went on board the *Tilbury* which was moored at Blackwall 'with the Light Inch Hawser to the Flood and stream cable to the Ebb'. Thus began a five month period of preparation for the long voyage to India. At first they loaded 30 tons of ballast followed by '180 pigs of the Company's lead', old cables and ship's stores.

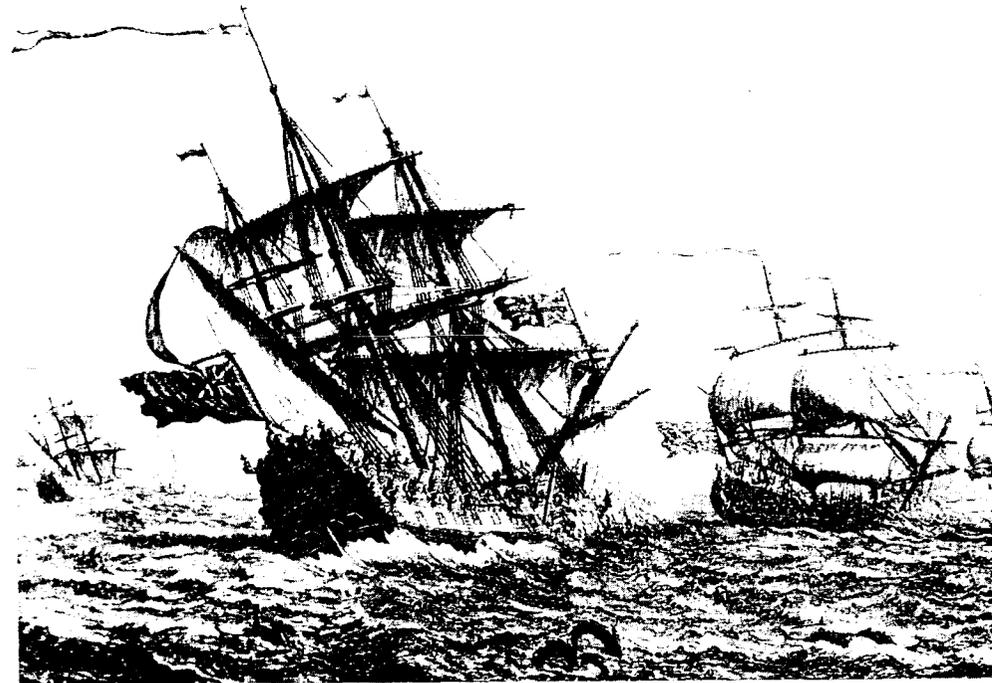
Early on 5th November the weather was cloudy with a fresh gale but this did not deter John May, the Pilot, from joining the *Tilbury* together with thirty men at seven o'clock. The *Tilbury* slipped its moorings at ten o'clock and moved to Gravesend, where it anchored 'with the smalls to the Flood, unbent the sails and struck the Yard and Top mast'. Thus began the second phase of loading with Gunners stores, casks of red and white lead, 8 chests of arms, gun carriages, a keg of musket ball, 57 bales of cloth, 460 rounds of shot, 4 chests of wine, 20 barrels of pitch and tar, 3 chests of medicine, one chest of gunpowder, 12 casks of Brandy and 28 parcels 'for the Troops going to India'.

On 27th December, 1757, 111 soldiers went on board the *Tilbury* and on 7th January, 1758, with light breezes and fine pleasant weather, the *Tilbury* weighed anchor and moved down to moor off the easternmost point of the Isle of Sheppey. A week later they moved to the Downs and saluted the Admiral with 15 guns. By now they were in company with several Men of War and seventy Sail. On 14th January, the Company's Agent came on board, but it was not until 7th February that Captain Mainwaring received his sailing instructions, and on Thursday, 14th February 'came on board Mr. Harrington, Supercargo, and other passengers'. By 23rd February they were moored off Bembridge and a month later they were 'turning to windward between Madeira and the Sertores'.

Two years later the *Tilbury* anchored off Gravesend on 26th September, 1760, and within a few days, Tommy Leake would have been safely back with his parents, brothers and sisters at their house in Mile End Old Town. There was to be at least one more meeting between Stephen Leake and Captain Mainwaring, for on 22nd November, 1760 Leake paid 'Captain Mainwaring in full for money advanced by him for Tommy during the voyage . . . £12 0s. 0d.'

### Gilbert Slater

Captain Gilbert Slater had a career that was typical of many men in the 'shipping interest' of the East India Company. As Commander of the 499 ton



East Indiamen. 1720

*Triton*, he made two voyages to China between 1750 and 1754 before embarking on a long career as a merchant, shipowner and Assurance Director. His investments in the East India Company began in 1750 with £1,000 of stock, which was quickly sold. He re-entered the market in 1761 but never held more than £1,000. Ships on charter to the East India Company were his major interest, and between 1766 and 1790 he had interests in the *Lioness*, *Triton*, *Pacific*, *Sea Horse* and *Major*. Frequently the shipping interests divided the ownership of a ship into sixteenths, thirty-seconds and later, as the ships became larger, into sixty-fourths, in order to share the commercial risks.

As the ships were built at dockyards in the Thames, it was convenient for Captain Slater to live in Mile End Old Town, which he did from 1746 to 1778, and he actively involved himself in Vestry matters. He was also elected an Elder Brother of Trinity House in 1765 and remained so until his death in 1785.

## Laurence Sullivan

Sullivan was a famous and powerful Director of the East India Company. His connections with Mile End Old Town span the period from 1738 until at least 1760. Little is known about his early life, but he was probably born in 1713 in Cork, Ireland. The rate-books for Mile End Old Town in 1738 records Laurence Sullivan as having premises with a rateable value of £200, which implies a merchant of some standing. He then went to India where he spent the years 1740 to 1753 and became a wealthier man.

It is therefore of interest that on his return to England in 1753 with considerable wealth and an important contribution to make to the affairs of the East India Company, he chose to settle again in Mile End Old Town. Whilst several authors have emphasised the move of the 'quality' to the developing residential areas in the West End, it seems clear that for merchants deeply involved in shipping, Mile End Old Town was a more convenient place to live and work. Whilst a wealthy man, Sullivan was not noted as a freeholder in Mile End Old Town between 1753 and 1760.

Sullivan had a villa on 'The Green' in Mile End Old Town until at least 1760, when Clive of India visited him. In 1761 he bought Ponsborne Manor in Hertfordshire for £13,500, and this was his country home until his death in 1786. Sullivan also maintained houses in the West End, being at Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury in 1760, and at Great Ormond Street, in 1767. He was an active trader in East India Company shares between 1755 and 1769. His holding was £2,000 between 1755 and 1761, but gradually increased to £4,500 by 1769.

In his years living on The Green, Sullivan obviously met the other leading citizens including Stephen Martin Leake, and on 26th November 1762, Leake recorded that he paid two shillings to 'Mr. Sullivan's man for bringing a Fillet of Beef'.

## The Winter Family

Captain Nehemiah Winter was a prominent East India Company captain, shareholder and director, whose initial connections with the Dissenters Community in Stepney were continued by his nephew James Winter. The records for the Old Gravel Lane Church in Stepney show that Nehemiah Winter and his wife Elizabeth had their children baptised there between 1704 and 1712.

In 1709 Captain Winter sailed to the East and in 1712 he was Master of the *King William* to Madras. On his retirement from the sea he moved from Stepney to Finchley. From 1719 he was a major shareholder in the East India Company starting with £2,000 of stock, which increased to £2,500 between 1723 and 1734. On his death in 1734 his shareholdings were divided amongst his children, one of whom, Captain Ralph Farr Winter, also became an East India captain.

James Winter was another director of the East India Company who lived in Mile End Old Town (1728-1756). He was probably born in 1692, the son of John Winter, a Deptford shipbuilder. His uncle, Captain Nehemiah Winter, in 1712 commanded the East Indiaman *King William* on which James

Winter was the Mate. In turn he became the Commander of the *King William*, and in 1721 he was Commander of the 480-ton *Eyles*, which he took to China, and in 1724 to 'Coast and Bay' (another term for the Bay of Bengal). In 1728 James Winter resigned his command due to ill-health and the Directors of the East India Company accepted his cousin, Captain Ralph Farr Winter (son of Nehemiah) as the next Commander of the *Eyles*, in which James retained a commercial interest. This strong family connection with the East India Company was to continue after James Winter's death in 1756.

James Winter first appears as a Mile End Old Town freeholder in 1728, and lived on Mile End Green until 1756. His rents in 1746 were only £38.0s.0d., which was modest by comparison with other Mile End merchants. However, from 1734 until his death he was major shareholder in the East India Company and generally he held over £3,500 of stock. Thus, he was a Director of the East India Company between 1740 and 1749 as well as an Elder Brother of Trinity House between 1738 and 1756. He was also a prominent member of the London Dissenting Community and was the leader of group of malcontents, who, as Manning wrote, 'wanted the Protestant Dissident Deputies to take more energetic action in dealing with their problems and to form a fresh committee and a national organisation'.

## REFERENCES

The private accounts of Martin Leake are on microfilm at the Local History Library, Bancroft Road, London E.1.

C. Gill, *Merchants and Mariners of the Eighteenth Century*, (London 1961).

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## THE IMPERIAL, CANNING TOWN

Cyril Demarne

EAST Enders on the right side of sixty years of age will have little or no recollection of the Old Imperial Theatre in Barking Road at the top of The March (Victoria Dock Road). Yet, for more than half a century 'the Imp' as it was affectionately known to all its patrons, was the centre of entertainment in Canning Town.

The theatre started life as The Royal Albert Music Hall; the title gives clue to the date, for the Royal Albert Dock was opened in 1880. The hall was better known as Relf's, following the custom of the day in referring to a theatre after its proprietor, in this case a Mr. Charles Relf. Other contemporary halls similarly known include Wilton's, Gatti's, Collin's, etc. In the nineties the Royal Albert was advertised in *The Stage* as 'The handsomest and most comfortable in East London, entirely illuminated by electricity.'

The hall, with its in-built pub, 'The Town of Ayr', derived much of its patronage from the workers engaged in building the dock at Plaistow Marshes and from the Thames Ironworks. It continued to thrive through the turn of the century and regularly featured top line acts engaged 'at enormous expense'. These included Tom Costello ('At Trinity Church I met me doom'); Charlie Coburn ('Two lovely black eyes' and 'The man who broke the bank at Monte Carlo'); Kate Carney ('Three pots a shilling'); Vesta Victoria ('Waiting at the Church'); Gus Elen ('It's a great big shame'); Ella Shields ('Burlington Bertie from Bow'), to mention but a few.

In the early days of the century Charles Relf decided to refurbish his theatre at about the same time as Lily Langtry's theatre, built for her by King Edward VII, was being demolished. Here was an opportunity too good to be missed and Relf snapped up many bargains. The entire surface of the auditorium walls was faced with polished marble slabs. These were taken down and removed to Canning Town, together with the Royal Box with its sumptuous gold-embroidered crimson silk curtains and the massive crimson and gold proscenium curtains. Having transferred much of the interior decoration of Lily's beautiful theatre to East London, Charles Relf decided to annex the title also and, in due course, the newly decorated and refurnished hall re-opened its doors as the Imperial Theatre of Varieties.

Some years later, the hall passed into the ownership of Mr. Archie McDowell who continued to present Variety Shows and a Pantomime at Christmas, before and during the Great War. But it was the cinema that was attracting the big audiences at the end of that war and business at Music Halls throughout the country began to decline. Mr. McDowell sold his theatre to the people who owned the Poplar Pavilion. The new owners decided to present films and two or three variety acts in continuous performances daily. The last panto staged at the Imperial was Aladdin, presented at Christmas 1920. One of the big successes of the show was a tableau representing the famous Pears Soap advertisement and the song, of course, was 'I'm forever blowing bubbles'. Audiences joined in with great gusto and the tune was heard everywhere. It was whistled in the streets, sung in the pubs and,

particularly, at the Boleyn football ground. West Ham Football Club reached the 1923 Cup Final (the first time the match was played at Wembley Stadium) and Bubbles was adopted as the Club's supporters' song.

The theatre was renamed the New Imperial Cinema and re-opened in January 1921. A typical programme consisted of a newsreel, two feature length films (The Gish sisters; Pauline Frederick; William Farnum; William S. Hart; Lionel Barrymore, etc.) and two or three variety acts. It was a three hour show for which seats were priced sixpence in the gallery, ninepence and a shilling in the pit and one and threepence in the circle. Patrons at matinees were offered a cup of tea and a biscuit free of charge and patrons purchasing a programme at tuppence were included in a draw for a prize of ten-shillings at each performance. Some artistes always received an extra warm welcome at the Imp., particularly local favourites. Among these was a tall, buxom comedienne called Ida Barr, always billed as 'Ida Barr? She'd 'ida bloomin' pub!'

In the early twenties the electricity supply in West Ham was decidedly creaky. Blackouts were frequent, cutting off power for the projectors and bringing the show to a halt. With perhaps two thousand people in the hall clamouring for entertainment, the management was faced with a serious problem, but experience produced at least a partial solution. There were several local performers among those who regularly appeared on the Variety programme. Arrangements were made with these people to 'come running' in response to an urgent call so that the show might go on. The acts on the current week's bill went on first, followed by the auxiliaries as they arrived. The performance started not in the blaze of the customary footlights but in the light of a couple of dozen or so candles, mounted on the stage side of the original Victorian 'shell' shades. The result was a pleasantly mellow glow which enhanced many an act. Unfortunately, the stage curtains could not be lowered between the acts; the first time it was tried the draught blew out all the candles!

Among the locals was a male impersonator called Vesta Fay, an old pro and a great favourite with Canning Town audiences. She had reached that stage in her life when the soft candlelight was distinctly flattering. Vesta really warmed to her performance at the sight of the old-style footlights. She slapped her thigh, filled and lit her pipe with all the old gusto she employed way back in the heyday of the Music Hall. And the crowd loved it.

If the blackout lasted, the turns would go on again until the current was restored. I gained the impression that the audience enjoyed these breaks since there was always a groan before the applause which greeted the return of the lights.

'The Imp' continued to prosper even in the dark days of the 'thirties, when one in five of the working population was unemployed. The management reduced the admission charge at matinees and many came in for warmth and the chance to escape from their bleak existence for a few hours.

The New Imperial met its doom in the early thirties when it was destroyed by fire. Flames were roaring through the roof when firemen arrived in the early hours of the morning and there was no hope of saving the old place. Lily Langtry's expensive furnishings, with all the rest, went up in smoke and, though the theatre was rebuilt, it never achieved the style or character of its predecessor.

## COPPERFIELD ROAD RAGGED SCHOOL

T. S. Ridge

THOMAS John Barnardo came to Stepney in 1866 and joined the staff of the Ernest Street Ragged School, becoming its superintendent, until his resignation in 1867. He went on to found the East End Juvenile Mission on 2 March 1868 in two small cottages at the end of a blind alley called Hope Place, World's End, Limehouse.<sup>1</sup> By 1875, his Hope Place Ragged School and another in Salmon's Lane, which he acquired in 1870, were so overcrowded with children from the poorest families in the locality and '... badly ventilated, ill-drained and inconveniently situated...' that the premises were condemned by the Privy Council of Education and the London School Board.<sup>2</sup> On 29 September 1876, Barnardo took a 21 year lease on two warehouses in Copperfield Road, for £200 a year, and converted them into two new schools.<sup>3</sup>

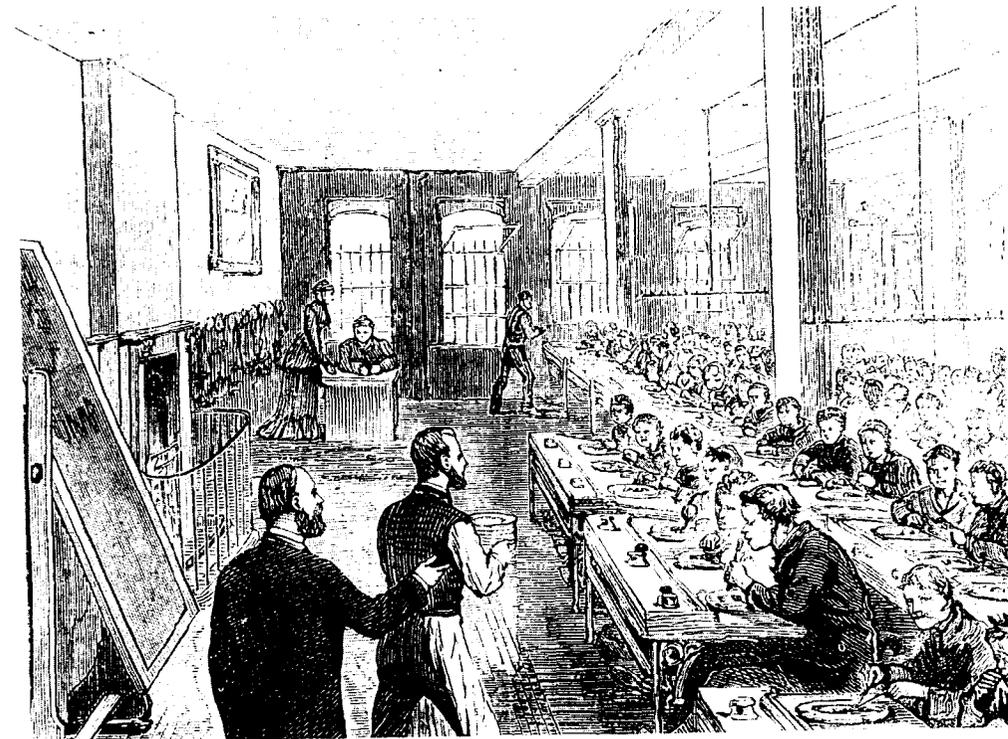
Copperfield Road had been laid out by the owners of the White's Estate and the name given official approval in 1868. George Hewett, a local builder, leased land alongside the Regent's Canal in 1872 and built warehouses which were acquired by three Scottish oil and provision merchants in 1875. Their partnership was dissolved the next year and they leased two of the warehouses to Dr. Barnardo, selling the freehold to Robert Westall in 1877.<sup>4</sup> Barnardo simply replaced the loopholes on the first and second floors with windows, but left the four wall cranes — three of which are still in position. A short pediment was added to the front parapet to give a unified 'classical' appearance to the edifice and announce its change of function.<sup>5</sup> The alterations cost £2,105 and provided accommodation for 359 boys and girls, in separate schools with their own entrances.<sup>6</sup>

The Ragged Schools opened in 1877 with four paid teachers and six paid monitors and an average daily attendance of 100 girls and 70 mixed infants and 106 boys. The Sunday School was attended by 1,500 children together with about 33 voluntary teachers.<sup>7</sup> By 1879, the Copperfield Road Schools were the largest of the 144 London Ragged Schools affiliated to Lord Shaftesbury's Ragged School Union. The Sunday School was not only by far the best attended in London, it was also '... one of the largest schools of this class in England, with some 2,500 on the books and average attendance of 1,750...'.<sup>8</sup>

During the winter of 1878-79, the half-starved scholars could look forward to one hot dinner a week, consisting of '... Irish Stew, a good nutritious soup, or of a meat cooked in some other way, with a plentiful supply of vegetables...'. The children paid a halfpenny for a large piece of bread, according to the plan of the Destitute Children's Dinner Society, but in all other respects the dinner was free.<sup>9</sup> As a member of the East End Relief Association, Barnardo distributed food and clothing in the early days at Hope Place and by 1871 he was serving the occasional hot dinner to his pupils.<sup>10</sup> By 1885, dinners were being served three times a week, together with breakfast. These were arranged for under the supervision of the schoolmaster and his wife, Mr. & Mrs. W. K. Butler — altogether over 26,000 free breakfasts and nearly 21,000 free dinners were supplied.<sup>11</sup> In the winter of

1886 dinner was served four times a week when 30% of the pupils reached school without breakfast and 30% '... had only had a piece of dry bread before leaving home, while 60% expected no dinner'.<sup>12</sup> By 1888, free breakfasts and dinners were available every day during the winter months, when Barnardo wrote of his pupils, 'They know what it is to have no fire in the grate and no bread in the cupboard; and we find in many cases that food is more essential to the boys and girls than education'.<sup>13</sup> In 1889 the free breakfasts consisted of bread and hot cocoa and the dinners of, '... lentil or pea soup and bread, varied occasionally by rice and prunes or haricot beans'.<sup>14</sup> The meals were provided by Dr. Barnardo's Free Meal Branch and were either free or for the nominal sum of a halfpenny for breakfast and a penny for dinner. Meals were not provided in public Elementary schools until the passing of the Education (Provision for Meals) Act in 1906.

*This classroom will be reconstructed in the museum for a variety of uses by schoolchildren and visitors. (Night and Day 1879)*



Classes were also held on two evenings a week for the older boys and girls and from 1877, the Factory Girls' Club Institute held meetings in the school on three evenings a week. These were well attended by about 200 girls, mostly from the match factories, and were conducted by ladies from the Deaconess House in Mile End Road. The girls were taught writing, sewing, needlework and how to make their own clothes.<sup>15</sup> In 1884, the Working Lads' Institute was established in the small two-storey building at the end of Copperfield Road.<sup>16</sup> This was open every night to 'Youths of Thirteen Years old and upwards' who attended Dr. Barnardo's three Sunday Schools. On Wednesday evenings, the Institute Drum and Fife Band practised and '... occasionally marched out through the neighbouring streets'.<sup>17</sup>

The Free Ragged Day School at Copperfield Road were recognised by the Privy Council for Education from their inception in 1877 and so were subject to inspection and government grant. 638 pupils were presented for examination in 1891-92 and those that passed earned the schools a total of £365 9s. 8d.<sup>18</sup> Total income from this and other government grants amounted to £550 5s. 5d. in 1893, to which was added £618 5s. 0d. from voluntary contributions via the agency of Dr. Barnardo's Homes and a small grant from the Ragged Schools Union, to which the Schools were affiliated.<sup>19</sup> The Homes also supplied the free school meals.

The Government Report for 1893 concludes, 'The kind but firm discipline maintained under circumstances of the most trying nature, and inseparable from premises so little suitable, is most creditable to the zealous staff. Reading in the first class of the Infants' School is still the prominent weakness in the work done in the Elementary Subjects. Recitation, Singing, and Drill are very satisfactory, and exercises in Kindergarden are employed with very good results. Order in the lower classes is excellent. The number of desks in need of repair is so great as to impede seriously the efforts of the staff in the upper division of the school. Here, as in other departments, the accuracy of the Registers should be more frequently tested. In the Evening School the teaching is very judicious and successful.'<sup>20</sup>

Children attending Board Schools had to pay between one and six pence a week, and although this payment was abolished in the Tower Hamlets Division in 1890, children from the poorest families in the locality continued to attend the Free Ragged Schools in increasing numbers. After 1898 average attendance was always well over 600, with well over a thousand on the register.<sup>21</sup> In 1895, Dr. Barnardo wrote 'The children attending these Schools are mostly drawn from "Limehouse Fields", a thickly populated region covered with houses containing three or four rooms each . . . The population is largely a riverside one, but it includes very many hawkers, costermongers, fish-curers, proprietors of exhibitions such as attend "fairs" in summer, and such like . . .'<sup>22</sup>

Again in 1897, 'During the summer months there is a large exodus from the neighbourhood for the hop and fruit-picking seasons. Not a few of the children also belong to the families of hawkers, wandering showmen, and of canal boatmen . . . The percentage of attendances, therefore, sometimes falls below fifty! Not merely do children who are so much absent lose the benefits of education, but it is a matter of extreme difficulty to maintain discipline over them when they do return'.<sup>23</sup> For those who stayed behind

during the summer exodus there was seldom a chance to see the countryside or the seaside: so with the financial support of the Children's Country Holiday Fund, Barnardo sent such Copperfield Road children for a fortnight's summer holiday in the country.<sup>24</sup> The first large group to benefit was in 1889 when 75 children, mostly girls, '... many of them weak and ailing . . .' stayed with '... cottagers residing within 50 miles of London . . .', on payment of 5 shillings per week each — three shillings from the CCHF and two shillings from Barnardo's Fresh Air Fund, to which the parents were encouraged to pay occasional pennies.<sup>25</sup>

Overcrowding in the classrooms became so serious that the Inspectors from the Education Department insisted on improvements<sup>26</sup> and plans involving the adjacent warehouse to the south were approved in February 1895, though it was noted that the first floor rooms were too low and the numbers reduced accordingly.<sup>27</sup> The additional premises were leased by Dr. Barnardo on 16 November 1895 for 21 years from 24 June 1895 at a rent of £70.<sup>28</sup> In August, the Architect, Ebenezer Gregg, drew up the Specification for '... the various additions to and alterations in the Copperfield Road Schools Limehouse E for Dr. T. J. Barnardo'.

The walls of the original premises were to be raised by four feet, the pediment and roof rebuilt, and the basement made into a playground; five openings were to be made in the dividing wall on the original premises and two new granolithic staircases on Dorman Long steel girders erected on either side; new fireplaces and larger windows fitted in places and 2,000 School Board Regulation Hat and Coat Pegs to be fixed; repairs made to the Working Lads' Institute.<sup>29</sup> During the building work, the girls and infants were transferred to St. Anne's Iron Hall and the boys were taught in the Burdett Dormitory. The children returned to their schools on 8 June 1896. Dr. Barnardo's Annual Report for this year gives the following information:<sup>30</sup>

Day School Children under instruction	1,075
Older Boys and Girls attending evening classes	178
Children in attendance at Sunday School	2,460
Children sent out into the country for a fortnight's holiday	157
Cases inquired into for Relief and Soup Dinners supplied	1,560
Children's Free Meals supplied	65,542
Boots and old garments supplied to necessitous cases	8,040
Boys and Girls assisted with suitable outfits upon entering their first situation	27
Teachers	13

Pupils leaving the Schools were not only provided with suitable clothing for their job, they were encouraged to keep it: for instance, in 1897 prizes were given to 46 former Night School scholars for retaining their situations, 28 of whom had done so for three and five years.<sup>31</sup> The boys were often found work either in Dr. Barnardo's Woodchopping Brigade or his City Messenger Brigade. Like others in the Ragged School Movement, Barnardo was very conscious of the need to provide employment for his old pupils.

Soon after starting the Hope Place Ragged School, he established his own branch of the Union Jack Shoeblack Brigade for homeless boys attending the school. The Brigade headquarters and home in The Mitre, Limehouse, was eventually taken over by the E.E.J.M. in 1875. Not only did the Brigade allow destitute boys to make a living, it also found them more permanent jobs, up until its closure in 1905.<sup>32</sup> Also in 1868, Barnardo established a Woodchopping Brigade to give winter employment for about 20 old boys living at home. The Brigade was situated on the Regent's Canal at Rhodeswell Wharf, Carr Street, where Baltic timber was unloaded and chopped into bundles of firewood for sale. In 1883, the work was transferred to the Youth's Labour House, Commercial Road, where it was mostly undertaken by the seventeen year old inmates.<sup>33</sup> The most successful of Barnardo's employment agencies for old boys was the City Messenger Brigade: founded in 1870 for '... lads of good character living at home with one or both parents ... able to read sufficiently well ...' and of '... respectable appearance ...'. The uniformed boys delivered messages, letters and parcels for eighteen months, after which time most had '... obtained permanent situations with merchants and tradesmen in the City ...' by 1888, there were about 100 members, each earning about seven shillings a week, from which the cost of their uniform was deducted in small instalments.<sup>34</sup>

The girls had far less difficulty finding work as there was a great demand for cheap girl labour in the numerous blacking, confectionery, jam, pickle, food and match factories. Their wages were often a necessary supplement to the family income, especially during periods of high male unemployment. In this respect, Barnardo thought that factory life among young girls '... appears to be a social necessity ...' but '... not conducive to the cultivation of gentle manners ...' nor '... domestic instincts and accomplishments ...'. It was to foster these virtues that he established the Factory Girls' Club & Institute. In particular, the evening meetings were '... of great value in keeping the girls away from the temptations of the streets ...' but domestic service was seen as the best solution to the problems: so from 1883 onwards, the Deaconesses encouraged the fifteen year olds to apply to Dr. Barnardo's Training Home for Girls in Bow Road. Here they trained for two or three months, '... under the able superintendence of Miss Kennedy ...', going out as day servants in the East End, and then being found a situation by the Servant's Free Registry Office.<sup>35</sup>

October, 1904 saw a drastic change in the admission policy on the Boys' side of the School, when 251 local boys were turned out to make way for orphan boys from Leopold House.<sup>36</sup> This was a Dr. Barnardo Home in Burdett Road for 10 to 13 year olds who were educated on the premises and finally shipped off to Canada each summer.<sup>37</sup> The Local Government Board thought that the boys '... should have more outdoor exercise and not be confined entirely to the premises in which they reside ...'. As a result, their school was closed and they were sent to Copperfield Road. Although the L.C.C. were not informed, they knew of the change but did nothing until January 1905, when they stopped the Masters' salaries as the L.C.C. were no longer responsible for supporting what had become an Institutional School. In June 1905, the Copperfield Road Managers appealed to the Board of Education, stating that they had been compelled to pay the teachers' salaries

and, enclosing correspondence which claimed that the Headmaster was under their instructions to take local boys, 34 of whom had been admitted since February. Officials at the Board of Education were of the opinion that Copperfield Road was clearly not an Institutional School within the meaning of the 1902 Act and wrote to the L.C.C. demanding that they maintain the school '... and if not to request ... why it should receive exceptional treatment ...'. The L.C.C. agreed to do so from 4 July, '... without expressing an opinion as to the unusual action of the managers in excluding a large number of children and of subsequently admitting a small number ...'. It was noted in Whitehall that neither the Managers nor the L.C.C. figured very well in the affair and that the Council wished to punish the former for not having consulted them in the first instance. The Board hoped the Council would maintain the school from 1 January to 4 July 1905, which they finally consented to in October 1905.<sup>38</sup>

Most of the local boys given notice the year before had probably found places at Council Schools in the vicinity, but doubtless missed their free meals at Copperfield Road. Leopold House boys continued their twice daily walk up until closure by the L.C.C. in 1908, when it seems they were the only boys in the Boys' Department at Copperfield Road.<sup>39</sup>

It was in January 1907 that the L.C.C. proposed a reduction in the accommodation, mainly because the first floor classrooms were too low, by the end of the year the Board of Education had agreed to their unsuitability and most of the first floor children were found places at Single Street and South Grove Council Schools. On 30 May 1908, the Council resolved to close Barnardo's Free School because, 'The rooms are all low, irregular in shape and cut up by columns ... urinals in a dilapidated condition ... playgrounds are inadequate and there is no accommodation for the teachers in the infants' department'. The school was closed on 5 June 1908 and of the 413 pupils in attendance, 136 went to rooms formerly used by Stepney Pupil Teacher Centre at Trafalgar Square School and 141 to the adjoining Ocean Street temporary iron building.<sup>40</sup> Dr. Barnardo's planned to reopen Leopold House School, which the L.C.C. were prepared to maintain provided alterations were made. Although the Board gave approval, Dr. Barnardo's abandoned their scheme in 1909 and boys from the Home continued to attend local schools until Leopold House was closed in 1912.<sup>41</sup>

The Copperfield Road premises were renamed 'Edinburgh Castle Mission School' and used for Sunday School and Services, Evening Classes under the Inspection of the Science and Art Department, Classes for Factory Girls on Tuesdays and Thursdays and various clubs and bands.<sup>42</sup> The Annual Report for 1909 records that 'a generous friend gave a Christmas Treat to 2,500 children at the Sunday School, under the auspices of the Duke and Duchess of Somerset, Mrs. Barnardo and others'. This took place on the Twelfth Day of Christmas, 5 January 1910 at the Edinburgh Castle. 'There was an ample meal, a distribution of prizes afterwards and a perfectly delightful Christmas tree, the gift of Mr. H. Gordon Selfridge'.<sup>43</sup> The 1909 and later Reports refer to the 'Copperfield Road Mission School' where the numerous agencies for the benefit of children in the neighbourhood continued until early 1915, when they moved to the Edinburgh Castle. The Factory Girls' Club was the last to leave for the Castle 'on expiration of lease'

Children from the Mission Sunday School outside Dr. Barnardo's former Ragged School, waving their invitation cards to the treat at the Edinburgh Castle. (Barnardo's)



in 1916.<sup>44</sup> For the next sixty or so years, the buildings were occupied mostly by clothing manufacturers and the exteriors remained substantially unaltered, though the top floor of 48 Copperfield Road was re-built following bomb damage in World War II.<sup>45</sup>

Copperfield Road was to have been demolished for an extension to Mile End Park but a case for the retention of 46, 48 and 50 Copperfield Road was made on the grounds that they were the only Dr. Barnardo buildings still in the heart of the area where he began his pioneering work for all destitute children and founded the largest of the nineteenth century philanthropic organisations. As such, it was believed that 46 and 48 Copperfield Road, that once housed the largest Ragged School in London, would make an ideal home for a museum about the East End and the history of education and youth provision in London. Also, that the old Working Lads' Institute at 50 Copperfield Road would convert to a community centre.<sup>46</sup> To this end, the Ragged School Museum Trust was set up in 1983,<sup>47</sup> secured the listing of 46 and 48 Copperfield Road as Grade II historic buildings in 1985 and by early 1986 had acquired the freeholds of all three properties with a grant from the GLC Arts & Recreation Committee. By 1987, it is hoped that the community resource centre will be providing a playgroup facility and services for parents of handicapped children<sup>48</sup> and that the first stage of the Ragged School Museum will be open at 48 Copperfield Road, with the main part of the museum opening in 1988.

#### NOTES

1. Thomas John Barnardo *The First Occasional Record of the Lord's Dealings in connection with the East End Juvenile Missions*. London 1868.  
East End Juvenile Mission — Yearly Statement 1868-69.  
My thanks to John Nowell and staff of Barnardo's Library for their help and access to these and the Annual Reports of The East End Juvenile Mission and Dr. Barnardo's Homes. Also, the official monthly journal *Night and Day*. The approximate site of the Mission is marked by an L.C.C. blue plaque on Solent House, Ben Jonson Road. The best biography of Barnardo is *Barnardo* by Gillian Wagner (London, 1979).
2. Annual Report for 1874-75.
3. LBTH Deeds No. 2212. My thanks to Christopher Lloyd and Harry Watton for their help with this and other deeds, maps and records relating to Barnardo Establishments.
4. Metropolitan Board of Works *Minutes*, 6 March 1868. LBTH Deeds No. 2212 and 5127.
5. The 1877 Conveyance (LBTH Deed No. 2212) contains a drawing of the front elevation of the two adjacent three-bay warehouses which may be compared with the earliest known illustration of 'Our Sunday and Free Day Schools, Copperfield Road' in *Night and Day*. Vol. III, 1879; pages 39-43 contain Barnardo's detailed account of the early years at Copperfield Road.
6. Annual Reports for 1876-77 and 1877-79. Committee of Council of Education Report 1878-79.
7. Quarterly Record, Ragged School Union 1878.
8. Quarterly Record, Ragged School Union 1879. Before 1879, George Yard, Whitechapel, was the largest Ragged School in London.
9. *Night and Day*. Vol. III, 1879, pp. 41-42.
10. Thomas John Barnardo *The First Occasional Record*. Annual Report for 1871-72.
11. Annual Report for 1885-86.
12. Annual Report for 1886-87. T. J. Barnardo *Something Attempted, Something Done!* London 1888, pp. 178, 233.
13. Annual Report for 1887-88.
14. *Night and Day*. Vol. XIII, 1889 p. 38.
15. *Night and Day*. Vol. III, 1879 p. 42. Annual Report for 1879-80.

16. Barnardo's Library, Handbill dated 27 September 1884. LBTH Deeds No. 5132: Architect's Specification, August 1895 LBTH O.S. map (1894) shows 'Working Lads' Institute'.
17. Barnardo's Library, Handbill dated 27 September 1884. T. J. Barnardo '*Something Attempted, Something Done!*' p. 162.
18. Annual Report for 1893 page 95.
19. DES Library, Minutes and Reports of the Committee of Privy Council on Education (1839-99) — 'Return for each Public Elementary School Examined . . . for the year ended 31 August 1893'.
20. Annual Report for 1893 pp. 94-95.
21. Annual Reports.
22. Annual Report for 1895.
23. Annual Report for 1897.
24. C.C.H.F. founded by Canon Barnett and his wife Henrietta in 1884.
25. *Night and Day*, Vol. XIII, 1889, pp. 68, 115-117. Annual Report for 1897.
26. Annual Report for 1895.
27. P.R.O. Ed 21/12071, 1895-1908, Limehouse Copperfield Road Free School. The calculations were made by E. R. Robson, consultant to the Education Department and former chief architect to the London School Board.
28. DES Library, Voluntary Schools Trust and Tenure 1906. The additional premises now 48 Copperfield Road.
29. LBTH Deeds No. 5132: Architect's Specification, August 1895. The works were to be completed by the end of October 1895, but according to a Licence to carry out the works, granted by Robert Westall's new Trustees on 4 February 1896, the builders, Messrs. Canning and Mullins of Newington Causeway, were still at work. On the same day that the Trustees granted the Licence, they also leased the double fronted school back to Robert Westall for 99 years from 25 December 1895, at an annual rent of £52 10s. 0d. Westall, by an Indenture of Underlease dated 11 February 1896, leased the premises to Dr. Thomas John Barnardo for 21 years from 25 December 1895 at an annual rent of £265. Information from various documents now in possession of Ragged School Museum Trust and Voluntary Schools Trusts and Tenure 1906.
30. Annual Reports for 1895 and 1896.  
St. Anne's Iron Hall or Gospel Hall was erected in 1875, next to the Edinburgh Castle Mission Church in Rhodeswell Road. The Burdett Dormitory was an overflow branch for boys from the Home in Stepney Causeway and the Youth's Labour House in Commercial Road, from 1884 to about 1909, formerly a Mission Hall called Burdett Hall which Barnardo purchased in 1875. It was on the corner of Burdett Road and Dod Street.
31. Annual Report for 1897.
32. Thomas John Barnardo *The First Occasional Record*. Annual Reports for 1874-75 and 1875-76.  
The Brigade was established in 1858 by a local committee.
33. Annual Report for 1882-83 and Directories.  
The Youth's Labour House or Labour House for Destitute Youths was established by Barnardo in 1882 at 626 Commercial Road, 622 and 624 were added in 1888. The 200 inmates were mostly employed in making mineral water.
34. Annual Reports for 1882-83, 1889 and 1891.
35. *Night and Day*, Vol. III, 1879 pp. 42-43.  
Annual Reports for 1882-83, 1884 and 1890.  
The Deaconesses were Evangelical ladies who resided at Barnardo's Deaconess House, situated at 403-405 Mile End Road from 1879 to 1898. The Servant's Free Registry Office and Training Home for Girls opened by Barnardo in January 1883 at Church House, 193 Bow Road, and moved to Sturge House, 32 Bow Road in about 1884, remaining there until 1897. The girls spent most of their time mending and washing clothes for boys in the Homes. Barnardo lived at 32 Bow Road from about 1876 to 1878; the house is now divided into flats.
36. GLRO School Admission & Discharge Registers — Copperfield Road Boys, 1897-1904.
37. Leopold House was opened in 1883 after Barnardo acquired the premises of the former St. Paul's Industrial School — see C. J. Lloyd's article in *East London Record* No. 7 — 1895. The site is now part of Elmslie Point on the corner of Burdett Road and Ackroyd Drive (formerly Turners Road). On Dr. Barnardo's and emigration see Gillian Wagner's *Children of the Empire* (London 1982).
38. P.R.O. Ed 21/12071, 1895-1908, Limehouse Copperfield Road Free School.
39. P.R.O. Ed 30/62, 1884-1909, Stepney: Burdett Road, Leopold House, Dr. Barnardo's Home School.
40. P.R.O. Ed 21/12071, 1895-1908, Limehouse Copperfield Road Free School.
41. P.R.O. Ed 30/62, 1884-1909, Stepney: Burdett Road, Leopold House, Dr. Barnardo's Home School. As well as several L.C.C. schools in the neighbourhood, some of the boys also went to Dr. Barnardo's Boys' School in Stepney Causeway (Annual Reports).
42. Annual Report for 1908.
43. *Night and Day*, Vol. XXXIII, 1910 page 18. 'The Edinburgh Castle' was a gin palace in Rhodeswell Road which Barnardo bought in 1872 and converted into the Working Men's Club and Coffee Palace, likewise, the music hall at the rear became the Edinburgh Castle Mission Church of People's Mission Church. The 'Castle' was the chief centre for all the local evangelical, temperance, medical and relief agencies operated by Dr. Barnardo's. The site is now part of the East London Stadium, Mile End Park.
44. Annual Report for 1915.
45. Dr. Barnardo's Executors surrendered the lease to Robert Westall's six nieces on 23 March 1916 and on the same day they leased 46 Copperfield Road for seven years to Martin and Wilfred de Selincourt, woollen warehousemen. From 1925, the property was leased to Harris and Woolf — Wholesale Manufacturing Clothiers — who surrendered their lease in 1937. After this, various floors were let to different clothing manufacturers. In 1949 the three surviving Westall sisters purchased the freehold of 46 Copperfield Road which they sold to Mr. Gerald Myers in 1965. (Documents now in possession of the Ragged School Museum Trust).
46. The case was made in September 1983 to the Mile End Park Steering Group, consisting of representatives of the London Boroughs of Tower Hamlets, Hackney and Newham, City of London Corporation and the GLC. A Feasibility Study by architect Peter Shaw and Ove, Arup & Partners was jointly funded by the GLC and LBTH and was printed and published by the Trust in September 1984 (copies are in LBTH Libraries). The Study contains a full list and map of the 38 different Dr. Barnardo Establishments so far located in Tower Hamlets, of which only six are still standing: the three in Copperfield Road; 32 Bow Road (see note 35); 182 Grove Road, formerly Sheppard House, a Home for cripples; and 12 Dock Street, formerly one of two Free Lodging Houses founded by Barnardo in response to the Ripper murders of 1888.
47. The Trust is a registered Charity which represents over forty local community groups, tenants' associations, churches, schools, youth clubs and local history groups in Tower Hamlets. Please give or lend items to our collection of the ordinary things of daily life, work and leisure from the past and/or make a donation to 'Ragged School Museum Trust' for which you will receive a signed certificate and your name entered in the Register of Donations, on permanent display in the museum. Volunteers are needed to help with rescue projects and fund-raising events. Please write to the Secretary, RSMT, 46-48 Copperfield Road, Bow, London E3 4RR.
48. The surplus and interest from the GLC grant has been used to repair 50 Copperfield Road. The initial service will be a respite scheme for parents of mentally handicapped children, operated by Barnardo's, LBTH and MENCAP.

## BOOK REVIEWS

G. P. Moss and M. V. Saville. *From Palace to College: An Illustrated Account of Queen Mary College*. Queen Mary College, 1985. £4.75.

THE authors have presented a superb survey of illustrations and major influences on the college's evolution. The detectable bias towards the sciences that the college has is reflected in just about the right proportion.

The overwhelming impression is a constant pursuit of more money, more land and more students and facilities for leisure and recreation, for, if any of these elements withered, so too would the institutions. The reasons why and how QMC, the only university college in East London, has survived nearly 100 years are only partly revealed here and Professor Leslie's centenary book, due next year, is eagerly awaited.

The wealthy Drapers' Company in the City resolved to establish a technical school for its apprentices and a place of recreation for East Londoners; the People's Palace and the East London College sometimes had an uneasy coexistence. The fire at the Queen's Hall in 1931 was the pivotal point for the supremacy of the college over the Palace.

Rapid expansion took place to the east and west of the Main Building, especially after 1945, and this is graphically described in the book. The maps and plans, 19 in all, dating from 1703 to 1985, are of great assistance to the reader.

The errors are rare; '1852' instead of '1862' in the caption to figure 22, and 'university' is misspelt on page 121. A frontispiece photograph of the Queen (the College patron) as she appears now would have been more in keeping with the overall authenticity of the book; the one shown was taken 30 years ago. There are surprising omissions: The Centre for East London Studies, an important new project mentioned on page 140 is not entered in the index, and the meaning of CERN (pages 123 and 146) (The European Organization for Nuclear Research).

There are 308 illustrations, many of which have never been widely circulated. Eight of these are in colour. The captions to some 93 portraits are succinct biographies and of particular interest is the reproduction of part of the lease of 1698 (figure 4) from Joseph and Jonathan Hardy to Michael Lake of the Cherry Tree. The book excels in presentation, research, and value.

C. J. Lloyd

Robert Barltrop. *A Funny Age*. Part 11. Growing up in North East London between the Wars. London Borough of Waltham Forest Libraries, 1985. £2.25.

THE period between the wars was indeed a strange period for children growing up. The delayed shock of the terrible slaughter of the 1914-18 War imposed a sense of gloom in many East End households and many of those who were very young thought of Passchendaele as being just down the road. The lack of faith in politicians gave rise to a political vacuum in which idealists of varying political colours proclaimed their philosophies from the street corners to largely deaf ears. The Church tried hard to repair the damage done to their comfortable pre-War teachings of a divine interest in each and

every being. In all things, a boy's mind seemed to be tossed 'from pillar to post' and this comes out in Robert Barltrop's book in a number of ways.

As an East Londoner myself, and contemporary with the author, I did not learn much from the book nor did I expect to do so. Much of what it contains can be found in the many booklets of memories and reminiscences which have proliferated during the past thirty years. As a Monoux boy, the author would be considered a cut above the other boys around Walthamstow and there were many in this 'funny age' in much less attractive circumstances. However, I would recommend this little book as a frank exposé of the thoughts and hopes of an early teenager in the 1920s and 1930s; his poor impressions of the Scouts in Hackney (one is left wondering if he fared better with the Scouts in Walthamstow), his remarks on the difficulty of getting employment (we thought a University Matriculation Certificate would have employers queuing up for us, as many graduates think today — but how wrong we were!). Many teenagers walked the streets for weeks with none of the financial help which unemployed school-leavers get today.

I hope this book will be widely read; it is not a local history nor just a collection of juvenile impressions. It provides a background from which the great problems facing youth today can be more clearly understood. Just as military historians regard the Second World War as a continuation of the First, so many of the problems of youth today have their roots in the uncertain inter-war period. In this respect, one looks forward to Barltrop's concluding booklet shortly to be published.

A. H. French

Florence Boss (ed.). *William Morris's Socialist Diary*. Journeyman Press, 1985. £3.25.

WILLIAM Morris was one of these rare political thinkers who combined artistic ability with a political concern for the place of the arts in society. Many writers — including Marx — turned their hand to verse or letters of one form or another, but none managed to contribute equally to the theory and practice of art, design and literature; indeed most tended to subsume the role of the artist to that of the politician. Morris was that rare exception — a radical who made art and design a central plank in his programme of reform. It is therefore of particular interest when a new work appears that can help to illuminate how artist and agitator can exist together. Florence Boss's edition of Morris's diary, handsomely published by Journeyman Press, gives us a brief glimpse into his activity between the months of January and March 1887. Through these pages we follow Morris's constant presentation of the case for Socialism; from smoke-laden working men's clubs, open air Sunday Demonstrations, to public platforms with his friends and fellow radicals G. B. Shaw and Clifford Bax. Morris in these pages emerges as a figure of real dedication, struggling not just against wintry train journeys and smoke-laden draughty halls but often against audiences that were numbed and dulled of spirit. It is a very brief but revealing glimpse for all of that, and it is supported by extensive notes and introduction which makes this little work a moving introduction to William Morris and his circle — my only cavil is that the delightful illustration of Morris at Kelmscott which accompanied this work when it was first published in *History Workshop Journal* was not used for the cover of this edition.

Bernard Canavan

Robin D. Gwynn, *Huguenot Heritage*. The history and contribution of the Huguenots in Britain. Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985. £15.95.

I suppose 'what every East London schoolboy knows' about Huguenots could be summed up in the following three statements:

(1) They were French Protestants; (2) They came to England round about the time of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685; (3) They lived in Spitalfields and were silk weavers. I knew already rather more — that whilst the first statement is correct, the others are only very partially true — but I found out a great deal more from this book.

It is a general survey, the first for a very long time, which answers, at least in general terms, most of the questions which anyone might ask about the Huguenots: What made them leave France? When did they come to England? Where did they settle? What was the attitude of the English government and of the ordinary English people? What trades and professions did they practise? What contribution did they make to intellectual life, the arts, the defeat of Louis XIV? How and when did they become assimilated into English society?

Having to cover so much, the book cannot treat everything in much detail, though it finds room for some personal accounts of the persecutions they faced in France, and the difficulties and dangers they went through in trying to escape. Escape in the 1680s became organised with guides and routes, rather reminiscent of the Resistance in the last war!

The earliest Huguenot refugees came here very much earlier, about 1550 and particularly after the Massacre of 1572. When conditions became better in France, many of the earlier ones went back. The greatest number did come in the 1680s. On the whole, unlike earlier and later immigrants, the Huguenots were generally made welcome in England and met with little opposition, though there was some from those who feared their competition in commerce, and some less serious mocking of strange foreign habits like eating frogs' legs and snails. The Government supported them strongly most of the time, not only out of sympathy with persecuted Protestants but for such commercial reasons as bringing valuable new skills. The only threat to their liberty of worship in the Calvinist manner was during Archbishop Laud's period of power, and the Civil War broke out before this became serious.

London was an important centre from the beginning, but at first they would have settled in the City or perhaps in Westminster — the main and earliest French church was in Threadneedle Street; Spitalfields only became a centre of settlement in the 1680s, but soon was one of the two main areas in London — the other was Soho. I also discovered from the book that there was a French church and smaller Huguenot settlement in Wapping, but it does not go into any detail about this.

However, there is a bibliography, which will help those who want to find out more about this and similar topics. There is also an appendix about tracing Huguenot ancestry, with among other things a list of names and the forms in which they were anglicised. Some of these must make it rather hard to recognise them as French at all. In some cases they were translated into the English equivalent, in others mangled into something more familiar — so Du Bois might become Wood or Boys or Boyce. The Huguenot Society of

London has published and indexed most of the French churches' registers, and a number of other records, which helps make searches easier.

I found the book very interesting. It is well produced and illustrated with old prints (examples of Huguenot craftsmanship) and contains many maps and charts.

Ann Sansom

Peter Ackroyd, *Hawksmoor*. Hamish Hamilton, 1985. £8.95.

TO the Londoner and visitor alike, the churches of Nicholas Hawksmoor — Christ Church, Spitalfields and St. Anne, Limehouse among them — have always been held in awe. Their sheer size and sombre grandeur have puzzled the historian and student of church architecture, seeming out of place amidst the sprawl of the East End. Even if we accept that the reason was to show the ungodly that the Church was all-powerful, Hawksmoor's edifices still carry an air of overpowering majesty. Seen from today's high tower-blocks, they retain their loftiness, even overshadowing the modern concrete and glass.

Ackroyd has taken this atmosphere, weaving it into an eerie tale. Part history, part melodrama, it contains no dry statistics, no long details of how or why the churches were built. Instead, we have a Gothic horror, which in itself explains Hawksmoor's own dark mind.

The architect was a protégé of Wren, a brilliant but overworked man, haunted to the point of madness by his genius. In Ackroyd's novel — as one Nicholas Dyer — he plans his churches to form a pentangle, each one requiring a human sacrifice to its building.

A modern day detective — named by chance Hawksmoor — attempts to solve a series of murders which occur on the sites of 18th century churches in London. Gradually, the two worlds merge into one; the noisy stews of the past; the seething underworld of today's dispossessed, where derelicts and meth-drinkers haunt the crumbling churchyards. At times, this crossing of two streams of consciousness can be confusing. But the novel is well researched and fascinating for all that, a glimpse into the dark past of the East End that few writers have touched upon. This one is for the readers of grisly tales . . . or the connoisseur of history who prefers it in aspic . . .

John Allen

Michael Paris, *Silvertown 1917*. Ian Henry Publications, 1986. £3.25.

ON Friday, 19 January 1917, I was within three weeks of my twelfth birthday. Making my way home along the Brunswick Street shortly before 7 o'clock on a miserably cold evening, I noticed the glow of a fire in the sky over R. & H. Green & Silley Weirs' shipyard at Blackwall, just beyond my home.

'There's a big fire at Greens', I told my dad and we moved over to the window to look. As we did so, the roller-blind shot up revealing a sky as bright as day, brilliant red, followed by a blast that rocked the five floor block of flats and set our ears ringing.

Michael Paris, in his most readable book, vividly and accurately recalls the events of one of the most outstandingly grim nights in the history of London's East End, as I am able to testify from personal observation.

He is to be commended on his thorough research into the events leading up to the actual explosion, his analysis of its probable cause and for his sympathetic treatment of the personal tragedies suffered by those who

lived in the small houses along the length of North Woolwich Road and its side turnings.

The reports of Official Committee's appointment to enquire into the disaster were restricted by the Forty Years Rule, but in this field, too, the author has delved diligently to bring his readers a clear and concise account of evidence given behind closed doors. He reveals the acceptance by the Ministry of Munitions of responsibility for the catastrophe and tells of the West Ham Council's commendably prompt measures to bring relief to those in urgent need. He raises the question of why such a dangerous industry should have been allowed in a heavily built-up area and why the works, which produced only a relatively small quantity of T.N.T., should have been allowed to continue to operate after larger and more efficient plants had come into production.

What a pity the photographs are crude, smudgy specimens, particularly those of dead and injured firemen bearing illegible captions. Why could they not have been of the quality of those nostalgic posters, reproduced on the inside front and back covers? It is a well-written, entertaining little book and well worth reading.  
Cyril Demarne

David Jones and Kevin Whelan. *A B C Mile End: the first 150 years*. David Jones *TROXY: Where East is Best*. Mercia Cinema Society. £1.50 each.

TO quote the lyrical chorus 'Memories are made of this' from the earliest *Paragon* days, when East London contained more than eighty cinemas, varying in classification from the luxurious to what were commonly known as 'Flea Pits'. These two books indeed provide nostalgic memories from the 'Golden era' of East End Cinemas.

The first presents a fascinating insight into the structure of film screening from its beginnings right up to the compact treble screen cinema. The second portrays the changing pattern of cinema going, how the less salubrious cinemas had to be refurbished to attract the large audiences. Surprisingly, there is no mention of the Troxy magazine, which was issued free.

Louis Behr

Betty Vodden. *One over the Bakers Dozen*. Centerprise Trust Ltd., 1985. £2.50.

RECENTLY there have been many books published in which people tell what it was like to live in North East London in the recent past. Betty Vodden's one is different because it is a woman's tale.

She describes how her mother (and Betty and her sisters) were left to provide for the large household (hence the title) in the inter-war years. The men did little about the house. Even the trips to the pawnbroker had to be kept secret from her father. But she also relates the happiness of being part of a large family — the Saturday parties and the sisters who became lifelong friends.

Most remarkably, although Betty only started writing at the age of seventy when she went with her daughter to the Hackney Women Writer's Workshop, she is able to see her past through modern eyes. For example, she points out that without television children were less aware of how other people lived and so did not appreciate the poverty of their own lives.

Similarly, she starkly describes the rest of her life to the present day — evacuation to Somerset with her mother and a sister ill with T.B., returns to London, the joy of being allocated a prefab and the sudden death of her husband Dick. In many ways, a hard but all too typical life. But the final impression is a resilient woman who still enjoys life, new experiences and challenges. I look forward to her next book.  
H. David Behr

John Hollingshead. *Ragged London in 1861*. Everyman paperback edition, J. M. Dent & Sons, 1986. £4.95.

THE middle decades of the 19th century saw a spate of publications depicting the life of the poor of the industrial cities, including both works of fiction (notably the novels of Elizabeth Gaskell and Charles Dickens) and newspaper reports like those of Mayhew. John Hollingshead was a pupil of Dickens, and contributed to 'Household Words' in the 1850s and '60s. In 1861 he was commissioned by the *Morning Post* to write the series 'Horrible London', on which this book is based. (Later in life, Hollingshead became a successful theatre manager, and the life and work of this versatile Victorian are discussed in the introduction by Anthony S. Wohl).

Between January 21st and 31st, 1861, Hollingshead made a series of rapid forays (most of the investigative journalists of the time regarded the world of the poor as an explorer regards an uncharted jungle) into the areas of Clerkenwell, Whitechapel, King's Cross and 'Over the Water' (the Lambeth Marshes). The book reveals a kind of Hades, a nightmare underworld peopled by 'thick-lipped, broad-featured, rough-haired, ragged women and hulking, leering men', and where the houses 'present every conceivable aspect of filth and wretchedness; the broken windows are plastered with paper . . . the staircases are steep, winding and covered with hard mud' (Whitechapel); 'Scores of streets filled with nothing but thieves, brown, unwholesome tramps' lodging-houses and smoky receptacles for stolen goods' (Southwark).

In that coldest of cold winters, Hollingshead reported a tired apathy among the poor and hungry — broken only occasionally by acts of mass protest, such as the bread riots described on Page 5. He shared with the majority of middle-class Victorians the view that the poor brought their poverty upon themselves by their lack of self-reliance and by their laziness. When the docks, river wharves, brickyards and building sites had been brought to a standstill and thousands were unemployed, he could record all this and still say of the 'honest labourers', that: '(they) ought to do their work, keep homes above their heads' . . . 'they look to everyone to relieve them, but make few efforts to relieve themselves'. The influence of Malthus is apparent: 'They increase and multiply . . . let them defer their marriages for six or seven years and they will turn their backs on strikes and starvation'. The fear of the unruly poor — so numerous and so ugly — peers through Hollingshead's strenuous efforts to make a reasoned and objective assessment of the problems of the inner city. This book is as much about the dilemma of the Victorian middle-class when faced with the unpleasant consequences of rapid industrial growth, as it is about the poor themselves. A useful document for teachers and students of Victorian urban life and values, and not without points of comparison with our own times.  
Eve Hostettler

Roger Swift and Sheridan Gilley (eds.). *The Irish in the Victorian City*. Croom Helm, 1985. £18.95. *The History of the Irish in Britain: a Bibliography*. Irish in Britain History Centre, 1986. £2.50.

'THE Irish' write Swift and Gilley in their Introduction, 'were the outcasts of Victorian Britain on the basis of class, nationality, race and religion, with an accumulated body of disadvantages possessed by no other group of similar size until the Jewish immigration'. Their book is not a lament for the deprivations of an immigrant group that was hard to assimilate, but is rather an attempt to understand the ambiguities that characterised attitudes towards the sometimes turbulent immigrants as well as the immigrants own response to their new environment. For they were perhaps unique among immigrants in that, in their flight from misery, they found themselves in the cities of the very country many of them blamed for their misfortunes.

The book reflects the considerable amount of work that has been done in recent years on the social history of Irish immigrants to Britain, much of it cited in Gearoid O Tuathaigh's opening essay on the problems of integration. Of the next eight contributions, six deal with the Irish in particular cities or towns (York, London, Glasgow and Liverpool, Edinburgh, Wolverhampton and Stockport), sometimes focused on a particular event like an election or a riot. Readers of this magazine will be particularly interested in John Belchem's piece on working-class radicalism and the Irish, where he retells the events at Bishop Bonner's Field in Bethnal Green in 1848, when Ernest Jones went near to identifying Chartism with the Irish cause. The link gave the hostile press an opportunity to denigrate the Chartists as being 'Irish', by which they meant 'seditious', thus alienating public support from Chartism. There is also an interesting article on the Irish press in Victorian Britain.

The last three essays in the book will be of particular interest to students of religious history. Anyone who believed that the Irish immigrants were models of church attendance to their lukewarm Protestant neighbours will be surprised by Gerard Connolly's evidence to suggest that they were nothing of the kind. In their contributions Sheridan Gilley and Raphael Samuel examine in detail the kind of Catholicism the immigrants experienced. They defy summarizing, but are unreservedly recommended to those who believe that there is more to religion than church attendance.

If *The Irish in the Victorian City* confirms the quality of work in the field, the Irish in Britain History Centre's *Bibliography* confirms its quantity, with, for example, more than 80 entries relating to London alone. It will be useful for amateurs and professionals alike and my only criticism is that the authors might have given us a one-sentence description of the small number of works where the content is not apparent in the title. For example, is F. Molloy's *No Mate for the Magpie* (p. 45) a novel, a work on the natural history of Kilburn or a lament that professional thieves can no longer find wives?

C. Kerrigan

*A Souvenir History of St. Luke's School, Isle of Dogs, E.14*. Island History Trust, 1986. £1.00.

THIS attractive publication is not so much a history as a valuable social document. It gives a clear picture of the 'Island' people and their affinity with the local church school, opened in 1873 in West Ferry Road by the Rev. Jesse

Hewlett. Of particular interest is a lithograph of an early Day and Sunday School treat on a paddle steamer on the Thames.

Reminiscences of old scholars have been skilfully presented — old street games are recalled, teachers remembered, generally with affection and there is an account that the girls walked from the Island to Mile End to play netball! The inkwell monitor will strike a chord in the memories of the older generation. A wedding photograph of a family whose children attended the school in 1910 is splendid illustration.

Finally, there is a reminder that the population has more than halved since 1945, having been scattered during the Blitz. Despite this fall, the school still plays its essential part in its new home in Saunders Ness Road.

It is a pity that the authors remain anonymous as they deserve congratulation. It is to be hoped that they will list their sources and deposit them with Bancroft Road Library.

W. Wilford

Christopher Lloyd and Ian Orton. *Tower Hamlets: Past and Present*. London Borough of Tower Hamlets Directorate of Community Services, 1986. £1.95 (18p postage).

THIS 44 page booklet consists of black and white photographs, with various views of the borough in the early years of this century (The Twenties, mostly) with 1985 photographs of the same views on the facing pages.

The pictures come from Tower Hamlets extensive archives collection. It is interesting, when comparing The Old and New views to notice that despite redevelopment many of the borough's traditional and well-known landmarks remain unchanged.

Doreen Kendall

We have received the following interesting piece from Dr. Brooks, one of our readers who lives in Israel.

*A Souvenir History of Hackney in Brief* (Chiswick Press, London, 1908).

On May 28, 1908, over 75 years ago, the Prince and Princess of Wales drove in state to the Central Library in Mare Street for its official opening. Andrew Carnegie, the great philanthropist, had donated £25,000 towards library services on condition that the ratepayers maintain the buildings. Colonel Rhodes donated a site in Mayfield Road, Dalston, for a branch library. It was for this occasion that the Mayor, Dr. F. Montague Miller, J.P., produced this charming booklet. In its 45 pages the origin and antiquities of Hackney are recounted and brief summaries given of the Knights Templars, Barbers Barn, The Church House, The Black and White House, Brooke House, Temple Mills, John Howard and Balmes House. A history of St. John of Hackney and its predecessor, St. Augustine, is given as well as a section on ancient gardens and Victoria Park.

There is little original in the booklet but it formed a memento for the grand opening of the library services in Hackney.

It was printed on handmade paper and originally produced in a limited edition. The demand was such that a further fifty copies were printed, price five shillings each.

My own copy is in perfect condition, having been once in the collection of Miss Florence Bagust, the historian of Clapton and Stamford Hill. I quote from an original review of the booklet, 'Altogether it is an excellent little brochure and lucky is the man who is fortunate enough to secure a copy.'

## NOTES AND NEWS

IAN Henry Publications Ltd., 20 Park Drive, Romford, Essex RM1 4LH have published many books on different aspects of Essex history and topography, including E. G. Ballard's *Our Old Romford and District* (£7.95 and £5.95 paperback) and *Silvertown 1917*, reviewed by Cyril Demarne in this magazine. Another book of local interest from the same publishers is Peter Honri's *John Wilton's Music Hall* (£17.45).

James Ince & Sons (Umbrellas) Ltd., of The Oval, Hackney Road have sent us one of the souvenir brochures for their 180th anniversary. Full of fascinating information on the family (Irish immigrants in origin) and the development of the umbrella business, my only regret is that it is so short. Full length books and theses have been teased out of far less interesting material.

The Marx Memorial Library is launching an appeal for £85,000 to rehabilitate its premises. Details may be obtained from the Librarian at 37a Clerkenwell Green, EC1R 0DU.

Alan Godfrey's reproductions of Ordnance Survey maps continue with Leyton (1893), North Woolwich (1869) and Wanstead Flats (1893).

Michael Quanne's *Prison Paintings* is now in bookshops. In an article on his life and work in the *London Standard* the painter recalled that as a child he read in Bethnal Green Library that art students copied masters to begin with. He copied Annigoni's portrait of Princess Margaret and was on his way. Of particular interest is 'Mass Escape' reproduced in the book, which shows claustrophobic schoolboys making a dash for freedom. I think Michael is leading the race, and the school has a Bethnal Green look about it . . .

An unusual book for us to receive is Douglas Moffit's *The Family Money Book 1986* (J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd. £3.95). We are assured by someone competent to judge that the advice is sound. If by acting on its suggestions or by some other means, some of our readers accumulate surplus wealth, we would ask them to bear the following in mind. We shall be publishing the tenth East London Record in 1987, and to celebrate the event we hope to increase the size to 64 pages for one issue. As we wish to keep the price increase to a minimum we are looking for sponsorship for that issue. All suggestions will be fully considered and answered.

*Village London*, from which we reproduced a picture of West Ham Gardens in last year's *Record* is now available in paperback, with Part 2 (North and East) selling at £6.95. The same publisher has produced Jack Read's *Empires, Hippodromes and Palaces*. The Mile End, Hackney and Stoke Newington are all included.

From music halls to cinemas: Mercia Bioscope is the quarterly magazine of the Mercia Film Society. Issue 22 is devoted to the East End cinemas. Elizabeth Owen's thesis 'The Rio Centre', of which there is a copy in Hackney Archives Department, includes a history of the cinema.

Asked to list three creative writers from East London most people would probably name Israel Zangwill, Arthur Morrison and H. M. Tomlinson. Zangwill is still read (my own copy of *Children of the Ghetto* is a 1972 reprint), Morrison's *A Child of the Jago* is often re-issued and there has been a recent paperback edition of *Tales of Mean Streets*. Now, happily, Tomlinson has joined them on the reprint lists, with *The Sea and the Jungle*, a 1985 addition to the Penguin Travel Library. First published in 1912, it is an account of his voyage to the Amazon and Madeira rivers in 1909, and costs £3.95. Perhaps his books on London's river will follow?

## SOME RECENT HISTORY ITEMS RELATING TO EAST LONDON

### Books and Booklets

- Ash, Tom *Childhood Days: The Docks and Dock Slang*. The author, 1984.
- Beaver, Patrick *The Match Makers*. Henry Melland, 1985.
- Benedictus, David *The Streets of London*. Thames/Methuen, 1985.
- Burridge, Trevor *Clement Atlee: A Political Biography*. Jonathan Cape, 1985.
- Crawford, Alan *C. R. Ashbee: architect, designer and romantic socialist*. Yale University Press, 1985.
- Mother Elizabeth, C.S.F. *Corn of Wheat*. (The Community of St. Francis in Dalston, 1908-1962). Becket Publications, 1981).
- Gibbs, Denis *Emblems. Tokens and Tickets of The London Hospital (1740-1985) and The London Hospital Medical College (1785-1985)*. The author, 1985.
- GLC Intelligence Unit *Annual Abstract of Greater London Statistics, 1984-85*.
- Hackney Council for Racial Equality *Annual Reports. 1977-84*.
- The Hackney Society *South Shoreditch Historic and Industrial Buildings*. The Society, 1986.
- London Borough of Tower Hamlets *Bygone Tower Hamlets*. (Third series) 1793-1850 (six reproductions).
- North East London Polytechnic and GLC *Docklands: An illustrated historical survey of life and work in East London*. 1986.
- Presswell, Dorothy *A Sparrow in the Meadow*. Merlin Books, 1985.
- Prockter, A. and Sandow, M. *The London Mineral Water Bottle Directory 1870-1914*. London Reference Books, 1985.
- Pyper, Hugh *Mary Hughes: A Friend to all in need*. Quaker Home Service, 1985.
- Rose, Andrew *Stinie: Murder on the Common*. The Bodley Head, 1985.
- Shapiro, A. & M. (eds.) *Memories of the Jewish East End*. Springboard Education Trust, 1985.

### Articles

- Bloch, Howard 'Fun in the Air' (balloon flights over Newham) in *Essex Countryside*, May, 1986.
- East of London Family History Society Recent issues of the Society's *Cockney Ancestor* have included articles on 'Records of the Shoreditch Board of Guardians' (Spring, 1985), 'Records of the Poplar Board of Guardians' (Spring, 1986), 'Records of the Hackney Board of Guardians' (Summer, 1985), 'An East End Boxer' (Autumn, 1985) and 'Memories of Bethnal Green' (Winter, 1985-86).
- The Jewish Chronicle* The issue of 12 July 1985 had articles on Chasidic sects in the East End during the 'twenties and on East End Yiddish theatres. The colour supplement of 6 December 1985 had a feature on the East End Jewry of today.
- Jones, Edgar 'A transport private saving calculation for the brewers Truman Hanbury and Buxton, 1815-63' in *Journal of Transport History*, Third Series, vol. 7, no. 1, March, 1986.
- Lai, Anne, Little, Bob and Little, Pippa 'Chinatown Annie: the East End opium trade 1920-35: the story of a woman opium dealer' in *Oral History*, vol. 14, no. 1, 1986.