

EAST LONDON HISTORY SOCIETY

Newsletter - Christmas 1990



Seasons Greetings to all our Readers

FIFTY YEARS AGO - Nov/Dec 1940

Bananas

The Government announced that no more bananas would be on sale, all imports would be stopped, as shipping space will be needed for more important items. (It would be five years before they appeared again).

Christmas Turkeys

Because of import restrictions, and shipping shortages, turkeys will be in short supply this Christmas.

The Ministry of Food stated that if there is any evidence of high prices, they will impose price controls at very short notice.

The public should not pay higher than two shillings and tenpence per pound for birds.

Air Raids

On the 20th December the London Graving Dock, Orchard Place, E14 was hit by a bomb. 3 Dead, 88 Injured. There was no enemy activity over Britain from 24th December to 27th December.

27 December - Heavy air raid on London started at 6.45 pm until 10.30 pm. Big fires reported in the East and West India Docks, Heavy damage in Poplar, Millwall, Bethnal Green and the City.

Total casualty list for the whole of London in this raid was 141 killed, 455 seriously injured.

Christmas 1940 was over.

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Subscriptions for membership remains at £2.00 per year. This entitles you to entry to some historic walks, history lectures, the newsletters - three this year.

The Newsletter belongs to all our members. If you have anything of interest you wish to share, or any problems with research, write to us, we'll do our best to help you, and also put you in touch with all our members, through our columns.

STOP PRESS:

The East London Record 1990 is out. Have you ordered your copy/copies? Doreen Kendall (address above) is waiting to hear from you!

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT- AGM

THURSDAY 24 JANUARY 1991 - 7.15 PM

Due to unforeseen circumstances the AGM which had been scheduled for October will now be held prior to our January Lecture on Yarrows by Sarah Palmer.

The lecture is due to begin at 7.45 pm, so we do need a prompt 7.15 pm start to the business of the AGM.

PLEASE DO COME ALONG - WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT TO KEEP THE SOCIETY ACTIVE.

So please remember the date:
Thursday 24 January at Queen Mary and Westfield College.

A Lady from the East End

Ada Reeve was born in Jubilee Street Stepney, in 1874, the eldest of 16 children. Her parents were members of a theatrical touring company.

Ada often had to be mother to the rest of the family, and act as bread-winner. Her usual fee for singing in a music hall was 7s. 6d. a night.

Her first appearance was at the Pavillon Theatre Whitechapel on Boxing Day 1878 in "Little Red Riding Hood", she was just 4 years old.

She continued to appear as a child actress in London and the provinces, until making her first music hall appearance at Sebrights in Swallow St Hackney, in 1886. This was followed by her West End debut at the Hungerford Theatre (Gatti's "In the Arches") in 1888.

She had by this time acquired a reputation of being the first girl to turn "Catherine Wheels" on the stage. Cries of "Over Ada" came from the gallery when she appeared on stage.

Her performances were a mixture of tomboyishness, drollery and a naive sentiment. This had a particular appeal to London audiences, but most of all she made them laugh.

In 1892, she was at the Tivoli Theatre in the Strand, in 1893 at the Paragon Mile End Road, in 1894 at the Gaiety theatre, as leading lady in a George Edwardes production "The Shop Girl", and in 1899 top of the bill at the Lyric Theatre in "Florodora".

In 1906 Ada went on a series of world tours including the USA, Australia and South Africa, returning to live in London permanently in 1935. She then starred in West End cabaret, in many plays, films and on radio. In 1945, when she was over 70, she played for over a year in "The Shop at Sly Corner" at the St Martins Theatre.

In 1958 she celebrated 80 years before the public and returned to the Players Theatre to sing some of her old songs. At 83 she appeared in a TV play, and on her 90th birthday she returned to the same stage where she had appeared 76 years earlier.

Ada was born Adelaide Mary Isaacs, but she copied her actor father who had adopted the stage name of Charles Reeve.

To the memory of
Ada Reeve
3rd March 1874-26th September 1966



MAX BEERBOHM 1894

The Ada Reeve Story contd.....

Her stage experience covered the Edwardian music hall, burlesque, Shakespeare, film, radio and television.

Ada Reeve died in September 1966 at St Charles Hospital, Paddington, London, aged 92.

JOHN HARRIS

TILL DEATH US DO PART

*Dr Ruth Richardson, Institute of Historical Research,
University of London, WCI:*

Thank you so much for the wonderful pre-view Rosemary Taylor researched and wrote for my talk on George Godwin, I am sure we shall have a good audience as a result.

I'm wearing a different hat to write this letter. Some readers already know that I've long been interested in funerals, burial/cremation and attitudes to death, and that I've been researching these matters for years. Would any Newsletter readers be willing to assist me? I am interested to hear from anyone who would be willing to reminisce about their own experiences, or who has anything relating to the subject, such as:

Family or assorted letters mentioning the subject, or black edged funeral bills/cemetery certificates.
Undertakers records
Death insurance certificates
Descriptions of funerals
Grief, mourning
Memorial cards or pictures
Songs, poems or postcards
Photos showing funerals
Graves
People in mourning wear
Undertakers shops

In fact, anything with any association with this subject, however small or apparently insignificant. Most work so far published on this subject apart from my own, I hasten to add, tends to focus on the observances of the rich and famous, and on the West End, and I hope readers will be as keen as I am to try to correct this bias.

My particular interest at the moment is to know if any readers know anything - past or present - from hearsay, documentary sources or from recollection concerning the laying out of the dead, and the purchase or preparation of burial clothes. Does anyone still keep burial clothes ready, 'in their bottom drawer'? My interest includes Britain and British emigrants abroad, who of course often took old practices with them. All correspondence will be gratefully received and postage costs happily refunded.

Dr Ruth Richardson replies to John Bevan:

I would think it may be a long shot, but for those attempting to trace family members who, like Mr Bevan, draw a blank after a laborious

search in many different places, it might be worth thinking of the Anatomy Inspectorate's records held at the PRO Kew.

If people died in poverty - in workhouses, hospitals or in the community - without money forthcoming to cover the cost of their funeral, rather than being buried as paupers, they could be taken for dissection under the Anatomy Act of 1832. In the London region during the first century of the Act's operation alone, approximately 57,000 people were taken legally for dissection in the capital's anatomy schools.

The records at Kew are patchy, and the names of all those dissected have not survived. Nevertheless, it is worth bearing in mind as a place of last resort. Alternatively, parish records may note the consignment or removal of bodies, though the latter was often arranged through local undertakers as a matter of policy, so as not to arouse hostility in poor neighbourhoods.

Until relatively recently - really only since the NHS - dissection was considered a dire indignity and a terrible punishment - since Tudor times it had been part of the death sentence for murder, this indignity was transferred to poverty in 1832.

The London Hospital or other local hospital records might record the arrival of bodies for their anatomy departments, but in my experience these things are very difficult indeed to trace. No harm in trying, though.

If anyone is interested in the history of this matter my book *Death Dissection and the Destitute* (Penguin 1988) is the place to look.

The Library Campaign

Chris Dixon, Newcastle upon Tyne, writes, re: the libraries:

You look as though you have another fight on your hands regarding the future of the library service. I was absolutely appalled to read Globe Town Neighbourhood's plans for the libraries. I was always a very avid user of both Bethnal Green and Bancroft Road libraries, and I think it would be a real crime if either of them were closed or changed in any way.

I joined the Children's Library at Bethnal Green when I was about 7 years old, and spent a great deal of time there, progressing to the Adult Library at the age of 11 or so. I would actually go so far as to say that I loved the place, the building, the books, everything about it. So much so that when I was fifteen I got a job there as a library assistant, working there two evenings a week and Saturdays, until I left school and started full time work two years later. My friends thought that I was pretty fuddy-duddy working in a library when they all had Saturday jobs in Woolworths or record shops etc. I also used to use Bancroft Road Library quite a lot as it was handy for my school (Coborn School in Bow Road) and of course as I became more interested in local history I visited there more and more. I have used many libraries in different areas since then, and I can honestly say that none of them compare even remotely with Bethnal Green or Bancroft Road.

Incidentally, the last time I was in Bethnal Green, probably about four years ago, I visited the library in order to buy some local history publications and I was very sad to see that the Children's Library had been closed and replaced with just a few shelves of books for kids in the Adult Library.

My daughter Gillian, who is seven years old is a very keen reader and uses our local library a lot, but there is no comparison with the vast choice of books that I had at her age. She would be in absolute paradise if she could have been let loose in the old Children's Library. I suppose the question of pounds and pence is the main consideration of Globe Town Neighbourhood. All I know is that there must have been thousands of others like me who have used and enjoyed the library facilities over the years, and who have had whole new horizons opened up to them as a result of doing so.

Arthur Grove, Bracknell, Berks, also feels strongly about the library service:

I have used three libraries, whilst I lived in the East End of London, the library in Bancroft Road, to which I was introduced as a schoolboy when I transferred from the Junior School to Cephass Street Senior School. I did not realise the beauty of the building at that time, we wasn't even allowed to browse among the books, then, we were given an index with the titles of the books and rather like a punter sticking a pin in, for his selection, so we had to make a choice, hand it over a counter, and then receive the book, so using the library soon lost its attractions.

As I grew older, and was able to use the library to its full extent, I came to realise the elegance of the building, climbing the steps and into the main doorway, then entering the library itself, being enveloped in its silence, its magnificent high and beautifully decorated ceiling, the polite movement of readers between its racks of books.

When I moved to Bow, I used both libraries, the one opposite the baths in Roman Road and the Bethnal Green Library. I do not seem to remember the library in Roman Road that well. I think the building was a rather uninteresting one, I went there merely to obtain books, but the Bethnal Green Library, what I remember, is that it gave you such a comfortable feeling, reaching it from a small road between the buildings and Barmy Park,; foggy evenings, the warm glow of its lights greeting you, and walking into its foyer, sniffing at the smell of shag tobacco where old men had stubbed out their fags before going into the Reading Room, and the homely atmosphere of the library itself. I cannot imagine it going.

Mrs Phyllis Upchurch, Hampton Wick, Surrey:

Re the closure of Bancroft road Library, I do hope the campaign will be successful. I have received much information from the reference library, the electoral rolls, and its history archives, does this mean the electoral rolls will also be moved? I would be willing to give a small donation towards the campaign, and would be grateful to know of how the campaign is progressing.

(Ed. Note. The campaign to save the Bancroft Road and Bethnal Green Libraries has been a success, we are glad to report (see details elsewhere in this newsletter), but the Globe Town councillors are still looking at ways of making cuts in the library service, and the library services are still under threat. We are now in the process of forming an East London Library Users Association, and endeavour to keep a vigilant guard over our libraries)

More about Bethnal Green

W Wilford, Brentford, Essex writes:

I was interested to read of the appeal for information about sites of 1914-1918 War Memorials. In 1959 Mace Street and Tagg Street in Bethnal Green were being demolished.

My predecessor at Bonner School, Mr W E James became aware of the distress of certain residents when they realised that the memorial would be destroyed. He arranged for its rescue and it is now sited on the wall of the school in Hartley Street.

(Mr Wilford was Headmaster of Bonner School 1970-1984).

John Harris replies:

The memorial mentioned by Mr Wilford has been recorded, and photographs taken and details passed to the Imperial War Museum, also the memorial in Cyprus Street.

With regards to the memorial in Hartley Street, Doreen Kendall has been seen with a stepladder, bucket and brush, giving it a good clean up.

Mrs A Wood, Chandlers, 4 Hookwater Close, Ford, Hampshire, SO5 IPS writes:

Thank you for the information about St Paul's Church, Bethnal Green, and for sending me details of the Blitz Exhibition.

I have already been in touch with most of the sources of information you suggest, it seems that all the St Paul's records were destroyed. The Bancroft Road library staff were very helpful and produced two photocopies of newspaper articles from the 1930's about Father Jones, I have also heard from two or three people who remember him in the 1930's but we have not yet managed to track down any photographs.

The Church of England Pensions Board was able to tell me that Father Jones lived to be 91, he died in Clapham in 1964, and he was Vicar of St Pauls, Bethnal Green from 1921 until the church was officially closed in 1951, although the Church had ceased to be used after war damage. As he was there for 30 years, I feel sure that someone must have a picture of him.

John Harris writes:

We have discovered more information about Father Jones. In 1931 he was elected to the Bethnal Green Council as an Independent, he received the highest number of votes over all other contenders - 1,467. He served until 1934, and during this time he was Vice-Chairman of the Public Health Committee, served on the Valuation Committee and Electricity Committee.

Do any readers have photographs of Father Jones, perhaps taken at a Wedding or a Baptism service? If you can help, please contact Mrs Wood at the above address.

Sutton House, Hackney

There is good news in the latest National Trust newsletter about this fine Tudor House which the Trust has long owned but often neglected.

Restoration work has now begun, and when completed there will be lecture and exhibition rooms, a shop and cafe. Educational projects will take place - a summer school for sixth form students to meet and question the professionals involved in the project took place in July.

The Trust and grants will meet the cost of restoration work, but there will be an appeal for funds to fit out the building for new uses.

ANN SANSOM

The West Indiaman

Mr A H French, Woodford Green, Essex, has the answer for Edward Harrison:

I have just seen your letter in the Autumn Newsletter of the East London History Society and hope to set your mind at rest regarding the West Indiaman which surmounted the West India Dock Gates under which I passed for many years during my employment in the Docks.

During my tenure as Chairman of the Society, I came into contact with the model a number of times since it was removed from its original site.

After a time in the Dockmaster's House, it was removed to Cutler Street where the PLA were accumulating items removed from the various docks, and the Cutler Street warehouses. Here it deteriorated probably more than when it was above the Dock Gate and the last time I saw it I had to remove a dusty tarpaulin which had been thrown over it.

Eventually, items which were considered to be worth saving were sent down to the PLA exhibition at Tilbury Docks. No one seemed to know what happened to the model but I can guess because when I last saw it there was a large crack down the middle and most of the hull had crumbled into small pieces (the hull was concrete but the deck and rigging were bronze.)

I don't know if you ever saw the model close-up but the workmanship was disappointing. The rigging was tied together by blobs of metal (probably bronze) very much as a child might do the thing in plasticene. Deck furniture was also not evidence of professional workmanship. I much preferred to look at it from the distance as it stood over the Gate and this is how I shall continue to remember it.

Mrs R E Oliver, Chigwell, Essex remembers:

I was pleased to get the pictures of Hughes Mansions as I have none except in my head.

Although I knew Mary Hughes, I never connected that the Mansions were called after her. I went to school in Buxton Street and of course her place was on the corner. As children we always called her comrade, and when she came into our flats the cry would go up that Comrade was here. She often visited our neighbours, and my memory is of a very small lady.

My memory of the King and Queen coming

to Hughes Mansions is quite clear in as much as I can still see them standing in the entrance but I can't remember the date. My father was with us so it must have been a weekend, and yet I thought they were away at Windsor at weekends. There were no crowds of people there, but then one policeman came through to let us know they were coming, so perhaps it was a sudden thing. So many things have come back to me as I have typed up my memories, the screams of the people I can still hear, going to the Brady Girls Club and Miss Moses telling me that our friends the Cohens had not survived, so many of my school friends disappearing from my life, the London Hospital filled to the overflowing with ordinary outpatients being turned away.

Chris Dixon, Newcastle upon Tyne, writes:

You may recall that I passed on copies of Sam Vincent's article in last year's Record to my relatives and asked them for any of their recollections that the article may bring to mind.

I had a very interesting letter from my Uncle Albert, who is now eighty-four and lives in Brentwood. Here is what he wrote:

"I found the references to the area most interesting inasmuch as my earliest years - up to the age of six years, were spent in that very spot. We lived on the corner of Alma Road and although I was very young I do remember very clearly some of the activities and people in that vicinity, like Mrs Hauser in the baker's on the corner of Bonner Street - a very spotless woman who used to give a piece of bread as a 'make-weight' when the loaf was under weight - there was Young's the butcher on the opposite corner of Bonner Street and I well remember the man and his wife who ran the old rag shop in Bonner Street (I wonder how they existed, for it always had a dank, musty smell and I thought was incredibly dirty by nature of the business). However I suppose they made a living.

Then there was Toye's the chemist with the very large coloured carboys which apparently was the trade sign in those times. Yes, it certainly brought back memories. On a more morbid note, I frequently saw a corpse being trundled along quite openly without any covering at all, when it had been recovered from the canal at Cricketers Bridge. This appeared to be a favourite suicide spot around that time."

I'm hoping that my uncle will pass on some more of his reminiscences to me, although he has not been in the best of health lately, so I don't like to keep on about it to him.

Sale of the Century

As all our members may now be aware, we have been fighting a vigorous campaign in support of our library service. Although we have won the first round, the battle is by no means over. The East London History Society committee members who were involved in the campaign had to act quickly and decisively, which was why it was not possible at the time to keep all our members fully informed of our activities. Now, however, the full story can be told.

Since their May election victory, the Globe Town Neighbourhood councillors, i.e. John Snooks, John Nudds, Jonathan Stokes (who is also chairman of the Borough-wide Education Committee), Akikur Rahman and Jennifer Mitchell, have been examining public service expenditure overall. They were looking for ways and means to finance their ambitious plans which involve further decentralisation of services, in order to create six estate-based community service points within Globe Town. This has been referred to as 'localisation' of services.

The two library buildings at Bethnal Green and Bancroft Road were identified as potentially saleable assets. The libraries had already begun to feel the pinch of a new cost-cutting exercise, when the planned closure on Wednesdays, due to decreasing funds to adequately staff the libraries, seemed likely. The first letter in support of the Local History Library and Archives appeared in the East London Advertiser of 20 April. There was a temporary reprieve, due no doubt to the fact that the Borough elections were held the same week.

Those of us who habitually haunt the Local History Library became aware that the Globe Town Neighbourhood councillors had plans for the rationalisation of the library service, and we grew increasingly worried that this would be to the detriment of the service. The ELHS committee sought a meeting with the Neighbourhood Chief Executive (Acting) and the Neighbourhood Arts and Information Officer on 16 July, to ascertain whether there was a proposal to sell off either or both of the library buildings. It was stated at the meeting that there was no decision at the present time, and that council members were concerned to maintain the best services possible to user groups, but they also recognised that the longer term interests may be better served by a rationalisation of those services. The Society's delegates questioned the right of Globe Town Neighbourhood to decide the level of service of the Borough-wide resources of the Local History Library and Archives without the other six Neighbourhoods

agreement. Following the meeting, the History Society members began writing letters to local papers, local councillors, MPs, historical organisations, the Ministry of Arts and Libraries and local researchers. We asked for people to write to the councillors to protest against what they believed could be a closure of the libraries.

A worsening financial crisis during the year came to a head at just this time and on 4 August a special meeting of Globe Town Councillors was held to review the policies and budget of all the services.

Soon after, news filtered through of a possible library service review. The lobbying progressed in the letters columns of the papers and feature articles became more frequent. There was a genuine fear that the libraries would close down unless a rapidly organised and vigorously co-ordinated protest was established. (Experiences of recent library cuts in Haringey, Hackney and Newham Boroughs were well known.)

On 19 September the Globe Town Neighbourhood Standing Committee were advised by the Neighbourhood Arts and Information Officer of the level of services that could be provided within the known financial parameters. The ELHS Committee were granted a deputation of two speakers in support of their views. A Globe Town local (and very vocal) resident Betty Osborne, and the ELHS Secretary Rosemary Taylor were allowed five minutes each to put the case of the preservation of the Local History Library and Archives. (Never has so much been said by two in so short a space of time!) The Councillors agreed that the policy review document be issued together with a public consultation questionnaire on what library service levels the users of the libraries would like to have.

Nearly 600 people filled in the forms, and wrote letters and 88 per cent of the forms indicated opposition to the closure of the two buildings. Comments made included the need for students to fulfill their National Curriculum course work, the elderly being unable to travel far to a single sited library, and the fact that the Local History Library and Archives is a Borough resource and should not be affected by one Neighbourhood alone etc.

At this point, the ELHS received the very welcome news that they had the full support of the London Archive Users Forum, who were prepared to back them, financially if necessary, in the battle to save the libraries. The Forum held a special meeting on 6 October during which they reiterated all the points made by the History

CONTD..Pg.9.

MEMORIES OF THE BLITZ

Columbia Market

From an account given by Alice Aldridge to Renee Oliver.

My friend Alice Aldridge lived in Gibraltar Walk which was two minutes from Columbia Market.

On September 7th she was sheltering with her family and friends (six in all) in the Anderson shelter in her garden, when the second wave of the air raid started (after the Docks had been set alight and the bombers returned.) The friends had a shop opposite and in the early hours of the morning one of the friends returned to the shop to see if everything was alright. He returned to the shelter, and as he got there he shouted, "Don't open the door." There was a swishing noise and violent explosion. There was the sound of bells and whistles and it was obvious there had been a major disaster. Two of the friends went out to see what had happened and they returned to say that the market shelter had 'copped' it and that there were people down there.

Alice later found that a bomb had gone directly through the fanlight/airshaft and had killed the people in the shelter. She never heard of any survivors and believes that the area was filled in when it was found impossible to retrieve any further bodies. She cannot recall any particular people who died in the shelter itself, but can recall some who were killed in the area at the time. When the bombs fell people were still in the buildings and they sheltered in the communal passages, and the mother of one of her friends was found standing dead.

Although it was called Columbia Market there were never stalls and suchlike there, only cabinet makers premises. The shelter was built during the phoney war and it was very unlucky that the bomb fell where it did. The Columbia Market for flowers was in Columbia Road and was held on Sunday mornings.

ED. NOTE:

On 7 September 1940, Columbia Market, London E2, Shelter No.2 received a direct hit, during the night raid. Toll - 38 dead, 48 hospital cases.

HUGHES MANSIONS

On March 27th 1945 at approximately 7.25 am a V2 rocket fell on Hughes Mansions. The Mansions consisted of three blocks of flats and it was the middle one which was destroyed, with the one farthest from Vallance Road almost destroyed and having to be demolished shortly after the disaster.

I lived in the last block of the tenements called Blackwall Buildings and this block overlooked the last block of Hughes Mansions. On that morning I was still in bed, my father had left for work and my mother had returned to bed after seeing my father off. I lay looking out of the window at the blue sky and the sunshine when suddenly the world was dark and it was impossible to see out or indeed in the room. I cannot recall hearing an explosion or even remember the furniture which must have passed over me moving. My mother started to stir and I thought that maybe the floor had gone so I called out to her to be careful and I was aware that she was feeling her way across the floor. I got out of bed and followed her but I couldn't see her because it was so dark. She pressed the light switch and a miracle, it worked. We could now see one another. The look of horror on her face came at the same time that I felt something dripping on my face. My head was slightly cut but it looked as if the injury was awful as there was so much blood.

Neighbours came rushing to help and I can remember cold towels being put on me, but while I was aware of the most terrible screams of the people in Hughes Mansions, I was told it was because they were scared. Gradually over about five minutes or so the screams stopped, and there was an uncanny quiet before all hell let loose with fire crews arriving etc.

My father worked for the Metropolitan Transport Co., which was a branch of Kearley and Tonge, so we decided to go along to Kearley and Tonge (three minutes walk away) to ask if he could be contacted. Without giving a second thought I walked along the street in my underwear, (I was fifteen and a half when this happened).

The security chap at Kearley's didn't bat an eyelid, and said he would get a message through at once. "Be careful what you say," I said, "I wouldn't want him to think something serious had happened."

After a short while I was taken to the London Hospital where it was found that apart from a tetanus jab nothing else was needed to be done.

Blitz ...contd

While I waited I saw the mother of one of my friends (also in her underwear) walking through the casualties calling for her son and daughter. I know that neither Lily Freedman nor her brother survived, what happened to Mrs Freedman I don't know. Another friend from school, Eileen Diss was brought out dead as were the family of Sylvia Cohen, mother, father and two sisters.

The clearing up took days, the army came to put in temporary windows, the searchlight crews worked through the nights while the bodies were being recovered (some parts of bodies were found on the roof of the adjacent St Peter's Hospital).

Eventually all was quiet, the army went away, but every night for weeks a lonely man wandered the ruins calling for Annie. We never knew who she or the man were, but many tears were shed for him.

One afternoon, a solitary policeman walked through the grounds of the tenements calling out to us that the King and Queen were coming. My mother dismissed it, but it was true. The Queen was in a blue outfit and she and the King stood in the ruins and waved to us as we stood on the roof of our tenement.

My father kept a war map and he advanced and retreated with what was happening in Europe with flags. After the rocket that map was still on the wall but all the flags were gone. In 1949 we moved and when we took the lino up there were all the flags, so the lino must have come up, drawn down the flags and laid itself flat again. My grandmother who was almost eighty, and who also lived in Blackwall Buildings, died in Bancroft Road Hospital on May 1st as a result of this incident.

Renee Oliver (nee Hilton)

ED. NOTE

The last rockets, V-2s of the War were fired from The Hague. At 7.21, on 27 March 1945, the last one to be launched fell on Hughes Mansions, Vallance Road, London E2. The toll - 134 dead, 48 injured.

Sale of the Century contd.....

Society, stressing their concern that the Local History Archives should be preserved at Bancroft Road Library, and that they would ask to be allowed to put their case before the councillors.

At the Standing Neighbourhood Committee meeting on 24 November, Isobel Watson and Robert Thorne spoke on behalf of the London Archive Users Forum. The results of the Questionnaire were also discussed, and a letter from the Ministry of Arts and Libraries, expressing concern was also produced. The councillors then decided to accept option 2, maintaining the status quo, but also decided to cut the opening hours from six days a week in both libraries to four days. However, before a final decision is made, a second public consultation questionnaire has been released, closing date 3 December, requesting users of the two buildings to state what times they actually used them or wished to use them, and what they would like to see the building used for, in addition to housing the libraries.

It must be stressed that this is only a reprieve, and not a victory in the long drawn out battle to save our libraries. There will be a Budget Review a year from now, and the issue will almost certainly raise its head again. In order to keep our campaign alive, a library users campaign group has been formed, co-ordinated by Frank Small, Morpeth School, Morpeth Street, Globe Town.

ROSEMARY TAYLOR

POSTSCRIPT

It has been truly said that these old buildings do not belong to us only: that they belonged to our fore-fathers as they will belong to our descendants unless we play them false. They are not in any sense our property to do as we like with them. We are only trustees for those that come after us.

WILLIAM MORRIS

Bethnal Green Tube Disaster

3 March 1943

At the beginning of the blitz the government had tried to prevent the use of the London Underground stations as air raid shelters, as it was feared that people terrified by raids would go down the tubes, and refuse to come up - a hypothetical state of mind known as deep shelter mentality. Londoners response was to buy a ticket for three half pence just before a raid was due to start, and stay down, no one could turn them out during an air raid. The practice became more widespread, as there was no way of preventing it.

The Government changed their policy, tube stations in daily use were organised as shelters in the evenings, and incomplete or disused stations were opened up and often furnished with bunks and toilets. Bethnal Green Station was under construction from Liverpool Street to Loughton and because of the worsening war conditions work stopped on 24 May 1940. The local council then opened it as a shelter in the following October, with bunks for 5,000 people and extra space for another 5,000 if needed. At the height of the Blitz it was usually full. Numbers then declined to hundreds, to those who just felt safe with other people, or who had been bombed out, or had no other place to go. The shelter had only one entrance, with an emergency exit half a mile away in another borough. There were no hand rails, no crush barrier, no white lines, and lit only by a single 25 watt bulb. From the entrance there were nineteen steps down to a landing, measuring 15 ft by 12 ft. A right hand turn followed by seven more steps, leading into the ticket hall.

In Victoria Park Hackney, a Z rocket battery had recently been installed. This fired 3 inch solid fueled rockets similar to the 3 - 7 inch A A shell, in salvos of over 100 rockets at a time, which accelerated to 1,000 mph in one and a half seconds. The noise was described as 'rather like an express train roaring through your living room' and was considered a great morale booster.

Early in 1943 the RAF commenced bombing Berlin, the Germans threatened reprisals, and people started to use the shelters again. On 28 February, 500 people used Bethnal Green Tube Shelter, on 1 and 2 March the numbers were 587 and 850 respectively, when the RAF raids on Berlin were particularly heavy.

On the fateful night of 3 March, between 5 - 600 were in the shelter within ten minutes of the alert. By 8.17 pm 1,000 people had poured down

the staircase, amongst them people from two cinemas and three buses. Ten minutes later a salvo of rockets from the newly opened battery in Victoria Park half a mile away opened up, with a terrifying screech which had never been heard before. Rumour went round that bombs were falling, and approximately 120 - 200 people around the entrance surged forward.

Two witnesses saw a woman stumble and within ninety seconds of the woman tripping 173 people were dead, sixty two of them children. At 8.40 pm a message reached the Chief Warden, who contacted control, and by 9.00 pm, 31 ambulances, 6 light rescue, and 2 heavy rescue vehicles had begun to arrive. Officers were placed at the entrance to keep order, and the Civil Defence started their harrowing task, assisted by Dr Sullivan, the Home Guard, and Servicemen. At 9.15 pm the All Clear sounded, and their task was finished by midnight.

When the casualties were later examined, the sole cause of death was suffocation, with only one broken bone. The survivors suffered bruising, shock, and minor cuts, and had mostly been at the bottom of the stairway, kept alive by air pockets.

On Thursday, 4 March an inquiry into the tragedy was opened at the Town Hall. Presiding was Sir Ernest Gowers (London Regional Commissioner), Alderman C W Key MP and the Council. They decided that the burial of the victims of the accident would be private, and not in a common grave. Then Thursday evening an official statement from the Ministry of Home Security was issued for the following morning papers, 5 March, as follows:

On Wednesday evening a serious accident took place near the entrance to a London Tube Shelter, causing the death of a number of people by suffocation. According to accounts so far received, shortly after the Air Raid Alert sounded substantial numbers of people were making their way as usual towards the shelter entrance. There were nearly 2,000 people in the shelter including several hundred who had arrived after the alert, when a middle aged woman burdened with a baby and a bundle tripped near the foot of a flight of 19 steps, which lead down from the street. The flight of steps terminates on a landing. Her fall tripped an elderly man behind her and he fell similarly. Their bodies again tripped up those behind them, and within a few seconds a large number of people were lying on the lower steps and the landing, completely blocking the stairway. Those coming in from the street could not see exactly what had taken place, and continued to press

Bethnal Green Tube Disaster Contd...

down the steps, so that within a minute there were hundreds of people crushed together, and laying on top of one another, and the lower steps.

By the time it was possible to extricate the bodies, it was found that a total of 173 had died. A further 60 were in need of hospital treatment. Statements from a large number of eye witnesses, members of the police and civil defence services, made it clear that there was no panic before the accident on the stairs, no bombs fell anywhere in the district during the evening. Preliminary reports received by the Home Secretary and the Minister of Home and Security indicate that police, wardens, soldiers, WVS and civilians worked hard and well to rescue the victims. Mr Morrison has instituted the fullest enquiries to establish in greater detail what took place, and to see whether any structural or administration weakness has been brought to light.

At the Inquest a verdict of accidental death was recorded by the Coroner, who after hearing many moving descriptions by witnesses stated: There is nothing to suggest any stampede, any panic, or anything of that kind.

The woman who first tripped was found alive, her baby dead. Mr Dick Corbett the boxer, home from training in Bristol for his next fight was one of the victims. PC Thomas was recommended by the Coroner for an award, but he never received it. The official report was held in camera by Mr Lawrence Dunne, a Bow Street Magistrate, and was not published until January 1945, for security reasons.

It was discovered that less than half the 173 killed were regular users of the shelter. 51 were registered for bunks, and another 30 odd were known users. The rest just went to the shelter that night. Mr Dunne found no truth in the rumour that the disaster had been caused by dips (pickpockets). It was impossible to have been started by the Jews, as there was only a small Jewish community living in the area. Mr Dunne could find no evidence that it was a Fascist plot. The new rockets were blamed for starting off the panic. Mr Dunne concluded that the disaster was caused by a number of people losing their self control at a particularly unfortunate time and place, and no forethought in structural design or practicable police supervision can be of any real safe guard against the effects of a loss of self control by a crowd.

In April 1944 Mrs Annie Baker of Braintree Street, Bethnal Green sued the Bethnal Green Council for negligence, after her husband and daughter were killed. The council admitted their responsibility, but denied negligence. Mr Justice Singleton said: They were responsible for making provision for the safety of people using the shelter. In awarding Mrs Baker £1,200 for her husband, and £250 for her daughter, plus costs, he added: The dangerous condition of the steps made the entrance a death trap. After this the Ministry of Pensions awarded widows and children a pension of fifty shillings a week.

The Bethnal Green Tube disaster was the largest civilian accident recorded during the war, and caused a third of all wartime deaths in Bethnal Green. There is no memorial plaque to the victims at the scene of the accident.

The total number of dead were, 27 men, 84 women and 62 children. According to medical evidence all died within 90 seconds.

London Central Line Bethnal Green to Stratford opened to the public on 4 December 1946.

DOREEN KENDALL

References:

The Daily Telegraph, East London Advertiser, The Star, all 5 March 1943.

News Chronicle 8 March 1943.

News Chronicle, Daily Express 20 January 1945

Hackney Express 26 February 1945.

Official Report held by Mr L Dunne, Coroners Official list of Victims, held at Bancroft Local History Library.

Note

Visitors to Bethnal Green Tube Station will still use the same stairway, except for the addition of handrails at the side and centre of the stairs. Nothing much has changed. Readers should bear in mind that it had been built as an underground railway station and was only "converted" into an air raid shelter, that was its shortcoming. Many purpose built deep shelters in the East End had as many as six entrances, all of them with wider stairways than that at Bethnal Green.

Two of these shelters come to mind, (and some of our readers may remember them) Grove Hall Park, Fairfield Road, (under the football pitches) and the recreation ground in Violet Road, Bow. These shelters are still there, although all the entrances and exits have been sealed off and concreted over.

John Harris

METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF BETHNAL GREEN
RETURN OF IDENTIFIED CIVILIAN WAR DEAD
BETHNAL GREEN TUBE STATION SHELTER - 3 MARCH 1943
173 PEOPLE KILLED 62 INJURED AND DETAINED IN HOSPITAL

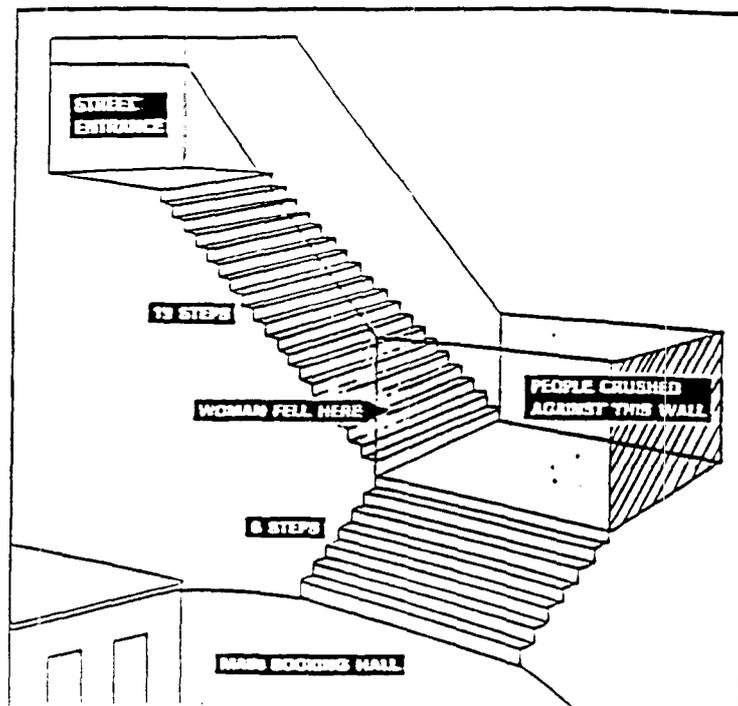
NAME	ADDRESS	AGE	SEX	SMW or D	DATE OF DEATH OR FINDING OF BODY
AARONS Betty	10 Gretton Houses E2	14	F		3.3.43
ASSER Jessie	44 Newcourt House E2	33	F		
BAKER George	43 Braintree Street E2	38	M		
BAKER Minnie	42 Braintree Street E2	14	F		
BAILEY Mary	27 Whitman House E2	72	F		
BAILEY Rose	27 Whitman House E2	41	F		
BARS Eileen	39 Portman Place E2	7	F		
BEAKEN Ethel Louisa	29 Morris House E2	53	F	M	
BEAKEN Eileen Louisa	29 Morris House E2	17	F		
BEAKEN Matilida Jane	70 Handley Road E9	40	F		
BERGER Emily Jemima	12 Stainsbury Street E2	57	F	M	
BENDON Elizabeth	73 Cyprus Street E2	38	F		
BENNETT E M	15 Moore House E2	48	F		
BOSWORTH Irene Patricia	10 Burnham Estate E2	17	F	S	
BOSWORTH Edith P	10 Burnham Estate E2	50	F		
BOXER Annie	20 Hunslett Street E2	24	F		
BROOKS Henry Norman	11 Swinburne House E2	10	M		
BROOKS Jessie	11 Swinburne House E2	46	F		
BROOKSTONE Israel	41 Teesdale Street E2	67	M		
BOWLING Bessie	1 Milton House E2	59	F	M	
BOWLING Eliza	1 Milton House E2	31	F		
BUTTERFIELD Allen	149 Corfield Street E2	3	M		
BUTTERFIELD George	149 Corfield Street E2	28	M		
BUTTERFIELD Lottie	149 Corfield Street E2	28	F		
CHANDLER D M	21 Burnham Estate E2	14	F		
CHANDLER Lilian Mary	21 Burnham Estate E2	35	F	M	
CHAPMAN Charlotte Elizabeth	21 Hersee Place E2	25	F		
CHAPMAN George James	17 Swinburne House E2	23	M		
CLATWORTHY Iris	156 Bancroft Road E1	2	F		
CLATWORTHY Joan	156 Bancroft Road E1	9.6	F		
COLEMAN Maud Louisa	236 Globe Road E2	54	F		
COLLETT Doreen	9 Stainsbury Street E2	11	F		
COLLETT Rose	9 Stainsbury Street E2	50	F	M	
COLLETT Ronald	9 Stainsbury Street E2	8	M		
COLMAN R T (otherwise CORBETT)	12 Whitman House E2	34	M		
COURT Patricia Marie	6 Electric House Bow E3	24	F		
DAY John Lewis	6 Gawber Street E2	69	M		

<i>NAME</i>	<i>ADDRESS</i>	<i>AGE</i>	<i>SEX</i>	<i>SMW or D</i>	<i>DATE OF DEATH OR OF FINDING BODY</i>
<i>DONGREY Annie</i>	<i>33 Bandon Road E2</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>F</i>		<i>3.3.43</i>
<i>ELLAM Rosina Ellen</i>	<i>31 Wessex Street E1</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>ELLAM Annie Eva</i>	<i>31 Wessex Street E1</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	
<i>ELLAM Frances Lilian</i>	<i>31 Wessex Street E1</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>ELLAM Pauline Patricia</i>	<i>31 Wessex Street E1</i>	<i>2.6</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>EMERY Clara</i>	<i>41 Hollybush Gardens E2</i>	<i>78</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>EWETT Ivy</i>	<i>1 Digby Street E2</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>FLETCHER Alexander</i>	<i>334 Corfield Street E2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>FLETCHER Elizabeth</i>	<i>333 Corfield Street E2</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>FORBES Leonora</i>	<i>27 Bishop's Way E2</i>	<i>57</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>FORBES Irene Catherine</i>	<i>27 Bishop's Way E2</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	
<i>FOWLER Mary Ann</i>	<i>42 Gawber Street E2</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>FRENCH Lilian</i>	<i>73 Cyprus Street E2</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>GEARY Carole Ann</i>	<i>9 Peary Place E2</i>	<i>5/12</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>GEARY Sylvia Sadie</i>	<i>9 Peary Place E2</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>GROVER Ethel</i>	<i>302 Globe Road E2</i>	<i>48</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	
<i>HALL Edna Phebe</i>	<i>148 Mansford Street E2</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>HALL Annie Jessie</i>	<i>148 Mansford Street E2</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>HALL Irene</i>	<i>17 Burnham Estate E2</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>HALL Mary Ann</i>	<i>17 Burnham Estate E2</i>	<i>47</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	
<i>HALES Joe</i>	<i>2 Crossland Square E2</i>	<i>53</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>HAMMOND Rhoda</i>	<i>18 Approach Road E2</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>HARRIS Olive Margaret</i>	<i>86 Royston Street E2</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>HAWLEY Leonard Joseph</i>	<i>143 Antill Road E3</i>	<i>64</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>HAYMAN Mary A</i>	<i>26 Burnham Estate E2</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>HIGGINSON Emily</i>	<i>10 Seabright Street E2</i>	<i>62</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	
<i>HILLIER Mary Ann</i>	<i>3 Kirkwall Place E2</i>	<i>61</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>W</i>	
<i>HISCOCKE Ivy</i>	<i>65 Gretton House E2</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>HOYE Lilian</i>	<i>106 Roman Road E2</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>HOYE Marjorie</i>	<i>106 Roman Road E2</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>HOYE Louisa</i>	<i>106 Roman Road E2</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	
<i>HOYE Rose</i>	<i>106 Roman Road E2</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>HUTCHINSON Joan Peggy</i>	<i>16 Bonwell Street E2</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>HUTCHINSON William George</i>	<i>16 Bonwell Street E2</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>INGLE Agnes Maud</i>	<i>King's Laundry 247 Globe Road E2</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>JOHNSON Caroline Ivy</i>	<i>11 Holly Mansions E2</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>JOHNSON Helen Emma</i>	<i>11 Holly Mansions E2</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>JOLLY Sarah</i>	<i>41 Burnham Estate E2</i>	<i>51</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>JOHNS Peter</i>	<i>18 Mulberry House E2</i>	<i>7.6</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>JONES Estella</i>	<i>33 Old Ford Road E2</i>	<i>57</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>JUILIER Henry</i>	<i>91 Bishop's Way E2</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>M</i>		

<i>NAME</i>	<i>ADDRESS</i>	<i>AGE</i>	<i>SEX</i>	<i>SMW or D</i>	<i>DATE OF DEATH OR OF FINDING BODY</i>
<i>KOROBENIC Eliza</i>	<i>66 Newcourt House E2</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	
<i>LAND Barbara</i>	<i>1 Bullards Place E2</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>F</i>		<i>3.3.43</i>
<i>LAND Martha Elizabeth</i>	<i>43 Monteith Road E3</i>	<i>56</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>LAPHAM Ronald</i>	<i>10 Approach Road E2</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>LAWSON Anthony William</i>	<i>172 Roman Road E2</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>LAWSON Patricia Eileen</i>	<i>172 Roman Road E2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>LAZARUS M</i>	<i>157 Bethnal Green Rd E2</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	
<i>LECHMERE Florence Rosetta</i>	<i>3 Entick Street E2</i>	<i>66</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>LECHMERE Thomas Allen</i>	<i>19 Entick Street E2</i>	<i>48</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>LECHMERE Thomas</i>	<i>3 Entick Street E2</i>	<i>66</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>LEGGETT Benjamin George</i>	<i>20 Bandon Road E2</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>LEGGETT Rose Maud</i>	<i>20 Bandon Road E2</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>S</i>	
<i>LEGGETT Roy Benjamin</i>	<i>20 Bandon Road E2</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>LEWIS George Ronald</i>	<i>10 Moore House E2</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>LEWIS Lilie Elizabeth</i>	<i>10 Moore House E2</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>LOFTUS Louisa Ellen</i>	<i>32 Grendon House Well St E9</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>LOFTUS John Samuel</i>	<i>32 Grendon House Well St E9</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>MAGUIRE Jean Mary</i>	<i>28 Butler Estate E2</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>MASON Charles</i>	<i>20 Russia Lane E2</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>MATHERS Ruby</i>	<i>16 Beale Road E3</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>MEAD Eliza</i>	<i>66 Newcourt House E2</i>	<i>67</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	
<i>MEAD Florence</i>	<i>7 Peary Place E2</i>	<i>35</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>MEAD George</i>	<i>7 Peary Place E2</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>MEAD George</i>	<i>7 Peary Place E2</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>MEAD Maureen</i>	<i>7 Peary Place E2</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>MEAD Kenneth</i>	<i>7 Peary Place E2</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>MORRIS Derek</i>	<i>25 Montfort House E2</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>MORRIS Florence Maud</i>	<i>25 Montfort House E2</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>MYERS Jeffrey</i>	<i>55 Cleveland Way E1</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>MYERS Sophie</i>	<i>55 Cleveland Way E1</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>NEVILLE Alfred</i>	<i>42 Gawber Street E2</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>NEWMAN Doris</i>	<i>24 Tagg Street E2</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>NEWMAN George</i>	<i>24 Tagg Street E2</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>NEWTON Sarah Ann</i>	<i>25 Wessex Street E2</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>NIXON William Henry</i>	<i>7 Burns House E2</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>PAPWORTH Rosina</i>	<i>80 Morpeth Street E2</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>PATTERSON Mary</i>	<i>8 Brierley Street E2</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>PERRYMENT Iris</i>	<i>74 Morpeth Street E2</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>F</i>		

<i>NAME</i>	<i>ADDRESS</i>	<i>AGE</i>	<i>SEX</i>	<i>SMW or D</i>	<i>DATE OF DEATH OR OF FINDING BODY</i>
<i>POOLE Sarah</i>	<i>87 Mansford St Buildings E2</i>	<i>54</i>	<i>F</i>		<i>3.3.43</i>
<i>PRICE Rose Elizabeth</i>	<i>37 Viaduct Street E2</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>PUSEY Emily</i>	<i>7 Shelley House E2</i>	<i>48</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	
<i>PUSEY Henry</i>	<i>7 Shelley House E2</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>QUORN Emily Elizabeth</i>	<i>5 Peel Grove E2</i>	<i>43</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>QUORN Gwendoline M</i>	<i>5 Peel Grove E2</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>QUORN William Frederick</i>	<i>5 Peel Grove E2</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>RAULINAITIS Joseph</i>	<i>9 Hammond Gardens E2</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>REDWIN Eileen Margaret</i>	<i>236 Globe Road E2</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>RELF Rose Lilian (Junr)</i>	<i>192 Wilmot Street E2</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>S</i>	
<i>RELF Rose Lilian</i>	<i>192 Wilmot Street E2</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	
<i>REYNOLDS George Francis</i>	<i>239 Cambridge Heath Rd E2</i>		<i>72</i>	<i>M</i>	
<i>RIDDELL Stella</i>	<i>51 Burnham Estate E2</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>RIDGEWAY Ellen</i>	<i>24 Brierley Street E2</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>ROCHE Bessie</i>	<i>123 Canrobert Street E2</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>ROCHE Eddie</i>	<i>123 Canrobert Street E2</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>ROCHE Joan</i>	<i>123 Canrobert Street E2</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>ROCHE Ted</i>	<i>123 Canrobert Street E2</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>SEABROOK Sarah Florence</i>	<i>163 Gretton Houses E2</i>	<i>62</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	
<i>SEABROOK Barry James</i>	<i>163 Gretton Houses E2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>SEARS William Herbert</i>	<i>15 Patriot Square E2</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>SHARPE Irene)</i>	<i>5 King Street Flats</i>	<i>16 mths</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>SHARPE Kenneth)</i>	<i>Maidstone - now staying at 20 Kerbela Street</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>SHEPHERD Arthur Theodore</i>	<i>19 Model Buildings Kings X</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>SMITH Dorothy Ann</i>	<i>9 Roman Road E2</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>SCEATS Lilian Doris</i>	<i>31 Whitman House E2</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>SPEIGHT Edith Margaret</i>	<i>9 Horwood House E2</i>	<i>47</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	
<i>SINNOCK L</i>	<i>6 Morpeth Street E2</i>	<i>62</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	
<i>SPICER Joan Pamela</i>	<i>10 Bonwell Street E2</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>SPICER Tony Anthony Edwin</i>	<i>10 Bonwell Street E2</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>STEVENS Mary Anne Elizabeth</i>	<i>36a Waterloo Gardens E2</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>STRETCH Rose</i>	<i>159 Wilmot Street E2</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>F</i>		
<i>STRETCH William</i>	<i>159 Wilmot Street E2</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>STRETCH William</i>	<i>159 Wilmot Street E2</i>	<i>49</i>	<i>M</i>		
<i>TARBUCK Geoge</i>	<i>63 Newcourt House E2</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>M</i>		

NAME	ADDRESS	AGE	SEX	SMW or D	DATE OF DEATH OR FINDING OF BODY
TARBUCK Louisa	63 Newcourt House E2	44	F		3.3.43
TAYLOR Sarah	27 Wessex Street E1	54	F		
TAYLOR James William	10 Lansdell Place E2	12	M		
THOMPSON Kate	83 Quinn Square E2	53	F		
THORPE Barbara	20 Kerbela Street E2	2	F		
THORPE Marie	20 Kerbela Street E2	11	F		
THORPE Olive	20 Kerbela Street E2	36	F	M	
TILBURY Clara Selina	31 Burnham Estate E2	49	F		
TRAYLING Irene Lilian	9 Kirkwall Place	20	F	M	
TRICE Isabella Rose	42 Wessex Street E1	39	F	M	
TROTTER Lilian Maud	26 Morpeth Street E2	36	F		
TROTTER Vera Lilian	26 Morpeth Street E2	7	F		
VANN Maud	74 Hadrian Estate E2	23	F		
VANNER Florence Eliza	68 Burnham Estate E2	49	F		
WARRINGTON Doris Beatrice	62 Blythe Street E2	16	F		
WELCH James	37 Digby Estate E2	52	M		
WHITEHEAD James Henry	6 Viaduct Street E2	69	M		
WILSON Edna Rosina	37 Butler Estate E2	15	F		
WOOD Alfred William	5 Kenilworth Road E3	60	M		
WOOLNOUGH Elsie Hilda	35 Mansford Buildings E2	37	F	M	
WOOLNOUGH Alice Elsie	35 Mansford Buildings E2	12	F		
YEWMAN John Robert Charles	5 Peel Grove E2	1	M		



The plan illustrates the design of the right-angled stairway leading down to the booking hall.

Books etc.

Good Old George: The life of George Lansbury. Bob Holman. Lion (paperback) 1990 £5.99

East Enders have been waiting fifty years for this book, the first on George Lansbury by a person outside the family circle.

Bob Holman recreates the man behind the legend. Lansbury is remembered today above all for Poplarism; for having gone to prison along with his fellow councillors, rather than charge the London County Council precept on their impoverished borough. Yet Lansbury was no Marxist. He saw socialism as the putting into practice of his Christian beliefs that people should be treated equally and that poverty in the East End should be eradicated. Moreover, he had the shrewdness and ability to work for changes within the existing system.

George Lansbury first came into prominence as a Poplar Poor Law Guardian and he worked with his colleagues to humanize the system. His efforts saw better quality and more varied food being served in the workhouse, and increased payments for those on out-relief. His only government post was the lowly one of First Commissioner of Works, yet he used the opportunity to build the lido in Hyde Park. But above all, it was his humanity that made him such a lovable person. Together with his wife Bessie, George Lansbury provided practical support for many members of his large family and fellow East Enders. His affability and sympathetic encouragement is still remembered by Lord Tony Pandy, the former Speaker. In the East End he welcomed outside help from middle class patronage, but objected to any imposition of middle class ideals, such as he felt were practised by Toynbee Hall. His understanding and belief in East End people formed the basis of his support for active grass roots democracy in social agencies and nationalised bodies.

The book covers much more than George Lansbury in the East End. It details his work as a Member of Parliament and Leader of the Labour Party, during a long and very active political career. Bob Holman has brought Lansbury back to life, and without drawing slick comparisons, he shows quite clearly how so many of Lansbury's ideas and beliefs are still relevant. Good Old George!

DAVID BEHR

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Marriage and Obituary Notices - 1880 - (Lynn Advertiser - Norfolk). Janice Simons. 1990 (paperback) £3.50 plus 40p p&p. (17 Kingcup, Pandora Meadows, Kings Lynn, Norfolk.)

This little gem has been painstakingly researched by its author, and published by her own efforts and is indeed a labour of love. Janice Simons has produced this reference book by working her way through the archives of the Lynn News, the Lynn Advertiser, Wisbech Constitutional Gazette and Norfolk and Cambridgeshire Herald.

But what, might one ask, has this got to do with East London history? Page 54, for example, provides an answer, where one finds the entry: November 21st - Hewlett Road, Old Ford, London, George Blaza, for many years keeper at Victoria Park, aged 66 years. Which just goes to prove, you never know where you are going to find that vital piece of information you've been searching for. Leafing through the book, one is constantly surprised and delighted with little snippets of information gleaned from what one might be forgiven for thinking to be a rather academic subject of research.

Janice Simons book will be especially useful to anyone tracing their family tree, and as a bonus has an index of surnames as found in the notices of 1880.

ROSEMARY TAYLOR

STOP PRESS

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