

The East London History Society

PROGRAMME 1985-86

1985			
18 Sept Wed	The 19th century working class funeral Ruth Richardson	Queen Mary College	7.30 p.m
10 Oct Thurs	Annual General Meeting Followed by workshop presentation on Chinese Lunchhouse	Queen Mary College	7.30 p.m
25 Oct Fri	Title to be given of Stan Newsins, MP Central London	Queen Mary College	7.30 p.m
21 Nov Thurs	Tower Hamlets Joint Annual Lecture Charles Goodman - The Battle of Cable Street	Central Library, Bancroft Road, E.1	7.30 p.m
12 Dec Thurs	Major John Andrie C. J. Gully	Queen Mary College	7.30 p.m
1986			
16 Jan Thurs	Beneath the streets of East London Ellis Braham (Principal Lecturer in Environmental Studies, NILEP)	Queen Mary College	7.30 p.m
18 Feb Tues	Thomas Hood, partner of Mile End Old Town Alex Werner (Museum of London)	Queen Mary College	7.30 p.m
22 Feb Sat	Visit to Hackney Archives Department to see its work and a conservation demonstration	Hackney Archives Department, Rose Lipman Library, De Beauvoir Road, N1	10.30 a.m
19 Mar Wed	Exploring East London Women's History	Queen Mary College	7.30 p.m
15 Apr Tue	Poplar and West Ham's Labour Pioneers Catherine Merion and Howard Bloch	Queen Mary College	7.30 p.m
15 May Thurs	Byrant and Max match factory at Bow John Evans (Archivist, Vestry House Museum)	Hackney Archives Department, Rose Lipman Library, De Beauvoir Road, N1	7.30 p.m
15 June Wed	Stoke Newington Walk led by J. A. Watt (Senior Assistant Archivist, London Borough of Hackney)	Meet Stoke Newington Station	3.00 p.m

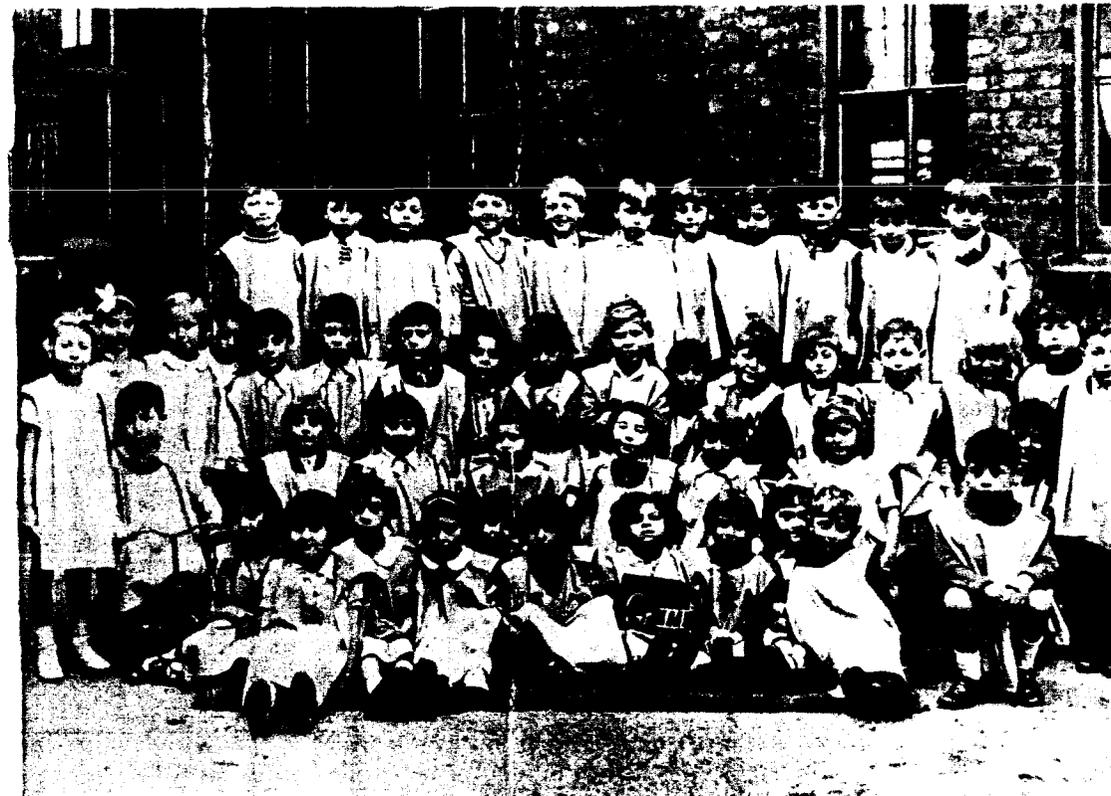
The East London History Society exists to further interest in the history of East London, namely the London Boroughs of Hackney, Newham and Tower Hamlets.

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

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EAST LONDON RECORD

No. 8

1985

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 Ridgale 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, and numbers 6 (1983) and 7 (1984) at 95p each + 25p post and packing, are still available from the circulation manager, Mr. Alan Searle, 67 Fitzgerald Road, London E11 2ST, who can also supply further copies of the present issue (1985).

As we have received several requests for complete sets of back issues, we have now photocopied those out of print and are offering the following set of back issues for £10, which includes post and package:

photocopies of numbers 1 (1978), 2 (1979), 4 (1981) and 5 (1982), plus originals of 3 (1980), 6 (1983) and 7 (1984).

All cheques should be made payable to the East London History Society.

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Cover illustration: class photograph from Stepney Jewish School in the 'thirties, with Mrs. Craven, the author of the first article in this issue, seated immediately behind the girl holding the board.

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'STEPNEY JEWISH'

Patricia Craven

GAZING down at the pearled blue cobbles on a wet Sunday morning last winter, fifty years were swept aside and I was back in the Autumn of 1934, trotting apprehensively beside my mother towards my first day as a Mixed Infant at Stepney Jewish School. I had no real idea what to expect and hardly understood why Mother was rather upset and left so quickly after handing me over to the tall, slim headmistress, Miss Kate Rose. I was taken into a large hall and allocated a miniature chair among about twenty other tots, some of whom were snivelling miserably; each of us was deftly engulfed in a shriek-bright orange overall, several sizes too large, which did nothing to lighten our bewilderment.

The sharp clap of Miss Rose's rather bony hands focused our wandering attention while her reedy voice told us to do everything our teachers said and behave ourselves at all times. The huge, crackling coal fire, heavily protected by a massive fireguard, was sending its rosy warmth towards us and I began to think maybe this strange place called school wasn't so bad after all, especially once we were handed some toys. Gradually, I began to settle enough to notice other groups of children in the hall, obviously veterans of a few days, some reciting a nursery rhyme in a dissonant chorus while those in another, more advanced group, were drawing on small slates with badly-tuned slate pencils. Our group was ranged before Miss Rose's tall, stand-to desk and other groups had one or two more teachers shared between them.

At break time, a bell was rung and we were each given a third-of-a-pint bottle of cold, creamy milk and shown how to push the straws through the kiss-cut circle in the cardboard tops; when we'd finished, the bottles were to be put neatly into the crate.

As we enjoyed our drink, Miss Rose reminded the inevitable few whose mothers had forgotten, that we had each to bring tuppence ha'penny every Monday morning for the week's milk.

The rest of the morning passed pleasantly, some of us making pom-poms of bright coloured wool oddments wound around clean milk-bottle tops while others cut shapes out of coloured sheets of paper and then pasted those on to larger sheets of cartridge paper in patterns of our own design. Some of the least dreadful of these were tacked up on the wall, to the delight of the proud artists.

I doubt whether I had ever before been so badly behaved at lunch as on that my first school-day; torn between gabbling all the exciting events of the morning and trying to bolt my food and get back for what the afternoon might hold was a terrible strain; finally, Mother took me back to school and we all resumed our seats like old hands. Shortly after this we were all taken to another room full of small green canvas beds and told to lie down to sleep for a while if we could — but it was much too exciting a place to be sleeping in so several minutes elapsed before we could be persuaded to settle. The next half-hour dragged until we could get up and resume the real stuff of the day, like



Another of Mrs. Craven's class photographs from Stepney Jewish School. Can you identify the author?

the absorbing business of pushing beads about on an abacus to calculate how many children were in our class.

There were one or two hiccups to the smooth routine that first day, like wanting to go to the toilet and having to wait until the teacher noticed the small raised hand; the tot-sized facilities, probably a little primitive by today's standards but perfectly adequate for our needs, were very fascinating and some of us asked to go more often than we needed; inevitably, one or two children mistimed their body clocks and were competently and unfussily dealt with, damp underwear being set to dry before the fire.

We were taught in the big hall only for as long as it took to get us used to school discipline, before being put into proper classrooms. Each class teacher taught her own class exclusively; my first teacher, Mrs. Groves, was a plump, kindly woman, slow-fused and very popular. The poor soul was prone to winter colds and in an age when germs and viruses were far from peoples' thoughts, it seemed perfectly sensible for Mrs. Groves to rinse out her wet hankies at the handbasin conveniently close to her desk, before spreading

them to dry over the large intestine-style radiators, continuing to teach unfalteringly during the laundering . . .

Mrs. Groves was usually very decent about it if we were a little late in the mornings and as her classroom was at the far end of the corridor from the main entrance, but conveniently close beside the playground and rear entrance, if we were not so late as to arrive after that door had been locked, we could often slip in that way and with a murmured apology to Mrs. Groves, nip quietly into place and no harm done.

My difficulty was that although I was always despatched to school in good time, once I was old enough to go unaccompanied, too many distractions beset my route. For example, I simply had to check the chewing gum machine on the wall outside the cobbler's tiny shop; this gadget was set to deliver two packs of P.K., to every fifth customer and there was always the chance that someone who didn't know this might have overlooked the free pack. The cobbler was already busy with his mouthful of nails and little hammer in the rich aroma of his leathery retreat, but always had time to wish me a slightly muffled 'Good Morning' as I passed.

Next, round the corner in Globe Road, was the little greengrocers where my Mother 'dealt'; I had carefully to consider whether a whole day's pocket money should be squandered on an apple or saved for two farthing bags of sweets.

Thursday was an especially tightly-packed schedule as comics were 'in' and meant I needed to remind Rosie in the paper shop to save my 'Dandy' until later; next door to the sweet and paper shop, with its twists of delicious cough candy and 'lamb chops, green peas and new potatoes' was the tiny Grey-Green coach office where a friend of my parents, Mr. King, worked.

Stepney Green Station, on the corner of Globe and Mile End Roads, was particularly dear to me for its fabulous echo, which extended even up to the booking hall; on those red-letter days when my parents took me anywhere by train I used always to embarrass them by singing 'Little Sir Echo' all the way through the tunnel to the platform. On my way to school during the week, if the porter were busy elsewhere, it was almost as satisfying to stamp across the front of the booking hall and enjoy the echo of one's own footprints. (I checked the echo last winter and it's still there!). The young lady who sold papers and magazines in the station bookstall, Grace, was a favourite among my regular 'greeters'.

I then had to cross Mile End Road. During my infant school-days I was always taken as far as the other side of this major traffic route with its clanging trams and the shire-drawn drays clattering across the cobbles into Charringtons' yard. As the years passed, however, with many imaginative warnings and threats I was at last promoted to crossing on my own, following a very complicated code of my parents! Just across the road I passed Angel's shop window, with its carnival masks and novelties. I used always to think Kitty Angel, who was a classmate of mine, so lucky to have parents in a really interesting line of business — my own were in the more mundane tailoring trade.

A few more yards brought me to the narrow lane leading to Stepney Green — but first I had to negotiate the 'Buildings'; I always hurried as fast as possible past this grimy tenement since the time I'd heard raised angry voices

from within, looked up in surprise and unfortunately and unwittingly drawn the attention of one of the residents who started to shout quite frighteningly at me. This hurdle behind me I had a choice of either walking down the blue-stoned roadway, about three to four yards wide, which still lies between the pavement and the narrow strip of park along Stepney Green, or through the first three little segments of the park.

The grassy wastes dotted with a few lank trees I saw last winter bore little resemblance to the scrupulously trim, bright and well-tended flower beds of my childhood, set in carefully clipped 'keep-off' grass on either side of a smooth, asphalt path which had just the right amount of grip for skipping along.

By the time all these heady excitements had been fully explored it was inevitably and heart-sinkingly past 'going-in time'; the road was hushed by the empty playground and I knew I was in big trouble if Miss Rose caught me. On such days I used to go through the front entrance, closing it noiselessly and carefully behind me, toss my hat and coat into the cloakroom as I tiptoed past, before bearding Miss Rose's study, set rather in the fashion of Gardiners Corner, facing down the main corridor to Mrs. Groves' classroom and the tightly closed rear entrance. I'd got away with it a memorable couple of times, while 'earlier' late arrivals were being lectured and on one glorious occasion Miss Rose so far forgot her duties while speaking on the telephone as to turn her narrow back on the forever open door of her den, enabling me to scurry softly the entire length of the corridor to my class. Most mornings, however, though I innovated several S.A.S. style methods of infiltration, the vinegary voice would intone, 'Patricia Silverman — come here!' and I'd be doomed to a long, if well-deserved, lecture, during which I ached desperately to be away, safe in my classroom . . .

My Grandmother taught me to tell the time as well as the letters of the alphabet before I went to school, which must have given me a head start in reading. Progress in this subject at Stepney Jewish School was gauged by working our way through a series of 'Readers' graded by difficulty — swirl-patterned soft-covered books which I found so enjoyable I read them for pleasure, so never felt the pangs of learning. At any rate, I soared through the series in sheer enjoyment at a rate which rendered my arithmetical shortfalls less apparent and enabled me to attain the dizzy heights of Miss Boardman's class earlier than my age warranted. This meant that not only was I able to bask in the reflected glory of the school's most popular teacher but need no longer run the Rose gauntlet on two counts, first because Miss Boardman's class was better placed strategically for late arrival and second — I was by then so keen to start each day at school that I became punctual, much to the satisfaction of Miss Rose.

I believe my happiness as a pupil at Stepney Jewish may have largely been due to Miss Boardman; she was young and quick to see the funny side of situations, while able to bestow encouragement and sympathy when and where necessary — as well as discipline. Her shiny brown hair was drawn back into an elegant chignon and her narrow feet shod in brogue shoes with slashed flaps — positively the last word in chic! It took many weeks of pressure to persuade my Mother that I simply had to have some shoes 'just like Miss Boardman's' — only to find the pressure was on me for they were sublimely

uncomfortable, though I'd never admit it — which may have some bearing on the present state of my feet . . .

It was Miss Boardman who encouraged me to write, she who added kind remarks at the end of my essays and saw fit to exhibit one of my truly dreadful epic stanzas on the classroom wall — as well as explaining gently to me the meaning of plagiarism when on one occasion my essay on 'How I Spent my Holidays' bore too close a resemblance to 'Coral Island' — though she understood this was an expression of admiration and appreciation of a fine story.

Given my life-long love affair with words I simply do not understand why the same magic didn't apply to Hebrew, despite the undoubted enthusiasm of the bearded patriarch who taught us. My only remaining recollection from all those lessons is the sound of aleph, beth and gimel, the first three letters of the Hebrew alphabet; but I couldn't now pick out their shapes from a row of beans. Hebrew lessons always followed the Ceremony of the Malt, which was conducted with just one very large spoon, scrupulously and unhygienically licked clean by each child in turn. The malt was stored in a huge stone jar and was the best I've ever tasted; perhaps it was the malt lingering on my taste buds which prevented the proper absorption of the Hebrew tongue . . .

They were happy days, when my main pre-occupation was how quickly I could sail through piano practice after school, before going out to play. By the time I was old enough to start worrying how I had fared in the Preliminary Scholarship examinations, the ugly and all-pervading cloud of World War II had gathered on the horizon and my safe, warm world was changed, irrevocably.

Evacuation was the beginning of the end of my happy school-days — and of the end of an era for us all.

HACKNEY WATERWORKS

Keith Fairclough

DURING the last years of his life Francis Tyssen II became the major landowner within the parish of Hackney, acquiring three manors there between 1697 and his death in 1710. He was a prominent East India merchant, and had been involved in the formation of several joint-stock companies — the Hollow Sword Blades Company, the Company of Copper Miners in England, and the Company for Recovering Wrecks in England, amongst others. Of particular interest is that he was one of the original shareholders of a company floated in 1692 to supply London with water, the Hampstead Aqueduct Company. For a man with such interests, Hackney provided a convenient residence close to the City.¹

Among the properties he acquired in Hackney were Jeremy's Ferry across the river Lea, and a fishery along the river between Lock Bridge and Bullivants (by this date Lock Bridge was already a ferry not a bridge, about ½ mile further up the river from Jeremy's Ferry).² Owners of fisheries had rights to erect weirs across the river, ostensibly to increase the catch, but they also acted as occasional flash locks to assist the passage of barges. Such a weir stood at Jeremy's Ferry, and Francis II was to erect a waterworks at this weir to supply his tenants and neighbours.

Some doubt must remain as to the exact date that these works were set up,³ but sufficient evidence does exist to suggest that it was built between 1707 and 1709. In March 1707 the Lea bargemen complained to the London aldermen that Tyssen was setting up a weir and other works at Jeremy's Ferry, and the aldermen appointed a committee to investigate. This committee subsequently surveyed the completed works in November 1709. Meanwhile the bargemen made similar complaints to the Commission of Sewers for Tower Hamlets, only for the complaints to be dismissed after the bargemen failed to attend the hearing.

Then in December 1709 7 bargemen signed a document certifying that the weir at Jeremy's Ferry had stood for several years and was essential to the navigation, also acknowledging that Tyssen had recently 'fixed a Mill or Engine in the Dead Roome of the said weare on Hackney side of the said River' but that this in no manner prejudiced their interests.⁴

Nowhere is it stated that it was a waterworks that Tyssen had built, but in the light of evidence from the ensuing decades, it can have been little else.

In August 1715 the Hackney churchwardens excommunicated Randolph Johnson, the engineer at the waterworks, for non-payment of his rates. An effective ploy, he paid up the following week.⁵ In 1720 John Strype described the works in his Survey,⁶ and in 1724 a report to Chancery stated that the waterworks had become derelict, itself confirmation that the waterworks had stood some years.⁷ Unfortunately the wills of Francis II in 1710 and Francis III in 1717 provide no information about the works.⁸

From these various sources however, a vague impression of the works can be gleaned. There was a weir in the river at Jeremy's Ferry; an engine, probably a waterwheel, to raise water out of the river; either pipes or a

wooden conduit to carry the water to a reservoir in Clapton; and wooden pipes to distribute it from thence to the customer.⁹

When Francis III made his will in 1717, his wife was still expecting the heir, Francis John Tyssen, so guardians were appointed to look after the estate during his minority. It may have been these guardians who allowed the waterworks to decay, for in July 1724 John Ward of Hackney, representing Francis John, complained to Chancery that the waterworks were dilapidated, and that there was a need to rebuild and expand the enterprise.

Ward wished to undertake this task himself, and presented an estimate which had been prepared by a plumber, George Osmond. The plans produced show not just repairs but a major expansion. The engine house was to be rebuilt, and a better cast-iron engine introduced. Old pipes were to be dug up and rejoined, the conduit was to be properly planked, and new pipes were to be laid. It was estimated that this work would cost £2,051 if done 'with Brick and Stone' or £1,781 'if only done with Timber'; and that the annual maintenance thereafter would be £60.

Ward had already canvassed custom. He told Chancery that the rental income already assured came to £152 7s a year, and that if the other 340 inhabitants would sign agreements this would bring in an additional £50 a year. Furthermore the income of the enterprise could be increased if he was allowed to build two mills, one on each side of the river, the rent from which could be £50 a year.¹⁰

Ward and Osmond had been involved in waterwork enterprises together before this date. In 1708 Osmond had erected a waterworks at Hertford, and Ward had taken over the property by the end of the following decade.¹¹ Osmond had also given evidence to Parliament in 1721 in favour of a scheme to supply London from the Colne and its tributaries.¹² The pair were obviously sufficiently keen and experienced, but their proposals for Hackney were never implemented. Evidence to the contrary can readily be discounted.¹³

One reason was that Ward was in no position to finance or organise the plans. Shortly after presenting his case to Chancery, he was convicted of forgery and expelled from Parliament after rows between him and the Duke of Buckingham over alum mines in Yorkshire. As early as 1726 he was taking steps to avoid his creditors, and he was formally declared bankrupt in November 1730.¹⁴

With the loss of the waterworks, the inhabitants had to rely on traditional methods once more. Parliament were told in 1762 that they were supplied either 'by Carts from the River which is very expensive' or relied on pumps and rainwater. The inhabitants had approached the New River Company in 1757, but negotiations had fallen through because they could not guarantee a minimum annual income of £250.¹⁵

Such evidence was presented because a new initiative had emerged to set up a local waterworks once more. In June 1760 Francis John Tyssen granted a 61 year lease at £30 a year to John Barrow of Stafford Row in Middlesex, gentleman, Thomas Holloway of Hackney, merchant, and Henry Holloway of Hackney, yeoman. The premises let were a tenement and lands on the west bank of the river just south of the road leading to Lea Bridge. On this property the lessees were granted rights to erect 'any Buildings Engines or

Works for the Purpose of Supplying the Town of Hackney and the parts adjacent with Water'.¹⁶

Then in September 1762 Tyssen issued another lease, for 59 years at £23 a year on premises on the east side of the river in Low Layton marsh known as Chevaliers Ferry House, with all the associated fishing rights. At this date the lessees were named as William Miller of London, merchant; John Bourke of London, merchant; Abraham Ogier of Hackney, gentleman; William Gilbee of Blacksfields in Surrey, mariner; in addition to the already named John Barrow and Henry Holloway. Thomas Holloway was no longer involved.¹⁷

Abraham Ogier was a notary based in Popes Head Alley, and was certainly living in Hackney when he died in 1784.¹⁸ The others were 'several Adventurers and Undertakers' described as 'several Gentlemen . . . willing to undertake the Furnishing a sufficient Quantity of Water, at a reasonable Expence'.¹⁹ The will of Henry Southouse of Southampton in 1791 refers to '4 shares in Hackney Mills and Water Works'²⁰ which confirms that the works were financed by share capital, but so far no other information of the financial arrangements has been discovered. Share finance was a sharp contrast with the earlier works which had been financed privately by Francis Tyssen II.

Another contrast was that the new works were cited lower down the river, below Lea Bridge, not at Jeremy's Ferry, where the earlier works had been. The new adventurers did take over the reservoir at Clapton and some of the pipes from the original venture, but it was unlikely that they took over the original engine house as the lessees were to claim in 1821.

Of the new venture, a contemporary newspaper reported that 'Some curious waterworks of a new construction will shortly be erected near the River Lea, for the better supplying with water the parish of Hackney, the hamlets of Clapton, Hammerton and parts adjacent'.²¹ Just why the works should be considered curious has to be gleaned from the evidence provided by the map reproduced as Figure 1²² and other scattered sources.

A new cut had been built alongside the navigable river over which were erected mills designed both to raise water and grind corn. On the west bank of this cut a tower was built, presumably to provide extra pressure to drive the water through underground wooden pipes to the reservoir at Clapton. In the navigable channel the locks shown on the map were built. On one side of the river there were single gates, but on the other side a pound lock was built.

Major rows erupted over the existence and design of these locks. In November 1761 the bargemen complained that the 'Works lately erected' prejudiced the navigation, and the Trustees of the Lee Navigation instructed the owners of the waterworks to attend their next meeting. If they did, they were to be disappointed, for the Trustees failed to obtain the necessary quorum of 10 at any of the next three monthly meetings. The owners approached Parliament instead, and on March 3, 1762 they were given leave to introduce a bill.²³

The bill was never submitted. Eventually agreement was reached between the adventurers and the Trustees, but not before further acrimony. The Trustees' immediate response to events in Parliament was that 20 actually attended the next meeting, and resolved to oppose the bill. The following

month they instructed their surveyor to destroy the newly built locks on May 17. This task was postponed however, on receipt of a legal submission from the adventurers, and proper negotiations began. These negotiations are not minuted but by October an agreement had been reached. The Trustees leased the locks from the adventurers and appointed a lock-keeper to ensure their proper use, both for the navigation and the waterworks.²⁴

In 1766 John Smeaton reported to the Trustees that the pound lock was only 'occasionally used' and that its design was bad 'as neither its floor nor the river below is deep enough for navigation, without flashes there, as at present'. He proposed an artificial navigation cut from Lea Bridge to Old Ford which by-passed the mills completely (see Figure 1). However, subsequent negotiations led to an alternative cut being proposed by Thomas Yeoman, Smeaton's assistant, and to statements in the act of 1767 that the lock 'hath been found by Experience to be of very great Service and Advantage to the Navigation'.²⁵

The Hackney Cut was opened to barges on 7 August 1769, and it left the Lea immediately below the lock and the mills. By this date Tyssen had sold his interest in the pound lock for £750, part of the payment being compensation for the loss of income from a wharf and two public houses he owned on the by-passed river channel.²⁶

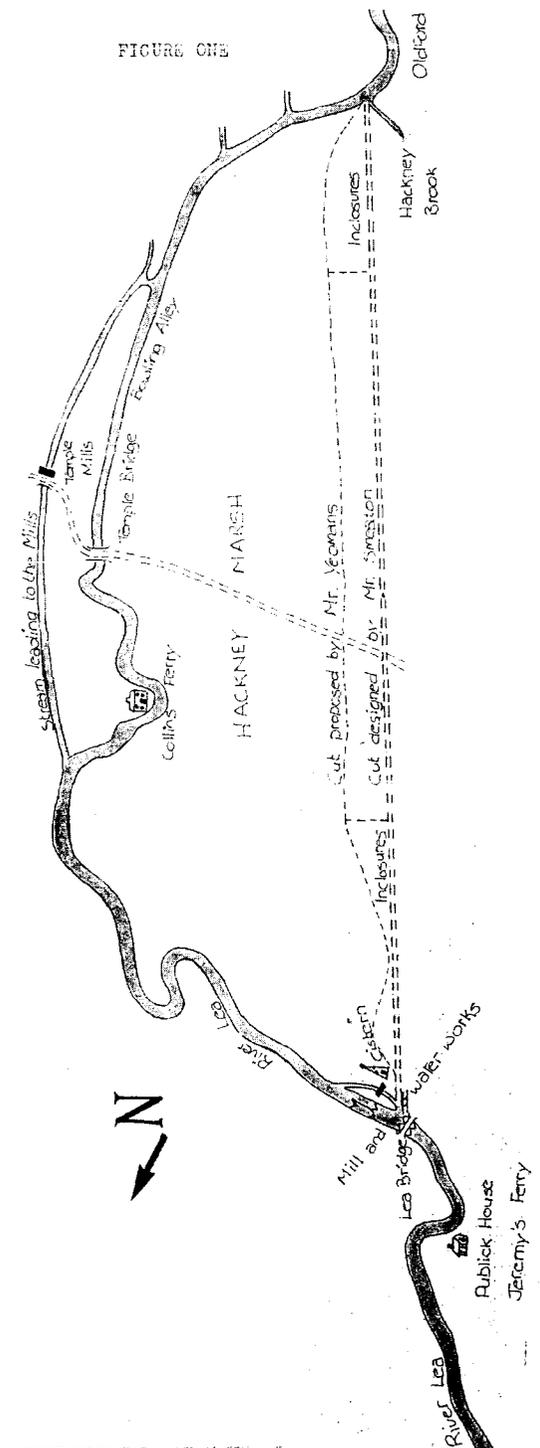
Of the fate of the enterprise in the ensuing decades, little has been found about the waterworks, but Simmons has found several references to the corn milling business in the insurance records. In 1772 Benjamin Ardley of Bow, miller, insured his stock and utensils in a timber and tiled corn mill near Lea Bridge for £1,000. In January 1776 however the mills are described as brick and timber built when Jonathan Rogers and Charles Hammerton insured their corn mills and waterworks for £2,000, a valuation which was raised to £4,000 in 1782.

These two were in possession of the main lease, but a series of millers and mealmen insured their stock and utensils on the premises:- Thomas Palmer and Ralph Natrass of Southwark, mealmen, in 1781; Samuel Lewin and Robert Thomas of Hackney, mealmen, in 1782; Edward Phillips and William Foster of Tottenham, millers, in 1786, and George Fawbert of Bromley, mealmen, in 1787.²⁷

The precise arrangements between these mealmen and millers, and Rogers and Hammerton have not been discovered, nor have the latter's arrangements with the original adventurers about the waterworks.

These works were an integral part of the enterprise. In January 1788 when major floods inundated Hackney marshes the mills were at a standstill, and fears were expressed that since 'they throw water into the reservoir at Clapton, a scarcity of water was apprehended, in consequence of which, it was distributed through the pipes in scanty portions'. However, supplies did last until the waters receded.²⁸

Jonathan Rogers was still a partner in 1782. However, in 1790 a commission of bankruptcy was awarded against Richard Rogers 'late of Lee Bridge Mills but now of Charing-cross, miller, dealer and chapman'; and in a 1793 directory there is a reference to 'Hamerton & Co, mealmen of Hackney'.²⁹



Sketch map drawn to show alterations to the original plans of Smeaton for canalizing the river in 1766 (Hackney Library Services)

Then on Thursday 14 January 1796 disaster struck:—

About a quarter before three o'clock this morning, a fire broke out at the extensive Mills at Lea Bridge . . . which, after burning with amazing rapidity for two hours, entirely consumed the same, with an immense quantity of wheat and flour. The works which supply Clapton with water were also destroyed; and a considerable pin or needle manufactory, with much timber on the Wharf, and about 3000 quarters of wheat and flour, the property of the Government. The fire is supposed to have been occasioned by the meal-weighter's leaving a lighted candle between 2 sacks in an upper-room. The dwelling house adjoining escaped. Mrs. Killick, who lived in it and had lately lain-in, sustained no injury, though greatly alarmed and removed in fright . . .

Of the pin manufactory nothing else is known; but the mills were presumably working on contracts for the war effort. The Mrs. Killick who escaped was Hamerton's daughter, who had married a John Shepherd Killick.³⁰

Hamerton did not suffer too much from this disaster. He became the alderman for Bread Street ward in 1797, and obituaries on his death in November 1800 noted his wealth, commenting particularly on the 'extremely lucrative concern' at Lea Bridge Mills, and his links with his brother, Thomas, at Lynn Mills in Norfolk.³¹

The mills and waterworks were rebuilt after this fire, but the exact sequence of events is difficult to discern. The 1821 legal case states that the lessees proposed to surrender the existing 61 year lease which still had 25 years to run, in order to take out a new lease for a longer period, and at a higher rent. They might have wished not just to rebuild but to expand the enterprise. The guardians of Francis Tyssen (the illegitimate son of Francis John who had died in 1781) took the advice of a leading engineer, John Rennie, and refused to grant a new lease. Another famous engineer, Robert Mylne, was also consulted, but by whom and in what capacity is not known.³² An opportunity to expand was thus lost, and the opportunity was seized instead the following decade by the East London Waterworks Company.

The evidence suggests that the mills and waterworks were rebuilt on the same scale as before, if not to the same design, but by whom and exactly when cannot at present be determined with accuracy. Different interpretations can be construed.

The waterworks were back in operation by April 1798, for in that month artillery men from Tower Hamlets were sent to guard the works 'against the mischievous intention of disaffected persons' who were rumoured to be about to make an assault. Similar protection was given to the New River and the London Bridge waterworks. The rumoured attacks did not materialise.³³

At this date, however, Charles Hamerton & Son, mealmen, were based at 29 Bread St, Cheapside, not at Hackney.³⁴ It is possible therefore that temporary measures had been taken to put the waterworks back in operation, and that the corn mills had not been rebuilt by this date.

Hamerton's obituary in November 1800 mentioned that he had let Lea Bridge mills to the 'new chartered company for supplying London with flour

and bread'. This was the London Company for the Manufacture of Flour, Meal, and Bread' which had been authorised by Act of Parliament earlier that year. It had been set up by a 'number of benevolent gentlemen' who were worried about shortages and high prices in the markets and wished to manufacture flour and bread themselves to sell 'at reasonable prices'. Share capital of £120,000 was authorised.³⁵

Since the formation of this company was vigorously opposed by the bakers, millers and mealmen who supplied the London markets, Hamerton must have annoyed many of that business community he had been part of for so long.

In December 1801 the Times reported that the annual general meeting of the Company had resolved to purchase the site of the Albion Mills near Blackfriars Bridge which had stood empty ever since the spectacular fire of 1791. The Times commented that 'The Company are at last determined to follow up the original plan of their incorporation'.³⁶

Does this statement imply that they had achieved little at Lea Bridge Mills, and that perhaps this had been because they had not taken over a working mill, but only a site on which to erect new mills? No definite answer can be given. It is possible that they took over a lease on mills which had already been rebuilt, but that the scale of their operations were too small to materially affect the level of prices in the London market, thus their interest in the larger site at Blackfriars. It has to be noted that they never rebuilt the Albion Mills, and about 1809 houses were built on the site.³⁷ Further evidence of this philanthropic venture would be interesting, it seems to have failed to have achieved anything.

Their working interest in Lea Bridge Mills was definitely short-lived. In 1802 John Killick is listed as a miller and mealman at Hackney Mills, Lea Bridge, and in the same year George Hooper of Walworth, mealman, insured his stock and utensils in 'Mr. Killicks Water Corn Mills' there. Killick was Hamerton's son-in-law and had been at the mills when they burnt down in 1796. Presumably he had reached terms with either the trustees appointed in Hamerton's will or with the London Flour Company, it is not clear which. It is also possible that it was Killick who finally rebuilt the mills.³⁸

All that can be said with certainty is that the waterworks were definitely supplying customers once more as early as April 1798, but that of the 'corn mills, it can only be noted that they were definitely working by 1802. Before that it can only be surmised.

In 1808 Killick insured his stock and utensils in 'his Water Corn Millhouses adjoining and communicating brick and timber and tiled having two kilns, communicating only by two iron pipes'. No waterworks are mentioned in this description, but a further description is provided in the 1821 legal case which does mention the waterworks:-

a large Building chiefly of Wood on a Brick foundation, with a Slate Roof containing the Waterworks and a Corn Mill with Ware & Stor rooms . . . 2 waterwheels one of which is used for the purpose of the Mill and the other supplies the Waterworks as well as turns the Mill and also moves an Engine for boring pipes for the Waterworks

The buildings had already taken on that configuration depicted in the map of 1829 which is reproduced in Figure Two. One obvious difference with the works built in 1762 is that the water tower was no longer required.³⁹

Killick was declared bankrupt in 1809, but he rode out the storm, paid a final dividend in 1816, and was still working the mills and waterworks in 1821 when the 61 year lease came to an end. However, he was not in possession of the expiring lease, as it was in fact held by a John and James Surrey.⁴⁰

These two had been described as millers of Silver St., Edmonton in 1802, but from 1805 onwards they were based at mills in Rotherhithe, being described variously as millers or biscuit bakers. In December 1817 these mills were burnt down, and a report of the disaster noted that the mills were 'of great importance to the poor of Southwark, whom it supplied with bread at a much lower rate than the market price'.⁴¹

This statement might suggest some link with the philanthropic company set up in 1800, however tenuous, and might explain how they held the lease. On the other hand it could have come into their possession either during Killick's bankruptcy or directly from the trustees of Hamerton's will. No definite statement can be made without further evidence.

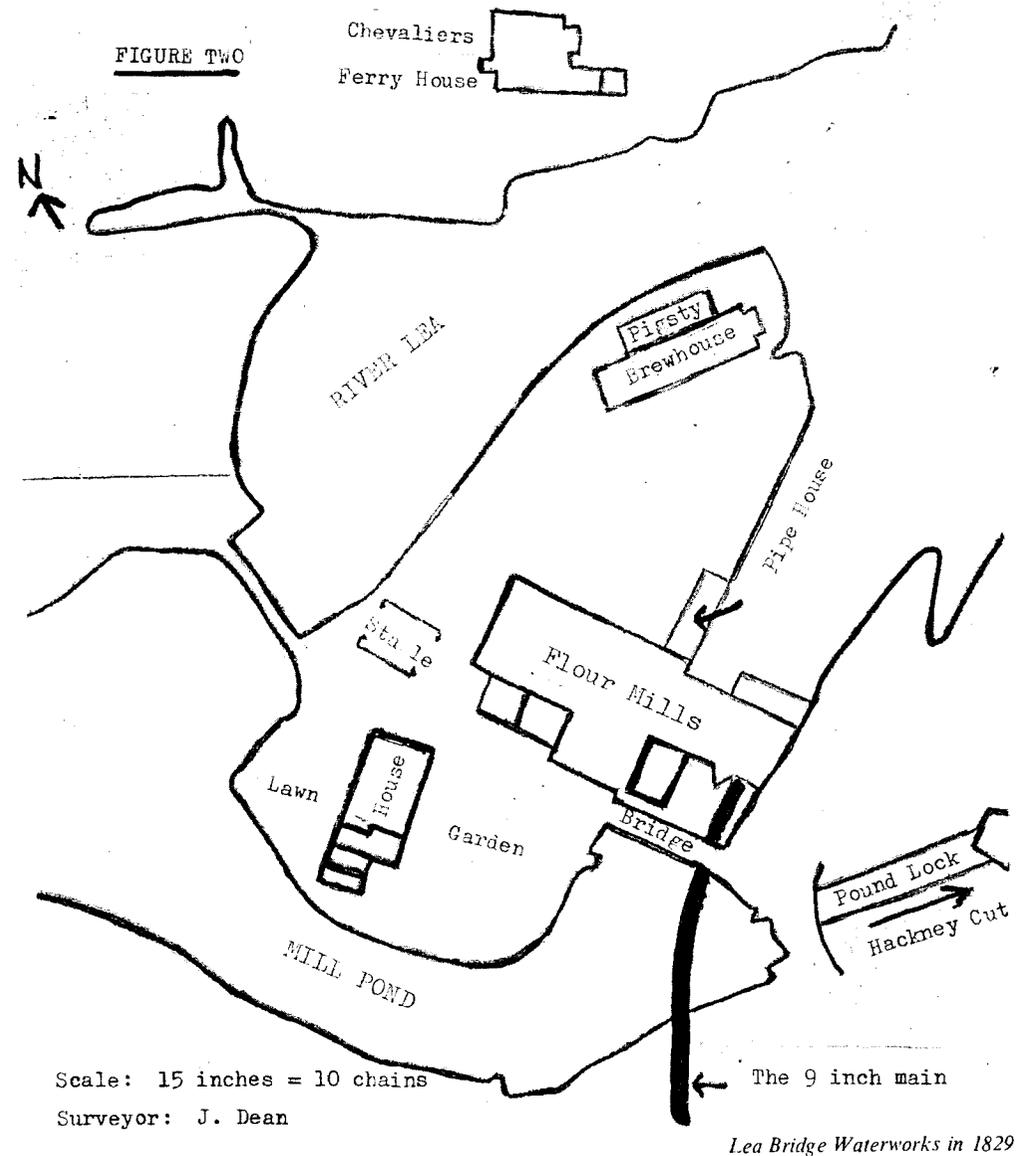
Whatever the case, disputes arose as the end of the lease on Lady Day (25 March) 1821 drew near. The Surreys wished to renew their lease and retain an interest in the works; William George Daniel Tyssen (who had succeeded in 1814) insisted that the 1760 lease was a building lease and that he was to take over the buildings and property on its expiration; Killick too wished to protect his investments by taking out a new lease.

An additional factor was the growth of other competing water companies. Whereas the Hackney company had remained a localised enterprise supplying areas within the parish of Hackney, the first decades of the nineteenth century witnessed the expansion of both the New River Company and the East London Waterworks Company into the area. Both these companies had begun to supply houses within the parish, before they reached an agreement in 1815 which limited future geographical and price competition. The smaller Hackney company was not involved in this agreement, and indeed in 1816 made 'an active Canvas' to win new customers and maintain their old.⁴²

As early as June 1819 Richard Dann, a director of the East London company, had suggested to Tyssen that some agreement should be reached to allow the takeover of the Hackney works, but, to Dann's disgust, his fellow directors were not prepared to take any initiative.⁴³

Then in September 1820 the Surrey brothers approached the East London company, and offered to discontinue Hackney waterworks in return for £5,000. They stated that if this offer was not taken up, they would approach Parliament for powers to raise more capital, erect a steam engine to raise water, and expand supplies beyond the parish of Hackney. They asked for a reply within ten days.

A special meeting of the East London Waterworks Company was held a couple of days before this deadline to consider the offer. However, other matters were debated instead, and consideration of the offer was postponed,



as they informed the brothers, because several directors had been absent from town. Notice was then placed in the London Gazette that 'the proprietors of the Hackney Water-Works, or some of them' intended to obtain an Act of Parliament.

This was a bluff. The brothers approached the East London company once more in January 1821, but once more met with a rebuff. The East London company were in a poor financial state at the time, but the real reason for these persistent refusals to get involved was that they were well advised of the weak position of the Surrey brothers.

They knew that Tyssen intended to re-possess the works, and may have been aware that as early as February 1820 Tyssen had signed a new lease with Killick, a lease which was to commence on the day that the old lease expired.

The terms of this 31 year lease involved Killick in spending £2,000 on repairing the mills and £2,000 on repairing other parts of the enterprise. In November 1821 Tyssen then had to allow Killick a further £1,050 to compensate for the dilapidated state of the works. It was this very state of disrepair which had determined Tyssen not to renew the Surreys' lease.

There may be some question concerning the probity of the Surrey brothers' approaches during this period. However, their arguments with Tyssen were settled by arbitration in April 1821. One other point to note is that at one stage they had mentioned 'Gentlemen . . . of the first consequence' who were prepared to act as guarantors, namely Messrs Scott, Garnett and Palmer of the Corn Exchange, a firm of corn-factors. Were these other proprietors of Hackney Waterworks?⁴⁴

In October 1821 James and John Surrey were declared bankrupt, but they had paid out a final dividend by July 1822. After this the brothers are noted in an 1825 directory as biscuit-makers of Rotherhithe, but not in other directories. Then in 1828 John Surrey is listed by himself as a flour factor at Wapping Steam Mills.⁴⁵ Further details of their activities may provide more information about the waterworks, the role of the proprietors, and of Killick's exact position before 1821.

On taking over the lease Killick seems to have come to some form of informal agreement with the East London company, for in January 1822 they wrote to him expressing surprise that he was breaking their understandings. In March 1824 it was further reported that Killick was replacing the wooden main between Lea Bridge and the reservoir at Clapton with a 9" iron main, and was replacing some of his other wooden mains with iron pipes. In addition he was known to be looking for extra capital to expand his works and introduce a 20 h.p. steam engine, and had already poached some customers away from the East London company.

The steam engine was never introduced, but the East London company were sufficiently worried by these developments to order an investigation into how much it would cost them to lay new pipes into Hackney to compete for Killick's customers. A war seemed to be in the offing.⁴⁶

In November 1824 however, Killick offered to sell his interests in Hackney waterworks to the East London company. He asked £18,000 for the mills and waterworks, or £10,000 for the waterworks alone. The company

were definitely interested, but when they arrived at Lea Bridge to inspect the works, they were informed that Killick had died that very morning. After a decent interval no doubt, negotiations continued with the son and heir, John, but in January 1825 these had broken down, the company not thinking it worth purchasing the waterworks on the terms demanded by John. It is not known whether his terms were different from those of his father.⁴⁷

However, within a few years the East London company were to finally acquire the Hackney works. These developments sprang from a Royal Commission in 1828 into the quality of the water supplied by the various companies serving the capital. This Commission made no specific recommendations with regard to the East London Waterworks Company, but the drift of their questions to the company's representatives showed concern that their supplies were taken from the Lea below the limit of the tidal influence of the polluted Thames.⁴⁸

Stimulated by this the East London company petitioned Parliament in February 1829. They referred to the doubts expressed by the Royal Commission, and admitted that their own water must be suspect because the Thames tide flowed up the Lea beyond the intake to their reservoirs and they took water in on the ascending tide. They thus sought leave to introduce a bill to allow them to take water out of the Lea above the tidal limit, 'between the Lea Bridge Mills . . . and Old Ford Lock'.⁴⁹ Their intentions at this date are shown on a map in the Rose Lipman Library. They did not wish to purchase Hackney waterworks, they just wished to take water out of the Lea just below the Lea Bridge Mills.⁵⁰

When the bill was submitted, both Tyssen and Killick submitted petitions opposing the scheme, with the sole intent, as the East London company opined, to achieve some personal benefit. Whatever the case, the company changed their plans, and in April 1829 resolved to purchase Hackney waterworks. By the following month initial agreement had been reached with Killick and Tyssen, and the bill before Parliament was redrafted to give the company powers to purchase the mills and waterworks.⁵¹

The ensuing purchase was not effected without dispute, however. After valuation of the estate the East London company offered Killick £4,000 for the remainder of his lease, but Killick was of the opinion that it was worth £20,000, generously offering to settle for £15,000. When the decision to go to arbitration was taken in August 1829, Killick immediately increased his valuation to £30,000.

He was not just awaiting developments. The East London company were concerned to hear reports that he was busily improving the property whilst waiting for the arbitrators to arrive, and they made some comment about the special efforts he had made to display a thriving business to the arbitrators. They were also annoyed that Killick had refused entry to the engineer hired by them to take a survey, Joseph Cubitt. For their part the company began to emphasise that the advent of steam was rapidly devaluing any property which still relied on water for its power.

Eventually the arbitrator gave his valuation in July 1830. He awarded Killick £10,830 for the remainder of his lease, and instructed the company to pay all costs. Even then Killick dragged his feet. He failed to turn up to sign documents, argued over the fixtures and fittings, and made a final plea to be

allowed to stay on at the dwelling house next to the mills. But by November they had gained complete possession of the property.⁵²

One reason that Killick offered for his unwillingness to quit was that he had not yet found alternative mills. Whether he did has not been discovered, but every year between 1828 and 1836 he was listed in the annual Post Office London Directory as John Killick, flour-factor, Jacks Coffee House Marks Lane. The edition for 1837 has not been consulted, but he was missing from the 1838 directory.

The East London company also had to reach agreement with Tyssen over the purchase of the property. No details of these negotiations are minuted, except that in March 1832 they had been completed, and that £271 2s 6d had been expended on the necessary stamp duty.⁵³

From these negotiations some idea of the enterprise during its last years can be gleaned, and Figure 2 provides a plan of Hackney Mills as they stood in 1829.⁵⁴ Robinson writing shortly after the purchase described the estate thus: 'The Lea Bridge Mills were employed for grinding corn, and a small portion of the power (amounting to about eight horses) was used occasionally to supply water, about 600,000 barrells being raised annually'.⁵⁵

An inventory provided by Killick, and a report made by Thomas Wickstead, the East London company's engineer, provides additional detail. The mills had two waterwheels, a breast-shot wheel equivalent to 20-24 h.p., and an undershot wheel of 8-12 h.p. There were 7 pair of french stones for the grinding of corn and a carpenters shop with a water-driven saw and lathe. The water was raised out of the river for distribution by means of 'a three throwed 8 inch forcing engine with crank' and a '9 inch three throwed lifting engine', with the necessary suction and delivery pipes. The water was carried from the mills to Clapton by the 9" iron main that Killick had laid in 1824, and was distributed from the reservoir by a mixture of wooden and iron pipes. One point to note is that Wickstead said the pumps were out of repair when the estate was taken over, but that he thought them capable of raising 7,740 barrells every 12 hours.⁵⁶

Killick had stated that his waterworks had an income of £780 from rents alone, and the East London company accepted this figure, though noting that the poundage allowed the collectors would diminish this total. Killick also provided a complete list of his clients, but no trace of this list has been found in the Thames Water Authority's stronghold.⁵⁷

Having acquired Hackney waterworks the East London company began to put their plans into effect. By May 1834 they had completed the canal from their new intake at Lea Bridge down to their reservoirs at Old Ford, and thus secured the better quality water they sought.

The customers of the Hackney enterprise continued to be supplied from Lea Bridge, but changes were made to these works during the decade. Initially the Clapton reservoir was withdrawn from use, and the customers were supplied direct from the river by means of an 18" main which replaced the 9" iron main. By October 1833 the flour mills had been pulled down, but it was not until 1837 that the waterworks itself were refurbished and expanded.

In that year a new mill was erected, with 2 water wheels and 4 pumps, with a total power of 50 h.p. capable of raising 13 million barrels a year. Part

of this water was raised to a new reservoir at Stamford Hill which was opened that year, in order to allow the water to settle before distribution.⁵⁸

It was not until after the cholera outbreak in East London in 1866, and its subsequent association with supplies of water at Old Ford from the tidal Lea, that the East London Waterworks concentrated its pumping activities and reservoir capacity on the site at Lea Bridge.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the Thames Water Authority for access to and permission to quote from their private archives, and to Mr. Damonsing for his courtesy in showing me these archives. Thanks also to Ms. Roberta Lewis for drawing Figure 1.

NOTES

1. W. Robinson, 'History & Antiquities of Hackney' (1842-3, 2 vols), i. 304, 314, 322-3; Public Record Office, PROB 11/518(278); W. R. Scott, 'The Constitution and Finance of English, Scottish and Irish Joint-Stock Companies to 1720' (1910-12, 3 vols), iii. 5, 435-42; Cal. S. P. Dom., 1690-1, 207, 422, 459, 505, 522. His father, Francis Tyssen I was a London merchant born in Flanders and naturalised in 1660.
2. London Borough of Hackney Library Services, M1280; *ibid.*, D/F/TYS 35 fos. 83-91; GLRO, M79/2H/112/1-2.
3. A legal case drawn up in 1821 states 1700, but it is obvious that little was known of these original works at this date. John Strype, in a book published in 1720, states that it was built by Mr. Tyssen, late lord of the manor. In 1720 such a description would fit Francis III who had died in 1717, but Strype could have written the comment long before publication, so it could refer to Francis II who died in 1710; GLRO, Acc. 413; J. Strype, 'A Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster' (1720, 2 vols), ii. 123.
4. City of London Record Office, Repertories, 112 fo. 96; *ibid.*, 14 fo. 6; GLRO, THCS 60, Court of Sewers, 13 January 1708, 10 February 1708; GLRO, M79/LH/122/1.
5. London Borough of Hackney Library Services, D/F/TYS 12/1.
6. J. Strype, *op. cit.*
7. PRO, C38/374.
8. PRO, PROB 11/518(278); *ibid.*, PROB 11/561 (222).
9. Thames Water Authority Stronghold, Box 81 no. 354; J. Strype, *op. cit.*; PRO, C38/374; GLRO, M79/LH/122/1.
10. PRO, C38/374.
11. Hertford Record Office, Borough of Hertford Records, Vol. 36 fos. 581-4; *ibid.*, Vol. 39 fos. 23-9.
12. C.J., xix. 526.
13. The 1821 legal case states that it was thought that the works fell into disuse about 1730, but admitted that it was not known whether the works were rebuilt after the Chancery case. In 1735 Robert Seymour described the waterworks in his Survey. However, his description is copied word for word from John Strype's book published in 1720. I think the polite phrase is that it must be treated with scepticism; GLRO, Acc. 413; R. Seymour, 'A Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster, Borough of Southwark and Parts adjacent' (1725, 2 vols), ii. 780.
14. B.M. Add. Mss. 36153 fos. 141-8; R. Sedgwick, ed., 'The History of Parliament. The House of Commons 1715-54' (1970, 2 vols), ii. 519-20.
15. C.J., xxix. 154, 205. No mention was made of any existing or past local waterworks.
16. M79/LH/127/3. This document came to this writer's notice too late to pursue the names of the other adventurers in probate records or directories.
17. *ibid.*
18. Mortimer's Universal Directory 1763; PRO, PROB 11/1125 (37).
19. C.J., xxix. 154, 205.
20. GLRO, BRA 723/44.
21. London Borough of Tower Hamlets Library Services, Local History Collection 980.

2. London Borough of Hackney Library Services, 912.1767 LFF.
23. PRO, RAIL 845/2, Minutes 23 November 1761, 21 December 1761, 18 January 1762, 15 February 1762; CJ, xxix, 154, 205.
24. PRO, RAIL 845/2, Minutes 15 March 1762, 19 April 1762, 19 May 1762, 11 December 1762; GLRO, M79/LH/127/3.
25. London Borough of Enfield Library Services, *'The Report of Smeaton, Engineer, upon the New-making and completing the Navigation of the River Lee, from the River Thames, through Stanstead and Ware to the Town of Hertford'*; another copy, Bodleian Library, Gough Maps 17; revised report submitted to Parliament in 1767: *'Reports of the Late John Smeaton'* (1812-4, 4 vols), ii, 155-63; 7 Geo III c. 51.
26. PRO, RAIL 854/4, Minutes 18 June 1768, 29 July 1769.
27. Science Museum Library, Simmons Collection 2/85.
28. W. Robinson, op. cit, i, 71; see also: G. A. Walpoole, *'The New British Traveller'* (1784), 287.
29. Simmons, op. cit; London Gazette (1790), p. 262; Wilkes British Directory 1793. This last cites Richard Rogers of Lea Bridge as a member of the Baker's Company.
30. Gent. Mag. lxxvi (1796), 75; Times 15 and 16 January 1796; PRO, PROB 11/1350 (794).
31. A. B. Beavens, *'The Aldermen of the City of London'* (1913, 2 vols), i, 139; Gent. Mag. lxx pt. 2 (1800), 1113-4; C. Welch, *'History of the Worshipful Company of Paviers'* (1909), 55-6.
32. GLRO, Acc. 413; A. E. Richardson, *'Robert Mylne, Architect and Engineer, 1733 to 1811'* (1955); Rennie's biographer makes no mention of this consultancy, and the pocket books kept by Rennie which could provide further information are no longer at the private address cited: C. T. G. Boucher, *'John Rennie, 1761-1821'* (1963).
33. Annual Register, April 1798, Chronicle p. 31.
34. London Directory 1798.
35. Gent. Mag. lxx pt. 2 (1800), 1113-4; 39 & 40 Geo III, c. 97; D. MacPherson, *'Annals of Commerce'* (1805, 4 vols), iv, 500.
36. Times, 12 December 1801.
37. O. Manning & W. Bray, *'The History and Antiquities of the County of Surrey'* (1810-14, 3 vols), iii, 539-40.
38. Holden's Triennial Directory 1802-04; Simmons, op. cit; PRO, PROB 11/1350(794).
39. Simmons, op. cit; GLRO, Acc 413.
40. Ibid.
41. Holden's Triennial Directory 1802-04; Holden's Triennial Directory 1805-07; Kent's Directory 1811; Johnstone's London Commercial Guide 1818; Robson's London Directory 1820; Gent. Mag. lxxxvii pt. 2 (1817), 624; Times, 15 December 1817.
42. East London Waterworks, v. fo. 125; *ibid.*, vi fo. 259; *ibid.*, vii fos. 78, 81; Report of the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the past and present state of the Supply of Water to the Metropolis' (1821).
43. ELW, viii fos. 435, 458.
44. ELW, ix fos. 415, 422, 430-1, 436; *ibid.*, x fos. 15, 19, 28-30, 34-5; *ibid.*, xviii fos. 132-3; London Gazette, July - December 1820, pp. 1801, 1828, 1852; Report of 1821 Select Committee, op. cit, p. 62; GLRO, Acc. 413; Triennial Directory 1817-19; Pigot's Commercial Directory 1826-7.
45. ELW, x fo. 100; London Gazette, July-December 1821, p. 2085; *ibid.*, January-June 1822, p. 1010; Kent's Directory 1825; Post Office Directories, 1822, 1823, 1824, 1825, 1826, 1827, 1828, 1829.
46. ELW, x, fo. 377; *ibid.*, xii fos. 284, 471.
47. ELW, xiii fos. 82, 83, 107, 209; PRO, PROB 11/1696 (147). Killick described himself as a miller. A witness to the will was Robert Death, miller, Lea Bridge.
48. Report of the Commissioners appointed by his Majesty to inquire into the State of Supply of Water in the Metropolis (April 1828); see also Select Committee Report: July 1828. In evidence to the Royal Commission the New River Company expressed a wish to take water from the Lea near Lea Bridge. They were later to purchase Tottenham Mills instead.
49. CJ, lxxxiv, 58.
50. London Borough of Hackney Library Services, 912.1840.
51. CJ, lxxxiv, 88, 123, 169, 210; ELW, xvii fo. 519; *ibid.*, xviii fos. 2-3, 258ff; 10 Geo IV, c. 117.
52. ELW, xviii fos. 94-101, 132-3, 134-6, 143, 148, 172, 185, 205, 218, 258ff, 306, 464; *ibid.*, xix fos. 151, 310, 318, 374, 400, 412, 421, 439, 457, 496; *ibid.*, xx fos. 38, 40, 55, 78.
53. ELW, xxi, 1 May 1832.
54. London Borough of Hackney Library Services, 912.1829.
55. Robinson, op. cit, i, 49.
56. ELW, xviii fos. 94-105; *ibid.*, xx fo. 40.
57. ELW, xx fo. 134. Some clients and areas supplied by Hackney waterworks included:- Homerton, College Street, John Street, Hockley Street, London Lane, The Grove, Almhouses Grove, Silvester Row, Jerusalem Square, Clapton Square, Clapton Alley, Laura Place, Dalston Lane, beyond the Coach & Horses Homerton, from end of Hackney plug to the Nags Head; Orphan Asylum, Clapton Turnpike: ELW, xviii fos. 94-101.
58. ELW, xxi fo. 511; *ibid.*, xxiv fo. 459; Report of Select Committee on Metropolis Water (1834); Robinson, op cit, I, 49-50; H. W. Dickenson, *'Water Supply of Greater London'* (1954), 89-92.

MEMORIES OF SPITALFIELDS

Simon Diamond

I was born in Peabody Buildings on the 30th April, 1912. As was the fashion in those days local mothers acted as midwives, the local doctor calling after the birth and charging his fee of 2/6d to check that all was well. So Simon Diamond, nicknamed Sam, emerged into the world.

My family, like many other East End Jewish people, were of Dutch descent, our grandparents having emigrated from Holland to Great Britain. Many settled in Spitalfields. Most of these immigrants were poor and scraped a living in all walks of life where work was available. Where work was scarce many were dependent on the local charities, or had to depend on the local Jewish Soup Kitchen, who doled out hot soup, bread, margarine and two tins of pilchards to literally hundreds of poor families in need.

Like thousands of others I was not born with a silver spoon in my mouth. On the contrary, our family of eleven were finally whittled down to nine. Brothers Jack, Joe, plus three sisters, Sarah, Julie and Catherine, plus of course mum and dad and myself. Then at a latter stage there arrived Solomon, nicknamed Butch. There were others but miscarriages and fatal accidents left a final total of nine.

Our father was a speiler (gambler), so our mother Rebecca, rest her soul, saw more pay days than pay and if it was not for the soup kitchen plus help from an uncle who had a vegetable stall in the Spitalfields Market, we all would have seen more dinner times than dinners. We did help out by scrounging around the market after they had stalled in, collecting spare potatoes, carrots, swedes, turnips and the outside leaves from cabbages or cauliflowers plus fruit, all of which mother scrubbed clean and served up to feed the hungry mouths. Other than this our main diet was a piece of raw herring and a potato baked in it's jacket. So this was our upbringing.

My father Barney had, like thousands of others, done a moonlight flit, which meant moving our beds and all our possessions to another site, and of course owing rent and money on articles taken from local business people which were never paid for. We moved to Fort Street along Spitalfields Market. We rented two large top floor rooms with an outside cooker, that is, outside on the landing, with a water tap and sink adjacent to the stove. Our mum and dad were to occupy the front bedroom which we also used as a living room, whilst the children, girls and boys, would share the other. We divided the room down the middle with a blanket to separate us from one another. Obviously, to carry out nature's functions we had pails to pee in and for baths we had a large tin bath which was placed on the gas stove to heat up with water which we took turns to use. Or otherwise we would use the local baths.

Unfortunately, we were constantly attacked or bitten by bed bugs and despite our continual war with lighted tallow candles to kill them, plus getting the local council to sulphur-gas them, they came back and bit into us causing some of us to have to go daily to the London Hospital for sulphur baths and treatment.

Our Fort Street tenement was divided into three sections, the first floor being occupied by a Russian Jewish immigrant family. The father of the

family often had a few drinks and opened his windows calling out to all and sundry that he did not care a f... for Rule Britannia and would fight anyone who would take him on. He was a small man who normally could not knock a fly off a rice pudding. He had two daughters and one son. They also were poor and one daughter, the eldest, was a comfort to some of the local lads, but we who knew the set up were not too eager, knowing that this lady was subject to nits.

The second floor was occupied by an Irish Catholic family, three boys and two girls. The local priest from time to time had to chase up both parents and the children for not attending Mass. So our upbringing was not strictly orthodox. We played with Catholics, Protestants and Jewish children and our parents never objected. None of us boys were Barmitzvahed — it was unheard of in our family and anyway, where was the money to come from to pay for such a thing?

The year was 1914 and war was declared. Many times the maroons (a type of exploding flare rather like a small rocket) would sound off and my brother Jack would rush out banging on doors and shouting to all to take cover. The German Zeppelins were overhead and they, despite anti-aircraft guns and searchlights, did a fair amount of damage. My mum aided by an aunt of ours used to get us up and away to the shelter under Wheeler Street arches or down to the Liverpool Street underground station. Such was the panic on one occasion that my aunt wrapped me in a shawl, but then dropped me down unwittingly on the landing floor and rushed out clutching the shawl. Mother screamed, 'Where is my Simon?' My aunt nearly had a fit when she realised what she had done. She bolted back to rescue me only to find me still fast asleep where she had dropped me, none the worse for the experience. We learned that a bomb did penetrate the Bank Underground station, doing a fair amount of damage. Our family luckily missed this.

My father was in the army and had been put in charge of the Officers Mess because he didn't drink, but he rarely came home on leave without bringing a bottle of air raid mixture plus a few other sundries with him. Mother used to say he only had to throw his trousers over on to her and she was pregnant again. Our mother was our champion. She would fight tooth and nail for her family but Papa was too involved with the gambling bug, — horse-racing, snooker and billiards.

More often than not, after he had gone to work (he was a master french polisher and could earn a good living) a knock was made on our door. It was his boss asking where he was. What could poor mum say? Instead of going to work he had gone to Thirsk or Sandown Park only to come home broke whilst mother and us children were hungry for a decent meal. I was by now nine years old.

Having spent my childhood at the Jewish Free School my mother decided that I should attend Sunday School to get some Jewish culture installed in me. I went for a few weeks and was progressing. The teacher called me out and told me to get a cap to cover my head. My mother decided that the pimple cap (capel) was too expensive. So she bought me a nice little cap which I wore the next Sunday. I was ridiculed and told not to appear like that any more. I went home really furious, vowing that there would be no more religious instruction for me. Subsequently, my mother received a note stating

that because of my absence from Sunday School, I was being barred from going on a two week holiday in the country financed by the Country Holiday Fund.

At this time I was helping out in a local grocery store for a Mr. & Mrs. Cohen who held me and my family in high regard. My mother showed Mrs. Cohen the letter and she was livid. 'We shall see about this' she said, 'My husband and I contribute large sums of money towards the Country Holiday Fund so I will be talking to someone about this, but rest assured Simon will go'. And I did. So now, nearly ten years old I decided that I had got to bring in some money to help my parents. Well, innocently I was out walking one Friday night when several people called out 'Come here yocky boy and light up my gas, or light up my fire and I will give you threepence', (the Orthodox Jews were forbidden to work after the Sabbath had begun). I did quite a trade and in the end earned a few shillings which I took home to my parents. They laughed when I told them how I had earned this money. Apart from this I was contracted to sell newspapers in Spital Square. *The Star*, *News* or *Standard* were the main papers of the day, and I received 9d a quire. Of course it was hard work going out in all winds and weathers, but I enjoyed earning and bringing home a few shillings.

Spitalfields Market in 1912



Prior to these episodes some friends and I had made contact with a local wood box-making factory. The workmen were willing to give us loads of firewood in exchange for some cigarettes, so we loaded up our borrowed barrows and set out to sell 2d or 1d bundles of firewood to local high rise flat dwellers and we earned a nice few shillings for our parents. We also made contact with the local fish and chip shops, who were prepared to buy our loads in exchange for as much hot fish and chips as we could eat and carry. So my family enjoyed many a free fish supper.

Whilst at the Jewish Free School I got into several fights with local louts who used abuse against Jews, just as I and my brothers fought later against the Mosleyites at the battle of Aldgate. So obviously we were Jewish, but our attitude was based on all men and women being born equal and only by mixing more with one another as human beings with less segregation would a better world emerge.

During my school days I was asked to write an essay on any subject so I set to and described how I had walked from the Tower of London and down Queen Victoria Street. I was taking careful note of what I was seeing. On walking along the Embankment, I saw a large number of men laying down on the benches covered with newspapers to ward off the bitter cold wind that was blowing. There were some other people who were going along to these unfortunate human beings and were giving them bowls of soup and lumps of bread — all this horrified me. So I hurried on and made my way into the Strand, where large cars were transporting wealthy men and women outside the Savoy Hotel. I asked myself, how can this be? How can one set of people have all this luxury whilst only a few hundred yards away other poor souls were poverty stricken? I wrote my essay and took it into school. My class teacher called me out and said, 'Who helped you write this essay?' I said, 'No one Sir.' 'Well Simon, your spelling is awful, your writing fair, your English is very good. One day you will be something to be proud of in this world.'

Now within our area of Spitalfields and Whitechapel, the general elections were taking place. Our champion was a Mr. Johnstone (Labour) and his opponent was a Mr. O'Reilly (Conservative). Mr. Johnstone got a horse and cart bedecked with slogans and flags and this was trotted all round the streets with us children sitting aboard singing at the tops of our voices 'Vote, Vote, Vote for Mr. Johnstone, punch old Reilly in the eye; Johnstone stands for you, O'Reilly only for the wealthy few, so Vote, Vote, Vote for Mr. Johnstone!' Much to our joy Mr. Johnstone got elected.

Whilst at the Jewish Free School, I learnt to box and could take care of myself. On many occasions I fought battles in Cock Alley, which was located near Bell Lane. Many of the East End boxers went to the J.F.S. including the great Ted (Kid) Lewis, who won a World Championship and gave all of us children at the school a lovely party. Numerous others emerged — Kid Berg, the Mitler Brothers, Harry Brown, Moe Moss and literally dozens of others. Many times I watched fights at the old Premierland, the Blackfriars ring, and the Devonshire Boxing Club. Of course in those days the purses were very small compared with today, but we sure got value for money. So life rolled on.

Now out of the blue the City of London Corporation, who owned our bug-ridden property, offered my parents a four room flat in a building located in Sydney Street, Whitechapel Road. My parents readily accepted the offer so

the Diamond family moved into Dron Buildings as they were called, with a separate bedroom for us boys and girls and one for mum and dad. We also had a separate bathroom and toilet. It was heaven compared with the old bug hutch that we had left behind.

By now a further addition had arrived into the family, namely young Solomon. Unfortunately, our dad had developed T.B. of the stomach and was unable to work. Our Jack and Joe were first-class upholsterers and earned a good living. Sister Sarah was employed in the cigar trade and our Julie was in tailoring, whilst Catherine was a ladies dress saleslady. So mother, bless her, was getting enough money to do housekeeping. We children all got the benefit of chicken soup, plus chicken and roast potatoes with baked rice, and on Friday night we had fried fish with salad and dessert. Mother lit candles — why is still a matter of conjecture — but it made her happy.

I had by now reached school-leaving age and after a family conference it was decided to set me to work at an upholstery establishment run by an immigrant Polish Jew who employed several workmen, craftsmen, upholsterers and an apprentice boy who was always being cheeky outside of the governor's hearing. Well, I started getting 7/6d per week. My job was to undo old furniture down to the frames and get them ready for the upholsterers. After cleaning it of old webbing and tacks, I stained the frames. The work was filthy but at times lucrative, as I often found odd coins 2/-, 2/6, or 3d which I counted as my perks. Pens, hairpens, pen knives and knitting needles were often found too, but I was only looking for the money.

Another part of my job was to hump the completed furniture to various shops all over the London area. So rain or shine I pulled barrow loads up and down bumpy roads. I truly was earning my 7/6. After a period of time I was shown the art of webbing and how to lash and tie the springs. Furniture these days are minus these, having been replaced with steel sprung layouts, quicker and cheaper to use. My career in the upholstery trade was not to last, however, for one bright and sunny morning after the craftsmen had left their benches for breakfast, a man by the name of Big Solly, the apprentice, said to me, 'Hey you, you sappy bastard, make the tea!' I retorted, 'Make it yourself, you overgrown git'. Solly now advanced towards me shouting, 'Right put them up, I'll teach you some manners'. So I duly obliged and, having delivered a few right and left hooks, Solly was a sorry mess. He ran off to complain to the boss, who rushed into the workshop and thrust my pay packet into my hands shouting, 'I don't want any fighters here. You have nearly killed my Solly, you're fired!' The upholsterers had by now returned and congratulated me for giving Solly a hiding. And so home I went and told my story to Papa and brother Jack, who was not working that day. My dad asked how much wages I had been given, so I said 7/6. 'Well that's not enough, you have got to get a week's wages in lieu of notice.' So brother Jack took me back, and, after a debate, I was given another 7/6.

I must point out that all the male members of our family were trade union members, and had an understanding of the many rules and regulations governing working people. This was useful to me during the remainder of my working life, especially during my thirty-eight years service at the Ministry of Works, where I was at one time secretary of the Staff Side Central Committee and, with my executive committee, managed to keep the peace in the London area, without any major strikes.

HOP PICKING IN THE NINETEEN THIRTIES

Dennis Freeman

I remember the excitement as we packed the tea-chests and the wicker basket with the cooking pots, the hurricane lamp, clothes for the beds and other things, and along with the Terrys, the Shans and the Carneys, filled Lusty's furniture removal van. We left Poplar through the cavernous, echoing Blackwall Tunnel for the backwoods of Kent. Sometimes we travelled by special train from London Bridge Station. I preferred the van, with the singing, and the laughing as we lurched among the luggage.

The camp was in the upper corner of a large, sloping meadow. Nearby were the tall hop-kilns, meadows with sheep, woods, apple-orchards, and not far away were the great hop-fields; acres of high hop-bine arches, symmetrical rows, dark and quiet like forests.

We lived in windowless, corrugated-iron huts. When the sun shone they were like ovens, but at night they were cold. When it rained countless drumsticks played on the roofs. Some of the pickers had the same huts every year, and they decorated the walls and hung lace curtains at the doors. We slept on beds of faggots and straw, lulled to sleep by voices droning through the huts like the cluck and guggle of a chicken coop. We cooked outside, hanging the pots on hooks over iron crossbars, burnt faggots brought each day by the big cart and horse. In bad weather we used the cooking huts and the food tasted of smoke. Water came from the big galvanised tank. The taps were the push-in sort and the water gushed out with the force of a fire-hose. A moat of mud formed round the tank.

There was no sewage service. The farmer put up sheds. They were like sentry boxes with their backs to the camp, and were supposed to be out of noseshot, but on warm days with a breeze our way we could smell them. The smell was tempered by smoke from the cooking fires and we got used to it. Inside the sheds was a deep trench and a wooden ledge to rest the haunches on, but no one stayed to read. The sheds were full of flies; big, black and buzzing, with luminous, silvery-green wings. I was frightened of the flies, and frightened also of falling into the trench. It was better in the hop-fields. There, in the gloom of the unpicked regions, we could dig a hole and have a quiet squat with perhaps the momentary discomfort of catching the backside against a hop-bine. Despite the poor sanitation, few of us were ill. When we got home we were told how well we looked.

In the early mornings we walked through mist to the hop-fields carrying food and pots of water. Our voices and the humming of the overhead wires as the bines were tugged down, rang throughout the field. The hops, cone-shaped, golden-green blossoms with tight petals, were picked into sackcloth, wooden-framed troughs called 'bins'. Hands were scratched and roughened by the bines and blackened by the hop-pollen. A bitter odour clung to our clothes.

My mother was a quick picker. She held a branch with the leaves uppermost, and the hops dangling, and more by touch than sight, stripped it of hops in seconds. They came off in little groups, without leaves usually,



Hop picking commences at Paddock Wood, Kent, in 1932

plucked at their stalks, hardly touched by hand. For me, picking hops was an irksome duty, performed in return for the periodic freedom to run loose in the woods and fields with my friends.

At times the hops were measured by the farmer. He used a wicker bushel basket and scooped the hops from the bins into enormous sacks called 'pokes'. We were paid 6d a bushel and a good picker could earn six shillings a day. Some of us collected our earnings in one sum when the picking was over, but most of us 'subbed' once or twice a week. Once the hops were too small and we went on strike for a better price. We all walked off the field and had a meeting and, if I remember correctly, won a halfpenny extra a bushel.

Gradually, we worked through the fields leaving in our wake the rolled-up bines and the tall poles and the wires naked to the wind and the sky. When a field was cleared we waited with our bins, like fishermen in small boats at sea, for our hops to be measured before moving to the next crop.

On fine evenings the older children were sent ahead to the huts to get the fires going and fill the pots with water. Later the camp was lit up by the flaring, crackling flames, and the squat, black pots sizzled on the crossbars. Slowly the fires diminished into glowing mounds of ash and embers, and shadowy groups dispersed to their huts.

The weekends were days off and the menfolk came. The washing was done.

The Church Army used to come to the camp on Saturday evening. They arrived after dark and set up a big white sheet and gave a lantern-slide show. The subjects were biblical, accompanied by a commentary. The kids loved them.

Near the end of September, and when the last field was picked clean, we packed up and left the huts, not without some excitement, for though we were glad to come to the country, and would come again and again, at heart we were townspeople from the streets by the docks in London.

RECORDS OF THE POPLAR PENSION FUND

I. A. Baxter

THE records of the Poplar Pension Fund are to be found in the Marine Miscellaneous Series (L/MAR/C) and the Accountant General's Records (L/AG), at the India Office Records, 197 Blackfriars Road, London, S.E.1. They are a primary source of biographical information for persons employed in the East India Company's maritime service but hitherto their existence has perhaps not been as well known as it might be.

It was in 1627 that the East India Company first established a hospital cum almshouse at Poplar, for the relief of their indigent sailors, close to their dockyard at Blackwall. In 1654 they erected a chapel adjacent to the hospital and soon afterwards appointed a regular chaplain to minister to the spiritual needs of the inmates. The first pensioners all 'lived in' but by 1679 there were at least two out-pensioners and thereafter the number of out-pensioners steadily increased vis-a-vis the in-pensioners until eventually they greatly outnumbered them. The Poplar Fund, which furnished these charitable donations, was financed from a variety of sources — these included a levy of $1\frac{1}{4}$ per cent on the wages of the Company's seamen, deducted at the end of each voyage, a duty of two shillings per ton upon ships taken into service and occasional fines imposed on ships' captains for infractions of the Company's rules. In 1802 the old almshouses on the south side of the chapel were pulled down and new buildings erected in their place capable of accommodating 38 lower grade pensioners (i.e. petty officers or seamen or their widows). On the north side of the chapel twelve better class houses were erected for higher grade pensioners (officers or their widows) and a further six were added in 1808. Reference to the minutes of the Committee of Shipping shows that there were many applications from out-pensioners to be put on the waiting list for these residences.

The regulations of the Poplar Fund were revised from time to time over the years. According to the last set of regulations, issued on 7 November 1832, no officer or seaman was entitled to a pension unless he had served a full ten years and was physically unfit for further duty. An exception to this rule was made for those who had been killed or disabled — in such cases mariners or their widows could receive a special pension irrespective of time served. The 1832 regulations stipulated that all widows had to be married more than one year, and over 40 years of age unless incapable of earning a livelihood. Children born during the father's maritime service were entitled to a pension until they reached the age of 18. In 1832 the rates of pensions varied from £150 'per annum' to commanders of regular ships down to the £6 'per annum' awarded to ordinary seamen. Officers' widows generally received about two-thirds of their husband's pension (the proportion varied somewhat according to rank) seamen's widows received the same pension as their husbands and the rate for children was one-fifth of the mother's pension. A strict means test was imposed on all grades of pensioner and a proportionate deduction made with respect to additional sources of income. Failure to disclose such sources led to immediate cancellation of the pension.



Poplar Hospital in 1799 (The Bodley Head, Ltd.)

In May 1801 an additional fund was created called the Poplar Contingent Fund financed out of the interest on the Regular Fund. This was intended to provide relief for a select number of commanders and their families who did not strictly fall within the regulations of the existing fund. The Poplar Contingent Fund as such was abolished in May 1821 but the pensions continued to be paid partly from the Company's cash and partly from the Regular Fund.

Until April 1834 Poplar pensions were paid on the authority of the Committee of Shipping. On the abolition of that committee on 9 April 1834 responsibility for payment devolved on the newly created Finance and Home Committee. Finally, after the transfer of the Government of India to the Crown in November 1858 payments were made by the Accountant General's Branch of the India Office. The Poplar almshouses did not long survive the change of regime. In 1866 they were pulled down and the land sold for £12,000

to the Poplar District Board of Works. The existing tenants received extra pensions to compensate them for loss of residence. As for the Poplar Chapel, it was transferred in 1866 to the Church Commissioners and became the parish church of St. Matthias. It was closed down as a place of worship in 1978 but the building still survives and contains some interesting mementoes of the East India Company.

The records of the Poplar Pension Fund can be divided for convenience into (a) registers of applicants/pensioners and (b) pension payment books. The first category are to be found entirely in the Marine Miscellaneous Series and the principal items are as follows:

L/MAR/C/784 Alphabetical list of pensioners compiled c. 1809, giving date of admission, name, relationship (if widow or child), amount of pension and date of termination.

L/MAR/C/785 Register of applications for Poplar pensions, 1809 - 21, numbered I - 1936B, with index. Gives name, age, station, relationship, length of service and whether entitled.

L/MAR/C/786 A continuation of 785, 1821 - 38, for applicants numbered 1937 - 3559. With index.

L/MAR/C/787 For the most part a duplicate of 786, but with additional information including dates of marriage and death of male pensioners.

L/MAR/C/789 - 840 Poplar Pension Application Papers. These are the most informative of the Poplar Fund records. They comprise 52 volumes of application papers numbered from 1 to 3559, the numbers corresponding to those in 785 - 86 above. For each applicant one will normally find a complete statement of service, marriage certificate, children's baptism certificates, certificate of good behaviour (where required), and medical certificate. There are lists of contents for each volume, but since the volumes are neither foliated nor indexed, at present the best way to use them is via 785 - 86 above. It should be noted that about one in five of the entries in 785 - 86 have no corresponding set of application papers in 789 - 840.

As regards the various series of payment books the situation is not as simple as the existing lists suggest for not all categories of pensioner are invariably included. An analysis of the payment books produces the following result:

L/AG/9/4/1 - 4 Company's Quarterly General Pension Books. Poplar pensioners are included from December 1802 to March 1828 but *only* the very small number who were granted pensions under the Poplar Contingent Fund.

L/AG/21/7/5 - 6 Quarterly payments arranged alphabetically, June 1830 - December 1837. Covers all grades of pensioners *except* those paid under the Poplar Contingent Fund. Home addresses are occasionally given in L/AG/21/7/6.

L/MAR/C/851 - 52 Quarterly payments, September 1838 - June 1842. Higher grade pensioners only, *including* those paid under the Poplar Contingent Fund.

L/AG/21/7/7 - 8 Alphabetical lists of pensioners, March 1838 - March 1844 with additional information on deaths of pensioners up to 1858. Lower grade pensioners only.



Poplar Chapel (The Bodley Head, Ltd.)

L/AG/21/7/14 - 18 Pensioners' Receipt Books, September 1821 - June 1824 and March 1833 - September 1860. These are records of the receipt of moneys by pensioners living in London who were obliged to attend in person at East India House. Higher grade pensioners living in London seem for the most part to be excluded, though there are one or two examples early in the series. L/AG/21/7/9 - 13 Quarterly Payment Books, December 1860 - March 1893. With indexes. All grades of pensioner are included and home addresses are frequently given especially for those to whom payment was made direct. The last Poplar pensioner or record died on 30 March 1893.

Reprinted from the India Office Library and Records Newsletter of April 1984.

BOOK REVIEWS

Asa Briggs and Anne Macartney. *Toynbee Hall. The First Hundred Years.* Routledge, 1984. £15.

SO much has been written about Toynbee Hall that it is difficult to write an adequate centenary record of this great East London settlement by casting new light on to hitherto unrecorded facets of its interesting century. It is to the credit of Lord Briggs and Anne Macartney that they have been able to achieve this (especially remembering the difficulties of a joint authorship) by taking a fresh look at the background of many associated with Toynbee Hall (Harvey, Morgan, Dent, etc.) who are now almost forgotten.

The authors refer to Toynbee's Beginnings and how a penny pamphlet called *The Bitter Cry of Outcast London*, published anonymously in 1883 under the auspices of the London Congregational Union, stimulated its formation. Perhaps one day someone will investigate the effects of this remarkable publication which shook the social, political and religious worlds of the period to the core, extending far beyond the bounds of East London. The problems which this pamphlet presented, poverty, moral corruption, depravity and godlessness, provided Toynbee Hall with an opportunity to form a 'social workshop' in which they could be studied and ameliorated. In its hundred years, thousands have participated in its activities including many famous people, and the book shows how Toynbee played its part in facing up to these problems.

As an East Londoner myself, an ex-student of Toynbee Hall, and a W.E.A. lecturer, I find myself reflecting on Canon Barnett's concern that 'the mass of people live without knowledge, without hope, and often without health'. Successive leaders of 'Toynbee' did much to elevate the status of the East London worker by a gradual cultural and educational involvement, and by helping to reduce the class barriers of which the East Londoner has always been so conscious, yet the *Bitter Cry* referred to the 'condition of the abject poor' — the deprived, the outcast, the unemployed and unemployable — this was the East London of the eighties and one might have thought that Toynbee would have tried to reach them by creating a focal point and sending out its 'missionaries'. Except for the few, whose numbers increased with the years, East Londoners would never enter those premises in Bethnal Green and later Commercial Street, to benefit from what was offered. Thus the beginnings were slow and much of the social contact was through St. Jude's and the various clubs which sprang up about this time. The churches and missions endeavoured to make contact but as W. C. Steadman, a Fabian Socialist and loyal supporter of the East End Mission, said at Lycett Hall in 1895 'For 22 years I have devoted myself to the Trade Union Movement, and nothing has struck me more painfully than the little influence exercised by the Church over the workers — the Labour leaders are thoroughly distrustful of the Church'. About this time, the Rev. Peter Thompson of the Stepney Central Mission said his church was trying 'to reach those whom the University Settlements and People's Palace could not reach'. It was thought therefore that Toynbee Hall might fill this vacuum and put greater emphasis on social need. However, Canon Barnett was convinced that education would benefit

the East Londoner far more than the provision of day-to-day amenities. The book quotes his statement that 'the ideal of many connected with Toynbee Hall is that it may grow into an East London University' and indeed many have been prepared there for an academic career. Yet, as the book points out, this savoured of an elitism and, as J. M. Dent says in his *Memoirs*, many of those early participants had already been at Universities and having had 'every opportunity for cultural thought came to Toynbee Hall to be in touch with workers and offer the result of their culture in exchange for intimacy with the life of the workers'. There were comparatively few East Londoners who readily offered to share this culture and it took time and effort to break down the prejudice and apprehension — always a barrier between the East Londoner and the academic world. Yet the book shows how this was achieved in measure during the early part of the present century when Toynbee was looked upon more as a Club and a working man's Institute.

It has been argued that the service Toynbee Hall gave to East London affected only the few and that music concerts and philosophical discussions were not the best ways of improving the lot of the man in the street. There were also those who felt that a stronger political line should have been the objective, and indeed when Heath branched off to Poplar in 1915 it was thought this might follow, but this branch did not survive the War. However, Toynbee Hall played a great part in educating the worker in the basic principles of Trade Unionism, and indeed this centenary record confirms the valuable service since rendered to the East London worker through the Workers' Educational Association.

The book gives some thought to the future of Toynbee Hall (Chapter 'Unfinished Agenda 1954-1984') — the poverty and ignorance of those early days no longer exist, but the needs of the East Londoner are still great though very different. The large Jewish element of the eighties is now replaced by a considerable Afro-Asian community and it is regrettable that, though this has been very much to the fore for a decade or more, the book makes little reference to it. Toynbee must now take account of the minorities which surround it and provide for their special needs as well as providing for the community at large.

I recommend this book as not just the history over a hundred years of a social Institution, but as the fascinating story of a unique movement which throughout this period gave hope to many in despair, a sense of purpose to many whose outlook was bleak, and a home to many who had never known one.

A. H. French

Julia Bush. *Behind the Lines.* East London Labour 1914 - 1919. The Merlin Press, 3 Manchester Road, London E14, 1984. £12.50, and £5.50 paperback.

NATIONALLY there was an official party truce during the First World War and no general elections were held between 1912 and 1918. Historians have therefore tended to neglect the Labour Party in this period through lack of national sources to study; and they have explained labour successes after the war by reference to the immense increase of the working class vote. In

February 1918, the Representation of the People Act trebled the electorate in many East London constituencies by abolishing previous property qualifications and giving all women over 30 the right to vote.

Julia Bush shows just how inadequate is this explanation. By drawing on extensive research into local sources — newspapers, union journals and interviews with local people, for example — she provides a remarkably comprehensive account of labour and trade union activities in East London. The area is defined as the six metropolitan boroughs of Shoreditch, Bethnal Green, Stepney, Poplar, West Ham and East Ham. It was ceaseless hard work, especially on the numerous special wartime committees, that enabled the Labour Party to establish a solid base here when the other main parties were relaxing their efforts. She concludes that 'at the end of the war East London refused to return to the fatalistic acceptance of poverty and helplessness which had characterised the area in 1914'.

The study betrays its origin in an academic thesis by the number of footnotes although these have been reduced and the text rewritten in a more readable style. Those interested in the history of local party politics will find much original analysis, and some background knowledge of labour politics at the time would help to understand the complexities of the various political affiliations.

However, there is much also for the reader with a general interest in East End history, especially the detailed description of changing patterns of employment, the use of female labour and the effect of the war on living conditions with endless food queues and even riots in Spitalfields over meat prices. Surprisingly, seeing that many Jews did not have the vote and election candidates played down their attitudes to immigrants, Julia Bush devotes considerable attention to the position of Jews during the war. This is particularly valuable as previous studies of the Jewish East End have usually stopped around 1914. In taking the story to 1918 a period of great tension is covered; and the Lusitania riots of 1915, the issue of military service for Jews and the deportations to Russia of Bolshevik sympathisers after the Russian Revolution are thoroughly discussed.

By concentrating on this period of political transition in a time of national upheaval, Julia Bush has not only illuminated some dark corners of East London history but also provided an important account for historians concerned with the wider context. Merlin Press are to be congratulated on bringing her work to the attention of a larger audience.

Bernard Nurse

Sax Rohmer - *The Mystery of Dr. Fu Manchu*. Everyman Classic Thriller. J. M. Dent & Sons, 1985. £2.95.

SAX Rohmer (real name Arthur Henry Ward) was one of the most prolific thriller writers of the pre-war era, but is best remembered as the creator of perhaps the most evil character in fiction — the sinister Dr. Fu Manchu.

This re-issue by J. M. Dent & Sons, first appeared in 1913, the forerunner of 14 books dedicated to the endless battle of wits between the Devil Doctor and his adversary, Dr. Petrie. As D. J. Enwright explains in his penetrating introduction, the secret of Rohmer's books' popularity lay in

their action rather than style, an element that gave Fleming's James Bond books their success.

But what will be of special interest to the new generation of readers will most certainly be the description of Chinatown. Until the Blitz and the coming of the redevelopers, the East End's Chinese community were concentrated mainly in just two thoroughfares — Pennyfields and Limehouse Causeway. Alas, they are now changed beyond recognition, covered by new council estates that replaced the narrow alleyways and courts of Chinatown. Rohmer himself told the story of how, as a journalist, he was sent on a mission by a magazine editor to track down a mysterious 'Mr. King', reputed to be a drug peddler; of how he became so obsessed by Chinatown that he began to haunt its fog-shrouded streets by night, almost to the detriment of his marriage.

It was during one such sojourn, one night in Gill Street, that he observed a very tall, elegant Chinaman in evening dress leaving a house and climbing into a limousine. Thus Dr. Fu Manchu was born in the writer's fertile imagination. And also a legend — the legend of Chinatown that was to be copied in countless boys' magazines, films, radio serials and on TV. A sinister half-world in which furtive shadows lurked, Tong wars raged and opium dens flourished. In fact, the Chinese of Limehouse were the most law-abiding community of any. Some took Englishwomen as wives, their Tongs were no more sinister than a type of Chinese Freemasonry, their gambling dens as orderly as today's betting shops.

However wide the gap between Rohmer's fictional Chinatown and the real thing, it does not distract from the fascination of his book. And if, on some dark winter's night, with the mist creeping in from the river, you should catch a glimpse of a tall, feline Chinaman in Gill Street . . .

John D. Allen

Michael Coren. *Theatre Royal*. 100 years of Stratford East. Quartet Books, 1984. £12.95.

THIS is a timely and opportune book; timely because this famous and almost unique (at least for London) little theatre has just celebrated its centenary; and opportune, for after having struggled through one hundred years, with its many vicissitudes and storms, it is once again in danger of neglect and closure.

This history of what is called 'Stratford East' is more than a useful and up-to-date supplement to Oscar Tapper's monograph. Perhaps one can regret that more space was not allotted to the period 1884 to, say 1939, but then possibly the material was not so readily available. A large part is devoted to those famous creative years, 1953 to 1975, when Theatre Workshop, with a permanent home at the Theatre Royal, attained a national or even a European reputation. Joan Littlewood was the driving force, aided by Gerry Raffles. When he died suddenly in 1975 Joan Littlewood withdrew into permanent seclusion and the great experiment came to an end. For anybody who knew them, or who attended the theatre regularly during those years, this book will make fascinating nostalgic reading.

The last chapters are given to more recent events and to the difficulties

and dangers once again facing this unique theatre. It is a miracle that it survived one hundred years when almost all of such similar theatres have long since disappeared from the landscape. Let us pray for more miracles.

Alan Searle

John Moynihan. *The West Ham Story*. Arthur Barker, 1984. £6.95.

THIS is a bad summer to write about football. The enforced isolation from the world game of its own inventors, and the financial clouds from the Bradford disaster, are bad enough in themselves. And Paul Allen has left West Ham.

Football clubs have varying degrees of closeness with their community: and perhaps more pertinent, for each club that closeness itself can vary over time. East London's pre-eminent professional team has always enjoyed a steady level of support from its locale, and alongside this, its individual players have shown a remarkable degree of loyalty to the club — the departure of a player before his time, as with Allen, being very much a once-in-a-decade experience. Demonstrating this is fairly straightforward. Rather harder is trying to find out why it happens.

John Moynihan has produced a lucid and readable general history that does the demonstration well enough without ever getting to grips with the explanation. This is a carping criticism: he did not set out to write a treatise in social history. But there is a field here for someone to tap. An American academic of my former acquaintance was once embarked on such a project, but alas it seems to have been beached somewhere.

The well-illustrated text of *The West Ham Story* follows the ups and downs of the team with a good range of quotations, some the result of Moynihan's own researches and others culled from contemporary sources. It is a pity that modern times — Greenwood and beyond — take up half the space, but most likely this is a mere reflection of the availability of those sources. Especially useful is the frequent listing of elevens: doubtless like many local readers, I read through them with (unrealised) hope, family legend having a long-dead relative who turned out in the claret-and-blue. Strong on anecdote, then, and if weaker on analysis, well, it wasn't the author's task.

Peter Aylmer

Gwyneth Francis-Jones. *Cows, Cardis and Cockneys*. Welsh Books Centre, Aberystwyth. £3.95.

PEOPLE tend to gravitate towards cities for various reasons, but most of them go in search of making a better living. Dairy farmers from rural Wales — Cardiganshire in particular — were no exception, and their efforts to improve themselves also helped to improve the diet of Londoners by providing them with fresh milk delivered to their doorstep, or sold in a dairy shop often with a fascia bearing the name Jones, Evans or Griffiths.

Above the shop would have been the living rooms for the family and on the premises, round the back or side, would have been a building, housing between two and twelve cows, milked twice a day and exchanged every few months with others from the country.

Into one of these dairies a young lady from Cardigan came to visit her relations, stayed and worked. This book contains some of her memories and experiences of being one of the London Welsh. It tells how they worked at their trade yet lived in 'peace' with Cockneys, migrants and immigrant groups mostly situated east of the City. Like other groups, they brought their own traditions and culture: choirs (mixed and male voice), chapels (like the one on Mile End Road, now the home of the Half Moon Theatre) and the London Welsh Association on Grays Inn Road.

With the improvement in living conditions, migration from rural Wales has diminished: the Cardigan society, which once was 2,000 strong has now only a few hundred members. The establishment of the Milk Marketing Board saw the reduction of local herds, the last being in Black Lion Yard, Whitechapel, until the outbreak of World War II.

Reading the book was a delight, and I would have liked to go on to find out more about what happened to Welsh emigrants to other parts of the world, like the U.S.A. or Patagonia. Also, why was rural Wales poor at a time when South Wales was being industrialised? Was it part of the division between the industrialists who wanted cheap food for their workers in order to keep down wage rates?

This book is a worthy addition to more general works on immigrants and migrants, and inspires curiosity to plough deeper into the connection between local history and history in the making: new migrant groups with different backgrounds, yet having to live in 'peace' (or *shanti*) in order to improve their standard of living. Thank you Gwyneth for a nice evening's reading — you may like to know that I too played a small role in the growth of the L.W.A. *Diolch yn fawr. Nos da i chi.*

H. Joseph

Anthony Vaughan. *The Vaughans*. East End Furniture Makers. Three Hundred Years of a London Family. ILEA, 1984. £3.50.

THIS book is in a way a supplement to a previous publication, *Sam: An East End Cabinet Maker*, by Sam Clarke, who had a small workshop supplying local stores, while the Vaughan family, by about 1900, was selling its wares through first-class West End shops like Maples, and Waring and Gillow.

Vaughan's book traces in detail the history of the family from its origins in Wales in the reign of Queen Anne and the inter-marriages with French Huguenots, until in the 19th century it became relatively prosperous, living in fine houses in South London. Well researched and profusely illustrated, the book will be of value to anyone involved in local history, particularly those with a knowledge of or interest in the furniture industry.

Alan Searle

John Gorman. *Images of Labour*. Selected Memorabilia from the National Museum of Labour History. Scorpion Publishing Ltd., 1985. £14.95 cased; £7.50 paperback.

THE people of East London have for centuries been at the forefront of trade union and labour struggles. It was therefore appropriate that the National Museum of Labour History should have been opened in the old Limehouse Town Hall in 1975. The museum owes its existence largely to the efforts of two enthusiasts — Henry Fry and Bethnal Green-born Walter Southgate, who at a time when there was little interest in the subject, sought out and spent what little money they had in acquiring material for their collections.

Like Fry and Southgate, Gorman is an enthusiast. In his previous books (*Banner Bright*, about trade union banners, and *To Build Jerusalem* about working class photographs) he has been concerned with re-assessing the historical and artistic significance of these forms.

In *Images of Labour* his interest is again in the forms' visual evidence. Using a selection of material from the Museum's collections, the book includes chapters on badges, certificates, leaflets and posters. In these he has set out to examine the circumstances under which they were produced and the image of the organisations they were intended to create. Each item is represented by an excellently reproduced black and white or colour illustration, an immensely useful feature, particularly in the case of banners and paintings where it is possible to examine the artists' work in detail and a meticulously researched text which brings them to life.

Many of the items reviewed are of local interest, including a battered old leather bag which during the Great Dock Strike of 1889 was used to carry money from the street collection to a chest at the Wade's Arms in Jeremiah Street, Poplar — the headquarters of the Strike Committee — and from which assistance was given in the form of relief tickets rather than cash to ensure that it could not be spent on drink.

The book deserves praise for its bibliography and the high standard of its printing and design, the work of a team of art editors. I hope that it will encourage others to use the Museum's collections to give a new dimension to history.

Howard Bloch

THE INDUSTRIAL TRUCE BROKEN

FEBRUARY, 1917.

THE WOMAN WORKER:



The Quest of the Red Flower

By Moira Marjoribanks

PRICE ONE PENNY

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

A JOURNAL FOR WOMEN TRADE UNIONISTS

Great New Prize Scheme! Do you want £5 0 0

One of the illustrations from *Images of Labour* (Scorpion Publishing Ltd.)

James A. Schmiechen. *Sweated Industries and Sweated Labour*. The London Clothing Trades 1860-1914. Croom Helm, 1984. £27.50.

ALONG with Jack the Ripper, perhaps the most lingering impression of the Victorian East End was to be found in its sweat-shops. From the time of Hood's *Song of the shirt* to the Commissions of the 1890s the outworkers of the clothing industry suffered almost more than any other group of exploited workers. Virtually beyond the reach of union aid, at the mercy of vagaries of fashion — and overseas competition — the mills of the sweat-shops absorbed whole families, whole streets into a maw of mindless misery. Large parts of Spitalfields, Mile End and Whitechapel were wholly devoted to the clothing trades — Mayhew claimed 37,000 women alone in the 1850s, while Shaw, in *Mrs. Warren's Profession* suggests that prostitution was a wiser choice for a working-class woman than industrial labour.

Professor Schmiechen's book is an abridged adaptation of his doctoral thesis, and in this respect more of an academic approach than Duncan Bythell's *The sweated trades: outwork in nineteenth century Britain* (1978). But he uses material from contemporary accounts, including the Royal Commissions, to paint a vivid picture of cheap labour, starvation wages and physical conditions beyond description. 'One must watch everyone of the 120 or more stitches that are put in per minute; her eyes are intensely and constantly fixed upon a line, her hands and feet must move with the regularity of any piece of mechanism, a turning of the eye, a slip of the hand or foot spoils the work. The same set of nerves are constantly strained, and overstrained, while the rest of the body is enfeebled perhaps paralysed by inaction. What ravages the sewing machine causes among those who have to play it constantly for a living is not yet ascertained'.

Even Schmiechen's statistics are terrible — in Bethnal Green, at the turn of the century, 1 in 2 married women were involved in the sweatshops, working from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. for 10 shillings a week. Not until the end of the century did workshop inspections become regularised, and ironically this often led to an increase in outworkers, totally unprotected by any government legislation.

Schmiechen shows how little government commissions — even Charles Booth's vast survey of conditions in late Victorian London — actually improved the lot of the workers. It was in fact reckoned that between 1887 and 1906 wages had fallen by as much as half in all the main branches of the industry — mantlemakers, corsetmakers, glovemakers, shoemakers, waistcoatmakers, shirtmakers, and trousermakers.

The culmination of decades of agitation and legislation over the conditions in the industry was the Sweated Industries Exhibition, opened at the Queen's Hall in 1906. It represented 45 trades, including all the sweated trades, many of which were performed by workers to the amazed disbelief of the Edwardian upper classes. Schmiechen reproduces several photographs from the catalogue of the exhibition, which provoked from the Princess of Wales the plaintive cry 'What can we do? What can we do?'. Despite the formation of the National Anti-Sweating League, and the Trade Board Act of 1909, designed to raise minimum wages in the sweated industries, the onset of World War I ensured only a token acceptance of the new regulations.

And today, a century and more since the days of Mayhew & Booth, the sweat-shops of the East End roll on — under different management, but still in the same buildings. No doubt some day another Schmiechen will write another thesis on them.

David Webb

Jim Baker. *A Mis-spent Youth*. Centerprise Trust Ltd., 1985. £2.70.

I believe strongly in the value of social commentary through literature and feel that this book makes a powerful comment about how an environment can sometimes cause an individual to drift into a life of crime. This is one more welcomed book from another once inarticulate criminal from a working-class background.

When Jim Baker was ten he hated school! Why should he not have hated it? Schools are word-orientated. They are also about communicating. So someone like Baker would probably, because of his inevitable poor vocabulary, a working-class trademark, have experienced considerable difficulty in that area. In effect he would not have been able to take part on any real level. The result at the best would have been disillusionment. But Jim Baker decided, when he was ten, not to take part any more, 'playing the hop' regularly. Perhaps he knew instinctively that the system did not exist for him. Finally he saw crime as an alternative. Something that he could understand. The irony is that criminals like Baker, Boyle, McVicar and perhaps myself have become articulate through the very prison backgrounds which our earlier inarticulacy had contributed to having us finally experience.

Mike Quanne

NOTES AND NEWS

THE 1984 annual lecture, organised jointly by Tower Hamlets Directorate of Community Services and the East London History Society, was about Toynbee Hall, and was given by the historian Lord Asa Briggs, whose book on the same subject is reviewed in this issue. It was interesting to note that musical events were introduced at Toynbee by J. H. Dent, later to start the publishing firm, books from which are regularly reviewed in this magazine. This year's annual lecture will be by Charles Goodman and will be about the Battle of Cable Street, an event in which he was a participant. Full details of the East London History Society's programme for the coming year appear on the back cover.

In response to his 'Boxing Memories' article in *Record* number 5 (1982) Louis Behr has had an interesting letter about Richard Henry Paul, who boxed as Harry Paul in the eighteen nineties. While none of our readers will be old enough to have seen one of his fights, which were reported in *Sporting Life*, it may be that someone has heard a father or grandfather recall one of them. If so, contact with Mr. Behr and his correspondent can be made through the editorial address inside the front cover.

Items of local interest recently put on display at the London Museum include a magnificent dress worn by a mid-eighteenth century Lady Mayoress of London, woven from a unique Spitalfields silk. Two marble replicas of 42-gun warships from Trinity Almshouses on Mile End Road have been resurrected from a basement in County Hall, restored, and now appear in the Museum's Late Stuart Gallery.

Turning to the affairs of a museum nearer home, the Ragged School Museum Trust has secured the listing of 46 & 48 Copperfield Road as Grade II historic buildings. The Trust has been awarded a grant by the GLC to buy all three buildings and hopes that work will soon start on converting them to the museum and community centre. Items donated or loaned will be duly acknowledged in the museum. Cheques made out to 'Ragged School Museum Trust' should be sent with stamped addressed envelope to Midland Bank, 660 Commercial Road, E14, for a signed certificate that your donation has been entered in the register on display in the museum. For further information please contact T. S. Ridge c/o Sir John Cass's Foundation School, Stepney Way, E1. Patrons of the Trust now include Lady Wagner, Ian Mikardo, M. P., Lord Briggs, Sir Roy Strong and Bruce Oldfield.

A classic in the history of religious endeavours in the area has recently been reprinted by Peter Marcan, 31 Rowloff Road, High Wycombe, Bucks. This is Henry Walker's *East London: sketches of Christian work and workers*, first published in 1896; at £4.95 plus 50p postage it gets our vote for bargain of the year in East London history publications. Another reasonably priced production is the Journeyman Press edition of *William Morris' Socialist Diary*, edited and annotated by Florence Boss and selling at £3.25. No such bargains are available from Garland (New York) whose series of reprints of books on 'The English Working Class' include *Handbook of the "Daily News" Sweated Industries Exhibition, 1906* (\$17), Walter Besant's *East London* (\$35) and Howarth and Wilson's *West Ham* (\$38).

Gareth Stedman Jones' influential work, *Outcast London*, which first came out in 1971, has been reprinted as a Peregrine paperback for the second time. Unlike the 1976 reprint, this one carries an introduction by the author in which he offers what, insofar as I can judge, are competent replies to critics of the original work. Among his few concessions to them is his admitting a 'taste for dramatic language and metaphor', but, as I think he feels himself, without this the book would be much less readable. One of the other criticisms of *Outcast London* was that discussion of Victorian London's social problems was restricted to the middle classes' view of them. He acknowledges that his aim was to do just that, but a discussion of working class attitudes to the same problems was in fact written later, and is included as one of the essays in his book *Languages of Class* (Cambridge University Press, 1983, £7.95). Under the title 'Working class culture and working class politics in London, 1870-1900', it contains, like *Outcast London*, much material of particular interest to students of Victorian East London.

A work which all local history libraries should be encouraged to buy is *The Autobiography of the Working Class*, edited by John Burnett, David Vincent and David Mayall, and published by The Harvester Press, Brighton, at £60. It contains more than 1,000 entries of books, articles and manuscripts that throw light on all aspects of working class life from 1790 to around 1900. There are several entries for East Londoners, including Selig Brodetsky, the Zionist, William Collison, the anti-trade unionist and, most interesting, the anonymous autobiography of a boy who spent part of his childhood in the Bethnal Green Workhouse, where he worked in the oakum cellar, and was later taken as a parish apprentice to a Derbyshire mill. We are pleased to see that two of the entries are for people whose memories were first published in the *East London Record*: C. A. Brown (number 2, 1979) and Francis le May (number 4, 1981).

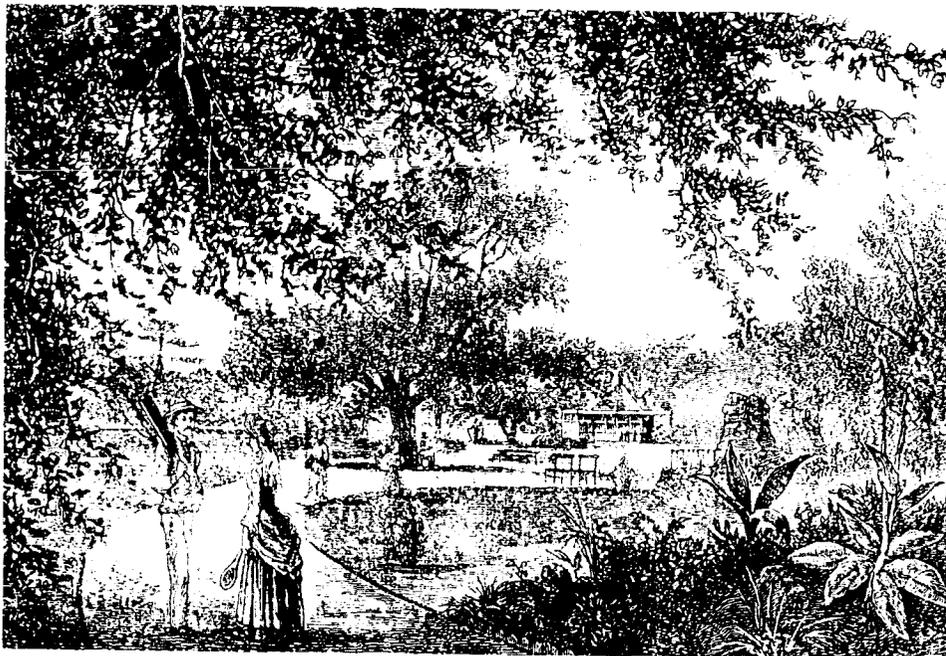
Christopher Lloyd's *Tower Hamlets at War* was produced to accompany an exhibition on the subject, and Howard Bloch has edited Les Miller's research in *Black Saturday* which contains East Londoners' recollections of the first day of the Blitz. Priced at £1.50 and £0.75 respectively, both are excellently illustrated.

People who move to Newham is a folder containing reproductions of more than 50 items (maps, newspaper cuttings, census returns, photographs) that relate to the many immigrant groups who moved to the area over the last 200 years. Aimed primarily at schools, it will be of great interest to anyone, child or adult, who wishes to understand the area today. It is priced at £2 and includes an excellent set of notes.

Readers interested in the Spitalfields area should note two slide/tape productions. First on the market was *Brick Lane* produced by ILEA at £21 (or £14 to ILEA institutions), followed by *In Good Faith* (on '59 Brick Lane'), from Shapiro Programmes Ltd., at £28.50 plus £1.50 post and package.

Publication number 130 of the London Topographical Society is 'Charles Booth's descriptive map of London poverty, 1889' in full colour; details of this and other LTS publications are available from the Hon. Secretary, 36 Old Deer Park Gardens, Richmond, Surrey. The Springboard Education Trust has produced 'Guide Map of the Jewish East End', and Alan Godfrey, of 57-8 Spoor St., Dunston, Gateshead, has reproduced several

more old Ordnance Survey maps of local interest. Selling at 90p each, the latest batch includes Stamford Hill 1894 (London sheet 21), Stoke Newington 1868 (sheet 30), Dalston 1913 (sheet 40), Shoreditch 1893 (sheet 51), Stratford 1893 (sheet 42) and Bow and Bethnal Green 1894 (sheet 52). All have historical notes printed on the back.



This tranquil view of West Ham Park more than a century ago is one of several illustrations of local interest in *Village London: The Story of Greater London*, by Edward Walford, first published as *Greater London* in 1883-4, and now reprinted by Alderman Press, 1-7 Church Street, N9 9DR, at £17.50. The 575 pages of text includes historical accounts of most of the villages that came to form the present boroughs of Tower Hamlets and Newham, as well as many to the east and north (e.g. Ilford, Barking, Leyton, Walthamstow, Woodford, Wanstead, Chigwell) that will be of interest to East Londoners. Alderman Press have more recently reprinted *Victorian London* with text by W. J. Loftie (vol. 1) and P. Fitzgerald (vol. 2) which first came out in 1891-3.

SOME RECENT HISTORY ITEMS RELATING TO EAST LONDON

Books

- Ashworth, Mandy *The Oxford House in Bethnal Green*. 100 years of work in the community. Oxford House, 1984.
- Conner, J. E. *Stepney's Own Railway*. A history of the London and Blackwall system. Conner & Butler, 1984.
- Dunn, H., Hamilton, K., Mann, R., Walleit, J. *East End on Screen*. A catalogue of East London Film and Video. THAP, 1985.
- East End Mission *Centenary Appeal Brochure*, 1985.
- Grace, Gerald (ed.) *Education and the City: Theory, History and Contemporary Practice*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984.
- Guy, Barry *Gordon Hall*. National Children's Home, 1985.
- Gwynn, Robin, D. *Huguenot Heritage*. The history and contribution of the Huguenots to Britain. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985.
- Honri, Peter *John Wilton's Music Hall: the handsomest room in town*. Ian Henry, 1985.
- Jones, David *Troxy: Where East is Best*. Mercia Cinema Society, 1985.
- Jones, David, and Whelan, Kevin *A.B.C. Mile End: the first 150 years*. Mercia Cinema Society, 1985.
- Parsons, Ian (ed.) *The Collected Works of Isaac Rosenberg*. Chatto/Hogarth, 1984.
- Rosenberg, David *Facing up to Antisemitism*. How Jews in Britain countered the threats of the 1930s. JCARP, 1985.
- Searle, Muriel V. *Down the Line to Southend*. A pictorial history of London's holiday line. The Baton Press, 1984.
- Tebbutt, Melanie *Making Ends Meet*. Pawnbroking and Working-Class Credit. Methuen, 1984.
- Thompson, John *Community architecture*. The story of Lea View House, Hackney RIBA Community Architecture Group, 1985.

Articles

- Bailey, Victor ' "In Darkest England and the Way Out" — The Salvation Army, social reform and the Labour movement', in *International Review of Social History*, vol. xxix, 1984, part 2.
- Clark, E. F. 'G. P. Bidder at the London Dock Extension Works 1826-1828', in *Transactions of the Newcomen Society*, vol. 55, 1983-4.
- Earl, John 'J. G. Buckle: a note on the Theatre Royal, Stratford East', in *Theatrephile*, vol. 1, no. 4.
- Griffiths, William P. 'Priestley in London', in *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London*, vol. 38, no. 1, 1983-4.
- Hefford, Wendy 'Soho and Spitalfields: little-known Huguenot tapestry-weavers in and around London, 1680-1780', in *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of London*, vol. xxiv, no. 2, 1984.
- McCarthy, Sean, and Norris, Hilary 'Revons a Nos . . . the search for Joan Littlewood', in *Theatrephile*, vol. 1, no. 4.
- Maynard, Jean 'The History of the Salem Chapel, Mile End' (typescript in Tower Hamlets Local History Library).

- Mills, Peter 'The Royal Mint: First Results', in *The London Archaeologist*, vol. 5, no. 4, Summer 1985.
- Ryan, Pat 'Politics and Relief: East London Unions in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries', in M. E. Rose (ed.) *The Poor in the City: The new Poor Law in an urban context*.
- SauL, G. M. 'Shadwell Waterworks collector's rent book' and 'East London Waterworks: origins' (typescripts in Tower Hamlets Local History Library).

Theses

- Smith, Elaine R. 'The Attitudes of settled Anglo-Jewry to the East European immigration, 1881-1905' (copy in Tower Hamlets Local History Library)
- Taylor, Pamela Jean 'The Estates of the Bishopric of London from the seventh century to the early sixteenth century' (copy in Hackney Archives Department)

Some recent additions to archives

- (a) Tower Hamlets Local History Library:
Bethnal Green Allotment and Garden Association: Minutes 1942-1957
Poplar Old People's Welfare Committee: Minutes, 1952-1959
- (b) Hackney Archives Department:
Charity of Cranston and Marshall, Shoreditch. Minutes, correspondence and other documents 1887-1983
Downs Baptist Chapel
Minutes, financial and church membership records 1869-1952
Rectory Road United Reformed Church
Registers, minutes, financial, Sunday school, property records, church manuals. Also early records of the Hoxton Christian Institute, which was founded from Rectory Road, 1870-1978
Old Vermontians Club
(private school old boys club). Record album 1890-1900
Richard Pye, boxmakers of Shoreditch.
Financial and other records.
Bryant and May Ltd.
Bookmatch sales records 1905-1975 (additional deposit)
John Lobb (1840-1921).
Hackney representative on the School Board for London. Will, press cuttings, etc., c1880-1921
Cllr Stanley Mason.
Amateur theatrical and other papers c1925-1974
Maddison family.
Recollections and photographs of their glass works. Hoxton c.1910-18
Grove Young Men's Institute magazine 1883
Hackney Day Nursery.
Annual reports, attendance and other records 1934-1943
Hackney and North East London Model Yacht Club. Scrapbook 1928-29
C. Fisher Yates.
Records of Mayoralty of Hackney Metropolitan Borough 1933-34 and records and correspondence concerning the Disabled Soldiers and Sailor's Hackney Foundation 1918-45

Plan of Wick Manor (the estate of Edward Woodcock), 1766
Abney Park Cemetery.
Cemetery Company minutes and plans of the Cemetery c1850-1890
Library Service.
Plans of libraries c1890-1970

Thanks are due to Mr. H. Bloch, Miss A. J. Wait, Mr. C. Lloyd, Mr. H. Watton and Mr. D. Behr for assistance with this list.

CONTRIBUTORS

Patricia Craven, a native of Stepney now living in Canvey Island, has contributed poems to previous issues of the *Record*; Keith Fairclough is a research student who lives in Plaistow; Simon Diamond was 'the son of an unorthodox poor Jewish family' and now lives in Wanstead; Dennis Freeman was born in Poplar Hospital and moved to North London when he left school; I. A. Baxter is at the India Office Library and Records Office; A. H. French was a founder member of the East London History Society in 1952; Alan Searle is this magazine's distribution manager; John Allen lives in the Isle of Dogs and H. Joseph, a retired teacher, lives in Bow; Peter Aylmer is a Tower Hamlets councillor; Bernard Nurse is Local Studies Librarian for Southwark and Howard Bloch has the same post for Newham; David Webb is Reference Librarian at the Bishopsgate Institute; Mike Quanne's book *Prison Paintings*, with an introduction by the critic John Berger, has just been published by John Murray at £7.50.