



**EAST LONDON HISTORY SOCIETY  
BULLETIN**

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EDITORIAL

The Local History Section of the Tower Hamlets Library require two copies of each of "East London Papers" Vol.11, No.1 and Vol.12 No.2 to complete their sets. The Library would be glad if any member possessing these and not requiring them, would pass them to Mr. Hellicar at Bancroft Road.

We are indebted to Miss Gillian Hawtin, B.A., F.S.A.(Scot) for her hitherto unpublished article on "East London Scandals - Sacred and Secularist". This is an extract from her Ph.D. Thesis.

The Waltham Abbey Historical Society is holding an Exhibition in the Town Hall, Waltham Abbey (opposite the Abbey Church) from Saturday, 25th to Monday, 27th August 1973, 10.30 a.m. to 8.30 p.m. daily, to celebrate its 21st Anniversary. Members of the E.L.H.S. are very welcome.

For your diary, the A.G.M. is expected to be held at the Queen Mary College on Wednesday, 17th October 1973, at 7 p.m. A.H.F.

EAST LONDON SCANDALS : SACRED AND SECULARIST.

Along the Whitechapel Road, behind the London Hospital, is a group of streets which formed the setting for one small chapter of the religious history, in both its orthodox and its heterodox aspects, of the late 1850's and early 1860's. I refer to Turner Street, Philpot Street and Newark Street. At the corner of Turner Street and Stepney Way stands the Anglican Church of St. Philips. A little further down Turner Street, on its west side, still survives a house where Charles Bradlaugh resided during some of his more penurious days; an L.C.C. plaque was fixed to it in the early 1960's.

But in Philpot Street no longer stands a building there in Victorian times. In the days of rumbustuous freethought advocacy, here was a hall which served as meeting place of the East London Secular Society. The meetings were, of course, held inside the hall, but outside, exhibited at the entrance, were placards. These the Rev. Mr. Bonwell, incumbent of St. Philip's, described as offensive. As the conduct of local secularism was in the hands of one J.P. Adams, this was very likely the case! For Adams was not known either for the reticence or the squeamishness of his manner. For example, when declaiming on Paddington Green in June 1857 on the unsuitability of the Bible for young persons, he had insisted on seeking to prove his thesis before a mainly Christian and (hardly surprisingly) hostile audience, by quoting the more salacious parts of Genesis at length and in detail.(1)

This seems about to coincide in time with the original complaints made by Bonwell. In the same year some sort of hearing seems to have occurred before the Thames Police Court. Yet it was probably six of one and half a dozen of the other. If the infidels were scurrilous, orthodox rowdies, muscular Christian soldiers were found to go onward into battle - too literally.

They were led by one Andrew Hepburn, aged 44, a man apparently of big and burly stature. There were many disturbances about the hall on Sunday evenings. Sometimes Hepburn and his confederates forced their way inside the hall and disturbed the meetings going on inside. The police constables on duty had repeatedly refused to do anything about it. On one undetermined date, early in 1859, Hepburn and his friends went too far (2). Between 8-9 p.m. they broke in and rushed the door without payment. Great confusion, bawling and swearing, ensued among the some hundred and fifty persons present. P.C. 91K called in to apprehend Hepburn, had his hand bitten! He and two companions, Alexander Reed (34) and Joseph Lathliff (23) were walked to the station. There were two other defendants, James Wilson (43) and Augustus Wilkinson (14). Charged with creating a riot and disturbance, and assaulting a police constable in the execution of his duty, they were brought before Mr.

Selfe. Reed and Lathliff were defended by a solicitor, Mr. Stoddard. His clients, he urged, were respectable men, in Philpot Street by accident, they saw the old man (sic) Hepburn ill-used, and hearing cries, interfered.

Unfortunately for the defendants, a rather different version came from the Crown. Mr. Metcalfe, barrister-at-law, prosecuting, pleaded that whatever might be the tenets of those meeting in the hall, the prisoners, if they entertained different opinions, had no right to disturb them. "The time had come when people of every religious creed might assemble, and the law....would not tolerate the persecution of one sect by another". P.C. Sheridan 334 K disclosed that Hepburn had been tried and convicted four years previously for disturbing a congregation in a Mormonite chapel but never called up for judgement. Selfe allowed Wilkinson, as a "mere lad", to go back to the sweet-shop where he worked. Two, reserving defence, were sent to the Clerkenwell House of Detention. Hepburn, and one other, though given bail, were sent for trial at the Middlesex Sessions.

The secularists were weary and aggrieved at the inconveniences they suffered repeatedly. In the circumstances they decided that a barrister of some standing should be retained. The big hurdle would be the Grand Jury, likely to be much prejudiced against them. The trial opened at the Middlesex Sessions, Before Mr. Bodkin, described as 'assistant judge', on the 9th June 1859.(3)

Metcalfe, opening for the prosecution, made the vital point. The real question was whether the law of England would tolerate the prosecution of a vast number of intelligent and respectable citizens who publicly avowed their disbelief in the doctrines of Christianity. Whether they were right or wrong, in England religious freedom was one of the things most dearly prized.

Hepburn also addressed the jury. Then came the surprises. He was employed, he alleged, and paid, by the Rev. W.W. Champneys, Rector of Whitechapel and Canon of St. Paul's Cathedral, and by other Christian gentlemen whom he named, publicly to expose the errors of Secularism and Mormonism on all occasions. He had been sent by them to expose Holyoake (4), Iconoclast (5) and other lecturers. Hepburn denied he had used filthy language; witnesses had mistaken his Scottish dialect!

Bodkin was not impressed. Even granted the prisoner misguidedly thought he was acting in the cause of true religion, it was clear he had other objects in view, which related to the hat going round when he had got these mobs together. Hepburn was given three months hard labour. The others were freed after securities were given, the prosecution being instructed not to press the charges. The expenses borne by the Secular Society were rather heavy, about £40, due mainly to subpoenas for witnesses, and it appealed for aid. However, no doubt the Society was gratified by the result of the trial. The Reasoner which did not approve Adams, but which kept up incessant propaganda for legislation to extend toleration, was certainly gratified. It paid "the greatest honour" to Bodkin for his impartiality throughout the proceedings.

As for the Secular Society's other opponent, the Rev. Mr. Bonwell, nemesis was soon to overtake him too. The trial already outlined was not the last connected with our dramatis personae. Now the scene is transferred to the elevated venue of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, where the appeal of Bonwell v The Bishop of London was heard in 1861.(6) How the reverend gentleman had reached this dismal pass was the result of a series of events extraordinary indeed. These events, too, had been contemporaneous, in 1858-9, with Bonwell's denunciations of the secularists, and it is intriguing to study the chronology.

Already, in 1858, Bonwell could be described as "a beneficed clergyman of many years' standing". There was a Mrs. Bonwell, and she kept a school or college for young ladies, apparently at some distance from London. Whether the couple were already estranged and the first ardours of marriage had settled down to a routine indifference, or whether it was Mrs. Bonwell's absence which provoked his errant behaviour, we have no evidence. At any rate, there was a family, but Mr. Bonwell's

conduct was remarkably unlike that of a family man. In October, 1858, at the house of a Mr. Robinson in Margate, Bonwell was introduced to a Miss Elizabeth Yorah. He represented himself as unattached, and conducted himself towards her as someone in the marriage market. "The acquaintance soon ripened into an intimacy; he paid her particular attentions, which were favourably received...and it was understood in the family in which she was visiting, that they had become engaged to each other"(7). On the 22nd January, 1859, Bonwell went to Newport to visit the mother, Mrs. Yorah, a blind lady, and her brother, a surgeon. Bonwell was accepted as Miss Yorah's suitor, introduced as such to members of the family, and it was understood that marriage was to take place in that June or July (1859).

It should not be thought, however, that the visits were all one way. Early in December, 1858, Miss Yorah had been in London, and even attended services at St. Phillip's. In the spring, Bonwell paid further visits to the parental home. Because of the entire confidence placed in the apparently reputable suitor, the two were allowed to sit up alone together. Events show they took full advantage of the freedom.

On the 8th June 1859, Miss Yorah arrived once more from Newport at her Margate friends' home. It was only too obvious she was eniente. She left for London the very next day (which happened to be just when Hepburn was appearing before Bodkin) and took lodgings in the Balls Pond Road under the name of Mrs. Harvey. The landlady, Mrs. Glenny, accepted her as respectable because she could give the Rev. Mr. Bonwell as reference!

By any standards, and especially Victorian ones, she seems to have been a distinctly 'fast' young lady. She was once away even from this address for nearly a fortnight. Perhaps one might be permitted to show a little pity for Bonwell. For a middle-aged cleric to indulge in such behaviour, he must have been infatuated to the point of dementia. By now, a child was well on the way, and he must have been busy thinking a way out of this predicament. Then Mrs. Bonwell walked in. The Privy Council report says 'unexpectedly' but the date (22nd July) was about the normal end of term. True, Miss Yorah herself was not on the premises at the time but Mrs. Bonwell's sharp eyes espied a parasol. Her husband's tale of a cousin from distant Australia was unacceptable. There was a quarrel and she left the house.

Still standing next to the church is an erstwhile schoolhouse, which in 1858-9 had schoolrooms, a kitchen, bedroom and parlour. Bonwell had control of these premises. At the time they were empty, and obviously an ideal flat for Miss Yorah, who came and went with her own key and let herself in between ten and eleven at night. Here:-

".....on the 11th August, 1859, (Miss Yorah) was delivered of a male child. Mr. Bonwell sent for the nurse and the medical man. For the twelve days that she remained there, he was in daily attendance in the bedroom on the mother and child; at the end of those days they were removed to the Sussex Hotel, in Southwark. Mr. Bonwell took the apartment, described the lady as being his sister, and paid a bill for their stay there. After a few days the child died and Mr. Bonwell employed the undertaker and paid the charges for the funeral".(8)

It was this death which made final concealment impossible. There was a coroner's inquest, and although there was no reflection on him in that regard, Bonwell now found himself subject to the Church Discipline Act, (9) and a sentence of deprivation was imposed. There was really no choice open to him but to appeal. His livelihood was at stake.

Bonwell contended his sentence should be reversed, or, at all events, be less severe. He conducted his own appeal ably.(10). Too ably. Its very vigour gave offence to their Lordships.(11). Judgement was delivered by Sir John Taylor Coleridge on the 18th July 1861. Bonwell undoubtedly suffered from the Victorian convention

that the woman was never to blame. The only slight hint that Miss Yorah might not after all be quite blameless, was but the signal for a fresh waxing of righteous indignation:-

"... if Miss Yorah were a too willing object of seduction, if she had even offered herself to his embraces, had he no safeguard against such a temptation, in his age, in his married state, in his children, in his professional character, in the vows which he had taken, in the ministrations he had to perform, the rites to celebrate?" (12)

Considering the child was born in August, and Bonwell met Miss Yorah the preceding October, the lady can hardly have been too unwilling, but there was no mercy for Bonwell. His judges said:-

"... it would have been difficult to sustain any judgement which should not have made it morally impossible for such a delinquent to return to those parishioners to whom he (had) set such an example, to whom his ministrations would be an offence and a scandal - even his presence, shocking." (13)

What else could they say and do? Confirming the sentence, they concluded:-

"... he has ventured to cite as apposite to his own case the memories of holy penitents... but he has come here in no spirit of repentance, apparently solely actuated by the miserable desire for restoration to the profits of his incumbency." (14)

No doubt, but what else, in a corner, could he say and do?. It might have been the hour of triumph for the secularists, but they show a unique restraint. In fact, their own world was in a ferment, rent with internecine strife, at the time. The Reasoner was in difficulties, the National Reformer barely begun. History does not record what became of Mrs. Bonwell, whether a reconciliation was ever effected. Did Bonwell eat of the bread of repentance? He certainly sailed into calmer waters. A few years later, Crockford records him as classics master (he was a Master of Arts of Cambridge University) at Epsom College, no less.

What of St. Philips? This, surely, needed to be swept and garnered. It was. It had had its sinner. It was soon to have its saint. Hither, in autumn 1865, came the Rev. John Richard Green (15), later celebrated as the author of a four-volume Victorian narrative-style history of England (16). Since ordination, and before this, he had been at St. Barnabas', King's Square, E.C., a church in the centre of the watchmaking trade. Green had been accustomed to spend morning after morning in the Reading Room of the British Museum, writing, at this time, a life of St. Patrick:- "It was a strange life, half with Patrick and the great Library, half in the wretched purlieus of Clerkenwell and St. Luke". (17), he wrote. Even this short sentence shows that his sensitive soul was alive to the miseries of his environment. In 1862 he had begun to contribute to the Saturday Review. When he was promoted to the vicarage of St. Philips', Stepney, his literary and journalistic efforts were intensified. This was to support himself, for his stipend was expended on his parishioners. So was his health and his strength, for 'one of the virtues of which he was ignorant was moderation in work', said the Annual Register in his obituary. Cholera epidemics were of course frequent at the period, but in 1866 a particularly severe one hit the East End. Green spent his days and nights in the hospital wards, in infested tenements, or the burial grounds. This pace could not last. In Easter, 1869, he resigned the benefice, Tait offering him the post of Librarian at Lambeth:-

"Looking back (writes his biographer, Addison) it is clear that Green ought never to have undertaken the oversight of such a parish as St. Philips, with its 16,000 people, its mission church and numerous organisations, its staff of four curates, its financial burdens and modest stipend." (18)

Today, if we retrace our steps past St. Philips, and down Newark Street, the clamour of the secularists, the rowdiness of the Mormon 'bashers' or the delinquencies of a Bonwell who was tempted and who succumbed, have vanished. Only

a plaque upon the school house, chaste and quiet, reminds us that once a good clergyman, John Richard Green, laboured here for a brief but memorable while.

Wimbledon, October 1972.

Gillian Hawtin.

References:-

1. Reasoner, No. 579, p.112.
2. The details of the affray and the subsequent preliminary proceedings are in Reasoner, No.683, No.681, 12th June 1859.
3. Reasoner, No.683, 26th June 1859, pp.206-7; Investigator, 1st July 1859, pp. 253-5; Greater London Record Office (M) MJ/CP 1859.
4. George Jacob Holyoake (1817-1906), secularist and co-operator, had commenced the Reasoner in 1846, and at the same time, a centre of secularist propaganda at 147 Fleet Street, and was commonly regarded as the premier freethought protagonist at this date. He had coined the word secularism for a new positive definition of freethought, and was universally respected for the high tone of his advocacy.
5. Pseudonym of Charles Bradlaugh, later celebrated on account of the oath controversy, but at this time an articled clerk in the office of the solicitor Montague Levenson, and, as editor of the Investigator at the height of his struggle for power and the leadership of the movement largely created by Holyoake in the previous decade and a half. A native of the East End himself. Noted for more pugnacious style and methods than Holyoake.
6. A collection of the judgements of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in ecclesiastical cases relating to doctrine and discipline, with a preface by the Lord Bishop of London, and an historical introduction. Entitled (under the direction of the Lord Bishop of London) by the Hon.George C.Brodrick, Barrister-at-Law and Fellow of Merton College, and the Rev.William H.Fremantle, Chaplain to the Bishop of London, and late Fellow of All Souls' College. London 1865, pp. 200-211.
7. Ibid. p.200
8. Ibid. p.202-3.
9. Ibid. p.203
10. Ibid. p.204
11. The members of the Judicial Council present at this appeal were the Archbishop of York, the Lord Justice Knight Bruce, the Lord Justice Turner, and Sir John Taylor Coleridge. Bruce was a severely established figure.
12. A collection of judgements, etc., op.cit., p.211
13. Ibid. p.210
14. Ibid. p.211.
15. Born Oxford 1837, educated at Magdalen College School, read physical science and classics at Jesus College, declining to read history because it was at that time combined with the study of law, which he detested. Ordained, largely due to the influence of Stanley, then Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History, in 1860. In 1869 succeeded Stubbs as Librarian at Lambeth. Died on 7th March 1883, at Mentone, whither ill-health had driven him. See Annual Register, 1883, pp.132-3, and D.N.B., Vol.XXIII, pp.46-49.
16. The Short History of the English People appeared at intervals between 1877-1880.
17. Quoted Addison, W.G., J.R.Green, London 1946, p.27. This slight but percipient biography seems to be the only published life.
18. Addison, op.cit., p.28.

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MEMBERSHIP

A number of members have not yet paid their subscriptions for 1972/3. Reminders have been sent and those concerned are asked to give this matter their attention. The subscription (50p) should be sent to Mr.G.Bettis, Membership Secy., 11 Osterley House, Giraud St., Poplar E.14. This is the last Bulletin to be sent to those who do not renew their subscriptions. The final issue of "East London Papers" will shortly be issued. Will those concerned kindly send their £1 to the Treasurer.

Of the East End of London we may say, as our opinion, that although you cannot buy there certain high-priced articles which you can in the West, yet you can there lay out your money to greater advantage. With regard to groceries, there are some large establishments where fifteen or sixteen counter-men are constantly engaged banging their scales, the scene on Saturday nights being terrific. Exposed on stalls in the Whitechapel Road you see vegetables, fish, sweets and cakes, all of good quality and very cheap; while if you go into a market in a back-street you will find tolerable fresh fish going at about a penny a pound, onions four pence for twopence, good cheese at eightpence, and compressed dates at a penny. Oranges, coconuts and other fruit go remarkably cheap; with sweets three ounces a penny, tolerably good; while blackcurrant lozenges at a halfpenny per ounce are decidedly not the thing, though a fair imitation. And here is a man who has a truck-load of cheese, which he is offering at fourpence a pound, and very fair cheese it is. The meat too at one of the leading shops is good though not prime, and buyers can be suited at all prices beginning with salt beef at threepence per pound, going on to beef and mutton scraps at fivepence and so on to ribs of beef at elevenpence.

Yonder is an open shop with a burly individual in front, brandishing a large cutlass-shaped knife, and keeping up a rattling fire of small-talk. "Rabbits, mum - yes, mum, seven and a half tonight, - weigh up at five and four, Charly" (here he throws inside the shop a piece of bacon, and the customer follows round to see it weighed). - "Beautiful bit of real Wiltshire bacon, sir, Sold again, ha, ha! I thought we'd clear all off that board tonight, - weigh up here at six and eight, Charly; keep the scale hot!" and so on, up to the small hours on Sunday morning. Here you obtain delicious butter at sixteen pence per pound, and if you will come with us down a back lane near one of the wharfs, we will buy for you bacon at a shilling, which cannot be excelled either West or East. We will now try an establishment opposite the principal entrance of the London Docks, where they boldly advertise "a good dinner for fourpence". Enter a few minutes before four and innocently take a seat, supposing that a waiter will attend your wishes. Vain expectation; for as soon as the clock has struck, in rushes a crowd of hungry ragamuffins from the Docks who seize each a plate, and having procured what they want, convey it to the nearest table and devour it. Having waited on yourself in a similar manner, you find the fourpenny dinner to consist of a jorum of soup, a hunk of bread, and some well-baked greasy potatoes, the quantity of each article being for the money quite astounding; and if your hunger should still be unsatisfied you can fill up with 'plum duff' baked in fat, or fatty roll pudding made with some of the 'family jam' at fourpence a pound to which we have before alluded. However, the proprietor does a roaring trade, and these cheap cook-shops also do a good outdoor business in pennyworths of pudding, potatoes, and small quantities of meat; not to mention the fried fish shops - and you must go to the East End to taste fried fish in perfection - where you can have a good fill for about twopence.

(Submitted by Mr. H. Willmott).

#### NONCONFORMITY IN STRATFORD

There is a long tradition of Dissent in Essex and the Eastern Counties. The Rev. Thomas Rose who was presented to the living of West Ham by the young King Edward VI was one of the early Reformers. He was deprived of the living by the Catholic Queen Mary and arraigned before the bishops but managed to escape to the Continent, where he remained until the accession of Queen Elizabeth allowed his return and restoration to the Vicarage.



In 1556 Stratford Green was the scene of the largest single martyrdom of Queen Mary's unhappy reign when 13 Protestants from various parts of Essex were burned together. A memorial to them, to Rose and to several other sufferers during the Marian persecutions stands in the churchyard of St. John's.

A hundred years later, during the time of the Commonwealth, West Ham seems to have been firmly in the hands of the Puritan church administration. Under legislation passed at the Restoration, the tenure of Thomas Walton (presented to the living at West Ham by Lord Protector Cromwell) was declared invalid and he was replaced by a nominee of the Crown.

Tradition says that after the passing of the Act of Uniformity, 1662, some 'nonconformists' in West Ham formed a small dissenting congregation in a house to the north of Stratford Broadway where Salway Place and the Grove Primary School now stand.

No record can be found of prosecution under the Conventicle Act against any people meeting at Stratford although two prosecutions involving West Ham people appear in Quarter Sessions records: One of Quakers meeting at Plaistow and one involving two Stratford women in a conventicle at East Ham:-

20 April 1677

CONVICTION at Plaistow before the undersigned justice on 26 July of Simon Edes of East Ham, Joshua Cobham and James Matthews both of West Ham, on the oath of Peter Ward sen. and James Pye, both of West Ham, for being at the dwelling house of Solomon and Ann Eccles alias Egles there, with divers others to the number of thirty persons, at an unlawful assembly or conventicle under the pretext of religion, for which the said justice imposed a fine of 30s. on Edes and 50s. each on Cobham, Mathews, and 20 li. on Solomon and Ann Eccles alias Egles.

23 July 1665, Summary convictions

Memorandum that on 23 July Rich. Greenaway of St. Ann, Blackfriars, London, tailor, Tho. Cook, servant of Rich. Ashfield of Romford, Hornchurch, yeoman, Peter Petchey of East Ham, blacksmith, John Salter, shoemaker, Phaniel Neaking, blacksmith, Margaret, wife of Rich. Clark, seaman, all of Barking; Debora Walter of Stratford Langthorne, spinster, Anne Ving of East Ham, spinster, Ann, wife of Dan Shoake of Barking, carpenter, Alice Walter of Stratford Langthorne, widow; Maria, wife of Edw. Blott, farmer, Eliz. wife of Tho. Debbett, East Ham gent., on the said day assembled together at the dwelling house of the said Wm. Williams, to the number of twelve besides his own household under the colour of exercising religion and were convicted and committed on the same day to pay a fine (ranging between) 6/8d and 12d. (except for Greenaway 3 months or 5 li.).

Whatever the precise date of the foundation of the congregation a chapel was built on the Salway Place site and appears in Roque's map of London 1741/5 marked "Decenters Chapel".

In 1776, a new chapel with a burial ground was built at "Brickfields" just off Vicarage Lane, and remains today the oldest place of religious worship in West Ham after the parish church. The burial ground was closed for interments by Order in Council in 1854 (at the same time as West Ham churchyard).

About the time of the opening of the Brickfields Chapel, the Methodist cause was being established in Stratford. John Wesley paid three visits to Plaistow quite early in his ministry but no society appears to have been established there then.

Entries in his diary 1786/90 indicate, however, a thriving society at Stratford and a Methodist "plan" for London c. 1790 shows Sunday services at "Stratford 11 and 5".

"Thursday 9th November 1786. In the evening I preached at Stratford; and understanding that I had many good sort of people to deal with ..."



"Wednesday 6th February 1790.- I preached to a larger and more awakened congregation at Stratford".

Wesley is supposed to have preached in a building just behind what is now Essex House in the High Street and there is a tradition that the pulpit from which he preached was preserved in the Chapel built in Chapel Street, Stratford, during the 19th century.

Certainly by the time of the 1821 survey of the Parish of West Ham there was a "meeting-house" near the supposed site in what became Wood's Yard, High Street, and a 'Chapel Resolution Book' starting in 1826 of the 'Woods Yard' Chapel is still in existence for the society.

The great increase in the artisan population during the middle of the 19th century occasioned the growth of many nonconformist causes. A Baptist congregation was commenced in 1840 and the old Chapel in West Ham Lane opened in 1844. By 1900 there were nearly 20 chapels and mission halls in the Stratford area.

F. Sainsbury.

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ALL HALLOWS CHURCH : BROMLEY

This Church, in Devons Road, celebrated its centenary on the 16th May 1973 and the Society helped to stage a small local history exhibition and provided a supply of historical hand-outs.

The Church is not old, being originally built in 1873 to cope with the ever-increasing population resulting from the development of the Docks and Railways, also local industries. The finance was provided from the sale of the site of All Hallows Staining, in Mark Lane, in the City, which had become redundant. The Tower of that Church, at which Princess Elizabeth gave thanks on her release from the Tower on Trinity Sunday, 19th May 1554, still stands. From the funds realised by the sale of that Church, the three churches of All Hallows, Bromley-by-Bow, All Hallows, East India Dock Road, and St. Gabriel's, Poplar, were built. All these three churches were destroyed in the Second World War. All Hallows, Bromley, and All Hallows, East India Dock Road, were rebuilt, and the former was reconsecrated on October 19th 1955.

It appears that Devons Road follows an ancient track leading on to Stepney Way and to the City. At the Bow "cross-roads" there was, of course, the ancient Priory of St. Leonard, and nearby were Bromley Hall, the Tudor Hall, the "Seven Stars" and "The Ship". Nearer All Hallows were the bowling-green and the "ducking-stool" pond. On the area now occupied by the Church there were apparently large houses in the 17th century in which some famous people lived, reference to whom will be made in a later Bulletin. The houses later gave way to market gardens and in the latter half of the last century, to the working-class houses and streets many of which we see today.

In the early 1900's, Bow Common Lane, just past the Church, was the daily scene of large numbers of labourers, many of them Irish, making their way to the West India Docks in the hope of being selected at the 7 a.m. "call-on".

The Patrons of the Church are the Worshipful Company of Grocers, whose Company arms can be seen in the side light and who presented the modern stained glass windows. As with the rest of East London, the main poverty has gone but the burden of indifference and apathy has increased. The present Rector, the Rev. Clifford Smith, has an uphill task.

A.H.F.