



**EAST LONDON HISTORY SOCIETY
BULLETIN**

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EDITORIAL

Many thanks to Mr. S. Tongue, Hackney Archivist, for having taken over the December Bulletin so effectively and giving me a break. In this and subsequent issues we have more from Hackney and it is hoped that this will continue.

On the 21st January 1974 an Exhibition of Paintings by Mr. A.V.Conn, an East London docker who died last year, was held by the Port of London Authority Arts & Crafts Committee at the London Docks. The paintings were of a very high standard though there were not as many of the Riverside as might have been expected. Exhibited with the paintings were some typewritten reminiscences of Mr.Conn's early life at Cuba Street on the Isle of Dogs before the Great War. His comments on the horse-buses, the sailing-ship bowsprits extending across the main West Ferry Road, the children dangling their feet in the unsavoury Thames, etc. brought a touch of nostalgia to many Islanders.

One Friday evening recently, the famous 140-year old Lutine Bell was removed from the Underwriting Room at Lloyd's in the City not, as one might have thought, the scenario for a daring, but probably unremunerative robbery, but instead a bit of restoration work carried out with the precision of a military operation. An expert from the 400-year old Whitechapel Bell Foundry, after examining the bell, had decided that although it was in good shape, the clapper mechanism needed attention, the clapper itself being at least $\frac{3}{4}$ " short. So the bell was dismantled, lowered to the floor and taken away to the Company's works in Whitechapel Road where it was fitted with a new clapper and clapper staple. It was returned to Lloyd's on the Saturday afternoon and rehung thereby not being away during working hours. The bell now sounds much better, considerably louder - and will certainly be safer.

Various traces of the Viking incursions into East London have been unearthed from time to time, particularly along the River Lea. It is said that King Alfred diverted the Lea at Stratford, leaving some of the raiders high and dry. Over an Islington pub, the Norse Film and Pageant Society make their plans to re-enact some of the Viking activities. Then on the Hackney Marshes each week they do battle at the sound of a buffalo horn, arrows fly from long-bows and the opposing army counter-attacks with spears. This is apparently followed by hand-to-hand combat with axes, swords and daggers (all fitted with safety devices) and (I am told) no one gets hurt. They also study Viking lore, craftwork, enamelling, jewellery-making, etc.

The retirement of Miss Phyllis Gershon M.B.E. at the end of December after 48 years as Warden of Stepney Jewish Settlement was sad news to her many friends in East London. Miss Gershon gave herself untiringly to the community work amongst pensioners, mothers, babies, etc. She also served as a local magistrate. We may get her to talk to us in the next session.

Now for the mediaeval touch! Muddies, of Barking Road, Plaistow, for many years "purveyors of jellied eels extraordinaire" - are now arranging to supply game (pheasant, quails, guinea-fowl and pigeon-pies) to hotels and restaurants etc. They have already been appointed official suppliers of venison and hares to a group of Essex hotels. So for your pheasant paté you know who to contact. There appears at the moment to be no demand for whitebait suppers, mutton-pies or pigs-head soup!

Don't forget Mr.Royden's evening on the 28th March at Q.M.C. at 7 p.m., also the slide-show by Mr.Sainsbury at East Ham Central Library (Town Hall) at 7.45 p.m. on Tuesday 23rd April, and the talk on the Tower of London by one of the Yeomen Warders on Wednesday, 29th May at Q.M.C. at 7 p.m.

A.H.F.

THE SAD CHAINED SWAN

Among the many heraldic devices and badges that survive from mediaeval times few have been more appropriate to their bearers than the pathetic Chained Swan worn by the De Bohun family. Consider the plight of such a noble creature were it to be tethered with a coronet for a collar and a chain about its slender neck. It is such similarity of cruel misfortune that beset the House of De Bohun.

The demolition of the last remains of the Priory of Bromley-St-Leonard sent some of us in the Society hurrying back to the Local Collection in the hope of finding some information about its history, or the hope of uncovering some forgotten aspect of this "Chaucer's Convent". The Contractors responsible for the demolition of the site, Messrs. Mowlem Ltd., had a touch of conscience about the task, and a very respectable account of the history of the Convent appeared in the Company Journal "London John". The Greater London Council also sent their Surveyor of Historic Buildings to the site, who produced an admirable collated summary of all the known sources of history relating to the Convent, together with a sketch plan of the last church to occupy the site. It was from this summary that I learned the names of the most esteemed burials to occupy the Norman chapel. These were Elizabeth Plantaganet, and John De Bohun, Earl of Romford, who died in 1335. Local History is usually a matter of patient research, and the follow-up of a single clue. For me these two names have revealed a lot of good history, enough almost for a book, and a wider knowledge of some little-known mediaeval Manors in nearby Essex.

It is not commonly realised that the Priory of Bromley-St-Leonard was annexed to the jurisdiction of the Abbey of St. Peter at Westminster, and therefore independent of the Diocese of the Bishop of London. It housed a community of French Benedictine Nuns. It was this association with Westminster that caused it to extend the privilege of a retirement house to Royal widows, and to this Convent in 1322, Elizabeth Plantaganet, daughter of King Edward I and Margaret of Anjou, came in her hours of grief. Her husband, Humphrey De Bohun, Earl of Hereford and Essex, was killed at the Battle of Boroughbridge. Elizabeth had six sons and four daughters. The De Bohun family trace their ancestry back to Humphrey De Bohun, a Norman nobleman who was a supporter of William the Conqueror. The family amassed vast fortunes through a number of marriages into the line of the blood royal. For three hundred years they proudly carried the Office of Constable of England, together with a number of Earldoms and other distinguished positions. The pedigree bears the names of three Kings of England, Henry IV (Bolinbroke) who married Mary De Bohun, co-heiress 1370-1394, who bore him three sons and two daughters. The eldest son, Henry, became the glorious Henry V who died after a short reign of only nine years, aged 35. His successor, the infant Henry VI, perpetuated the De Bohun misfortunes in his lengthy sad reign, beset with civil war, usurpation and finally murder. Eleanor De Bohun, perhaps the best known member of the family fared little better. Her husband, Thomas of Woodstock, the youngest son of Henry III was arrested for treason and assassinated before he could be arraigned for trial. Eleanor saw her inheritance pass through all her family. One daughter, Anne, survived her. She in turn shared the grief of the chained swan, as did her children and her children's children. Returning to John De Bohun at our little Priory in Bromley - this John was the eldest son of Elizabeth Plantaganet. He was styled Earl of Hereford, not Romford, which may have been a mis-reading of his worn brass in the eighteenth century. He was buried close to his mother. His wife, of whom nothing is known, was buried with him. The Brass has been missing for about two hundred years.

In this brief summary, I have touched only on a few of the members of this noble family, who at one time owned half the manors in Essex, vast estates in Gloucester, Stafford, Buckinghamshire and Northampton. Each line of the family is

a catalogue of misfortune, sons who died in battle, infants who never reached maturity, violent deaths for alleged treason, and saddest of all, sons against fathers and brother against brother, during that treacherous Plantaganet era known as the Wars of the Roses.

Next time you visit Westminster Abbey, look out for the beautiful brass of Eleanor, Duchess of Gloucester, who died in 1399. Her husband, Thomas of Woodstock, is buried under the floor of St. Edward the Confessor's Chapel. The Mary De Bohun buried next to Eleanor is a lineal descendant who died in 1694. She is really a member of the House of Stafford. John De Bohun's brother and sister, Hugh and Mary, who died in 1305, are also buried at Westminster.

The last true member of the House of Bohun died on the scaffold at Tower Hill on the 17th May 1521, executed for alleged treason brought by Wolsey. With him died the Chained Swan, that sad emblem worn so proudly for over five hundred years.

B.J.Barrell, Feb.1974.

KING JOHN'S PALACE

Standing in Old Ford by Wick Lane until 1811 was the remains of a building in a ruinous condition, known as King John's Palace or Castle, referred to also as King John's House and King Henry VIII's House. The remains were said to be the gateway of a royal mansion once belonging to Henry VIII, but not a shred of real evidence has been found to support this claim. A lithograph published in 1787 showing the gateway reveals no sign of the buildings beyond, of which only the foundations were then to be seen, in particular those of a chapel that stood until a few years before. Local residents (in 1786) remembered seeing the chapel and the fine painting and "curious painted glass" it contained; it was called, they said, the Romish Chapel.

At one side of the building ran a sewer, later enlarged to admit coal barges from the River Lea, and to make a wharf. When this work was carried out a stone wall was discovered "twenty-seven paces in length" which seemed to have been the boundary and breadth of the so-called palace and premises and as their length was little more the area was extremely small for a royal mansion.

The "Gentleman's Magazine" of 1793 published a letter in which it was claimed that a butcher found a silver spoon with Arms stamped on it near the site in 1788, but whose Arms was not mentioned. Glazed tiles, ornamented with yellow-painted scroll-work, had earlier been found and these were thought to have once formed part of the chapel pavement; several ancient coins were also unearthed on the spot. At the time the letter appeared the ground within the gateway was occupied by a calico printer and in his kitchen was said to be the Arms of King John.

Daniel Lysons, in his "Environs of London", 1795, states that he knew of no record or memorial of any kind to prove the palace was ever vested in the Crown and advances the theory that it was the same mansion, called "Gissing Place" or "Petersfield" which, with 19 acres of land in Old Ford was conveyed in 1418 by John Gæst to Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, William Louthir and others. Lysons also tells us that in Queen Elizabeth's time the "old place" or "great place" at Old Ford was divided into tenements, according to entries of baptisms and burials of, it is presumed, St. Mary's Church, Bow. In 1665, the site was given to Christ's Hospital by William Williams, citizen of London.

It is recorded in the "Annual Register" for 1800 that on January 25th that year a storm blew down what remained of the castle "at Old Ford built in 1203 as a residence for King John". "Here", the account continues, "historians say

he plotted the death of Prince Arthur; here he entertained the Brabancon chiefs, and here he probably slept after having signed Magna Carta (1215). This place was first mutilated during the Civil Wars of Charles I; about 40 years ago the chapel fell, and 10 years afterwards two wings tumbled down. It is now all levelled. The ground belongs to the Bluecoat School". There is no proof that Arthur's death was planned at Old Ford, or that the King ever slept there, and we are not told who the historians were who contributed this information. What was left of the gateway was pulled down in 1811, according to David Hughson's "Walks through London", Vol.I. 1817, but it is probable that a small part remained and was seen by the artist responsible for the lithograph executed in 1863, a caption to which reads "A building of some antiquity, reported to have formed a portion of a palace of King John, was destroyed by fire on Wednesday, September 23rd 1863. It was a twelve room building, standing in a kind of terrace, with elaborate chimney pieces etc. and a large oaken staircase. Two or three centuries back it was a famous hostelry, the River Lea being forded near, but the erection of Bow Bridge changed the route into Essex, by the Bow Road, when the house lost its fame and trade".

Attempts to discover the name of this building have been unsuccessful, and it was not known whether it was still a tavern at the time of the fire, or whether by then it had been converted into dwellings or other premises. The caption, incidentally, is misleading for Bow Bridge was built in the 12th century and replaced by a new one in 1838. The site of the former hostelry is today covered by Palace Works, belonging to Palatial Ltd., furniture manufacturers.

Another house of considerable size that formed part of the palace premises was known as "The Old Palace", according to ledgers in the possession of Christ's Hospital authorities. Between 1835 and 1855 this and other property in Wick Lane and Old Ford was leased to Benjamin Chapman (of Chapman & Co. sugar-refiners and distillers). Besides a house with pleasure grounds, garden and buildings, the property comprised "a factory, stable and cart shed, a spring of water, two meadows, nine cottages in Prevots Road (Old Ford Road), a house and two cottages, shed and wharf, and a public house known as "The White Hart". In earlier records the factory and adjoining land is described as "Calico grounds" and earlier still as "The Dye House".

In later years, "The Old Palace" (not to be confused with the "Old Palace" that stood by the "Seven Stars" tavern, Bromley-by-Bow) was styled "Palace House", and as such was occupied at the beginning of this century by W.H. Bundock of Bundock Wharf and Cartage Company, a Bow vestryman, who died there in 1921. "Palace House" was in Wick Lane, adjoining "The White Hart", and a photograph taken about 1898 showing a doorway suggests it was built in a similar style to the building destroyed by fire in 1863.

Over the years, antiquarians and historians have pondered over the question of whether King John's Palace ever belonged to Royalty, and in the absence of records we may never know the answer, but it is evident that whoever was responsible for its construction must have been somebody of importance, probably a "person of quality" connected with the Court at that time and who very likely entertained Royalty there on occasions.

A.L.Hellicar. (c.1950).

HISTORY ON WHEELS!

There will be a motorcade round a number of historical sites in Hackney, led by Mr. S.C.Tongue, on Saturday afternoon, 11th May 1974. Meet outside the Pitfield Street Library at 2 p.m. There will be stops at Springfield Park, Clissold Park etc. and an opportunity for refreshments. If you wish to come, please give your name to Mr.French or Miss Sansom so that car spaces can be allotted.

On one occasion we had the dust carts in the Borough with the legend "Where there's dirt there's danger". On my way to a Council meeting one evening I passed Haggerston Library in Kingsland Road and saw cobwebs and dirt hanging down from underneath the stone sills of the building. Accordingly, during Council, I asked the Mayor whether they observed their own slogan and, if so, they would eliminate the dirt from underneath the sills of the library as it was Council property. The question was adjourned for action by the then Borough Surveyor. At the following meeting a report was presented on this and the Surveyor reported that to clean the stonework would lead to deterioration of the fabric. I rose in my seat and said "Fiddlesticks! I want a proper answer to my question". The Mayor said I had received an answer and asked me to resume my seat so I said "I'll see you damned first". At this, all the members began to shout "Sit down, sit down". I said "I'm not going to sit down until I get a proper answer". With that the gavel went down for the second time, then His Worship said "Councillor Bellamy, if you don't sit down I shall have to adjourn the Council". I replied that he could do what he liked but I was not going to retract. Up jumped the Mayor, and members of the Council, and they all walked out. Of course, one had many verbal duels with the opposite Party. I remember whilst electioneering during the 1910 Parliamentary campaign when the Tory, the Hon. Rupert Guinness lost his seat to H.G.Chancellor - I organised six open air meetings on a Sunday morning and I was due to take the last one myself on Whitmore Hill. By the time I got there a "Clarion" van - the famous newspaper of the Socialist Robert Blatchford was printed in Worship Street - was drawn up alongside my cart and we got into an argument about Lloyd George's first Old Age Pensions Act. The argument waxed fiercer and fiercer and I defied them as long as I could until, finally, they took the chains off the wheels and ran me down Whitmore Hill. We turned the cart around and took it over to the other side of the road and had another go.

There was also much concern and heated debate over poor relief and I remember how on one occasion the Labour Party were critical of the workhouse bakery. One of the members who was also a Councillor went down into the cellars to criticize the baker and the baker gave him a hiding. Policy as to relief used to vary according to which party was in power but, of course, had it not been for the charitable organisations such as the Hoxton Market Mission (which is still there doing good work) and Jackson's Soup Kitchen in Hoxton Street and so on, people would have been in an absolutely desperate condition. I've had many a dinner from Jackson's Soup Kitchen; there was another one in Shap Street. Sometimes I had a penny to come out with and would get a pennyworth of bread and a soup ticket for Jacksons. That was a "blow-out". At an earlier period, in the 1890's, mother would give my brother and I a halfpenny and we would go across to Hoxton Hall and have a breakfast for a farthing each. This building was originally a Music Hall - it is now the only one surviving in the whole of London, exactly as it was built in 1864 - but it was never of very great repute, always overshadowed by the Britannia, and eventually McDonalds, as it was called, was closed by the police for disorderly conduct. At that time there were fifteen public houses and beer houses in the length of Hoxton Street alone.

To those of us who can look back seventy years or more, the era of the Britannia Theatre was one of "Pride, Poverty and Pianos" - those who would not be seen to be poor and those who couldn't hide the fact. Only a few were outside these categories but "The Brit" catered for them all, its nightly audiences averaging two thousand. Here was Drama, Farce and Pantomime.

A stock company of great ability was retained, some members of which were idolised, all were appreciated. There was Algernon Sims (the Hero), Walter Steadman (the Villain) and George Bigwood (the Comic) whilst among the actresses were Beatrice Toy, Oliph Webb and Topsy Sinden. Some members of the company took lodgings locally; among those was Algy Sims. He was a splendid actor and a fine figure of a

man, the idol of them all. He lived in De Beauvoir Town which was then a quiet and lovely oasis. Occasionally he would take a morning stroll along Hoxton Street, elegantly dressed - "done up to the nines" as we would say - replete with white spats and a walking-stick, to the delight and plaudits of the crowd. They loved him.

Wally Steadman also had his following. The story was told of his performance in a play - the title of which escapes me - wherein the scene was the interior of a huge barn. In the semi-darkness Wally entered dressed in a cocked hat, long black cloak and heavy boots. He approached, menacingly, a bundle lying against the back wall which, the audience knew, contained a small child. Roughly he pushed the bundle with his boot and out rolled the child. At this tense moment, a girl in the gallery shouted "You lousy s-d", the audience hissed him and the play went on. That Wally could get them and hold them to that pitch of tension was of course a triumph of the actor's art. Beatrice Toy, who usually played the heroine, was the darling of the girls, Oliph Webb was not far behind in esteem and the dancing of Topsy Sinden was wonderful.

I first saw Sarah Lane when I was eight years old, in 1892. My father took me and I remember going in and seeing this company in a circle, all looking inward. They sang "Hush, hush, hush, here comes the bogey man" and up from the stage floor came George Lupino dressed in pantaloons, etc., and jumped over their heads. The "pantos" had a very long season, starting well before Christmas and running on well into March. It was fourpence to go "Up the Brit" and at the close of the "panto" season the patrons were allowed to bring presents which were either handed up from the Pit or thrown from the Boxes. Thus did the people of Hoxton show their gratitude for the pleasure they had enjoyed.

(Contributed by Mr.S.C.Torgue)

A PALACE IN THE EAST END

It was in May 1887, Golden Jubilee Year, that Queen Victoria opened the Queen's Hall in Mile End Road, the first unit of the People's Palace to be built. She drove through streets thronged with cheering crowds and opened the Hall with a golden key. The ceremony which followed commenced with the singing of "Home Sweet Home" by that universal favourite, Madam Albani.

Among the distinguished guests present was Sir Walter Besant. For him this must have been a poignant occasion, for he was witnessing a fantasy - his own brain child - that had become a reality. Sir Walter had long been a champion of the East End of London which he described as "an utterly unknown town" of two million people who had "no public buildings of importance, no municipality, no gentry, no carriages, no soldiers, no picture galleries, no theatre, no opera - they have nothing". In 1882, Besant had written a novel called "All sorts and conditions of men". Angela, the heroine of this story, is a beautiful girl who is heiress to a famous brewery in Mile End. Turning her back on Society, she settles in Stepney. Here she meets Harry, the adopted son of a peer who has returned to investigate his birthplace. Angela starts a profit-sharing dress-making business in her Queen Anne house in Stepney Green. In the evenings her employees gather in her drawing-room to sing madrigals or to listen to Angela and Harry playing duets. Harry and Angela marry. They decide that some antidote is needed to the drab misery of the people and they build a Palace of Delight, where inspiration and spiritual uplift can be found in the pleasures of art, music and dancing.

Although Besant's novel illustrated a contemporary trend of thought, it was a man called Barber Beaumont who first sowed the seeds of a cultural movement in Stepney. This gifted man had been born in 1774. As a boy scholar he had entered the Academy Schools where he won several medals. In his early thirties, however, he renounced a brilliant career as an artist, and turned to commercial enterprises. He

promoted an insurance scheme, the Provident Institute, a fore-runner of the Workingmen's Friendly Society. His activities were endless; during the Napoleonic Wars he worked out a defence scheme and became the first commanding officer of the Duke of Cumberland's Sharp Shooters. He added colour to his varied career by fighting a duel in Hyde Park.

It was after reading Fellowe's Religion of the Universe that Beaumont undertook a new venture. In Beaumont Square, just off Mile End Road, he put up a neo-Classical building which was called the Eastern Athenaeum and later, the Philosophical Institute. It housed a library, museum and concert hall and was intended to bring culture within reach of the working men of East London. Beaumont also formed a trust fund of £13,000 for higher education in the East End. He died in 1841 and although this Institute functioned for another 40 years, without his driving force and with insufficient funds, it lost its sense of purpose.

In 1883 the Beaumont trustees decided that some change was needed. Their thinking was influenced by the Royal Commission of that year, which reported that England was losing her lead in world markets owing to lack of workers with technical skills. The Industrial Revolution and the closing down of shipbuilding on the Thames had altered the work pattern of East London. Men and women now crowded into the factories where there was scant protection from the evils of sweated labour. If opportunity was given for technical training, men could once more be proud of their skills and supply a need in modern industry.

Sir Edmund Currie, Chairman of the Trust, found a suitable site for a new venture close at hand. This was the disused Bancroft Hospital on the north side of Mile End Road. Francis Bancroft, citizen and draper, was a man of very different calibre to Beaumont. He pillaged the poor and amassed an ill-gained fortune. He was so hated by the London people that when he died in 1728, they attempted to halt his funeral procession. Probably as a memorial to himself he left a bequest to be administered by the Drapers' Company for the foundation of a boys' school and an almshouse to be called the Bancroft Hospital. In 1885 the School moved to new premises at Woodford and the Beaumont Trust bought the site from the Drapers' Company for £22,400. Here they planned to build a Palace "for the intellectual improvement and recreational amusements of the inhabitants of East London". The scheme, which included technical schools, library, concert hall, gymnasium and swimming bath, was estimated to cost £100,000. Currie must have realised that such a sum could not be raised without the help of a fairy godmother.

He found this proverbial being in the Drapers' Company to whom he turned for help. The Company gave £22,000 for the building of technical schools, the first of many grants. A fund-raising meeting at the Mansion House nearly ended disastrously when Mr. F. N. Charrington created a disturbance, demanding that Sunday opening and the sale of alcohol at the Palace should be forbidden. So persistent was he, that a policeman was called and he was forcibly removed. In spite of this diversion, the sum of £70,000 was raised and plans were prepared for building.

The chosen architect was Mr. Robson, FRIBA. His original design, a pseudo-oriental structure of red brick and white stone, adorned with minarets, was fortunately discarded for a pleasing building of stone in the art nouveau style. In 1886 the Prince of Wales laid the foundation stone of the Queen's Hall. Next to be built was the fine octagonal library and then the technical schools.

The Queen's Hall came into use long before the building programme was completed. The early concerts were patronised by people from the West End who drove out in their carriages. This annoyed the East Enders, although some of them admitted that they preferred nigger minstrel entertainment to classical music; however, ballad concerts and choral works were always popular. A fine variety of entertainment took place in 1889. There were dog, cat and rabbit shows, and a

coster's donkey and pony show was judged by the Duke of Norfolk. The cockney's love of flowers was demonstrated when 20,000 people visited a chrysanthemum show. At an autumn fete lasting for six weeks, the gymnasium was laid out as a garden with fountains and a waterfall. Fairy lights illuminated the scene and a military band provided music.

With the opening of the workshops, 300 boys were enrolled for a three-year course. The fees were £2 a year but many boys obtained Drapers' scholarships. Hot dinners were served at the cost of a penny. Adult evening classes were well attended, and those on navigation and nautical cooking for seamen were always popular. Unfortunately, the large sums spent on entertainment led to financial difficulties; in 1892 the Charity Commission stepped in and a new scheme was drawn up. It was laid down that the Queen's Hall and Winter Garden should still be used for "entertainment suited for the recreation and instruction of the poorer classes". The Drapers' Company played a large part in the management and owing to their generosity, the educational side prospered. In 1907 the technical school was known as The East London College; eight years later it became a school of London University. In 1934 it received a royal charter and took the name of Queen Mary College.

The Queen's Hall, the original People's Palace, did not fare so well. It was destroyed by fire in 1931 and was rebuilt on a new site at the west end of the forecourt. King George VI opened the new building in 1937, but it never regained its former glory. The conception of a Palace of Delight had faded into the realms of fancy, and all too soon the reality of war dominated London life. Soon after peace was restored, Queen Mary College bought the Queen's Hall and it now plays a useful part in the life of the College.

Although Sir Walter Besant might feel sadly disillusioned by the turn of events, Barber Beaumont would surely be gratified that his plan for a cultural centre in East London had blossomed into this fine school of the University of London, with its 2,300 students.

Celia Davies

 THE DANIEL ALEXANDER ROOM - LONDON DOCK HOUSE.

London Dock House was built circa 1810 as the Head Office of the London Dock Company - the first major enclosed dock to be built in London.

These small but elegant Georgian buildings, which have been restored during the past year in consultation with the Greater London Council Historic Buildings Board, are some of the oldest Dock Offices in the world. They have been in continuous port use since they were built over 160 years ago and now form part of the Port of London Authority's Head Office.

The Surveyor of the London Dock Company - responsible for the Dock construction, the Warehouses and all building work - was Daniel Asher Alexander (1768-1846) and it is after him that this space (the main hall) serves as an Exhibition space as well as an assembly hall, has been named.

His portrait by Partridge forms the centrepiece of a small display of drawings and prints relevant of his work and career at London Dock and elsewhere. The London Dock House buildings now also house a small museum, the P.L.A. Archive collection, and the War Memorials removed from the original Head Office of the P.L.A. in Trinity Square.

Port of London Authority.

Note:- Members of the East London History Society are welcome to visit the Hall and Museum between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. It is hoped that the P.L.A. will shortly respond to our suggestion for a display of their magnificent collection of East London prints. A.H.F.