

**EAST LONDON HISTORY SOCIETY  
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The Borough of Tower Hamlets has published a second portfolio of six reproductions from the local history Library. The portfolio costs £1.50 including postage and may be obtained from any Tower Hamlets library. These excellent reproductions show a map of Spitalfields published in 1755, an engraving of the Tower of London from the excavations for St.Katherine's Dock 1827, the opening of St. Katherine's Dock 1828, Shipbuilding at Limehouse (the "President" on the stocks") 1839, King John's Palace at Old For 1847, and Colombia Market, Bethnal Green, 1869. The Library has also made available six postcard monochrome reproductions ("The London Hospital 1753, Aldgate House 1800, Aldgate High Street 1849, London Docks 1825, the Pool of the Thames n.d., and Blackwall Yard 1821). These are 3p per postcard also obtainable from any Tower Hamlets Library.

Another bargain is the selection of postcards published by the Borough of Newham and obtainable from any Newham Library. These consist of five reproductions of prints of old East Ham, and five of old Stratford. Supply is limited so get yours early - price 20p per set in an attractive cellophane envelope.

The developments around the Ratcliff Highway are threatening the Glassworks of T.& W.Ide Ltd. in Glasshouse Fields. The earliest record of the Glassworks is 1621. From 1670 until 1800 the Glasshouse was in the hands of the Bowles family who ran it very successfully. In the early eighteenth century it was the most famous and probably the largest glasshouse producing Crown glass in the country and the quality of the glass was famous abroad. In the early nineteenth century the English glass industry suffered from very heavy taxation and the Ratcliff works is thought to have closed down about 1820. Mr.Thomas Ide bought part of the site in 1875 and resumed glass processing, and at the turn of the century it was the biggest mirror producing factory in the London area.

Controversy is still raging over the use of the "mudshoot" near the tip of the Isle of Dogs. This extensive area of earth excavated in the building of the Millwall Docks has been used for allotments and it is now intended to build on the area. The controversy is about what is to be built there. This is the Cubitt Town area of the Island, a considerable part of it coming into the hands of the Cubitt family from the Countess of Glengall. The Borough of Tower Hamlets Libraries has now acquired the Lease Books of Miss Cubitt's Estate, Sir.J.Olliffe's Estate, Mr. William Humphery's Estate and Mr.John Humphery's Estate. These Lease Books are excellently detailed and each parcel of Ground leased is supported by a map. A study of these maps would be most rewarding to anyone interested in the area. They can be seen at the Central Library in Bancroft Road.

Mr.H.L.Carter of Walthamstow has referred to the account by Mr.Rust in Bulletin No.29 of the Church House, Wellclose Square, and the previous use of the site. He has an extract from the "Stratford Times & South Eastern Gazette" dated 22nd August 1863 regarding a large farm fire near the Parish Church, Walthamstow, and the Report states "about 11 o'clock one of Shand & Mason's powerful steam fire engines from Wellclose Square, arrived on the scene". It seems therefore that the premises at Wellclose Square were at that time a centre for fire-fighting.

Do not forget the Annual General Meeting at Queen Mary College on Wednesday, 23rd October 1974, at 7.15. It will be followed by a members' evening when you will hear (and it is hoped join in) items of current interest.

A.H.F.

THE BLACK EAGLE BREWERY, BRICK LANE, SPITALFIELDS, AND ITS BREWERS.

"Bond Ledger - who ordered such an unwieldy Monster." No answer was given, in writing, to this plaintive inquiry by one of the partners in Truman's Brewery in 1829, and the volume itself does not appear to have survived to stand comparison with the contemporary 40 lb loan ledgers. Nevertheless, an impressive collection of the records of the Company, now Truman Ltd., has survived to be deposited in the Greater London Record Office (ref.GLRO(L)Ac 73.36,B/THB). In some cases, for example, that of the gyle or brewing books (1802-1963), a long and almost complete series exists; in others, such as that of the malt books (1825-1834,1855-1876,1935-1965), sufficient samples have survived to enable comparative deductions to be drawn; and the early date of the first items in some series - the rest books or annual balance sheets dating from 1741, the house cash books from 1762, and the abroad cash books from 1763 - makes it possible to throw light on the business and management side of the history of the brewery from the time of its first expansion. These records have been extensively used by Professor P.Mathias in his economic history "The Brewing Industry in England 1700-1830 (Cambridge, 1959).

But these, and other records not used by Professor Mathias, also illumine the personalities behind the brewing. Partly this is a result of the family continuity at Trumans. Four major families only, Truman, Hanbury, Buxton and Pryor, have guided the brewery since the mid-seventeenth century. Professor Mathias has noted that "in no industry was this family continuity in ownership and control more marked than in brewing". Partly it is a result of the nature of the surviving records. Where they include, as do the records of Truman's brewery, the partners' comments on the business in a fairly informal form, correspondence on business matters which also includes family matters, and records of partners who participate vigorously not only in brewing but in a wide range of interests outside the brewery, an insight into the men as well as the businessmen is possible.

A trait which the partners displayed most strikingly was that of philanthropy. It was already there in Sir Benjamin Truman's bequest of £100 to the London Hospital, but it becomes more obvious in the early nineteenth century, partly as the result of the survival of more informative series of records.

It was manifested first of all to employees; not so much to those at the highest levels, where reward was a way of ensuring the continued management of the brewery on sound principles, but to men of less substance (though this too could be construed as sound business sense). Annual presents at the "rest", mentioned at least from 1819, may count more as profit-sharing, but pensions and gratuities not so. Merit was rewarded: "The hours were never too long for him. He is one of the best smellers in London....15/-per week". Hardship was alleviated: "Decr.14 1894 Mrs. Clarke. Age 86. No children. Husband died in 1858.... After Drayman Brights death she took charge of his children and brought them up. Being a good nurse she constantly gave her services to the men's wives etc. when sick. She is now past work, receives 2/6 per week from Parish. 10/- per week". Constructive care was shown for widows: "Mrs.Boutell, Widow of M(alt) Loft Man. Gave Sewing Machine". The same care was shown for dependents: "It was agreed that £10 should be allowed for the son of Mrs. Abun to put him to school until Mids.next - and that the widow shall have 10s.per week for one year from this date and the sum of £20 when we are called upon". Sometimes it is not clear whether all those who were helped were attached to the brewery - "Mrs. Tweed to be allowed 2/6 per week until she marries again".

This care for employees continued into the twentieth century. But it was at all periods tempered with reason. One of the partners wrote in 1825 "Take especial care not to pension those men who have not been good men as it has a bad effect". Bad servants of the brewery were not tolerated. Another partner wrote in 1825 "Nankin - drunken - dismiss him. Get a Scotsman in his place". But frequent efforts were made

to make a man see the error of his ways: Ben Ogers alias Ben the Painter was given numerous inducements to improve his work until 1828 when G.G(ow) the senior clerk wrote "3 May 1828 Ogers was discharged - he had always been master and now wanted to be more than master - he took little or no interest in anything he did and would not obey even the most reasonable orders - in other words he would neither dance nor hold the candle". It might all be done with a sense of humour but in the end sentiment could not prevail. Priscilla Buxton relates how T.F.Buxton, her father, reduced the painter's income in spite of Oger's plea of having taken on as an apprentice the only son of a widow: "Well but I don't see what you complain of. You wouldn't have us be painted to keep your apprentice?".

The partners' philanthropy extended beyond the brewery to Spitalfields and farther afield. The association with the London Hospital, begun by Sir Benjamin, is but one example. In 1819 it was "Resolved. to give £50 towards the infant school". A list of stewardships held by the partners in 1825 included those of the Orphan Asylum, the Ophthalmic Infirmary, and the Maternity Charity. They combined business and philanthropy in the savings clubs, taking on deposit those sums which poorer people chose to leave with the brewery in return for a small steady percentage. Finally the partners moved into the governmental sphere, though this is rather beyond the scope of this article.

J.K.

(Archives Dept. Greater London Record Office).

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EXTRACT FROM "THE BEAUTIES OF ENGLAND & WALES" BY EDWARD WEDLAKE BRAYLEY  
 & JOHN BRITTON, PUBLISHED 1803, VOL.V.

West Ham, a large village pleasantly situated about four miles from Whitechapel had formerly a market, the charter for which was procured in 1253 by Richard de Montfichet, whose ancestor, William de Montfichet, had built an Abbey at Stratford-Langthorne in this parish, in the year 1135, and endowed it with the manor of West Ham and other estates. On the Dissolution it became the property of the Crown, but has since been divided and passed through various families. The Abbey was founded for Cisterciarian monks and dedicated to the Virgin Mary and All Saints. "This house" says Leland, "First sett among the low marishes, was after, with sore fludes, defacyd, and removid to a cell, or graunge longynge to it called Burgestede in Estex, a mile or more from Billerica. These monks remainid at Burgestede untyll entrete was made that they might have sum helpe otherwyse. Then one of the Richards, Kings of England, toke the ground and Abbay of Stratford into his protection, and re-edifieng it, brougt the foresayde monks agayne to Stratford, where among the marsches they re-inhabytyd."

In the year 1307, the Abbot of Stratford Langthorne was summoned to Parliament; and in 1335, John de Bohun, Earl of Hereford and Essex, High Constable of England, was buried in the Abbey. On the Dissolution, its revenues were valued at 652 l.3s.1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. annually, and its possessions were granted by Henry the Eighth, to Sir Peter Mewtis, or Meautis, who had been Ambassador to the Court of France. Henry Meautis Esq. a descendent of Sir Peter, alienated the site of the Abbey, with the Abbey Mills, and two hundred and forty acres of land, to Sir John Nulls, in the year 1633. Since that period it has been possessed by different families. Margaret, the unfortunate Countess of Salisbury, whom the remorseless Henry the Eighth caused to be beheaded in her old age on a charge of high treason, appears to have resided within the precincts of the Abbey about the time of its dissolution. The chief remains of the monastic buildings now standing, are a brick gateway, which was formerly the entrance to the conventual precincts, and an ornamented arch, which appears to have been the entrance to the Chapel. The foundations of the Convent were dug up and removed by the present proprietor; in doing of which no antiquities of note were found, except a small onyx

seal, with the impress of a griffin, set in silver, on which is the following legend, "Nuncio Vobis Gaudium et Salutem" perhaps the Priory seal of one of the Abbots. The site of the precincts was moated and contained about sixteen acres; the Abbey stood about three furlongs south-west from the present Church.

The Church, dedicated to All Saints, is a spacious edifice consisting of a nave, chancel, and side aisles to both; at the west end is a square tower, seventyfour feet in height. Various eminent persons have been buried in the interior, which contains several handsome monuments. In the Churchyard was interred George Edwards, Esq., F.R.S. who was born at Stratford Langthorne and became celebrated for his acquaintance with Natural History, but particularly that of birds; besides various papers in the Philosophical Transactions, he published seven quarto volumes on Subjects in Natural History, upwards of 600 of which had never before been described. He died in the year 1773, at the age of eighty-one.

Numerous benefactions have been made in this parish for charitable purposes. A Charity School was instituted here, in the year 1773, for ten boys; but the endowments having been greatly increased by bequests from different persons, forty boys and twenty girls are now educated and clothed; and on leaving the School, receive five pounds each as an apprentice fee; the expenses are defrayed with the interest of the capital, aided by voluntary gifts, and collections made at an annual charity sermon. A School for clothing and educating forty poor girls has also been established in this parish, under the injunctions of the Will, dated 1761, of Mrs. Sarah Bonnell; who left £3000 in various stocks, for these purposes. West Ham Parish is divided into three wards, bearing the appellations of Church-Street, Stratford Langthorne, and Plaistow; the collective number of inhabitants is 6485; of houses 1105. Many of the former are employed in some manufactories of printing calicoes. The West Ham Waterworks, built on the River Lea, are worked by a steam and a water engine, they supply water to the villages of Stratford Langthorne, Bromley, and Bow, Stepney, Bethnal Green, and the lower part of Whitechapel."

(Submitted by H. Willmott).

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THE WELL OF ST. AGNES A CLERE : SHOREDITCH

"Among the surveys of Crown Properties is one of some small shed and a certain well called "Dame Ann A Cleere" late parcel of the possessions of Charles Stewart late King of England. The premises are described as "All that well environed by a brick wall lying on the King's waste." The Commissioners refer to an inquisition taken on the 11th September 1622, whereby it was found that the Well was on the King's waste in the tenure of John Million. The said Well is very commodious and of good use for some Ale Brewers. It will be noted that this well is quite explicitly stated to have belonged to the Crown.

On the 5th July 1661, the Crown leased the premises to Jonathon Ash, for £5 per annum and in 1662 a warrant was issued for a grant to Rebecca Ash, tenant of the Well of recognizance forfeited by Thomas Dawson and others in connection with their disturbance of her possession. It would appear, therefore, that the tenancy was being interfered with. To explain this it is necessary to go back to the sale of the Well among property of the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's; on May 21st 1650 the Parliamentary Commissioners sold to Thomas Davis the Manor or Prebend of Hoxton, including all that building or Well within the Liberties of Hoxton commonly called Annis a Cleere. After this purchase, Davis found that the deeds of the Well were not forthcoming and that he had no evidence of rents etc., and that the natives of the Paris were reluctant to give him precise information on this point and although they knew that the Well was part of the Manor of Hoxton, endeavoured themselves to

make a title to the City of London to this Well as being parcel of their Manor of Fynesbury. But possibilities were not yet exhausted.

In June 1671, Henry Halstead was made Prebendary and from information apparently in the possession of the Prebend, he came to the conclusion that the Well was situated on the Waste of that Manor and he forthwith took steps to recover it. He accordingly demised it on the 1st May 1672 to William Winchester. This at once led to an action at law which resulted in victory for Halstead. Further proceedings ensued in the course of which Brewers of Shoreditch and St. Giles, Cripplegate, identified the Well thus seized and claimed that they held the premises under Jonathon Ash, the Crown lessee. According to the Brewers, apart from this Well being used for the brewing of beer and ales, all persons within memory of man had used this Well at their wills and pleasures without hindrance or disturbance.

The Well had formerly lain open and unfenced, with the result that several persons and animals had been drowned therein, and for the prevention of this and so that the water might not in any way be tainted by the casting of carrion or other filth, the brewers had about half a century before, built a brick wall about the Well leaving doors for any person that will to fetch water.

The surface of the road had naturally suffered from the passing and re-passing of the water carts and in 1647 the Brewers were requested by the parishioners to find out some other way for conveying the water and to leave off the fetching by carts; as a result they had laid pipes from the Well to their Brewhouses and built a pump house. They were now afraid that the pipes would be broken up with the result that their trade would be ruined, their families reduced to want and the King's reserved rent lost, as well as excise duties of £1,500 per annum.

In spite of this piteous appeal the Prebendary won his case and for 20 years he continued to enjoy the premises which, however, yielded very little income or profit. This he attributed to the fact that he could not legally make a lease for longer than 21 years and in 1691 he obtained an Act of Parliament enabling him to grant a lease for 40 years.

How long after the Brewers continued to use the water is uncertain for when Chassereau made his Survey in 1745 the Well was being used as a Cold Bath for rheumatic pains. It seems to have undergone this change during the first 40 year lease (before 1731).

#### Extracts from History of Shoreditch 1798 - Henry Ellis

William Symmonds of Portsmouth - Brewer

Leased a house in Hollywell Street for £7 per annum (1756)

Henry Hodge of this Parish, Citizen and Brewer of London 1632 in his last Will gave one yearly rent charge of £5 (from 4 messuages, houses with outbuildings and a brew-house known by the name of the "Bell" in Shoreditch and occupied by John Byde and now by Ralph Harwood Esq.) to be bestowed by 2/- per week for ever in bread to the poor of the parish on Wednesday.

#### The prebend of the Manor of Hoxton Free Tenants

A garden on the west side of Golding Lane now in the tenure of John Banks, Brewer. Whitecross Street on the West Side land belonging to Richard Lister, late John Cores, now in the Tenure of Thomas Very, Brewer.

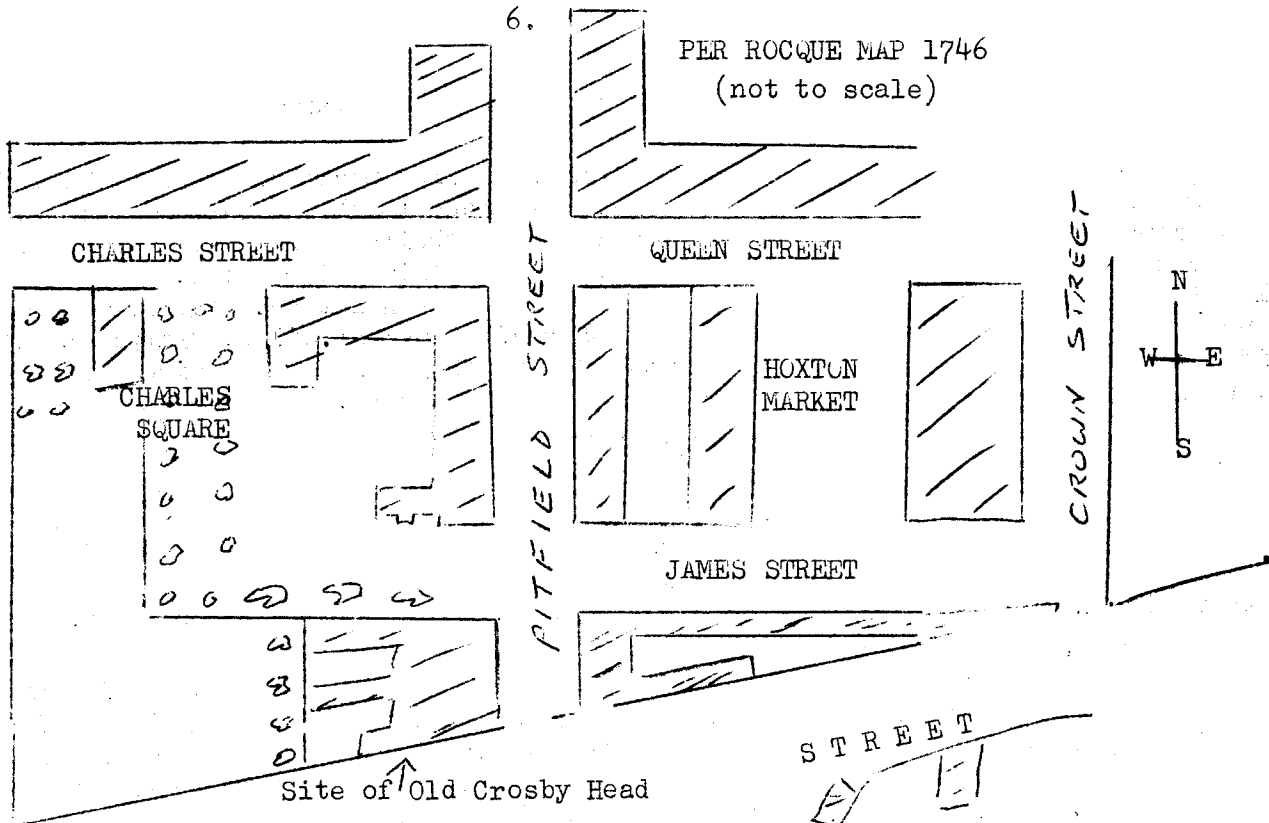
Land to the left hand side (West Side) of the old Crosby Head known as the Vinegar Yard belonging to Mr. Champion (later belonging to Mr. Calvert).

William Dashwood, Brewer, 1672.

(From the Survey of Crown Properties made in 1650, and from the History of Shoreditch).

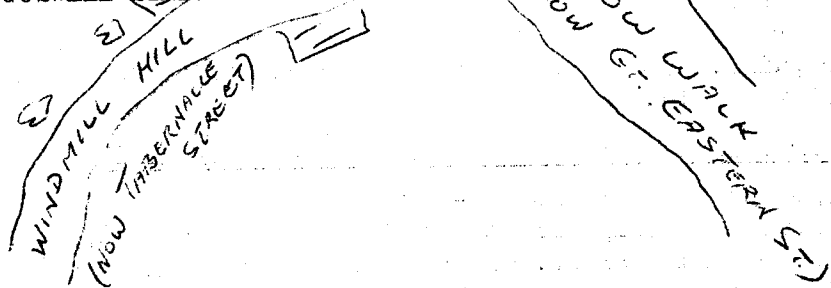
6.

PER ROCQUE MAP 1746  
(not to scale)



Site of Old Crosby Head  
 O L D St. Agnes l'Clair  
 Approx. site of Well \*

BREWERY INDICATED AT JUNCTION  
 OF OLD STREET & GOSWELL STREET



Chassereau's Map 1745 shows the Well on the South Side of Old Street at the Junction with Willow Walk. The Well dates back before 1600. Around 1700 it was used as a cold bath for the cure of rheumatics.

The "Old Crosby Head" mentioned above is named after Sir John Crosby who died in 1475. He was a member of Parliament and twice Warden of the Grocers' Company. Attached to the House of York, he was knighted by Edward IV on May 21st 1471 when, as Alderman and Sheriff of London, he went out to meet the King and was knighted on the field with twelve Aldermen and the Recorder for their "brave conduct when Thomas Nevil, the bastard Faulconbridge, with a riotous company set upon this City". The "Crosby Head" is traditionally where Crosby and the King met.

WEST HAM : HUDSON'S WARD

Hudsons Ward was formed from the original Plaistow Ward of the Borough when the latter was re-divided into twelve wards in 1899. Until the final re-division in 1922 it contained that part of the modern Canning Town and Grange Ward east of Hermit Road and south of the sewer embankment.

The first Councillors for the Ward 1899/1900 were Mr. (later Sir) Percy Alden, M.A., after whom Alden Avenue is named; Mr. Alexander Bothwell who was Mayor in 1905/6, and Mr. George A. McDowall who was Mayor in 1903/4. Sir Percy is mentioned again later in this article.

The name of the Ward (and of Hudsons Road) is derived from Richard Hudson, a wealthy butcher and grazier, who held about 350 acres of pasture land on the Plaistow Marshes in the first half of the 19th century.

Among his holdings was the 22 acre Star Field. The name of this field and of Star Pound (for cattle on the marshes) and Star Hill (upon which Trinity Church was built) is remembered in Star Lane. The modern Hudsons Road, Morgan Street, Alexandra Street, Edward Street and Fisher Street stand on the site of the field.

Hudson lived at Cumberland House and Farm. Most local residents will know that this derived its name from Henry, Duke of Cumberland and brother of King George III, who purchased the house and two acres of land adjoining for £300 somewhere about 1783 to 1787. It is said that the royal Duke used the property as a racing stud and occasionally spent the night at the house.

There is an entry in the Overseer's rate book for the Plaistow Ward 1788/9 showing "His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland" assessed at £277 and paying £20.15.6d. rates for the half year. This follows upon a Vestry minute of 4th December 1788: "Ordered His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland to be reduced for his premises in Plaistow Ward to £277 a year".

Elkington Road follows the line of the driveway from New Barn Street to the house and Cumberland Road runs through the eastern side of the grounds. The gardens of the houses on the eastern side of Gardner Road and those on the western side of Cumberland Road which abut on them stand on the site of the house and its outbuildings.

One of these outbuildings, an old barn (said to have been the largest in Essex) was a link with the earlier history of the locality. The part of the Ward around the area of Balaam Street - New Barn Street junction was a habitation in the 16th century and it is thought that the barn itself may have belonged to the Abbey of Stratford Langthorne. Certainly "Newbarne Street" and "Newbarnes" are recorded in the accounts of the Abbey property prepared by King Henry VIII's officials in 1537-8 when the Abbey was being dissolved. (It will be understood that "Newbarne Street" would probably refer to a general neighbourhood to the south of the "Abbey Arms" site much as rural hamlets still have "street" in their place names today).

According to these 1537/8 "Minister's Accounts" of the Abbey, a sort of branch house called "Newbarnes" stood near the site of Cumberland House with other dwellings and buildings and a number of fields between the modern Cumberland and Boundary roads belonging to it. In the words of the accounts, it was "lately occupied by a hospice for farmworkers and cattle" and must have been used by the Abbey in connection with grazing on the marsh pastures in the south of West Ham. It is possible that the old Cumberland House barn was the "granary for grain" referred to in the same accounts, and the very place may have taken its name from the "new barn" of unusual dimensions.

As an indication of how unchanging was the pattern of the place until the 19th century ... the field names of this Abbey property "Cowslease", "the Broke", "Upper-down", "Stakesdown" appear again in John James' book of Plaistow 200 years later and their sites can be exactly identified.



One other holder of property in "Newbarne Street" in the 1530's deserves notice .. George Monoux, Lord Mayor of London 1514-5, M.P. for the City in 1523 and founder of the Grammar School at Walthamstow. He held a "tenement in Newbarne Street", a cottage in Cordwainer Street (High Street/North Street/Richmond Street, Plaistow) called "Le Vyne", another tenement in Plaistow called "The Berner" and several field properties.

The memory of the Abbey property in the neighbourhood must account for the sign of the "Abbey Arms" public house and an earlier signboard used to have a representation of the heraldic device of the Abbey. In the 18th century, however, it was known as the "Crown" and John James describes it in 1742 :-

"It is a low old house two storys high and three rooms of a floor; part boarded and part plastered; a publick house ye Crown; with an orchard and old barn and cowshouses".

This "low old house" probably came down in the late 18th century and was rebuilt and renamed. The 19th century Abbey Arms was pulled down in 1882 and the present building no doubt dates from that time.

Two other old houses survived in the neighbourhood until the property developments of the 19th century:-

Loft House in New Barn Street to the south of Elkington Road built about 1758 on the site of a much older "Loft house"; Walnut Tree House behind the Abbey Arms - a very old house the lease of which dated back to 1683.

Both were owned at some time by the Ireland family who came to Plaistow in 1790 and farmed a fair area. Curwen's description of them in his "Old Plaistow" is worth repeating for its picture of a vanished scene.-

"In the old days the chief wealth of Plaistow was derived from the grazing lands, on which stock were fattened, and the families of Adams and Ireland farmed the greater part of the land for several generations, so that their history is inseparably connected with that of the village. In the year 1790 Mr. Francis Ireland bought an estate at the back of the "Abbey Arms" called Rose Gardens. The house was a very old one, surrounded by large walnut trees of great value. The best rooms were all wainscoted in carved oak. Mr. Ireland had only one son (James) and in 1799, this son being about to marry, he purchased Loft House, a much larger estate in New Barn Street, with a house and large garden noted for its orchard, stocked with fruit trees of the choicest kinds, including a very ancient mulberry tree. The house was surrounded by meadow lands, in which he used to graze cattle of all kinds. In those days there were nothing but fields between the house and the river Thames. With the aid of a telescope one could read the names of the vessels on the river".

Apart from this one area of old habitation, the rest of the Ward has developed well (practically entirely as a residential neighbourhood) within the last hundred years.

As late as 1870 the only houses in the Ward area were in James Street, Seaton Street and Star Street, with a few scattered along the Barking Road. The laying out of Denmark Street and Hudsons Road neighbourhoods had commenced and the beginnings of the proposed Beckton Road were outlined on the map. The rest of the Ward area was marked "Plaistow marshes".

(To be continued in next Bulletin F.Sainsbury).

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