

EAST LONDON HISTORY SOCIETY.

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SUMMER NEWSLETTER - JULY 1983

PROGRAMME 1983/84.

The Programme is enclosed - it is hoped these meetings will be well attended. Apologies to Mr. Howard Bloch, our new Secretary, whose name should have appeared on the programme. Since the printing of the programme and at the request of members, there will be a walk round Poplar, led by Mr. French, on Saturday, 22nd October 1983. Meet outside All Saints Church (East India Dock Road - 500 yards from Blackwall Tunnel) at 2.30 p.m. It is probable that a meeting will be held in May, 1984, in addition to the Hackney Walk. Mr. Hollamby of the London Docklands Development Corporation will give a talk, but the date and subject have yet to be finalised. Members will be advised in due course.

"EAST LONDON RECORD" No.6 (1983).

This is in the course of preparation and should be available by the A.G.M. Content includes articles on Shadwell mineral water manufacturers, watermen's politics in the 17th Century, two articles relating to Hackney and reminiscences of a lady who lived in Bethnal Green before the War and a man who frequented Crisp Street Market 50 years ago. A large number of books of local interest will be reviewed, as well as a listing of recent publications relating to the boroughs of Tower Hamlets and Hackney. C.K.

COACH TRIP

There will be a coach trip on Sunday, September 18th, to the lovely villages on the Essex/Suffolk border, stopping at Finchingfield, generally considered the loveliest village in Essex, Cavendish which has a fine church, and Long Melford which also has a magnificent church and where we shall be visiting Kentwell Hall, a Tudor mansion surrounded by a moat and fine gardens. The cost will be £4.50 (not including entrance to Kentwell Hall, £1.20, which will be collected on the coach). Lunch can be obtained at Long Melford, or bring a picnic lunch. Tea is available at Kentwell Hall. The pick-up point is opposite Mile End Station at 10 a.m. Please send bookings to Ann Sansom (Telephone: 524 4506) on the enclosed form.

LONDON BOROUGH OF HACKNEY - ARCHIVES DEPT

The Archives Department is at the Rose Lipman Library, De Beauvoir Road, London N1 5SQ. Telephones: (01) 249 3669 Ext.3 and 985 826 Ext.37. It is open Mondays 10 am.-5.30 p.m. and Tuesdays - Fridays 10 am until 5 pm and Saturdays 10 am - 5 pm (Closed 1-2 pm). If personal assistance is required, it is advisable to write or telephone to make an appointment before visiting the Department.

G.L.C. OPEN DAYS

The Record Office and History Library (40 Northampton Road, London E.C.1) will be open to the public on Mondays 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th July from 10 am. to 4 pm. with an exhibition of documents, prints, books and photographs entitled "Clerkenwell off the Record". Tours 'behind the scenes' will be conducted at 10.45, 11.15, 2.00 and 2.45 on each of the above days. Admission free.

HISTORY OF NORTH WOOLWICH

There will be an Exhibition on the History of North Woolwich at the Royal Victoria Gardens, N.Woolwich, on Saturday, 23rd July 1983. The Gardens are, of course, on the Newham side of the River.

SOUTHGATE EXHIBITION

Many members will remember the historic talk given to the Society by Walter Southgate during our 1970 Exhibition. There will be an Exhibition of Southgate memorabilia at the Rose Lipman Library, De Beauvoir Road, Hackney, between the 15th and 26th August 1983. This should be well worth a visit.

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## TWO EXHIBITIONS AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM

The leaflet publicising current events at the British Museum is illustrated by a portrait of a boxer who will be recognised by many members. He is Richard Humphreys, and the event being advertised is 'Sporting Life: An Anthology of British Sporting Prints' running until the 18th September, in the Prints & Drawings Gallery on the Museum's Top Floor.

Humphreys was an adversary of Daniel Mendoza, the Whitechapel boxer who became World Champion in the late 18th Century. Mendoza, predictably enough, appears alongside Humphreys, thanks to a portrait by Charles Jean Robineau. The caption refers to Mendoza as "the most scientific boxer ever known". Nobody stays on top for ever, and a few portraits further along we can see an anonymous engraving of the man who toppled Mendoza: John Jackson.

Boxing is only one of the sports covered: others include cricket, tennis, archery, fencing, football (disappointing, this) as well as disreputable pursuits like dog-fighting (surely not a sport).

Alongside this, in the same gallery, and also running until 18th September, is "Industry and Idleness: Hogarth and the Moral Print". Members will recall that this moral tale begins with the two apprentices at a silk-works in Spitalfields, the idler in a drunken sleep, the industrious engaged at his loom (Plate 1). An earlier version of this Plate is also on view, which shows Thomas Idle's face exhibiting what seems to me sheer exhaustion rather than the look of drunken dissipation that is revealed in the final plate. Does this perhaps suggest that Hogarth might have found it difficult to actually find a dissolute apprentice, while exhausted apprentices were no doubt two-a-penny? But that's another moral tale.

Both exhibitions are recommended as the best free shows in London, with opening times Mondays-Saturdays 10 to 5, Sundays 2.30-6 pm.  
Colm Kerrigan.

## 9. HACKNEY WICK

An exhibition on the history of Hackney Wick was recently prepared by Hackney Archives Department. As part of the Wick Festival, it was shown at Eastway Library and the adjacent branch of the National Westminster Bank Ltd. It will be on display in other Hackney Libraries in the near future.

The name 'Wick' means an outlying dairy-farm. In the thirteenth century the estate known as Wick or Wyke Manor, was owned by the Knights Templars, from whom it passed to the order of St. John of Jerusalem. Little is known about the area before 1763, when the owner of the main estate, Joseph Barbaroux, had a plan of his property drawn. The Wick was always an isolated settlement on the low-lying ground at the southern edge of Hackney Marsh. It consisted of a large house (Wick House), the White Lion Public House and a few cottages. There appears to have been no industry other than agriculture before the late eighteenth century.

When industry did arrive, it was in the form of workshops for the bleaching and dyeing of wool. These were soon followed by a large silk mill, at the junction of the present Wick Road and Kenworthy Road. Here the silk was spun into thread which was sent out for weaving. The cloth then came back to be dyed and finished.

As the nineteenth century wore on, other industries came to the Wick. The bleaching and dyeing works was replaced by a ropery (later slumped, the silk mill was used for the processing of horsehair. New factories were built for other trades, many of them producing offensive smells and effluent which would not have been tolerated in the richer and more populous areas of Hackney. Chemical works, aniline dye works, tar works, blood manure works, and varnish works, are shown on the 1871 Ordnance Survey map. Ingrams India Rubber Factory arrived shortly after

Two industries deserve special mention. One was the Parkesine Works, which opened in 1866. Parkesine was an early form of celluloid and the Works at the Wick was the first plastics factory in this country. There will be an article on this in the next issue of the East London Record.

The second was the dry-cleaning works of Achille Serre. Serre was a Frenchman who fled to England at the time of the Franco-Prussian War in 1870, and settled in Dalston. In 1876 he returned to France on a visit and there discovered the newly-invented process of dry cleaning. Serre then set up the first dry cleaning business in this country at White Post Lane, Hackney Wick. The business flourished and greatly enlarged its premises at the Wick before moving to Walthamstow in 1929.

The Exhibition prepared by Hackney Council's Archives Department covered a number of other topics, including leisure and entertainment, housing and the work of the Eton Mission. The staff of the Department will be very pleased to provide further information.

J.W.

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Miss J. Lenham,  
19 Harbinger Road,  
Millwall,  
London E.14.

EAST LONDON HISTORY SOCIETY

I enclose Cheque/Postal Order for £2 being my annual subscription to the above Society.

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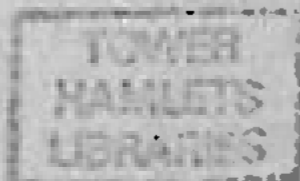
(Note: £1 for O.A.P.'s and full-time students)

Miss A.J.C. Sansom,  
13, Newdene,  
Wingford, E4 7PF.

EAST LONDON HISTORY SOCIETY - COACH OUTING.

Please include my name in the Coach Outing on the 18th September. I enclose cheque for £4.50.

Name.....  
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Please cut off where appropriate.