



EAST LONDON HISTORY SOCIETY

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KING JOHN'S PALACE - Reprint of an article written by Mr Hellicar (Poplar Librarian) for "Poplar News", more than 30 years ago.

Although Poplar's early history was mainly centred round Blackwall and the South generally, we intend to spread our reader's interest far and wide in the borough. We turn north to King John's Palace in Old Ford.

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 handed down 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 "twentyseven 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 "Gentlemen's Magazine" for 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 scrollwork, 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 Gest 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 Charta (1215). The 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 this lithograph 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 roomed 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 is 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 and Co., sugar refiners and distillers). Besides a house with pleasure grounds, garden and buildings, the property comprised a "garden and buildings; a factory; stable and cart shed; a spring of water; two meadows; nine cottages in Prevots Row (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.

FROM MEMBER - Mrs Lily Roberts (Auckland NZ)...

.....I have now received the address of Pearly King (from David Behr) and will be posting the buttons on Monday, to Mr George Hitchen, 12 Alden House, Sheep Lane, Hackney, London E8., .. he is London's Pearly King. My next project is "fly buttons". I read that a man, fed up with zips, is trying to get buttons brought back. My husband moans at the same thing. He has a lot of old fly buttons he had thought of putting into a museum but wonders if the man would like them. Mrs Roberts has written to the magazine in which she read about the man.

L T Archer of 12 Mansfield Towers, Marine Parade East, Clacton-on-Sea, CO15 1UU; asks for information in any publication to Jack the Ripper murders of 1888 - cr - to the Paragon and Cambridge Music Halls in Stepney. Please write to above address.

NEWS OF PUBLICATION

Members may recall that our Winter 1985/6 Newsletter gave a report of a talk by Ruth Richardson on "19th Century Working Class Funerals". At the end of that report we said we looked forward to her forthcoming book on the subject. Current news is that publication is imminent. The book is titled "Death, Dissection and the Destitute". It will be published by Routledge & Kegan Paul. The price should be £19.95 and publication is expected to be around September.

EAST LONDON RECORD - Nr.10 - Your Society's own publication.

This year's East London Record will be the Tenth Anniversary Issue and will be appearing, as usual, in October. The contents include an article on transport developments locally since around the year 1825. This has been written by E F Clark, an expert on transport history. His book, "George Parker Bidder: The Calculating Boy" was reviewed by Tom Ridge in Record Nr. 7 (1984) pp41-2.

There are shorter articles on the Bow and Bromley Institute; on Bow Road; and on the firm on C and R Light, cabinet-makers of Shoreditch: George Bishop presents his childhood memories of Bethnal Green in the 'twenties, in an article accompanied by an illustration showing the gentlemen patrons of The Queens Head, Gosset Street, in 1923, before going on an outing: There is also a large book review section and the usual list of studies relating to the East End area.

Priced at £1.50, or £1.75 to include post & package, advance orders can be placed with Mrs Doreen Kendall, 20 Puteaux House, Cranbrook Estate, London, E2 ORF, who can also supply copies of numbers 6 (1983), 7 (1984), 8 (1985) and 9 (1986) of the Record, priced at £1.20 each for numbers 6 & 7; £1.40 for number 8; and £1.55 for number 9, post and package included in all cases.

Colm Kerrigan.

(P.S. from John Curtis - If anyone has a copy of Issue Nr.1 which they can spare, I will be only too happy to give it a home... its the only issue I am missing. Any cost will cheerfully be paid).

JEWISH EAST END CELEBRATIONS - Began in May but still going on.. and some of the events you may get to are :-

Jews and Politics in East London from the 1880's to the 1950's - an EXHIBITION at The Davenant Centre, Open office hours but phone 377 6592 for information. FREE!
3 August - 11 September 1987.

Boris: The Studio Photographer 1900-1985 - an EXHIBITION at Camerawork, Roman Road Bethnal Green, E2. FREE! Open Tue-Fri 1pm-6pm, Sat 11am-3pm.
11 August - 5 September 1987.

Contact Helen Carpenter at 192 Hanbury Street, E1. Tel: 377 0481 for information on any other events.

BOUQUETS CORNER - Its nice to receive compliments - Stanley Fox says "I find the newsletters of last year so fascinating to read and brings forth memories..."

Some members send in more than we ask for as the subscription. To those that do we give many thanks.

OVERLAP IN HISTORY, a short essay concerning the histories of East London and Essex, by Bob Vickers.

Historical links between East London and Essex have been continuous since Roman times, by road and by coastal waters. Throughout recorded history the coastal waters have a special place as a highway of supply and trade with London. Its tidal water has always found its way into the most historical and interesting part of the capital city, East London.

This tide which gave the town its heart-beat also brought treasures from the outside world but I dare suggest that Essex in particular sent the very means of life and progress in the centuries now past. The River Thames has always been, in the past sense, busy with ships and lesser craft plying trade and commerce. It is a solemn reflection that the Colchester cutter and the Thames Estuary sailing barge are the last survivors of the once thriving river trade of London.

The growth of East London was dependent on food, timbers and other agricultural products that Essex was able to provide. More than that through, Essex also provided raw materials that London needed to produce a manufacturing economy.

Until the 19th century Essex was part of England that was managed as an open sheep-walk, providing the wool that brought prosperity and profitable trade. The ploughing up of acres of grassland in the years between 1800 and 1850 however, produced a new farming system that met the demands of an expanding population in London for food. The soil of Essex has variable texture and composition. Thus the county can supply a variety of foods, from the highly productive wheatfields of central areas to the potatoes, sugar, cereals and fruit of the Colchester leams.

Most of these products were carried by boat to London, and perhaps here I must mention the return trade from East London included an important cargo, the manure which made the land more productive. An important item Essex had for many years supplied to the capital was beef. There are farm buildings dating back as far as the 17th century that have bullock yards attached to the property. The drovers took their herds into London by the Eastern gate that links East London to the remotest Essex farm.

It is interesting to recall that Barking, Essex, was once a thriving fishing town, with a ready market at London. Again, it should be noted that Essex provided huge amounts of sugar-beet for processing in London; that much timber was given up for ship-building in East London. The areas of Leytonstone, Woodford, Hainault, and Chigwell were providers of oak. Essex oak, grown on clay soil, was valued as the best timber.

Samuel Pepys visited these areas to seek good timber when he was at the Admiralty. The shipyards of East London received this timber, and many an Essex man served in the ships, probably pressed into service by the gangs of recruitment men on their raids along the coast. Men with some knowledge of the sea were the best recruits and the five hundred kilometres of Essex Coast produced many who were familiar with the skilled task of sailing.

The coast of Essex itself has produced material for the industry of East London. Near the coast, at Mersey, Maldon and other places, are "Red Hills", so called because of the colour of the ground after salt extraction has taken place. The process needed heat to dry out the salt from sea-water and the earth, into which the water was puddled, turned a reddish colour. Maldon salt was considered to be exceptionally fine.

Another product from the coast was literally to change the face of London, by making possible the use of stucco. This is obtained by burning septaria or nodules of Essex clay in the same way as chalk is burned for lime. When mixed with water it sets hard and is waterproof. So, many a fine building with Georgian facades owes its good

looks to Essex. Coastal barges took the material to London and they were to be followed by others, carrying another product of the Essex coast that would create new industries on the eastern side of London.

Copperas (bisulphide of iron), in the form of nodules, were dredged from the coast edge around the year 1770 by a great number of smacks. The copperas were taken to a Brightlingsea factory where it was placed in heaps and layered with scrap iron. On being wetted the copperas was oxidized into green vitriol and sulphuric acid. Boiling in lead pans left the copperas crystallized, which was then sent to the developing chemical trades.

The copperas trade of Brightlingsea is perpetuated by Copperas House Field, marking the site of the works. At Ipswich was a firm making sulphuric acid from copperas, but Stratford in East London is the place where chemical industries really flourished, with the River Lea as its route to the shipping of the world.

"Stackies" - - hay boats - - plying between the wharfs of London and Essex were a common sight. Newham is to be congratulated on their decision to save one of these boats for the benefit of all East Londoners.

There were steamboats too, competing for the carrier trade along the Essex coast and calling at the great London Docks, alongside as many as thirty barges, loaded in London, awaiting transport to Colchester. The work for London dockers was almost unending but their task, though hazardous and hard, hardly compared with the beach work done on the open shores of Clacton, Frinton or Walton when these towns were being built. Rough seas would make the task extremely dangerous but much is owed to the docker, the men of London and of Essex, who kept the products of trade flowing.

Strangely, the trade would flow, like the tide, in a different direction in time. Wheat that once flowed from Essex changed course when imported grain came from Canada and America. Big millers, like Marriages of Colchester, ground the new grain and sent flour back to London in their own barges. But the mutual dependence of Essex and East London continued with a multitude of cargos carried by sea, although, with the coming of the railways, the relationship altered. Going forward further in time, with the container system of ship-loading now in operation at Tilbury taking a large part of East London dock trade, and motor transport increasing its share of inland cartage, the old ways have altered but are not forgotten.

But perhaps it is the "sailorman" (to borrow a London river term for a sailing-barge man) who should not be forgotten. Their work was hard and dangerous but most essential. The single owner probably worked the hardest one such man loaded his barge from the shore with 90 tons of sand, throwing it over the five-foot six-inch side into the hold, using a steel-tipped shovel.

He had to work at low tide and it took six tides to finish the job. Sand-loading by hand was heavy on the muscles but was even harder when the crew and barge had to work with the Port of London dredger! The dredger would scrape up sand and gravel from the depths of tidal waters and the barge would be positioned under the belt of buckets, ready to receive the sand, mud and salt-water in a crashing downpour into its hold. Within ten or twenty minutes, the barge would be well loaded and the crew would be well and truly worked to get the load levelled and the barge away.

Mucking Creek, within the London River, was the return terminus of Stackie barges after taking straw to London and returning with "London Mixture" ... a task not many would envy! The decline of horse-traffic in London, especially when the horse-bus was phased out, caused a falling off of Stack work. The 1914 war took a lot of horses from the streets of London for overseas service. This too led to a reduction of straw requirements.

There were accidents on the river. Perhaps the most tragic was the sinking of

the 'Princess Alice'. At a later date, in 1920, a barge, the 'Startled Fawn', was lost in the river but it was on the coastal route that the hazards of jounries were most worrying for the sailormen. These worries and fears were constant. As far back as 1829 the Essex Chronicle commented :

"It is remarkable that along the line of the coast of Essex, reckoning from Tilbury Fort to Harwich, an extent of nearly 100 miles, there does not exist a single harbour or landing place at which it is practicable to land...."

There were yearly storms but some years are remembered with greater grief than others: Black Tuesday 1881; The Great Gale, 1884; and the Terrible Blow of 1914, when 11 bargemen died just after Christmas.

To finish, perhaps a single word will remind us of our debt to the small craft of these English shores - - - Dunkirk!

Bob Vickers concludes the above essay with the following footnote :
There is so much connecting history between Essex and East London that a short essay does not do it justice. Perhaps further study will strengthen a bond of mutual understanding of two overlapping histories. The essay is offered, not as a 'discovery' but as a reminder to those who may like to follow and to further the subject.

SOME POINTS FROM MEMBERS

Diane Atkinson, Education Department, Museum of London, London, EC2: I am currently doing an M Phil at Queen Mary College on female sweated home-workers in the Spitalfields area, 1880-1914. I would very much like to include evidence culled from oral interviews with anyone who was either involved in working at home, or people who remember their mothers or other members of their families doing this kind of work. I am particularly interested in the Spitalfields area but would of course like to hear from ANYONE who could help me with this subject in the East End of London.

Dr Stuart Murray, 3 Connaught Road, London, E17: Would like any information from members on youth provision in East London.. Youth Institutes, Youth Clubs, Boy's Clubs, Girl's Clubs, 'Uniform' organisations, (Boy Scouts, Boy's Brigade, etc). It is difficult to find members of this early type of youth provision in the East End, although there may be members whose parents, etc., would have been involved.

Edward J Harrison, 6 Harold Court, The Walk, Hornchurch, Essex, RM11 3TL : I have made an audio-tape of interest to East Londoners and I wonder if the Society would be interested in it with a view perhaps of using it for future publication. (note; I have written to Mr Harrison, about contents of tape and suggesting that he perhaps sends it to me).

Adam Joseph, 32 Anworth Close, Woodford Green, Essex: A pamphlet from Mr Joseph giving details of a whole series of walks, taken under the direction of himself and Ruby Joseph. The walks take about 1½-2 hours and the cost is £3 per adult, with children under 12 free with a paying adult. Full details can be had by phoning 504 9159. Among the walks at the time of preparing this newsletter are :-
History of the Cockneys - Poor alleys amid wealth.

Jack the Ripper & the Elephant Man

Jewish East End - Roots in timeless streets.

Jewish Ghetto Alleys and old Cockney Quarter.

Chaucer's hidden alleys behind the Old Gate.

Adam Joseph is a member and has given a talk to the Society. He is very able and competent and is a Member of the London Tourist Authority.

HISTORY IN SONG - a report of one of our meetings..

by John Curtis

On Wednesday 15th April, our regular meeting place, Queen Mary College, was not available for our use and our meeting for that evening was held at the Church Hall of St. Latimer's Church. Not only was this venue very comfortable but it was one of the most enjoyable evenings I can recall at a Society Meeting.

The subject was 'East-End lives and Songs at the Turn of the Century' and our visiting speaker (and singer) was Jaki Leboff. She told us this was her first attempt at speaking to as large an audience as we were but this was hard to believe, so good was her presentation. Not only did we get an informative talk but Ms Leboff sang the songs so very tunefully and pleasantly. We also heard some of the people she had interviewed when getting the songs on to tape.

We were told that Ms Leboff had become involved in recording and preserving these songs as a result of being an entertainer. She started off visiting older people to sing to them and asked them to let her know of songs they knew. As a result of this she gradually added to her store of old songs but maintains that lots of work remains to be done.

Many of the people she has interviewed and recorded, inevitably, as a result their great age, have died. As she continually pursues the older members of the community, this will continue. She is working so hard at pursuing the recordings that there is not enough time to transcribe the tapes but feels that whilst the transcribing is important, it is so very vital to record the songs rather than lose time... and so lose the material.

She is particularly interested in songs with social comment (of everyday life). She has tried to find the origins of many of the songs she has collected but this has proved to be extremely hard work and time-consuming.. and she really hasn't the time. There is much work to be done in the archives to back her recordings up.

We heard from her that there were many fewer people at the turn of the century, with lots of immigrants, and the accompanying movement within and without London. There was a great contrast between rich and poor.. and the level of poverty was very, very low. There seemed to be lots of songs about money.. or lack of it! These included "We all came in the world with nothing", "When you're living down in Poverty Street" and "Enjoy Yourself".

Men who were working worked very long hours and women were mostly doing some sort of paid work, ie., domestic work, homework, etc. Young people also had great responsibility, making a contribution, either by working or having to look after siblings whilst their parents worked.

We heard a short song, "There's no shop like the pawnshop", and a parody on "Its a long way to Tipperary".. with words of "Its a long way to the Pawnshop". There was also "Wait 'til the work comes round" and "Come inside you silly feller, come inside".

Ms Leboff made the point that violence is not a new thing on the scene. There has always been violence, perhaps of a different sort to today. Much of it at the turn of the century was domestic, with husbands severely ill-treating wives and children. There was also much man-to-man fighting, inside and outside the pubs. Much violence was linked to drink, which was cheap and strong. Songs dealing with these aspects of life included "I'll go with him wherever he goes", "Batchelors", "I fell out of the frying pan", "When I wake up in the morning", and "Mr Booze".

Ms Leboff found the people she interviewed were most ready to burst into song, although there may have had to be a bit of prompting at times, the songs and words being partly forgotten in the mists of time. A small reminder though quite often

brought things back and the songs were sung quite unself-consciously and with much feeling. This is noticeable with songs about 'Mother'. We heard "Old-fashioned mother of mine", "I will always love you" and "Mother, I love you". The thing that went with mother, of course, was 'home', and so we heard " nice to have a home of your own".

Economic conditions made migration a way of escape and possible riches, and so - "I made up my mind to sail away". We worked our way to a perennial subject, mother-in-law, and one of the last songs of the evening was "I'm getting ready for my mother-in-law".

Ms Leboff stressed that to capture the words and tunes on tape and to speak to the people involved added so much more to the subject than archives and statistics can. On the evidence of the evening most of us were convinced of this. Some of our audience joined in with some of the songs, and many of us were reminded of things, as well as songs, we had forgotten. A most enjoyable evening was had by all.

(JEC)

SUBSCRIPTIONS -

These are due from September for the year 1987-88 and remain at £2 per year for full members, with a reduction to £1 for Pensioners and bona-fide full-time students. A slip for members to return with their payment is included with this newsletter. PLEASE pay promptly... DO IT NOW... and so save us sending out a lot of reminders with the next newsletter.

I hope members will understand if I do not send out receipts or acknowledgements. It all takes postage and stationery and we try to keep the subscription as low as possible. Most people pay by cheque and it will show up on your bank statement. Everyone can attend our meetings and everyone should receive newsletters. If you know of someone who is a member but has not received a newsletter, please let me know.

LOCAL HISTORY - a publication for local-historians.

This is Britain's only national local history magazine; read by local historians throughout the United Kingdom.. and overseas. It is published six times a year and was first published in July 1984. As well as being full of news, information and ideas, LOCAL HISTORY offers its readers a unique guide to local history publications by county and the chance to place FIFTY FREE WORDS IN EVERY ISSUE in its unique Subscriber's Noticeboard.

The above information reached the writers of this newsletter in May 1987 and gives an offer of 7 issues for the price of 6. The subscription is £9.60 and the publishers are Susan and Robert Howard, 3 Devonshire Promenade, Nottingham NG7 2DS. Members will probably still get the offer if they take out a subscription at any time of the year.

The copies your writer has seen have been very well produced, giving information of use and interest to organisers of societies. There are also articles of interest to general memberships of societies, with a lot of nicely printed photographs. The magazine is of particular interest to those who collect local history books, booklets and leaflets, giving a very good review of these in each copy.

Many of the articles could spur members on to some practical work of their own, inspired by the efforts of those appearing in the magazine. For that alone it should be worth subscribing to.

THE FISHER FAMILY - a meeting report by John Curtis.

Our Society meeting on 18 June saw an attentive audience of sixty people enjoying a talk by Diane Atkinson of the Museum of London. We heard how, in the course of her work and her particular interest in 19th/20th century London, she made enquiries at the museum about the Jewish East End. Not too much resulted from these but further search produced a bundle of documents and photographs from a drawer.

The museum had bought this bundle from a man for £25. Efforts to contact him, some seven years after the purchase, ended in failure. Enquiries to his Prinzelet Street address were unsuccessful. There has been little luck with other efforts to gain information about the family concerned in the photographs and documents.

We were shown these photographs and documents and they were passed around the audience after the talk. They told the following story.

The family concerned was that of Morris and Millie Fisher. There was first mention of them in Kelly's Directory of 1907 and this showed them as living at Hanbury Street. They were umbrella makers and the entry in the directory points to them as having immigrated to this country in the first decade of the century. Twelve years later, and a photograph of 1919 showed they were still at Hanbury Street, at Nr. 45... and were still professional umbrella makers.

Nationality documents dated 15 January 1920 show that Millie Fisher was born in 1868 and Morris Fisher in 1869. They took their family name of Fisher from Millie, whose Polish name was Fitzer. This was possibly because it was easier anglicised than Morris's name. The documents were issued by the Polish Consul, the couple having been born in Warsaw, and were based on information supplied by Leman Street Police Station.. and presumably supplied to them by Morris and Millie. Their home address was given as 132 Victoria Park Road.

A jump in the date of the documents took us to 1932, with a trading licence issued to Morris for a pitch in Whitechapel Road, outside Whitechapel Station. A strange thing about this, if Morris and Millie were Jewish, was that it allowed trading on Saturdays only.. the Jewish sabbath. His address is now given as 29 Hanbury Street.

It is possible that Morris Fisher died in the next year or so. Evidence of bad fortune, in the shape of several pawn-tickets, make their appearance. The first, in 1932, was for a diamond ring, pledged for £3 at 88 Whitechapel Road. The next year there is a ticket in June for diamond ear-rings, pledged for £10 at 554 Commercial Road, and giving a home address as 52 Quaker Street. Some six months later, on 1st December, a wedding ring was pawned for £2.10.0... and a diamond ring for £3 at 303 Commercial Road.

Intriguing possibilities present themselves. Did Morris die at that time? Evidence for this is that Kelly's Directory for 1933 shows his name, whilst the the following year's entry showed Millie's. What misfortunes caused the batch of pawn-tickets? Had the articles been pawned before and if so, how many times? Why had they not been redeemed now? Why so many home addresses? Why so many different pawnbrokers?

The photographs we saw gave substance to the people we heard about. Some of them could be identified, many could not. They were taken at various places, including Newyork, Warsaw... and Mare Street, Hackney. Were they all the same family.. or some friends.. scattered worldwide and only to see each other again only in pictures.

We shall never know.. or shall we? There was a lively talking session at the end of the evening and various suggestions were made by the audience. Perhaps some answers could come from you readers of this newsletter. Our thanks go to Diane Atkinson and The Museum of London for an interesting and intriguing evening.

AUTUMN COACH TRIP -

Anne Sansom

This will take place on Saturday 26th September. The main place visited will be LOSELY HOUSE, an Elizabethan house with fine panelling, furniture, tapestries, ceilings and chimney-pieces. It is also noted for delicious home-made ices and yoghourts. It is set in a large park and has attractive gardens.

Before visiting Losely, we shall be stopping at the village of COMPTON, nearby, to see the Watts Picture Gallery and memorial chapel. G.F. Watts, a Victorian painter, may not be to your taste (he is not much to mine), but it is endeniably something different.

We shall also probably be stopping for lunch in the town of Godalming, nearby, to enable people either to buy lunch or eat their own food. Tea will be available at Losely.

The coach fare will be £4.60. Entrance to Losely House costs £1.50 (no reductions for children or pensioners). I will collect this on the coach. Coach fare for children will be £2.30. Pick-up will be at 10am, at Mile End, opposite the station.

Booking forms are enclosed as a separate slip (to avoid having to cut up your newsletter) and should be returned to:-

Ann Sansom, 18 Hawkdene, London, E4 7PF

CHANGING TIMES ? ? ? ?

From 'Punch' magazine, dated 5 June 1880 -

Pickpurses - From some recent correspondence it appears that the thieves in our thoroughfares have lately turned their especial attention to "purse-snatching". For this, ladies are described as offering every facility by a habit they have lately adopted of carrying their purses in their hands as they walk the streets.....

From 'Punch' magazine, dated 22 July 1914 -

Portsmouth Town Council has carried, by 11 votes to 9, a Labour amendment refusing to place official guide-books to Pretoria in the public library unless the nine deportees are allowed to return to South Africa.....

FURNISHING THE WORLD - The East London Furniture Trade 1830-1980 - an exhibition open until 3 January 1988. At The Geffrye Museum.

For over a century, east London has furnished the world. This major exhibition is the first to celebrate the East End furniture industry. Every type of furniture has been made in the workshops and factories of east London. The range of furniture on show includes everything from traditional reproduction styles to contemporary designer furniture.

The exhibition is also about people - the makers and consumer of the furniture - and includes photographs, catalogues and advertisements. Special features include reconstructions of a second-hand shop and of Nathan Rosenberg's workshop, in which Mr Rosenberg explains on video how to make a 1950's cocktail cabinet.

There are visits and demonstrations of skills in action.. details from museum. The exhibition is at The Geffrye Museum, Kingsland Road, London E2 8EA (Tel: 739 9893), and the museum is open Tuesday - Saturday 10am-5pm, Sundays 2pm-5pm. ENTRY IS FREE ! ! !

The exhibition is sponsored by the British Petroleum Company PLC, DEGW Architecture,

WANTED

One Secretary - for East London History Society.

The new programme of events gets under way in September.. and the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING comes in October. The A.G.M. provides an opportunity for members to express their views about the running of the Society and you can be critical, satisfied or even congratulatory. Whatever you think, come along to the meeting and make your committee aware. Better still, join those on the committee in running Society affairs. We always look forward to new views and thoughts.

Most Officers will probably carry on with their jobs.. so you won't be dragooned into any responsibility, (but don't be shy about putting yourself or somebody else forward). An Office that is vacant is that of Secretary. Most of you will know that this came about through the sudden and sad death of John Allen. The post has remained vacant and we urgently need someone to step into the breach.

EXHIBITION - THE IMAGE OF LONDON: Views by Travellers and Emigres 1550-1920

From 6 August to 18 October at The Barbican, London EC2. Their leaflet says:-
"Because London has for so much of its history been the city most strongly associated with the idea of the city, the exhibition will throw light on changing conceptions of urban life. London has been portrayed by some as a wonder of the world, an expression of human reason and the sense of order. Others have seen it as essentially a hive of activity, business and busy-ness; others as a corrupt and unnatural thing, a modern Babylon. As well as delighting the eye, the exhibition will explore a theme with many entertaining and intellectually intriguing ramifications."

There will be paintings by Canaletto, Dore, Whistler, Monet, Gericault, Tissot, Pissaro and Derain.. and others. The exhibition will seek some answers to different presentations of London by different painters, and will set visual images against literary descriptions to reveal common traits and mutual influences.

E.L.H.S. PROGRAMME FOR 1987/88 - AN APOLOGY.

It is regretted that information on this is not yet available. It therefore follows that we cannot send our printed cards with this newsletter.. something that also happened last year! It is also a fact that this newsletter has been held back awaiting this information but it is imperative that it is sent out NOW.. to give members the chance of booking for the coach outing, and to avoid us making a loss on this event by underbooking.

When the programme is to hand, it will be sent out with your receipt for subscriptions. This will mean a fairly heavy expense, (taking the subscription income of fifteen full members). It also involves the costs for stationery, etc., plus the time and work involved, something your membership secretary has tried to avoid, as explained elsewhere in this newsletter.

We apologise most sincerely to members.