

Parish Church of St. Paul, Old Ford

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Editorial Note:

The Newsletter is edited, typeset and produced by Rosemary Taylor with the assistance of an editorial team comprising Philip Mernick, Doreen Kendall, David Behr, and Doreen Osborne.

Letters and articles on East End history and reminiscences are always welcome and we make every effort to publish suitable material. Whilst hand-written articles are acceptable, items of interest that are typewritten or even better still, on disk will get priority!!

Enquiries to Doreen Kendall, 20 Puteaux House, Cranbrook Estate, Bethnal Green, London E2 0RF, Tel: 0208 981 7680, or Philip Mernick, email: phil@mernicks.com

All queries regarding membership should be addressed to Harold Mernick, 42 Campbell Road, Bow, London E3 4DT

Check out the History Society's website at www.eastlondonhistory.org.uk.

The present committee are: Philip Mernick, Chairman, Doreen Kendall, Secretary, Harold Mernick, Membership, David Behr, Programme, Ann Sansom, Doreen Osborne, Bob Dunn, and Rosemary Taylor.

ELHS Web site

We have now added a map gallery to the site. (www.mernick.co.uk/elhs/mapgallery.htm to go there directly). You will find a series of maps ranging from 1746 to 2000 covering the whole of Tower Hamlets. They are in two groups Bethnal Green & Stepney and Bow & Poplar to allow for the complicated shape of the borough. You can either look at one map or compare any two. You can then follow the way the area gradually "filled in". It is surprising how late this was for Poplar/Bow.

Editor's Note:

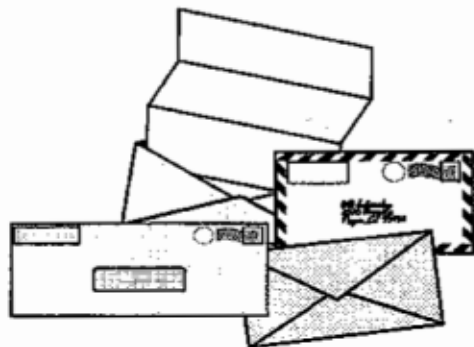
We have an interesting mix of news, views and articles in this newsletter, including Gary Haines' feature on Jack the Ripper. It is an objective and scholarly study of the industry that has grown up around the Victorian serial killer, and is the type of article we would normally have reserved for The Record. Do let us know what you feel about this slight change of input.

In September, East End Life published two articles on Chinatown and Brilliant Chang, which followed on from our discussion of the topic and appeal for information surrounding the mysterious death of Gwyneth Morgan. We are still waiting to hear from any members who may be able to shed further light on this subject.

The Programme

Suggestions and ideas for future topics and/or speakers for our Lecture Programme are always welcomed. If you can suggest someone or indeed if you would like to give a talk yourself, please do come along to the Open Evening in May, and meet David Behr, our Programme Co-ordinator.

Alternatively, email our Chairman Philip Mernick at phil@mernicks.com with your comments and suggestions.



EAST LONDON HISTORY SOCIETY PROGRAMME

2004-05

Thursday 27th January 2005

Beneath the City Streets – London's Unseen History

Speaker: Peter Lawrence

Thursday 24th February 2005

Your Victorian Ancestors – Facts you may not know

Speaker: George Smith

Thursday 17th March 2005

Details of everyday life – a closer view of local postcards

Speaker: Philip Mernick

Thursday 14th April 2005

The Life and Legacy of George Peabody

Speaker: Christine Wagg

Thursday 12th May 2005

Open Evening – Where we went for days out and holidays

The lectures are held on Thursday evenings at 7.30 pm in the Latimer Congregational Church Hall, Ernest Street, E1. Ernest Street is between Harford Street and Whitehorse Lane, off Mile End Road (Opposite Queen Mary and Westfield College). The nearest Underground Stations are Mile End and Stepney Green. Bus No. 25.

OUT AND ABOUT

With East End Connections

A full coach of members visited Wisbech on 2nd October, and we were delighted to find so many connections with the East End. A short lecture by the curator Mr Richard Barnwell of the Octavia Hill Museum told us of her connections in pioneering social work, creating housing trusts whose management still have 3,300 houses in its care in the East End today. He also spoke of her involvement in the creation of the National Trust, because she believed passionately that everyone should have access to open spaces; her friendship and training of other women like Emma Cons, Henrietta Barnett and Beatrice Webb.

Wisbech Museum are the proud owners of an original copy of Charles Dickens' book 'Great Expectations', in his very small cramped handwriting, not in his reporter's shorthand. It was given to the museum by his friend Mr Townsend, a local landowner. The marshes that are vividly described by Dickens are the Plaistow/Beckton marshes.

We were then shown photos of fruit pickers in the 1930s, families from the East End who came up to pick gooseberries, strawberries and apples. We had missed an 'Apple Day' get together by one week, where former pickers record their memories of their families working in the fields, their evacuation after 7th September 1940, when they fled the bombing and lodged with friends they had made in Wisbech. One of our members recalled that as a child in the 1930s she spent her summers picking strawberries in the fields with her aunt from Bethnal Green. We look forward to printing reminiscences of these hidden memories, that our members can recall.

On to Peckover House which had been owned by a local Banker who went into partnership with Samuel Gurney, our famous West Ham Quaker, the owner of West Ham Park, whose memorial obelisk still stands outside Stratford Shopping Mall. A coloured engraving of his sister Elizabeth Fry hangs in the dining room of Peckover House. Elizabeth devoted her life to prison reform for women prisoners at Newgate, and today she is remembered with her portrait on a five pound note. Peckover House was a home we could imagine living in – so well proportioned, with beautiful

large windows overlooking a huge garden and the frontage by the River Nene. A volunteer guide on the first floor told us that her family had been Watermen of Wapping and are buried in Bow Cemetery. Her life had changed when she was evacuated to people she knew near Wisbech, and ended up marrying a local army boy; her family still live in London. We also met Sue and Susan who have just formed a Friends of Levington Road Cemetery, known locally as Pocket Park, a site of three acres, and have planned a visit to meet us on Remembrance Sunday in Tower Hamlets Cemetery to see how volunteers work and the Friends management plan. (Sue and Susan did visit, as promised, and enjoyed seeing the cemetery and meeting the volunteers, and were a little overwhelmed by the size of THCP. They plan to bring all their committee down in the spring to see the bulbs in bloom.)

We paid a visit to the Rangers House on Open House Saturday to view the collection of millionaire Sir Jules Werner, born in Darmstadt in the German Rhine, (1850-1912), who also owned Luton Hoo House. Members may remember an enjoyable coach trip we made to this house a few years ago. This collection, on loan through English Heritage is stunning and priceless. Sir Julius made his money in the diamond fields of South Africa. Before this he spent his early twenties learning English in lodgings in Dalston and paid his way by becoming a correspondent with a German export firm.

John Gow, the Pirate of Orkney

On holiday in the Orkneys we found an East End Connection! Pirates in the 18th century were a real threat to shipping lanes off the coast of our country. John Gow lived in Stromness and joined the crew of the Caroline, a Guernsey boat, in 1724. When the crew mutinied, he was elected Captain at the age of 28 years. He renamed the ship The Revenge. In the next three months they captured and raided five ships. They also raided the home of Mr Honeyman the High Sheriff of Orkney and planned to raid in February 1725 Carrick House, the home of the Laird of Eday, one of the islands of Orkney. Unfortunately for Gow, his ship ran aground and he was needed a large boat to tow and refloat her. Gow sent ashore five fully armed men to seek assistance from the islanders. The pirates were most peaceful and taken to the inn for a

drink, where they were overpowered. Gow was arrested and held prisoner at Carrick House until he was transported to London to stand trial. The eight condemned prisoners, including Gow were taken in three carts to Execution Dock Wapping on the 11th June 1725. three of the men were so weak that they had to be carried up to the scaffold. Gow hung for four minutes, the executioner pulled his legs, and the rope broke. Gow then climbed up the ladder again, 'which he did showing little concern'. Gow's body was then tarred and feathered and left in chains to be washed by the Thames for three tides.

Ref: Trial records held at the P.R.O. Indexed the High Court of the Admiralty, under Gow alias Smith.

The pirates were taken to London for trial because all maritime crimes fell within the jurisdiction of the Admiralty Courts.

In 1814 Sir Walter Scott wrote: 'The drawing room at Carrick House still has to this day a large dark stain said to be the blood of the notorious pirate Gow.'

The British Library hold a first edition of Daniel Defoe's book about Gow ref: C69 d3.

A booklet of 28 pages published by Caithness Field Club called 'John Gow, the Orkney Pirate', researched by George Watson and illustrated by Lyndell Last, is sold in Orkney Library and is a fascinating read, detailing the long journey by cart and ship to London for the trial and execution.

Doreen Kendall

CORRESPONDENCE

In a previous newsletter we had mentioned that one of our members, Joanna Roberts, had been made an MBE. Joanna sent us an account of her experiences, unfortunately it arrived too late for the newsletter, but 'better late than never', so here she tells us in her own words of the events of her memorable year:

I arrived home from school on a miserable Thursday in November 2003, picked up the post and saw there was a letter addressed to me marked 'Urgent Personal On Her Majesty' Service'. My first thought was it's something to do with the marches I had taken part in which were against the war in Iraq, perhaps I'd been caught on camera shouting abuse at those in Government. Whatever it was it had me worried, I've never been in the nick, maybe it would be an experience. When I opened the envelope, the letter inside read as follows:

The Prime Minister has asked me to inform you in strictest confidence that he has in mind, on the occasion of the forthcoming New Year Honours to submit your name to the Queen with a recommendation that Her Majesty may be graciously pleased to approve that you be appointed a member of the order of the British Empire (MBE).

I had no idea as to why I was being given this honour but came to the conclusion it must be for the voluntary work I did, it could not be for my mathematical prowess or for my ability to score a goal for England. I told only one person about the letter and then kept my mouth shut until Jan 2004 when copies of the New Year's Honours list were given to the newspapers. I managed to get the day wrong and found it was one day earlier than I'd expected. On that day a letter came from the Department for Education and Skills. The envelope was addressed to Ms Joanna Roberts MBE. I have a daughter who lives in the flat above mine, she said, 'Mum there's a letter in the front hall for you, it's not terrible, you'll like it.' I said, 'Is it about an MBE?' She said, 'How did you know and why didn't you say?' I replied it was a national secret and I'm good at keeping secrets, national or otherwise. There in The Times was 'me name'. I'd

received the award for voluntary services to education.

School was still on its Christmas break, so I waited until I went back. I was received at the front entrance with 'Good Morning, Ma'am', much bowing and scraping, and again, 'Why didn't you say?'

In the days that following I received congratulations from many people, all lovely, friendly and kind. The school made notices which were displayed on the front entrance notice board, and the door to my little room. The children were all carried away and asked if I would shake their hand, which I graciously did.

Life settled down for a while until I was informed that an investiture would take place at Buckingham Palace on 18th February, and my attendance was requested. I had to arrive between 10 and 10:30 if I were late I may not get my medal on that day. I was allowed three guests, this proved a problem, who to take? I settled for my closed mate, friend, partner and sometimes enemy, Mike. My eldest daughter was in Paris, so I chose the younger and last of all a cousin, my only long time relation. I had asked an old lady of 90, she refused, which perhaps was wise; it could have proved difficult if she had expired in the Palace, especially if it were during the investiture. I did however, give her photographs, which she much admired.

The investiture takes place in the Ballroom of the Palace; very ornate, lots of gold paint and thin legged French looking chairs. In the background musicians fiddle and scrape, the theme was songs from the shows, nothing too exciting or taxing. The pictures around the Palace were priceless as was most everything else. One climbs the grand staircase to where the ceremony takes place, best red carpet and brass stair-rods, Ma'am had been round with the Hoover just before breakfast, one could see.

The investiture itself is quite daunting, you are coached by several posh gentlemen. You do not call her Her Majesty, Marm to rhyme with marmalade, but Ma'am to rhyme with jam. You do not speak to her; she speaks to you. You shuffle along in a line until it gets to your turn, your name is called, you enter the room where the investiture takes place via the East Gallery and from then on you are on your own. I forgot to curtsy, perhaps

that was a good thing, I forgot to bow until it was too late, so I did a big nod of the head.

The Queen was doing the Investiture that day, she does one in three, and Charles does the other two, so I was lucky. She was in a blue dress, very 'Queen' and I thought how small she was. She really looked at you and seemed interested in what you had to say. I told her Hackney was a poor borough and people needed to help in anyway they can. Her hand went out and I shook it, my brief moment was over. I never leave a person without telling them to 'take care of yourself,' which is what I said to Ma'am, what she made of this I shall never know, but I didn't end up in the Tower. I was given a medal on leaving her, it is now in safe keeping and goes to my eldest and much loved grandson.

What to wear had caused me great trouble, I know what I feel best in, so found a black velvet ankle length dress, very simple, it was given to me by a teacher some time ago, over this I wore a short jacket, also velvet and purchased from Friends Anon Charity Shop, £2.50, the hat was also bought at Friends about eight years ago, I'd liked it and it was as someone said 'a good hat' made from straw and also black. I bought five artificial full blown pinky red roses, stitched them on to it, bought a pair of old fashioned boots, also charity shop, a pair of black stockings, used a black handbag and wore a pink silk scarf tied like a necklace with the ends dangling down my back. I went to the Palace by minicab, the elderly West Indian driver entered into the spirit of the day by wearing a splendid suit and trilby hat, and looked most smart.

I have since been likened to Mary Poppins without the umbrella, not a happy thought and I staunchly deny any resemblance. The day finished with a pub lunch and a visit to the cinema in the evening.

A few weeks later I received an invitation to the Houses of Parliament. We were taken on a tour of both the Houses and went into Westminster Hall. There were drinks on the terrace overlooking the Thames and then a luncheon in the Churchill Room. David Milliband MP spoke to us all and we had our photographs taken with him, these they have sent me plus a signed copy of the menu. Both at the Palace and the Houses of Parliament we were made to feel very important and appreciated.

I have another invitation, this is from the Speaker of Hackney Borough Council, he sent me a congratulatory letter elevating me mistakenly to an OBE – ah well, maybe, just maybe. Doreen Osborne made me a special card; it was given on behalf of the ELHS. It must have taken her a long time, so many thanks.

This has been a special year for me, I not only got an MBE, I was 80 years old in March. My school made the day very special, an assembly, all the kids, teachers, helpers, anyone who knew me came, the children made me a splendid card and there was a big cake in the shape of a black and white cat. I wore my Palace gear and had my photo taken with the children. The photographs are up in school and I look at them often.

I have just received an award certificate signed by Her Majesty and Philip. I shall frame it. It seems ironic that I get an award for doing things I really enjoy. My Mondays talking to around sixty children are great. I've worked at the Ragged School Museum for quite a lot of years and hope to do so for many more to come. Benthall Junior School in Hackney is another love of mine, here I work from Tuesday to Friday. I'm the oldest inhabitant, so can answer questions such as 'what was it like in the 1960s?' I'm sometimes asked what Queen Victoria was like, but have to explain that I don't go back quite that far. I don't use my MBE after my name very often, though my Landlord must have been impressed when I signed it on my monthly cheque to him.

**George Donovan, 12, Branksome Close
Stanford-le-Hope, Essex SS17 8 BA** emailed Philip Mernick with a request for photographs of Bow:

Thanks for your prompt reply to my request, I'm very very pleased that you are able and willing to help me in my quest to revive some old memories for my sister now resident in America. If I give you a brief outline of the areas and streets of our upbringing, perhaps I can leave it with you to offer some pictorial reminders of those years and maybe as they are today. I will and want to reimburse you for any costs involved.

We were born in HAWGOOD STREET BOW COMMON, She in 1923, Me in 1925. Moved to BROMLEY-BY-BOW ST. LEONARDS STREET alongside the underground station/gasworks in 1926. Moved to ELECTRIC HOUSE BOW ROAD around 1941/2. I was called to the colours from there in 1943 having been working in OLD FORD (ALLEN COCKSHUTS CROWN WALLPAPER) on munitions. My sister married in the Catholic Church opposite BOW CHURCH. I went to MARNER STREET SCHOOL as an infant/ junior, followed by OLD PALACE SCHOOL until it evacuated around 1938/9 and she the same. My father worked for DURRELLS CASE MAKERS, GLOBE WHARF MILE END from as a boy until his death in 1948, some 40 years. I did also at various times. Dad lived in EARNEST and OCEAN STREET in his youth and WW1 days. I knew of a foreman at DURRELLS; named MEERICK and your surname reminded me of him. I am at the moment researching the area of Poplar known as ORCHARD HOUSE, My wife's father's family seem to have hailed from there and as I'm doing a write up on one particular member, I find some of my disclosures fascinating. Do you yourself know of it or have any dossiers in relation to it that would help.

A recollection that comes to mind: My elder brother came up with the idea of starting a Pig Club during the war and I got roped in. We managed to get some premises in FAIRFIELD ROAD BOW that belonged to the Battersea Dogs Home for a peppercorn rent. The idea was that we would form a club and purchase some young pigs, fatten them up and when prime have them slaughtered and share the carcass amongst the members----after having to give an allocation to the Ministry of Food, 1 pig in 4 I seem to remember. A register was kept as to what joint or cut was given to what member so that in turn each got their share of a prime cut. Members were allocated duties and I had to collect the Pig swill from various canteens in the area for pressure cooking. The Trolley-Bus depot in Fairfield road was a main contributor. The fuel for the pressure cooker came from next door to the piggery, a company known as the Plywood Box Company and it was their scrap that they were only to pleased to get shot of. At one time we had all the pens full with pigs in various stages of growth--quite an enterprise. I believe the dogs' home is still there. I wonder if there are any old members still around?

I see that one of your web pictures shows the bank building on the corner of Fairfield Road (Opposite Poplar Town Hall) One of our Pig club members was the Caretaker there and lived in the flat at the top of the building. He was a very active member and his job gave him free time during the day, so he was always on hand to cater for the Vet or council official who kept us on our toes with off the cuff inspections.

George Dafter, 52 Upland Drive, Derriford, Plymouth, Devon, PL6 6BD:

I am researching my family tree, and while I know that the ELHS is not a family tree society, I am hoping that you can help me put some flesh on the bits I already have.

My great grandfather came to the East End from Wiltshire, sometime in the mid to late 1860s. He was married in 1869 at the Church of St James the Great. In 1881 he is living with his 9 year old son at 71 Croyple Street Shoreditch. His occupation is given as CARMEN. What were carmen? I have a vision of them being like the modern day 'man and van'. Where did they work?

Great grandfather appears to have remained a carman all his working life. His son Edward John was a carman in 1891, but soon after became a SILK DYER or SKEIN SILK DYER. He was, I am told, involved in socialist activities. My father would only talk about my grandfather's efforts to get money for those worse off than him. My grandfather, he said, used to go out busking as far away as St Martins-in-the-field. He always wore trousers that did not quite reach his ankles, and bright red socks. Does anyone know if there are postcards available of this act? Granddad had a singing partner, both played banjo and bones/spoons.

Apart from his charitable work he was also a union activist, trying to recruit members wherever he worked. As he was in the silk dyeing trade, from 1899 to 1910 (in 1910 he was living at 39 Lamprall St, Bow). I assume it was in the silk trade that he was an activist. Family oral stories claim that it was because of this he could not find employment and some time after 1910 he and his family left the East End and walked to Kent. 71

Cropley Street maintained a connection with the family until at least 1901 with Lily Dafter living there. She was a plush frame maker – what is that?

I have photos of the churches my great grandparents and grandparents were married in. I also have a copy of Brian Girling's book 'Eastenders Postcards.' I am keen to find other books of cards of the East End, especially ones containing pictures of Cropley Street, High Street Poplar, a Silk Dyeing Works.

My son Philip, who is assisting me with this project has an email address which can be used for any replies. It is brendadafter@aol.com.

Mrs A Willmott has written to the ELHS informing us that her husband **Harry Willmott** passed away after a long illness. We offer Mrs Willmott our sincere condolences, and assure her that our thoughts and prayers are with her and the family.

Harry will be greatly missed by the ELHS, he always took a keen interest in our research, and was always ready to share his knowledge of the East End with us, and regularly offered us articles and snippets of information for publication.

Patrick Dunn has sent in this query:

I wonder if any of the readers of the ELHS Newsletter have noticed or know anything about a girls' school, founded in 1708, near to Shoreditch Church. I was in London last month (in August) on my way to Liverpool Street Station, sitting upstairs on a 242 bus that had stopped at the traffic lights at the junction of Old Street, Hackney Road and Shoreditch High Street. I noticed this sign on the wall that it had been founded in 1703, refurbished in 1801 and is still there, no longer a school of course. It must have been a private school in those days, three hundred years ago. It would be most interesting if anyone knew something of the history of the place, that the building is still there must be a wonder, perhaps not for much longer!!

As a footnote, I've only recently found out that a relation of mine was married at Shoreditch Church in the 1790s. The times I've been by there over the

years, not knowing this, one tries to picture the occasion over two hundred years ago, rather difficult though I'd never even noticed this plaque on the wall. I hope someone knows something about it!

Early Comment on Victoria Park

One of the sections of our "Illustrated History of Victoria Park (still available at £6.99) was "what others said of the park". The earliest quotation was from 1846 but I recently spotted an even earlier one. Old Humphrey's Walks in London (Old Humphrey was a pseudonym of George Mogridge) was published in 1843 (according to the British Library Integrated Catalogue) and says:

"Victoria Park, which is about four miles round it, is for the benefit of the eastern part of London, and will, no doubt, when completed, be a great ornament to its neighbourhood, affording health and enjoyment to thousands. Surrounded by Bethnal Green, Homerton, and Hackney, it is not likely to lack visitors. The lodge tower, of red and purple bricks, edged with stone, has a striking and attractive appearance. Report speaks highly of the salubrity of the air, and talks about a lake of several acres, and, perhaps, a museum of natural curiosities, being added to the park".

While on the same subject, I recently acquired the silver medal shown below. On one side is engraved "WON BY W. POWLEY AT VICTORIA PARK 15TH JULY 1869" The other side is engraved ELSC. I went through all the local newspapers but didn't find anything under that date but The East London Observer of 10th July 1869 had an item "The East London Swimming Club, The early risers at this part of the town were on Thursday morning (15th was also a Thursday) treated to a capital race on the great lake for the captaincy of the East London Swimming Club and a very pretty cup to become the property of any gentleman winning it twice in succession. The club is formed of gentlemen residing in the East-end and as it numbers in its ranks the celebrated Harry Moore, there is every prospect of their attaining considerable proficiency, the winner of this morning showing very good amateur form. The competitors numbered two, Messrs W. Bell and W. Morris (I presume this is not THE W(illiam) Morris who was born in Walthamstow), whose known abilities deterred others from

BOOK SHELF

Echoes of Epping Forest, Oral history of the 20th century Forest. Edited by Rachel Holtom and published by The Corporation of London 2004. ISBN 085 203 084 3. 148mm x 210mm, 106pages.

The publisher's stated aim was "to achieve a snapshot of the Forest in the last century – how people have used it in their leisure time: whether the appearance of the Forest and the wildlife has changed: how it has been affected by war and social change: how the management of the Forest has developed and how it has survived the various threats that have assailed it."

The book is divided into 13 chapters with headings such as Childhood Playground, The Second World War, People, Places, Wildlife. Each section is full of descriptions and reminiscences by people who grew up near the forest or worked in it (I noticed the name of at least one of our members in the list of contributors). The book's nicely pocketable size enabled me to carry it around with me and I read most of it while travelling on the Underground. I found it fascinating and it brought back many memories. As a boy I regularly walked from Whipps Cross to Woodford or visited High Beach or Chingford Plain. I am sure the Waggon Wheels and Ginger Biscuits from the kiosk opposite the Rising Sun were much larger then!

Highly recommended at only £3.95 and available at the Epping Forest Information centre, High Beach (0208 529, 7090), Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge or at local bookshops.

Hackney History Vol. 10 is now available, retail price £4.00 (It comes free to members of the Friends of Hackney Archives). Articles include: Daniel Defoe and bibliography; female migration to Australia in

the 1830s; patients in Hackney Workhouse Infirmary; an innovative educator in 19th century South Hackney; and the treatment of Hackney, Shoreditch and Stoke Newington in fiction.

Copies are available from Hackney Archives Department, 43 De Beauvoir Road, N1 5SQ. Please add 80p for postage and packing and make the cheque payable to the London Borough of Hackney.

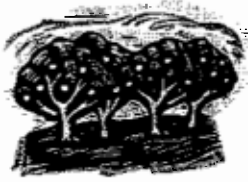
Membership of the Friends cost £10 per calendar year; cheques should be payable to the Friends of Hackney Archives and send to the same address.

Jews and the Olympic Games by P Y Mayer. Published by Valentine Mitchell £16.00 paperback. Foreword by Sir Martin Gilbert.

Sub-titled Sport: A Springboard for Minorities, the book by Yogi Mayer, former Director of the Brady Clubs in Whitechapel gives an authoritative, fascinating and lively account of Jewish participation in the Olympic Games. The book was motivated by the discrimination against Jewish athletes in the 1936 Games held in Berlin and highlights the contribution made by athletes and sports administrators to the success of the Olympics. A list of some 400 Jewish medallists is given from the first modern Games in Athens to the Sydney Games of 2000.

Yogi Mayer has drawn on his own memories as an athlete, coach and sports journalist to give a compelling eye-witness account. The book is a good read, and Yogi would be well-known to many people in East London.

MEMORIAL RESEARCH



Open House Day in Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park was a huge success, with walks on the hour by

various members of the team Doreen has taught to conduct the History walk. There were four walks on Nature and five on History, with over a hundred people in attendance. Evelyn and Margaret were busy all day with the free teas, and took over £60 in donations.

Recent improvements in the Cemetery include the installation of six seats, courtesy of the City of London Guilds, also display boards and direction signs, and the paths are being upgraded with gravel to take wheelchairs.

Doreen and Diane Kendall, with Doreen Osborne and a dedicated group of volunteers are in the Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park on the second Sunday of every month at 2 pm, meticulously researching graves and recording memorial inscriptions. They have been doing this work with great perseverance and enthusiasm for several years now, and have assisted scores of people with their family records, whilst adding to our knowledge of local history.

Tragedy at Forest Gate

The following research was in response to a letter from Mrs King of Brickendon asking if we could identify the photocopy of an obelisk memorial, which she thought was in Tower Hamlets Cemetery. Her Aunt of 92 years had given her the framed photo of the memorial as she was into Family History. This photo had always hung on her wall as it had done on her mother's before her, in memory of Walter Searle aged 9, an orphan from Poplar. Every New Year's Day, this lady, until she died in 1951, would draw her curtains and spend the day in prayer.

In 1844 the Poor Law Act was amended to form school districts. This gave the Board of Guardians who administered the Workhouses in their parishes power to build schools for the children in their care.

The Guardians of the Parish of Whitechapel Union in 1854 bought 12 acres of land in Forest Lane, Forest Gate to build a school at a cost of £34,000 with another £5340 for internal fittings. The main building over 3 floors held 4 schoolrooms for over 300 children, 2 reception rooms, a dining room, kitchen, needlework and sewing room, and 18 dormitories. The Infant Block consisted of 5 dormitories. The Infirmary Block had 6 wards for 66 beds. The Reception Lodge acted as a quarantine area for up to 36 children on admittance, where they stayed for 13 days before moving into the main school building. Initially, the school was given a certificate to house 859 children, this was amended to 720 children. The Board of Guardians of Poplar and Hackney Parishes also agreed to send their children to the school. In 1890 there were 542 children housed at the school with their ages ranging from 3 to 16 years. The annual report stated their circumstances as 46 children deserted by their parents, 59 orphans, 15 as illegitimate, and 402 were paupers.

The standard of teaching was poor, and the children spent half their time in Industrial Training, which made the children drudges, for most of the tasks undertaken were necessary to run the Institution. Boys learnt shoe repairs, tailoring and carpentry, and girls kitchen and laundry skills. The laundry alone laundered up to 35,000 items a week.

The tragedy at the school unfolded on New Year's Eve 1889. The local chimney sweep arrived at the school at 5 to check the stove situated in the centre of the needlework room with the flue pipe going up about 10 feet, then at right angles through a wooden partition into the wardrobe room where it entered the brick chimney. The fire burnt well, but unfortunately just after midnight soot caught alight and started a fire in the flue pipe that was to kill 26 children. Bath night was Tuesdays, and at 8 pm, 84 clean children filed into their two dormitories on the 2nd and 3rd floors directly above the needlework room. The gas lights were extinguished, the dormitory doors were locked, as well as the main entrance door to the block and the mains water outside the Porters Lodge turned

nearly off. At 12.20 am smoke from the fire awoke the wardrobe mistress, the whole place was in pitch blackness which enabled her to realise a fire had started in the wooden partition between the rooms. In spite of gallant efforts by staff, local people of the neighbourhood, and the fire brigade who arrived at 12.48 am, the dense smoke killed 25 boys who were suffocated in their beds, and one terribly burnt. The other 54 children showed remarkable bravery as they were helped through smoke filled corridors to concrete outside stairs, the wooden stairs inside the building having collapsed. On Monday 6th January the coffins of the 26 children were loaded onto 5 horse drawn carriages, the school managers had allocated one seat for each child's relative in the 8 following carriages, with the school officers and other officials following, accompanied by 40 of the children on foot. The road was lined with thousands of onlookers as the cortege proceeded to the nearby Church of St James. Interment took place at the West Ham Cemetery, where the ground had been donated for the 5 deep graves. Later the school managers donated £36 for an obelisk and 5 plaques on the graves. The Inscription reads: In Memory of the 26 boys who unhappily lost their lives by the disastrous fire which occurred at the School Forest Lane, West Ham, 1st January 1890. Erected as an expression of sympathy with the bereaved relatives by the managers and staff of the Forest Gate District School.

The Inquest criticised the school for its lack of fire drill, the doors being locked with no watchman on duty on the premises. Storing inflammable material which should have been stored away from the building, and turning the water pressure nearly off at night. No appeal was set up to compensate the families for their loss. The managers refused the offer of the Gurney Lodge of the Sons of Phoenix to start an appeal for a memorial. Churchwardens at St James church raised money to erect a stained glass window in the church without asking the managers' permission.

In 1897 the Whitechapel Union dissolved the Forest Gate School and Poplar Guardians partnership. Until 1908 Poplar Guardians continued to use the school for their destitute children. In 1911 the school was purchased by the West Ham Union and became a workhouse infirmary in 1913. By 1931 Forest Gate Hospital had several hundred beds with facilities for

training nurses in the maternity unit. The hospital closed when the Newham General Hospital opened in June 1983. Today, the front façade remains in Forest Road, with residential flats built behind. The Church of St James, Forest Lane, was consecrated in 1882. It was declared unfit for use in 1961 and closed in 1964.

Bancroft Road History Library hold the minute books of the Board of Guardians Whitechapel Union. ST BG/1/55/1-2 and PO BG/169/15. Stratford History Library hold the newspapers for the area, the Express and the Observer January 1890.

Doreen Kendall

Of East End Churches ...

Christ Church, on the Isle of Dogs is celebrating its 150 anniversary, and to coincide with this event, Eve Hostetler, Island History Trust, has published a new book. The details are not available, as we go to press, but look out for it at the History Fair, above.

2004 witnessed the official reopening of Christchurch Spitalfields, after 30 years of restoration work, £10 million spent and a battle for survival that started in the 50s and 60s when it came within a hair's breadth of demolition. Nicholas Hawksmoor's masterpiece dates from 1714, and is one of his three East End churches, the other two being At Anne's Limehouse, and St George's in the East, Wapping. In 1956 the church was declared unsafe and was closed, gradually rotting during the 60s and 70s. In 1976 the Friends of Christ Church was formed, and they fundraised tirelessly over the next 20 years, until a Lottery grant was secured to save the exterior, and later the interior of the church.

St Paul's Church in St Stephen's Road, Bow, reopened in May after a year of refurbishment works at a cost of £3.2 million. The church had been semi-derelict for several years. The local community and congregation have worked hard over many years to restore the church and create a community resource. The church will not only be used for prayer and worship, it houses a community café, an arts creativity and exhibition

space, community hall and meeting room, plus a fully equipped gym and sauna.

In September 2004 The Recorder reported the visit by the Duke of Gloucester to St George's, the German Lutheran Church on the occasion of its re-opening following a £900,000 refurbishment. A ceremony held to mark the completion of the work was attended by the Duke of Gloucester, the Mayor of Tower Hamlets Cllr Manir Uddin Ahmed, and Chairman of the Historic Chapels Trust, Alan Beith MP

St George's Lutheran Church was built in 1763, and is the oldest surviving German church in Britain. The congregation was founded by Dederich Beckmann, a wealthy sugar boiler and cousin of the first pastor. Inside the church can be seen the coat-of-arms of King George III and two carved Commandment Boards in German. The Royal Arms recall a connection with the Duchess of Kent, mother of Queen Victoria who was Patron of the adjacent German and English schools from 1819. Until the First World War around 27,000 Germans lived in East London and the congregation was always German speaking. During the Nazi period in Germany, the pastor, Julius Rieger set up a relief centre for Jewish refugees from Germany who were provided with references to travel to England.

The Grade II listed building in Alie Street, Whitechapel had closed in 1996, but following an upgrading of its status by the Historic Chapels Trust as a place of worship of architectural and historic interest, funds from the Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage, Tower Hamlets Council and St Paul's German Evangelical Reformed Church Trust, paid for the refurbishment.

It is such a pleasure to learn that yet another piece of East London's heritage has been saved, and used for the purpose it was intended. One of my favourite churches, St Matthias in Poplar, was made redundant in 1976, and was left derelict for many years. Eventually the London Docklands Development Corporation stepped in with funding to refurbish the building, and it is now being used as a community centre. Others in the East End were not so fortunate and have been refurbished into apartments which were then sold off at prices well beyond the means of most East Londoners.

Rosemary Taylor

An Examination of the Cultural Legacy of 'Jack the Ripper' and the 'othering' of the East End of London

If one was to ask the man or woman on the street what they associate with the word 'Victorian' one may imagine them to answer with replies that would invoke the terms 'Queen Victoria', 'Empire' and of course the perennially favourite 'Dickens'. If you were to then narrow down the term of reference to Victorian London, again 'Dickens' would be mentioned as perhaps would be 'poverty', 'disease' and 'industrialisation'. But if one was to use the term 'The East End'¹ it can be safely assumed that many replies would invoke terms such as 'crime' and 'murder'. This place in the darkest recesses of the cultural imagination that is occupied by the East End owes much to the murderer known as 'Jack the Ripper'.² One only has to note that the Ripper murders are also commonly called the 'Whitechapel murders'³ to begin to understand how this murderer is specifically located to a geographical place.

Why then has the figure of 'Jack the Ripper' had such a major impact on the public imagination to the extent that the term is part of the perceptions that people have of the culture of the 'East End' in the twenty-first century? Raphael Samuel commented that 'living history, so far from domesticating or sanitizing the past, makes a great point of its

¹ The term first appeared in an article by Samuel Barnett, 'Sensationalism and Social Reform' in the journal *Nineteenth Century*, xix, February 1886. Cited in Paul Begg, *Jack the Ripper: The Definitive History* (London: Longman, 2003), p. 4 and footnote 8.

² The iconic name was probably invented by a journalist and is evocative due to the name 'Jack' which has a long pedigree in stories and myth associated with London e.g. 'Spring heeled Jack', 'Jack the Giant Killer', Jack Shepherd. Christopher Frayling, 'The House that Jack Built' Lecture given at 'The Art of Murder: Representation and Crime in Late Victorian Britain', Symposium held at Tate Britain, 28 November 2003.

³ Although commonly referred to as such this is incorrect as one unfortunate victim, Catharine Eddowes was killed within the boundaries of the City of London.

otherness, and indeed the brute contrast between 'now' and 'then' is very often the framing device of its narrative.⁴ It is my view that the enforcing of 'otherness' is central to understanding the cultural legacy of the Ripper as is Hayden White's discussion of the 'impulse to narrate.'⁵

Countless books, plays, websites, films, comic books and walking tours have all continued to enforce the Ripper narrative and have done so since Marie Belloc Lowndes *The Lodger* was first published in *McClure's* magazine in January 1911.⁶ When examining the narrative one must firstly acknowledge the discourse of the East End of London as a crime ridden, savage land where life is led in a state of nature that Hobbes would have recognised.

The following appeared in *The Palace Journal* of 24 April 1889 when discussing preconceptions of Whitechapel,

A horrible black labyrinth, think many people, reeking from end to end with the vilest exhalations; its streets, mere kennels of horrent putrefaction; its every wall, its every object, slimey with the indigenous ooze of the place; swarming with human vermin, whose trade is robbery, and whose recreation is murder; the catacombs of London darker, more tortuous, and more dangerous than those of Rome, and supersaturated with foul life. Others imagine Whitechapel in a pitiful aspect. Outcast London. Black and nasty still, a wilderness of crazy dens into which pallid wasters crawl to die; where several families lie in each fetid room, and fathers, mothers, and children watch each other starve; where bony, blear-eyed wretches, with everything beautiful, brave, and worthy crushed out of them, and nothing of the glory and nobleness and jollity of this world within the range of their crippled senses⁷

This excerpt comes from an article which goes on to show that this concept of Whitechapel

⁴ Raphael Samuel, *Theatres of Memory: volume 1: Past and Present in Contemporary Culture*, (London: Verso, 1994), p. 284.

⁵ Hayden White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation*. (Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), p. 1.

⁶ L. Perry Curtis, Jr., *Jack the Ripper and the London Press* (Yale: Yale University Press, 2001), p. 276 fn.

⁷ 'Whitechapel', *The Palace Journal*, 24 April 1889. Obtained from Tower Hamlets History Online website, <http://www.thhol.freemove.co.uk/palwhite.html> Accessed 5-1-2003.

and the East End is wrong.⁸ This is a deliberate attempt to convince others that the East End is not the one depicted by the discourse that had been morphing the East End into a land of savages since before the time of the Ripper. As Paul Begg states, 'Jack the Ripper committed his crimes in an area that had come to represent the dangerous and threatening underbelly of Victorian society'.⁹ The murders served as proof positive that the East End, and Whitechapel in particular, was a 'breeding ground for criminals, prostitutes, and layabouts; a center of depravity, degradation, a disease'.¹⁰ As this excerpt from *Littell's Living Age* testifies;

Whitechapel and Spitalfields are always interesting neighbourhoods, and recent events have made them decidedly more interesting. They have afforded startling illustrations of the dreadful possibilities of life down in the unfathomable depths of these vast human warrens. At all times one who strolls through this quarter of town, especially by night, must feel that below his ken [sic] are the awful deeps of an ocean teeming with life, but enshrouded in impenetrable mystery. . . he may get a momentary shuddering sense of what humanity may sink to when life is lived apart from the sweet, health-giving influences of fields and flowers, of art and music and books and travel, of the stimulus of interesting enterprise, the gentle amenities of happy hours and intercourse with the educated and the cultured. A momentary gaze of what human nature may become may here and there flash in upon one as he gazes out upon the dark waters, but it is only when the human monster actually rises for a moment to the surface and disappears again, leaving a victim dead and disembowelled, that one quite realizes that that momentary scene is a dread reality.¹¹

To paraphrase Peter Ackroyd, Whitechapel served as the dark accomplice to

⁸ 'generalities are rarely true, and when applied to a district of London so large as that compromised under the name of Whitechapel, never.' *Ibid.*

⁹ Paul Begg, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

¹⁰ L. Perry Curtis, Jr., *op. cit.*, p. 32.

¹¹ 'An Autumn Evening in Whitechapel', *Daily News*, *Littell's Living Age*, 3 November 1888. Obtained from Tower Hamlets History Online website, <http://www.thhol.freemove.co.uk/palwhite.html> Accessed 5-1-2003. This diatribe builds on existing perceptions of the East End. The article also sees in its wording that the 'human monster actually rises for a moment to the surface', as well as its obvious Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde connotations, that the Ripper is given life by the perceived inhumanity of Whitechapel.

the Ripper.¹² As outlined by John Marriott there are three distinct reasons for this. Whitechapel was 'the East End in the East End.'¹³ The geographical location of the parish next to the City, the cosmopolitan culture of the area and the effects of a declining industrial heartland, were all highly influential in constructing the distinctive nature of Whitechapel in the cultural imagination.¹⁴ On to this was placed the Ripper narrative. The result was that the East End was perceived to be 'a creature beyond the pale'¹⁵ and thus 'the East End was the true Ripper.'¹⁶

The placement of the Ripper within the context of the history of the East End is so strong that it appears that the Ripper owns the East End. Hayden White comments 'Narrative becomes a problem only when we wish to give to real events the form of story. It is because real events do not offer themselves as stories that their narrativization is so difficult'¹⁷ This should be considered highly significant where the Ripper narrative is concerned. Associating the Ripper with the 'savage' East End gives the narrative stronger appeal in the present day. Vivid examples of this can be found in *Jack the Ripper: The Definitive History*. This book uses terms that appear in many other popular works concerning the Ripper, 'Spitalfields and Whitechapel, the heartland of Jack the Ripper'¹⁸ and 'Jack the Ripper's East End.'¹⁹ There has however, from the time of the murders onwards been an effort in some

quarters to correct the othering of the East End.

Charles Booth compared the East End to a curtain, 'on which were painted terrible pictures: - Starving children, suffering women, over-worked men; horrors of drunkenness and vice; monsters and demons of inhumanity; giants of disease and despair.'²⁰ Attempts were made to raise this curtain. Charles Booth's great survey *Life and Labour of the People in London* found that even in the worst districts of the East End that there was 'enough diversity of housing and lifestyles to undermine all the generalizations and stereotypes that contemporaries used in order to distance themselves from Whitechapel.'²¹ Unfortunately the weight of the commercialisation of the Ripper which enforces the myth has kept this curtain closed.

Before I discuss the negative impact of Ripper commercialisation on the East End a focus on the cultural historians attempt to examine the murderer will be undertaken. The books *City of Dreadful Delight*, *Jack the Ripper and the London Press*, *Jack the Ripper: The Definitive History* and *Portrait of a Serial Killer* have been chosen for there different approaches to the subject. Judith Walkowitz's essay which was expanded to become *City of Dreadful Delight* was indeed 'groundbreaking'.²² In this work she shows how the threat of the Ripper was used by men as a means of control and drew on 'cultural fantasies'²³ and 'established a common vocabulary and iconography for the forms of male violence that permeated the whole society'.²⁴ This study influenced others and led to L. Perry Curtis's work on the Ripper.

¹² Peter Ackroyd continues, 'the streets and houses of that vicinity became identified with the murders themselves, almost to the extent that they seemed to share the guilt'. Peter Ackroyd, *London: The Biography*, (London: Vintage, 2001), p. 273.

¹³ Quoting J. H. Mackay. Cited in William J. Fishman, *East End 1888: A Year in a London Borough Among the Labouring Poor* (London: Hanbury, 2001), p 5.

¹⁴ These categories were defined by John Marriott in 'Mapping the East End' lecture. Lecture given at 'The Art of Murder: Representation and Crime in Late Victorian Britain', Symposium held at Tate Britain, 28 November 2003.

¹⁵ W. Fishman, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

¹⁶ P. Ackroyd, *op. cit.*, p. 678.

¹⁷ Hayden White, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

¹⁸ P. Begg, *op. cit.*, p. 10, emphasis mine.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

²⁰ Charles Booth, *Life and Labour of the People in London*, vol. 1, p. 172. Cited in L. Perry Curtis Jr., *Ibid.*, p. 38.

²¹ L. Perry Curtis Jr., *op. cit.*, p. 37.

²² L. Perry Curtis Jr., *Ibid.*, p. 31.

²³ Judith R. Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late - Victorian London* (London: Virago Press Limited, 1994), p. 201.

²⁴ One particularly threat highlighted by Walkowitz's is that used by a male on a female to 'Whitechapel' them. The Ripper was and is Whitechapel. *Ibid.*, pp. 219 - 220.

Again the cultural aspects of the Ripper murders are highlighted this time through the interaction of the press, 'I have treated murder news as a social and cultural construct assembled by reporters who both influence and are influenced in turn by standards of approved behaviour.'²⁵

Jack the Ripper and the London Press makes the important point that I believe is crucial to the cultural construction of the Ripper. Because the Ripper murders were unsolved and reporting was limited to the social constructs of 'taste and decency'²⁶ gaps and silences in the narrative were left and 'Into the vacuum created by these silences rush all kinds of speculation and fantasy on the part of the journalists and their readers.'²⁷ Both of these books are the most important culture works on the Ripper and both use the tools of discourse and narrative. William Fishman's book *East End: 1888* is of importance as it attempts to show that there was more to the East End then the Ripper in that pivotal year. All of these works however, look at the Ripper largely from the point of view of 1888, not from the point of view of the hundreds of people who wander around Whitechapel seven nights a week, twice on Sundays, to visit the streets the Ripper stalked and slaughtered in.

The most recent titles to cover the Ripper are Patricia Cornwell's *Portrait of a Serial Killer* and Paul Begg's *Jack the Ripper: A Definitive History*. The former in many respects an example of the ultimate narrative due to the author's unique conviction that she has at last found the killer. Patricia Cornwell indeed cites from the outset that her aim is to fill in the gap in the Ripper narrative, e.g. she

²⁵ L. Perry Curtis Jr., *op. cit.*, p. 4.

²⁶ In lecture entitled 'Ways of Seeing the Ripper's Victim's: or Images of the Naked and the Dead' L. Perry Curtis Jr., highlighted how the illustrations of the Ripper victims that appeared in the press would depict the skirt to the victims ankles although in reality most skirts were bunched up to the waist. Lecture given at 'The Art of Murder: Representation and Crime in Late Victorian Britain', Symposium held at Tate Britain, 28 November 2003.

²⁷ L. Perry Curtis Jr., *Jack the Ripper and the London Press*, p. 6.

has caught him, 'Murder is not a mystery, and it is my mission to fight it with my pen'.²⁸ Paul Begg's book is of interest as the author is a 'Ripperologist'²⁹ and the book is a self declared attempt to reintroduce context into the studies of the Ripper thereby highlighting how the Ripper although specifically located to place is, in many ways, not located to a specific time.³⁰

How does someone sale a brutal killer who nearly decapitated his victims and whose identity is unknown? Firstly it must be noted that selling the Ripper is not a modern phenomenon. After the body of Annie Chapman was discovered locals who had back windows overlooking the murder site saw a quick way to make money and so rented out their windows for a penny a look.³¹

This behaviour was seen as outrageous by the local press with the *East London Advertiser* commenting,

*with all our boasted civilisation and increase in education facilities the morbid tastes of the poor still come to the front, or we should not hear of hundreds of persons paying a penny each to view the back yard of the house in Hanbury Street where the poor unfortunate woman, Annie Chapman, was hacked to pieces.*³²

Another attraction was waxworks. The working class population of the East End was

²⁸ Patricia Cornwell, *Portrait of a Killer: Jack the Ripper Case Closed* (London: Time Warner, 2003), p. 13. This crusading discourse is prevalent throughout the book and overtakes any worries over bias that she may have had a passing concern over. This exemplifies the 'witch hunt' approach to the Ripper hunt. In the medieval to early modern period if you took a dislike to a woman in the neighbourhood you accused them of being a witch. If you take a dislike to anyone in the Victorian period, usually male and he happens to have been around in 1888 you call them the Ripper.

²⁹ The origin of this term is unclear as is how you qualify to be a 'Ripperologist'.

³⁰ 'for Martin Fido and Keith Skinner in the sincere hope that they will find some merit in this effort to set the crimes in their historical context.' Dedication, P. Begg, *op. cit.*, p. v.

³¹ 'Victim/Suspect Files' narrated by Stuart P. Evans and Donald Rumbelow. DVD extra on disc two of *From Hell* DVD Pal version 2002.

³² 'Rambler - Here and There', *East London Advertiser*, 15 September 1888. Cited in W. Fishman, *op. cit.*, p. 211.

ripe for exploitation by showman and the waxworks that were set up in Wood's Buildings, Whitechapel Road in September 1888 are an example of this. The *Daily News* reported,

*There is a waxwork show with some horrible pictorial representations of the recent murders, and all but the dreadful details are being bleated out into the night, and women with children in their arms are pushing their way to the front with their pennies to see the ghastly objects within.*³³

Waxworks and the Ripper are still closely linked today with the Madame Tussaud's 'Ripper Street' and the 'Jack the Ripper Experience' at the London Dungeon, described as follows in its advertising,

*Dare you Visit the Streets of Jack the Ripper's London? In the 1880's, the East End of London was a rather unpleasant place to live. High unemployment and low wages brought poverty and homelessness, and a feeling of desperation pervaded the air. As a result, people lived their squalid lives against a background of immortality, drunkenness, crime and violence. Robbery and assault were commonplace and the streets were ruled by gangs. Then, between August 31st and November 9th 1888, there occurred a series of murders so gruesome and evil that they outraged the entire nation. The killer was never found, but from those days forward, he was known as 'Jack the Ripper'. . . Come with us in search of the answers as we retrace the bloody steps of the most infamous killer of all time.*³⁴

This shows vividly how the othering of the East End works in conjunction with the commercialisation of the Ripper. Another aspect of the commercialisation can firstly be viewed by examining *The Ripperologist*.

The *Ripperologist* magazine is the dedicated magazine for those interested in the Ripper murders. Beginning with a pilot issue in the winter of 1994/1995 with ten pages and titled the *Cloak and Dagger Club Newsletter*

after the third issue it was renamed the *Ripperologist* and grew to become a glossy 40 pages plus magazine which focuses mainly on the hunt for the Ripper. Articles on suspects and the locality of the Ripper are its main stay.³⁵ New films and anniversaries of the victims and killings are celebrated with some relish.³⁶ It is however the advertisements that shed a spotlight on how the Ripper is 'sold'. In the pages of the *Ripperologist* are adverts for various memorabilia. These range from Public Record Office packs of facsimile documents, 'Jack the Ripper and the Whitechapel murders' to mugs depicting a cartoon policeman chasing a cloaked top hatted Ripper, drawn like a latter day Dick Dastardly of Wacky Races fame.³⁷ One particular memento stands out for the purpose of our discussion. This is the game 'Jack the Ripper's Playground: Whitechapel – 1888- A Game of Chance, Skill and Strategy for 3 to 6 players aged 12 and above, based on events which took place in the East End of London in

³⁵ *Ripperologist* Nos. 1 – 12. Bound volume, Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives L. C. 341.

³⁶ In no. 3 of the 'Cloak and Dagger Newsletter' of September 1995 an anniversary walk was announced as follows, 'Murder!! Most Foul. Jack the Ripper Midnight Double Murder Anniversary Tour. 11.45pm Friday 29th September 1995. A special tour which follows in Jack's footsteps on the night and early morning of 30th September and the 'Double Event'. The full Jack the Ripper tour will be given – visiting 7 sites in all. Two of the murder sites will be visited at EXACTLY the same time that Jack was there 107 years ago. . .', p. 11.

Ripperologist, Nos. 1 – 12. Bound volume, Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives L. C. 341. Emphasis in original.

³⁷ *Ripperologist*, no. 41, June 2002, for advertisement re. (then) PRO document pack. *Ripperologist*, no. 50, November 2003 for advertisement for commemorative mugs to tie in with a Liverpool conference which depicts the cartoon Ripper. *Ripperologist*, Nos. 41 and 50, Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives L. C. 341 in loose leaf folder. Ripper games are nearly as popular as the books. Combining two Victorian icons in one is *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Serrated Scalpel* a computer game which sees Sherlock Holmes hunt the Ripper. John Gardiner, *The Victorians: An Age in Retrospect* (London: Hambledon and London, 2002), p. 101.

³³ 'An Autumn Evening in Whitechapel', *Daily News*, 27 September 1888, p. 9. Cited in Matthew Sweet, *Inventing the Victorians* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd, 2002), p. 83. The reporting of these exhibitions is another example of 'othering' the people of the East End. It is scarcely believable that only the locals visited these 'attractions' Those from outside the locality must have been spurred on by the extensive news coverage to visit the area.

³⁴ Quote from <http://www.jacktheripper-cd.com/londondungeon.html>. Accessed on 8 – 12-2003.



SPRING COACH TRIP

SUNDAY 24TH APRIL 2005
**RED HOUSE & HALLPLACE
BEXLEY**

The main visit will be to Red House. William Morris commissioned it from Philip Webb. It retains many original features, including stained glass by Burne-Jones. The garden design is also interesting.

As it is rather small, we shall divide into two groups, one to visit it in the morning and one in the afternoon. The other group visit will probably be to Hall Place, a fine Jacobean House with extensive gardens. This is not quite certain, as they could not confirm it yet. If we don't go there the alternative is Danson House, an 18th century city merchant's home.

Both of these houses are free. Red House is National Trust, so free to members, otherwise £5.00. I shall collect entrance money on the coach. The coach fare is £7.50; please send this with the booking form below.

Refreshments at Red House are limited to tea and cakes. There is a restaurant at Hall Place, Red House morning and afternoon visitors will switch over at lunchtime. You could also bring a picnic.

The pick-up will be at the bus pull-in in Grove Road, round the corner from Mile End Station, at 9.45 a.m. The coach fare will be £7.50

Please fill in the booking slip below and send to me, Ann Sansom, 18 Hawkdene, London E4 7PF. Tel. 020 8524 4506. (Photocopy it if you don't wish to spoil your newsletter.)



SPRING TRIP Sunday 24 April 2005	
I/We would like _____	Ticket/s for the coach trip to Red House.
NAME/S _____	
ADDRESS _____	

TEL NO. _____	I enclose a cheque/PO for £ _____
(Cheques made payable to the East London History Society.)	
NATIONAL TRUST MEMBERSHIP (IMPORTANT)	
YES	NO Some of us (please give number)