



Entrance to London at Mile End (1808)

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Editorial Note:

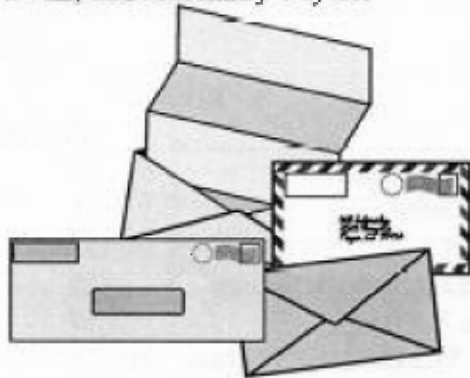
The Newsletter is edited, typeset and produced by Rosemary Taylor with the assistance of an editorial team comprising Philip Mernick, Doreen Kendall, David Behr, and Doreen Osborne.

We have a wide variety of topics in this edition and we trust our members will enjoy reading it as much as I have, whilst compiling the newsletter. Several women are in the spotlight this month, through book reviews or enquiries. We hope this trend will continue! 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, on disk, or even better still, emailed to us 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 Sanson, Doreen Osborne, Bob Dunn, and Rosemary Taylor.



MEMORIAL RESEARCH

Doreen and Diane Kendall, with Doreen Osborne and a dedicated group of volunteers continue their sterling work in the Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park on the second Sunday of every month at 2 pm, meticulously researching graves and recording memorial inscriptions. They would welcome any help members can offer. This labour of love has grown into a project of enormous proportions and complexity, with an impressive database of graves researched, with illustrations attached.

Unfortunately, due to the pressure of work, Doreen and Diane cannot undertake any research on behalf of individuals seeking their ancestors in the cemetery, but would welcome any information that has been uncovered through personal searches.

A recent discovery of a corner of the cemetery, squares one, two and nine on the cemetery map, which had been cleared of brambles, ivy and rubbish, had led to the finding of memorials to non-conformist minister and church helpers. Among the finds are the graves of the Revd Joseph Lee, Minister of Ebenezer Chapel, Commercial Road, John Franks, Minister of Bloomsbury Chapel, Commercial Road and Jenkin Wansel, Minister at Zion Chapel, Three Colts Street, Limehouse.

Enjoy a walk in this area and read the memorials, and if you do record or photograph something that catches your eye, do pass on the information to Doreen for the archives.

Cover picture: Print showing Mile End Gate and view looking west with The London Hospital just visible on the left. It was engraved for Hughson's Description of London. See page 8 for details of the second edition of Derek Morris's book Mile End Old Town 1740-1780

**EAST LONDON HISTORY
SOCIETY PROGRAMME
2007**

Thursday 25 January 2007

**Social Benefits and William Perkin's
discovery of Mauvine**

Speaker: David Leaback

Thursday 13 February 2007

**Recent research on Eighteenth
Century Wapping**

Speaker: Derek Morris

Thursday 22 March 2007

**How the body snatchers of Bethnal
Green turned to murder to supply the
surgeons**

Speaker: Sarah Wise

Thursday 19 April 2007

Reminiscences of a Trade Unionist

Speaker: Max Levitas

Thursday 17 May 2007

**Open meeting - Inventions: how they
have changed our lives.**

**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.**

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.

CORRESPONDENCE

We've had the following responses to items published in the last newsletter:

Information which may prove a useful adjunct to "A Forgotten Star of Variety Theatre?" (See Newsletter, Vol.2, Issue 14)

WOI (Bandmaster) John Markey, I.RAM, was the father of Isabelle Donaldson Markey, who married George Clarke, comedian, (real name George Henry Broome).

John Markey was born in 1863 and enlisted, as a fifteen-years old bandboy, in the 1st Battalion, the Suffolk Regiment, on 11th June, 1878. After some years with the Regimental Band, he attended the Student Bandmasters' Course, at the Royal Military School of Music, Kneller Hall, passing out, with Certificate No.206, in 1893, aged thirty, comparatively young for a Bandmaster. Appointed Bandmaster to the Band of the 16th The Queen's Lancers on the 21st February, 1893, he remained with them until 14th November, 1919, when he retired from the army after 41 years service, 26 of them as a Bandmaster.

Since its inception as a recognizable regimental band, in 1869, the 16th had suffered several bad experiences with Bandmasters. One was described as 'intemperate' and another was 'bad and unsatisfactory', both being reduced in rank. It was not until a Sergeant (BM) William James Castle came along that some stability was established. Following Sgt. Castle came WOI John Markey and his contribution was considered most significant, particularly as his service with the band included the Boer War and the Great War.

The 16th The Queen's Lancers originated in 1759 as the 16th Light Dragoons, changed, in 1769, to the 16th, or Queen's Light Dragoons. By 1815 they had assumed the title the 16th (The Queen's) Lancers, as they were when

Markey took over the band. In 1921 they became, simply, the 16th The Queen's Lancers and one year later combined with the 5th Royal Irish Lancers to form the 16th/5th The Queen's Royal Lancers.

Since then many changes have taken place in both the band service and the regimental system. As a first step, in 1995, 69 army bands were reduced to 30 and, although some retained a regiment or corps affiliation, all came under the Corps of Army Music. By 2006 the plan is to reduce to 23 only. So far as the 16th/5th Lancers are concerned, they first merged with other Lancer bands to make up the Band of the Royal Lancers and are now combining with the Band of the Hussars and Light Dragoons (another *mélange*) in the Light Cavalry Band. Similarly, many famous regiments have disappeared (well publicised in the press) in the cause of modernisation.

When John Markey was a Bandmaster there were hundreds of bands; what would he think of only 23 for the whole of the British army?

Sources: *The History of British Military Bands, Volume One*, Gordon Turner & Aiwyn Turner (1994)
The Trumpets Will Sound, Gordon Turner & Aiwyn Turner (1994)
FANFARE, The Kneller Hall Journal, Vol.3, No.7 (1994)
 FANFARE, Corps of Army Music Journal, June 2006

Roy Hays

From Mike Elliston: Ref Newsletter, Page 9:

1-24 Helena House, was built by Abraham Davis in 1897 and demolished 1974/75. Compare Fran Walsh's manuscript interpretation of Lolesworth Street with "Wallis Ward Street" and you will see the misunderstanding. This was in E1. Helen House was in E2, in Bethnal Green and was not built (on the Minerva Estate) until 1947/48.

Barbara Brown (nee Marsland), 34 Downs Hill, Beckenham, Kent, BR3 5HB, writes:

I've often read tales of ex-East Enders in your Newsletter, and so I'm enclosing a few of mine! Whilst not a real East Ender, I do have an affinity for the area, and these thoughts of the past might trigger a few memories in others.

As a small girl of around 6 or 7 years of age, I used to be taken to Alma Street, Hoxton, where my aunt Millie lived, in rooms in a house that had bead curtains in the doorways. If you were feeling naughty, you could break the thread at the bottom and they would all cascade on to the lino floor. The landing had a coloured glass window pane, and fitted the sounds of Suzette Tarr singing 'Red Sails in the Sunset.'

I can't remember how many of the family lived there, but in a front room (with a piano, plus little brackets that swung out, presumably for candles) was 'Granddad'. An old, white-haired, whiskered man whose image I always thought of as God, was in bed, at the side of which was a table with a cap on it, full of pennies. I would be propelled into this room with the instruction to 'kiss Granddad' and I duly did and felt those whiskery cheeks, and received a penny from his cap! Also in this house lived 'Kitty' – some half sister or other. She was young and her dressing table had 'Bourjois' (Evening in Paris) scent in a dark blue bottle on it, which I thought very daring.

My aunt Millie (I later discovered was my father's 'full' sister) was plump and wore her hair in 'earphones'. These were long plaits that you wound round in a circle on your ears and fixed them with giant hairpins.

She had married 'Uncle Wilf' who had been gassed in the First World War and had a funny eye, and her wedding head-dress was fine net and little pretend bunches of seed pearls sewn on to a halo kind of wire – I would dress up in this when staying for the weekend. If you were good you might get the cherry from the tinned fruit salad that was for tea on Sundays, after

you had brought the winkles in a blue paper bag from the man with the horse at the front door, and if you were very good, you would be given a darning needle with which to pick the black ends off the winkles and then wiggle them out of their shells. We would stick those black round dots on our faces as 'beauty spots', with a lot of giggling going on. The needles were lined up on the mantelpiece, which had a sort of furry velvet flap that hung down to disguise that it was just a shelf, and this fitted above the range, and just in between two gas jets for light. The center light had two chains and you pulled one and it would plop on, giving a greenish glow over everything.

Over by the window was a wind up gramophone, underneath which was hidden copies of 'Health and Beauty' magazine showing naked ladies cavorting on lawns, referred to by aunt Millie as uncle Wilf's moments!

We all played down in the sub basement, called the 'Airy'. We also played in the street with a rope tied round the street light arms, and if you were clever you could sit in the loop and wind it round the lamp standard then swing out and revolve round and round. I was never very good at that, being too nervous. They were gas lamps, and lit with a long pole, by a man on a bicycle with his trouser legs tucked into his socks.

Next door lived Mrs Thorn, an oldish, large lady who worked on sewing and textiles. In her domain I found thimbles without ends and bits of cloth with spikes in. She was a kind of surrogate mother to us and always very welcoming. At the bottom of the house was the wash house with a big copper in one corner and a wooden copper stick, all hairy with splinters. A fire would be lit underneath, but I never actually saw the 'rub a dub', but all Mondays were wash days. This was just across the yard from the loo, as I recall this was a bucket under a plank, and you had sheets of newspaper punched with a hole in one corner and strung up in this little grotto.

On Saturday nights you would go shopping late, as the meat shops would station a man at the front window with a metal S. He would reduce the price of the joints of meat hanging up, and tap the windows for your piece. There was no refrigeration in those days, so you only ate fish on Fridays, and they couldn't keep food over the weekend. Also in this market all the fruit and veg. would be sold off cheap, under great naphtha flares, with a hissing sound and glare.

On Sunday mornings my dad would take me to Club Row where I remember seeing men with puppies shivering, held in their jackets, for sale, and my dad saying they had been taken too early from their mothers. This was where organ grinders would be heard, and they had small monkeys in felt jackets, with beady eyes and they would bare their teeth at you if you pulled their tails.

One day, when I was staying there, auntie Millie said that my mother had gone to Heaven and was with the angels, but this really didn't mean a lot to me as I'd been a singleton for quite a long time. I realize now that my dad, who said he was 'in the print' which at that time was the 5th in the industrial scale, had a hell of a job with a 7 year old and being a widower. But all that is another story, I think this tale of the East End in the period 1934-35 will suffice for now.

From Mike Taber, Pathfinder Press (New York), via email:

I thought your historical society might perhaps be able to help me with a question: I'm trying to find out information about Norah Smyth, the close collaborator of Sylvia Pankhurst in the East London Federation of the women's suffrage movement, and subsequently in the Workers Socialist Federation. I'm particularly interested in finding out her birth and death dates. We're preparing a book containing the English-language translation proceedings of the Third Congress of the Communist

International in 1921. Smyth was a delegate to this congress and spoke at it, and we're putting together a glossary of the delegates.

Rosemary Taylor replied:

Here are some details about Norah Veronica Lyle-Smyth, kindly supplied by her nephew Mr C T Isolani, CBE, LVO, as collated by Sylvia Ayling. We met him some 12-13 years ago when he kindly agreed to unveil the plaque we had placed on the site of the Toy Factory in Bow, East London, which had been largely financed by Norah from 1915 onwards.

Norah Veronica Lyle-Smyth was born in Cheshire on 22 March 1874. She died in County Donegal, Ireland in 1963. She was the sixth daughter of the descendent of a prominent Anglo-Irish family whose father founded a firm of grain brokers. She was an accomplished painter and sculptor, as well as a photographer, and is mentioned in *Women Photographers* by Val Williams (Virago Press 1986). Norah took a studio in Chelsea, London, after the death of her grandfather in 1911. Here she met and was influenced by Sylvia Pankhurst, who had her studio in the same area. She joined the suffrage movement, and accompanied her friend on a speaking tour of Copenhagen, Gothenburg, Norway, Budapest and Vienna in 1913. She had a gift for organising and practical planning. She financed the *Women's Dreadnought*, the East London Suffragettes weekly publication. She also financed the East London Toy Factory, set up by Sylvia Pankhurst to help East End women earn money during the First World War. She also helped set up the Women's Hall in Old Ford Road, Bow, East London, where she and Sylvia lived for about ten years. In 1918 the Russian People's Information Bureau was opened at the Women's Hall, after the East London Federation of the Suffragettes had changed its name, first to the Women's Socialist Federation and then to the Workers Socialist Federation. According to Mr Isolani, the Communist Party of Britain was a rechristened WSF. In 1919, Norah Smyth, Harry Pollitt and Melvina Walker distributed

Lenin's Appeal to the Toiling Masses, at open-air meetings. When Sylvia was imprisoned for six months in 1921, Norah organised processions to Holloway Prison, singing the Red Flag. In 1924, she joined her brother Max in Florence, Italy, and worked for the British Institute. From being a very wealthy woman, she had become entirely destitute. But she never lost her indomitable spirit, and her nephew recalled that before she died she chiselled her own headstone for her grave, leaving only the date of death out, as she said she knew exactly what she wanted on her gravestone!

Alf Bonnyhood, of Woodford Green, Essex, has written:

It has been suggested to me by Ivy Alexander, that your Society Editor may be interested in a poem I wrote some time ago (in 1981) called The Demise of the London Docks.

The Demise of the London Docks.

Oh, how sad to see our London Docks
With grass growing tall around quays and locks.

These Docks were once like a busy city –
Now desolate, abandoned and full of pity.

Its giant cranes that were so regal
Slowly rusting away – not wanted by people.
Seagulls now swoop over this silent space,
Disturbed once a year by a powerboat race.

Gone are the ships that came in on the tide,
With cargoes aplenty from far and wide.
Gone are the Dockers, Riggers, Stevedores too,
Chinese, Indian, and Lascar crew.

But where are the goods we get from all nations?
They now come in by containerization.
No more the sounds of a ship's engine as she waits to depart
Like some large friendly monster with beating heart.

Instead they talk of an Airport here now,
With aeroplane wings replacing ship's bows.

What would our forefathers say if they saw these Docks now –
These Docks that they built with the sweat of their brow.

What would they do? What would be said?
Nothing I fear, just a shake of their heads.
So now we accept these Docks have come to their end
Like the passing away of an old cockney friend.

Plaudits for TH Local History Library and Archive

East End Life 8-14 January had a full page feature on Tower Hamlets Local history Library & Archives. It also mentioned that they scored well above average in a customer satisfaction survey of 137 archive services undertaken in 2006 by The National Council on Archives.

Congratulations to Chris, Malcolm and the rest of the crew! On line information is now much improved and can be viewed at www.ideastore.co.uk/index/PID/270
The site gives details of the services offered at Bancroft Road, and the publications and maps that they have available for sale (including, of course, those from ELHS).

Details of their archive collections are also available through a link to the A2A (Access to Archives) database at www.a2a.org.uk. This is very easy to use and can be searched by subject or date. Just putting in a randomly chosen 1940 gave a list of 29 different catalogues each of which can be accessed. The number of times each has been viewed is also shown which is in itself interesting in showing what areas of research are most popular.

WE REMEMBER

CHARLES STOCKLEY died on 4th August 2006. He was a long-standing member of our Society, and a regular at the monthly lectures. He was also actively involved with the Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park.

WILLIAM TURNER died May 2006, aged 95 years. Born 17th December 1901

Known affectionately to us all as Bill, he spent his last four years in Wrexham North Wales with his only son Victor. All his life Bill was passionate about photography. During the Second World War he served with the Royal Engineers Survey Photographic Mapmaking Section A.

The Turner home in Finnis Street, Bethnal Green was bombed, and the family lost everything. Camera film was rationed at the time, yet Bill managed to take some photographs of the evacuation of the area around Corfield Street and of children playing in the bombed rubble and of the VB Victory Parade 1946 along Cambridge Heath Road. Bill, always generous, allowed the Society to use these photos at the Ragged School Museum's 'Fifty Years After the War' Exhibition, and in our East London Record No 18.

A French Polisher by trade, Bill was to be found in many banks in the City repairing and matching polish to exact detail and colour. Bill's hobby of photography became an evening job, as tutor at the Bethnal Green Institute where he taught students, many of whom became well known international photographers.

A keen cyclist, he rode tandem all over Britain with his lovely wife Lily, and could even be seen in his eighties around Epping Forest. His only concession to age being a train ride to the edge of the forest.

I count myself lucky to have had Bill and Lily as my friends and I have a lasting reminder of his work in my wedding photos taken in St Peters Church in 1952.

Doreen Kendall

Mile End Old Town 1740 -1780

The first edition of Derek Morris's book was very well received by academics. A review of the book by Professor Michael Port, a doyen of London's historians, stated " ... a remarkably thorough and lively account of its inhabitants and activities. Morris's account presents a markedly different picture from that traditional one of East London still presented in a dismissive paragraph even in well-reputed histories".

All copies had been sold by the middle of 2006 and it was decided to print a new edition as Derek had unearthed a lot more material.

The Second Edition has 30 more pages and three new illustrations compared with the first edition and the major additions are:

A new chapter on the links between Captain James Cook and his neighbours - this is all research completed in last two years.

A new section on the Moravian Settlement in the 1740s.

A new section on Langley Bradley, the man who built the clocks on St Paul's Cathedral for Sir Christopher Wren.

New information on the West Indian plantation holders, plus numerous improvements throughout the text.

We hope to be able to maintain the original 2002 cost of £9.60

Roy Hayes has sent us two items, both of which I'm sure our members will enjoy reading.

THE MILK OF HUMAN KINDNESS

Although it was well over seventy years ago, I still remember, quite clearly, my first day, in 1935, at the Gainsborough Road L.C.C. School for Mixed Infants, in Hackney Wick; one incident, in particular, is indelibly imprinted in my mind. There were no playgroups in those days and for many youngsters the first socialising with other children was starting school at the age of four or five. The school was only about seven hundred yards from home and the buildings had been erected originally for the School Board for London, in the nineteenth century. The Board was abolished in 1904 and the London County Council, which had been established by the Local Government Act of 1888, became education authority for the whole of London, covering a somewhat different area from what we now know as Greater London.

On the appointed day I was escorted to school by my mother to meet, briefly, Miss Coward, the Headmistress, before being taken along to the classroom presided over by Mrs. Denny. She was somewhat unique in being married, with a son, Bernard, then in his early teens, who, as an infant, had attended Gainsborough Road. Most of the female teachers were 'Miss', probably due to the carnage of the Great War, which took away so many of the eligible men, plus the 1920s influenza epidemic to which many, already weakened by the war, succumbed.

Term had already started so I was the innocent plunged into a class of seasoned, four or five-year-old, veterans. All was going well until mid-morning, when it was 'milk time' and we were each given a one-third of a pint glass bottle of milk. That particular size was unique to schools and the bottles were wide-necked,

with a cardboard top in which the centre portion had been pre-scored so that, in theory, pressure from the thumb pushed into the centre either made way for a straw or enabled the top to be lifted out. The milk-monitors, or chosen favourites, had already put a straw in each bottle and I still shudder when I think of the state of some of those tiny thumbs, and thumb-nails, immersed in the milk, particularly when the centre-hole proved a bit tough and the whole top collapsed in a shower of pasteurised full-cream.

Unfortunately, I had never used a straw and, after receiving my bottle, the first thing I did was to blow - with spectacular, and disastrous, consequences. "Miss, 'e's blown down 'is straw", observed my more astute classmates, as Mrs. Denny rushed to my aid and commenced the mopping-up operation. Fortunately, the dinner-break provided an opportunity to regain my dignity and it was much better in the afternoon when I discovered the main item was a lie-down on what I recall as a cross between a camp bed and a sun-lounger.

I stayed in Mrs. Denny's class for a year or two, although I never qualified as a milk-monitor, then it was upstairs to the 'big-boys', where a succession of teachers marked my forward progress until war intervened. In the meantime the name of Gainsborough Road had been changed to Eastway but the school's title was modified only slightly to Gainsborough (J.B.) School. On the outbreak of war, many of the pupils were evacuated and the school buildings served as a Civil Defence post. Miss Coward, however, along with her sister, who had also taught at Gainsborough, did not desert the Wick. In two classrooms borrowed from the Catholic School in Sydney (later Kenworthy) Road they continued to provide a rudimentary education for those children who, either, did not go away, or returned, having decided the disrupted life of the East End was still better than living in the country.

Mrs. Denny's life was shattered when Bernard was lost at sea whilst serving with the Royal Navy. She remembered many of her pupils if she chanced upon any of them in the area near her North London home. During 1939 and 1941 I was shunted between six different schools before finally settling in Somerset for four years – but that's another story.

THE WEDDING MARCH or Music Hath Charms

What could be more idyllic? Victoria Park, the church, a few relatives and close friends; just the setting for the nuptials of Mr. B.P. and Miss M.B. on a quiet Saturday morning while all of his workmates were slaving away at Henry Maples & Son, in Wansbeck Road. Or were they? The report in the local newspaper, probably the *Hackney Gazette*, gave another side to the story of an event in the early part of the twentieth century.

B.P., who lived in Cadogan Terrace, thought the secret was secure, he had told no one at work. At a time when Saturday morning was part of the working week he had simply arranged to take some time off and walked along to St. Mark's Church at the appropriate time. His beloved, from Rothbury Road, also made the journey to just outside the park gates and the ceremony, conducted by the Revd. William Hunt, got under way. Weddings always attract onlookers but scrutiny of the waiting crowd on that particular occasion would have revealed a number of artisan types, clad in leather or canvas aprons, bearing an assortment of metalware.

Here I should explain that Henry Maples was a firm of sheet metal workers, established in the latter part of the nineteenth century. They would have been unknown outside of the trade but their precision made, quality, laboratory equipment, incubators, ovens, etc., had wide distribution carrying famous names like Gallenkamp and Townson & Mercer.

Whether there was any music inside the church is not recorded but, when Mr. and Mrs. B.P. emerged, to the usual oohs! and ahs!, the full power of the Maples' Band became apparent as it struck up to welcome the newlyweds. "Struck" is the operative word; the metalware, pots, pans, etc., was attacked with an assortment of metal bars and wooden staves to produce what was probably the most cacophonous sound ever heard in Victoria Park. The paper reports the date as the thirteenth and the couple might have wondered if they were right to choose such a day. Unfortunately, the cutting is undated and I cannot pinpoint the year; even though I heard the story many times I never thought to ask. The Revd. William Henry Hunt became vicar at St. Mark's in 1910, leaving, to be rector at Bilsthorpe, in 1918, which gives some sort of timescale. During those nine years the '13th' fell sixteen times on a Saturday. In wishing the couple a "prosperous union", the *Gazette* suggested the secret of the wedding had been passed on. Undoubtedly a mole had been at work. Nevertheless, the new Mrs. B.P. was described as appearing "radiantly happy"; from what I heard, though, the lucky groom was none too pleased.

Although accorded the title "Maples' Famous Band", the ensemble received no further bookings and went into decline. Henry Maples & Son, and that memorable Saturday the thirteenth, lived on, some of the 'musicians' milking the story well into the 1960s. Two of the firm's major customers remain in business, albeit in modernised form. Townson & Mercer is now Townson Mercer Limited, trading from Altrincham, Cheshire. Gallenkamp is known as Sanyo Gallenkamp plc, Loughborough, owned by Sanyo Electrical Company, Japan. The Church of Saint Mark, Old Ford, still stands and is linked under one vicar, the Revd. Philippa Boardman, with the recently renovated Church of Saint Paul, St. Stephen's Road, E.3.

The Revd. Boardman was most interested in the story of the wedding but church records

for the period were no longer readily available. Lambeth Palace Library provided details of the Revd. Hunt although I have relied mainly on what I remember of the story as related by some of the participants, plus the undated and unattributed newspaper cutting.

The full names of the wedding couple have been withheld to avoid any possible embarrassment to descendants.

Roy Hayes

Adventurers

The year 2007 marks the 400th anniversary of the colonising of America by English settlers. Three ships set sail from Blackwell in December 2006, with a group intent on making their fortunes in the New World. For Blackwell it was just another event in its colourful history. During the 16th century, Blackwell shared in the excitement and achievements of the greatest sea-faring adventurers of all time. Ships departed from Blackwell, Limehouse, Ratcliffe and Wapping on voyages of discovery, trade and commerce which took them to the far corners of the world.

In 1577 Martin Frobisher set off from Blackwell stairs on his voyage in search of a North-west passage. Sir Walter Raleigh, whose half-brother Sir Humphrey Gilbert lived at Limehouse from 1573 to 1578, sailed from here in 1596, on a voyage to Guiana in search of gold. John Grenville, the young son of Sir Richard Grenville of the *Revenge*, accompanied Raleigh. Young Grenville was to lose his life before the end of the voyage.

In 1582 Edward Fenton, who had set sail from Blackwell on a voyage to China captured a Spanish ship off the coast of Brazil. On board her was an Englishman named Richard Carter from Limehouse, who had been living abroad for twenty-four years, the last few of those up the River Plate.

In 1583 James Hellier and Richard Morris of Blackwell sailed to Tripoli, and a certain James Welsh who sailed to Benin in 1588 had braved the Corsairs' coasts and seen Christian slaves in Tripoli. The English mariners fought running battles with the Spaniards, and in 1592 Master Thomas White brought his captured Spanish prizes up to Blackwell.

A few years later, on 17th April 1610, another of those great Elizabethan adventurers, Henry Hudson, set out from Blackwell on his last tragic attempt to find a North-west passage.

It was from Blackwell that the Virginia Settlers, the first English people to succeed in establishing a permanent home in America, set out on the greatest adventure of their lives, led by the intrepid Captain John Smith. On the 19th December 1606, three little ships set sail from Blackwell – the **Susan Constant**, commanded by Captain Christopher Newport, the **Godspeed** with Captain Bartholomew Gosnold and the **Discovery** captained by John Ratcliffe. The 105 voyagers arrived at what became Jamestown, Virginia, on 26th April 1607, although six months later only 38 of them were still alive, the strange land, fevers and lack of resources taking a heavy toll of life.

However, two of the original men were still alive and well with families in 1624, when the census was taken. They were John Dods and John Laydon, listed as labourers on the *Susan Constant*.

Two years later, in 1608 Mrs Forrest and her maid Ann Burras arrived, the first two women to join the settlers. Mrs Forrest was the wife of a London Merchant, and shortly after her arrival in Jamestown the first marriage was recorded, between John Laydon, aged 27 years, and Ann Burras, aged 14 years. Their daughter Virginia was described at birth as the first fruit of the first English Protestant marriage in the New World. The census records four daughters living with John and Ann Laydon in 1624.

The gentlemen who headed the expedition were London Merchants, all eager to make their fortunes in this New World of vast untapped resources. We do not know if John Dods and John Laydon who were recruited to join the pioneers, along with the other labourers, skilled craftsmen and sailors, hailed from East London, or if they were among those recruited by Bartholomew Gosnold in Suffolk. Gosnold himself died only weeks after setting up the colony, and recent excavations at the Jamestown site have revealed skeletal remains thought to be that of Gosnold, although that has yet to be proved. Captain Christopher Newport made several voyages between Jamestown and Blackwall, supplying the settlers with fresh provisions, and dispensing comfort and advice. The ships also took more and more settlers to America, from Blackwall as well as from ports such as Plymouth and Bristol. Although the death rate continued to be high, and life expectancy amongst the settlers was low, they eventually established themselves, and the rest, as they say, is history. Perhaps it is not such a well publicised fact that America's ancestry has such close ties with the East End of London, as well as Essex.

A series of events has been planned to run through the year at Blackwall and St Matthais Centre. An Exhibition **Journey to the New World**, is on at the Museum in Docklands West India Quay, until May 2007.

Rosemary Taylor

ELHS has a new publication nearing completion. "**The Borough Beyond**" by **Pat Francis**, subtitled **Life in West Ham 1895 - 1915**. It is likely to be about 160 pages, and covers events such as the formation of the new borough, the Jubilee, the Boer War, and events at the turn of the century, political changes, and the effects of the First World War. The book should be available in the Spring.

REVIEWS

The Memories of an old East Ender By Arthur Ernest Newens (1899-1977). A5, 62 pages, plus over 30 photographs, maps and family tree. Price £4.50 post free, from Mr S Newens, The Leys, 18 Park Hill, Harlow, Essex CM17 0AE.

Arthur Ernest Newens sold his Road Haulage business in 1967 after a lifetime of trading in the Bethnal Green area, and retired to Loughton where at the Loughton Hall Community Centre he learnt to touch type, which enabled him to write his autobiography. His eldest son, Stan Newens, Member of Parliament for Epping and Harlow and Member of the European Parliament for London Central, has produced this delightful book with the help and expertise of Gregory Clinker, grandson of Arthur Newens.

All the families and streets around Gascoigne Place off Columbia Road, Bethnal Green are described in great detail, with prices for rent, food, and the hardships endured to obtain a living by repetitive work in order to earn enough to support the family.

At the age of fourteen Arthur Newens left St Philip's Church School with a dream to become an engineer. Economics of the time proved this to be impossible, though always trying to earn a bit more, he hopped from job to job. His father, a policeman, helped him to acquire work at the engineering workshop of Scammel and Nephew in Fashion Street for a low wage instead of an apprenticeship. The hours were long, 6 am to 5.30 pm. The outbreak of World War One made job seeking harder as employers were loath to train a lad who could be drafted into Military Service. Changing jobs, he worked for London General Bus Company (later to become London Transport). He was drafted into the army in 1917, trained as a signaller, then on arrival in France joined a handful of men just out of the line, that turned out to be all that was left of

the 18th Battalion of the Royal Rifle Corps. His experiences were hard and a shock to an 18 year old, and all his life he never forgot the men or the hardships endured. After the Armistice in November 1918, Arthur fell victim to the flu epidemic. Determined to live, he used all his ingenuity to return to base camp of his regiment at Winchester, where he was invalided out with a 20 per cent pension of 8 shillings a week.

Setting up business with one lorry, his haulage firm grew to 5 lorries, with his wife keeping the books. Realising that another war was in the offing, he built a bungalow at South Weald where his three children spent the war years.

I found this book fascinating, knowing well the area where most of his customers worked in the furniture manufacturing industry, either as small time workshops or piece work at home.

Arthur's son, Stan, in producing this book as a dedication to his father's life, describes a way of life with close knit family ties that has slowly died out. Mr Stan Newens, is a member of our Society and Chair of Essex History Society and has given lectures to us in and past. We should all try to follow the example of his father, and record our lives for future generations.

Doreen Kendall

THE CABLE – The Magazine of the Jewish East End Celebration Society – No. 2. Price £2.00

I am truly grateful to David Behr for sending me a copy of the magazine, via Doreen. I read it with great interest, from cover to cover, and was amazed at the wealth of information it provided. In the case of some of the items, it was like meeting up with old friends. I was privileged to take a walk around Brick Lane and the surrounding streets with Professor Bill Fishman, and Anna Tzelniker, when she pointed out the site of the old theatre, and

recalled events long forgotten. Anna recalls her years touring with the Yiddish theatre with her father. There is an evocative article on the Whitechapel Library, home and refuge to so many intellectuals, writers, painters and poets. A piece on the closure of the Fieldgate Great Synagogue recalled its great days and some of the more colourful characters involved in its life. Interviews with Elliott Tucker, a Jewish film-maker and Bernard Kops, playwright and poet are both lively and informative. Included is a poem Bernard Kops wrote on Whitechapel Library, Aldgate East. Some of its lines found an echo in my heart:

The reference library, where my thoughts were to rage.

I ate book after book, page after page.

I scoffed poetry for breakfast and novels for tea

And plays for my supper. No more poverty

That door of the library was the door into me.

And Lorca and Shelley said 'Come to the feast'.

Whitechapel Library, Aldgate East.

The magazine appears to be an 'occasional' one, as I could not find a date on it at all. However, if you wish to know more about the group and have an interest in the Jewish East End, they have a website www.jeccs.org.uk. You can also contact the editor via email c.bettington@jeccs.org.uk.

Rosemary Taylor

Henrietta Barnett in Whitechapel: Her First Fifty Years by Micky Watkins 2005. Published by the author and Hampstead Garden Suburb Archive Trust 160 pp. £9. Enquiries about buying this book should be made to the author at mickyvw@britishlibrary.net

Henrietta Barnett came to Whitechapel as the wife of the Revd Samuel Barnett, of the parish of St Jude in Whitechapel. For thirty years the

Barnetts worked relentlessly to improve and uplift the underclass who formed the majority of their parishioners. They firmly believed that by providing stimulating and enlightening recreational activities, they could create a difference. With this aim the Barnetts opened the Whitechapel Art Gallery where they held concerts, lectures and art exhibitions. Toynbee Hall is a lasting memorial to their endeavours to improve the lot of the underprivileged Eastender. Henrietta Barnett also worked tirelessly to improve the lives of the young girls who were caught in a deadly trap of poverty, squalor and deprivation, with the ever present danger of sexual abuse, both within the family and in the community at large. It is difficult to imagine the world in which they lived, where becoming pregnant at an early age was literally a fate worse than death. The chapter on Whitechapel Girls alone, is worth buying the book.

This book is a valuable addition to our East End history, especially Women's history, and I congratulate the author for having produced it. As you can see, it has been published privately, but writers and researchers like Micky Watkins deserve all the support we can offer them.

Rosemary Taylor

Gilda O'Neill, East End Historian and author, has a new book on sale '**The Good Old Days**' – Crime, Murder and Mayhem in Victorian London (Penguin/Viking £16.99) in which she seeks to explode the myth that the 19th century was as, if not more violent and depraved than anything to be found today. Gun crime at the time was rife, as was the drug and prostitution problem – blamed, as now, on immigration from foreign shores!

As Gilda says: All it basically shows is that nothing has really changed and those people who talk about how it was a golden age, and we are going to the dogs, are completely wrong.

Essex Ready for Anything by Michael Foley. Published by Sutton Publishing. Price £12.99 ISBN: 0-7509-4413-7.

This book is about Essex in the Second World War, by the same author as *Frontline Essex*. It contains a year-by-year record of events in the county during the war period, set against a background of worldwide events. There are interviews with local people who lived through the period and around one hundred illustrations. For further information about the book and where to buy it, contact the author via email Michael.foley1@btinternet.com.

Angela Burdett-Coutts 1814-1906, a centennial memorial to a Victorian philanthropist. Written and published by Ernest Glynn, 2006. This A5 booklet has been printed by Design Avenue who also print this newsletter. Ernest Glynn has written this 8 page (card covers) homage to the memory of Angela Burdett-Coutts who was born to tremendous wealth and devoted herself to helping the poor and disadvantaged. It summarises her activities and is illustrated with a lot of images related to them. Only 100 numbered copies have been printed and it is available from Design Avenue, PO Box 190, Benfleet, Essex, SS7 9BQ for the subsidised price of £1 (plus 50p postage). Mr Glynn is to be applauded for his initiative in producing this little work, which might inspire others to "go into print".

Unfinished journey by Aubrey Morris. ISBN 13 978-9513909-8-6. Published by The Polemicist in conjunction with Artery Publications, 2006. 207 pages, card covers, £12.99. This is the autobiography of ELHS member Aubrey Morris and I quote the summary on the back.

"This is the story of an extraordinary life. Aubrey Morris was born into a Jewish émigré family in London's East End. His father was a baker who was addicted to gambling and

managed to fritter away much of the bakery's meagre earnings, so life for the family was far from easy. Aubrey left school with little formal education, was intimately involved in the 1930s battles with Mosley's fascists in the East End, before joining the British Army to fight in Normandy. Once the war was over, he, like several of his contemporaries, became a London cab driver. After taking his family in the black cab on holiday to Italy in the early fifties, he caught the travel bug and plunged into the travel business.

He pioneered the idea of package holidays for his fellow cabbies, and became the main transporter for Spurs and England fans travelling to the continent for away matches. His success in the travel business brought him wealth, a privileged life and a great deal of satisfaction. However, this didn't shake his continued belief in socialism and a fairer society for all."

The first part of the book paints a vivid picture of Aubrey's early life in the Cable Street area and his early introduction to left wing politics. Called up in 1939 and sent to France he experienced the retreat to Dunkirk (not Normandy). Although he remained in the army until 1946, damage to his hearing incurred during this period prevented him being sent overseas again. He became a cabbie in 1951 and, after using the cab to take his family to Europe, realised the potential in providing continental holidays to working class people. In 1956 Riviera Holidays was launched and his early experiences make fascinating reading now we are used to just picking up a brochure or doing it ourselves via the Internet. The final part of the book returns to his interest in politics.

Philip Mernick

OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY ASKS FOR THE EAST END'S HELP TO REWRITE THE DICTIONARY

If your granddad was a spiv, if you remember when you first used the dog and bone, or if you've ever taken the mickey - the *Oxford English Dictionary* urgently needs your help.

The *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)* is asking for public assistance to help them trace the history of forty well-known words and phrases. The results of this new Wordhunt will feature in hit BBC Two series *Balderdash & Piffle*, presented by Victoria Coren, which returns this spring. The *Oxford English Dictionary* is the accepted authority on the evolution of the English language over the last millennium. It is an unsurpassed guide to the meaning, history, and pronunciation of over half a million words, both present and past. For more information about the dictionary, please visit www.oed.com.

This year the *OED* and the BBC are appealing via the *Balderdash & Piffle* Wordhunt for help with several words and phrases, and they need the East End's help. Several of the words on the Wordhunt list seem to have Cockney origins. Can you help us pin them down and defend East London's rightful place in the dictionary?

Did spivs exist before 1934?

Did you take a bung before 1958?

Is 'taking the mickey' rhyming slang - and if so, who on earth was Mickey Bliss?

Did you know the original Gordon Bennett?

Did you use the dog and bone before 1961? - and most importantly, did you write it down?

The *OED* seeks to find the earliest verifiable usage of every single word in the English language - currently 600,000 and counting - and of every separate meaning of every word.

The forty words on the new Wordhunt list all have a date next to them – corresponding to the earliest evidence the dictionary currently has for that word or phrase. But can the British public do better? Successful findings will not only feature in the new series but will be published in the *OED*. Some suggestions as to where to start can be found at bbc.co.uk/balderdash. Some of the nation's favourite insults also feature in this year's Wordhunt. The *OED* is optimistic that help from the public will enable them to improve their dictionary entries for *prat*, *wally*, *wassock*, and *tosser*.

To join the Wordhunt, people need to find an earlier appearance of the word in a book or a magazine, in a movie script, a fanzine, or even in unpublished papers, letters or a post-marked postcard. It might even appear first online or in a sound recording. The most important thing is that it can be dated.

So dog's bollocks meaning the bee's knees before 1989, anyone?

Sometimes the *OED* can't tell how a word was invented, so these words are listed as ORIGIN UNKNOWN or ORIGIN UNCERTAIN and the *Balderdash & Piffle* team would love to hear convincing theories from the public. If the theory is proved right it might help in rewriting the dictionary.

In 2006 *Balderdash & Piffle* viewers came up trumps by providing evidence to update the dictionary - setting them straight on the *ploughman's lurch*, the *ninety-nine* ice cream, and *the full monty*, among many others.

John Simpson, Chief Editor of the *OED* at Oxford University Press says:

"Wordhunters made some remarkable discoveries in the last series. They found Wordhunt words tucked away in football fanzines, LPs, school newspapers: just the sort of sources we can't easily get our hands on when we're researching words.

It's great that the long-established democratic traditions of the dictionary are continuing. Our first public appeal went out in 1859, and we've been busy collecting information ever since. We've selected forty words that are puzzling the OED's editors for the new Wordhunt, and we're hoping for some more great results!"

For further information and stills please contact: Jo Foster, Takeaway Media, 020 7424 8591, jo@takeawaymedia.co.uk or Kate Farquhar-Thomson, OUP Publicity, 01865 353423, kate.farquhar-thomson@oup.com

Please include the info required for people to submit their information to the project. They can visit bbc.co.uk/balderdash or email balderdash@bbc.co.uk. The forty words:

Man's Best Friend

dog and bone (1961)
the dog's bollocks (1989)
mucky pup (1984)
shaggy dog story (1946) *
sick puppy (1984)

Put Downs and Insults

plonker (1966)
prat (1968) *
tosser (1977)
wally (1969)
wazsock (1984)

Spend a Penny

domestic (1963)
glamour model (1981)
loo (1940) *
regime change (1990)
whoopsie (1973)

Fashionistas

flip-flop (1970)

hoodie (1990)
 shell-suit (1989)
 stiletto (1959)
 trainer (1978)

X Rated

dogging (1993) *
 kinky (1959)
 marital aid (1976)
 pole dance (1992)
 wolf-whistle (1952)

One Sandwich Short

bananas (1968) *
 bonkers (1957) *
 daft (or mad) as a brush (1945) *
 derr brain / duh brain (1997)
 one sandwich short of a picnic (1993)

Who Were They?

Bloody Mary (1956) *
 Gordon Bennett! (1967) *
 Jack the Lad (1981)
 round robin (1988)
 to take the mickey (1948) *

Dodgy Dealings

bung (1958) *
 Glasgow kiss (1987)
 identity theft (1991)
 spiv (1934) *
 twee (1990)

* Origin unknown or origin uncertain

George R Sims

125 years ago, in 1882, was published one of the most affecting pieces of Victorian literature. Now only known from its (incorrect) title it has, in my opinion been much maligned. In fact *In The Workhouse, Christmas Day* by George R Sims is a pretty accurate reflection of many working peoples' opinion of the way the Poor Law Acts were interpreted during the last quarter of the 19th century. Read it through to the end and you need to be fairly unsentimental not to agree with its message.

It was just one of a series of dramatic poems, originally appearing in *The Referee*, that were published in 1887 as *The Dagonet Ballads*. The author George R(ober) Sims (born 160 years ago in 1847) was a Londoner. He was the son of a successful business man and was educated at Hanwell College and Bonn, yet he had a deep understanding of the struggle many Londoners had to survive. Having started working for his father in a City office he began contributing articles to magazines and writing plays. Although not included in the ranks of top Victorian literature, plays such as *The Lights of London* and *Harbour Lights* were very popular and made him wealthy.

He still retained radical views from his youth and was a friend of John Burns, Trade Union leader, and MP from 1892; and gave lectures on the need for social reform. After one of these meetings in Southwark, Sims was approached by Arthur Moss, a local School Board officer. Moss told Sims of the terrible poverty that large numbers of working class people were experiencing in London. Moss offered to take Sims on a tour of the district.

Sims was so shocked by what he saw and that he decided to use his connections to bring this information to the notice of the general public and wrote a series of articles for *The Pictorial World*, a new illustrated paper. Illustrated by Frederick Burnard, the articles were later published as a book entitled *How the Poor*

Live (1889). Articles originally published in the *Daily News* appeared in another volume called *Horrible London* (1889).

He also wrote several dramatically titled books such as *The Black Stain* (1907) which examined social conditions in East London. He also acted as editor for the three volume *Living London* (1901) which is a fascinating and brilliantly illustrated collection of articles on a huge number of topics. His autobiography *My Life: Sixty Years' Recollections of Bohemian London* was published in 1917 and also makes interesting reading. George Sims died in 1922.

IN THE WORKHOUSE, CHRISTMAS DAY

It is Christmas Day in the Workhouse,
And the cold bare walls are bright
With garlands of green and holly,
And the place is a pleasant sight:
For with clean-washed hands and faces
In a long and hungry line
The paupers sit at the tables,
For this is the hour they dine.

And the guardians and their ladies,
Although the wind is east,
Have come in their furs and wrappers,
To watch their charges feast:
To smile and be condescending,
Put pudding on pauper plates,
To be hosts at the workhouse banquet
They've paid for — with the rates.

Oh, the paupers are meek and lowly
With their 'Thank'ee kindly, mum's'
So long as they fill their stomachs,
What matter it whence it comes?
But one of the old men mutters,
And pushes his plate aside:
'Great God!' he cries; 'but it chokes me!
For this is the day *she* died.'

The guardians gazed in horror,
The master's face went white;
'Did a pauper refuse their pudding?'
'Could their ears believe aught?'

Then the ladies clutched their husbands,
Thinking the man would die,
Struck by a bolt, or something,
By the outraged One on high.

But the pauper sat for a moment,
Then rose 'mid a silence grim,
For the others had ceased to chatter
And trembled in every limb.
He looked at the guardians' ladies,
Then, eyeing their lords, he said,
'I eat not the food of villains
Whose hands are foul and red:

'Whose victims cry for vengeance
From their dank, unhallowed graves.'
'He's drunk!' said the workhouse master.
'Or else he's mad, and raves.'
'Not drunk or mad,' cried the pauper,
'But only a hunted beast,
Who, torn by the hounds and mangled,
Decline's the vulture's feast.

'I care not a curse for the guardians,
And I won't be dragged away.
Just let me have the fit out,
It's only on Christmas Day
That the black past comes to goad me,
And prey on my burning brain;
I'll tell you the rest in a whisper, -
I swear I won't shout again.

'Keep your hands off me, curse you!
Hear me right out to the end.
You come here to see how paupers
The season of Christmas spend.
You come here to watch us feeding,
As they watch the captured beast.
Hear why a penniless pauper
Spits on your paltry feast.

'Do you think I will take your bounty,
And let you smile and think
You're doing a noble action
With the parish's meat and drink?
Where is my wife, you traitors -
The poor old wife you slew?
Yes, by the God above us,
My Nance was killed by you!

'Last winter my wife lay dying,
Starved in a filthy den:
I had never been to the parish, —
I came to the parish then.

I swallowed my pride in coming,
 For, ere the ruin came,
 I held up my head as a trader,
 And I bore a spotless name.

'I came to the parish, craving
 Bread for a starving wife,
 Bread for the woman who'd loved me
 Through fifty years of life;
 And what do you think they told me,
 Mocking my awful grief?
 That "the House" was open to us,
 But they wouldn't give "out relief."

'I slunk to the filthy alley —
 'Twas a cold, raw Christmas eve —
 And the bakers' shops were open,
 Tempting a man to thieve;
 But I clenched my fists together,
 Holding my head awry,
 So I came to her empty-handed,
 And mournfully told her why.

'Then I told her "the House" was open;
 She had heard of the ways of *that*,
 For her bloodless cheeks went crimson,
 And up in her rags she sat,
 Crying, "Bide the Christmas here, John,
 We've never had one apart;
 I think I can bear the hunger, —
 The other would break my heart."

'All through that eve I watched her,
 Holding her hand in mine,
 Praying the Lord, and weeping
 Till my lips were salt as brine.
 I asked her once if she hungered,
 And as she answered "No,"
 The moon shone in at the window
 Set in a wreath of snow.

'Then the room was bathed in glory,
 And I saw in my darling's eyes
 The far-away look of wonder
 That comes when the spirit flies;
 And her lips were parched and parted,
 And her reason came and went,
 For she raved of our home in Devon,
 Where our happiest days were spent.

'And the accents, long forgotten,
 Came back to the tongue once more
 For she talked like the country lassie
 I woo'd by the Devon shore.

Then she rose to her feet and trembled
 And fell on the rags and moaned,
 And, "Give me a crust — I'm famished —
 For the love of God!" she groaned.

'I rushed from the room like a madman
 And flew to the workhouse gate,
 Crying, "Food for a dying woman!"
 And the answer came, "Too late."
 They drove me away with curses;
 Then I fought with a dog in the street,
 And tore from the mongrel's clutches
 A crust he was trying to eat.

'Back, through the filthy by-lanes!
 Back, through the trampled slush
 Up to the crazy garret,
 Wrapped in an awful hush.
 My heart sank down at the threshold,
 And I paused with a sudden thrill,
 For there in the silv'ry moonlight
 My Nance lay, cold and still

'Up to the blackened ceiling
 The sunken eyes were cast —
 I knew on those lips all bloodless
 My name had been the last;
 She'd called for her absent husband —
 O God! had I but known! —
 Had called in vain, and in anguish
 Had died in that den — *alone*.

'Yes, there, in a land of plenty,
 Lay a loving woman dead,
 Cruelly starved and murdered
 For a loaf of the parish bread.
 At yonder gate, last Christmas,
 I craved for a human life.
 You, who would feast us paupers,
What of my murdered wife?

'There, get ye gone to your dinners:
 Don't mind me in the least;
 Think of the happy paupers
 Eating your Christmas feast;
 And when you recount their blessings
 In your smug parochial way,
 Say what you did for *me*, too,
 Only last Christmas Day.'



SPRING COACH TRIP

SATURDAY APRIL 28th

TITSEY PLACE & WESTERHAM

We will first be going to Westerham, an attractive small town/large village in NW Kent. The childhood home of General Woolfe, Quebec House, is there & can be visited from 1 PM onwards. I have not arranged a party visit - National Trust members can get in free, it costs £3.50 for others. It is fairly small, we shall not have a lot of time before going on to Titsey Place. There is also a fine church & some attractive houses. Pubs and cafes are available for lunch (own arrangements).

Titsey Place is the main objective. It is a country house in parkland tucked away beneath the North Downs, just a few miles from Westerham. It gives the appearance of a complete Victorian estate with church & village. The house, however, is basically Georgian with Victorian remodeling and enlargement.

It was the home of the Greshams and then later the Leveson-Gowers, rich London merchants. They were enthusiastic collectors of furniture, portraits, paneling etc. There is also a striking walled garden and woodland walks on the slopes of the Downs.

Entrance is £7.50, including a conducted tour of the house. I will collect this on the coach.

The coach fare will be £9.50 per person.

The pick-up will be at the bus pull-in in Grove Road, round the corner from Mile End Station, at 9.30 am. It is only a short journey.

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



SPRING COACH TRIP
Saturday 28th April 2006

I/We would like to reserve _____ Ticket/s for the coach trip to Titsey Place & Westerham.

NAME/S _____

ADDRESS _____

TEL NO. _____

(Cheques to be made payable to the East London History Society.)