



Recruitment bus in the East India Dock Road 1914, (see page 3)

Courtesy of Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives .

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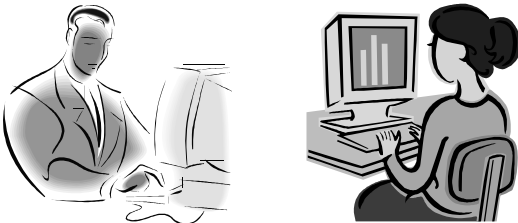
Editorial Note:

Philip Mernick, Chairman, Doreen Kendall, Secretary, Harold Mernick, Membership, David Behr, Programme, Ann Sansom, Doreen Osborne, Sigrid Werner and Rosemary Taylor.

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

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



The Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park

The Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park are on a mission to discover more about First World War Casualties who are buried or commemorated in Tower Hamlets Cemetery (Bow Cemetery). We want to reveal previously untold stories that emerge from people's family albums, diaries and other memorabilia. 'If we don't do this now the people who are able to help us will no longer be with us and their memories and stories will be lost forever.'

Tower Hamlets was heavily bombed during the First World War. Were your ancestors killed or injured by the Zeppelin raids?

Did your ancestors die in the Great Influenza Pandemic of 1918? It is thought to have killed from 30 to 100 million people worldwide. About 228,000 British died and millions more were sick, and ironically, as if youth had not sacrificed and suffered enough, this virulent Spanish flu, contrary to form, killed a disproportionate number of people in their 20s and 30s. Pregnant women had the highest death rates.

Is a member of your family commemorated on the War memorial or died in action and are buried elsewhere and commemorated on a private memorial stone?

If you have information or memorabilia you would like to share or allow the FTHCP to copy, please contact friendsthcp@yahoo.co.uk or contact Diane Kendall c/o The Soanes Centre Southern Grove London E3 4PX.

Join Doreen and Diane Kendall and assist in recording monumental inscriptions in Tower Hamlets Cemetery on the second Sunday of each month, from 2-4 pm.

All volunteers welcome.

**East London History Society
Lecture Programme
2014-2015**

Thursday September 18

Mementoes of Tower Hamlets

Philip Mernick

Thursday October 23

Isaac Rosenberg East End War Poet

Clive Bettington

Preceded by short AGM at 7.15.

**This meeting will be held at the
Stepney Community Centre, 2-8 Beaumont
Grove E1 (opposite Stepney Green station)**

Thursday November 13

*All change for Upton Park-
the 1950s in the East End*

Steve Derby

Thursday December 4

Films of the River

Ray Newton & John Tarby

Thursday January 22

London's sailortown in the 18th century

Derek Morris

Thursday February 19

*Rifleman Albert Prettejohn of Bow and the
care of the blinded soldier of the First World
War.*

Gary Haines

**The lectures are usually 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 get in touch with David Behr, our Programme co-ordinator, either at one of our lectures or, alternatively, email our Chairman Philip Mernick with your comments and suggestions.

Email: phil@mernicks.com

Cover Picture

Recruitment bus outside the Army Recruitment Office, East India Dock Road, Poplar, shortly after war had been declared between Britain and Germany, on 4th August 1914. The bus ran from the Tower of London to Poplar, with its destination board displaying: "To Berlin and Back Free." This was a reference to advertisements inviting day trippers to take an August Bank Holiday train and boat trip to Boulogne at 11s. 6d. return, with a trip to Calais costing a bit more.

The First Victoria Cross awarded in the First World War went to Private Sidney Frank Godley, 25 years old, 4th Battalion, The Royal Fusiliers, during the Battle of Mons. His citation read: For coolness and gallantry in firing his machine gun under a hot fire for two hours after he had been wounded at Mons on 23rd August 1914, at Mons, Belgium. He received the actual medal from King George V, at Buckingham Palace, on 15 February 1919. On 2 August 1919, Godley married Ellen Eliza Norman. He worked as a school caretaker at Cranbrook School in Bethnal Green. He died on 29 June 1957. He was buried with full military honours in the town cemetery at Loughton, Essex, where he later resided. In 1992 Tower Hamlets Council named a block of flats "Godley VC House" (Digby Street, E2). A plaque attached to the flats also commemorates him. On 19 July 2012 his medals were sold at auction for £276,000.

News Update

Subscriptions for our 2014-15 season are now due. The cost remains £5 and can be paid by cheque or by direct transfer. Email us for bank details. If you don't find a subscription reminder form in this Newsletter there is no need to send any money. You have either already paid or you pay by standing order.

ELHS Record and Newsletters. You can now download from our web site (no charge) PDFs of all issues of East London Record and the last three series of Newsletter (1992 to 2013). They can be found on our publications page together with indexes to aid selection. We have sold all hard copies of our Mile End and Wapping books but PDF copies can be supplied for £6 each – contact us for details. All of the PDFs can be searched for specific words. We also have older Newsletters (from 1962) scanned but the quality of printing means that the PDFs can not be searched. If you have any Newsletters from the 1950s or 1960s please let us know, I am sure we are missing some issues.

Don't Miss:

Dan Jones, Artist, whose paintings and prints are on display at Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives, Bancroft Road. Well worth a visit!
Depictions of scenes from all walks of life, and of events that took place in and around Tower Hamlets in the 70s and through to the present day, all painted in Dan's inimitable style.

The Library will also be hosting a series of events in September, as follows:

Thursday 11 September 6-8 pm, film screening of *Vince, Paul, Lawrence and Richard*, a BAFTA award winning documentary from 1971.

**Wednesday 17 September 6.30-8 pm
Poetry workshop with Dan Jones**
at the Idea Store Whitechapel.

Dan has been collecting children's playground games and rhymes from the East End and across the world for years. In this workshop organised with the help of Dan's writer friends, you are challenged to write and perform an original piece of work reflecting on some aspect of your life in the borough that makes you laugh, cheer or weep.

Thursday 25 September 6-8 pm, film screening of *'Alright, We'll Do It Ourselves.'*

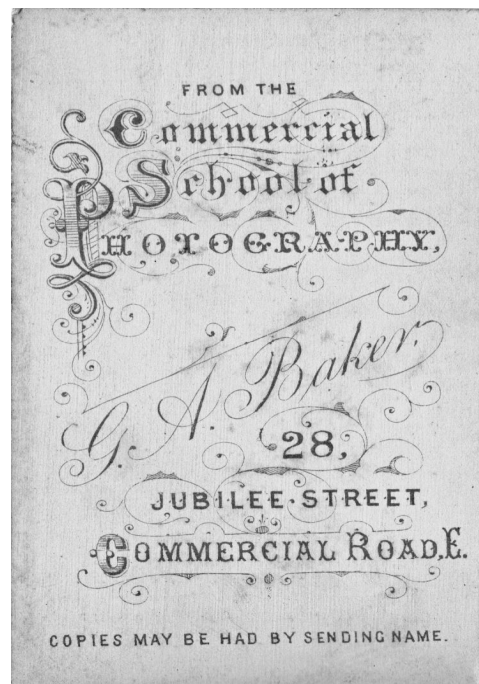
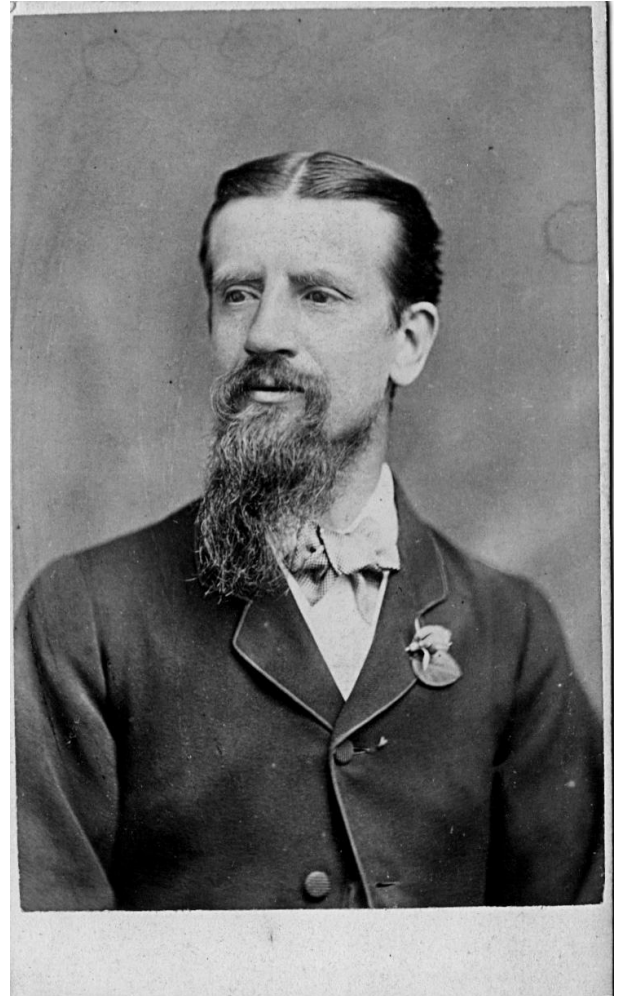
This BBC documentary from 1973 is about the E1 Festival which took place for many years in Stepney, organised by local residents on vacant land. The film stars Dan and many others from the local area, and is a fantastic record of this feat of community organising. You may even spot yourself in the pram race or tug of war, or just amongst the crowd!

East End Photographers No 17 Gabriel Baker

Despite popular belief, Jubilee Street has no connection with Queen Victoria – it commemorates a much earlier, and long forgotten jubilee, that of George III in 1810. Straddling the divide between the two East End arteries of the Mile End Road, and Commercial Road East, Jubilee Street has always been a prime commercial location, and it is not surprising that the first photographic studio – that of Elias Gottheil, featured in number 8 of this series – opened at 17a as early as 1857. The following year John Richard Kemp (1823-66) opened a rival studio at 25, while in the 1880s John Goodwin (1827-1905) had two successive studios at 29 and 43. But the firm which epitomised photography in Jubilee Street was that of Gabriel Baker, opened in the early 1870s, and continuing until almost the end of the 19th century.

Gabriel Augustine Baker was born in the Oxfordshire village of Witney in 1841. Witney was the centre of the blanket making industry at the time and indeed Baker's contemporary, Augustine Early, a member of one of the most prominent firms Early & Marriott, became a photographic agent in Chelsea in the 1880s. Baker was orphaned at an early age, and spent his formative years as a pauper in Witney workhouse, from which he left to seek his fortune in the East End.

In the early 1860s he was apprenticed to a hairdresser, David Smith, in York Street, at the Limehouse end of Commercial Road East. Such was his ability, Baker was able to open his own shop in Philpot Street in the mid '60s. It was in Philpot Street that his interest in photography began, and it was not long before the hairdressing was abandoned, and Baker went into full-time business as a photographer, opening permanent premises at 28 Jubilee Street in 187.



A few years earlier, Baker had married a local girl, Emma Westley, a barmaid at The George public house in Whitechapel Road. They eventually had a family of nine. In 1890 Baker photographed a montage of sweets for Clarke, Nicholls & Coombs – the Clarnico firm in Hackney. The photo survives in the National Archives at Kew.

Baker's success in Jubilee Street persuaded him to go into partnership with William Cowper (1844-1911) in a joint studio in Bayswater, grandiosely named Queen's Portrait Studio, from its location in Queens Road. It was rather a risky venture in an area overrun by studios; after a couple of years, Baker took sole charge of the studio following the failure of another partner Frederick Tyller (1849-1912) to halt the decline. The venture was closed down in 1881.

Back in Jubilee Street, Baker pressed several members of his family into working in the studio. Daughter Florence acted as assistant in the late 1880s until her marriage; son Marshall was drafted in as a camera operator until he decided to join the navy. A second son, George also helped out, though he too moved on after a few years to open an ironmonger's shop in East Ham. It may well have been the difficulty in recruiting family members which led to the closure of the firm in 1897 after more than a quarter of a century.

Baker sold out to the ubiquitous Avery family – initially to John James Avery, who ran it until 1902, when it passed to Avery's son Frederick for a couple of years.

In 1904 Baker's old studio was again taken on by John Avery until its final closure in 1907. However, though now in his mid-50s, Baker showed no inclination to slowdown. Instead he moved to Walthamstow – and into corsets! Presumably, there was money in corsets, although it does seem an odd choice of profession, even considering his background as a hairdresser. Initially he was helped by Florence, now Mrs Edwin Philbrick, the wife of a commercial traveller, but Baker's death in January 1913 put an end to the enterprise.

After the Averys' tenure there is no record of any further studios in Jubilee Street.

Baker's son George became a successful entrepreneur in his own right. A conscientious objector during World War I, he was briefly imprisoned, before enrolling as a special constable in the Metropolitan Police. The ironmonger's shop moved to Wakefield Street, East Ham, during the war, and in 1916 Baker started East Ham market in the garden. By 1919 he had opened a snack bar in Barking Station selling tea from the urn and sandwiches from trestle tables. The first railway station buffet on a permanent basis began in the following year.



In 1921 Baker started a dancing academy, next to the shop, with his wife as a teacher. Further moves to Leigh on Sea, and Rainham followed in the 1930s, and the Eastminster Café in Barking Road was opened in 1930. Baker was active in the Caterer's Federation, and having narrowly escaped death in a V2 attack in Barking in 1945, became the proprietor of the firm of Beebe, wholesalers

and retailers in Hammersmith, in 1948. Baker died in Rainham in the following year. If Gabriel Baker had ever felt inclined to write his memoirs, the title at least, was ready made; ‘From the workhouse to the whalebone’. It would, of course, have been illustrated by his own photographs.

David Webb



Marcus Samuel, Sea Shells and the Search for Oil

Occasionally, one comes across something which proves that fact is truly stranger than fiction, and the story of Marcus Samuel ranks high on the list:

St Botolph without Aldgate, next to Aldgate Tube station has a stained glass window dedicated to Sir Marcus Samuel, Lord Mayor of the City of London from 1902-1903. Described as a Spectaclemaker, solely based on the fact that he belonged to the Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers, Marcus Samuel's rise to fame and fortune is indeed stranger than fiction.

He was born in Whitechapel in 1853, six years before the drilling of the world's first oil well, into a Jewish East End family. His father, also Marcus, had established an import-export business, importing among other items, painted jewellery cases made from seashells. The family business expanded and they had connections throughout Asia. The younger Marcus joined his father's business at the age of 16, and he worked as a petty clerk in a shipping office. The company chartered ships to haul mechanical looms, textiles and tools to the Far East, returning with produce including rice, coal and silk.

Then came a commission to take tanks of oil to the Orient. With funds borrowed from the Rothschilds, the firm built specialist oil tankers, with ships carrying oil in huge tanks rather than 5 gallon drums. This was the mundane beginning of Shell Oil and Transport. The name derived from the family firm's humble origins of importing knick-knacks made from seashells. Marcus became interested in oil production and bought concessions in Borneo, launching the family fortune. In 1892 the Shell Transport and Trading Company was established. Its big rival in Europe was Royal Dutch. In 1907 shell and royal Dutch merged to create what

has become one of the world's largest companies.

Meanwhile the original M Samuel company had over the years been developed into a merchant bank. It merged in 1965 with Philip Hill, Higginson, Erlangers Ltd to create Hill Samuel, now part of Lloyds TSB.

The Samuel family were a major philanthropic influence in the Jewish East End. They funded and gave their name to the Bearsted Memorial Hospital in Underwood Road, better known as Mother Levy's.

Marcus Samuel was elected a City of London Alderman in 1891, and was elected Lord Mayor in 1901. He was awarded a peerage for putting his tanker fleet at the disposal of the Allies during World War One and was created Baron Bearsted of Maidstone, in 1921 and in 1925 became Viscount Bearsted. He died in 1927, less than 24 hours after his wife.

(Special thanks to The Cable, the magazine of the Jewish East End Celebrations Society, where the article on Marcus Samuel first appeared).

Sanders Brothers

Neil Tyler's article about grocery chain Sanders Brothers appeared in ELHS Newsletter 3-15. His book "Sanders Brothers, the rise and fall of a British grocery giant" has now been published and is available on-line and in book shops. The History Press, ISBN: 9780750956215, price £14.99.

A POET IN EAST LONDON

In this year when journalists are commemorating the First World War, we will hear a lot about poets who served and wrote about their experiences, among them Ivor Gurney. Gurney is known to many people because he was a musician as well as a poet. To others he is predominantly a poet of Gloucestershire; not many people will associate his name with London, still less with east London. But after his discharge from the army in 1918, he wandered London streets, and wrote about them.

Ivor Gurney's experiences in the trenches had scarred a sensitive mind. He tried to continue his studies at the Royal College of Music under Ralph Vaughan Williams, but was unable to settle. Always of a restless disposition and a hardened walker, he often roamed London after dark. He observed city scenes with the same interest as he looked at landscape; the people he looked at with compassion and wrote affectionately of them much as he did of his comrades at the Front.

In his post-war collection, *80 Poems or So*, he included the poem 'North Woolwich'. While he was walking by 'tall derricks/And floating chimney-pots with empty tackle', he has in mind the classical gods and goddesses so often invoked by writers of pastoral. He concluded that people living and working in West Ham had more need of a Christian god, and drew a warm picture of a very human Jesus, as a fellow worker:

Can Aphrodite bless so evil dwelling,
Or Mercury have heed of Canning Town?
Nay, rather, for that ugly, that evil smelling
Township, one Christ from Heaven should
come down,

Pitiful and comradely, with tender signs,
And hot the tea, and shield a chap from fines,
A foreman carpenter not yet full grown.

In 'A Wish', Gurney has a vision of turning
West Ham into something of a Garden Suburb,

to give the children a better chance in life. It begins:

I would hope for the children of West Ham
Wooden-frame houses square, with some sort
of stuff
Crammed in to keep the wind away that's
rough,
And rain; in summer cool, in cold
comfortable enough.

Although it may seem rather quaint to think of
West Ham being prettified, with children
digging little plots of land, he did not envisage
a constricted environment. He thought it
better for things to be a little random and
untidy.

Better that, he wrote, than the too exact
Straight streets of modern times, that strait and
strict

And formal keep man's spirit within bounds,
Where too dull duties keep in monotonous
rounds.

In his night-time wanderings, Gurney loved to
see the lights on the Thames. 'Woolwich or
So' describes them: 'and the river's full/of
gliding, shifting, radiant shivers, beautiful/of
coloured lights and darks quicker than
thought'. Day dawns, and he watches different
classes of people starting their day. 'Fine rain'
describes the gentlemen in bowlers and the
aristocratic ladies, but his sympathy is with the
'old fellow by the orange barrow', who has
seen so many wet mornings 'from far West
Hammersmith to Bethnal Green' he merely
gives a sniff 'as if/London held nothing worthy
of that sniff.'

In 'The road', he writes of all the racial and
national types 'out beyond Aldgate', living 'a
hard life, hardly earned'. He sees them
crammed on trams and buses

Or Saturday night dammed-
Up, seething, dodging,
Grumbling, laughing, over-busy
Crowd in Mile End crammed,

The lines are short, quick and nervous, jostling
like the crowd. The poem rushes through brief
pictures of life in East London, bringing in
football, music hall, and even the winkle-
stalls: 'Or eating of strange fish/Or shelled
things from barrows;/Stewed eels, winkles'.

After a few years of wandering back and forth
between London where he was supposed to be
studying, and his beloved Gloucestershire,
poor Ivor could no longer cope with life, and
spent the rest of it in asylums, still writing
frantically and composing music, some of
which is only now beginning to be valued as
works pushing the boundaries of art and not
merely incoherent ramblings. When Ivor
Gurney was withdrawn from the world, it was
not only rural England, but the East End,
which lost a poet.

Poems taken from *80 Poems or So*, edited by
George Walter and R K R Thornton Press,
1997, and *Collected Poems of Ivor Gurney*
edited by P J Kavanagh, Oxford University
Press, 1982

Pat Francis

Philip's Email Inbox:

**From Derek Houghton, 142 Parkwood Road, Bournemouth BH5 2BW
Tel: 01202 565086**

It has long been an overdue ambition of mine to have placed on record or even have published in book form a collection of old Cockney songs that used to be sung at parties by our parents and grandparents. Songs that if not retained now could be lost forever. Therefore if any of your members can recall any of the old Cockney songs sung by their parents, grandparents and relatives around the 'old jo-anna' at parties, I would love to hear from them in order to get them on paper.

**From: Jennifer McGhee
Subject: Mile End Old Town**

Thank you for forwarding the Mile End Old Town file. It looks as though it is going to be very interesting and give me a good background of the lives of my ancestors. I was hoping that I just might find some reference to my Mile End ancestors but I don't think they made it into the book! I also received the Whitechapel book which will be very useful. Just in case you know of anyone with an interest in the same people I am putting a brief summary of whom I am interested in below and who were the reason I became interested in MEOT and Whitechapel.

Richard Packer Snr (Abt 1729-1817.) According to his will he was a successful carpenter in MEOT. He had various freehold and leasehold properties which I will investigate further in the future.

Richard Packer Jnr (1760-1853) I am unsure as to his early career. One source had him as a mate on an East India ship but I have not been able to verify this yet (he certainly wasn't an officer.) His children were born in MEOT and on the 1851 census (and in other sources) he

was described as Town Clerk and still living in MEOT.

In Whitehall I am interested in John Cressall (1736-1821.) From his fascinating will he was obviously a successful undertaker and one of his sons took over the business when he died.

**From Lindsey Allwork
Subject: Gypsy Travellers in the East End**

I wonder if you are able to help me, please. Undertaking my family tree research, I have discovered that one part of my family lived, for a time, in caravans, alongside Gypsies and Show People in Ernest Street Yard, off Mile End Road from around 1830 through to around 1870. (Allworks and MacFarlanes). I don't think they were Gypsies - although it sounds terribly romantic - I think they may have been escaping the Poor House, having fallen on hard times. I would love to speak to any contact who may be able to throw some light on this, and who maybe has access to photographs of the area at the time, too, please.

Philip Mernick replied:

Sorry about the late reply Lindsey but I have been away on holiday. Even though our society actually meets in Ernest Street, I am afraid that I can't really help you. Apart from the fact that Ernest Street was first built in about 1810 and the eastern half was still rope works until the 1830s, I don't know anything about it. I have to say that connection with circus folk sounds very interesting. The whole of Ernest Street was rebuilt after WW2 as a vast housing estate so nothing old remains. It is also too early for photographs even if a visitor had ventured off the Mile End Road. Have you spoken with Tower Hamlets Local History Library? They have an enormous collection.

Lindsey replied:

Thanks so much for coming back to me. How strange, you meet in Ernest Street.

But thank you for the link with Tower Hamlets Library. I have to say I wasn't sure which one dealt with what in London, now. So I shall head for there, now.

From: Nick Fielding
Subject: Lucy Atkinson article

I am writing a biography of Thomas and Lucy Atkinson, noted explorers of Siberia. I see that you have published an article about Lucy's connections with Stepney in your newsletter. Is it possible to obtain a copy, as I would like to know if you have managed to find any interesting details about her life. I know she is buried in Tower Hamlets and that she once had a business as a toy dealer in Commercial Road before she left for Russia, but would be interested in any further information you have. Please let me know the best way to obtain a copy of the article. I am happy to pay a subscription for the newsletter if that helps.

(Philip sent Nick the relevant article published in the newsletter).

From: Maarten Jacobs
Antwerp, Belgium
Subject: Chrisp Street Market & Woollett Street

I am looking for Woollett Street which used to lie in the Poplar area. My grandfather lived there as a Belgian exile when he was 6 years old in 1914. He went to the local primary school now called Mayflower.

Does this street and its original houses still exist or is it now part of the Chrisp Street Market?

From: Phil Mernick
 Dear Maarten, this is what Mike Elliston's "A Topography of Tower Hamlets" (unpublished) has to say about it. 'William Street, first west of Chrisp Street on the north

side of East India Dock Road, was renamed Woollett Street, 3/11/1876. The name commemorates William Woollett (1735-1785), draughtsman, artist and line engraver. Woollett Street was closed by order dated 2/01/1968 for the Vesey Path retail and housing area. I know the area and nothing old remains.

From Rita Curry, Broadstairs, Kent

I used to live in Stepney until I retired in 1998 and I still support Neighbours in Poplar, where I was a colleague of Rosemary Taylor before we all moved in the same year.

A Neighbours in Poplar group of elderly ladies are currently down in Broadstairs on holiday. and I was with them last night, sharing my home grown produce. During these gatherings reminiscence is rife, as always with the very old and their happy memories. There was a lady of 94 there, asking me if I knew anything about 'The Edinburgh Castle' in Rhodeswell Road. She told me it did have a castle like roof and her mother used to take her there when she was poorly for medical help. I have never heard of this, or remember it when I lived off Salmons Lane. We remembered Lusty's, winching the turtles up which were in hessian sacks. I have promised I will try to find out for her any information and just pulling one of Alan Young's books out, thought of your very knowledgeable group. Does this ring any bells of any of your members? Your assistance would be appreciated.

Philip responded:
 Dear Rita, the Edinburgh Castle was an ex pub taken over by Dr Barnardo. This link gives you a lot of information.
<http://www.lookandlearn.com/blog/17051/dr-barnardo-turned-a-gin-palace-into-a-coffee-house/> also
http://www.eastlondonpostcard.co.uk/POMimages/200711_EdinCastle.jpg

Note: The Edinburgh Castle in Rhodeswell Road, once a gin palace and music hall, was

taken over by Dr. Barnardo and converted into a workingmen's club and people's mission hall. It was opened by Lord Shaftsbury in 1873. Barnardos left in 1927, and the mission was finally demolished in 1952 to make way for Mile End Stadium.

Rita Curry : Thanks a million Phil, I will get that information to her before she goes home tomorrow.

Sylvia Pankhurst in Woodford

(Sylvia Pankhurst Lived in Bow, at 400 Old Ford Road throughout the First World War, working for and supporting East London families.)

In 1924, when Sylvia Pankhurst moved out of the East End, it was further east into the leafy suburbs of Essex. She lived in Woodford for 32 years, keeping in touch with her friends from ELFS days who included Annie Barnes, whose book, *Tough Annie*, gives an account of their meetings. Travel there was by bicycle, trolley bus or steam railway.

Her own books which were written there included **The Home Front**, about the Great War years in the East End, **The Suffragette Movement**, which begins with a description of living on the edge of Epping Forest, and **Save the Mothers**, an appeal for a National Maternity Service, with a foreword by George Bernard Shaw, who greatly admired her. Through her partner the radical socialist, Silvio Corio, and his associates, she was aware of the rise of fascism in Italy and fought it with all the means at her disposal. She produced the second of her weekly newspapers, *New Times and Ethiopia News* printed on local presses from 1936. And after the bombing of defenceless Abyssinians by Italian airmen with mustard gas, she had unveiled, next to a tree lined sward at the side of the High Road near Mornington Road, an ironic stone monument, designed by Eric Benfield. Unlike conventional memorials with their soldiers in battledress and their avenging

angels, it takes the form of a descending torpedo bomb on a plinth surrounded by railings. Now listed in the Imperial War Museum's National Inventory of War memorials. its inscriptions include that it is raised as 'A Protest Against War in the Air'. It is dedicated to those who, in 1932 refused to ban the use of bombing planes, this being the World Disarmament Conference in Geneva, the British Delegation being led by David Lloyd George. Those attending the unveiling include a representative from the Imperial Ethiopian Legation.

In 1956, Sylvia and her son, Richard, left Woodford for Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia, honoured guests of the Emperor, Hail Sellasie, whose cause she had championed since his exile in Bath before the Second World War. She died there in 1960 and lies buried amongst the heroes of the Nation, a woman who thought of herself as a citizen of the world who owned no barrier of race or nation.

Sylvia Ayling

The Widow's Son Pub

150 year old tradition under threat?

The hanging of a hot cross bun at the Grade 2 listed Widow's Son pub on Devons Road, Bromley by Bow has been an annual event since the middle of the nineteenth century. However next year's ceremony could be the last. In 2012 Punch Taverns sold the premises to Dalco Development Ltd of Wanstead Park Road, Ilford. Dalco's plan for flats to be built over the rear section of the pub and its garden was rejected by Tower Hamlets Council in 2013. Unfortunately the pub's lease runs out in 2015, and if not renewed then, another part of East London's historic taverns will suffer that oh so familiar fate. Our picture shows how the "luxury apartments" are creeping ever closer. Anyone who used to go down Violet Road on their way to Christ Street Market wouldn't recognise it now. I have been unable to find out much on Dalco from the internet apart from publicly available financial data, and their current ownership of Wanstead's Evergreen Field whose proposed development has been vigorously opposed by the Wanstead Society.

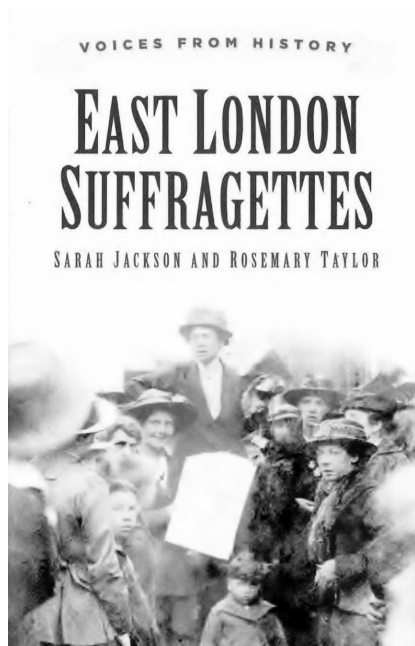
Philip Mernick



Book Reviews

Voices from History, East London

Suffragettes, by Sarah Jackson and Rosemary Taylor. Published by the History Press. Paperback 190 pages, 24 illustrations. ISBN 978-0-7509-6093-9. Price £ 9.99. Available from all good bookshops. Further information email rftaylor40@gmail.com.



This year 2014 flags up two significant centenaries. In January 1914 the radical East London Federation of the Suffragettes, led by Sylvia Pankhurst, split from the WSPU. Sylvia's mother and sister, Emmeline and Christabel, had encouraged her to give up her work with the poor women of East London - but Sylvia refused.

In August 1914 Britain went to war against Germany, resulting in immense loss of life on the battlefields of Europe, and untold misery and hardship to the women and children left behind at home. On the home front, the battle for women's right to the franchise evolved into the formation of a group dedicated to fighting for women's right to a decent standard of living. When the First World War brought widespread unemployment and starvation, their relief work saved countless lives.

Besides campaigning for women to have the right to vote, from their headquarters at 400 Old Ford Road, Bow, the ELFS called for equal pay, a living wage, and better housing. They opened a nursery, a 'cost price' restaurant and a co-operative toy factory.

The pioneering work of the East London Federation of the Suffragettes (and 'our Sylvia') deserves to be remembered. This book, filled with astonishing first-hand accounts, commemorates an extraordinary time in East London's history and a courageous and creative group of forgotten East End rebels.

London's Sailortown, 1600-1800: A social history of Shadwell and Ratcliff
We hope to publish Derek Morris & Ken Cozens next book: late 2014 or early 2015. The first three books in this series have been extremely well received by academics and historians.

Played in London

Charting the heritage of a city at play

By: Simon Inglis

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In 2012 London became the first city in the world to have staged three modern Olympic Games. This was no accident, for when it comes to sport, London has form.

From its first century Roman amphitheatre to its extraordinary array of colosseums in the 21st century – venues that have earned global renown for the likes of suburban Wembley, Wimbledon, and Twickenham – London has always been a city of spectacles and sporting fever.

In the 12th century crowds would gather at the 'smooth field' (Smithfield) to watch young men and apprentices compete in horse racing and ball games. In Tudor times they flocked to

the tiltyards of Whitehall and Greenwich for jousting, while in the 17th century the Stuarts were keen exponents of a game with the familiar name of Pall Mall.

At Hampton Court the world's oldest covered tennis court, with elements dating from 1625, remains in daily use. Every July on the Thames there takes place the world's oldest rowing race, initiated in 1715, while the crack of leather on willow may still be heard at the Artillery Garden in Finsbury, where cricket has been played since at least the 1720s.

London has not only played, but has shaped many of the world's favourite sports, for example athletics, rugby and boxing. In 2013 the Football Association celebrated the 150th anniversary of its formation in a tavern in Holborn. Meanwhile in 2014, 46 London clubs were able to trace their roots back 150 years or more, with 32 set to join that august roster over the coming decade.

The capital also now has more professional football clubs than any city other than Buenos Aires. In the 20th century London was to the fore in the development of greyhound and speedway racing, and even of darts.

Profusely illustrated with detailed maps and in depth research, Played in London is the most ambitious offering yet from the acclaimed Played in Britain series.

Capital sport guaranteed.

If you would like Simon Inglis to talk about Played in London at one of your meetings, please get in touch.

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jackie@malavan.com

The London Hospital and World War One

Although World War One affected almost every hospital in Britain, the London was, perhaps, more affected than most. It was the first hospital in England to admit war wounded from the front; it was the first to send a group of nurses to the front; it was situated in an area that was bombed more often; the Matron-in-Chief of the Army Nursing Service was a "Londoner"; so was the Principal Matron in France and the Matron-in-Chief to the Mediterranean Forces.

The first impact was the call for nurses. They had been under contract with both the Admiralty and the War office for some years to supply nurses in case of sudden need - 60 to the Navy and 50 to the Army. Britain declared war on Germany on the 4th of August 1914 and the first batch went that same day - they had a great send off. The London Hospital sent 229 during the course of the war although many others who had qualified there also went; one of the most famous being **Edith Cavell**, shot "at dawn" in Brussels on October 12 1915.

The first wounded arrived on August 30 1914, a Sunday. The Hospital had promised 500 beds to the Government in case of sudden need, as soon as war was declared, and the required beds and bedding had been purchased and packed away waiting for the call. On Sunday morning the War Office asked them to admit 100 men that very evening. They even had to arrange to collect the men from Waterloo Station. This was done in a fleet of J. Lyons & Co vans as Alfred Salmon was a member of the Hospital Board and also a Director of Lyons. Arranging provisions and staff had to be done in a rush and it was, as mentioned previously, a Sunday. The first wounded men arrived at 9 P.M. and while they were still being admitted and allocated beds, the request came to take another 200 during the night, although they didn't actually arrive until 10 A.M. on Monday. The Hospital admitted many, many wounded straight from the front, some still wet with the Flanders mud. During

the war the hospital, in all, admitted 6,533 wounded.

Shortage of medical staff was also a major problem. Most consultants were scattered across the zones of conflict and resident staff of House Physicians and Surgeons, usually 40, dropped at one time to 6 and this when there were 1,200 patients. Volunteers, many ex "Londoners" came from around the world to fill the gap.

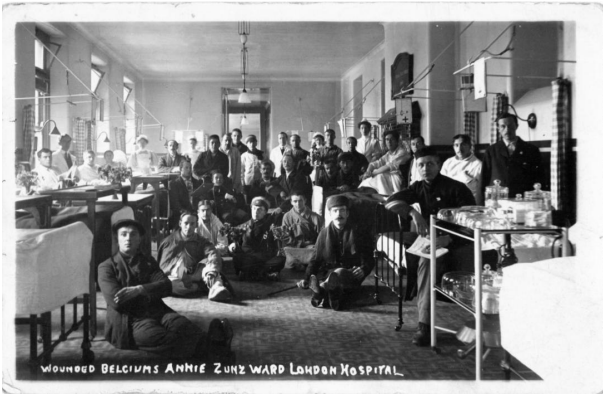
We are fortunate to have a lot of images relating to this period as George Occleston of Shoebury Road, East Ham published many photographic post cards recording events in the hospital. They were largely intended to be used by patients and staff and many have post marks indicating that they were sent very soon after the pictures had been taken. They provide a detailed and fascinating view of this aspect of the Home Front.

Information largely taken from "The London Hospital" by E.A. Morris, Edward Arnold & Co, London, 1926.

Philip Mernick



Queen Alexandra visiting wounded soldiers in the London Hospital.



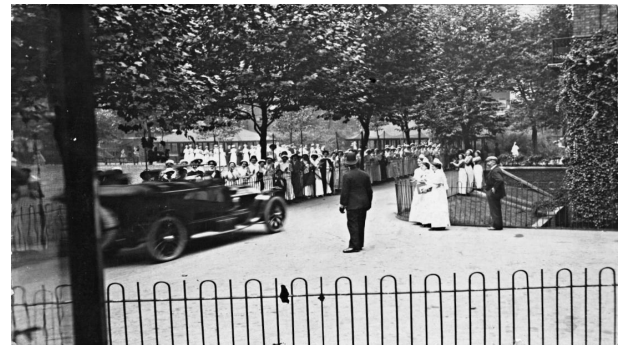
Wounded Belgian soldiers in the London Hospital, Annie Zunz ward.



Nurses from the London Hospital leaving for war service on the continent.



Belgian soldiers leaving the hospital for convalescent homes.



Wounded soldiers being driven to the London Hospital just one month after the outbreak of the war.



Belgian soldiers' coffins leaving the London Hospital.



The caption reads 'Wounded but happy Tommies at the London Hospital.'