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

Cover Picture

Photograph taken by well-known Poplar photographer William Whiffin of a class of local children holding the gift boxes given by Poplar Borough Council to celebrate the coronation of George VI and Queen Elizabeth (Queen Mother) on the 12th of May. The report in the Council minutes reads as follows:

For special reasons the Millwall Central School could not participate with other schools of the southern area and were entertained on Friday, 28th May.

The adjoining Boroughs, in agreement with Poplar, entertained all children in attendance at the schools irrespective of domicile.

The approximate total number of children entertained was 22,500.

Where it was not possible to entertain the children in the schools because of lack of suitable accommodation they were entertained in halls kindly placed at the

The Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park

The Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park are always seeking to augment their store of information on the burials in the cemetery, and any history related to the area.

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.

Currently cancelled due to Covid-19.



disposal of the Coronation Celebrations Sub-Committee by the proprietors.

325 were entertained at Poplar Town Hall.

190 were entertained at Emery Hall, Augusta Street.

730 were entertained at Poplar Pavilion, East India Dock Road.

500 were entertained at Queen's Theatre, Poplar High Street.

415 were entertained at King George's Hall, East India Dock Road.

165 were entertained at St. Luke's Hall, Millwall.

A total of 80 separate entertainments was provided, 22,500 Tuck Boxes were distributed, and by arrangement with the Milk Marketing Board a bottle of milk was provided for each scholar.

The Tuck Box, supplied by the London Co-operative Society, Ltd., contained: Apple.

Orange.
 Bar of Chocolate.
 Buttered Bun.
 Packet of Biscuits.
 Piece of Cake.
 Serviette and Medallion'
 Paper Cap.

In addition, a small packet of Chewing Gum was provided by Messrs. Wrigley.

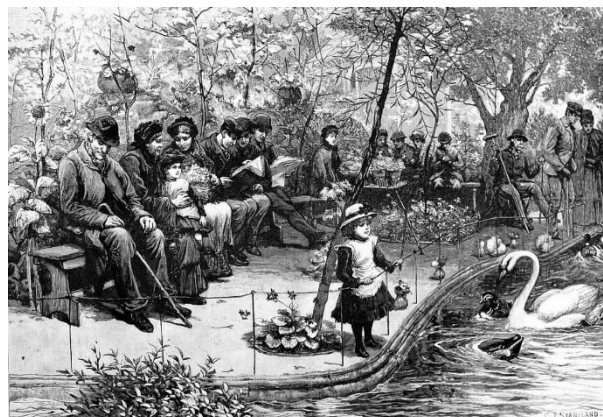
The Council will no doubt remember that it, was the intention to provide an earthenware beaker or similar souvenir to all children and provision was made for that purpose in the estimate approved by the Council, but the County Council as Education Authority resolved to supply a beaker to all children in the schools.

His Worship, The Mayor, visited as many centres of entertainment as was possible on each of the days and was assisted in these visits by the following members of the London County Council: Messrs". F. T. Baldock. E. Cruse, J.P., and W. H. Guy. The Town Clerk accompanied the Mayor on his visits on the first day.

We are satisfied the entertainments gave unalloyed pleasure to the children and the intention of the Council to provide an occasion memorable in the lives of the children was undoubtedly achieved. The many letters received from Head Teachers bear eloquent testimony to that fact. The whole-hearted co-operation of the Teachers helped the organisation very considerably and was much appreciated.

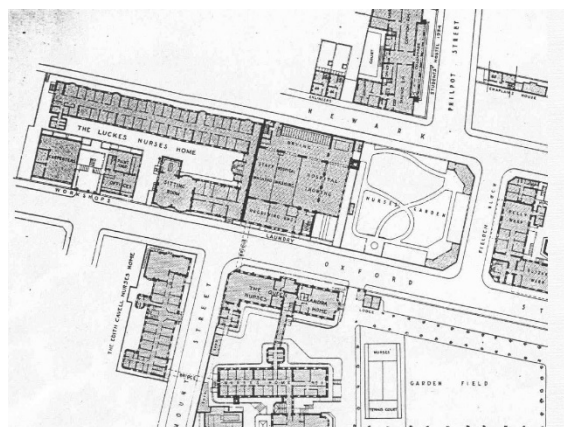
Previous issues' cover picture

I explained that the rural looking lake below had been swallowed up by extensions to The London Hospital using a series of ordnance survey maps, finally commenting "a number of questions still remain which I will try to answer in another Newsletter.



The first is that the 1913 map still shows the garden although now inside the hospital grounds – is this the nurses garden shown on many contemporary post cards?"

Well, I found the answer on the ELHS's own web site! Listed under "Virtual Tours" is one of London Hospital and it includes "a detailed plan from 1933"



This is looking south across Oxford Street now renamed Stepney Way and shows "our" garden now marked as Nurses Garden. If you go through the Luckes Entrance of the modern hospital you will find no grass, just concrete and glass.



Postcard pictures of the Nurses' Garden

East London History Society Lecture Programme 2022

Because of the current Covid-19 situation we have postponed our lectures. A new committee is hoping to be able to restart lectures in the Spring but nothing is yet decided we regret. We expect to have another newsletter before then to advise you of the up-to-date position.

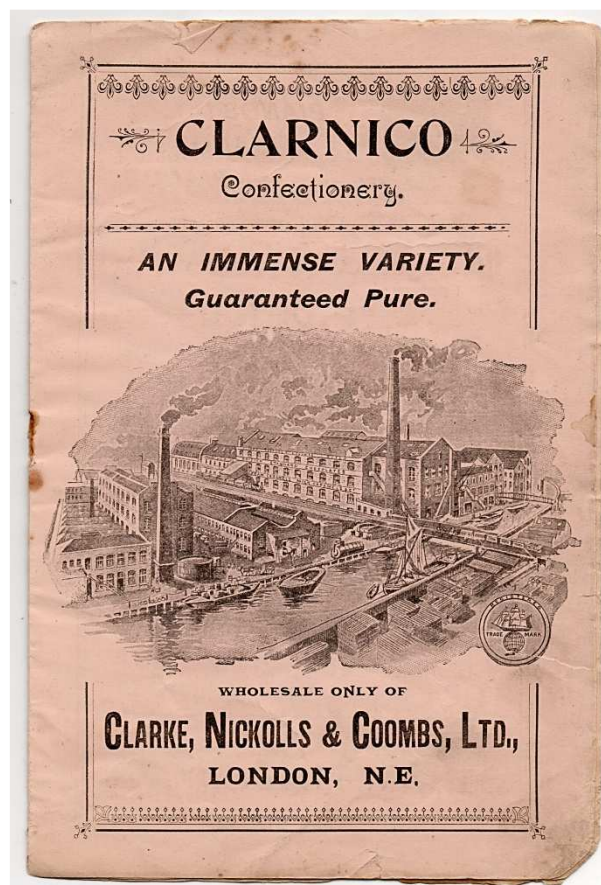
ELHS Record and Newsletters.

You can now download from our web site (no charge) PDFs of all issues of East London Record and the all issues of ELHS Newsletter from 1992 until issue 4-20. 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. We have now sold all copies of our Victoria Park book but we have no PDF version.

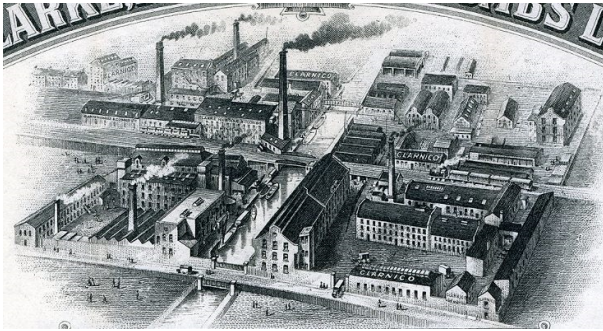
M.O.T.H. Philip Mernick

As many of you will know I collect all sorts of items relating to Tower Hamlets. To display some of them, my brother Harold created a web site called M(ementos) O(f) T(ower) H(amlets) which can be found on our main web site www.mernicks.com.



This advertisement for Clarke Nickolls & Co, better known for the acronym Clarnico appears in a theatre programme from the 1890s. It shows its enormous factory at the junction of Carpenters Road and Waterdon Road, Stratford with the River Lea and what was the North London Railway (now The Overground) near Hackney Wick Station. Near the junction of

Tower Hamlets, Hackney and Newham, I believe it to be in the former. Please correct me if I am wrong.



Clarnico from a 1928 letter head.



Some old factory buildings have survived

Bancroft Road invites you.

Current opening times

Mondays: closed

Tuesdays: 10.30 am to 4 pm

Wednesdays: 10.30 am to 4 pm

Thursdays: 10.30 am to 7 pm

Fridays: closed

Saturdays (first and third of each month):
10 am to 5 pm

The Blacksmith and the Toffee-Maker, by Jackie Gooding

Chapter 3: The Accident

It's December 1888 and I'm Tom, telling my thoughts to Taffy, who can write better than anyone else. What a year! In fact, the last two years have been the most eventful of my whole life (except for leaving home for London all those years ago). Typical that my wife should write a chapter before I do; she's a great talker and one to start things off. She and Sarah took over the organising of our joint wedding and the party after, so Taffy and I didn't have to do a thing except say "I do!" There was the cost of the wedding-clothes and food, of course, but we held the reception at the brides' home, as is the custom. Betty only moved away from Turner Street to the forge on her wedding-night.

The big question was should we have alcohol or not. Betty's friends from the Salvation Army were often also members of the Temperance Movement and would be shocked by the offer of wine or beer. We didn't want to offend anyone. Betty was now "dry", but I wasn't! Neither were Sarah or Taffy. In our years together he'd started to enjoy a pint with me. We compromised by providing non-alcoholic drinks at the reception itself and inviting those that wanted to adjourn to "The Good Samaritan", a pub just on the corner of Turner St and Whitechapel High St. We paid the landlord for the use of an upstairs room, with only our guests allowed to go up. My best man arranged this with a good supply of ale in advance (and lots of toffee too!)

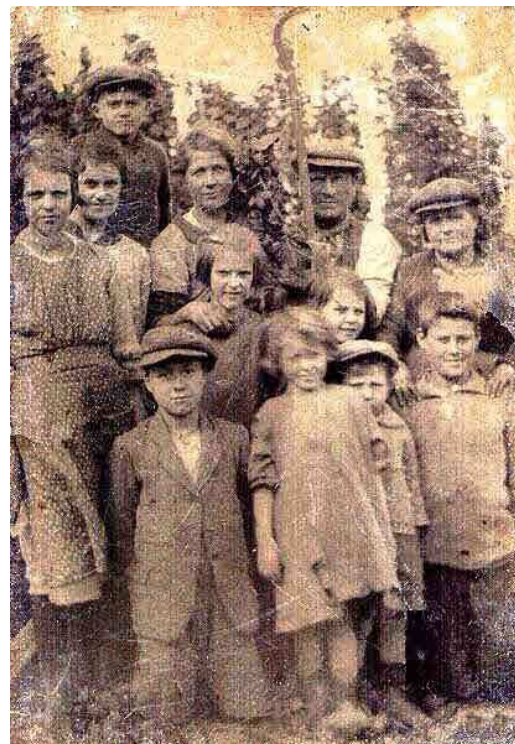
The wedding at St Dunstan's in Stepney was splendid. You could walk to the church from Turner Street. I did and so did Taffy, but Betty and Sarah arrived in a horse and carriage lent by the brewery. The church is medieval: beautiful and plain. It's surrounded by lots of grass and trees. It's peaceful. You wouldn't think you were in the East End. Both Betty and Sarah had simple long matching white dresses which a tailoress friend had sewn for free. It

seemed they were trying to outdo each other with their smiles. They carried fresh autumnal bouquets: the cornflowers were a strong blue against the green and copper beech-leaves. I was nervous but there was no-one to disapprove or condemn us for being unconventional. Our friends were so glad I was getting a wife at last after 30 years of being single. They wanted Betty to marry again. People were curious to learn Sarah was about to become my daughter and that Taffy wasn't my son. Anyone who knew "timid Taffy" was so relieved that he'd found the courage to propose to such an attractive and spirited girl. Sarah knew what she wanted: Taffy. And she got him!

The house in Turner Street was so full of guests you had to struggle to breathe! I had invited my family from Goudhurst, although I'd only seen them twice in the four decades since I had left home. It's not easy to leave a forge. Both of my parents had died, but three of my seven brothers and sisters managed to come to London to wish me and Betty well. The sandwiches and cakes steadily disappeared and long speeches were made, teasing me for how long it had taken me to find the right woman. I couldn't have been happier. I never intended to stay single – it just happened. Then I was married!

"Did you have a honeymoon?" you might be asking. Well yes and no. When they came to the wedding, my two brothers, still living in Goudhurst, made a suggestion. They said the hopping season was almost over by late September but there were always the final hops to be picked and odd jobs to be done. Hops are what are used to flavour beer. The idea was we could all four (the two newly-wedded couples) go to Paddock Wood by train and stay for a week in a "Hoppers' Hut", a wooden shack used by East End families when they spent the summer in Kent picking hops. Of course, I had to get permission from my boss at Charringtons to leave the forge. But my oldest brother offered to cover for me and I was allowed to take my first week-long holiday in 44 years!

So, we went to a farmer my brothers knew well and all enjoyed a week in the fresh autumn air of Kent, near where I was born and bred. Since there were no hop-pickers except us, the farmer allowed Betty and me to have a hut alone to get a little privacy. Taffy and Sarah didn't need to share with us either. We didn't need to pay him any rent because we were "honeymoon couples"! We made wood-fires in the open air and cooked our meals together. Me and Taffy did "men's work" around the fields to earn some cash, whereas Betty and Sarah (who had never lived in the countryside before) learned how to strip the last hops off their strings (which can really hurt your hands). They collected water from the outside tap, searched for kindling and wood for the fire and cooked! They also sat in the sun which shone on us in every way. Instead of resenting the presence of Taffy and Sarah, Betty and I were happy to have their company as usual - less frightening for me than being with Betty all day in a strange place so different from the East End!



East Enders at the hop fields. From a tintype photograph c. 1900.

Now at the end of 1888, we are starting to get accustomed to our new homes and partners. It was a shock for all of us! I didn't realise I'd become so set in my ways and so unaware of dirt. Betty saw dust as an enemy to be driven into submission. Living next to a forge in a brewery in East London meant she continued the self-imposed battle day after day, insisting upon snowy-white chair-backs and constantly tidying. But I found it such luxury to know that she was cooking, cleaning and caring for me! I'd looked after myself since 1844. I didn't regret the loss of those chores. My friendship with Taffy had drawn me out of the pit of loneliness but it is Betty who has affirmed that I'm lovable and she will care for me "till death do us part".

At the forge we have two rooms beside the workshop: one at the end as a bedroom and one as a living area, next to the warmth of the forge-fire. I didn't have much furniture before, but Betty managed to find us a second-hand dining-table and chairs and a double bed so old and rickety it seemed drunk. But we put newspaper under one of its legs and now it doesn't wobble. My wife has a way of making the rooms look homely and comfortable: she brought some of the pictures and crockery from Turner Street, careful, of course, to leave enough for Sarah and Taffy.

I don't know who does what at Turner Street, but they work out being husband and wife somehow and always welcome me and Betty with good cooked food (and toffee!) We love having them visit us at the forge. Betty enjoys the challenge of making a stew "stretch" to feed another two eaters. There are two rooms up and two rooms down at Turner Street. The toilet "out the back" is shared between all the residents in the block of ten terraced houses. Sarah, of course, was used to that arrangement but Taffy wasn't! He hates having to use the "bucket and chuck it" with so many others. He'd become used to living with me and only the two of us using a hole-in-the-ground pit latrine in a little shack behind the forge. Of course, when he lived with his mother in Wales, he and she were the only ones to share

their splendid indoor lavatory.

Taffy is a private man who reserves his energy for those he knows and loves: Sarah and me. He tells me he feels inadequate with Betty and her endless chatter, but he can put up with Sarah bossing him around because he knows she loves him. And she does! Betty and I never expected Taffy and Sarah to become friends and marry. She's so headstrong and he can appear weak and limp. (Sorry, Taffy, to make you write this down when it's all about you!) Underneath my friend and son-in-law has got a strong will and determination to get what he wants. Otherwise he would never have arrived in the East End and survived making toffee! or married Sarah! I guess she's learning to respect Taffy's quiet manner and trust him to make wise decisions for them both. But I'm sure she expresses her opinion as well.

I was going to tell you about the lodgers at Turner Street before I got side-tracked into toilets and Taffy. The two ground-floor rooms are used for living and sleeping by the new married couple. Upstairs they take in lodgers to help pay the rent. There's a couple from Russia in one room and an Irishman in the other. Compared to many dwellings in Whitechapel, this is luxury! I don't know how they all manage to cook and wash and I don't ask. The Irishman was there when Betty was in charge: he's not a labourer digging out the docks – he's a musician, a flute-player, who makes his money playing in local groups and orchestras. Sometimes he gathers a crowd around him in the street or at the market and passes his cap around as he plays jolly or sad melodies. I'd like to chat more with him and find out where in Ireland he comes from. I wonder if he came to London because of the Potato Famine in the 1840s or whether he arrived much later. It would be great if Taffy would play his violin with the Irishman playing his flute. We could go round the local pubs and raise money for the Sally Army. That would please Betty.

The Russian couple are 60 or so with no children; at least no children with them in

Whitechapel. I don't know their story, but I want to find out why and how they came to London. I don't know how we'll communicate because they don't speak much English and I don't know any their language! The husband is a bootmaker and works in a shop run by his Russian friends in Aldgate. His wife makes knickerbockers for a large firm at the rate of a penny a pair, using her own needle and thread. She earns five shillings a week. I know all this as a result of a great deal of time and effort (and nosiness!) from Betty. She managed to extract information from the couple by gestures and pictures and writing numbers on scraps of paper. She talks a lot but she can also listen.

What can I remember from the year 1888? Fog! Last January there was a terrible fog for a week so thick that some dockers drowned. One man fell into the river and shouted for help, but no-one could find where he was. We need life-lines attached to the quay-wall. Dockers' conditions are awful because the bosses want to cut costs to feed their greed. I always remember Betty's first husband died in a dock-accident. I won't be surprised if there's a massive dock-strike soon now the matchgirls have led the way.

But let me tell you about something more cheerful! In July we went on a monstrously huge outing to Clacton-by-the-sea on two special trains from Limehouse that took 1,700 men, women and children for a day at the seaside. We had a brass band and marched to and from the railway stations. We played cricket in the afternoon and got home at 10pm.

Mr. Frederick Charrington, (who left the family brewery and built a Great Hall just two years ago in 1886 on the Mile End Road, very close to the forge) organised and paid everything for the Clacton trip. He's a fascinating man, a bachelor and a true Christian who fights prostitution and the excesses of alcohol. (I still drink but never too much!) F Charrington lives in Stepney. He's not one of us but he certainly cares. Me and

Betty go to his Great Hall sometimes for concerts or religious meetings. It can seat 5,000!



Mr. Charrington's Great Assembly Hall

Also in July the Great Hall was used by 1,300 striking matchgirls who started to form a union, the largest in England and only women-members! Of course, Sarah is a matchgirl earning four shillings a week at the Bryant and May factory in Bow. She went on strike in July to complain about working conditions. She says the girls who make the matches with phosphorus sometimes get phossy-jaw which is a form of bone-cancer. They get yellow skin and the side of their face turns green and then black. There's horrible pus and finally they die. Phosphorus is apparently banned in USA and Sweden but not in Britain. Sarah really admires Annie Besant who encouraged and publicised the strike. On 17 July Bryant and May gave way and agreed to the terms of the Strike Committee and Sarah went back to work. She can tell you all the exciting details! All I know is that the mass-strike succeeded. People should join unions and fight for their rights. Is there a Blacksmiths' Union I wonder or one for Toffee-Makers?

A Year Later

Now I come to the next world-changing event in 1889, nothing of national significance but transforming life for me and Betty, Taffy and Sarah. At 59 (me) and 41 (Betty), we had assumed we would never have children. Betty

thought she was going through “the change”. I knew nothing of how women’s bodies work! But I saw Betty getting fatter although it annoyed her when I said this. She accused ME of being “old and fat”! I can’t help my age but my job keeps me fit and I’m proud of my muscles.

Our “accident” came in the shape of a baby called Charles, delivered at home exactly a year after our wedding-day! Betty finally realised she was pregnant again after 21 years. She was overjoyed. She left her job at the hospital laundry in June and looked after herself carefully for the last three months before Charles was born. I had never expected to be a father and looking after another little life came as a challenge but me too, I’m overjoyed.

Sarah and Taffy were not far behind! Their baby, David William, was born in late November, so this Christmas we will have two extra little people to love. I’m so thankful for the happy accident that has made me a father. Being a husband was a shock but having my own son, my own flesh and blood, is a miracle!

Chapter 4 will appear in the next newsletter.

One thing leads to another by Diane Kendall

My intentions were good. I was supposed to be working on the proposed Conservation and Management Plan for Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park. But, as so often happens when researching, I got distracted by an entry in the owners register that simply states James Brunsten St. Leonards Road, Bromley who purchased a 12 foot deep private grave for £4 4s in August 1857.

A quick check of the 1851 census shows that James Brunsten at age 41 years was a Victualler and living with his wife Agnes, 3 children, a servant and two pot boys but what really caught my interest was the name of the

public house - Grave Maurice, Bow Lane. Knowing that there had been a pub of that name in Whitechapel Road frequented by the Krays I wanted to know the origins of the name. A search of the newspaper archive gave various options for the origins of the name.

***East London Observer*, 27 February 1858**

WHO WAS THE "GRAVE MAURICE"?

This question, upon the solution of which much ingenuity has been elicited, and considerable curiosity expressed, is thus answered in the *European Magazine*, Oct. 1806 - **Dr. Hughson, by favour of Mr. Asperne, begs to acquaint X, and the other readers who are inquisitive concerning the meaning of the sign called the Grave Maurice, opposite the London Hospital, that the sign in question was most probably intended to represent the Grave Maurice.

In Junius's *Etymologican*, Grave is explained to be Comes, or Count, as Palsgrave is Palatine Count, of which we have an instance, Palsgrave Head Court, Strand, so called in memory of the Palsgrave, Count or Elector Palatine, who married Princess Elizabeth, daughter of James I: “Their issue were: the Palsgrave Charles Louis, the Grave Count or Prince Palatine Rupert, and the Grave Count or Prince Maurice, who all distinguished themselves during the civil wars in the reign of Charles I”. “The Princess Sophia, their youngest sister, was the mother of King George I and, had she lived would have been Queen-Regent of England, after Queen Anne. So that the Grave (or Prince) Maurice was a collateral ancestor to his present Majesty” (George II).

112, Holborn-hill, Oct. 2, 1806. – Note (by the Editor of the *European Magazine*): We are much obliged to Dr. H. respecting the sign termed the Grave Maurice; he is perfectly right in his conjecture, for in the Magistrates' Licensing Book it stands "The Grave Maurice" This sign remained against the house until

within these three weeks, and is now only taken down to be repainted. The hero it represents appears in a hat and feather, like a drum-major, dressed in a blue coat, &c.

The tradition of the neighbourhood is, that it is the portrait of a Prince of Hesse, who was a great warrior, but of so inflexible a countenance, that it was never seen to smile in his life, and that he was therefore most properly termed Grave. But leaving this rumour, in which truth and fiction seem to be blended, we must, as we are upon the subject of signs, remark, that the Palsgrave, his father, however unfortunate in the events of his life, was once a popular character in England: and a tavern, denominated from his portrait, stood on the site where Palsgrave-place is now erected. Another called the Palatine's Head, was to be seen near the French Change, Soho. The head of the Queen of Bohemia, his wife, long stood in the front of a public-house, which was once part of her palace, in Wych-street.

The two princes, Rupert and Maurice, for their courage and the generosity with which they espoused the cause of their uncle, the unfortunate Charles, were, after the restoration, the darlings of the people; and, as we have an idea that the mount at Whitechapel was raised to overawe the city, the latter, before he proceeded to the west, might have the command of the works on the east side of the metropolis, and a temporary residence on the spot where his sign was so lately exhibited. Dr. H. knows that the name of Prince Rupert is still commemorated by two streets, one near Coventry Street, west, the other in Goodman's fields; both of which, it is probable, took their appellations from the signs of public-houses which displayed his portrait.

There was a Prince Maurice, of Nassau, who was a great commander in the United Provinces, and died at the Hague, 1625; to him the title of Graff or Grave might apply; but it is unlikely, as he had but little connection with England, that his head should have been

adopted by us as a sign, so many years after-Editor.

East London Observer, 07 May 1910

There is more than one "Grave Maurice" in East London, and the students of this curious subject, while agreeing that it comes from Graaf or Graf (Dutch or German for Count) Maurice, do not agree as to the identity of the personage so favoured by the inn-keepers. There was a "Grave Maurice," Prince of Orange, elected Knight of the Garter upon St. Thomas's Day, 1612, but he was installed by deputy, for he was then an English hero, because of his successful fighting against the Spanish domination in the Netherlands. The Palatine Count Frederick was this Grave Maurice's nephew, and he married King James's daughter, who presented him with two sons - Rupert and Maurice who distinguished themselves in England during the Civil War. Most authorities think it was those young Princes' great-uncle, the Grave Maurice of Nasau, who gave the name to two of our East End taverns one of which is in the Whitechapel-road. There was another Maurice for whom some claim can be made. He was Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, and much admired in England for his adherence to the Protestant cause during the Thirty Years' War, when many English soldiers of fortune followed his banner and brought home tales of his prowess and learning. "Prince Rupert" was once a common sign in the Tower Hamlets, and so were "The Palatine" and "The Palsgrave" all derived from British association with German Protestant Princes. But Prince Rupert's brother, somehow, never touched the English fancy, and it is thought unlikely that he was ever in mind when an inn was to be called "The Grave Maurice."

East London Observer, 23 March 1912

On the walls of the Whitechapel Reference Library there is a quaint print of October 1764 which purports to be a view ("drawn on the spot") of the Palatine Camp in Whitechapel Fields. By this, it seems that the haven of the

South German refugees was close behind old Whitechapel Church. In the foreground we have a number of poor women washing and cooking in the open air of a wide field; in the middle distance are the tents where the refugees found nightly shelter under guard; and, in the background, is the tower of the old Parish Church, embowered in trees.

The whole aspect is quite rural, and we are shown the Camp being visited and inspected by the London city gentlemen and their sympathising ladies. By the bye, George Augustus Sala stated that it was certain " that in the reign of James I. an illustrious visitor to that Sovereign, the Landgrave Maurice lived in Whitechapel. "The shadow of His Highness's name dimly survives in a public-house, The Grave Maurice. However, the Whitechapel picture under notice does not relate to the period of James I., as has sometimes been erroneously stated; or to any of the immigrations of the Seventeenth century, which were consequent upon the Wars of Religion in Middle Europe.

I was then not only distracted by a lovely photo and account of the opening of the New Raine's Foundation School in Arbour Square, on the same page as the above extract, but also by an article in The East London Observer 11 September 1915 which gave an account of two drayman who were delivering beer at the "Grave Maurice" in the Whitechapel on 12 February 1814 and were struck down by a barrel head which had come from the sky! Evidently a big fire had broken out in the Custom House in Lower Thames Street earlier in the day, it had spread with such ferocity that the building had to be abandoned, unfortunately gun powder was stored in nearby vaults and at 9.30 am two and half barrels exploded. The shock waves were felt all over the city and buckets/barrels and debris rained down over a large area.

The "Grave Maurice" at what is now 269 Whitechapel Road was established in 1723 and

rebuilt in its present form as a Truman's Brewery house in 1874. Following use as a wine bar which closed in 2010 it now houses Fish Brothers and Paddy Power Bookmaker,



although the words "Grave Maurice Rebuilt 1874" are still engraved on the first floor wall. The website pubwiki.co.uk gives a list of the residents for the "Grave Maurice" at Bow the earliest listing is 1824. An advert for staff in 1827 and an upcoming auction shows how rural the area was.

Morning Advertiser, 11 August 1827

Man that has been used to the line, to carry out beer, and make himself otherwise useful, he must have a good character from his last place. Apply at the Grave Maurice, Bow-lane or Beer-lane, Bromley, near the East India Docks.

Morning Advertiser, 19 March 1833

All the Materials of Thirty Cottages, situate nearly opposite the Grave Maurice public-house, Bow-lane, Bromley, Middlesex, in Thirty Lots.by Ramsey and Son, on Thursday, March 21, at One, on the Premises, comprising all the pantiles, rafters, joists, flooring-boards, doors, frames, sashes, shutters, and brickwork of one cottage in each lot. May be viewed till the sale, and Catalogues to be had at the Grave Maurice public house, and of the Auctioneers, No. 83, Poplar, and No. 37, Assembly-row, Mile-end-road.

As with most public houses inquests were held on the premises the Grave Maurice in

Whitechapel was opposite the London Hospital which may have accounted for the larger number of inquests held compared to Bow Lane two of which stand out.

The Weekly Times (London), 01 November 1829, reported on an inquest held at the Grave Maurice public house, in Bow-lane, Bromley, on Mr. John Mackintosh, a master carpenter and builder, who was found lying, face downwards, in a pond or pool opposite to the Grave Maurice, on that morning. From the evidence, it appeared that the deceased was seen, between seven and eight o'clock on the evening before, about a quarter of a mile from where he was found, in a state of extreme intoxication, and the fog being rather dense at the time, it was supposed that he imperceptibly walked into the pool, and falling on his face into the mud, he was at once suffocated. There were not the slightest marks of violence perceptible on the body, nor were there the slightest suspicions that he came unfairly to his death. Verdict, Found dead

The Leicester Journal, 18 July 1834, reported on an inquest of a 3 year old child whose death by hydrophobia caused by the bite of a mad dog. If that was not sad enough, the parents were under the belief that their child could be saved by giving her a portion of the dog's heart and liver. The coroner Mr. W Baker pointed out to the parent and their friends the folly of their ways and hoped that such gross ignorance would not be seen again.

The Morning Advertiser, 25 July 1831, gives an interesting list of subscribers (namely over two columns given over to listing the London's Public house and their licensee) to an appeal by the Governors and Committee for the Licensed Victualler's Asylum for contributions towards completing the two wings of the original design, Mr Ludwig Lange of the Grave Maurice, Whitechapel paid 4 guineas in total, while James Sairs of the Grave Maurice Bow paid 3 guineas in total. Wondering where the building was led me to six acres of freehold land lying just off the Old Kent Road where the Licensed Victuallers' Asylum had been founded in 1827 to provide an institution

wherein the distressed members of the licensed victuallers' trade, and their wives or widows, might be enabled to spend the latter part of their days in peace and quietness.

Subscriptions were solicited to erect one hundred and one separate houses, each with three rooms and the requisite conveniences. During the Second World War, the tenants were evacuated to Denham, in Buckinghamshire. The asylum was bombed, and the chapel was almost completely gutted by an incendiary device, apart from important stained-glass windows and a collection of carved stone funerary monuments. The surviving cottages were sold to Southwark Council in 1960 to provide accommodation for local elderly and infirm residents. and renamed "Caroline Gardens" after Caroline Secker, a former resident widow of James Secker, who was the marine in the Battle of Trafalgar (1805) said to have caught Nelson when he fell.

Today the cottages are Grade II Historic England listed and still in use, the chapel which had been stabilised and made watertight by filling the crypt with concrete has had further restoration and is now used as a flexible project space and licensed for weddings.

Returning to the Grave Maurice Tavern, Bow, the *Hackney and Kingsland Gazette* reported on 24 June 1881 that the tender of Mr Shurmur (Clapton), £1,980 (approximately £125,750 today) had been accepted for alterations. By 1893 the address had changed to 18 St Leonards Road Poplar when Charley Duck late of the Nags Head Poplar took over the management of the billiard saloon at the Grave Maurice as reported in the *Sporting Life*. The description in Lloyd George Domesday map is that of substantial looking house, close to East India Road. Saloon at end of building approached by tessellated 7' passage way. 4 bars leading off this. 2 Floors over, 2 rooms on each. Very fair condition and well fitted but wants painting. At rear, top lighted billiard saloon with 2 tables. The building was

demolished to make way for the slip road on the Blackwall tunnel Northern Approach. My mind is already wandering to the development of St Leonards Road but that will have to wait for another day, as having spent an interesting evening and totally forgotten what I set out to do, it's time to climb the wooden hill.



St Leonards Road looking south 1956. The Grave Maurice can just be seen at the far left. Image P05827 courtesy of Tower Hamlets Archives



St Leonards Road looking north, 1956. The Grave Maurice is at the point of the arrow. Sign enlarged. Image modification of P05832 courtesy of Tower Hamlets Archives

Wapping, Shadwell and Whitby in the eighteenth century

Derek Morris

Probably every modern visitor to the north bank of the Thames, down river from the Tower of London, eventually finds their way to one of the many riverside taverns, such as the Prospect of Whitby, and wonders about the origin of their names.

Certainly, many taverns in the eighteenth century had names which linked them to a geographical area, including the Town of Ramsgate, the Dundee Arms, and the King of Sweden. Here a mariner could collect messages, exchange news with men from his home port, and meet the contacts that would help him find his next voyage, or perhaps find a ship to return him to his home port. The victuallers provided a source of safety for possessions left whilst a man was away, operated an informal *poste restante* system, provided micro-credit between voyages, as well as satisfying the demand for drink, food, a bed, entertainment and probably women. The safeguard for the victualler's provision of these services was to ensure the sailor made a will before leaving on his next voyage.¹

I have found nothing to link anyone in Whitby to the Prospect of Whitby, which for most of the eighteenth-century was known as the Pelican. I have, however, discovered far more links between Whitby and the Bell in Wapping, thanks to its connections with the family of Captain James Cook, who, in 1762, married Elizabeth, the daughter of the victualler Samuel Batts. Cook and his young wife lived at 126 Upper Shadwell until about 1765 when they moved to Mile End Old Town.²



My interest is in Elizabeth's mother Mary Batts, who was widowed in 1742 and took as her second husband a John Blackburn of Wapping. Blackburn is a common name in London and Yorkshire, so did he have Whitby connections? Fortunately, Mary Batts was aware that she faced a typical 18th century problem that on remarrying all her lands and possessions would become the property of her husband. So, she sold the property she had inherited, and probably set up a trust for her daughter Elizabeth to receive the dividends from investments in Bank of England annuities.

The first clue came from an indenture of 1745, which links Mary and John to a William Blackburn, mariner of Whitby.³

The second clue came from the will proved in 1779 of a William Blackburn, master mariner,

of Whitby, and it is a gold mine. He owned property in Shadwell and in Church Street, Whitby and his brother was John. His two new houses on Wapping Wall were left to his son Israel. He also owned *The Ocean*, and also “parts of ships”.⁴

The Blackburns were probably involved in both the coal trade from Newcastle and the major trade sending cheese from Yorkshire to London, and these are new lines of enquiry. My research continues but I would be interested in learning more about the Blackburns, and any other ports with strong links to Wapping and Shadwell.

Notes

1. D. Morris and K. Cozens, *London's Sailortown, 1600-1800: Shadwell and Ratcliff, a social history*, 2014, p. 61, East London History Society
2. D. Morris, *Mile End Old Town, 1740-1780; a Social History of an Early Modern London Suburb*, East London History Society, 2007. Second edition, pp. 117-128
3. LMA, Middlesex Deeds Register MDR 1750/1, 291, 15 July 1745
4. Borthwick Institute, University of York, BIA 20213144_RP_Blackburn_Whitby

My Randlord Relation Benjamin Dunham

How the proprietor of the East End's King of Prussia pub became a prosperous diamond merchant

When Barnett Isaacs (aka the irrepressible Barney Barnato) arrived in South Africa in 1873 to join his older brother Harry, he brought with him his modest savings together with some stock in trade: 40 boxes of cigars provided by his brother-in-law Joel Joel, the cigar dealer his sister Kate had married twelve years earlier at the Great Synagogue in 1861.

Joel's great grandfather, Isaac "Katsov" Joel, having come to London in the mid-18th century, was a respected member of the Great Synagogue congregation, possibly serving as a religious official responsible for the supply of kosher meat. Kate's mother's family tree included an honored rabbi.

Two generations on, however, Joel's father Isaac and his uncles (Coleman, David, Solomon, and Mark) were struggling as furniture brokers, not much more than peddlers, so members of the next generation were determined to try something new. Joel and his cousins Solomon and Joseph, sons of Coleman, and cousins Reuben and Joel, sons of David, all entered the cigar trade. (Who taught them about cigars and how to make them is anybody's guess. Mine is that their teacher was Isaac Simon Corper, the brother of Joseph's future mother-in-law. He was a cigar maker from Amsterdam, which was a centre for the production of cigars.)

Four of the cousins set out for America to ply their trade in the 1850s, but Joel Joel stayed behind and established himself in London as a cigar dealer. In the cigar business, Joel and Kate could look forward to a hard-working but not desperate existence. A life of ease, however, seemed out of reach.

Meanwhile, the Isaacs family - the recently widowed Isaac (a clothier from Newcastle), sons Henry (Harry) and Barnett and daughters Catherine (Kate), Sarah, and Elizabeth - lived above a shop at 8 Sandy's Row. At the Jews Free School on Bell Lane, only a two-minute walk away, the Isaacs boys received a good basic education from Moses Angel, said to be "the single most significant figure in Anglo-Jewish religious and secular education in the 19th century." Once out of school, they developed talents that lent themselves to advancement and promotion, including prize fighting and creating a vaudeville magic act featuring Harry as "Barnato (The Great Wizard)."

By the relatively tender age of 21, Harry had acquired the license for the King of Prussia public house on the corner of Petticoat Lane and Wentworth Street, a good location at the apex of the Petticoat Lane Market. The census taker found the Joel-Isaacs family there in 1871, with Harry as "publican" and his sister Kate as a "barwoman." Kate's husband Joel was listed as a "general dealer" (including cigars, probably), and their three sons, Isaac (Jack), Woolf, and Solomon (Solly) were all in school, presumably at the nearby Jew's Free School where their uncles had been educated.

The next year, Kate's young cousin David Harris returned, flush with gambling winnings, from South Africa. He encouraged the Isaacs boys to join him in the wide-open area of Kimberley, where diamonds had recently been found. This seemed like a splendid opportunity to the enterprising Harry, so he transferred the King of Prussia license to his brother-in-law Joel and followed David to the Mother Continent. As we have seen, Harry's even more resourceful brother Barnett embarked a year later with his 40 boxes of cigars.

The rest of this well-known story - not exactly "rags to riches" but "wiles to wealth" - is easily traced in Wikipedia and in a number of books, most impressively in Geoffrey

Wheatcroft's *The Randlords* (1985) and most engagingly in Stefan Kanfer's *The Last Empire* (1993).

By the early 1880s, all three Joel nephews had joined their uncles in the diamond business. Their progress can be followed in the census listings for their father, Joel Joel. In 1881, after the Barnato Brothers had had their first successes in the Kimberley mine, Joel listed himself - at age 46 - as "retired publican." "By 1886," writes Stefan Kanfer, "profits distributed among the Barnato family members had made them unimaginably wealthy." Three years later, Cecil Rhodes bought out the Barnatos to get full control of the De Beers Company with a check for £5,338,650 (£739,356,731 today) - at the time the largest cheque ever written. In the 1891 census, Joel Joel, the former cigar dealer and publican, identified himself, cheerfully I hope, as a "retired diamond merchant."

As far as I know, the four cigar-making Joel cousins who came to America - one of them my great grandfather - were not aware of their connection to the wealthy Randlords. I would surely have remembered if my parents and my grandmother Joel had ever said a word about it.



The brash and wily Barney Barnato, born Barnett Isaacs, whose mining successes in South Africa brought wealth to his sister Kate and brother-in-law Joel Joel, if not to Joel's cigar-making cousins in America.



An ad in the *The Era* of December 3, 1871, for one of Harry Isaacs's appearances as "Barnato (The Great Wizard)." The next year he set off for South Africa.

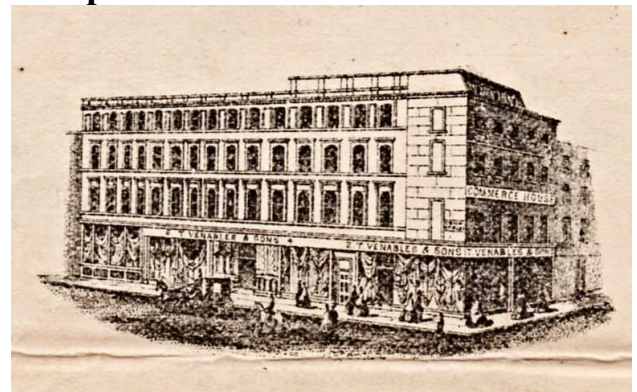


An early photograph of Barney Barnato taken in Kimberley in 1879. It comes from the book "B. I. Barnato: A Memoir" by Harry Raymond, 1897

Prussia public house was once located. Looking up Wentworth Street during a Sunday Market. Before it was demolished, the King of Prussia pub would have been located to the right of the image.

Benjamin Dunham, a retired arts executive and journalist, living in the U.S.A, is a first cousin, three times removed, of Joel Joel, and second cousin, two times removed, of his Randlord sons Jack, Woolf, and Solly, facts of some interest but which have never rewarded him financially in the least!

Yesterday, today and tomorrow? Philip Mernick



Yesterday



The corner of Wentworth and Middlesex (Petticoat Lane) in 2015, where the King of



Today



Tomorrow? Foster & Partners proposals

All show the junction of Whitechapel High Street and Commercial Street.

“Yesterday” depicts the massive premises of T. Venables & Sons from an advertising brochure dated Spring 1879. It quotes their address as 102-105 Whitechapel and 2-12 and 29 Commercial Street. “T. Venables have the pleasure to inform their Customers and the public, that their STOCK is now complete with all the FASHIONABLE GOODS for Spring & Summer ware.

The Venables business started in 1825 when the two young sons of Cornelius Venables

(1773-1841), a mercer and linen draper in Whitchurch, Shropshire, set up in London. William (1799-c.1851) and Thomas Venables (1800-1875), first appear briefly in 1825 as ‘silk mercers of 234 Whitechapel Road’. By 1827 W. & T. Venables had opened a shop at No. 103, near the corner with Essex Street, formerly Catherine Wheel Alley, later Commercial Street. They dissolved their partnership in 1830 when William went off to set up his own venture in Holborn. Thomas was then joined in partnership by a younger brother, John (1803-79). The Whitechapel shop at No. 103 appears, from a description during a court case in 1842, to have been predictably domestic in scale, with a separate ‘bonnet room’ at the rear. Although only four storeys high, including the shop, in 1841 the building accommodated Thomas Venables, his wife and young son, another younger brother Charles (1815-77), who soon returned to Shropshire, and twenty-three shop assistants, mostly men in their early twenties, living in presumably cramped dormitory conditions, with five servants, to cater for both the family and assistants.

In 1846 Venables took over the building that adjoined No. 103, on the east corner with Commercial Street. The new premises, formerly 104 and 105, were already a substantial building three windows wide, soon to be renamed ‘Commerce House’.

Over the years the Venables shops were expanded and rebuilt – in 1862 they expanded along Commercial Street (top view) and in 1909 when the corner buildings were demolished and rebuilt. Venables became a limited company c. 1891 when the last of the Venables family retired. It finally closed in 1928 and the site was taken over by F.W. Woolworth. It suffered heavy damage in World War 2 but was rebuilt (current view) and Woolworth continued there until 1960. The ground floor currently houses a Sports Direct with the upper floors used by a variety of businesses. In 2018 a proposal was made by

South Street Asset Management to demolish the Commercial Street building and build a 63 metre high glass building on the site retaining the façade of the existing 1909 corner building (lower view). It was submitted to Tower Hamlets Council for approval in 2022. The East End Preservation Society advised on 31st December “Tower Hamlets Strategic Development Committee was not at all impressed with this planning application tonight and voted overwhelmingly to reject it. 5 voted against it with only 1 abstention. The Councillors were highly critical of the scheme and seemed very surprised that it was put forward for approval. They were hugely concerned about the historic aspect and the damage to Whitechapel Gallery, Toynbee Hall and the whole Conservation Area. They told the planners that the Conservation Area was not for tall buildings, and they wanted to see something which was smaller in mass and scale which was sympathetic to the Whitechapel Conservation Area and its surroundings. The documentation is currently being prepared for submission to the GLA and the Mayor. They will then decide whether to agree with Tower Hamlets' decision or to call it in for review.”

Information on W & T Venables from the on-line Survey of London Whitechapel Project which contains more detail and references.

What's In a Name Carolyn Clark

What's In a Name, What's in a Street
Some street names reflect what it says on the tin – Mile End Road, Old Ford Road, Victoria Park Road, Commercial Road and Hackney Road. In other names, you wonder which came first, the pub or church or the street. Less obvious Victorian streets names may well relate to the individuals involved in the development – the owner, solicitor, Trustee, investor, developer, Uncle Tom Cobbley and all. The streets around Columbia Road are an

interesting case study.

In 1689, the ‘14 acres and 24 Perches’ of land where Jesus Hospital Estate now stands, were given to Jesus Hospital in Chipping Barnet by James and Mary Ravenscroft of High Holborn. Over 330 years later, the Ravenscroft name lives on in modern day Bethnal Green. The names of the owners of the surrounding land - Mr. Blake, Mr. Willett and Mr. Patient Ward do not. This does not necessarily mean that acts of benevolence bring recognition while just happening to own the right place at the right time do not.

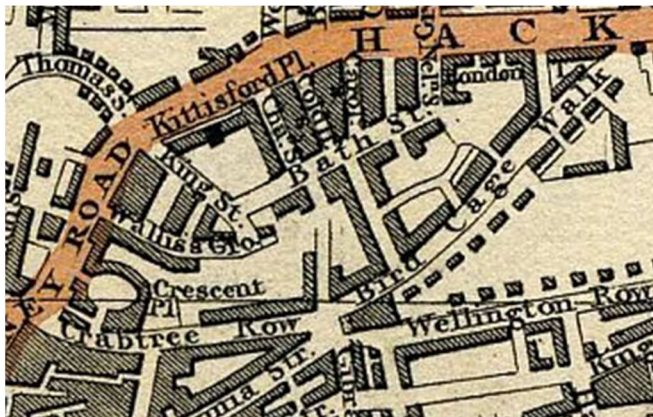


Columbia Road Market Buildings, 1869

After a long period of agricultural use, Jesus Hospital Trustees a.k.a. Visitors decided to build on the land in the middle of the C19th with the laudable aim of housing the East End poor. The first attempt was beset by corruption and mismanagement which created jerry-built slums. Jesus Hospital trustees were shocked by what they saw leading to the first housing being demolished and rebuilt from 1860. One of the first identifiable roads was Wellington Row c1835, possibly adopting the mantle of the nearby Wellington Place of c1830, named in the afterglow of the Iron Duke's defeat of Napoleon some 15 years earlier.

The new streets brought new names. Barnet Grove is a nod towards the Chipping Barnet base of Jesus Hospital. In the early years of 1860, Cross Street was a logical name for what

became Elwin Street. So why Elwin? Sounding like characters from a Dickens novel, Elwin, Wimbolt, Quilter and Baxendale are the names of the big wigs involved in the process of development.



1844

Columbia Road is a bit of a puzzle. An 1870 East London Observer report of a Bethnal Green Vestry meeting gives an insight into how random some names are. The Burdett Coutts funded Columbia Market Buildings were completed in the 1860s in Crab Tree Row, a lane that was at least 100 years old at the time. (This lane was later merged with Birdcage Walk to the east to form Columbia Road.) Having widened Crab Tree Row and installed lamps on the footpath as part to support the Columbia Market complex, Burdett Coutts wrote to ask the Vestry to *'now take to the thoroughfare'*. The Vestrymen questioned that *'as Crabtree Row is now a wide thoroughfare, would it not be as well to call it something better'*. One Vestryman, Mr Cook, suggested that another, Mr Pringle, *'would like to call it Angelina'*. We need a Dickens to explain who Angelina is – Mr Pringle's wife, mistress, or dog maybe? However, Mr Pringle was not falling for this and *'replied that he was not exactly in love with that name, but they might call it Columbia Street or Road.'* The decision was deferred.

An added twist to this story was uncovered by the 'Tenements, Terraces and Tower blocks project

[\(https://bethnalgreeninfocus.wordpress.com/2013/06/13/the-barnet-street-mystery/\)](https://bethnalgreeninfocus.wordpress.com/2013/06/13/the-barnet-street-mystery/).

The project found that the 1873 Post Office Directory and 1871 map below called Birdcage Walk to the east of Crab Tree Row 'Barnet Street'. The plot thickens, but at least the street is still there to tell the tale. For more on the Jesus Hospital Estate and Columbia Road, see 'Watercress but no sandwiches – 300 years of Columbia Road' by Linda Wilkinson



We should celebrate that Victorian and Georgian East End streets live to tell the tales. The tangible glimpse of the past they provide needs effective conservation area protection and enforcement. Some 200 years of heritage is increasingly being eroded by the destructive modern combination of: gentrifiers who just want to pop a new downpipe there for the mansard, or, when that is not enough, build out under the pavement; the politicians and planners embattled or encouraged into collusion; the consultants with their own ideologies; the lobbyists who see the street as a 'blank canvas' to be grabbed for other purposes despite a wealth of more suitable space five minutes' walk away. Streets are as much part of our heritage and place as housing, shops, markets, religious buildings, institutions, industrial buildings, waterways and parks. Tread lightly on our past.