



**Editorial Note:**

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The Newsletter is edited by Philip Mernick, with the assistance of an editorial team comprising, Diane Kendall and Samantha Bird.

**Cover Picture**

**THE CONVENT, 26 BOW-ROAD, 1897.** Image published by “The Builder”, January 23 1897.

“THIS building, now being erected, is for the Sisters Marie Auxiliatrice, whose principal convent is at Paris. These Sisters have been established for several years at 24, Bow-road, adjoining, their special work being amongst factory and working girls at the East End; this building, however, being inadequate for the community and the particular work they had undertaken, the adjoining site of No. 26 was purchased, on which to erect the building illustrated.

The materials of construction are walls of stock bricks in cement, with Gentry's red brick quoins, mouldings, and facings; Bath stonework in entrance doorway, niche, pinnacles, &c, Stuart's granolithic

**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](mailto: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.

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copings and staircases; slate roofs, walls inside finished with trowelled stucco; Terrazzo floors in corridors and entrance hall. The building throughout will be heated with hot water, and the total cost is £6,280. The builder is Mr, W. Watson, of Ilford, and the architect Mr- J. H. Eastwood, of Kensington.

Bow Road is remarkably short running from St Clements to Bow Church and only got its official name in 1875 (Mike Elliston), even though it must have been known as The Road to Bow since the village got its name about 1100. The 19<sup>th</sup> century locals must have been quite religious as between the Methodist Church at the corner of Merchant Street and Bow Church near the River Lea there was still space for a Congregational church and THREE convents! I hope to be able to do a full article on Bow Road in the next issue.

## Follow up to previous issue's Cover Picture.



I bought, at a Brentwood antiques fair, just a few weeks ago, a West Ham equivalent



This envelope in a blue wallet is printed GIFT FROM THE / County Borough of West Ham / TO CELEBRATE THE / CORONATION OF H.M KING GEORGE VI / MAY 12<sup>TH</sup> 1937. DAISY PARSONS J.P. Mayor, and holds a mint condition 1936 sixpence. Did the children get a sixpence and a party?

P.S. I have also found a brochure from Stepney, their pupils got a "Tuck Box"

## East London History Society Lecture Programme 2022

We are delighted to announce that we are going to resume our lecture programme. We shall be holding two in-person lectures at the usual Latimer Congregational Church Hall, Ernest Street, E1 4LS. Doors open at 7.00 pm and the lectures will start at 7.30pm.

June 23rd Gentle Author. Spitalfields Life

July 28th Carolyn Clark 200 years of industry along the Regents Canal.

**\*\*There will be a short General Meeting at 7.15pm prior to the start of this lecture\*\***

Suggestions and ideas for future topics and/or speakers for our Programme are always welcomed. If you can suggest someone or indeed if you would like to give a talk yourself, please email to [mail@eastlondonhistory.org.uk](mailto:mail@eastlondonhistory.org.uk) or [dkendallehs@yahoo.com](mailto:dkendallehs@yahoo.com)

## ELHS Post Pandemic

As with most societies despite the lifting of restrictions there are still many challenges ahead.

Since the society has been in suspension since the beginning of the pandemic the existing committee wish to give notice that a General Meeting will be held before the lecture on Thursday, July 28<sup>th</sup> 2022 at 7.15pm, to discuss the future of the society

The good news is as you will have just read above, we are returning to our venue in Ernest Street for two in-person meetings. Then after the summer break we are looking to do online lectures through the winter, when we believe attendance may not be so high. Also, during the winter months, if ideas are forth-coming, we would like to arrange some form of event

or visit – ideas welcome! However, if you have the expertise to help, going forward we would like to allow online members to join the talks with the audience at Latimer Congregational Church Hall.

Now for the bad news, the Society's long-serving Chair Philip Mernick, and many of the existing committee members have indicated that they intend to stand down. Therefore, to be effective, the remaining two members need help to run the society. Committee meetings in recent years have been informal and any help you can give would be much appreciated from making the tea, arranging speakers, working on the website, membership, publicity, etc. If you think you can contribute even in a small way, please do come to the meeting or contact Diane: [dkendallelhs@yahoo.com](mailto:dkendallelhs@yahoo.com)

Membership rates have not changed for many years and it must come as no surprise that our present membership cost of £5.00 per year is not sustainable. Costs for speakers, room rental, postage and publication of the newsletter have increased. Our fees presently do not cover the cost of the newsletter alone. Therefore, the cost of membership from September 2022 will be £10.00 per year and if the society continues membership may well need to increase again next year.

Membership is still good value for money, and contributions are still desired for future newsletters.

Please can you ensure when you pay your membership renewal that the society has an up-to-date email address for you, if you wish to view the online lectures.

## **ELHS and Facebook**

Why not link up with other members of the ELHS on social media? We have now created an ELHS group on Facebook, so that members can interact with each other any time of the

day or night! The aim is to bring members together so that they can easily contribute news, share their knowledge, memories and love of the East End.

If you have a query that someone in the group might be able to help you with, post a question...who knows where it might lead to! Found a nice picture in the back of a cupboard, then share it for everyone to enjoy! This is an additional space for members to be able to chat, so our over-seas friends and anyone who cannot make our lecture sessions can join in at any time!

So why not join the group by following the link:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/920507538645929> or simply type in East London History Society and you should be able to see our logo!

## **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](http://www.mernicks.com).

This issue's contribution is a paper bag, but not any old bag!.

Paper bag for holding 6d worth of Percy Dalton's "Monkey Nuts". Percy Dalton was born in Whitechapel 1908/1909 and began work at 14 as a barrow boy in The Old Road street market near Ben Jonson Road, Stepney. He appears in Post Office directories as a fruiterer at 128 Whitehorse Street (1931 and 1932) and as a Fruit Salesman in Spitalfields



In 1940 he and other members of his family took premises at 50-52 Brushfield Street, also part of Spitalfields Market and traded as fruit merchants. They were there until 1977 but moved their warehouse to Dace Road, Old Ford (Fish Island) in the early 1970s. They later moved to Haverhill, Suffolk still specialising in the processing and packing of nuts. In the early 1950s Percy Dalton came up with the idea of roasting peanuts in their shells and selling small packets at football matches and other sporting events. Percy Dalton retired in 1975 and handed control over to his son Barry. He died on the 9th of August 1983,

aged 75. Percy Daltons Famous Peanut Company, incorporated 22nd May 1957, dissolved 20<sup>th</sup> December 2016.

Does anyone know if the family is still involved in the nut trade?

**Last issue's M.O.T.H.** showed an aerial view of the Clarnico factory from an 1890s theatre programme. Tom Ridge sent me the following information.

Dear Philip, thank you for sending me the ELHS Newsletter. I attach my response to your piece about Clarnico. Some of the information is from the attached four-paragraph extract from my unfinished *East End Waterway Guide*, which I must finish. So far there are 77 typed pages and numerous long captions for images, mostly in the collections at Bancroft Road. Six miles of waterway was too big an undertaking, especially as constant revisions are needed to keep up with ongoing redevelopment; and I have still to incorporate further research on the southern part of the Limehouse Cut, and make further revisions where necessary.

The railway seen in your theatre programme is not the North London Railway but a branch from Stratford(?) which joined the NLR at a junction just to the west of the present Hackney Wick Station. I haven't included it in my response because I can't remember its name and date and all my research notes etc. are still at my flat in Bethnal Green. The paragraph about Old Ford was mostly written from memory, as was the bit about The Island.

With her smartphone, my friend Mary helped me to check the date of the Fish Island Area Action Plan and the fact that heritage asset no.16 in the CA constitutes three buildings (shown on the plan but not described).

The LLDC was going to call the CA Fish Island & Hackney Wick but I wrote a detailed letter re the boundary with Hackney and they changed the name to Fish Island & White Post

Lane. It should have been the Fish Island CA because the White Post Lane area is in Tower Hamlets' "Fish Island". I now realise that the LLDC must have thought that the name Fish Island should be confined to the area with freshwater fish street names: hence their need for an additional name to cover the part of the CA to the north of the eastern part of the Hertford Union Canal. The fact that they intended to name it "Hackney Wick" illustrates the strength of the mistaken belief that this part of Tower Hamlets is in Hackney Wick.

Some information in the response has been taken from an unpublished report about King's Yard, which I had typed up in 2004. It has 15 numbered pages and is based on observations in King's Yard and research at Bancroft Road and LMA with references to numerous plans, illustrations and English Heritage photographs (all still at my flat in Bethnal Green).

With careful editing, additional info. on architectural interest and a new title, I think it would make an attractive book. Especially with photographs of sweet-making machines from the book on confectionary which you kindly gave me during my Save King's Yard Campaign (see Games Monitor). Let me know if you are interested and I will ask Joan Goldsmith to email you a scanned copy of the typescript.

## **Bancroft Road invites you.**

### **Current opening times**

Mondays: closed

Tuesdays: 10.30 am to 4.30 pm

Wednesdays: 10.30 am to 4.30 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 4: The Hidden Doorway**

Good-day, ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls. It's now 1893, five years later than the previous chapter. I'm Betty's daughter and Taffy's wife and David William and Margaret Elisabeth's mother. But I'm also a person in my own right: I'm Sarah! I live, as you may remember, in Turner Street in Whitechapel with Taffy, my Welsh husband and our two children. Our daughter was born late 1890 so she's three and David William will be four in November.



Salvation Army Matches

In 1891 the Salvation Army opened its own match-factory in Old Ford Road and I was one of the first workers to be employed. It helped that Mum and me have so many Salvationist friends. Also, I knew what I was doing, having worked before for Bryant and May in Bow. But there was a big difference between the two factories: the Salvation Army only use the harmless red phosphorus so none of us "girls" gets phossy-jaw. We get paid twice the amount other factories offer (they pay 2d a gross). I hear we produced six million boxes of matches last year! Because I understood how to make matches on a grand scale, I was soon promoted in charge of the women who were supervising the "juniors" in their jobs. I enjoy this responsibility and the extra pay, but my dream is to train as a nurse at the London Hospital just five minutes from where I live. They don't offer this chance yet and

when they do, sadly they won't accept married women like me. There's a dynamic woman as Matron. Her name is Eva Luckes and she was appointed at the age of 26! At that time, she only had four years' experience as a nurse and the hospital is the only one in the East End with 600 beds. I saw this amazing lady many times when Mum worked in the hospital-laundry. Eva Luckes is a role-model for me. I'm waiting for her to train nurses and improve life for patients.

My mum, Betty, already looks after her child, Charles, and my two all day while I'm at work so I don't need to worry about childcare. Charles, who is theoretically my step-brother (!) and my two little ones get along fine: whoever looks after them just needs a lot of energy. My mum says she finds it exhausting but so much more rewarding than dealing with sheets and towels. When she goes back to the hospital to visit her previous work-mates, she finds out for me what's happening with the proposed nursing-training. But it will remain a dream.



What about Taffy?" do I hear you ask? He's no longer the shy man who would prefer not to talk to anyone. He seems happier and he loves spending time with his son and daughter. They adore him. He's much more affectionate with them than he is with me! In public he'll never willingly hold my hand or give me a cuddle. Sometimes I deliberately embarrass him by kissing him goodbye at the market or putting

my arm in his as we walk to church. Taffy and the Irish lodger have become great companions because they're both musical. Once they get together with their instruments (violin and flute), you can't stop them (except for food!) Sometimes, when the children are in bed or just before, they play jigs and folk dances. They always improvise or play from memory rather than from sheet-music. The melodies are often cheerful but occasionally they're sad. I prefer the happy tunes. I like to dance in the living-room with David and Margaret. I love children, especially under the age of five: they're so natural, simply enjoying movement and being together and being silly! David is quiet like Taffy used to be, but Margaret is just like me and my mum: talkative and willful.

The Irish lodger, whose name is Patrick, agreed to my step-dad's plan that we could ask the landlords in some pubs to let him and Taffy play music to the customers and collect money for the Salvation Army. Betty had checked that this was acceptable with the local Army captain. All four of them, Patrick and Taffy, my mum and step-dad, went off one Friday evening to visit all the pubs where they were known. That's how Tom became so useful. He'd been around Whitechapel longer than any of us. Before he married my mum and enjoyed her cooking, he often used to eat and drink in some of the local hostelrys (and there were at least a hundred to choose from!) Most landlords recognised him from the past and trusted him, so they were glad to have an Irish/Welsh duo playing violin and flute. What has happened over the past five years? Tom, my step-dad, is now a fit and active 63-year-old. We hope he will slow down soon but he shows no sign of doing so. He and Betty moved out of the forge in 1890. This was a shock for all of us. He still works there, of course, but he and my mum moved to 6, Bellevue Place. The Charringtons, who own the brewery, had decided, about 75 years ago, to build a cul-de-sac of terraced houses for some of their manual workers. There are little gardens at the front and back of each house –

lovely! Tom had lived 46 years at the forge and expected to die there. However, my mum wanted to escape the busy noisy area of the stables, the storehouses, the blacksmiths and the brewery itself with its huge towers and clanking machinery. She hated the smell of burnt horses' hooves as Tom fitted the horseshoes.

My step-dad never expected at his age to be offered the chance to move and pay a subsidised rent. It's only five minutes brisk walk to the forge and yet you would think you were in heaven in Bellevue Place and in hell at the brewery. I think the Charringtons offered the house to Tom as a reward for his 46 years of loyalty. He and Betty lived together less than two years at the forge and they were told they could remain at Bellevue Place even when he retires. Maybe there are plans afoot to knock down parts of the brewery, including the forge, and the bosses needed Tom and Betty to move out. Who knows? As you can imagine, Betty loves having another home to "make" and spent days going round the markets in Whitechapel, Bethnal Green and Poplar, to look for curtain material and second-hand furniture. She found a dilapidated old grandfather clock which didn't work. But she persuaded a driver to put it on his cart and bring it to her new home where she was sure Tom or Taffy would get it going!

Have you ever wondered how toffee is made? It's basically white sugar with butter (and maybe salt) heated until it becomes like caramel. Once the mixture is very very hot, you take it quickly from the heat and pour it onto a surface where it cools and hardens. You can vary its stretchiness by the amount of each ingredient and how long you let it cool. Taffy makes letters of the alphabet in toffee which are very popular with courting couples. However, he isn't only good at making toffee: he can make simple toys for our three under-fives. When other parents, friends and neighbours see the toys they ask where we bought them. That's how my Taffy became the **toy** and toffee-maker!

He makes and sells skipping ropes, cup and

ball, hoops (with whips), spinning tops and even a croquet set that was commissioned by a smart gentleman with a posh hat and lots of money. Taffy's dream is to make a simple jigsaw, but he needs better tools which cost money that we don't have. The children proudly show off their toys to their mates, shouting "My Daddy made this!"

For Margaret's third birthday he spent hours in one corner of the forge designing and making a "2 up/ 2 down" dolls' house for his little daughter. She shrieked with delight screaming "MY house!" But the best was yet to come. Taffy had made a secret compartment at the back of the dolls' house and there was a hidden doorway in the back wall. He guided Margaret's pudgy right hand to the back of the house and showed her how to slide the wall along to reveal a secret room full of miniature handcrafted furniture and a couple of little people made from pipe-cleaners. I wanted to say that Margaret was too young to play with such small dainty objects, but for once I held my tongue. I contented myself with instructing Margaret that it was such a precious toy she could only play with it on Sundays. However, I would put it on display on the sideboard for everyone to see. She was half-satisfied with this arrangement!

Thinking about that hidden doorway and the last five years, I'm amazed at how many doors have opened for our extended family. The three children, of course, have been a doorway to a different, delightful but demanding way of life. I found a safer job with more responsibility and my mum and step-dad went through the door of a house in Bellevue Place that they had never known or dreamed about. Taffy has become a pub-musician as well as a toffee and toy-maker. It's as if someone has opened lots of hidden doors of opportunity and unlocked our power to change and develop.

**Chapter 5 will appear in the next newsletter.**



## The London & Blackwall Railway by Tom French

The railway was opened on the 6th of July 1840 only fifteen years after the opening of the Stockton & Darlington Railway, which was the world's first public railway to use steam locomotives. The London & Blackwall was the second such railway to be built within London, the first being the London & Greenwich Railway, which was opened on the 8th of February 1836.



Viaduct in 1987

The line was less than four miles in length and for the first year of its existence, before its extension into the city square mile at Fenchurch Street, it was located entirely within the boundaries of the present-day borough of Tower Hamlets. When first opened it stretched from the Minories in the west to its eastern extremity at a location south of the East India Dock at Blackwall.

The owners of the dock constructed Brunswick Wharf on the river frontage adjacent to the Blackwall shipyard. It was opened in 1834 and the installation of its pier soon afterwards, gave an option for ships travelling to and from the Kent coast and cross channel ports to dock there.

At this time, the sheer volume of shipping trying to reach the already overcrowded Pool of London resulted in massive water born traffic jams on the River Thames at Limehouse Reach, and by disembarking at the wharf and

completing their journeys by road, travellers could take advantage of this facility to cut their journey times to the City.

Unfortunately, the road option did not entirely solve the problem, because the heavy volume of traffic along the route also led to congestion problems and severe delays. This opened the door for consideration to be given to a third option – the installation of a railway connection. It was thought that this would result in a much faster, direct and efficient service to the City, and it would of course eliminate any congestion problems.

Opposition came from those with vested interests, who saw the railway as a serious threat to their support of road transport, and they took all possible measures to prevent its construction. Several schemes were suggested to improve the road link between the docks and the City, and it was thought that if one of them was successfully implemented, it might remove the need for a railway system, and that authorization to build it would not be granted. Sadly, for the supporters of the road lobby however, this assumption was doomed to failure when two rival consortiums were formed, both of which sought parliamentary approval to build the railway.

John Rennie, an engineer who had worked alongside Robert Stevenson in the planning and construction of the London & Birmingham Railway, was appointed as the engineer of the proposed railway to be called “The Commercial Railway” and he initially surveyed and drew up plans detailing the route its line should take. He proposed that it should run on a brick built arched viaduct built to a great height for its entire length, and it would be of similar construction to the one installed on the London & Greenwich Railway. Starting from a point within the confines of the City of London, the elevated line would run parallel to the south side of Commercial Road. It would then cross the Regents Canal Basin (renamed Limehouse Basin), before travelling to its final destination at Blackwall.

He also recommended that the track gauge

(width between the rails) should be about 5' 0" rather than the 4' 8 1/2" gauge which would soon become the standard gauge in British railway construction.

By becoming involved with this project in East London he was following in the footsteps of his father, a civil engineer who had been greatly involved in the design and construction of the East and West India Docks.

The publicity given to the "Commercial Railway" project alerted other interested parties to investigate the feasibility of running such a line through East London, and very soon another company was set up in opposition. No less a personage than George Stephenson "The father of railways" and his son Robert were engaged to survey their own line between the docks and the city.

Theirs was given the rather unwieldy title of The London & Blackwall & Steam Navigation Company and it was a slightly less ambitious in its design than that of John Rennie. They proposed that its terminus would also be located in the City. Built within a very deep brick cutting for almost its entire length, the line would run parallel to the north side of Commercial Road and run in an easterly direction until it reached its final destination at Blackwall.

The first major setback to the proposals occurred when John Rennie stood down from his role as engineer to "The Commercial Railway". The reasons for this are rather complex but surprisingly the Stephenson's then jumped ship and joined this company, where they replaced him as joint engineers of the project.

George Stephenson's son Robert was subsequently appointed as the line's consulting engineer. He was involved in the construction of numerous other railways during the same period, and by 1850 almost a third of the country's new railways, including the 112 mile long London to Birmingham Railway, were under his control.

The plans drawn up for the line by John Rennie were adopted by Robert Stephenson with one major exception. Instead of employing steam locomotives, Robert Stephenson opted for a system of rope haulage.

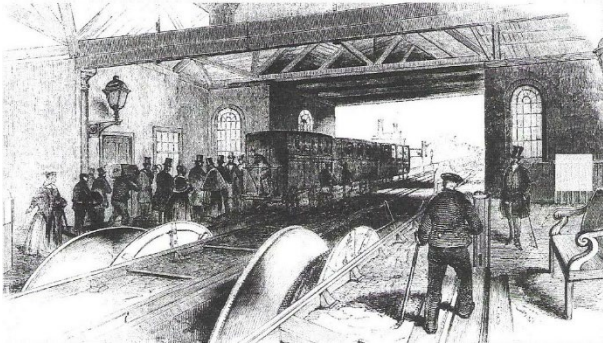
Despite the fact that the Stephenson's were so closely associated with steam locomotion, Robert none the less decided that rope haulage was the safer option because the risk of flying sparks escaping from locomotives could possibly set fire to property in close proximity to the line. He had already employed rope haulage on a short stretch of the line on the climb out of Euston Station when building the London & Birmingham Railway, so it was not all together surprising that he opted for this system now.

Once the plans of both parties had been finalized, they were submitted to a Parliamentary Committee appointed to consider whether the railway should be built at all, and if authorized to rule which of the two rival companies should prevail. Several weeks of parliamentary debate ensued before the Committee announced the result of its findings, and after examining and giving due consideration to both schemes, their final decision ruled that it should be built by "The Commercial Railway"

The Act authorizing construction of the railway received Royal Assent on the 28th of July 1836, but it stipulated that the line's western terminus must be outside the City. This was because the City of London Corporation categorically refused to permit any railway development within the square mile.

Building work began two years later in October 1838, and because of the relatively short length of the railway, construction of the line and most of its infrastructure was completed within two years. One significant change of plan however involved the length of the viaduct. Instead of carrying the line all the way to Blackwall as planned, it was only built

for a distance of about 2¼ miles to West India Dock, where it ended abruptly. From there the tracks were carried on a raised embankment before entering a shallow cutting on the final approach to Blackwall.



Winding Gear

Two bi-directional tracks operating independently of each other were laid down with the track gauge set at 5' 0" and as expected, rope haulage was selected as the method of traction. A separate rope was installed for each of the two tracks and the winding gear for each was powered by a stationery steam engine placed at each end of the rope.

The ropes could not be stopped or started independently, so a means of controlling them remotely had to be found. The problem was solved when the recently developed electric telegraph system was installed as a means of communication. This enabled the operators at each end of the line to maintain constant contact with each other, and it gave them control of the ropes throughout each journey, by their coordinated use of the winding gear.

*To be continued.....*

## **From John Clark, Hello Philip,**

Regarding your request for contributions for the next Newsletter, I have been searching my 'Archives'. and found a copy of Elam, 'A Magazine for the Arts in East London', Spring. 1976, which included a Local History Quiz. Having been born and raised in East London and surveyed properties there from the 60s to 90s, I thought I had a reasonable knowledge.

However, I only managed 7 and 1/3rd out of 20.

Coincidentally or perhaps strangely my best score for a single programme on University Challenge is 7, considerably less than the winning scores in their 100s.

I wondered if the combined knowledge of your colleagues in ELHS might find it interesting, or dare I say challenging.

My lucky 7 were 1,2,5,8, 17,19,20 and 1/3d of 9.

Here were the Questions:-

1. Which famous explorer lived at 88 Mile End Road?
2. What institution now occupies the site of the Peoples Palace?
3. What was the full name of the White Chapel from which Whitechapel gets its name?
4. the original Bow Bridge was Roman, Norman, Late Mediaeval, or Elizabethan?
5. The London Hospital opened at its present site in 1657, 1757, 1857, or 1957.
6. Which Bishop of London is supposed to have been responsible for building Bishopsgate
7. The garden of Dr. John Fothergill is now a local park, can you name it?
8. "Poor East London has only one ancient and venerable Foundation, and they have wantonly destroyed it"....to what event is Walter Besant referring?
9. Name 3 primary schools commemorating 3 imprisoned Poplar Councillors.
10. The Stratford martyrs were burnt because they were Catholics, Protestants, Quakers, or Baptists?
11. Who is Meath Gardens named after?
12. Which Church was the church of the East India Company?
13. What was the name of the priory where Chaucer's prioress learned French?
14. What year was the London Docks closed down?
15. John Strype the historian was Vicar for 68 years of Leyton, West Ham, Hackney, or Barking?
16. Who wrote 'The world is a Wedding' .
17. Who put up the money to build the

Drinking Fountain in Victoria Park?  
18 Besides the Dock Strike which other famous strike was in 1889?  
19. Which 17th century figure was captured in a Wapping pub and died in the Tower?  
20. Who designed, 'The Great Eastern'?  
Good Luck, John Clark  
**Answers on page 17**

## Docklands History Group

Conference: London's Sailortowns 21st  
May 2022 - Tickets Still Available



Historically, many areas east of the City catered for the port's sailors – St. Katharine's, Wapping, Shadwell, Limehouse, Poplar and Blackwall, on the north bank, and Bermondsey, Rotherhithe, Deptford, Greenwich, Woolwich and Gravesend, on the southern shore. These areas were – physically, economically and culturally – distinctive liminal spaces where the maritime met and interacted with the non-maritime. These were areas whose inhabitants and buildings were intertwined with the river and the sea. They were the port's traditional 'Jack Tar' districts. The conference reveals some of the many complex debates on London's sailortowns and sailors' lives ashore, including the sense of 'otherness' and exploitation that often impacted on both. It also demonstrates that the Thames littoral was sometimes a place of conflict within the maritime community and

between it and officialdom, in its many different guises.

Chronologically, the seven conference papers span the period from around 1580 to 1910. The distinguished speakers – who are all established experts in their various fields – will present much new research material and also address the numerous myths which have come to surround some of their subjects.

This conference will take place at the Museum of London, London Wall.

### **My name is Albert Noble, now living near Ashby de la Zouch in the Midlands.**

Here's my personal recollections of WW2 starting in East London and moving West!  
Regards, Albert

I was born in Stoke Newington in 1933 in a nursing home in the High Street. We lived in Park St, near Clissold Park, where my mother took me paddling in the pond there. There was a van parked near the exit showing Mr Therm gas films." Meet Mr Therm, he makes your life more easy, he makes your life less greasy, so meet Mr Therm."

A 16mm projector inside the van threw a picture onto a shaded screen at the rear, where we all stood. I attended at five, Princess May Road school, where we were taught to write with a slate board and slate pencil.....pre biro days, indeed. As war approached, we moved to a little terrace house in Kingsbury Road, Dalston, next to the Jewish cemetery. I recall the muffin man and knife grinder who visited the road. Hanging on the back of the coal cart, whilst the other boys would shout out, "Look behind gvnor" Taking the wireless accumulator to be charged for 6d and getting a packet of 5 Woodbine for my father.

My father and Uncle had a builders in Essex St, where I was taken on a Saturday morning as a treat. It later moved to

Fleming St, opposite the Geffrye Museum  
Fleming St has long been flattened.

When war broke out my father dug out the garden for the Anderson Shelter. I recall the night the London Docks was hit, looking out of the shelter up at a barrage balloon overhead. It was a ruddy red in colour, the red flames from the burning warehouses being reflected off the silver barrage balloon. One could hear the German bombers overhead and the mechanical sound of bombs being released, then screaming down.

One day an unexploded land mine landed in a garden of a house opposite to ours so we had to leave. Next day my mother and I were shopping along Dalston Waste when there was an almighty explosion. On returning home we found that the land mine had exploded whilst the bomb disposal were trying to defuse it. The roof of our little terrace house was completely destroyed etc., all windows out etc.

Just at this time my Uncle moved from a flat in Shepherds Bush to Brighton, so we took over his flat and my adventures continued in the West! Picking up shrapnel each morning, sleeping down the London tube on a hard platform each night. Incidentally the lighting in the train carriages in those days had glass shades. Can you imagine how long they would last, intact in these days! Playing on the local bomb site. Walking back home each morning when the all clear sounded carrying blankets. Cringing under a coat with my mother when a V1 came over, waiting for its engine to cut out and maybe fall on us in our flat. (it fell on the Met railway line at Goldhawk Rd, opposite.)

It all ended at Piccadilly Circus watching the Victory Parade go by in 1945.

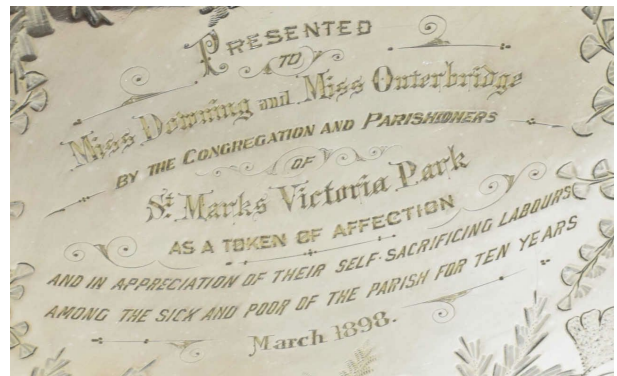
## Suffragette reminders

Two items of local suffragette interest came up for sale at Stroud Auctions (Gloucestershire)

on the 12<sup>th</sup> of January. Lots 351 and 352

### Lot 351.

A silver-plated tray inscribed *Presented to Miss Downing and Miss Outerbridge by the Congregation and Parishioners of St Mark's, Victoria Park ... in appreciation of their self-sacrificing labours among the sick and poor of the parish for ten years, March 1898.*



Estimated at £100 - £200, it sold to a UK collector for £400

### Lot 352

A hallmarked silver hunger strike medal engraved with the name, date and the gilt encomium *Presented to Frances Outerbridge by the Women's Social & Political Union in recognition of a gallant action, whereby through endurance to the last extremity of hunger and hardship, a great principle of political justice was vindicated.*



Outerbridge's name does not appear in the Suffragette list of recipients of the medal, unlike her lifelong friend, fellow nurse and East End housemate, Caroline Downing.

But on March 1, 1912, at the Bow Street Sessions, when Downing was sent to the infamous force-feeding Winson Green Prison for a window smashing protest, so was one Frances Williams.

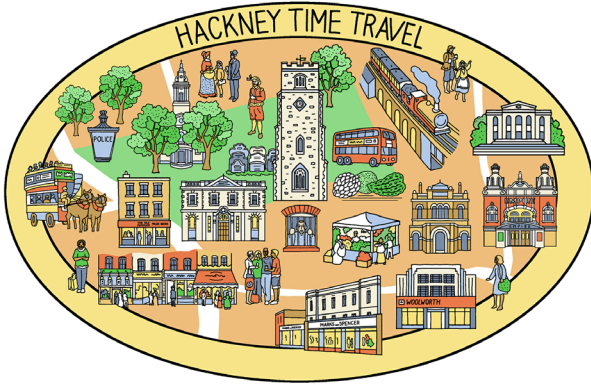
Williams was the maiden name of Outerbridge's mother. It seems likely that she gave the false name to avoid embarrassing her uncle, a prominent politician in Bermuda who was pushing for female suffrage on the island (the measure finally passed in 1946).

Both lots were consigned by a proud descendant of Frances Outerbridge who consigned the medal, which was estimated at £2000-5000 and sold online to a UK collector at £13,400.



## Hackney Time Travel

### Information from Carolyn Clark



Hackney's oldest building is the focus to bring together Hackney Central's past and present with a new programme of activities, exhibitions, workshops and talks this year.

On Saturday May 14th, the Tower will be open from 12-3.00. We'll have an exhibition on how transport has changed over the years and its impact on the area. People are invited to share their own stories. Artist Emily Tracy - <https://emilytracy.co.uk> will run an arts workshop exploring the graves in the graveyard around St Augustine's tower and collect rubbings of names, words, dates and patterns which give clues to Hackneys' history. Use these impressions to create mini books. And not forgetting our monthly competition with prizes from M&S.

On June 11<sup>th</sup>, St Augustine's Tower will be open from 12-3.00. We'll have an exhibition about 300 years of Narrow way shops, inviting people to share their own stories. Storyteller Rebecca Tubridy will weave stories from the past. Artist Emily Tracy - <https://emilytracy.co.uk> will run art workshops on Hackney's long history of shoe makers, In the 1880's Hackney was a centre for shoemaking and it is home to Cordwainers college. In the 1950's to 1970's Mare Street used to have Lilley and Skinners, a Dolcis where you could get your feet x-rayed to make sure the shoes fitted. In 1901, 2,686

bootmakers were employed in Hackney. People are invited to come and work with Emily to create an artwork inspired by shoe making trade in Hackney using collage. Book a place on <https://hackneytimetraveljune.eventbrite.co.uk>

On July 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Shops theme will continue with Jane Smith running art workshops on the theme reflecting shopping in the past, present and future.

During the year, there will be more exhibitions, workshops and events showing 700 years of change in our backyard. If you're passing, and the Tower is open, drop in to see what's on. All the events and activities are free.

Hackney Time Travel project is part of the Hello Again Hackney programme funded by London Borough of Hackney, to enable more people to re-discover and enjoy the buildings and services that Hackney offers. It is run by the Hackney Historic Buildings Trust. See programme updates on <https://www.staugustinestower.org/>  
Instagram: staugustinestower  
Twitter: staugustinestwr

## Ex-Police Constable's Sad Suicide. By Janice Brown

At West Ham on Monday Mr George E. Hilleary held an inquest on the body of William BRANCH FARROW, 55years a Regulator, of 82, Vernon Road, Stratford. The Widow said her Husband was a superannuated police constable and had received a pension for ten years. For six years he had been employed by the Stepney Borough Council, as a Regulator at the Hay Market.

When the Council took over the Market fresh regulations were made. In consequence of these alterations in the regulations there was a Law Suit, which had been pending for about

twelve months. The deceased talked a lot about this and had worried over it and he often had to see to a solicitor about it.

The case was to have been heard last Monday but was put off and deceased had been worrying very much since then. He was unable to sleep at night and said that the people were all against him. He was under the impression that he was wanted to tell a falsehood. On Thursday when he came home, he seemed very much disturbed and worried. During the night the Witness had to fetch a doctor to him because his nerves were bad. On Friday dinnertime the witness missed her Husband's knife but did not take any notice. He appeared worried but this was not strange. In the evening the witness went out to get the deceased some castor oil, when she came back ten minutes later she found him with his throat cut. He said, "I have cut my throat, it came over me all of a sudden" and the Witness informed the Police and a suicide note was found.

P.C. Taylor said he was called to the house and found the deceased sitting in the kitchen. He took him to the Hospital. The Witness found a table knife on the floor of the latrine. There was a good deal of blood about.

Dr. Fleetwood, House Surgeon at the West Ham Hospital, said on Friday evening the deceased was admitted to the Hospital. He had a deep wound in his throat, but was conscious. He appeared to be going on fairly well but on Saturday morning he collapsed and died shortly afterwards. The cause of death was asphyxia from the wound.

George William Clark, Town Clerk to the Stepney Borough Council, then gave evidence. He said he should like to express on behalf of the Council and his colleagues, sincere sympathy with the Widow in her bereavement. There was never a more faithful servant than the deceased, who was much esteemed. He said Stepney Borough Council succeeded the Whitechapel Trustees, as a result of this coming into operation of the London Government Act. The Borough Council had a statutory right, and made certain

alterations in the regulations of the Market. These regulations were exhibited in the Market and it was the deceased's duty acting under the instructions of the Borough Engineer to enforce them.

One of the Firms in the Market wanted to try a legal point with the Council and left two horses and vans outside the Market in the Whitechapel High Street. The deceased removed them to a green yard and presented a report.

The Firm were very anxious that the Council should proceed against them but the Council were very reluctant to do this and the Firm brought an action against the Council. The matter seemed to worry the deceased a great deal. The Solicitor for the Council had interviewed him several times. On the 5th of this month the deceased came to witness in great distress and was very much worried about a plan that had been made by one of the assistant surveyors and said he was very doubtful if the measurements on the plan were accurate. The Witness told him that he would not have to swear to the plan if he did not draw it up and this seemed to reconcile him somewhat.

The Clerk for the plaintiff's solicitor came to deceased with a subpoena and the deceased seemed doubtful as to whether he should take it and came to witness to know that he should do. Deceased seemed in a great state of mental agitation about the plan, which he had nothing at all to do with.

The Jury returned a verdict of 'Suicide' while of unsound mind.

I sent for the death certificate and it shows cause of death 'Asphyxia from wound in the throat self-inflicted whilst of unsound mind' it must have been a painful and gruesome experience not a method I would have chosen.

The Suicide Note.

They have plotted against me - they have trapped- I am done- all against me, done my duty fair. I hope you will forgive me, do, there's a dear. I am sorry to give you this



trouble-no way out of it. You know that I have told you. Good-bye once more. Don't fret. Goodbye to everybody. I hope it will come home to them, when they see what they have done. Not accountable for my actions this morning - sorry afterwards  
 Goodbye Harry, Flora, Bill. Your unhappy Father. Don't fret. I have no chance against them. I done no wrong to them - only duty- too late tomorrow - WF.

Reading the suicide note it seems that he mentioned only three of his children, Henry, Florence and William but not Kate and Albert, I know they were still alive as I have traced them on subsequent Census's after 1906 and can only assume they may have been estranged from their father for some reason. On reading the Newspaper article I was intrigued as to why William's wife on finding him sitting in the chair with his throat cut she called the Police and not a Doctor and why did she need to go out for castor oil and what was it for!!!  
 William did not leave a will but on 11th June 1906 his widow Sarah Ann FARROW was granted his effects of £167.16s.1d.  
 Recalling all those years ago my Mother was under the impression from her elder Sister that their grandfather committed suicide because he was accused of taking bribes from the stall holders in The Hay Market and by reading the Coroner's report this does not appear to be the case.

The Town clerk to the Stepney Borough Council gave William a good character reference of him being a faithful servant and was held in much esteem by them. There was no court case against him as he was to be called as a witness and not a defendant. I suppose with all the worry of the impending court case it sent him over the edge and whilst being of unsound mind wanted to end his life. It just goes to show that family rumours can be distorted over the years and family researchers should check for as many details as possible to get to the true facts but I am very glad that I was able to read the newspaper report and see

the reason for my great grandfather's suicide in a different light.

I have not been able to find out where William is buried and am not sure whether in 1906 a 'suicide' death could be buried in consecrated grounds as it was a crime in those days.

I was curious to find out what happened to Sarah Ann FARROW, William's widow after his death but on checking the 1911 Census had no luck finding her. I even tried finding her under her maiden name of HOY thinking she may have reverted back to her maiden name but again had no luck.

Thinking that perhaps she had died but this was a long shot as she would have only been 54 years of age in 1911, but on searching the death registers between 1906 and 1911 I found a death entry for her in 1907 just under a year since her Husband's death.

In the first quarter of 1907 Sarah Ann FARROW died in West Ham, London, aged 50 years and I was so surprised that she died so soon after William's death but do not know the cause of her death.

I am very pleased that by tracing my great-grandfather's life I was able to trace not only his parent's, Jonathan and Harriet Farrow my 2x grandparent's but also John and Susanna Farrow, my 3x grandparents and Thomas and Alice Farrow my 4x grandparent's way back to 1771 who were all born in small hamlets in Norfolk and now know where my Ancestors lived and died.

### **Answers to the Local History Quiz from Page 11.**

1. Captain Cook.
2. Queen Mary College.
3. St. Mary Matfelon.
4. Norman.
5. 1757.
6. Bishop Erkenwald (died 697).
7. West Ham Park.
8. The removal of the Royal Foundation of St. Katherine's to make room for St. Katherine's docks.
9. Susan Lawrence, John Scurr, George Lansbury.

10. Protestants.
  11. Earl of Meath, Chairman of the Metropolitan Public Gardens Association when opened in 1894.
  12. St. Mathias, Poplar.
  13. St Leonard's Priory.
  14. 1969.
  15. Leyton.
  16. Bernard Kops.
  17. Angela Burdett-Coutts.
  18. The garment workers strike.
  19. Judge Jeffrey's.
  20. Isambard Kingdom Brunel.
- Regards John.

## Victoria Park, 1906

### Samantha Bird

I don't know about you, but whenever I am out and about, I am always on the look-out for imagery of the East End and in particular of Stepney Borough. It's been school holidays here, so a chance to take a bus-ride over to Epping. Always have to go on a Monday, as it's market day and it's getting harder to find a market these days! Epping has a brilliant bookshop and I often come out of there with a gem or two!

On this particular day, I am just about to walk out of a charity shop, when a picture frame catches my eye. A nice early 20<sup>th</sup> Century picture, from the style and costume; then I read the caption underneath it "Victoria Park, 1906". It's an image I don't have a copy of, so after paying a few pounds, I'm the proud owner of this picture:



This image shows the Grove Road Entrance to Victoria Park. Llanover Lodge, built in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, is by the Crown Gates entrance. During the time this picture was taken, it would appear that, one James Alden lived in the property, along with his wife Eliza and two sons, Edward and William. Alden had been a Park Constable since at least 1881 although he had lived in various local properties in the years before the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Alden and his family remained at the Lodge until the next census in 1911, by which time he is described as a Park Keeper. By 1939, one Charles Harrap and his family have moved into Llanover Lodge. Harrap had now taken over the position of Park Keeper. His wife, Lottie kept house while his eldest daughter, Eileen was a Wool Works Shop Assistant and his youngest daughter, Doris was a schoolgirl.

Harrap was a local man. Born in south London he was living in Bromley St Leonards, Poplar, by the age of four years. By the 1911 census he was a Private in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Royal Fusiliers. He was to serve during the First World War as a Corporal in the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Royal Fusiliers, in France for 4 years and 4 months. With the end of First World War, he married Lottie Sims in Shoreditch, 1919, and settled into family life. During the inter-war years he moved to Llanover Lodge. During the Second World War, Harrap was an ARP Warden. He remained at Llanover Lodge until his death 1951.

Prior to the outbreak of World War Two, Victoria Park had strong associations with London's Labour movement. The park was famous for its public speakers' corner, near Victoria Fountain, where people could stand on a box and wax lyrical to passers-by. It began with the Chartists in 1848 and was followed by the Dockers in 1889 where the park held meetings for such orators as Tom Mann, Ben Tillett and John Burns. Victoria Park, created in the 1840s, was of great importance to East End history as it was the first time that a great undertaking was

motivated, not for private profit, but public welfare. A great recreational space for the masses of the new industrial community. Victoria Park covers a total area of 217 acres, which the *The Metropolitan Borough of Bethnal Green: The Official Guide*, 1955, claims to cover within its borders practically everything necessary for the recreation and pleasure of the local people.

Between the years of 1842 and 1845 Victoria Park was laid out by Sir James Pennethorne and was opened in the latter year. The Park was named after the young Queen who had only ascended the throne eight years prior to its opening. By 1873, Queen Victoria visited the park. At this time one Michael McMahon and his wife Harriett were living in the lodge. As Park Keeper at the time he was no doubt responsible for making sure the park was looking at its absolute best for a royal visit. Following the history of the lodge, it would appear that Park Keepers changed at regular intervals, why, you might be thinking, one can only make assumptions. Looking at the ages of the park keepers at the points of census it would indicate that those taking on the position were generally in their 50s and of a reasonable standing in the hierarchy of life. It is interesting to see how their position is described: Park Keeper, Superintendent of Victoria Park, Park Constable. They all have the underlying theme of looking after the park but interesting how each person labels their role.

So, for an innocent bus ride out, a lovely picture was found and a journey of discovery was taken! What will we discover on our next journey...



East End Canal Festival in the Art Pavilion, Mile End July 16th and 17th.

We gather and share peoples' stories of the canal – the Cut – in the 20th century. From 1820, the Regent's Canal was the artery of commerce feeding London's nationwide and international trade. From Regent's Canal Dock (now Limehouse Basin), the Regent's Canal runs through the heart of the East End, Shoreditch and Islington to Paddington Basin and then, as the Grand Union Canal, to the Midlands. For 200 years the Regent's Canal has provided livelihoods, recreation and an adventure playground to generations. The East End Canal Festival celebrates the 200 years history of these canals. **Carolyn Clark.**

## Back page

The back page is a wall poster or possibly a window bill (similar size to modern A4) for Harris's clothier's shop at 145 Whitechapel High Street. This example dates between 1873 (when moved from 136) and 1884 (Aldgate East Station opened and mentioned on posters), when it was actually being run by Alfred Jacobson. I have three variants with the same basic text but different edge details. Post Office directories show Henry Myer Harris at 136 Whitechapel High Street between 1863 and 1870 and Alfred Jacobson at the same address 1871 to 72. Jacobson is at 145 Whitechapel High Street from 1873 to 1889. Google images shows further variants with addresses outside east London.

The challenge is to translate the text from Cockney to standard English. A few clues: "Slap-up-Tog and out-and-out Kicksies Builder": translates as Superior coat and very excellent trouser maker!

To His Rile Highness  His Imperial Majesty  
The Prince of Wales and  The Emperor His Army

# HARRIS,

Well known by everybody to be the only Genuine Clothing Manufacturer in Whitechapel, and acknowledged by the Natives to be the Cheapest and Best House in the Neighbourhood for Cord and Cloth Clothing of every description.

THE CHAMPION OF ENGLAND

## SLAP-UP TOG

AND OUT-AND-OUT

### KICKSIES BUCKLEER,

Nabs the chance of putting his customers awake that he has just made his escape from Canada, not forgetting to clap his mawleys on a rare dose of stuff, but on his return home was stunned to tumble against one of the Tip-top Manufacturers of Manchester, who had stuck to the gilt, cut his lucky from his drum, and about namousing off to the Swan Stream, leaving behind him a Valuable Stock of Moleskins, Cords, Velveteens, Plushes, Doeskins, Box-Cloths, Pilots, &c., &c., and having the ready in his kick grabbed the chance, stepped home with the swag, and is now safely landed at his crib; he can turn out Toggerly very slap-up, to lick all the Slop-shops in the Neighbourhood, at the following low prices:—for

**READY GILT-TICK BEING NO GO.**

Upper Benjamins, built on a downy plan, a monarch to half-a-finnuff. Proper cut Togs, for Business or Pleasure, turned out slap, 1 pound; Sneaking or Lounging Togs, at any price you name. Fancy Sleeve Blue Plush, Pilot or Box-Cloth Vests, cut saucy, a couter; Black or Fancy Vests, made to flash the dicky or tight up round the scrag, from six and a tanner; Ditto Ditto Sealskin, Buckskin, Doeskin, Moleskin, Deerskin, Chamoisin, or any other skin, made to order at 6 hours' notice. Pair of Kerseymere or Fancy Doeskin Kicksies, any color, cut peg-top, half-tights, or to drop down over the trotters, from nine and a tanner to 21 bob; Double Milled Drab or Plum Box, built in the Melton Mowbray Style (by men), at four-and-twenty bob; Worsted or Bedford Cords, in every color, cut very slap, with the artful dodge, a canary; Pair of Out-and-Out Cords, built very serious, from six bob and a kick, upwards; Rare Fancy Cords, cut awfully loud, 9 times; Pair of Bangup or Constitution Cords, 14 and a half; Pair of Moleskins, any color, built hanky spanky, with a double fakement down the sides and artful buttons at the bottom, half a monarch; Out-and-Out Black Doe Trousers, which stun all comers, made to measure in any style, 14 and a tanner.

Beware of the Worthless Imitations made by the Roughs at the same price.

YOUNG LADIES' HABITS ATTENDED TO BY A PRACTICAL SHICKSTER.

Liveries, Mud Pipes, Knee Caps, and Trotter Cases, built very low.

A Large Assortment of Caps to fit all sorts of Nuts.

A decent allowance made to Seedy Swells, Tea Kettle Purgers, Quill Drivers, Mushroom Fakers, Counter Jumpers, Organ Grinders, Bruisers, Head Robbers, and Flankeys out of Collar.

Shallow Coves, See Sailors, or Fellows on the High-fly, Rigged Out on the Shortest Notice.

Kid's Clothing of every description kept ready-made or to measure.

Gentlemen finding their own broady can be accommodated.

---

**Make No Mistake! It's HARRIS'S,**  
**The most Celebrated Clothing Manufacturer in the World,**  
**145, HIGH STREET, WHITECHAPEL,**

Directly opposite where the Tramway Cars Stop.

Entered at Stationers Hall.

[W. J. & H. STENNETT, Printers, Mount Street, Nottingham.]