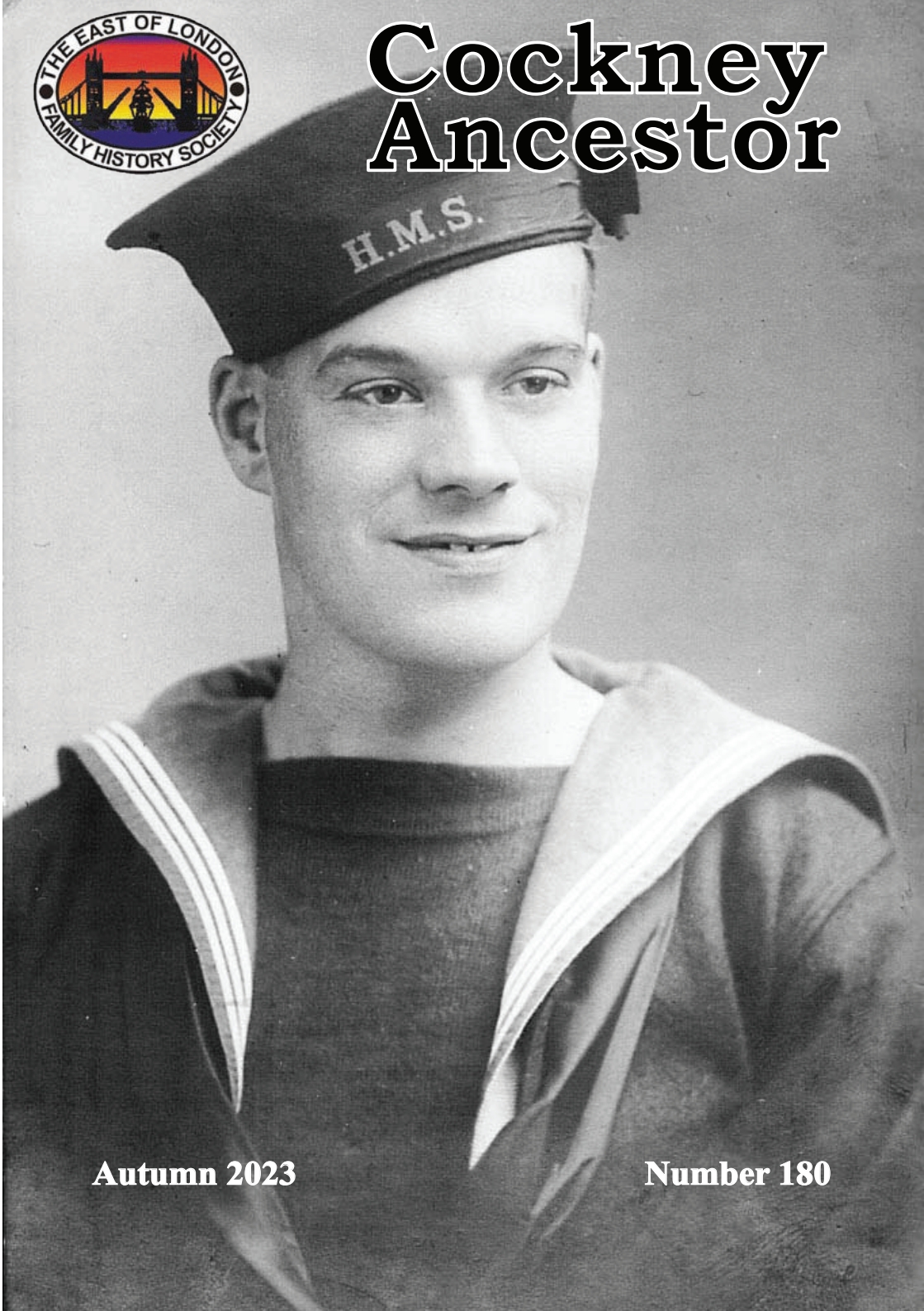




Cockney Ancestor



Autumn 2023

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The East of London Family History Society

<http://www.eolfhs.org.uk>

Registered Charity No. 1094419

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Front Cover Illustration

The Front cover illustration shows Ted Skinner of Hoxton in Shoreditch. In 1938 he was sailing on a tanker on one of the North Atlantic convoys, which is why he could not attend The Austerity Wedding—see article on page 52.

Image courtesy of Peter Holford.

Cockney Ancestor

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Editorial

This is the last edition until January so I am going to wish you all an early Merry Xmas (well I have seen Xmas cards in the shops already!).

We have had a very interesting batch of articles this year. I am always amazed at how you respond to my call for more, so please keep them coming.

I cannot do the job of Editor without the help of my Editorial team. We have all had a hard year this year with most of us suffering with illness or family commitments so I want to give a big thank you to all of them.

This edition includes an article written by Elizabeth Scudder, principal archivist at London Metropolitan archives. I hope this will inspire more of you to visit and explore the records held at this unique archive.

You may or may not have noticed that *Cockney Ancestor* has had a few changes this year. Due to spiralling printing and postage costs it was decided to trial printing the magazine on cheaper paper and to produce it entirely in black and white (except for the cover). We have also found a new printer who has managed to reduce the postage costs slightly too. We don't think that these changes have detracted from the magazine, do you?

Cockney Ancestor is your magazine so if there is anything you would like to see in the future we would love your feedback.

If anyone would like to join the Editorial team with a view to shadowing one of us then please let me know. We are a happy bunch, since covid we have taken to communicating online rather than meeting so members of the team do not have to live in Essex or Havering.



Merry Xmas
Editor

The Editorial Committee is a Sub-committee set up by the Executive.

Members are:

Vera Bangs (layout), Audrey Neal (article preparation), Brian McDonald (grammar and postbox), Tom Cannon (proof-reading) and Graham Keeler (photo editor).

The Rohwetters in England – Part II

Martin Jordan No.15434

I previously wrote about my great-grandfather, August **ROHWETTER**, the hairdresser from Poplar who disappeared leaving his wife and two daughters around 1906 and bigamously married under a new identity as Frederick Charles **ROBERTSON**. August was one of six siblings born to hairdresser Emil Rohwetter and Dorette **LOTZE** who had arrived in London in the 1860s from Stettin (Szczecin) and Bremen respectively.

The story of this family can be traced through records, but it seems they were a family apart. There are no Rohwetters shown in the 1841, 1851 or 1861 census records and appear not to have been any in the UK since the death of Emil and Dorette's daughter-in-law in 1952.

Emil and Dorette married on 29 October 1867 in Forest Gate at Emmanuel Church, their address given at that time as 22 Forest Street, Forest Gate. By the 1871 census they were living at 38 Forest Street, Forest Gate with their two-year-old daughter, Wilhelmina Rohwetter, born August 1868. A son, Emil August Micklaus, was born September 1869 but died in August 1870 aged 11 months.

Emil is shown in the 1871 and 1874 Essex trade directories as a hairdresser at Forest Gate but by 1875 had moved his family and business to 165 High Street, Poplar where they lived next door to the baker's shop of **FAGG** and **BATTEN**.

The 1881 census lists the whole family at 165 High Street, Emil and Dorette and their five surviving children, Wilhemina, John, August, Johanna, and Emil all living together.

Sadly, Dorette died on 26 November 1884 aged 44. She had lived in London for less than 20 years during which she married and gave birth to four sons and two daughters. On her death she left the sum of £119 to her husband who, ten months later, married her sister, Johanna Henrietta Lotze who was 15 years younger than both her sister and new husband.

Emil clearly had some presence and a newspaper article from 14 December 1889 records that a meeting of the *Hairdressers of the East End* was held at the *Silver Tavern* in Burdett Road with Mr Rohwetter in the chair. It was decided by the majority at the meeting for hairdressers to have early closing on Thursdays, to be introduced at 2pm from the New Year.

In the 1891 census, Emil and Johanna were still at 165 High Street but all the five children had moved on by then. By 1901, Emil and Johanna had moved

to 16 East Avenue, East Ham and my great-grandfather, August Rohwetter, had returned to live and trade from the hairdresser's salon with his wife, Eleanor, and baby daughter, Doretta.

Emil Rohwetter died of heart failure on 21 October 1910 in Middlesex Hospital. His estate of £120 was almost identical to the amount left to him by his first wife 26 years earlier. He left this to his second wife, Johanna.

A passport application was made by Johanna in February 1921 in Bremen and, in the *London Gazette* of Tuesday 26 September 1922, Johanna Henriette Rohwetter is shown on a list of *Former Alien Enemies Landed between August 1-31*. So, it appears that Johanna had travelled back to Bremen and when she returned this was recorded under the Aliens Restriction Act 1919.

The Children

Wilhemina – Wilhelmina was born 18 August 1868 in Forest Gate and was both the first born and last to die, being 93 at her death in 1961. Wilhelmina married widower William **FAGG** in Islington in March 1887. He had two children by his first wife and had been the baker living next door to the Rohwettters at 167 High Street, Poplar. By the 1891 census 'Minnie' Fagg was 25 and living with William aged 39 at Whalebone Lane, Chadwell Heath. The 1901 census shows William and Wilhelmina running a 17th century pub, *The One Tun* at Cheapside, Sunningdale, Berkshire. William Fagg died in January 1905 and Minnie then spent some years living as a housekeeper. In April 1908 she was called to give evidence in the well-publicised *Music Hall* divorce case, **COCHRANE** v Cochrane which concerned a performer whose stage name was Phil **RAY**. Minnie said that she had been hurt in a scuffle between the couple and that Mrs Cochrane had threatened her with a carving knife. She admitted that she had been in a car with Mr Cochrane when he went to see his ill father and it was suggested to her that Mrs Cochrane saw Minnie as having superior status in the household to her. In 1911 Minnie is living in Croydon as a housekeeper to a widower, Charles Ernest **SIMPKINS**, and his three young children. Minnie is shown as a widow and Charles as a stockbroker's clerk.

Minnie was a witness to the marriage of my father's parents, Henry Harper **JORDAN**, and Doretta Rohwetter, in 1923, her signature being on the wedding certificate. But did she know that the bride's father was still alive and living under a new name with a new wife and son? On 5 January 1924, Emil's widow, Johanna Henrietta Rohwetter, died in the German Hospital at Dalston. This hospital for Germans living in London had remained open during the Great War with German

speaking staff. In her will, Johanna left her estate to her stepdaughter, Wilhemina Rohwetter. The estate, worth £855 gross, comprised the freehold house and shop at 165 High Street Poplar, the leasehold house and shop at 72 St Leonard's Road, Bromley by Bow, and leasehold houses at 16 and 20 East Avenue. Wilhemina then appears on a 1929 electoral register living in Leeds with her younger brother, John. But, after his death, the 1939 Register shows her back at 101 Kensington Avenue, East Ham as a 71-year-old widow doing unpaid domestic duties. This was also her address at the time of writing her will in 1949. Wilhelmina died on 30 December 1961 at Alderbrook Hostel, Wanstead with an estate valued at £536. She did not leave any of her estate to her family with six small beneficiaries named, each receiving £10 or £5. The remainder was left jointly to her friends, Paul **WERNER**, and Olive Werner, of 57 East Avenue, although Paul Werner predeceased her in 1952.

John Henry—After the death of infant Emil August Micklaus, another son, John, was born in April 1871. In the 1891 census he too is shown as a hairdresser and visiting his sister Minnie and William Fagg at Whalebone Lane, Chadwell Heath. John appears in the 1898 electoral register living in Berber Road, Clapham in a single unfurnished room. He appears to have left London soon after and married Mary Jane **KNIGHT** from Sunderland in 1900. They appear in census records living in Wavertree, Liverpool in 1901 and in Leeds in 1911, in both cases as a ladies hairdresser. He registered the death of his father, Emil, in 1910 and was shown as living at 42 Lascelles Road in Leeds at that time. In 1929 John and Mary are shown on an electoral register at Park View Terrace, Halton, Leeds, and Wilhemina Fagg is also shown as living there.

John and Mary did not have any children and he died on 21 July 1932 living at 82 Donisthorpe Street, Bradford. It was said in the newspaper notice of his death that he was late of *Marshall and Snelgrove*, an upmarket department store where the branch in Leeds had a hairdressing department. They also had a store on Oxford Street and were eventually taken over by *Debenhams*. Mary, who died in 1952, was shown as living as a serviced apartment keeper in Leeds in the 1939 census. Neither appears to have left a will.

August Lotze Rohwetter—my great-grandfather was August Lotze Rohwetter born 8 November 1872 at 165 High Street Poplar but who died as Frederick Charles Roberston in 1939. August had a son who was born and died in December 1896 plus two daughters, my grandmother Doretta (1900–1948) and Ivy Lilian (1901–1922). He also had a son and daughter under his new identity.

Johanna Lotze Rohwetter—Johanna Lotze Rohwetter was born in 1874 and

christened on 29 May 1874 at All Saints Church, Poplar. In the 1891 census she is shown as being an ‘inmate’ at Limpley Stoke Girls Reformatory School at Bradford, Wiltshire. This was a reform school opened in 1861 following an act of 1855 in which counties had to sentence children under 16 to either 14 days in jail or two to five years in a reform school.

The first matron at Limpley Stoke was dismissed in 1862 but thereafter the reform school does not appear to have been too harsh from reports at the time. I have not found any record of why Johanna ended up there in 1891 or how long she was there for it appears that records of inmates are not available. The school closed in 1895 due to an outbreak of diphtheria and only part of the building remains.

There seems to have been a close connection between her brother, August, and Johanna. August married in Poole, Dorset in 1895 and Annie also settled there, after leaving Limpley Stoke.

In the *Bournemouth Daily Echo* of 5 October 1900 an advert appears ‘Good washer and ironer seeks position—live in—age 26—A Rohwetter, 38 Market Street, Poole’. Johanna is now known as ‘Annie’.

As Annie Rowhetter, she then married Edwin **COOPER** on 25 March 1903 in Poole Dorset. Her address on the marriage certificate was also 38 Market Street, Poole.

They then had three children, Albert John Cooper (1904–1980), Edith (Daisy) Cooper (1905–2000) and Florrie (Florence Sarah) Cooper (1910–1961)

In the 1911 census they were shown as living at Railway Cottages, Newton Tony in Wiltshire, close to Stonehenge and the border with Hampshire. Edwin Cooper was a signalman on the London and Southwest Railway.

Johanna seems to have turned her life around from her teenage years, having three children who all went to have their own children. She died in September 1946 at Southampton.

Emil Lotze Rohwetter—A final son was christened on 13 December 1875 as Charles Emil Lotze Rohwetter.

Although in the 1881 census the ‘Charles’ appears to have been dropped and he was recorded as Emile **LOTZE**, a scholar aged 5.

In the 1901 census, as Emile, he was shown as a hairdresser’s assistant living at 99a Pentonville Road, which looks to be digs in a house of multiple occupation.

But, like his elder brother, August, he doesn’t trouble the census enumerators again.

There seems to be no further record of Emil Junior. Did he also change his

name? Another dead end but perhaps another DNA connection would give the answer if Emil subsequently had children.

Summary

So, Emil and Dorette had six children after they travelled to England. Four of them, including the infant Emil, do not appear to have had any children of their own. August had three children before his change of identity but only Doretta lived long enough to marry. Johanna (Annie) also had three with her husband Edwin Cooper.

So, although the bloodline continues, the Rohwetter name disappeared from the UK with the death of John's wife, Mary, in 1952.

There are plenty of Rohwetters in the USA and it seems many emigrated around the time that Emil and Dorette came to London. There are some prominent Rohwetters in Germany where Marcus Rohwetter is a journalist with *Die Zeit*, Maja Rohwetter is a contemporary artist and Angelika a physiotherapist. I haven't yet found a connection in either the US or Germany yet but will keep looking.

Email: Martinjordan179@outlook.com



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London Metropolitan Archives

Elizabeth Scudder, Principal Archivist



The London Metropolitan Archives (LMA)

Image courtesy of the LMA

London Metropolitan Archives (LMA) is the largest local authority record office in the United Kingdom with over 100km of archives including documents, books, maps, photographs, prints, films and oral histories. The collection at LMA tells the story of the capital and its people covering the development of London and the expansion of the capital as a world city. If your ancestors lived or worked in London then the LMA is a vital place to visit to further your research.

In its current format LMA is an amalgamation of several previous record offices. These were the *London County Council Record Office*, the *London County Council Members Library* and the *Middlesex Council Record Office* which combined in 1965 to form the *Greater London Record Office*. Then, in 1997, the name was changed to *London Metropolitan Archives* and, on the abolition of the Greater London Council, responsibility for the Archives was taken over by the City of



Information area
Image courtesy of the LMA

London Corporation. In recent years LMA has taken over the administration and management of archives from the former *Corporation of London Records Office* and both the Manuscripts and Prints and Maps sections of Guildhall Library.

LMA's collections are wide and varied including archives of associations, businesses, charities, hospitals, local government bodies, community groups, religious organisations, courts and individuals. Here follows a brief overview of some of the types of records we hold.

Architecture, infrastructure and engineering

London's built environment is very well documented through the archives of construction businesses, including **HIGGS** and **HILL, MOWLEM**, and **TROLLOPE** and **COLLS**.

We also hold building control files and plans and drawings created by architects and engineers from the surveyors and planning departments of former London local authorities such as the Greater London Council, London County Council and the Metropolitan Board of Works. These records can be an excellent resource for researching the history of an individual house or the development of housing schemes by both local authorities and London wide housing trusts such as the *Guinness Trust*, *Peabody Trust* and the *Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust*.

Business and Employment

We hold the records from many businesses ranging from archives of individual craftsmen and traders through to City based companies which have national and global interests such as *Kleinwort Benson*, *Standard Chartered Bank* and Anthony **GIBBS** and Son.

Important collections include the caterers *J. Lyons and Company*, the *Chartered Gas Light and Coke Company*, the *Metropolitan Water Board* and the water companies it superseded such as the *New River Company* and *Chelsea Water Works Company*.

We also have many collections of brewery company records, including those for *Courage*, *Whitbread* and *Allied Breweries*. We hold major collections relating to insurance such as the records of the *Sun Fire Insurance Office*, which include policy registers giving a rich source of information about people and buildings across London.

There are also significant collections relating to 20th century publishing, including *Hodder and Stoughton*, *Pollinger Ltd* and *Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications Ltd* the radical black publishers and booksellers. The records of admissions to the Freedom of the City of London survive from the late 17th century and give details of all those who plied a trade or made their living in the City of London. LMA also administers the records of over 80 City of London Livery Companies or related organisations (City companies or fellowships without a livery), some of which are now defunct. Access to the Livery Company records is at Guildhall Library.

Courts, Justice and the Legal System

LMA holds records for different kinds of court—coroners, magistrates or petty sessions, county courts, quarter sessions and other types of local or national courts relating to London. These include records of the City of London, Middlesex and Westminster Sessions of the Peace covering both the judicial and administrative functions of the Justices of the Peace, and the records of the Gaol Delivery Sessions for London and Middlesex until 1834 which were held at the Old Bailey.

Amongst records deposited with the Clerk of the Peace are hearth tax assessments, land tax assessments, registers of electors, licensed victuallers' recognizances, enclosure awards and maps, and plans of public undertakings such as canals, docks, and railways.

In addition, the penal system is documented through records of the City of London Police although we do not hold records of the Metropolitan Police which are held at The National Archives. We also hold records of

Wandsworth and Holloway Prisons and Feltham Young Offenders Institution.

Family History

We hold many records which are important sources for family history.

LMA holds the records of over 800 Anglican parish churches within the City of London and Greater London areas including records of almost all of the ancient parishes for the Diocese of London and a number for the Diocese of Southwark.

Parish records, including registers of baptism, marriage and burial, date from the late medieval period and great quantities survive, despite losses suffered during disasters such as the Great Fire of 1666 and the Blitz. We also hold the archives of the registries of the Church of England Dioceses of London and Southwark and a substantial proportion of the collections for the Diocese of Rochester and Winchester, including Archdeaconry and Commissary Courts of Surrey. The records cover a wide area including Hampshire, Surrey, Greater London, Essex and Hertfordshire.

Wills of deceased ancestors proved in church courts prior to 1858 are heavily used for the research of family history. LMA also holds the records of numerous overseas Anglican chaplaincies as from 1633 the Bishop of London was held to have responsibility for these chaplaincies where no local bishop had been appointed.

Our cemetery holdings are quite limited but the major set of records we hold are for the City of London and Tower Hamlets Cemetery.

We hold electoral registers from 1832, although the majority of our holdings are from 1890 onwards. We have a large collection of school records from the former county of London although we do not hold records of every school. There are extensive collections of records generated by the Poor Law including records of workhouses. We have digitised many of these key family history sources in partnership with *www.ancestry.co.uk* and we provide free access to this on-site in our Information Area.

Health and Welfare

LMA holds the archives from more than 100 hospitals, institutions, authorities and charities who were concerned with the care of the sick, destitute and abandoned. Ranging from major teaching hospitals such as Guy's, St Thomas's and the Royal Free Hospital through to small local hospitals such as the Putney Hospital and the Miller Hospital, Greenwich, and from specialist hospitals, such as Moorfields Eye Hospital, the Homeopathic Hospital and Queen Charlotte's Hospital, to large nineteenth century asylums including Colney Hatch, Hanwell, Wandsworth, and Caterham. We also hold the records of institutions such as the



Archive Study area
Image courtesy of the LMA

workhouses and infirmaries maintained by the Board of Guardians who operated under the Poor Law Acts prior to 1930. The surviving records often document the management of the institutions but sometimes include records of the individual inmates and patients in the form of admission and discharge registers, creed registers and case papers.

Manors, Property and Family Estates

The ancient history of London's manors and estates are well documented in records such as court rolls, field surveys and even some surviving lists of tenants for certain areas. Records include the Duke of **BEDFORD**'s Covent Garden estate, the Marquess of **NORTHAMPTON**'s Clerkenwell and Canonbury estates, the **MARYON-WILSON** estates in Hampstead and Charlton and the Northwick Park estates of Lord **NORTHWICK**. Family collections include those of the Marquess of **ANGLESEY**, the **CLITHEROW** family of Brentford, and the Earl of **JERSEY** which contains correspondence with notable literary figures and politicians. Records of over eighty manors have been deposited in LMA; of particular interest are those of two Harrow manors (virtually complete from 1315 to 1913), Isleworth Syon (1279-1937) and the manors owned by Charterhouse and St. Thomas' Hospital extending from Essex to Wiltshire and Yorkshire. The

outstanding court rolls of the manor of Tooting Bec (1394-1843) were inherited from the Metropolitan Board of Works.

There can be a wealth of information about individuals in estate records such as those of the **WOOD** Family which document not only the estate they owned in Littleton, Middlesex but also include correspondence documenting all aspects of estate management and domestic arrangements. LMA also holds the Middlesex Registry of Deeds 1709–1938.

Migration, Settlement and Communities

The history of many different communities is documented within the collections we hold providing evidence of migration and settlement.

LMA is a major repository for the archives of the Anglo-Jewish Community including records of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, the Office of the Chief Rabbi, the United Synagogue, the Beth Din, the Federation of Synagogues, the Jews' Free School and the Jews' Temporary Shelter Access to most of these collections requires written permission from the depositor.

There are also significant collections from the Black and Caribbean community, including the archives of Eric and Jessica **HUNTLEY**, publishers and booksellers of Ealing and the Chinese community for which we hold oral histories as well as personal and organisational records.

Transport and highways

Our records document the development of roads, rail and public transport infrastructure. They document the movement of goods and passengers along the River Thames, including records of individuals who were members of the Watermen's and Lightermen's Company and records of the Bridges across the Thames. Public transport records include the archives of the London County Council tramways department, the Metropolitan Railway Company and early London Transport Board Minutes.

Map, Photographs and Graphic Collections

We have an extensive collection of printed and manuscript maps and plans with such items to be found across all archive collections as well as in discrete series such as the Metropolitan Map collection and the Prints and Map collections. These date from one of the earliest maps of London, Civitas Londinum (also known as the 'Agas' map) through to modern Ordnance Survey maps.

Our photographic collections are equally extensive and include a daguerreotype dating from the 1840s through to over 300,000 photographic images created by the London County Council and Greater London Council which depict all aspects of London life. We also hold over 90,000 prints and drawings ranging from



Mediatheque terminals
Image courtesy of the LMA

lithographs, watercolours, engraving and etchings. Our image website, The London Picture Archive <https://londonpicturearchive.org.uk>, provides free access to over 250,000 historical prints, maps and photographs of London dating from 1450 through to the 1980s.

Film and Sound

The film collections explore different aspects of London life, showcasing events such as the Lord Mayor's show, the development of housing schemes such as a film from 1969 documenting the start of building works in the Barbican through to films developed by the Inner London Education Authority for use in schools which cover a wide range of topics. We also have some important oral history collections including filmed interviews with over 100 individuals relating to the HIV epidemic of the 1980s.

Many of our film, sound, photographs, prints and maps are accessible on the Mediatheque terminals in our Information Area.

Library

The LMA reference library contains over 100,000 volumes and periodicals and specialises in all aspects of the life and development of the Greater London area

and in the history and organisation of local government. About 10% of books are on open shelves in the Information Area but the remainder can be ordered up to consult on-site.

Research Guides

Our research guides are a good starting point to discover our collections, with information about our most popular sources. These are available on the research guides page of our online collections catalogue and are searchable by subject.

Catalogue

The online collections catalogue is a vital tool if you're visiting London Metropolitan Archives and contains over three million descriptions of the films, maps, photos, books and other historical archives in our collections. This is available at <https://search.lma.gov.uk>. It is worth noting that only a minority of our records are indexed by name. However, a name search can be worth a try for some key collections such as the judicial records from the Middlesex Sessions of the Peace and the *Sun Fire Insurance* policy registers. Not every archival collection is fully catalogued and available for searching, but new records are being added all the time and the database is expanding daily. Therefore, do not be surprised to see different results between your searches conducted on different days or weeks!

Visiting LMA

We are open Monday–Thursday from 10am until 4:30pm, except Wednesdays when we remain open until 7pm. We are also open on selected Saturdays, 10am until 4.30pm. Our address is 40 Northampton Rd, London EC1R 0HB

There is no need to pre-book a visit, but we do require individuals to obtain a history card in order to view original archive documents. Along with our collections and research facilities, visitors can enjoy our current exhibition, as well as our Mediatheque. Our telephone enquiry line of 020 7332 3820 is open 10am – 11:30am and 2pm – 3:30pm Monday – Thursday. Please see our pages on the City of London Corporation website at <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/lma> for further visitor information and details of how to make an enquiry.

We have a range of talks and events, either on-site or online, and more information can be found on our website.

Do sign up to our *mailing list* to receive all the latest news on exhibitions, collections, events and much more.

You can also follow us on *Facebook*– *londonmetropolitanarchives*– *Twitter* (X)– *LdnMetArchives*– and *Instagram*– *ldnmetarchives* and if you'd like to watch a selection of our films, please visit our Youtube channel– *LdnMetArchives*.

Catherall's History

Tony Catherall No. 16068



Usherettes at Capitol Cinema c 1929
Image courtesy of Tony Catherall

A couple of years ago I thought I would spend time looking into my family history.

Starting with my grandparents, I have managed to go back to 1700 and found that they had come from different parts of country, coming to London.

There is a village called Catterall near Preston in Lancashire. It is mentioned in the Domesday Book and it is suggested that the name is derived from the old Scandinavian name Kattar-Hall, 'Cat'sTail'

I traced my family back to Great Gaddesden in 1700 where generations lived for over 100 years until they came to Shoreditch in about 1815.

My grandfather, Granville **CATHERALL**, was a lamplighter and he moved to Sydenham in about 1900 to work for the South Suburban Gas Company, The Bell Green Gas Works. His three sons later joined him when they were 14 or younger.

He married Maud **MIXTER** in 1900. Her family had lived in Braintree, Essex since at least 1788; Mixters were still there a few years ago.

My mother was a **WEBB**. Her father, William, had come from Upton in Gloucestershire and his family moved to Bermondsey in 1851. He was an army reservist in 1899 and a policeman in 1911.

He married in 1899 to Fanny **DANIELS**. Her family had lived in Bermondsey from the 1840s but they came from Minchinhampton, Gloucestershire. I have



The Capitol, 11–21 London Road, Forest Hill, London SE23. Designed in Art Deco Egyptian style by J Stanley Beard and built in 1929 as the Capitol Cinema. Taken over by Associated British Cinemas in 1933, renamed ABC in 1968, closed as a cinema 1973. Reopened as a Mecca Bingo Club 1978, later the Jasmine Bingo Club, closed again 1996.

Reopened 2001 as a Wetherspoon pub.

Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

traced them back 1800. Fanny ran a corner shop in Perry Rise, Catford, ‘Open all Hours’.

In the 1920s my mother was an usherette at the Capitol cinema in Forest Hill and so was my father’s sister, so he met mother when he went to pick his sister up.

Reginald Catherall married Ada Webb in 1933. From 1920 to 1950 my aunts, uncles, cousins and my family all lived in Sydenham so mother soon knew what I was up to.

We all survived WWII. My father was a gas repairman going to the buildings with the fire brigade to turn the gas off.

Now I have cousins in Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada and other countries abroad.

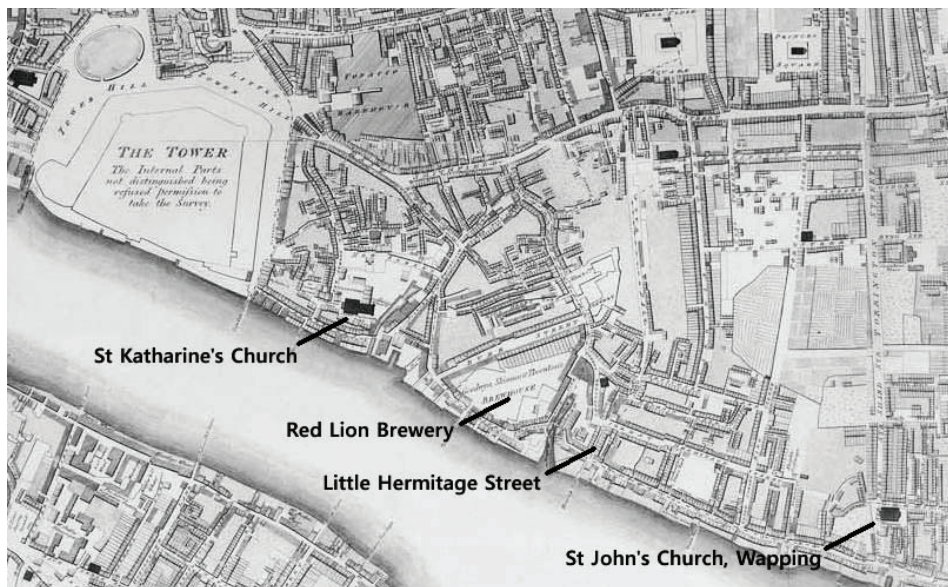
77 Merlin Grove, Beckenham, Kent BR3 3HS

Uncle Samuel and Wapping

Peter Holford No. 14359

Jesse Pound's London

Jesse: *All [my father's] relations were dead as far as I knew at the time of my emigration in 1829, except my Uncle Samuel, who was then sexton of a church at Wapping in the east part of London. He always appeared like an amiable dispositioned, quiet man but not my father's equal, I imagine, in natural power of intellect, and neither of them were men who read much or thought on any subject profoundly. My Uncle Samuel also was in very easy circumstances and had several children, but how many I do not now remember.*

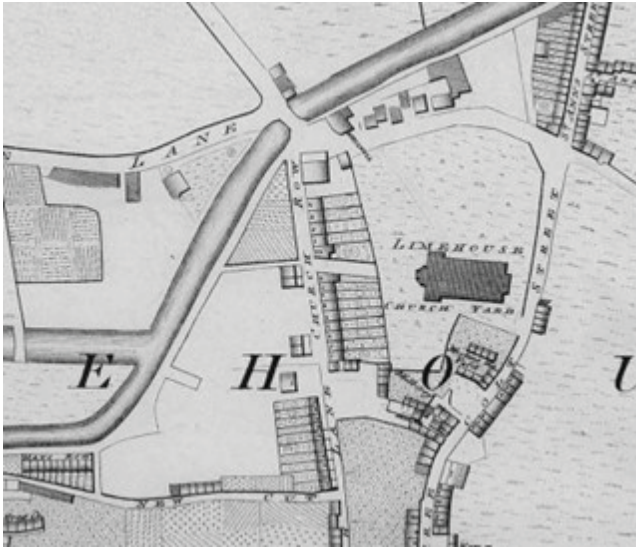


Map of Wapping 1799
Image courtesy of Peter Holford

Samuel **POUND** was a tailor. His father, two of his brothers, various nephews and one of his sons were also tailors. The number of male members of the Pound family that weren't tailors before 1850 could be counted, literally on one hand.

There was his brother, Richard – a builder; his nephew, Charles – a mariner, and of his three sons just one was a tailor. The other two became coopers.

Samuel's father had been a tailor too in Ilminster, a small town in Somerset.



St Anne's, Limehouse 1799

Image courtesy of Peter Holford

There were only so many tailors that could find work in places like that and as the cities grew it is hardly surprising that people like Samuel moved.

His brother, John (Jesse's father), set up in Bethnal Green. Samuel had already found his way to the East End. Samuel had arrived in Limehouse at some point in the early 1790s.

In 1796 he married Ann **STINTON** in St. Anne's Church shown here on the map of 1799. They lived next

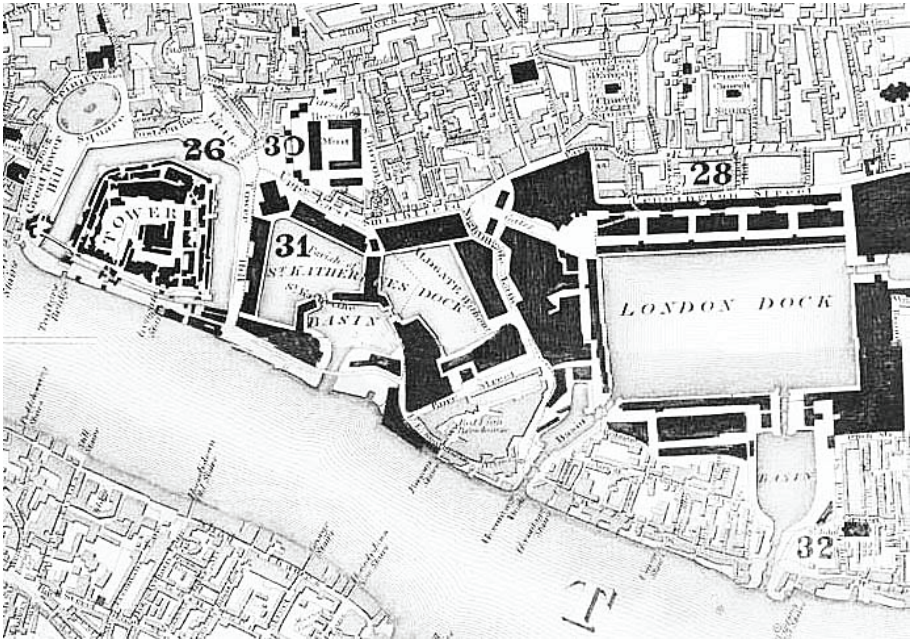
to the church on Church Lane. The map shows Church Row and Church Lane

forming a continuous road and by 1828 the part that was Church Row had become a part of Church Lane. For a man from rural Somerset this wasn't too much of a culture shock because it was a very rural setting, surrounded by fields. The church itself, a Hawksmoor church like Spitalfields Church, was



St Katherine's church

Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons



Map of Wapping 1828

Image courtesy of Peter Holford

new having been built in 1730 to cater for the expanding population. The houses shown on the map are largely still in place and it is probable that Samuel and Ann lived in one of them. There is a land tax record from 1799 that gives his address as Church Lane.

In 1800 he moved with his family to Wapping and set up his tailor's business on Little Hermitage Street. He was now less than ½ mile from the Tower and in the heart of the Port of London.

The Pool of London stretched from London Bridge to Limehouse and even as early as 1800 was a huge centre of trade, commerce and industry. In 1795 nearly 12,000 coastal vessels docked, many of them bringing coals from Newcastle and over 3,600 ships came from foreign ports. He was close by to the *Red Lion Brewery* which was one of the big porter brewing establishments of London producing 80,000 barrels per year. That made it only the sixth biggest brewery of London! There would have been plenty of business for a tailor like Samuel Pound who was located near the Wapping quays.

The congestion was so extreme that it was said to be possible to walk across the Thames simply by stepping from ship to ship. There was also the problem of theft and smuggling through open quays. Something needed to be done. So, it



Red Lion Court

Image courtesy of Peter Holford

was decided to construct enclosed docks behind the river front. The first of these was St. Katharine's dock. As can be seen on the map of 1799 there was still a surprising amount of open land but much of the rest was occupied by some of the worst type of slums. However, the site also contained St. Katharine's Church after which the docks were named. Although it was a medieval church of architectural merit it was nevertheless demolished.

In the space of twenty years the map of Wapping changed completely. The population from the docks area was displaced to the neighbouring areas including the Wapping waterfront. Samuel's property wasn't demolished but he evidently chose to move away from this immediate area. He moved onto Wapping Street (now the High Street) and then $\frac{1}{2}$ mile down river and settled in Red Lion Street (nowadays Reardon Path). His address in the 1841 census was 5 Red Lion Court.

In the present day Red Lion Court is a restored residential address commanding seven figure sums for each apartment.

I am not certain that it is the same building because it is an old warehouse and not the sort of place in which a tailor might have lived two hundred years ago. But Samuel would have known this building. Samuel died in 1846, fourteen years after his wife, Ann. He had lived to the great age of 78 in an environment where



Tower of St John, Wapping
Image courtesy of Peter Holford

pollution and hard labour finished off most people long before their sixties. He was survived by three sons, a daughter and numerous grandchildren.

Samuel Pound Jnr was a cooper in Mile End with seven children by his wife, Mary (née **PORTEOUS**).

Joseph was a tailor in Stepney who never married and ended up in the workhouse where he died in 1867.

John Stinton Pound was also a cooper in Wapping and had three children with his wife, Elizabeth (née **SELF**). He died in Scarborough, Yorkshire in 1863 presumably visiting his sister, Martha, who had married Robert **STONEHOUSE**, a baker of Scarborough and had moved there after her marriage.

It begs the question of what a North Yorkshire baker was doing in London but judging by the size of the house in

Scarborough that they lived in, I would imagine that the bakery was his business rather than a manual labour for him.

As for Samuel, my 3-x-great-uncle, I can find no evidence of Jesse's assertion of his 'lack of power in intellect'. Most importantly he seems to have led a full, contented life with numerous descendants in London and Yorkshire today.

References

Wikipedia – Royal Foundation of St Katharine, Pool of London, St Anne's Limehouse London!

Brewing Capital by Ronald Pattinson (Mini Book Series: XI) – can be read on Google Books

Email: counthill@aol.com

Last Orders Please!

Peter Cope No. 14117

The Life of a London Publican

A DNA match with his 3 x great-grandaughter confirmed my instinct that the Thomas **TYRRELL**, licensed victualler of Lower East Smithfield, whose daughter Eliza was baptised at St. Botolph Without, Aldgate, 17 August 1825 was the youngest brother of my ancestor, William (**MOON**) Tyrrell, whose, as it transpired, illegitimate daughter, Elizabeth, was baptised at the same time.

Thomas Rich Tyrrell, the son of Avery (aka Alfred) Tyrrell, a notary public and his wife, Jane (nee **PRICHARD**), was baptised at St. Mary, Lambeth, 12 September 1797.

At this time the family, formerly of Finch Lane and Crooked Lane in the City, were living in Kennington at York and Mansion House Rows according to the Land Tax records. Thomas's middle name Rich came from his mother's brother-in-law, William **RICH**, a pastry cook of 2 Ludgate Hill in the parish of St. Bride's, reputedly the man who invented the tiered wedding cake!

Thomas married Ellen **SILKSTONE**, 5 May 1818 at St. George in the East. His life can now be traced in various records. These are mainly in the parish registers at the baptisms of his children, his 2nd marriage after Ellen's death and the 1841 census.

Then, as a publican, he appeared in a number, of directories and sadly in the *London Gazette* when bankruptcy proceedings were instigated against him.

His first two daughters were difficult to find as Ellen's name was miss-spelt as Hellen. However, 28 October 1818, Hellen, parents Thomas, fruiterer & Hellen Tyrrell of St. John's Lane was baptised at St. Sepulchre, Snow Hill.

Being a fruiterer fits well with his brother, William, my ancestor, being a cook.

Then 6 June 1820, a second daughter, Jane, parents Thomas Tyrrell, wine merchant & Helen of Mile End Old Town, was baptised at St. Dunstan, Stepney. Again, this fitted well in the family, this time with his sister Elizabeth Mary Tyrrell's first husband, Robert **SMITH**, who was listed in their children's baptism records variously as a cook, brandy, and wine merchant.

When his later daughters Eliza, Ann and a second Eliza were baptised in 1823, 1824 and 1825 Thomas was a licensed victualler of Lower East Smithfield. Now *the Directories* come into use and *Pigot's* lists Thomas Tyrrell at *The Edinburgh Castle* in Lower East Smithfield in 1827 and 1828. Tragically though, Thomas's wife, Ellen, had died in 1826 and was buried at St. Botolph. Next, I found Thomas in 1830 as a victualler in Little Shire Lane when his son, Thomas Avery, was

baptised 4 April at St. Clement Danes. So far, I have been unable to trace what, if any, pub Thomas was running. The mother's name was given as Harriot **YOUNG**. Thomas Avery must have died soon after as Thomas and Avery Tyrrell, twins maybe, were baptised 15 February 1832 at St. Mary Queenhithe when Thomas, a vintner, was living in Little Trinity Lane. This was confirmed by his entry in *Robson's Directory* as a vintner at *The Farnham Castle* in Little Trinity Lane.

As for Thomas marrying the mother of these children, banns of marriage for a widowed Thomas Tyrrell and Harriot **JACKSON** were read out at St. Swithin's November 1833. However, the banns were cancelled as the marriage didn't take place within the requisite three months.

If this was my Thomas Tyrrell this may be because bankruptcy proceedings had been started against him in April 1833 according to the *London Gazette*. These, though, didn't stop a further daughter, Frances, being baptised 5 March 1834 by when Thomas had moved again to Blue Anchor Yard. He was still described as a victualler but it is possible that his bankruptcy had prevented him from running a pub again.

The 1830s can't have been easy for Thomas and the records show his gradual decline from '*mine host*' through bankruptcy to, in 1838, the Debtors' Prison. The *London Gazette* on 2 April 1839 gave a list of Thomas's former pubs. It appears that *The Farnham Castle* was the last. *The Lea [Leigh] Hoy*, Church Street, Mile End Old Town and *The Kinder Arms*, Little Turner Street, Commercial Road were former addresses although I haven't found any other record of Thomas at these addresses. To make matters worse it may be Harriet who died in the Spring of 1838 in Bethnal Green.

In the 1841 census, Thomas was reduced to living in a multiple occupancy house at 66 Brunswick Street in the parish of Christchurch, Southwark still described as a victualler but now with Selina Tyrrell, aged 29, not born in Surrey and his youngest child, Frances.

Thomas Tyrrell died, having suffered from *paralysis* for four months, at the age of 49, 26 November 1846 at Marlborough Poor House in Peckham about which there is useful information online. It was a sad end to an interesting life.

Of his surviving children, Ellen (or Hellen) married John Thompson **BLACKBURN** in 1848, Jane married Peter **LAWSON** in 1846 but died before 1853 when Peter Lawson remarried.

Ann married Charles **HENSON** in 1843 and Eliza married George **KING** in 1859. These marriages produced numerous children with descendants down to modern times including, of course, my DNA match.

I can't find any trace of the two boys Thomas and Avery, the daughter Frances or the mysterious Selina. Another challenge for other members!

Email: petercope@hotmail.co.uk

All Change!

Janet Seward – General Secretary

At this year's Annual General Meeting (AGM) we spoke at length about the ways we as the Executive Committee have been trying to reduce outgoings, given the increasing prices of everything from speakers to hall hire.

The society is trying to balance our income and expenditure and we have achieved much over the past year.

At our last Executive Committee, we discussed what more we could do, looking at costs of the AGM including venue and support for the event and also looking at income and expenditure trends.

We consider it only fair to share our thoughts with you.

We have decided to move venues for the 2024 AGM from the Ecology Pavilion to the Trinity Church, Gaynes Road, Upminster, RM14 2YS.

This is where the Havering branch meet.

The AGM will take place on Saturday 6 April 2024, and we will let you know the details soon.

Our reason for making this change is that although the Ecology Pavilion at Mile End is a good venue, it is very expensive for the relatively low numbers attending.

The Upminster venue has the advantage of being a lot less expensive, with good transport links and plenty of local food outlets.

The event will, of course, be on Zoom.

The second thing under consideration is subscriptions.

We all have experienced the cost of everything rising.

The society income is also not keeping pace with the rising costs we are incurring and we will need to look at increasing rates next year.

It is six years since the last time we increased them and we will take the time to look at the subscription options and how best we can meet the needs of the society.

We hope to come up with a fair subscription rate which brings in the income we need to survive.

We will advise at the AGM what is proposed and the rationale around it, so this is an early notification to make you aware of the proposed changes.

It is expected any rate change will be made from the 1 September 2024.

If you have any comments or helpful suggestions please send them to me.

Email: society.secretary@eolfhs.org.uk



1937 Coronation Street Party

1937 Coronation Street Party sent in by Dennis Galvin and taken in Mundford Road, Clapton. He is in the white shirt at the front and his sister Joyce is next to him.



1937 Coronation Street Party

1937 Coronation Street Party sent in by Dennis Galvin and taken in Mundford Road, Clapton. His father, Albert Galvin is sitting at the front holding a ball.

Our Cockne



This photo was sent in by Peter Holford as part of his arti

y Ancestors



cle An Austerity Wedding which you can read on page 52.



Roundup

- ❖ *Ancestry* have added 120,000 entries to their collection of Women Land Army records index cards before 1922. They have also added Scottish Red Books, records of Scottish clans 1600 – 1939.
- ❖ *Findmypast* have added Norfolk memorials, more Norfolk parish records and Anglo Boer records from 1899 – 1902. They have also added 40,000 non-conformist parish records from Southwark.
- ❖ *The National Archives* have various talks in November including *Women in Intelligence* on 1 November 2023 at 19.30. Also *Tea and Sovereignty: British responses to the Boston Tea Party* on 24 November at 14.00. They also have *Behind the Scenes* tours on 16 November at 15.30, 25 November at 11.15, 14 December at 15.30. For all these please book via the website. www.nationalarchives.gov.uk.
- ❖ *The Essex Record Office* has a talk entitled *A Round Up of Archaeology in Essex* on 28 November. Tickets from www.essexrecordoffice.co.uk.
- ❖ Have you booked your tickets yet for the *Family History Federation Really Useful Family History Show*? It takes place from Friday 17 November 2023 to Saturday 18 November 2023. It is an online event costing £15 and tickets can be purchased from their website www.fhf-reallyuseful.com Visit their website to see the societies taking part, talks, and workshops.
- ❖ *Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives*, 277 Bancroft Road E1 4DQ, Tel: 020 7364 1290, email: localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk They have an extraordinary range of: original documents, photographs and other images, rare publications, reference books, press cuttings, maps and films. Whether visiting them online or onsite you can search the catalogue descriptions of the library and archive collections, access original library and archive material in their Reading Room, view the Digital Gallery of images, get copies of documents, explore Digital Resources, visit the shop for publications, enjoy exhibitions inspired by the collections, attend a range of

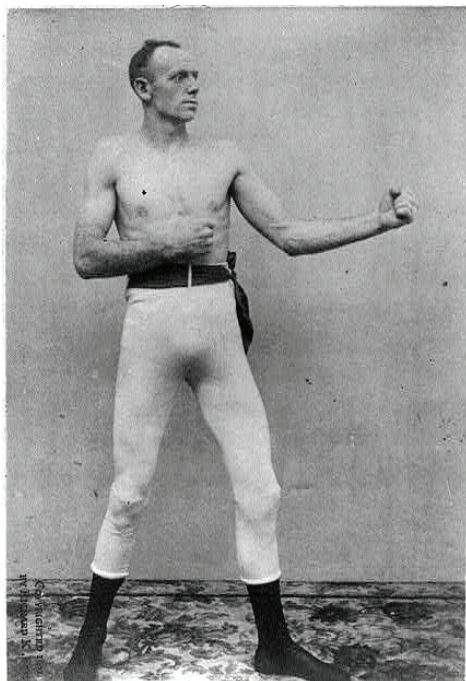
events for all ages, book a workshop with them for your students, community or youth group, partner with them on heritage projects, hire the Ground Floor Education Room, help them build their collections by depositing books, documents and images, support its activities by volunteering with them.

- ❖ *Newham Archives and Local Studies Library*, First floor, Stratford Library, 3 The Grove, Stratford E15 1EL. You can search a range of information sources including: Local newspapers, local authority records for Newham council and our predecessors including, East and West Ham county borough councils—dating from the 17th century to today, school and hospital records, electoral registers, trade directories, census returns and some parish registers, historical local maps, books and printed leaflets on local history, photographs and illustrations.
- ❖ *Free UK Genealogy* is a charity dedicated to providing free public access to family history records. They do this through their dedicated team of volunteers who transcribe public records such as the indexes of Births, Marriages and Deaths, Parish Registers and Censuses. The Charity also actively campaigns to improve access to public history through its commitment to making data available as Open Data. We all know about FreeBMD but did you know there is also FreeCEN and FreeREG?
- ❖ If you are starting out with your research for the first time, then *FamilySearch* is a site that you should bookmark from the outset, for this site is packed with parish records, censuses, and many other crucial resources. Created by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the Mormon Church) to help its members fulfil a religious requirement to research their ancestry, the site is open to everyone to access and hosts a range of digitised records and indexes from across the world. In addition there is a free wiki site with lots of useful background information, free tutorial resources, a family tree hosting program, digitised ebooks and just so much more. While most of its materials can be viewed at home, some can only be accessed at a local family history centre run by the church, but a visit there will also provide you with free access to subscription sites such as *Findmypast* and *Ancestry*.
- ❖ *Genuki* is well worth a look too <https://www.genuki.org.uk/>. You can click on the area that your ancestors come from and after a brief description and a map a wealth of links come up to explore.
For example I am researching my Baird family who come from Mauchline in Ayrshire, Scotland and have already found some useful information.

The Reminiscences of an Ordinary Man – Part XIV

Reg Coleman – Non-Member

This article was written by Reg Coleman in late 1970/80s



Jem Mace

Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

During our holiday a letter arrived from a long-lost uncle of my mother, named Henry **HURRELL**, aged 78 years, whom she had heard about earlier in her life, but had never met. He had run away from the village where she was born at the age of 12 to London and had never been heard of since. Somehow he had traced her whereabouts and was living in Gillingbourne, Kent and expressed a desire to meet her. Naturally my mother was overjoyed and promptly wrote and invited him to come and stay awhile with us.

When he arrived, he looked an imposing gentleman with a moustache and beard. He stood over 6ft tall and was as straight in stature as a young man. Mother arranged that he and I slept together and from that moment we became staunch friends. We never called him by his Christian name as he preferred his surname so it was always

Uncle Hurrell. In bed at night we talked right into the early hours of the morning and I was enraptured by his stories and experiences. He became my hero. As I was boxing at the time, he told me of his friendship with a champion old time prize fighter named Jem **MACE** in the 1800s and an incident in a public house in Shoreditch, London when he had an exhibition fight with him in a back room of the pub. These sorts of bouts were mainly sparring sessions to show the public the finer arts of the craft. Quietly one of the customers in the pub said to uncle if you find an opening in his guard try to put him on the floor for a joke. My uncle got the opportunity and struck him on the jaw and the champion fell to the canvas lifeless to the delight of the customers of the pub. My uncle immediately left the

pub before Jem came round, knowing full well that he would, without doubt, have set about him for doing this. They never met again and uncle kept clear of that pub after hearing that Jem was searching for him and God help him if had caught up with him again.

He told me of his life as a ganger in charge of a number of men when boring the first tube railway station in London which was known as the City Line, from the Bank to Euston Station, which is now called the Northern line having been extended from Morden to Cockfosters. As a lad, when first working in the City of London, I used to travel up and down this railway during my lunch hour as it was a new experience in those days. The entrance was near a church on the corner of Lombard Street and King William Street. Later he went to India for ten years to assist in the building of the General India Peninsular Railway.

They had to cut down huge trees and steadily clear the jungle across India laying the track as they went. He was the only white man amongst the Indians and had a parsee as an interpreter to convey his instructions to the natives. Gradually, this fellow taught him Hindustani and he was later able to converse freely with the man. The natives would push along the track a trolley on which he sat holding a large umbrella to shield him from the hot sun and he marvelled how these fellows ran along the hot metal track in their bare feet, singing a native song. He would be three months at a time pursuing into the jungle before seeing a white man who came from the base HQ with supplies of food and any letters from home. Uncle then had to report on the progress made. These natives were a strange bunch and when they were paid their wages refused any rupees which did not shine bright enough.

He suffered from malaria and other types of disease and the natives tried to heal him with their primitive methods. One old fellow made him lay flat on his back and laid full length on top of him massaging his body and kept in that position for hours in order to keep him warm because he was shivering from the effects of malaria. Strangely, with all these unorthodox methods, it cured him. He got on extremely well with these chaps because, unlike other Europeans, he did not use bullying methods to drive them on in their work but instead tried to understand their way of life.

Whilst at the base HQ for a periodical rest he became a freemason and during our nightly talks he once recited the mason's prayer which was always said at the opening of a lodge meeting. He also began to teach me Hindustani and our sessions would sometimes go on to 4.00am in the morning. The next day mother would say *whatever were you two talking about last night I could hear you for hours.*

When out walking on Sunday mornings, I would engage in conversation with the crowds of Lascar seaman from India who were making their way from the docks to Petticoat Lane. My first greeting was *Tomkiashi, Sahib*, meaning *How*

are you Sir?. The reply came back fast *Amborthatchi, sahib Tomkisahi* meaning *I am quite well, Sir how are you?* Then the conversation went on like this. *Are you married, have you any children, where do you live, how old are you?* The style of chatter was nearly always the same and they were so delighted as they talked in their squeaky voices. Once you got them going, they would not stop I really got a kick out of this.

On uncles return to England from India, he first became a licensee of a public house, named *The Willow Tree* in Balls Pond Road, Dalston, London where, unfortunately, his first wife died. Then he settled in Gillingham, Kent, where he became a noted person, first opening a grocers' shop combined with a sub post office then Pier Master of Gillingham Pier on the River Medway. Later he was past-master of his freemason's lodge and appointed on the Board of Governors at the local hospital. He was very interested in cricket and was umpire at the Royal Navy's cricket ground at Chatham into his 80th year. On this occasion I sent his photo wearing his white umpire's coat together with a short story of his activities to the newspaper called *The Star* which is not in existence now. And it was published. When we got up in the morning, he would say to me. *Put up your dukes lad and I'll show you how we used to fight and how to hit hard.* Mother used to be thrilled to bits and would say *you two are a right pair.* He was certainly my hero and a man's man as they say.

When he was 83 years-old an accident befell him, when he fell from the top flight of stairs at his place of lodging and struck the back of his head at the foot of the stairs. Being, a heavy man, the fall was a severe one and, ironically, he was taken to hospital where he had been on the Board of Governors. Mother and I visited him, but alas he was in a coma and died a few days after admission. We went to his funeral which was attended by his brother masons of Gillingham, What a sad ending for dear Uncle Hurrell and the loss of my hero.

Dear Uncle Hurrell had whetted my appetite for boxing with his yarns of the old-time stuff and had demonstrations of how to put a solid punch over and the opportunity came one evening to try it out. I did not want to try the tactic on my friends but, unexpectedly, six roughs came into the club and the toughest looking sorted me out and suggested we put the gloves on. I believe he thought I was easy game. He forgot one thing and that was that I had learnt the science of hitting whereas his was just brute strength. He began by flailing the air with wild swings and God help me if I happened to be on the end of one. His guard was open however and all I had to do was to deliver a straight left to his nose and spring out of reach. Time after time I did this rapidly and then suddenly, I tried Uncle Hurrell's solid punch and down he went to the canvas. The other five hopped it. A fortnight later I chanced to meet one of them in the street and he admitted that they had all come to take the mickey out of us church lads and the fellow I had boxed told the others, *my God, couldn't that bloke hit* and he

was sore for a fortnight. My old school pal, Sidney **DELANEY**, also joined the club. His father had been a metropolitan police boxer and, of course, Sidney was interested. There was an occasion when one of our members, a very good-looking chap name Leslie, had tried to lure Sydney's girl from him. My friend was very upset about it and said to me *I am going to get him in the ring and give him a good hiding*. Leslie was a tall chap, slender in build, whereas Sydney was shorter, very well built, with strong hands and arms owing to his occupation as a shoe repairer. The boxing bout which was supposed to be friendly, turned out to be almost a comic turn. My friend had shorter arms, whereas Leslie had a long reach and Sydney was continually caught up in a tangle of arms almost as though caught by an octopus, but at long last my friend managed to get free and landed a good punch on Leslie's jaw and his feelings had been vindicated. Whether Leslie knew what it was all about I do not know, but he certainly was a girl chaser and probably knew he was attractive.

Sydney and I became interested in rowing and trained on the River Thames, the Serpentine in Hyde Park and the boating lake in Victoria Park, East London. We had a bit of a job fitting it in with our Athletic club, our work, the latter of which did not terminate till 6 or 7pm, after which one had to travel home, get a quick meal and be out on the river by 8pm. We got quite expert in the art of feathering the oars i.e. skimming the blades of the oars on the surface of the water for resuming the stroke and placing the blade at the right angle, so as not to catch a crab as the professionals call it.

On Bank Holidays we travelled from the East End by bus and tram to Hounslow, Middlesex and thence to Hampton Court. There were very few houses beyond there at that time of day and we walked through farmlands and fields to Walton on Thames where we hired a skiff i.e. a small narrow boat with a moving seat which slid backwards and forwards on a steel rail. All day long we had races up and down the river in all weathers from 9am till dusk such was our enthusiasm for open air life.

Later Sydney dropped it and became interested in building wireless sets at home in an old shed behind his father's shop. This was in the early days of the crystal sets. Gradually as this new and wonderful invention progressed the crystal was superseded by valves and Sydney and I would spend long hours in the evenings with earphones on listening to amateur stations all over the world giving their call signs and countries of origin and sending messages to each other. We had never known such a thing to be possible.

I recall my father saying once that in his opinion one of these days you will be able to sit in your own home and listen to a performance in a theatre miles and miles away. What a well-read man he must have been and so far-sighted into the future. All our friends laughed at him when he forecast this and said he was out of his mind. Although living in those early days of radio, unfortunately he died

before seeing the fulfilment of his forecast. I wonder what his friends thought after ridiculing him.

One necessary part for good reception in these early crystal sets was to have a good long aerial erected very high up between two poles and the lead in wire through my friend Sydney's shed was carefully insulated in order to gain the maximum amount of sound from the ether. I do not know what the composition of the crystal was but it was very small and glassy looking and was placed in a small metal cup. Facing it, close by, was a piece of thin wire attached to a holder to make a circuit, which caused the sound to be produced. This sometimes took a long time to accomplish and a lot of patience and a steady hand. Very often a slight vibration or a movement of somebody close by would move the wire away from its contact and the process had to begin all over again. There were no loudspeakers and each listener had to wear earphones.

I once visited some friends whose father had just bought a set. They were a large family, mum, dad plus seven children. We all sat around, each wearing a pair of earphones, holding our very breath not daring to move, whilst dad sat in the middle of the room with his spectacles perched on the tip of his nose peering close up to the small box on the table, carefully manipulating the tiny piece of wire on to the vital spot of the crystal.

Suddenly some music came through or an announcer would say this is 2 L O calling and we then heard dance music from the Savoy Hill dance band. There was complete silence as we sat enraptured 'till somebody fidgeted, coughed or one member of the family up to mischief tapped his foot on the floor causing the sound to disappear, whereupon the dad would jump up in a terrible rage and demand to know who the culprit was? Then all over again the painstaking process began with us all holding our breath, dead scared of the rage of the father. This went on many times during the evening. Sometimes it was caused by the heavy traffic going by from the docks as they lived on the main road, but father always blamed one of the family.

When valves superseded the crystal in technical advance this spot of interference was eradicated. Gradually shops began to sell blue prints of the wireless sets with a list of components needed and I built several sets in my spare time. It grew intriguing when valves were brought into use and one kept adding another valve to get extra power and longer range. Then, when loudspeakers were brought into use, we experimented with all sorts of sizes, different types of paper and parchment to try to amplify the sound.

As technical advances grew, sets became too intricate for amateurs to make and large companies were formed making wireless business very profitable.

To be continued....

The Tragic Death of Edward French

Tom French No. 12537

Although this narrative relates to events that occurred in Enfield, Samuel, the fourth born son of Edward **FRENCH** relocated his family to Shoreditch from Enfield in about 1816, and most of my forbears have lived in the East End ever since. Together with his four sons, Samuel gained employment as a stone sawyer after the move, and a great number of their descendants were employed thus for the remainder of the 19th century.

Edward French, my 4 x great-grandfather, was baptised at St. Andrew's Church, Enfield on the 30 October 1742. He was the fourth of the seven children born to Thomas French and his wife Ann (nee **ONLETT**). They married at the church of St. Benet, Pauls Wharf in the City of London, where Thomas was recorded as being from Enfield.

Edward married Mary **FREEBODY** at St. Andrew's on the 3 June 1770. She was a widow who had previously been married to Arthur Freebody. Arthur died in 1767 and was buried on the 6 September at All Saints church, Edmonton. Mary, whose maiden name was **NICHOLSON**, was baptised at St. Andrews on the 14 December 1748. She died in 1797 and was buried at St. Andrew's on the 26 March that year.

In 1802 Sir Francis **BURDETT**, a prominent politician of the day, was returned as the Radical Member of Parliament for the County of Middlesex. This event was to begin a chain of events in which Edward was to lose his life in very tragic circumstances.

Politicians were afforded celebrity status at this time and the poll at Brentford was attended by a very large crowd of voters including a contingent of the baronet's supporters from Enfield, Edmonton, and Tottenham. They invited him to attend a dinner in his honour at the *Kings Head Tavern*, located in Enfield's marketplace.

The event took place on Saturday the 14 August 1802 when an enormous crowd which had gathered outside the tavern, made their way along the London Road to meet the coach. Their plan was to unhitch the horses and pull the coach themselves to the marketplace in triumphant celebration. But having been warned of this Sir Francis prudently made a detour which enabled him to reach the tavern before the crowd returned. Disappointed and disgruntled they made their way



Lord Stanley holds open the door to a coach to Sir Francis Burdett
 Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

back to the marketplace and regrouped outside the tavern.

Sir Francis then sat down to dinner with the invited guests from the ranks of his supporters. Strong beer was sent outside to the assembled throng, and this inevitably led to many of them reaching an advanced stage of inebriation. So much so that when Sir Francis returned to his coach the mob unhitched the horses with the intention of dragging it through the town in triumph. Unfortunately, Edward was involved and in the ensuing melee he was jostled, lost his footing, and sustained fatal injuries when he fell under the wheels of the coach.

He died the following morning, and the *Morning Chronicle* reported that ‘the instant Sir Francis was informed of the unhappy accident, he alighted from the coach, ordered medical assistance, which being found unavailing, he gave directions for his burial. He enquired after the family of the deceased and understanding that only one child (a boy of about twelve-years-old) remained unprovided for, Sir Francis, with his wonted liberality, directed that this boy might be sent to town, and promised to provide for him. That boy was Thomas Bush French, the

Burials in August 1802

| | | |
|----|--|-----------|
| 1 | Edward Taylor | |
| 1 | Mary Clark | St Andrew |
| 1 | Betty Matthews 46 | |
| 8 | Rebecca Turner 55 | |
| 8 | David Hornes 46 | St Andrew |
| 11 | John Smith 2 | |
| 12 | George James | St Andrew |
| 18 | Elizabeth Hayden | |
| 19 | Edward French 58. Killed by Sir Francis Burdett's coach being drawn over him by the populace | |
| 20 | Elizabeth Handley of St Ann's Scho. 1 | St Andrew |
| 20 | Anne Child 2 | St Andrew |
| 21 | Francis M. R. Prew 42 French, St Andrew | St Andrew |
| 29 | Eliza Lewis | St Andrew |
| 29 | Louisa Lane | St Andrew |
| 29 | Sarah Plummer 2 | |
| 31 | William Wood 53 | |
| 31 | William Cobley | St Andrew |

Burial Register, St Andrew's 1802

Image courtesy of Tom French

youngest of Edward and Mary's ten children.

Edward was buried at St. Andrew's on the 19 August and, surprisingly, a statement was included in the parish burial record which read *Killed by Sir Francis Burdett's coach being drawn over him by the populace.*

Footnote. Sir Francis was the father of Angela **BURDETT-COUTTS** who, through her inheritance, became one of the wealthiest women in the land. Despite this she defied the social conventions of the day and used her wealth for worthwhile causes, largely centred in Bethnal Green.

She built homes and infrastructure for the area's development, and this was an

early step in the creation of social housing. In 1869 she founded Columbia Market and, although this palace like structure was built at enormous expense, it never received the trading support that had been anticipated and its expected success was never achieved. The road between Mile End and Limehouse was originally named Victoria Park Approach Road but, in 1862, it was renamed Burdett Road in recognition of Angela Burdett-Coutts. She was responsible for the construction of the colossal drinking fountain in Victoria Park, which was paid for by her. It is known as the Burdett-Coutts Drinking Fountain and is a lasting monument to her benevolent achievements in East London.

Acknowledgements:

The Times – 17 August 1802.

Morning Chronicle – 18 August 1802.

David Pam FRHist S.

Edmonton Hundred Historical Society.

Historic UK.

19 Manford Court, Manford Way, Chigwell, IG7 4DP

East London Climate Change

B J Spear No. 883

There is currently much discussion of climate change—if some doomsayers are correct we will soon be underwater not to mention enduring hurricanes, earthquakes and the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. However, before buying a boat, it is worth looking at past events to keep things in proportion.

As GB is on a tectonic plate the last Ice Age left the North of Scotland depressed by the weight of ice while Southern England was correspondingly elevated. However once the ice melted the situation reversed and the South has been sinking relative to sea level ever since. When the Romans arrived 2000 years ago, the Essex coast was 12-14 feet higher than at present and it continues to sink. The Thames was wider and shallower than now, being flanked by numerous marshes, could be forded in many places and was only tidal to around the present Tower of London. As there was high ground there the Romans built a bridge and the city.

Although widespread accurate temperature measurements in GB only date back to the mid-19th century, indirect methods (sampling of pollen, tree rings, oxygen isotopes etc) and historical records give a fair idea of the climate. The Medieval Warm Period from roughly 950–1250 AD meant that, in England anyway, it may have been warmer than now. Surprisingly

Southern England was an important centre of the European wine making industry for nearly 300 years.

Recently there have been reports that some of the streams forming the source of the Thames have dried up due to ‘climate change’ but, clearly, medieval droughts were more severe than anything we have experienced. For example one of the first London historians, William FITZSTEPHEN, mentioned in passing that in 1158 ‘*there happened so remarkable a deficiency of water in the River Thames, that the citizens passed through the bed of the river on foot, without being wet*’. This had happened before as, according to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for 1114, ‘*there was an ebb-tide which was everywhere lower than any man remembered before; so people went riding and walking across the Thames to the east of London Bridge*’. Numerous other examples have been found.

The warm weather was very good for agriculture and thus aided a

considerable population increase. *The Domesday Book* was completed as a taxation record in 1086 and from this historians have attempted to measure the population. Estimates are round the two million mark, roughly half the estimated population at the height of the Roman occupation. By the 14th century it is estimated to have reached 5 million or more. However, from roughly 1300 to 1850 there was a period of global cooling covering GB labelled the *Little Ice Age* with particularly cold periods (separated by warming) around 1650, 1770 and 1850. The years 1315–17 had a series of bad harvests with widespread loss of life due to starvation and disease. GB could no longer support such a large population but the Black Death, which killed around a third of the population around 1348 with regular outbreaks thereafter, reduced the population by around half by 1450 leaving the survivors better fed than before. Scientists have various theories on why these climate variations occurred but human activity seems to have had little or nothing to do with it.

The first London stone bridge was completed in 1209, an architectural wonder in its day, but its numerous stone piers restricted the already sluggish flow and, in the cold weather which became increasingly common after 1250, the upstream part froze very easily. This happened in eg

1269, 1282, 1410, 1434, 1564 with increasing frequency thereafter. Fairs were held on the frozen ice, eg in 1684 the river was frozen for 2 months and the attractions included '*Bull-baiting, Horse & Coach races, Puppet-plays & interludes, Cookes & Tipling, & lewder places.*'. The last one was in 1814; London Bridge was rebuilt after 1824 and the increased flow, together with embankments and draining of the marshes, prevented any repetition. Such occasions might look romantic but they caused great hardship to the poor as shipping and trade were adversely effected.

Fortunately GB had large coal supplies which were brought to London by boat from Newcastle as early as 1227 so, despite the pollution, Londoners could keep warm. The resulting clouds of coal smoke reduced sunlight over London and made it even colder though.

However, in numerous parts of the country, where there was a shortage of wood and coal could not be economically imported by boat, winter for the poor was hellish. One side effect of coal burning was that holes in the roof were replaced by proper chimneys. In 1446 it was said '*Now have we manie chimneys and yet our underlings complain of rheums, catarhs and poses. Then we had none but rewedosses and our heads did never ache. For as the smoke in those*

a sufficient hardening for the timber of the house, so it was reputed a far better medicine to keep the good man and his familie from the quacks'. Nothing new complaining about 'snowflakes'!

However, despite the cold winters there were often very hot dry summers too. The Great Plague year of 1665 was exceptionally dry which no doubt aided the spread of the Great Fire of London the following year. Up until then London was largely built of timber and thatch so devastating fires were common in dry periods eg 1077,1087 (when St. Pauls burnt down) and 1133.

In 1212 Southwark burnt down as did many of the houses on the new bridge. According to John **STOW**, who wrote his London history in 1598, around 3000 people died, but he may have been exaggerating. Only in the aftermath of 1666, with rebuilding in brick with effective fire regulations, was the problem diminished.

One does not normally associate England with earthquakes but there were serious ones in London in 1247, 1275 and 1580 which caused considerable damage—at that time they could not blame fracking! The fear of earthquakes persisted; after a few minor tremors on 8th February and 8th March 1750, fear spread about the 8th April. The Bishop of London opined, *'the earthquakes expressed the wrath of God at the depravity of Londoners'* while a lowly preacher convinced many

that, *'via an angel, he had a direct message from God that the dissolution of the world would happen'*. Many believed him and thousands slept on the open slopes of Highgate, Hampstead and Islington on the night of 7th April. Fortunately, nothing happened.

Likewise the most serious hurricane experienced in London appears to have been in 1703 which caused massive damage and loss of life in London and even worse losses at sea; eg *'All the ships in the River Thames were drove from London bridge to Limehouse, except four, which were so damaged by beating against each other, as to be entirely unfit for any future service'*.

Climate variations certainly affect the range of living creatures and there was great excitement in 2006 when a whale nicknamed 'Willy' was found in the River Thames. However, in 1240 a whale swam though London bridge and was finally killed at Mortlake while another was killed near Greenwich in 1658. Two of its ribs were mounted over a toll-gate on the Romford Road which led to the naming of the present Whalebone Lane, Dagenham.

In 1251 London citizens could watch a polar bear fishing in the Thames. Fortunately this was not caused by global warming; it was a present from the King of Norway and lived in the Tower menagerie where it was allowed to swim secured by a length of chain!

Rising sea levels caused increased

flooding in low lying areas. For example Barking Abbey was established in the 7th century and granted extensive lands in the area. However the Abbess of Barking petitioned the King in 1377 to be relieved of the French war tax as her lands in Barking and Dagenham had been inundated by the Thames. Similar pleas followed eg in 1380 and 1462. Their problem was only resolved by Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries and nunneries when most of the Abbey was demolished and sold for building materials in 1539.

In 1621 a Dutch Engineer, Cornelius VERMUYDEN, was employed to embank Dagenham. However, Dagenham had its worst flooding in 1707 with over 1000 acres inundated. The problems continued for seven years and so much soil was swept into the Thames that it was a considerable hazard to navigation. All the low-lying Thames estuary coastal areas had increasing problems of this nature,

So whatever climatic events occur in future there are plenty of precedents from the past. Plus, ca change plus c'est la meme chose.

Sources

The Annals of London A Year by Year Record of a Thousand Years of History

John Richardson Cassell and Co 2000

Medieval Warm Period–Wikipedia

Little Ice Age–Wikipedia

The Thames in London running dry....–Historic Weather–Netweather
Community Weather Forum

North Sea flood of 1953–Wikipedia

Email: brian_spear31@hotmail.com

together with considerable erosion in places like Walton and Frinton.

On the whole, people, very sensibly, did not build houses in marshy areas (which were often plagued by malarial fevers anyway). However, draining and embankments led to extensive building in low lying areas of the East End and appalling problems of sewage disposal and consequent ill health. Dr Hector GAVIN'S famous book, *Sanitary Ramblings: Being Sketches and Illustrations of Bethnal Green*, published in 1848 explained the problem well.

The later Victorians solved the drainage and sewage disposal problem but there has still been massive house building in very low lying areas in recent years. Given the North Sea Surge in 1953, when over 300 were drowned in England, many in the Thames Estuary, future repetition seems almost certain.

Emily De Gruchy nee Buttivant 1856 – 1926

Marion Turner No. 1532

One of the few things I knew of the beautifully named Emily de **GRUCHY** was that she had died in the Horton Mental Hospital in 1926. I had got her death certificate many years ago and knew the basics of her life but had no particular feeling of her as a person until quite recently.

She was born Emily **BUTTIVANT** in 1856, the fifth, but fourth surviving, child of Charles Buttivant and Hannah Sarah **WING**. Their third child was Albert, my great-grandfather, so Emily was my great-aunt. What Emily probably didn't know was that her parents were not actually married, well Charles was, but to somebody else! He had married Mary Ann **FRAMPTON** in Putney in 1830 and they had had seven children, two of whom had died in infancy.

The last of Mary Ann's children was born in 1844 and, by the end of 1847, Charles and Hannah had had their first child together. She would be followed by another seven.

However, in the 1851 census 27 year-old Hannah and her daughter, Hannah Martha, are lodgers in Back Church Lane, Whitechapel, whereas Charles is shown with his wife and family in Southwark. Also living with Hannah is a nine year-old boy shown simply as W Buttivant who is described as her son. I've recently discovered this was another of Charles's children, by a third woman, Matilda **FLAWN**.

Whatever the reasons for his marriage breakdown, Charles didn't seem to be on good terms with his wife. *The Morning Post* of 29 January 1861 contains the following:

NOTICES: CAUTION. – I HEREBY GIVE NOTICE, for the third time, that I WILL NOT HOLD MYSELF RESPONSIBLE for ANY DEBTS my WIFE, MARY ANN, may INCUR, having been separated upwards of 12 years. CHARLES BUTTIVANT, 3 Mint-pavement, Tower-hill. Witness – Charles Buttivant jun.

Charles seems to be being a little economical with the truth here, given that he is still shown with Mary Ann in 1851 but perhaps by then it was only a part-time arrangement and he was dividing himself between her and Hannah.

By the 1861 census, however, Charles and Hannah seem to be firmly settled, now with four children (two have died). The youngest two are yet to be born, later in 1861 and 1864.

Charles came from an interesting family. He was born in Norwich in 1804 and

came to London as a young man. The Norwich Buttivants were numerous, and were merchants, property holders and members of The East India Company. They were also prominent members of the Norwich Freemasons' Lodge.

Charles's father had married Ann **GOSNOLD** whose family had Otley Hall in Suffolk and one of her forebears was Bartholomew Gosnold. Bartholomew had travelled to America and named Cape Cod and Martha's Vineyard and, under the patronage of James I, had been one of the founders of Jamestown.

Unfortunately Charles doesn't seem to have inherited the business skills, entrepreneurialship or tenacity of his forebears. He had been made bankrupt in 1846 according to a notice in *Perry's Bankrupt Gazette*, and in 1865 he committed suicide by taking poison. I was fortunate to find a newspaper account of the inquest, in which a friend of Charles said:

He had fallen into great difficulties in consequence of not being able to get cargoes for ships. He was a man of good ability and education, and he was always trying to get something to do, but the worst of it was that whenever a ship went in, somebody else, younger men than himself, always got hold of it. His furniture was going to be removed under a bill of sale which he had given upon it for 10/-., and the landlord had threatened to distrain for the rent. He had been summoned to the county court for one debt, and for another he had been served with a writ. He had been requested by the guardians of the poor to appear before them to show cause why he did not pay the arrears of the poor-rate. He frequently said, 'I shall put an end to my existence; there is nothing but the workhouse before me. What will become of my unprovided family of five children?' He did not count his eldest daughter, for he said, 'She can do something for herself, but the others are all too young.'

The report went on:

*Dr. M. **BROWN GARRATT** said that the deceased expired in consequence of taking a very large dose of oil of bitter almonds. He had drunk about one ounce. It was singular that he lived for such a length of time after he had taken the poison, for such a large dose generally caused instant death.*

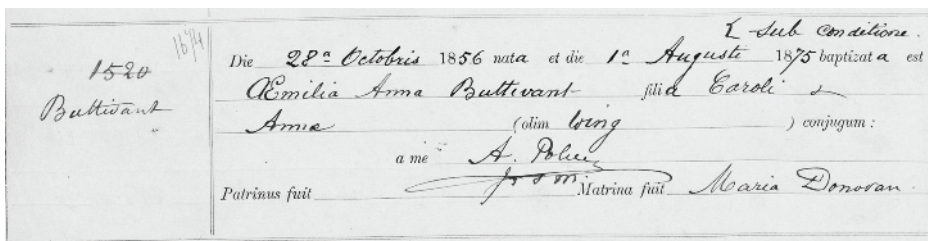
The article also said that Charles obtained the poison in the docks from someone who had brought it in from Port Adelaide. It begs the question: had Charles asked for it to be obtained for him? If so, he must have had suicide on his mind for some time.

Apart from stating that his wife was within calling distance at the time of his death, Hannah Sarah is not mentioned and she doesn't seem to have given evidence. Emily would have been not quite nine years-old when her father took

his own life. How did Hannah and her family cope with this and deal with it? Also, what had it been like at home in the period leading up to his suicide? How had the family's straitened situation impinged on them and how aware had the children been? I have to wonder how such a situation impacted on Emily's own state of mind and her own mental health in later years.

From what information I had gleaned from the records it seemed as if her life had proceeded fairly normally.

There was one rather strange anomaly though. I found a record for Emily being baptized as a Roman Catholic in St. Anne's Church, Underwood Road in 1875. This is definitely her: it gives her correct date of birth, her parents Charles Buttivant and Hannah Sarah nee Wing and the baptism is *sub conditione*. I gather



Emily's baptism into the Catholic Church

Image courtesy of Marion Turner

this is a little note put in when a person converts to Catholicism because, even if there was a previous baptism, the Catholic Church wouldn't recognise it. A person can't be baptized twice so basically they are covering themselves.

When I first discovered this I thought it might be in view of her impending marriage because, just a couple of months later, Emily married Thomas de Gruchy. He was from a prominent family in Jersey so I wondered if he was Catholic.

Her sister, Hannah Martha, had already married Thomas's brother, Philip. Philip was a mariner and Thomas was a ship's carpenter. However, neither Emily nor Thomas is ever subsequently described as RC and they were married under licence in the Church of England. Interestingly, Thomas had had to apply for a licence as Emily was a minor, her father having died leaving no designated guardian and, although her mother had consented to the marriage, being a woman, that was of no account at that time.

With hindsight, I do wonder whether Emily was having some sort of crisis which accounted for her conversion. Thomas was ten years her senior. Was this

significant, having lost her father, or was it simply that she had got to know him through her sister?

By 1877 Emily and Thomas have two children, a son, Thomas Joseph born 1877, and Emily Lucy born 1880.

In the 1881 census, Emily and the two children are living in Limehouse. In the same house are her sister, Hannah Martha, who has now remarried following the death of her husband, Philip, at sea. She is with her two daughters, her new husband and step-daughter. Where, though, is Thomas de Gruchy? I have found no record of him in that census anywhere in the country. Has he left Hannah or is he a visitor elsewhere and gone unrecorded or possibly he may have returned to visit family in Jersey. Wherever he is, I can't find him.

Subsequent censuses show Emily and Thomas together at various addresses in London, including the 1921 census where they are shown as living in The Gardens, SW9. I had assumed therefore that sometime between 1921 and 1926 she had been admitted to Horton Mental Hospital, probably due to the problems of old age, possibly dementia.

That all changed when in August last year the East of London FHS held a zoom meeting with a talk by Kevin **McDONNELL** of the Friends of Horton Cemetery research project which is investigating the lives of those people who were patients of the Horton Asylum and buried in the cemetery there. I wasn't able to catch the live meeting but saw the talk on catch-up and, knowing that Emily had died there, I wrote to Gary, Chairman of EoLFHS, and he kindly passed my details on to Kevin.

Several emails ensued between Gary, Kevin and myself until, in February this year, I was overwhelmed to receive from Kevin a totally unexpected and comprehensive account of Emily's last years which has totally overturned my original thinking. Far from leading a pretty normal family life until an age-related decline in later life as I had previously envisaged, Emily had been institutionalized for at least 14 years prior to her death.

Even before that, an entry from the UK Register of Lunatics shows her in Camberwell House Asylum as a private patient for two and a half months in 1879. This is only four years after her marriage and when her son would have been a toddler. Is it significant that only two years later the census doesn't record her husband. Is her marriage under strain already? Perhaps post-natal problems have contributed to her state of mind.

I also have an admissions and discharge register entry from Newington Workhouse for 1912 prior to her being sent to the Manor, which simply gives

the dates she went in and left, and where she was sent.

Her death certificate in 1926 states her usual place of residence to have been the Newington Workhouse, Walworth.

Obviously she was not a suitable person for the type of care they could offer and she was sent to the Manor Asylum where she stayed for the next eight years, apart from a break during the war years when it was used as a military hospital and the patients were sent to other asylums.

She went back to the Manor after WWI and stayed there until 1920 when she was sent to Horton where she stayed until her death in 1926. Her death certificate also gives her husband simply as [blank] de Gruchy, occupation unknown. So what was the state of their marriage and why was she buried in the Horton Asylum cemetery? Her husband and children were still alive so had they disowned her?

I was somewhat confused because this information seemed to contradict what I had found out, namely that Emily and Thomas were together in 1921.

I had another look at that census entry and it definitely shows Emily with her husband. A search for Emily de Gruchy showed no other entries. I knew that, even if she had been in an institution, she should have been on the census so I tried again, this time putting in simply E de Gruchy, and there she was, a patient in Horton Hospital. For whatever reason, Thomas has not told the truth.

This long period of hospitalization has brought further questions. It is obvious from the information which Kevin gave me that Emily was suffering from severe mental problems which would not have come on overnight. This must have been an ongoing problem which had gradually deteriorated until it was no longer



Emily de Gruchy

With thanks to Julian Pooley and Surrey History Centre for permission to publish this photo. The photo is in her case notes from the Manor Hospital, Epsom where she was admitted in 1912

REGISTRATION DISTRICT

Epsom

in the County of Surrey

1926 DEATH in the Sub-district of Epsom

Columns: 1 When and where died 2 Name and surname 3 Sex 4 Age 5 Occupation 6 Cause of death 7 Signature, description and residence of informant 8 When registered 9 Signature of registrar

| No. | When and where died | Name and surname | Sex | Age | Occupation | Cause of death | Signature, description and residence of informant | When registered | Signature of registrar |
|-----|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------|-------------|--|---|---|-----------------|--|
| 124 | Southleigh Dorset October 1926 | Emily Black de George | Female | 70 years | Wilmington Wokingham Wokingham Wokingham Wokingham Wokingham Wokingham | see map p 0054 W. Marie Indecisive (Miles) years Extreme intestinal apertics years 84 Certified by Colford | Ellen Street Exbury Medical Superintendent Horton Hospital | 1926 | Snod George Dillinger Registrar |

CERTIFIED to be a true copy of an entry in the Register of Deaths in the District above mentioned.

possible for her to be at home, or in a workhouse.

So, when and why had her situation begun to deteriorate? Some points ought perhaps to be considered: her father's character and his earlier family and what seems to have been his commuting between his wife and Emily's mother. Did she know any of this or learn any of it from her older siblings?

Her own marriage to a man ten years her senior which echoed her mother and Charles and was also re-enacted with her own daughter, or is that all no more than coincidence?

Where was Thomas in 1881 and does his absence say anything about their marriage?

Was she left in Horton alone because nobody cared or was it simply too painful for them to visit and see her as she had become, and when she probably would have had no idea who they were?

I feel that Emily had a very unstable childhood—her father's other family and previous extra-marital affair—were there others?—the family's decline into severe debt and Charles's consequent suicide.

What did this do to Hannah, left to bring up the family on her own? What of Hannah herself? What sort of influence was she on her children? She worked as a laundress after Charles died so she was obviously hard-working.

I have a lot of information which I think is about her but, as yet, no proof but I believe she may also have had problems.

Certainly there are indications of mental instability on her side of the family. I think

she deserves her own story. What about pre-1912? I feel sure there must be other records for Emily because, as I say, her mental condition would not have happened overnight. Similarly I hope to find records of her stay in Horton for the last six years of her life

There's still work to do on Emily but I'm so glad I managed to watch that zoom talk and decided to ask if there was any more information about her. Little did I envisage what I would find out and how sad her life had become.

Sources:

Ancestry; FindmyPast; David Early; GRO Index; Horton Project

Email: mturner9849@gmail.com

Are You Missing a Desforges Gravestone?

Brian Bailey – non-member

Back in 1982, when I had a grandfather called **DESFORGES** (although our lives overlapped by less than one month), I visited West Ham Cemetery to take this picture of the gravestone of some of his ancestors. The quality of the photograph was not particularly good and I vowed that one day I would return to take a better one. Here is a transcript of the memorial on the stone:

In Memory of Mary Ann Desforges,
who died November 26th 1869,
Aged 69 years.

Also her beloved husband James Desforges,
Who died October 16th 1872,
Aged 82 years.

Both of this parish.

Weep not for us our children dear,
We are not lost, but gone before.

Look to your saviour for he is just,
In him dear children put your trust.

Also in loving memory of Sidney Desforges,
Third son of the above,
Who died May 17th 1892,
Aged 65 years.

A light is from our household gone,

A voice we loved is stilled;
A place is vacant on our hearth,
Which never can be filled.

Also Elizabeth
Widow of the above Sidney Desforges,
who died March 10th 1895,
Aged 65 years.

A tender mother kind and dear,
A faithful friend lies sleeping here.
On wings of love to heaven her spirit fled.
We loved her living we mourn her dead.

I did eventually return to the cemetery, equipped with a digital camera, in 2007. I stood on the spot where the stone had been but it was no more. The attendant said that it may have broken in two and been carted away, or simply crumbled away. (The start of this process can be seen in the bottom right of the photo.)

I therefore offer my record of it here to anyone interested in the knowledge that the original can never be seen again.

Finally, I must explain my opening sentence. Recently I took an *Ancestry DNA* test, as a result of which I discovered that I was not a Desforges after all.

My grandmother, in 1917, desperate for a child that would not come with her husband, obviously sought help elsewhere.

There weren't many options at that time and I'm in no position to be judgmental about her action. I do now know who my biological grandfather was, but to lose a Desforges was a bitter blow.



**Desforges gravestone
in West Ham Cemetery**
Image courtesy of Brian Bailey

Email: brian.jr.bailey@btinternet.com

1943 – An Austerity Wedding

Peter Holford No.14359



St. Francis of Assisi Church
Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

It's Wednesday, 25 August 1943 and the wedding party gather for the formal photo.

Yes, just nine people including the bride and groom.

It's a picture of absences.

Even more remarkable is that one of the party has travelled 200 miles to be there.

The venue is St. Francis of Assisi Church which sits beside the Great West Road (A4) in

Isleworth near to Brentford. As can be seen it's not an old romantic type of venue which might be a first choice for a white wedding. Perhaps it's more in keeping with those times, a functional building of few embellishments that can perform the task of marrying two people. In 1943 the church was just ten years old having been constructed alongside the newly completed road (1925)

The groom, John **HOLFORD**, was from Hackney while the bride, Stella **WOOD**, was from Hull, East Yorkshire. The venue was chosen because Stella was living in Isleworth with her sister, Hilda.

Hilda was nine-years-older than Stella and had arrived in London via Guildford before the war working as a nurse. Hilda had a flat nearby. The previous year Hilda had married a work colleague, Frank **BULL**, and so Stella had moved out to a bedsit in a garret up many flights of stairs in Victoria near her place of work. It wasn't the best place to live with a dripping cold water tank and falling bombs.

Stella had also been a nurse but, when she arrived in London, she changed



John Holford and Stella (nee Wood)
Image courtesy of Peter Holford

profession and worked at Lloyds Bank doing payroll duties for the armed forces. On Christmas Eve 1942 one of her friends suggested a blind date and invited Stella to join her at the *Railway Inn* in Putney. Her boyfriend was a policeman and she said that he had a very attractive friend. Against Stella's better judgement she went. The marriage was exactly eight months later.

There were seven attendees besides the bride and groom. On the left of the picture (see centrespread) is **Bet SKINNER**, the sister of the groom. She had married Ted Skinner of Hoxton in Shoreditch in 1938. But Ted was away sailing on a tanker on one of the North Atlantic convoys. He was the best friend of the groom and should have been the best man. John and Ted had done everything together,

rowing, boxing and pubbing. It was through John that Ted had met Bet (Beatrice).

The next person is Alice May Holford, the mother of the groom (and Bet of course). She lived in Hackney and still worked in pubs mainly as a cook. She was divorced but her ex-husband, Ernest Holford wasn't there having died in 1931.

The third from the left is Elsie Wood, another sister of the bride, five-years-older than Stella. She acted as the bridesmaid or maid of honour since there were no children in either family. She didn't really fit the profile of a bridesmaid having been married to a pilot and subsequently widowed. Two months later she was to spontaneously marry a paratrooper who would be captured at Arnhem. It was a marriage which would end in divorce. Two further marriages followed. She ended life as a very wealthy woman!

After the bride and groom, we have the best man, Dick **CHITTY**. Obviously, a substitute for the first choice, he was another policeman, a colleague of John's at Putney police station. He was a near neighbour of ours as I grew up in Putney. But he and dad weren't really friends who socialised; they were simply workmates and he had been available for the occasion.

The next person is the mother of the bride, Lilian Wood. She lived in Hull and had made the journey south especially for her youngest daughter's wedding. The father of the bride had died three years previously. The couple on the right



L to R: Elsie Wood, John, Stella, Dick Chitty
Image courtesy of Peter Holford

are Frank and Hilda Bull. Apart from Ted there were others who weren't able to be there. John's Aunt Flo wasn't able to attend and two more of Stella's sisters weren't available being up in Yorkshire, one in the WRAF and the other a young mother.

There were also no friends in attendance. Perhaps being on a Wednesday as well as being wartime meant people couldn't be there. It was a functional wedding.

The wedding party appears to be very well attired considering the strictures of rationing but Hilda was a very capable dressmaker and managed to source the material for the bride's dress. It appears no effort was spared in presenting a fashionable and well-dressed face to the world in a time of hardship.

The reception comprised a few sandwiches and a cake made by Hilda in her flat with some ration vouchers saved for the occasion.

But the marriage lasted, not a forgone conclusion in a family that could already number five divorces by 1950.

It endured until 1998 when John died. Stella lived until 2012 when she was 92.

Email: counthill@aol.com

Recycle your printer cartridges

Recycle4Charity collect used printer cartridges and make a donation to the charity of your choice – preferably the East of London FHS.

Go to <http://www.recycle4charity.co.uk>. On the home screen click on Register Now.

Further down, on the same screen, type the word East in the Choose Your Charity box. A drop down list of charities beginning with the word East will appear. Select East of London FHS–C916.

Check you have selected the correct charity at the top left of the next screen. Add your name and address details so they can send you the envelopes for returning your used ink cartridges.

On the next screen choose envelopes rather than boxes.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND Epson or Kodak cartridges, damaged cartridges, cartridges that have been previously refilled, cartridges that have been labelled for another brand eg. Tesco, PC World or Office Depot, cartridges with labels removed or extra holes (signs that refilling has been attempted).

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For those offering personal or commercial services to members:

Full page £45

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Lineage adverts – non-professional: 5p per word,
plus 50p per advert for non-members

Quotes for colour adverts on request

A 10% reduction if advert appears in 4 consecutive publications

Email: editor@eolfhs.org.uk or contact:

Mrs Vera Bangs

24 Alderney Gardens, Wickford, Essex SS11 7BD

Branch Information

Havering (H): First Saturday of the month at *Trinity Church, Gaynes Road, Upminster, Essex RM14 2YS*. Doors open at 1pm, meeting starts at 2pm.

Newham & Redbridge (NR): Fourth Wednesday of the month at *The Churchill Room, Wanstead Library, Spratt Hall Road, Wanstead, London E11 2RQ*. Doors open at 7pm, meeting starts at 7.30pm.

Central London (CL): Last Friday of the month at *St. Andrew's, Short Street, Waterloo, SE1 8LJ*. Meeting starts at 5.45pm, room will be available from 5.30pm.

Diary Dates

Check for updates to the Society's Online News at www.eolfhs.org.uk/news/

NOVEMBER 2023

- | | | | |
|------|------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| (H) | 4th | <i>The English Language Pt II (Z)</i> | Charlie Haylock |
| (NR) | 22nd | <i>Members' Evening and AGM</i> | |
| (CL) | 24th | <i>A History of Christmas</i> | Nick Dobson |

DECEMBER 2023

- | | | | |
|------|------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| (H) | 2nd | <i>Cogs of Machinery of War</i> | Dr Vivien Newman |
| (NR) | 23rd | <i>Members' Evening</i> | |
| (CL) | 25th | <i>No Meeting</i> | Sue Gibbons |

JANUARY 2024

- | | | | |
|------|------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| (H) | 6th | <i>Starting a Family Tree (Z)</i> | Charlie Mead |
| (NR) | 24th | <i>Immigrant Ancestors (Z)</i> | Sue Gibbons |
| (CL) | 26th | <i>The Battle of Hastings</i> | Steve Hookins |

FEBRUARY 2024

- | | | | |
|------|------|--|------------------------------|
| (H) | 3rd | <i>History of Upminster's Windmill (Z)</i> | Keith Finch |
| (NR) | 28th | <i>Breaking Down Brick Walls (Zoom only)</i> | Gary Barnes & Melissa Ford |
| (CL) | 23rd | <i>Famous Quakers of West Ham</i> | Peter Williams & Mark Gorman |

MARCH 2024

- | | | | |
|------|------|--|-------------|
| (H) | 2nd | <i>Feed the Family in World War I</i> | Mike Brown |
| (NR) | 20th | <i>London's Docklands (Z) (NB 3rd Wed)</i> | Peter Tatam |

Society Information

Surnames of Interest:

Until the Surname Interests position has been filled please follow the instructions set out below:

Members with Internet Access and an email address are encouraged to submit their Surnames of Interest via the Society Website. Members without internet access may send details of their Interests or request a search of the Surnames of Interest to the General Secretary, Janet Seward, at the address on the inside front cover. Please remember to quote your membership number and enclose a stamped self addressed envelope. The same service is available to non-members of the Society.

Contact Email Addresses

Chairman: chairman@eolfhs.org.uk

Secretary: society.secretary@eolfhs.org.uk

Treasurer: treasurer@eolfhs.org.uk

Membership: membership.secretary@eolfhs.org.uk

Projects: projects@eolfhs.org.uk

Helpdesk: helpdesk@eolfhs.org.uk

Editor: editor@eolfhs.org.uk

Enquiries and Correspondence:

In all correspondence with the Society, please quote your membership number. When writing it is essential to enclose a SAE for a reply.

Webmaster: Bill Hughes. Email: webmaster@eolfhs.org.uk

Website: Put <http://www.eolfhs.org.uk> into your browser and add it to your favourites or bookmarks.

Writing for Cockney Ancestor

All material for inclusion in *Cockney Ancestor* should be sent to the Editor, 24 Alderney Gardens, Wickford, Essex SS11 7BD or email to editor@eolfhs.org.uk. Please quote your name and membership number and enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope for any returns.

There is no guarantee that an article will be included in any particular edition. Please do not send any original photographs in case they are lost or damaged. Your article submission will be acknowledged and you will be asked to complete and submit a copyright form. Further details can be found on our website at <https://www.eolfhs.org.uk/casubmissions/>.

The Area of the East of London F. H. S.



The Society's area is to the east of the City of London, and it comprises the London Boroughs of Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Newham, Redbridge, Barking & Dagenham, and Havering. A selective list of places within these boroughs is as follows:

Hackney: Clapton, Dalston, Hackney, Haggerston, Hoxton, Kingsland, Shoreditch and Stoke Newington.

Tower Hamlets: Aldgate, Artillery Liberty, Bethnal Green, Bishopsgate, Bow, Bromley-by-Bow, Bromley St. Leonard, St. George in the East, Isle of Dogs, Limehouse, Mile End, Millwall, Old Ford, Norton Folgate, Poplar, Ratcliff, Shadwell, Spitalfields, Stepney, Stratford-le-Bow, Tower Liberty, Wapping and Whitechapel.

Newham: Beckton, Canning Town, Custom House, East Ham, Forest Gate, Little Ilford, Manor Park, Plaistow, Silvertown, Stratford Langthorne, Upton Park, West Ham and North Woolwich.

Redbridge: Barkingside, Chadwell Heath, Chigwell, Clayhall, Cranbrook, Fairlop, Fullwell Cross, Gants Hill Cross, Goodmayes, Hainault, Ilford, Great Ilford, Little Heath, Newbury Park, Redbridge, Seven Kings, Snaresbrook, South Woodford, Wanstead, Woodford, Woodford Bridge, and Woodford Green.

Barking and Dagenham: Barking, Beacontree, Part of Chadwell Heath, Dagenham East, Dagenham Heathway, Dagenham Village, Rush Green and Upney.

Havering: Chadwell Heath, Collier Row, Corbets Tey, Cranham, Elm Park, Emerson Park, Gidea Park, Havering-atte-Bower, Harold Hill, Harold Wood, Hornchurch, Rainham, Romford, Upminster, and Wennington.