



Cockney Ancestor



Winter 2023/24

Number 181

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 Adelaide Emma Stafford. It was sent in by Peter Holford and was taken in South Africa. Read more about Adelaide in Peter's article on page 44.

Image courtesy of Peter Holford.

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Editorial

Happy New Year everyone!

I have to apologise for the lateness of this magazine. The Executive committee wanted to include the details of the forthcoming AGM in this edition so that those of you who wished to attend could have all the details to hand. This year's AGM will take place at the Trinity United Reformed Church in Upminster on 6 April 2024 and we hope that many of you will be able to attend. Details are on pages 28 to 31, so no *Cockney Ancestors* feature this time.

At the moment I am exploring our new look website, especially the Members' area. I must admit I have been very lax in adding my Members' Interests and have made it my New Year's resolution to do so.

I have already found several other members with the same surname interests so hope to exchange information with them soon. Like many of you, my ancestors migrated from Scotland and Ireland as well as Norfolk and Cambridge to find work in the East End. I have traced most of the male lines back to the 1600s now so am now concentrating on the female lines. It's a never-ending hobby isn't it?

Our webmaster is looking to introduce a way in which members can submit their articles to me via the website. So watch this space!

I have had a number of articles submitted to me recently which have needed some work to the layout and content before we can publish them. Unfortunately, the Editorial team do not have the capacity to do this so please do not be offended if your article is returned to you for editing. It is always helpful to have a small family tree included if this helps to clarify things. Photographs and copies of documents also help to make the family come alive and the story more interesting to the reader.

So keep your articles coming in 2024.

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 Piano Makers

Peter Holford No. 14359

The 19th century was an era of rapid industrialisation for Great Britain. The changes in technology that saw coal become the method of powering new machines meant that industry grew exponentially on the coalfields of the Midlands, the North of England and the Central Lowlands of Scotland.

What is frequently overlooked is that, in the world's first industrialised economy, the greatest concentration of manufacturing activity was in London. London had a greater manufacturing capacity than either Birmingham or Manchester. But the type of industry was different.

While the factories on the coalfields churned out large quantities of heavy machinery, steel and textiles, London's industry was smaller scale and largely concentrated in small factories and workshops. Coal to power steam engines to drive machines or to stoke furnaces for industries like brewing and sugar refining was shipped down from the Northeast and brought up the river to the factories that congregated around the port.

The size of London's population in the world's biggest city generated a huge demand for consumer goods such as clothing, processed food, beer, furniture and other domestic requirements. One of these items was pianos.

In 1880 there were 34 piano manufacturers listed north of the river in London. Of those, 14 were in Hackney where there was also a piano warehouse.

London was the world's biggest piano manufacturing location but Hackney wasn't the main place. That was Camden Town. It was said that every street in north London contained a piano works, and in many parts of Camden this was literally true. Between 1870 and 1914 Camden was the centre of the world's manufacture of pianos which were sent around the globe. In those golden days, besides manufacturers there were small-part makers, French polishers, makers of piano castors, piano stool makers, piano movers, piano tuners and of course salesmen.

The types of pianos made covered the full spectrum from grand pianos for royalty and concert halls to the humble upright piano that used to grace every pub and many people's front rooms.

In 1902 the company that claimed to be the world's oldest piano maker moved to Old Ford in Hackney Wick. There was also a sawmill for imported timber brought by barge to the company's timber yard on the nearby Hackney Cut.

John **BROADWOOD** and Sons was founded in 1728 and supplied pianos to the likes of **CHOPIN** and **BEETHOVEN** and holds the royal warrant as a supplier of pianos to Queen Elizabeth II. The firm left Hackney in 1931 and



George Edward Stafford

Image courtesy of Peter Holford

Henry and Arthur, were making pianos.

In the 1901 census he was described as ‘pianoforte maker—bellyman worker’. Apparently this is ‘a worker who assembles and adjusts the soundboard of a piano’ (Merriam-Webster dictionary).

At the same time another of my great-grandfathers, James **HOLFORD**, was a piano maker living on Lamb Lane, Hackney. He was a ‘case maker’, making, assembling and finishing the wooden frame of the piano; basically he was a cabinet maker.

He also had four sons engaged in piano making; James (b. 1865), George (b. 1869), William (b. 1876) and my grandfather Ernest (b.1884). The girls

these days is based in Whitby, Yorkshire.

The original piano industry of the 17th and 18th centuries was based in London’s West End, notably in Soho and Mayfair but moved out to Camden and Hackney in the 19th century to locate on cheaper land adjacent to the Grand Union Canal which provided transport of heavy materials such as wood and the finished products.

Many families have ancestors who made pianos. I have ancestors both from Camden and Hackney who worked in this trade. My great grandfather, George Edward **STAFFORD**, was a piano maker from Camden. He was actually born just over the parish border in Holborn in 1863 and by 1891 he and his brothers,



George’s wife Alice nee Iffe

Image courtesy of Peter Holford

were mostly still in the silk trade as silk winders.

In 1900 the wife of George Stafford died at the age of 36. Alice (née **IFE**) had succumbed to TB like her father, Nathan, before her.

George was left with three children aged between 9 and 15.

His widowed mother-in-law, Eliza Ife, had moved into the house on the border of Camden and Kentish Town, presumably to assist with looking after the family.

But Eliza was on a downward path. She was 59 and would soon be admitted to the Lunatic Asylum at Hanwell.

It may have been a case of Alzheimer's or any one of 46 other reasons recorded for admissions at the Trans-Allegheny Lunatic Asylum which admittedly was an American institution.

But the reasons for admission could be varied and extraordinary e.g. 'grief', 'imaginary female problems', 'hysteria', 'hard study', etc.

It seems George had to escape from his environment. In 1902 he moved to Almack Road in Lower Clapton. He found work in the other piano making area of London and started working with members of the Holford family.

He became best mates with one of the sons of James, James jnr. They were of similar ages – George was 38 and James was 36 with a young family.

Through this connection, James's youngest brother, Ernest, got to know George's eldest daughter, Alice May.

Meanwhile George met a young woman, Rebecca **WAKELING**, and married again in 1902 in Islington.

She bore two girls, Ethel (1903) and Doris (1909), and in 1911 the family were living at 170 Well Street, Hackney.

By 1911 Ernest Holford had abandoned the piano trade which was dying out as a mass consumer industry and he was now working as the manager of the *Palmerston* public house at 184 Well Street. In August of that year, Ernest Holford and Alice May Stafford were married – my grandparents! Unfortunately,



James Holford

Image courtesy of Peter Holford



Ernest George Holford and another
Image courtesy of Peter Holford

intact—it is now the home of Well Street Pizza.

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the marriage ended in divorce in 1924.

With the death of George Stafford in 1925 there were no remaining piano makers in the Stafford family.

The Holford family also left the trade and with the death of James Holford, jnr in 1930 there were no remaining Holford piano makers.

Like Ernest, George Holford had also gone into the pub trade running the *Duke of Devonshire* on Darnley Road until his death in 1928.

The *Devonshire* has closed and has been converted into apartments but its name survives in the carved stone panels at roof height.

The *Palmerston* didn't survive either, but the building has also remained



The Palmerston
Image courtesy of Peter Holford

Mother's Unusual Birth Certificate

Doug Andrews No. 5210

My mother, Frances Mary **FARROW**, was born on 16 December 1897 into a family which had suffered hardships which were perhaps more arduous than those of many other families during those difficult days. Her mother, my grandmother Jessie **SWAN**, first saw the light of day on 26 May 1864 in Little Thurlow, Suffolk, and was the fourth of eleven children of John Swan (1838–1890), a horsekeeper from Withersfield, and Maryann **TEVERSHAM/TEVERSON**.

Every one of their brood had been born in Little Thurlow, but it will come as no surprise to learn that six died in infancy, with three passing away having been lucky, if that is the correct word, to have reached their second birthday. The other three departed this life when one was aged less than two months, the next was just five weeks with the third only six months old respectively.

Jessie Swan married Elijah **SMITH**, a farm labourer (born in Great Bradley in 1863) on 31 October 1885 and their first child, Elizabeth Mary, was baptised the following year on 28 November 1886, followed by a son two years after. He was christened on 24 of March 1888 with the name of Alfred. Just twelve days later, Elijah died of phthisis (consumption) on 5 April, to be followed into the grave by the baby boy who was buried with the name of Arthur on 17 May.

Spare a moment for Jessie's plight—through no fault of her own, she was now a 24-year-old widow with an eighteen-month-old daughter to care for, but with no visible means of support. In a move that must have required great courage, she 'migrated' from Suffolk to South London where she married Reuben Farrow in Christ Church, Gypsy Hill, Lambeth, on 17 November 1889. Jessie must surely have known Reuben previously, since he also had been born in Little Thurlow—on 1 November 1859. His parents were Frederick Farrow (1837–1891) and Harriet **BURTON** (1832–1923) and he was the first of their six children.

Reuben was working as a coal porter when the couple married, and it appears that it became necessary for the family to move to North London between 1895 & 1897 with their growing brood of Alice (1890–1987), Martha Jane (1891–1981), Jack—christened John Frederick (1893–1968) and Kate (1895–1982) in order that he could continue working as a coal porter, and I believe his employers were **WARREN'S**, a well-known coal merchants. My mother, Frances was born at 8 George Place, Olinda Road, Stamford Hill as stated earlier, in 1897.

Tragedy was again soon to follow when Reuben died of confluent smallpox on 27 May 1902 whilst in isolation, with his death being certified by the Resident Steward on the hospital ship 'Endymion' in the River Thames off Dartford.



The family in mourning
Image courtesy of Doug Andrews

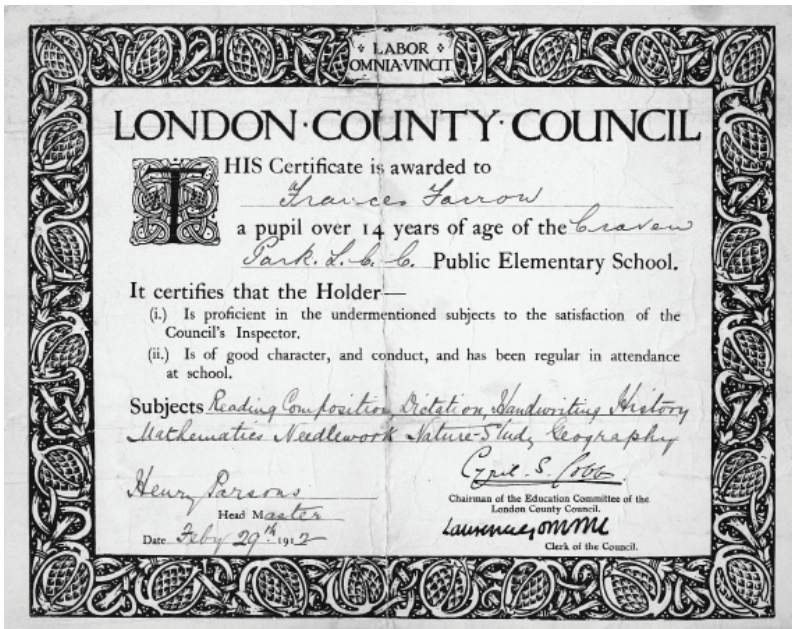
Life must have been one long struggle for Jessie, trying to raise 5 children—six if you count ‘half-sister Lizzie’ as Elizabeth Mary was always known—with no widows’ pension or child allowance in those days, and five girls and a boy whose ages ranged from sixteen years down to four. Doubtless Lizzie would have left school as soon as possible to start work and, hopefully, contribute to the family budget—but more on this subject will follow.

There is a photograph of the family in mourning dress with, from the left, Alice, John Frederick (known as Jack) and Martha Jane, with Kate sitting on the floor, and the toddler Frances ‘looking like a rabbit

caught in a car’s headlights’. The picture can only have been taken in 1902 and I first saw it only a few years before my mother died in 1994. My immediate reaction was to ask her, ‘Where did the money come from for them to be able to afford mourning clothes and a family photograph?’ She replied that there had been a small lump sum from Reuben’s employers, and the woman in No.10 (George Place) said to Jessie ‘If you get the material, I’ll make the dresses.’ Note also the girls’ footwear.

Many years later my mother recounted to my two children how she was sent by her mother to a grocer’s shop on Stamford Hill with a saucer to buy ‘a ha’porth of plum jam’ which Jessie would add to a rice pudding made with water, for their lunch. She also recalled going to school with holes in her shoes plugged with cardboard and her mother taking in washing from the affluent families in Amhurst Park, then pawning the bed linen for a few days to help feed her family. When the servants called to collect their laundry and it was still with ‘Uncle’ as the pawnbroker was known, Jessie would say something like ‘It’s not ready yet, it’s still damp, can you call back later?’ She would then have to raise the modest sum necessary to redeem the items that had been ‘popped’.

Turning now to the subject of mother’s unusual birth certificate and bearing in mind the abject poverty of her early childhood, it is perhaps understandable



Education certificate awarded 1912
Image courtesy of Doug Andrews

Presumably the need for this type of birth certificate was short-lived, since new parents would surely follow the necessary procedure once a child had been born and get the now-familiar type of certificate. The legislation was obviously designed for unregistered births of children such as Frances, who would have been fourteen in December 1911 and had left school at that age but was temporarily unemployable. When my wife, Sylvia, registered our son Robert's birth in 1965, our local registrar had not seen this form of birth certificate and she asked for permission to take a copy of it.

Also there is a copy of the education certificate which mother had been awarded dated 29 February 1912 (Leap Year!), which she received two months or so after leaving school. It shows that, despite the difficulties of her early upbringing, she could justifiably be proud of her achievements.

I find it to be of interest that her school entered what would nowadays be regarded as one pass—English—as four separate subjects, reading, composition, dictation & handwriting. She was probably the best-educated of her family, since she went on to master Pitman's shorthand, typing & book-keeping whereas her three older sisters, Alice, Martha & Kate, were not only all 'in service' but with the same family, the head of which owned a linoleum manufacturing business.

Their home address was in Montagu Mansions, Baker Street. At some time in

the 1930s the family home in George Place was condemned and Jesse moved to a second-floor bed-sit flat in Woodside Gardens, Upper Clapton, where she spent the rest of her life. I cannot remember any occasion on which grandma ever ventured outdoors.

My mother, Frances, my older brother, Stan, and I were regular visitors every Saturday afternoon (when I was not evacuated from about September 1944 to April, or thereabouts, in 1945), and in those days, as far as grandma was concerned, ‘children should be seen and not heard’ so such visits were something of a chore for my brother and me.

We did have our uses when winter approached, however, in that late on Saturday afternoons we two would go to Stoke Newington where, outside the wet fish shop, the proprietor would leave the empty wooden fish boxes, reeking from the smell of their contents. The boxes would be carried home and left in our pram shed (which every flat had) until they had become less smelly, at which stage brother and I would reduce them to neatly tied round bundles of kindling—tied with postman’s string which father always had in his pockets—which grandma used to light her open coal fire.

On these regular visits, it was the normal routine for my Aunt Kate and cousin Vera to get the 653 trolley bus from where they lived near Stamford Hill station to grandma’s, not forgetting to buy two quarts of Guinness ‘to see the old girl through the week’ and we three would get the 106 bus to the end of Northwold Road where it joins Lower Clapton Road, cross over and go into the post office on the corner to draw grandma’s modest pension. On this particular Saturday however, Frances was seated by grandma’s right ear (her better one bearing in mind her deafness) and telling her quite loudly, that we hadn’t been able to get her pension. Poor mother was being berated as all kinds of a fool by Jessie, but what Frances couldn’t quite get through to her mother was, that the post office was no longer there! It had been destroyed by a doodle bug—a V.1—on Saturday, 29 July 1944, but grandma, living two floors up and only about three hundred yards or so from the explosion, had heard nothing! There is a picture of grandma Jessie as I remember her.

We also had another excellent source of kindling for grandma, one that was obtained in identical-sized wood blocks measuring roughly six inches long, four inches wide and about four and a half inches deep. These blocks had another welcome feature in that they had been steeped in creosote before use. Their supply was somewhat erratic however and depended on the weather. It was quite common in those days for roads to be surfaced with these pine blocks which were then thickly covered with tar and some gravel. To make the blocks available to us it was necessary to have had a long period of drought during which they would dry out. A heavy downpour of rain would enable them to swell and the road surface would expand and rise upwards thereby calling for very urgent road repairs



Grandma Jessie

Image courtesy of Doug Andrews

far-off days when most items were still on ration, money was a scarce commodity. From my hazy memory of her passing, I do not think the family went to the expense of a permanent headstone. The contents of her flat were very modest and were shared out by the next of kin, but I do have two items of hers which I treasure. One is her wooden footstool, very solidly made (possibly by Reuben?), and the hammer with which she broke any large lumps of coal. By the time I had retired from work in 1992 and began to study our family history, a prolonged search of Abney Park—which by then was neglected and overgrown (but a haven for wildlife)—failed to reveal any trace of her grave.

Over more than five decades, the thought had often crossed my mind, that with Jessie's lifetime of abject poverty, how did she acquire a liking for alcohol, and in particular, Guinness? My research into our history might have produced an answer – on the 1881 census she is described as a 'general domestic servant' working for Henry & Lydia **FORD**, a beerhouse keeper and wife aged 28 & 26 respectively, and their two young children at *The Woodman*, Carlton, Cambridgeshire, in the next county—but a glance at a map of the area shows that Carlton is a mere two-and-a-half miles from Little Thurlow. Was this early experience her introduction to 'the demon drink'? We shall never know.

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and traffic control measures. When we became aware of such an incident, we lads would wait until it was dark, then take our cart, a soapbox on wheels, and liberate as many blocks as we could before the night watchman became aware of our activities and shouted at us, whereupon we deemed it prudent to beat a hasty retreat. The blocks chopped into regular-sized pieces very easily which were all of the same length—and burned very readily!

Having come through the war unscathed, grandma departed this life in 1946 and was buried in Abney Park cemetery, but again, in those



Obituary



Rosemary Lilian Mint 'Rose'

15.2.1940–23.4.2023

by Sandra Murray No. 10493



Rose was born in Poplar to Frederick and Lilian MINT as the first of five children.

Her first job was as a library assistant in Poplar libraries but after a while she went to try Australian life for a couple of years. She returned to the UK and took up a library post in Tower Hamlets working for some years at Lansbury and Whitechapel libraries. Later she worked in the Tower Hamlets First Stop Shop where her advice and assistance were much appreciated by the residents. She loved to travel and went all over the

world during her annual holidays.

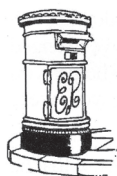
She was good at handicrafts and enjoyed attending bookbinding and greeting cards courses to improve her skills.

She was a supporter of Haven House Children's Hospice and sold her cards for their benefit. She often could be found rattling the tin for them at stations. She was a keen gardener and had an allotment when she lived at Buckhurst Hill. After she moved to a retirement flat in Upminster she helped to look after the communal garden as well as her local allotment.

She became interested in genealogy and joined our society in 1985 (membership number 1310) helping the society over the years in many ways including recording gravestones and transcribing records at home. As her paternal grandfather and her grandmother's parents were born in Germany she joined and became very involved with the Anglo-German Society. She regularly went to Westminster Archives for many years to transcribe the registers of the German churches that they held.

Two years ago, Rose became seriously ill and after several spells in Queen's Hospital and St. Francis Hospice she died at home in April.

I have known Rose since 1965 and she was a good colleague and a great friend.



Post Box

The Editor reserves the right to edit letters due to space considerations.

- ☐ Lesley Gwynne (lmgeneral@outlook.com) has recently discovered a silver spoon with the inscription '9th BATTn N.L.V.R.'. The hallmarks are clear and show Queen Victoria, the London assay mark for 1846 and the maker's mark for Henry **HOLLAND**. Lesley knows that her husband's grandfather, Abner Lloyd Bryant **GOSS**, was involved with the Middlesex Regiment and his son, Lawrence Abner Kenneth Goss, served as Private G/98751 with the 1st Middlesex Regiment. Both lived at 91 London Road, Clapton. There is nothing to associate either of them with the spoon and Lesley does not know what the inscription refers to although assumes it is '*North London Volunteer Reserve*'. She would appreciate any help that members can give.

- ☐ The Tyne Theatre & Opera House has developed a performance calendar to hold details of all performances from the theatre's opening in 1867 until 1919 when it was converted into a cinema. A team of volunteers have researched over 24,000 newspaper adverts, programmes and day-bills so there is now a searchable database of over 3,500 events.
These years were the heyday of touring theatre. National companies such as *D'Oyly Carte* and *Carl Rosa Opera Company* visited, famous actors such as Henry **IRVING** and Ellen **TERRY** trod the boards and the theatre was used by local groups such as the *Newcastle Amateur Dramatic Society* and the *Tyneside Sunday Lecture Society*.
Entries for each production include dates of every performance along with information on the type of performance, writers, composers, cast and crew where possible. To access the database visit www.tynetheatreandoperahouse.uk/about/performance-calendar-database/
If you would like any more information, please contact rachel.snape@tynetheatreandoperahouse.uk

Your Society Needs You!

Audrey Neal No. 9369

Every club and society, all around the country, has the same problem:

VOLUNTEERS (or the lack of).

The East of London Family History Society is no exception.

Over the years we have had so many dedicated people in any number of various positions, without whom it would not be as successful as it is now.

Two of Havering's Branch members have stood down from their posts after years of volunteering which leaves us as a very small group.

As well as help in general, setting up, putting out/away the chairs, bringing equipment from the storage room, we need a **TREASURER**, so if anyone is interested, they could contact the Society's treasurer, Kevin Dopson (*treasurer@eolfhs.org.uk*) or Jacky, Havering's secretary (*j.grim2011@gmail.com*) or speak to any member of the committee for details.

The old saying of 'many hands make light work' is very true. We wouldn't be able to run our tea bar without our great band of ladies who volunteer on a rota basis. We are very grateful to them.

We could quite easily find any number of small jobs for helpers as and when they were able.

It would be a shame if another of our branches had to close through lack of helpers coming forward.

Email: aneal@ntlworld.com

A Barge Builder on the Isle of Dogs *Nathaniel John Hudson (1818–1875)*

Susan Pepper No. 22125



St. Anne's, Limehouse
Image courtesy of Susan Pepper

My research into the life of my 3 x great-grandfather, Nathaniel John **HUDSON**, was prompted by finding his family grave amid tangled undergrowth in Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park last summer. Although Nathaniel was born in Greenwich, by the age of six he had moved to Poplar and he spent his working life as a barge builder in the area. He eventually leased his own yard on the Isle of Dogs where his neighbours included the most successful of the East End ship builders, the **YARROW** brothers and the **SAMUDA** brothers.

Nathaniel had served his apprenticeship and become a barge builder like his father by the time of his marriage at the age of 20. His marriage certificate gives his residence as Limehouse and he and his father must have been working

in one of the numerous small shipyards along the Thames from Limehouse to Blackwall.

1838 saw the coronation of Queen Victoria on 28 June in Westminster Abbey and, three days later, Nathaniel married Eliza **POPE**, originally from Cowes, Isle of Wight and the eldest daughter of a sawyer, in St Anne's Church, Limehouse. The first of their fourteen children, Thomas (my two x great-grandfather) was born on 2 May 1839 and was baptized at St. Anne's.

In the 1841 census, Nathaniel and Eliza then with two sons were living at 4 Rose Lane, Ratcliff. Ratcliff was a hamlet beside the River Thames to the west of Limehouse and was an area which had suffered the worst effects of the rapid growth of East London's population in the nineteenth century. Charles **DICKENS**

even describes it as *'a place of poverty and desperation, where accumulated scum of humanity seemed to be washed from higher grounds'*. For Nathaniel and Eliza it would have meant somewhere to live close to his barge building on the river and where they could afford to live without multiple occupancy or taking lodgers. Nathaniel is not included in the electoral roll for the hamlet of Ratcliff for 1843 and he was evidently not paying an annual rent of £10, which was the qualification to vote under the provisions of the 1832 Reform Act.

By the end of 1847, Nathaniel and Eliza had had seven children, but had suffered the loss of three of their sons: James William,

aged six, from inflammation of the liver; John, aged only nine months, from bronchitis; and one year old, James Henry from pneumonia. Such losses were not unusual in Victorian times and the infant mortality rate for Poplar in 1851 was 16%. However, it is interesting to note that the Hudson children did not die, like many others, from infectious diseases and it may be that their respiratory conditions had something to do with the dense London fogs and their damp riverside homes.

In the late 1840s the Hudson family moved out of East London to 12 Southampton Street West in Lambeth and then to Holland Street in Southwark, but they were back in Poplar by March 1855 when the record of their daughter, Charlotte's baptism gives their address as Pennyfields, Poplar. Their next daughter, Ellen, was baptized 12 July 1857 at All Saints Church, Poplar and, from then on, all of Nathaniel and Eliza's children were baptized in this impressive Georgian building, built in 1821-3 for the newly created parish of Poplar.

By 1861, Nathaniel and Eliza had moved again and the census records them as living at 16 Wint Terrace on Manchester Road in Cubitt Town on the east of the Isle of Dogs. This terrace of houses was newly built, having been developed



All Saints Church, Poplar

Image courtesy of Susan Pepper



Folly Wall and the modern storm pumping station in 2022–Folly Wall is now a road running between Stewart Street and the site of the old Folly Wall at the Prince of Wales Public House

Image courtesy of Susan Pepper

between 1853 and 1861 as part of the new settlement of Cubitt Town. The Wint Terrace property clearly qualified Nathaniel as a voter under the terms of the 1832 Reform Act and he appears on the electoral register for the borough of Tower Hamlets in 1860.

That same year, Nathaniel bought a lease on land for his own shipyard to carry out his barge building trade. This land was at Folly Wall, literally round the corner from where he was living in Wint Terrace. The yard had previously been used as a stone wharf by Charles **ROSS** and a number of iron and ship building industries had already developed in the area. John **STEWART'S** Blackwall Iron Works, established in 1851, was to the north of Nathaniel's yard and, to the south in Hope Yard, was the successful ship building business run by the Yarrow Brothers. Further south was the works of shipbuilders Joseph **D'AGUILAR SAMUDA** and his brother, Jack, who pioneered the use of steel in shipbuilding. Nathaniel also had an unusual neighbour in the *Royalist*, an old warship that was moored by Folly Wall and served as a Thames River Police Station. The 1861 census describes Nathaniel's eldest son, Thomas, as a barge builder and his second son, Nathaniel, as apprentice to a barge builder and it is reasonable to suppose that

they were both working with their father at his new yard. In the 1871 census, Nathaniel is described as a Master Barge Builder, again suggesting that he would have taken at least one apprentice.

After buying the lease on Folly Wall, Nathaniel and Eliza moved into a cottage, 1 Folly Cottages, on the Folly Wall site and, following his marriage to Emma **JONES** on 25 December 1861, their son, Thomas, moved into another of the cottages. Tower Hamlets was the first area to be surveyed, in 1886, for Charles **BOOTH'S** Inquiry into London Poverty and the findings are likely to be relevant to the couple of decades before. Although the purchase of a lease suggests Nathaniel's growing prosperity, he was still living in an area categorised by Booth as 'poor'. Booth comments that, on the Isle of Dogs, 'no one on

the island seems to be rich' and 'the poorest streets are those nearest the water'. He also refers to the lack of entertainment on the island as there were no music halls, but just public houses with singsongs. In Nathaniel's time, Folly Wall had two public houses, the *Prince of Wales* and the close by *Folly House Tavern*, which was noted for its whitebait suppers. Life on Folly Wall must have had its challenges as inadequate drainage led the sewers to flood in heavy rain. The problem was solved by the building of a storm pumping station, but not until after Nathaniel's time, in 1886. The shops also appear to have been on the West side of the island on Ferry Road West, giving Eliza a mile's walk for shopping either into Poplar or to the other side of the Isle of Dogs.

From 1862, Nathaniel appears on the electoral register for Tower Hamlets for his address at Folly Wall, so, as at Wint Terrace, he clearly qualified as a £10 householder. There was no contest in the Tower Hamlets constituency in the General Election of 1865, but Nathaniel would have had the opportunity to vote



Headstone to Nathaniel and Eliza's Private Grave (4164) at Tower Hamlets Cemetery

Image courtesy of Susan Pepper

in General Elections in 1868 and 1874. He would have had a personal interest in these elections as one of his neighbours on Folly Wall, the ship builder, Joseph d'Aguilar Samuda was standing as a Liberal. Samuda was elected both times, even in 1874, when the overall result in the country was a landslide victory to **DISRAELI** and the Conservative Party.

George Edward, Nathaniel and Eliza's final child, was born on 11 June 1865. At the time of his birth, Eliza was 46, had been child bearing for 26 years and had given birth to 14 children (of whom ten had survived infancy). Eliza's story is all the more remarkable given that the maternal death rate in the middle of the nineteenth century was around 5% and puerperal fever was a major killer in this time before antiseptics and antibiotics to prevent or fight infection.

The death of Nathaniel's daughter, Alice Caroline, on 20 August 1862 had prompted Nathaniel to buy a private grave (number 4164) in Tower Hamlets Cemetery. It had cost him £4 4s 0d and was 12 feet deep; in time, eight members of the family would be buried there. Nathaniel himself was buried there in May 1875, following his death at home from fever at the age of 57.

After her husband's death, Eliza sold the residue of the lease on the yard at Folly Wall to Yarrow Brothers, who had already taken over the adjoining area where Folly House stood.

Nathaniel's legacy as a barge builder continued, however, through his sons, Thomas and Nathaniel, and later on, through Thomas's sons, James and Albert.

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62 Havelock Road, Wimbledon, London SW19 8HD



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In Search of Jack Thomas Marney

via an unexpected locked door

John Sly No. 13403

As a result of reading many articles in genealogy magazines, I have found that a large number of family historians find it difficult to engage with military records. This is quite understandable, because the military, from the raising of the first regiments of the British Army under Charles II to the present day, has a language all of its own, and to be able to research with confidence a family historian must come to terms with some of that language. This article describes the process of researching a soldier of the Great War from the details on the medals awarded to him. The other armed services, Royal and Merchant Navy, and the Air Forces (Royal Flying Corps and Royal Naval Air Service up to 1 April 1918, then Royal Air Force), have their own separate records.

A medal auction in July 2008 included a section of lots named for men of the Essex Regiment, and for men of Essex who had served with other units. I was particularly attracted by a 1914–15 Star, British War and Victory medals (usually referred to as a 1914–15 Star Trio) named for 16798 Private Jack Thomas **MARNEY**, 2nd Battalion, Essex Regiment.

Marney was catalogued as having been born in East Ham, the borough in which I was also born. For no other reason than one of pure sentiment I decided I would bid for this lot, even though the catalogue recorded that he had been killed on 1 July 1916, the First Day of the Battle of the Somme. This guaranteed that the price would be much higher than for a similar Trio awarded to a soldier killed on any other day of the war.

These days probably a majority of the Great War medals on the market are researched at least to the basic level of the Medal Index Card (MIC)^[1] which is available on *The National Archives (TNA)* website or through *Ancestry*. The research with this group included the MIC research, showing that Marney disembarked in France on 18 May 1915, as well as relevant copies of the

516814	339816	Nooney Jaac Thomas	2nd Bn. on on Essex since Sept: 1.7.16 1st Lt. Scott 11798 presumed.	Wesley. 2 3 11 3 7	2 3 11	11/10/17	1. 11. 2. Pa. Returned	2 3 11		
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Army Register of Soldier's Effects
Image courtesy of John Sly

Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC)^[2] data, and information from *Soldiers Died In The Great War (SDGW)*^[3], a photograph of the *Thiepval Memorial*^[4] and of J T Marney's name thereon.

I then moved on to researching more data at *TNA*, starting with the War Diary of 2/Essex for 1 July 1916^[5], which is also available online.

Another source worth researching is the *Army Register of Soldiers' Effects 1901-1929*^[6], which is not available at *TNA*, as it is a record kept by the National Army Museum; I had to access it through *Ancestry*. In this case it provided only the additional detail that Marney's father was the sole recipient of his son's war gratuity. At this point I should explain the difference between 'regiment' and 'battalion' as these terms can confuse readers who have little experience of the military. Imagine that you have a house with the address of 'number 44, Army Street'. This house always remains the same, but the occupants may change over time. At first one person lives there, then two people, then another one arrives, and then perhaps another; later one leaves and so on. Think of the house as the regiment, which never changes; the people are the battalions, which can increase and decrease according to circumstances.

2nd Battalion, Essex Regiment (a unit in the pre-war regular Army), was part of 12 Brigade, 4 Division, VIII Corps. The battalion war diary, datelined (Be)rrancourt, 1 July, described what happened: *'At 8.36 a.m. A and D Companies advanced from their assembly trenches and immediately came under very heavy machine gun fire and Artillery barrage. At about 9.30 am the 10th Brigade were holding a line about 50 yards short of the German 2nd line and some parties had forced their way through and got as far as Pendant Copse. The main line tried to consolidate themselves in the line of craters but this work was practically impossible owing to the intense machine gun fire brought to bear on them from the direction of Serre on the left flank and Beaumont Hamel on the right...About 4.00 pm the line was forced to retire to the German front line...Casualties 22 Officers and about 400 Other Ranks.'* By the time the battalion was pulled out of the line and billeted at Mailly Maillet on 4 July the total casualties had risen to 23 Officers and 414 Other Ranks, of whom 117 were reported killed. It was the bloodiest day in the history of the British Army when Lance-Corporal J T Marney went missing (and was eventually recorded as killed).

My next step was to find out more about Jack Thomas Marney, and I looked first for a service record at the *TNA* in class WO 363^[7], the class of documents for Great War service records including those for soldiers who died. Unfortunately, no record existed; it was clearly destroyed in the warehouse fire during the Blitz during World War II which consumed a huge number of military records. Some were saved but these, known as the 'burnt' documents, were damaged by both fire and water. I then applied for a death certificate from the *General Register Office (GRO)*. These are usually not very useful when researching fatal casualties

Name.		Corps.	Rank.	Regt. No.
MARNEY		2 ^d Essex R.	Lt Col * Rec.	16498
J. T.				
Medal.	* Roll.	Page.	Remarks.	
VICTORY	K/2/102 84	266	pres dead 1-7-16	
BRITISH	do	do		
15 STAR	K/2/9 B	67		
Theatre of War first served in	(1) France			
Date of entry therein	18-5-15			
			K 1350.	

Medal Index Card
Image courtesy of John Sly

of the Great War, but as the CWGC records had failed to give me any further information about his family, the death certificate would at least give me his age. It did: he was twenty when he died in July 1916, so by a process of arithmetic he would have been four or five in April 1901 when the census was taken. I then went to the census for 1901 to look for a four/five-year-old boy, and here the problems started: there was no Jack/John Marney indexed, and by extension, no Jack Thomas Marney.

I then looked for a *John Marney* aged four/five, on the assumption that Jack is usually an alternative for John. Of the 47 John Marneys indexed, none was aged five, but there were three four-year-olds. I then tried an alternative spelling for Marney, ie **MAHONEY**. There was Jack Mahoney aged five, but he was born in Grimsby, so I ruled him out. Of the 203 John Mahoneys there was one aged five, recorded as having been born in Grays, Essex, still a long way from East Ham.

I then moved on to the other possible John Marneys, the three boys of four, one of six and one of seven. Of these remaining possibles in terms of age, none was a close enough fit to be convincing. Having not been able to establish precisely the identity of JTM, as a final check I searched the *FreeBMD* website. This recorded the birth of a John Thomas Marney registered in West Ham district in the September quarter of 1896. This looked very promising, so I took a risk and ordered the birth certificate. When it arrived, the details were as follows:

Born 24 June 1896 at 25 Marlborough Road, Forest Gate, East Ham.

Father Richard Marney, trade bricklayer (journeyman). Mother Elizabeth Marney, late **FAIRWEATHER** formerly **HERBERT**.

I now tried to find Richard and Elizabeth Marney on the 1901 census.

(To be returned in duplicate.)

2nd BN, ESSEX Regiment or Corps when Decoration was earned.

ROLL OF INDIVIDUALS entitled to the Decoration granted under Army Order 20 of 1919. ORIGINAL

To be left blank	On date of Despatchment		NAME	Date of Despatchment	REMARKS	Record of disposal of decoration	To be left blank for use in War Office
	Regt. No.	Rank					
✓	16769	Pte.	CLARKE S.	1/6/13(1)	Died of wounds 17/2/16.		67
✓	16771	Cpl.	BURGESS B.	8/6/18 (1)	Killed accidentally 9/10/16.		
✓	16772	Pte.	COOK W.T.	16/6/18(1)	Dt. No. XVI 6/12/18.		
✓	16774	*	CLARKE Edwin Hearlies	14/4/18 (1)	Died of wounds 6/10/16.		
✓	16776	*	HALLS G.H.	25/5/18 (1)	Cl. Z. 2/4/19.		
✓	16779	L/C.	ORMAN W.	"	Died of wounds 21/10/16.		
✓	16783	Pte.	LEWIS E.W.	14/4/18 (1)	Cl. Z. 7/4/19.		
✓	16784	L/C.	GRAY C.	25/5/18(1)	K. in A. 18/6/16.		
✓	16789	Pte.	GRAMMER B.	20/7/18(1)	Dt. No. XVI 25/9/16.		
✓	16790	*	PEARSON J.F.	28/6/18(1)	Cl. Z. 24/9/19.		
✓	16792	*	FOSTER T.H.	"	Died of wounds 17/7/16.		
✓	16798	L/C.	MARNEY J.T.	12/5/18(1)	Regarded for O.P. as having died 17/7/16.		

I certify that according to the Official Records the individuals named in this ROLL are entitled to the Decoration as detailed above.

Place WARLEY. 12-3

Date 12/12/19. Signature and rank of District Officer.

Colonel,
The War Office, War Department, War Office, London.

Decoration awarded to J T Marney
Image courtesy of John Sly

Surprisingly, there were only two Richard Marneys in the whole of England and Wales that year. The more promising of them was aged thirty-four and living in Leyton, Essex, which borders West Ham and East Ham. His trade was given as carman. He was living with his wife Elizabeth in the house of his in-laws, George and Amy **BORKETT**. He had a son, clearly recorded as Tom, aged fifteen. So, on two counts this could not be the family I wanted. I once again re-checked *FreeBMD* and found a marriage for Richard Marney and Elizabeth Fairweather registered in the Poplar district in the June quarter of 1893. Clearly this did not fit the circumstances of the Leyton family. The other Richard Marney was not any help, as he was aged twenty, living at 17 Clifton Road, Forest Gate. I had come full circle and was still unable to be certain about the reliability of the data I had discovered.

And so, I was left with an enigma, but not one produced by the military; this can happen to all researchers at any time. Clearly, a son, John Thomas, was born to Richard and Elizabeth Marney in East Ham in June 1896. In April 1901, this boy would have been nearly five, and therefore twenty in July 1916. Jack Thomas Marney (he might have changed his name to Jack for obvious reasons) was recruited into the Essex Regiment sometime after the outbreak of the Great War. He correctly stated that he had been born in East Ham. He was drafted to the 2nd Battalion in France in May 1915, and was killed in the attack at Serre just over a year later. This scenario is supported by the *CWGC*, *SDGW*, and the General

Register Office. Why the details of a man fitting this description, and his family, were not to be found readily on the 1901 census, I could not explain. This was a locked door for which I needed the appropriate key.

While I was completing this part of the research the 1911 census became available. In a matter of what seemed like seconds I had found the right family for that date: Richard Marney, bricklayer, his wife Elizabeth, their children Denis (sixteen), John (fourteen) and Lilian (thirteen), living at 20 Jephson Road, Forest Gate. Why were they not to be found ten years earlier? After taking advice from TNA staff, I had to assume that there was a transcription error; something had gone wrong when the person reading the 1901 census had created the digital record. After a certain amount of trial and error I discovered what it was: the M of Marney had been misread as a W, so the family appeared as **WARNEY**. When I checked this out it was clear that the whole family was there, living at 50 Marlborough Road, Upton Park. I had found the key to the lock.

This is not the first time I have discovered transcription errors in records created before the Great War, and it has to be accepted as going with the territory in an age when most records were hand-written. It also might happen if the person who is transcribing the data is not a native English speaker. These days we are used to computer databases that contain relatively few errors, but these databases are built up manually by hundreds of people over a long period of time. It is clear that in all periods the old adage applies, garbage in, garbage out.

NOTES

¹ Medal Index Cards. These were created as an index to the medal rolls (Class WO 329 at TNA), and confirm the personal details of soldiers, including rank, medals awarded, and the reference for the medal rolls. These rolls sometimes give additional information about the soldier's career, such as the battalions in which he served.

² Commonwealth War Graves Commission: originally the Imperial War Graves Commission, it has a very effective website that records death and burial details about individuals who died in the two World Wars. <https://www.cwgc.org/>

³ *Soldiers Died in the Great War*: this lists every soldier who was killed or died during the Great War, and provides information about unit, date and theatre of death, place of enlistment and place of residence at that time.

⁴Thiepval Memorial: The Memorial at Thiepval, maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, is the largest Commonwealth war memorial in the world. Standing 45 metres high, this monument bears the names of the more than 72,000 British and Allied soldiers, killed on Somme battlefields before March 1918, who have no known grave. <https://www.visit-somme.com/memorial-de-thiepval-de-la-cwgc/thiepval/pcupic0800011143>

⁵ War diary: every unit maintained a diary of its activities (WO 95 series at TNA). Some diaries are very scant in detail, others are more expansive, and

might even include individual names of soldiers who were awarded gallantry medals. The 2/Essex war diary is referenced as WO 95/1505.

⁶ Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects 1901-1929. This set of records provides data on the details of the effects and credits of deceased soldiers, and can offer confirmation of the date of death, the unit and even place of enlistment. <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/60506>

⁷ At TNA, WO 363 comprises documents which are a mixture of categories: soldiers who were killed or died, as well as soldiers who survived, and these records are available at TNA or at <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections>. The same website will also provide access to the documents of soldiers pensioned, and by definition who survived, in the class WO 364 at TNA or at <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections>.

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The Two Emily de Gruchys

Marion Turner No. 15302

Have you ever come across a document which completely overturns all you thought you knew? Just such a thing has happened to me since I submitted my article in the last CA about Emily de Gruchy nee **BUTTIVANT**.

It turns out there are two Emily de Gruchys and the one who ended her life in Horton Mental Hospital was **not** my Emily de Gruchy. There are so many similarities between the two and unfortunately I made the mistake of thinking that the death I found for Emily in Epsom referred to my Emily because I had nothing to refute it.

I have now been made aware of an entry in the Visitors Book of The Manor Asylum where she was sent in 1912 which gives her husband's name and her children's names.

Irrefutable evidence that this is not the same Emily!

I now have two Emily de Gruchys to research. I have the life of one up to 1912 and the latter part of the other one's life. It also explains why I was unable to find any evidence of a maternal grandmother in an asylum—I was looking for the wrong grandmother!

However, I believe I have now found the right one as written in my story on Hannah Sarah **WING**.

Email: mturner9849@gmail.com

Notice of the 45th Annual General Meeting



You are cordially invited to the Society Day and Annual General Meeting of The East of London Family History Society to be held on

**Saturday 6 April 2024
at Trinity United Reformed Church
Station Road
UPMINSTER Essex RM14 2UD**

Nominations are invited for the posts of Chairman, General Secretary and Treasurer. Nomination forms are available from the General Secretary (address inside the front cover of the *Cockney Ancestor*).

Members are advised that motions for discussion at the AGM should be notified to the Secretary no later than Friday 23 February 2024.

Please note that voting at the AGM is restricted to one vote per membership. Members will be able to vote in person or online.

The East of London Family History Society (Founded 1978)
Registered Charity No. 1094419

**Please note: The Society Day will start at 10.00 am.
The AGM will start at 10.45 am**

A G E N D A

Annual General Meeting of the East of London Family History Society

Saturday 6 April 2024

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. Apologies for Absence | Janet Seward |
| 2. Minutes of the Last Meeting | Gary Barnes |
| 3. Matters Arising | Gary Barnes |
| 4. Chairman's Report | Gary Barnes |
| 5. Treasurer's Report | Kevin Dopson |
| 6. Election of Examiner & Trustees | Kevin Dopson |
| 7. Election of Chairman | Melissa Ford |
| 8. Election of Officers | Chairman |
| 9. Motions to put before the AGM | Chairman |

in accordance with paragraph 9.2 of the Society's constitution it is proposed that the following subscription rates should apply:

- | | | |
|-----|--|-----|
| i | online membership | £15 |
| ii | UK membership | £20 |
| iii | membership for members outside the UK who receive a hard copy of <i>Cockney Ancestor</i> | £35 |
- | | | |
|-----|--------------------|-----|
| 10. | Any other business | All |
|-----|--------------------|-----|

About the Society Day and Annual General Meeting

The day will start at 10.00am and end around 4.30pm.

Theme for the day – From Cradle to Grave

This year, we are looking at the beginning and the end of life as experienced by our ancestors.

In the morning, we welcome Dr. Sara Read, FHEA FRHistS who is a specialist in early modern culture, literature and medicine with a specific focus on women's reproductive health.

She is a novelist who writes research based historical fiction. She is a senior lecturer at Loughborough University.

Sara will talk on the history of midwifery in London from the 1600s to the early twentieth century.

After lunch, we welcome John Harris, senior partner in T Cribb and Sons to talk about the History of Undertaking in the East End.

John has over 35 years experience in the funeral profession and is a founder member and past president of SAIF – the Society of Allied and Independent Funeral Directors.

John has a Master's Degree in 'Death in Society' from Reading University and regularly gives talks throughout the country on funeral history.

Bookstall

There will be a bookstall selling books on family and local history. We can only take cash.

Trinity United Reformed Church

Refreshments

We will serve tea and coffee on site. There are plenty of cafes nearby as well as shops selling sandwiches.

Wheelchair Access

The venue is partially accessible to wheelchair users. This means that there may be internal steps.

Please contact Janet Seward, Society Secretary at society.secretary@eolfhs.org.uk if you have special requirements.

HOW TO GET THERE

Trinity United Reformed Church Station Road, Upminster, Essex RM14 2UD is a few minutes walk from Upminster Station which is on the District Line and also runs C2C services.

Car

Car parking is available at Upminster Station.

The ULtra Low Emmission Zone (ULEZ)

The AGM venue is in a ULEZ area. You can check if your car is compliant or the charges on the tfl.gov.uk website under Ultra Low Emission Zone – Transport for London section. <https://tfl.gov.uk/modes/driving/check-your-vehicle/>

Your Committee looks forward to seeing you there!

The Reminiscences of an Ordinary Man – Part XV

This article was written by Reg C Coleman (Non-Member) in late 1970/80.

From 1920 onwards it was a continuing distressing period, with strikes and massive unemployment, coupled with the unrest in Ireland for Home Rule, with the clashes between Protestants and Catholics and the IRA very similar to today.

Unemployment benefit granted for only 15 weeks in one year and, in order to claim it, a person had to satisfy the labour exchange officials that he was genuinely seeking work. For instance, if one was sent for a job and refused to accept it because it was unsuitable, he was liable to lose his benefit if a committee decided that he was wrong to do so. Very often, when his benefit period was exhausted, a man had to seek help from the local board of guardians. This became a very heavy burden on the finances of the councils and the rates and I well remember a large deputation of labour mayors heading a huge procession of unemployed through Whitehall demanding to see Lloyd George in October 1920. Unfortunately, the police baton charged them and there were quite a number of broken heads and blood flowing. In 1921 there was another large demonstration in Trafalgar Square and a fight ensued with the police which became known as the *Battle of Trafalgar Square*. At this same time demonstrations took place in many other cities throughout the land. 1922 saw huge hunger marches beginning in Glasgow and the North of England which converged on London,

gathering more men as they marched. Lloyd George, who emerged from the war to be known as *the man who won the war* by the speed at which he got things done and afterwards promised everybody during the election campaign *a land fit for heroes to live in*, certainly must have had a headache in his role as Premier. Poverty was rife in the East End of London where I lived. A regular sight on Monday mornings was to see the women lining up outside the pawn shops carrying their husband's Sunday suits to pledge, in order to obtain enough money to pay the weekly rent. On the following Saturday they queued up again to redeem the suit for wear on Sunday. One woman in my street noted as an agent for a pawnbroker and regularly called on her friends collecting the suits in a large perambulator. She was able to get a bulk price from the pawnbroker and split the proceeds evenly between her customers. By this method each woman got a little more than bargaining singly.

The women were so badly off that they resorted to all sorts of means to get a little extra sustenance for the family, one of which was to attend a mothers'

meeting at a Church or Chapel, very often several in one week. Here they very often obtained some charity in the form of food or clothing, most especially at Christmas and in the New Year. This became such a racket that I remember one particular year when the various religious denominations got together and agreed to hold the Christmas parties on the same afternoon and thus thwarted this practise.

At my Chapel we had a lovely lady named Sister Nellie who visited the members of her mothers' meeting and rendered help to needy people. I recall her calling on one woman who always pretended to be sick and, on one occasion, saw her take off her coat and scrub the floors of the house. After she had left the house, the woman she had just visited immediately went off to the local pub and had a good laugh telling her friends about the way she had duped this splendid woman. Sister Nellie was a real lady of gentle birth as one would say and it made me mad to see how she was caught in this fashion.

Every Christmas Eve it was my practise to join members of my Chapel in going carol singing. We would set off at 11pm touring the streets with a small organ and tripod from which suspended a large hurricane oil lamp, and collected money for a charity organisation. But one particular Christmas I was unable to go with them and my old friend, George, persuaded me to provide them with cups of tea when they visited my street. At around 1am they duly arrived and, to my mother and father's surprise, they were awakened by the

gusto of singing under the bedroom window. They were really enjoying the carols as they laid comfortably in bed until suddenly there was a pause and a loud shout penetrated the quietness of the night. *Well Reg what about the tea you promised us?* I hadn't mentioned this to my parents and, in fact, I was fast asleep in the kitchen which was my bedroom at the back of the house and had not heard this. Suddenly I was awakened by my father with the exclamation *wake up boy, you have guests waiting for tea. You invited them so you jolly well get up and look after them.* In the dim gaslight, half asleep, I groped around and began to boil the kettle of water, whilst still hearing the shouts of my friends in the street below. However, I forgot to go and open the door to let them in and by the time the tea was made they had disappeared, no doubt disgusted at no response to their efforts. We regularly had bitter cold winters then and snow was falling thickly. My god, did I get a wiggling from George and the rest of them when we met up again. I was sure sorry for making that rash promise when in a hospitable state of mind.

New Year's Eve was always a wonderful night in docklands. I attended watch-night service and, promptly at 12 midnight, bedlam seemed to be let loose, as the church bells rang out, accompanied with the ships' sirens in the docks and on the River Thames and hooters from some factories who were doing night shift. The streets were full of people all shouting *Happy New Year* to each other. They were strangers to

each other all the year and here they were shaking hands and, in some cases, men were kissing the girls after having had a few drinks and feeling on top of the world, despite the austere and distressing time in this century. My father was a great believer in having a dark man to cross the threshold for luck and, as I was dark, he would wait up for me to return home in the early hours and shake my hand, both of us having a drink and wishing each other a Happy New Year. What lovely memories they are. In later life, when I moved away from the East End to North London, the New Year was always deadly quiet, except for a few church bells.

An incident comes to mind when, during one cold Christmas, a member of our athletic club thought it would be a good idea to go to the open air swimming pool at Victoria Park, East London and get a photo of a number of our members, stripped off in our bathing slips, breaking the ice on Christmas morning for publications in the Health and Strength magazine. The temperature was well below freezing and the cubicles for changing clothes were half exposed to the elements. We were tough lads, but I've often reflected on this mad venture, because of the fact that I could not swim, yet had no fear of any dangerous consequences.

January 1922 had arrived and I was 18½ years-old. After about three years with the company, my salary had increased to 25 shillings per week, seven shillings and six pence more than when I began and equal today of

37½ p. Reflecting on conditions today, what a time to wait. Employers had the whip hand then, owing to mass unemployment and one became afraid of turning in your job, especially at my age when there was no unemployment pay till a lad had reached 18 years-old, and that was a meagre amount. I could not afford to buy a made to measure suit but went to second hand clothiers, shops or stalls in Petticoat Lane, Aldgate. But what you never had, you never missed, as the saying goes and, in spite of all this, we were happy enough.

After going to the morning service at the Chapel on Sundays during the Spring onwards, in company with other young men, I made my way to Burdett Road, Poplar. This was where a number of the elite lived and, dressed in our second-hand suits and a posh straw hat worn at a jaunty angle, we walked up and down a mile stretch of the road raising our hats to the girls and giving them the glad eye, trying to get off. This was known as *Monkeys Parade*. When I arrived home for dinner, dad would say *Well boy where have you been this morning Monkeys Parade?* How gay and debonair we felt as we swaggered along feeling on top of the world. The minister's wife once said as she confronted me, *I will always remember you as the young man with sparkling laughing eyes.* This remark got round and my nickname became laughing eyes.

It was in the winter of 1922, whilst attending a Chapel social in the hall called *The Mitre*, that I met Irene, the

girl who ultimately became my first wife. It was during a *Paul Jones* dance that we became partners and I knew by the way she gripped my arm and held me closer than other girls did, that there was some strange warmth of feeling which I could not fully understand. I've always thought that, as far as Irene was concerned, it was love at first sight but as for me it was not so. The encounter reminds me of that Canadian saying that the Mounties always get their man and, in my case, it was that the woman always gets her man eventually by the wiles she employs.

After evening service at Chapel, the young men and girls made their way to Blackwall Pier on the side of the River Thames, where we happily chatted, laughed, stole kisses and cuddles especially during the cold weather to keep warm. Irene was always by my side and gradually I began to love her and knew she loved me too. This was a wonderful vantage point on the river and much further down than Greenwich Pier. During the dark evenings one could see the giant liners steaming up the river from South Africa and the Blue Funnel ships from the Pacific and Indian Oceans. Steaming up the river and anchoring in midstream waiting for high tide in order to enter the East India dock near the pier. We were high up above the river and the twinkling lights from the steamers' cabins made them look like floating fairy palaces below.

During the cold winters when it was snowing, the masts and rigging of the ships were one mass of white with long

icicles hanging from the rigging which, coupled with the twinkling lights, made them even more spectacular and us in turn became more romantic as we sat cheek to cheek cuddling and kissing. We felt so warm in our youth that the extreme cold did not worry us one bit.

Irene had two sisters and four brothers. I knew the brothers well as they had been in the Boy Scouts with me, but I never knew that they had sisters. They had been kept, it seemed, in a Victorian atmosphere and Irene being the eldest girl had to help her mother doing the household chores.

Her father had the ironmonger's shop in the East India Dock Road, Poplar and the family lived there. He also owned a ship and engine dock stores near the West India Dock gates, which was a thriving business due to the large amount of repairs needed for ships which had been damaged in the 1914/18 war.

As time progressed during our courtship, Sunday evenings after Chapel were spent indoors with her family. Here was I, comparably poorer than them, although I never divulged it, smiling my way through and accepting cigars and drinking whiskey with them as though I was used to it and on the same level. Her father never allowed his daughter to be out after 10pm and sometime, as Irene and I were coming home just after his curfew he would be waiting on the doorstep with a severe look on his face, which seemed to be saying *where the hell have you been at this time of night*. I used to wonder what he said to Irene when she got inside. I

would greet him with a smile and hello, which he never replied to as he turned to go inside and I hoped that I had softened him up a bit. The only time he relented was on New Year's Eve when we went to watch night service at the Chapel with the rest of the family and returned after midnight for a drink and the usual cigar.

For some considerable time I had not told my parents of my association with Irene but, on my birthday, a present arrived from Irene and my mother turned to me and said. *Ah, this is from a girl and how long has this been going on?* I replied, *How do you know?* She laughed and said with a twinkle in her eye, *A little bit of Sherlock Holmes lad, that parcel smells of perfume.* So, my secret was out and I invited Irene to tea the following Sunday for my parents to meet my girl and to get their feelings about her. I had been reluctant before because of living in two rooms, whereas she lived in a ten-roomed house. However, it made no difference to Irene as she was so much in love. Social status was no barrier to us. She once said that it's what you are as a person that counts and not where you happen to be born or where you unfortunately have to live.

Our pleasures were simple ones in those far off days and when I was not engaged in my athletics on Saturday afternoons, we often went by bus to Wanstead Park, Essex. This was a very peaceful and lovely place with beautiful walks. There was a fishing lake surrounded by trees in a wonderful setting and, close by, were the ruins of

a monastery and it was said that the monks fished in this lake for their usual religious feast on Fridays.

At other times we visited Woodford and beyond to Connaught Waters boating lake and the Wakes Arms area of Epping forest. It was not populated as it is today and at dusk farmers were allowed to let their cows graze there. The animals had bells hung around their necks, no doubt to warn the public of their presence and also to enable the farmer to trace them as it was a very large area unlike the open fields. One seldom saw the cows but, in the twilight of the evening, the twinkling bells around the animals' necks lent a romantic feeling to our young hearts in the beautiful stillness of the summer evening. Epping Forest was bought many years ago by the City of London Corporation, so that it could be made common land for the recreation of the people. Those old City of London Aldermen were far sighted men because, had they not done so, it might be built on today. Sometimes we went westwards to Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens and listened to the military bands or hired a row boat on the Serpentine. As winter approached, our Saturday evenings were spent going to the Holborn Empire (now demolished) and the London Palladium, where we saw Harry TATE, George ROBEY, Max MILLER, Randolf SUTTON and many more of the old timers. We loved Randolf Sutton who was dressed immaculate in high top hat and frock coat, a perfect gent playing his piano and singing songs in which we joined,

like *Mother Kelly's' daughter*. And another called *Don't worry mother, the girl will come home alright, early in the morning*. He had the perfect professional touch and was a favourite with the people. We usually went in the grand circle at a cost of, I believe, three shillings and sixpence (17½ p today) and with a box of chocolates for Irene, we were on top of the world. What happy days. It was always on the 2nd house performance at 7.45 pm and meant a bit of a rush to get home by her father's curfew of 10 pm and often we were a little late and there, as usual, was father waiting on the doorstep. On spotting us coming along he went indoors and it seemed could not face me with my cheeky laughing eyes. I got on well with Irene's mother and she often said that she regarded me as though I was her son, but I could not seem to get too close to her father who was a hard-headed business man.

At this time, my father's health was rapidly deteriorating and when I once told her of this, although she had never met him, one night after seeing Irene home she gave me a bottle of whiskey to give him. She was always generous to me.

These were the times when buskers were becoming prominent all over London, especially entertaining people lined up outside the theatres in the West End. One day I remember four fellows with a barrel organ spreading a tarpaulin sheet in the middle of Leicester Square, sprinkling the sheet with sand then rolling up their trousers above the knees, showing a thin pair of legs with most awful knobbly knees and to the accompaniment of the barrel organ done a sand dance. Their antics were so comical that a large crowd gathered and the traffic was stopped for ages till the police arrived and booked them for obstruction but not before one them had gone around with the hat to collect cash. I saw these fellows in other parts of London constantly. Another pair with a barrel organ dressed up as women with large hats decorated with feathers and wearing short skirts, silk stockings full of large holes with suspenders, doing a dance and showing off their legs to the laughter of the crowds. With all this happy light-heartedness around the outside world, there was to begin a new struggle at home for existence for my mother and father.

To be continued.....



George Robey as a Mayor in the Sketch 18 May 1904

Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

Our Little Park in Clapton Square

Annette Kilbourn No. 14179



A rare carved stone street sign c 1880
Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

My family used to love going to ‘our parks’ in Hackney, with some being frequented more than others. One such park is Clapton Square which we knew as the little park.

This park was one of my nan’s, Emily **RICHARDS** nee **JACKSON** (1905–1982), favourite ones and in fact it was nan that gave the park the nickname in our family.

The park came into being in 1816 when some of the **TYSEN** family’s land was laid out and became Clapton Square. Our little park had, like many typical squares of that time, been constructed as a green space originally for only the residents in the classical Georgian terrace houses around the square to use. The houses on the north and west sides are the original ones but a couple of mansion blocks replaced some of the older houses in 1900. This was likely due to Charles **BOOTH** noting in 1899 that lots of the house here were rented and were past their best.

In 1923 the green space was acquired by the London County Council (then passed to Hackney council in later years) and thus the park was opened fully to the public.

Looking it up in old *Hackney Gazettes*, during WWII, as in so many places, the park was bombed a couple of times in 8/11/40 and the 19/3/41. Some of this damage on the east side was not actually rebuilt on until the 1990s.

Another snippet is that in the 1950s there was going to be an open-air theatre which would have been Hackney’s part in celebrating the Festival of Britain that was held 1951, but the cost of an estimated £17,000 and opposition from the people who lived round the square soon put a stop to this idea.

The square itself also in its time has had its fair share of famous people living there for example at No.5 is where Thomas **BRIGGS** lived. Thomas had the dubious honour of being Britain’s first person that was murdered on a railway on 9 July 1864. This 69-year-old was the chief clerk at a bank in the city who was travelling home to Hackney on the train. Then at No.6 was Theodore

ROTHSTEIN (1871–1953), a journalist whose famous friend was the Russian revolutionary Vladimir Ilyich **ULYANOV** better known as **LENIN** (1870–1924) who is said to have visited him in the square in 1905.

Then the most famous of all, well certainly in our family, was my nan ‘s friend Maud who lived in Cavendish Mansions, which is one of the blocks built in 1900, but I cannot remember what her surname was. In fact, it might well never have been mentioned to me when I was a child.

Back to my family, and our little park in the main was used by us as a cut through to get to Lower Clapton Road.

We did this either to go to the shops, catch a bus in Lower Clapton Road, visit the doctors, visits to the hairdressers or for either my mum or dad to go and pay our electric bills at the London Electricity Board (LEB) as there was no online paying or direct debits back then. I will write more about this place later.

My nan also used to go through the park on her way to talk to the owners of **JASON’S** which was an art shop. They had three joined shops on the corner of Lower Clapton Road where the chemist, estate agents and Chinese takeaway are now. Occasionally nan would come home with a picture to go on the wall from there. They would not be up that long as she would either take them back and swap them for something else or give them to one of her children if they took a liking to the picture.

The ladies in the family also used to go to the Clapton Beauty Parlour which is just around the corner from the park.

It was my nan that started going to the beauty parlour occasionally when it first opened in the 1930s. Her mum, my great grandmother Florence Jackson (nee **LEE**), knew the family and the owners, Jean (1908–2003) and Emanuel **MANNING** (1909–1974).

Emanuel started out doing men’s hair at his family’s barber’s shop at 83 Chatsworth Road, but once the couple married and found the shop at 21 Lower Clapton Road, Emanuel then started to do women’s hair.

They also used to sell makeup, so this was where the ladies in the family used to buy their Max Factor and Revlon products for a while.

It has a couple of claims to fame too in that the famous hairdresser Vidal **SASSOON** worked there during WWII and my nan met Barbara **WINDSOR** there who was a client.



My short hair in my first school photo

Image courtesy of Annette Kilbourn



Me posing in my school uniform on my first day, behind our seat
Image courtesy of Annette Kilbourn

I too met Barbara years later at a bus stop in Piccadilly in the late '90s but I digress.

As for me they only cut my hair just the once when I was a little girl before I started school, but I did not like it as it went from long to very short. Even as a child of five I never let them near my hair again and let my mum cut it instead till I was in my teens.

The Clapton Beauty Parlour is still there today and after being run by Jean and Emmanuel's daughter, Marcia, it is now run by a lady that used to work for Marcia and a friend of mine now goes there.

If we were not using the little park as a cut through, then we could be found



Card posted in 1907
Image courtesy of Annette Kilbourn



Card posted 1920
Image courtesy of Annette Kilbourn



The 1894 drinking fountain in the middle of the park and you can see where our seat used to be on the left near my tree on the pathway which has now also gone.
Image courtesy of Annette Kilbourn



Postcard from 1906

Image courtesy of Annette Kilbourn

sitting on our seat. We always had our special seats in parks and here our seat was the nearest one to the exit in Lower Clapton Road and opposite the police station.

As you might remember from some of my other articles, my grandad, John Charles **TOLLADAY** (1903–1980), used to like collecting postcards. Flicking through them, I found a few of Clapton Square which I have added to this article.

I love looking at old photos and, looking at these postcards, Clapton Square and our little park has not changed that much at all.

There has never really been too much in the park. It did used to have good flower displays in the part facing Lower Clapton Road. There is a water fountain which was donated in 1894 and restored a little while ago, a shelter and, nowadays, a play area for children.

Despite being small, this park today does hold a green flag award (an international scheme that recognises the best parks and open spaces in the UK and abroad) and is now in a conservation area, plus has protection as part of the 1931 London Squares Preservation Act.

Just outside the park in Lower Clapton Road are four other buildings that are interesting too. One of my favourite buildings in the Hackney area is the old LEB building where we used to pay our electric bills. This is an art deco building called The Strand Building that was built in 1925. It was originally known as

the Hackney Electricity Demonstration Halls and offices. It was designed by J.A. **BOWDEN** and in 1995 this listed building was made into trendy apartments.

Then there is the old Hackney Metropolitan Police Station that was designed by John **DIXON-BUTLER** and built in 1904. Although it closed in 2013 the building is still there and has recently been re-opened as a school.



Same view of Lower Clapton Road today
Image courtesy of Annette Kilbourn

There is also the building designed by Edward **HARNOR** and Frederick **PINCHES**, which opened in 1897, as the Hackney Baths that today is known as The Kings Leisure Hall Centre.

Finally, opposite the park is one of my favourite churches, St. John at Hackney, that was built in 1792 and replaced the old medieval church that was there.

My final postcard from 1906 according to the postmark, shows the Hackney Baths to the right of the bus. The trees shown behind the bus are in our little park.

Also, if you look closely at the postcard, on the left near the lamp post, two policemen can be seen on their beat and the police station itself is only two doors down from where they are walking.

What I really love though, are all the people, mainly children on the right of the photo, all posing for the camera.

So, when I go along to Hackney, and if I'm near to our little park, I still walk through there and reminisce about my family, but alas I cannot sit on our seat or even hug my tree as I used to when I was a child as both have been removed, but I still have my memories of the good times that I had there.

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Adelaide Emma Stafford (1874 – 1953)

Peter Holford No. 14359

Most of the individuals who make up my family tree are quite anonymous. They are names with significant dates and places recorded and they fit into the network of relationships that make up the tree. But nothing really distinguishes them, either because they are too far back in time and there is no record of their lives or because they lived their lives with no noteworthy events beyond the expected pattern of life. Adelaide **STAFFORD** was different. She was a woman who forged her own path through life, far from the norms expected of a woman in that age.

Adelaide was born into a large working class family in Kentish Town, North London. Her father, George Richard Stafford, was a boot maker. He and his wife, Emma, had ten children, four of whom died young. Adelaide was the seventh born.

The three eldest boys became piano makers including my great-grandfather, George (see article on page 3). The fourth, Frank, was a whitesmith and the youngest surviving girl, Minnie, was a dressmaker.

Adelaide had higher ambitions. She never married, never had a partner. According to her nephew, Roger, no man was good enough for her. In fact Roger said he was certain that one of her main roles in life was to terrify little boys like him. My dad who was her great-nephew also spoke in awed terms of Adelaide.

By her early twenties she had left home and was travelling as part of her work. In the 1901 census she was in Weston-super-Mare working with a 'trade exhibition'. In 1911 she was lodging in Reading working in the 'toilet department of a cash chemist'. This was Boots the Chemist. She made a career with this company that included travelling abroad, notably to southern Africa.

She made several journeys to Cape Town during the 1920s and 1930s and, on at least one of those excursions, stayed abroad for nearly three years. On that occasion, for the return trip, she registered her last country of permanent residence as Rhodesia. In 1926 she recorded her occupation as 'saleswoman' but in subsequent voyages she was a 'housewife'. The photograph of her (on the cover), was taken in South Africa, She wore a wedding ring presumably to keep any unwanted male attention at bay!

In December 1939, at the age of 65, she sailed for South Africa again. This time the last country of permanent residence was 'Other parts of the British Empire'. She didn't return to England until 1947. But she didn't stay here for long and eight months later she returned to South Africa. She stayed there for more than four years. Finally she came back to England in 1952 when she was

78. One month later she wrote her will leaving small bequests to four friends in the **BROWNING** family in Totteridge, Barnet and the unspecified remainder to her sister Minnie's children. Her only other relatives, the nephew and nieces in Hackney, the children of brother George, were not mentioned.

Adelaide went back to her home in Bournemouth, a town where she had lived since at least 1926 when she was resident in England. She died the following March and as requested in her will she was cremated and her ashes scattered. It seems she had no desire for a permanent monument to her memory.

The Journeys made by Adelaide Emma Stafford to and from South Africa 1901–1952

** Miss Stafford, 7 December 1901 from the UK to the Cape via Tenerife on the *Guelph*

Miss A Stafford, 14 September 1902 aged 23 from Sydney, Australia to London on the *Orizibar*

Miss Stafford, 18 May 1907 from Southampton to Natal Cape on the *Gaika*

Stafford, Adelaide, 38 Roderick Rd, Hampstead, 26 August 1922 from Cape Town to the Port of London on the *TSS Barrabool*

Miss A E Stafford, 13 Drummond Road, Boscombe, aged 48, saleswoman, 12 February 1926 from Southampton to Cape Town on the *Armadale Castle*

Stafford, Adelaide E, Housewife, 38 Roderick Road, aged 54, housewife, 13 August 1928 from Cape Town to Southampton on the *Windsor Castle*

Miss A E Stafford aged 65, 31 December 1939, Southampton to the Cape on the *Winchester Castle*

Bradburne House, Bradburne Road, Bournemouth, age Nil from Cape Town to Southampton via Madeira on the *RMV Warwick Castle*

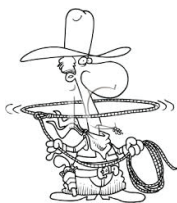
Stafford Miss AE aged 73 on 29 January 1948 from Southampton to Durban on the *Sterling Castle*

(with Adelaide Limbrey) aged 72 (77?) on 30 May 1952 from Cape Town to Southampton on the *Carnarvon Castle*

**There was also a Miss Stafford entered on the passenger lists for the ship *Norman* which sailed for South Africa on 17 August 1901. *The Union Castle Line* was created by the merger of the *Union Steamship Co., London (Est 1857)* and the *Castle Mail Packet Co., London (Est 1862)*. This is less likely because it was not a *Castle Line* ship, and rather near to her sister's (Minnie) wedding which she attended on 1 August 1901. At the time of the March 1901 census Adelaide was in Weston-super-Mare. She was present at 12 Piercefield Street when her mother died in January 1930, probably staying/living in Roderick Road.

She went to South Africa 5 times in all, but what did she do when she was there? Some say she was a companion to someone, or a landlady. What is the truth?

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Roundup

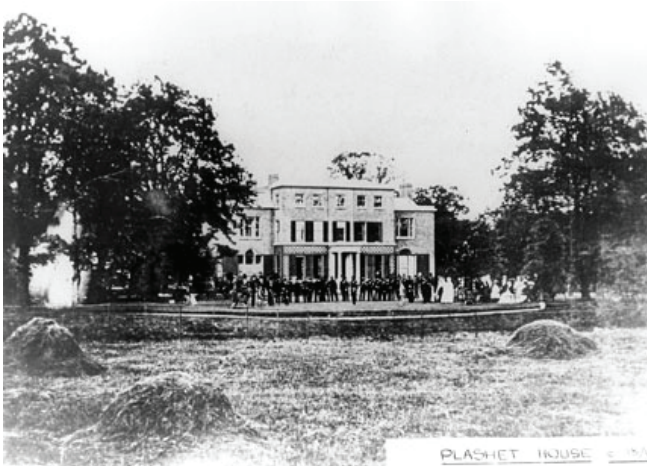
- ❖ More exciting news from the *Society of Genealogists (SoG)* this month. They've launched a brand new search tool called 'SoG Explore'! Whilst they are thrilled to have opened their Research Hub at Wharf Road, London N1 7GS they appreciate that not everyone can visit them in person. They are committed to continually developing digital collections and behind the scenes they've been busily working on a brand new search tool. SoG Explore will gradually replace their existing search function (SoG Data Online), and they've already migrated across 10 million named indexes. The tool is currently in development and they highly value your feedback. You can find details about SoG Explore and an instructional video on their website.
- ❖ *The Guildhall Library* have a new events programme spanning January–April 2024. All events are free and will be taking place either online, in-person, or both (hybrid), except walks. Please visit their web page and download a copy of the brochure (PDF): All events are available to book via *Eventbrite*.
- ❖ *Findmypast* has released over 122,000 burial records added to this existing collection for the county of Herefordshire. They span 300 years, between 1539 and 1840. You may discover your ancestor's name, date and place of burial with these transcriptions.
- ❖ *Findmypast* have also released over 14,000 new records for Medway in Kent. These cover 1981 to 2020. From these records, you can expect to learn a full name, age, birth year, burial date and place of residence. In some cases an occupation is also included, along with any dedication featured on the deceased's grave. Also added are 1,478 records from the town of Bromley to their collection of Kent Burials. Taken from two local parishes, these new additions span 1803 to 1839. These records, taken from registers kept by **DUNNS** Funeral Directors, contain both a transcription and an image of the original register. In addition to a full name and age, you'll learn a birth year, burial date and place from these records. In some cases, an occupation is also listed, as well as additional

notes – such as marital status, parents' names, and whether the deceased was a foundling.

- ❖ First World War Campaign medals. Over 6.5 million new records have been added to *Findmypast* this week, in the form of this brand new collection. It contains the names of men and women who were awarded campaign medals during the First World War. You'll typically find their name, rank, regiment or unit, medals awarded, theatre of war, and any additional notes.
- ❖ Macclesfield WWI hospital records. This second new collection on *Findmypast* includes 1,880 hospital records from Macclesfield in Cheshire, covering the years 1914 to 1918. The transcripts include a name, birth year, event date, place, and details such as rank, service number, regiment and unit or corps, plus an admission and discharge date
- ❖ *The General Register Office* has made available for viewing death register entries from 1888 to 1957, to add to the earlier records back to 1837 that were already available for immediate access online for £2.50.
- ❖ *The National Archives* online catalogue *Discovery* has been supplemented with details of civilians who were awarded medals for bravery in WWII, including George Cross, George Medal, OBE, and MBE awards, covering some 6.5 thousand individuals. Also Crimean War Casualties for 1853–1856. The 5,893 new records can include a name, date, soldier number, rank, regiment, in addition to a description of the casualty and the action it was caused by.
- ❖ *Ancestry* has added over 50 thousand of the UK's oldest Ordnance Survey maps, 1805–1874.
- ❖ Gary Barnes has sent us a link to St Bartholomew's (Barts) Archives catalogue <http://www.calmhosting01.com/BartsHealth/CalmView/>. You have to search and request items and book at visit and they are based at Bart's Hospital.
- ❖ On the eve of the Second World War, in response to the Nazi annexation of Czechoslovakia, the British Government established the *Czechoslovak Refugee Trust*. Its purpose was the assistance of Czechoslovak citizens who sought refuge from persecution. Thanks to a recent cataloguing project by volunteers at *The National Archives*, the records of the Trust are now searchable by name and date.

Joseph Fry

Melissa Ford No.7658



Plashet House, East Ham
Image courtesy of Melissa Ford

Born on 20 September 1809 at Plashet House, East Ham to parents Joseph Storrs **FRY** and Elizabeth **GURNEY**, both came from successful Quaker families.

Joseph junior was the sixth child for them. They had 11 children in total. Joseph had spent his early years living at Plashet House, which was his dad's family

home. Unfortunately, due to money troubles (I think some of us can relate to that) the family took the offer from the Gurney family and moved into The Cedars. This was a property on Samuel Gurney's estate at Portway. He resided at Ham House.

Joseph married Alice **PARTRIDGE** 1 January 1834 at St. Margaret & St. Nicholas Church in Kings Lynn, Norfolk. Their first child, Richenda Elizabeth, was born at Upton before they moved to a property called White House, around North End, East Ham, where more children were born. They were Walter Joseph, John Gurney, Jane Augusta, Henry Partridge, Frederick William, Richard Percival, Alice Octavia and Josephine Helena.

Joseph's occupation was a merchant in sugar and coffee but other records state he was a merchant in sugar and tea. When his father had money troubles, we know that his tea business survived and Joseph junior had taken over the business in 1828 at a salary of £600 per year. This is equivalent to £45,000 in today's money.

At some point the family moved to a property in Wanstead. I do not know the actual location of this property but the 1851 census just states that it was near *The George Inn*, Wanstead. Whilst living in Wanstead, Joseph and Alice had two more children, Catherine May Louisa and Margaret Adelaide.

Like other family members he had a good heart and would use his spare time



Fairkytes, Billet Road, Hornchurch

Image courtesy of Melissa Ford

helping good causes. One of these was getting involved with something that his uncle, Samuel Gurney, was involved with. *The Metropolitan Free Drinking Fountain Association* was started back in 1859 by Samuel Gurney and Edward Thomas **WAKEFIELD** to ensure that free drinking water was available to everyone. The name was later changed to *The Metropolitan Drinking & Cattle Trough Association*.

The 1861 census shows the family at Plashet Cottage. This was another property that was in the Fry family and it was here that Joseph Fry senior moved when his wife, Elizabeth, died and where he died 26 August 1861. This is probably why Joseph junior was there.

Joseph and Alice then moved to Fairkytes, Billet Road, Hornchurch. This was a mid-century home, which was previously owned by the **WEDLAKE** family who had the iron foundry opposite. Alice died at Fairkytes and was buried in St. Andrews churchyard. Joseph continued living there until he passed away in 1896 aged 87. He was buried with Alice.

After Joseph's death it was decided, in his memory and for his commitment to the *Metropolitan Drinking & Cattle Trough Association*, that a drinking fountain should be put on Wanstead Flats. This was done and can be found at the corner of Centre and Capel Road. Unfortunately, over the years it has lost its plaque and decorative items like the drinking cup.

(Previously published in Newham & Redbridge newsletter no. 181)
Email: historymel4@gmail.com

Cowkeepers, Contractors and Brick Merchants

Kieran Wright No.16010



St Dunstan and All Saints,, Stepney
Image courtesy of Kieran Wright

It was my father that was first interested in researching his family tree. That was in a time before the internet.

To look at the birth, marriage or death records would mean travelling, for example, to St. Catherine House or ordering possible records and waiting for them to be delivered through the post. Census could only be looked at on microfilm. His aunt had told him stories of possible German ancestors and bankruptcy in previous generations.

Christopher **TIETGEN** 1775–1860 married Dorothy **JARROD** 1776–1845 in September 1798 at Saint Matthew's, Bethnal Green, London. They were my 5 x great-grandparents.

On the 1841 census he was living with his wife at King Edward Street, Bethnal Green, London. His country of birth was given as foreign.

A search on *FamilySearch* website for name the Tietgen in the 18th century provides results for Schleswig-Holstein in Germany.

They had at least 2 children, Mary Ann Tietgen 1800–1878 and Henry Tietgen 1820. His age was sixty-five his occupation was cowkeeper,

Dorothy Tietgen (Jarrod) died in 1845.

Christopher died in May 1860. He was buried in the family grave bought by his son-in-law, Jacob **BASE**, at Tower Hamlet Cemetery.

In 1822 Mary Ann Tietgen married Jacob Base at St. Dunstan and All Saints, Stepney. They were my 4 x great-grandparents. Henry Tietgen married Mary

BENNET in 1839, his profession was given as a cowkeeper, the same as his father.

Jacob and Mary Ann Base in the 1841 and 1851 censuses were living in Charles Street, Stepney with their children, Eliza (**GIBBS**)1823–1884, Sarah (**WINN**) 1825–1908, Emma 1831–1853, Henry 1836–1879 and Mary (**REED**)1839.

Jacob's occupation was cowkeeper. His birthplace was given as Germany.

Jacob was 67 when he died in July 1859. He was living at Upton Place, Ilford Road in West Ham.

He was buried in the family grave at Tower Hamlet cemetery.

His will is difficult to read but does provide important information. John Medway Winn, his son-in-law, was his executor. It also provides the married names of other daughters.

Mary Ann Base (Tietgen) was seventy-eight when she died in November 1878. She was living at Mount Place, Whitechapel. She was buried in the family grave at Tower Hamlet Cemetery.

Jacob Base was my 3 x great-grandfather.

Jacob had a variety of professions: cowkeeper, carman, brick merchant and contractor.

He was declared bankrupt at least four times. *The British Newspapers* archive and *Findmypast.com* have provided information about his business, bankruptcies, and the auctions of his property.

Jacob Base was born in December 1834 in Bethnal Green.

Jacob was the fourth child. He was baptized at St. Mary's, Whitechapel.

Jacob married Mary Ann **JONES** 20 October 1855 at the parish church Hackney.

Mary Ann Jones' age was recorded as underage (16?). Her Parents were Christian John Jones 1809–1848 and Elizabeth **CLIFFE**. Christian had been the publican at *The Fountain* pub, James Street in Bethnal Green. Her mother, Elizabeth, had married George **APPLETON** in 1852.

George and Elizabeth Appleton were the witnesses at their marriage. George Appleton took over the license of *The Fountain*.

In June 1858, his first son was born at 11 West Street, Mile End.

Jacob Harry 1858–1898.

Christian 1860–1892.

Elizabeth Mary 1861–1947.

Henry 1862–1935.

Emily Sarah 1865–1937.

Emma Jane .1865–1865.

In the 1861 census he was living with family at 10 and 11 West Street, Mile End Old Town, occupation cowkeeper, Mary Ann 30, Jacob Harry 2, Christian 0.

In April 1870 Jacob instructed to be sold as consequence of having completed an extensive three-year-contact, 40 carts and van horses, 40 sets of harness, 16

carts. Ann Street, Devonshire Street (*CityPres*). Jacob was not recorded on the 1871 census. He was possibly trying to avoid his debtors. In September 1871, Jacob Base the younger was in the Bankruptcy Courts for the first time. (*London*

FAILURE OF A BRICK MERCHANT.

At the Bankruptcy Court yesterday it was announced that a petition for liquidation had been filed by Jacob Base, of Mile-end Old-road, Hackney, and Stratford, brick merchant and contractor. The liabilities are estimated at about £20,000, and the assets at £6,000.

Bankruptcy article in London Gazette 1884

Image courtesy of Kieran Wright

Gazette and East London Observer).

In January 1879, his wife, Mary Ann, aged 41, died at 21 West Street, Mile End. (*East London Observer*). In November 1879, Jacob's mother died, aged 78.

In his mother's will, she reduced the money that he received because of money

In Bankruptcy—Re Jacob Base, Ann-street, Mile-end, London, E.—By order of the Chief Official Receiver in Bankruptcy.

Mr. Rymill

Will SELL BY AUCTION, on the Premises, on Wednesday and Thursday next, Jan. 26th and 27th, at Twelve o'clock each day,

THE Entire STOCK of a COWKEEPER and CONTRACTOR, comprising—

42 MILCH COWS,

78 Powerful CART and VAN HORSES,

40 One-horse CARTS, 8 Two-horse CARTS

Milk Cart

Single and Pair Horse VANS,

Grain WAGONS, Cattle Conveyance,

80 Sets of THILL and CHAIN HAR-

NESS;

Contents of Farrier's Shop, Stable Utensils,

&c.

Catalogues on application to Mr. Rymill,

Royal Repository, Barbican, London, E.C.

On View Day Prior.

Bankruptcy notice 1887

in Essex Chronicle, Surrey Advertiser

Image courtesy of Kieran Wright

she gave him before he was declared bankrupt in 1871.

In the 1881 census Jacob Base was a widower, a cowkeeper living with children at 21 West Street. Elizabeth 19, Henry 18, Emily 14.

He was bankrupt for a second time 24 July 1883. His estimated liabilities were £20,000 pounds and his assets were £6,000 (*London Gazette*).

In today's money liabilities of £20,000 is worth £3,111,293.60 and asset of £6,000 is worth £933,388.08.**CPI Inflation Calculator*

Jacob was charged with being drunk while in

charge of a horse and cart. He was fined 2s. 6d. (*Tower Hamlet Independents*).

He was also prosecuted and was fined £2 for keeping a large quantity of filthy

1698	Private Grave 12 feet deep Consecrated 6 feet 6" x 2 feet 6" abandoned 2 inches length 15 see Spec 44 1852 February 24 th L.S.O.	Emma Base 1852	
		Christopher Tegen 24 yrs 7/6/60	810
		William J Base 13 mch 5/4/64	671
		Jacob Base 1859	250
		Mary Ann Base 28 th 1858	591
		Emma J Base 4 mch 14/4/65	1250
		Christopher Gibbs 4 yrs 3/10/67	60
		Emily E. Gibbs 3 yrs 15/12/68	856
Jacob Base 19 Charles Street Mile End New Town Cowan Keepen			

Family Grave at City of London cemetery

Image courtesy of Kieran WRight

rubbish and decom. In July 1884 he was reported for bankruptcy. Occupations were brick merchant contractor, cowkeeper and dairyman (*London Gazette*).

In 1887 he was bankrupt for the last time. January 1887 Mr RYMILL sold by auction at Ann Street, Mile End.

42 milch cows,
78 powerful carts,
41 one horse carts,
8 two horse carts,
milk carts,
single and pair horse vans,
grain wagons, cattle conveyance,
80 sets of thill and chain harness, contents of farrier's shop, stable utensils.
(*Essex Chronicle, Surrey Advertiser*).

In the 1891 census he was living alone at 3 Carlton Road, Mile End Old Town. He was a widower and a contractor.

In the 1901 census, his daughter-in-law, Laura Base, 45 widower (**DOBSON**) and seven of her children were also living at the same address. Beatrice, Frederick, Gertrude, William, Florence, Arthur, and Henry.

June 1903 he was admitted and discharged from Mile End workhouse.

He died in December 1903, age 70.

He was buried at the City of London cemetery.

Email: rightciaran@gmail.com

The English Language

Chris Langford No. 1338

On 4 November 2023 a grumpy looking man sat before me. I could see he was taking in everything that was happening around him as preparations were made for a short branch AGM followed by his talk.

To me, *a townie*, Charlie HAYLOCK'S appearance was that of a rustic man. His Suffolk accent confirmed my opinion.

I have never listened to a talk that was both so hilariously funny and educationally informative. I laughed out loud (it didn't go unnoticed by the speaker) and clung on to every word. No comedian has made me laugh so much and no speaker has ever held my attention so intently. I was fascinated and mesmerised by this dour man with a huge sense of humour!

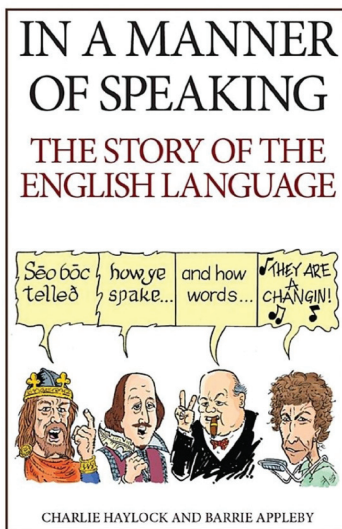
Charlie told us that his family moved from Suffolk to Hornchurch, Essex when he was a child. At school he was tormented but didn't realise until later that it was due to his accent. This, then, sparked his lifelong study of the English language.

So much detail was packed into his talk, which gained momentum as it went on – from the historical invasions of England which brought the different geographical dialects to the way people shape their mouths and tongues to produce regional accents. Charlie explained how our alphabet was formed and how various letters were interchanged and developed in the written word. Playwrights, poets and the Bible contributed so many phrases into everyday use and our English language today is enriched by a surprising array of words from diverse countries all over the world. Charlie stated that English has no official standard and is still developing.

I enjoyed the talk so much that I immediately purchased his book and I have spent late and pleasurable evenings reading through this lifetime's work.

So thank you, Charlie Haylock, and the Havering Branch of EoLFHS for this wonderful enlightenment.

24 Whybridge Close, Rainham, Essex RM13 8BD



Charlie Haylock's Book
Image from Google

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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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*. The meeting starts at 5.45pm. The meeting room will be available from 5.30pm.

Diary Dates

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

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 (Z)</i>	Mike Brown
(NR)	20th	<i>London's Docklands (3rd Wed) (Z) **</i>	Peter Tatam
(CL)	22nd	<i>Smoothfield to Smithfield *</i>	Eleanor Bloom

APRIL 2024

(H)	6th	<i>Society AGM</i>	
(NR)	24th	<i>Freedom of Information for Genealogy</i>	Richard Holt
(CL)	26th	<i>Tracing ancestry via the Internet</i>	Joanne Larner

MAY 2024

(H)	4th	<i>Military History</i>	Paul Nixon
(NR)	22nd	<i>Putting Your Ancestors on the Map</i>	Dr Nicolas Dixon
(CL)	31st	<i>Treasures from the Privy</i>	Alistair Owens

*NB week earlier. ** NB week earlier. (Z) Also on Zoom

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.