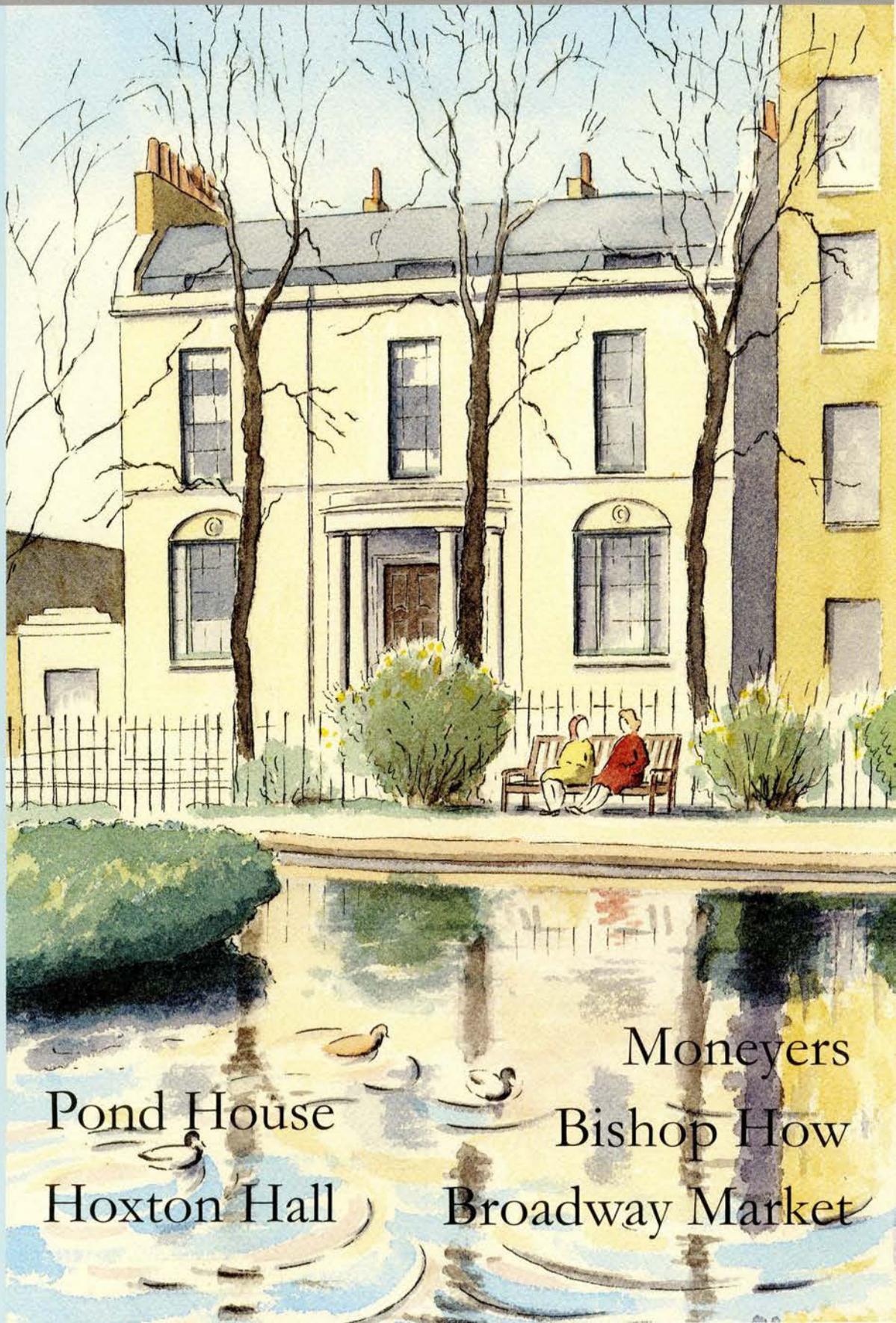


Hackney *History*

VOLUME SIXTEEN

people places



Pond House

Hoxton Hall

Moneyers

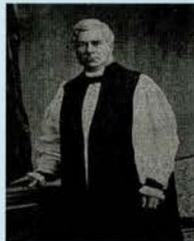
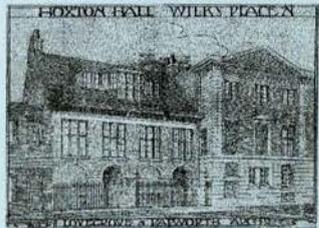
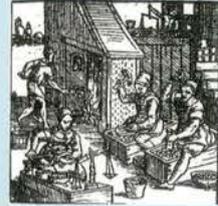
Bishop How

Broadway Market

Hackney *History*

In this issue

- the makers of the coinage and their local whereabouts
- the builder of Pond House and his scandalous career
- a history of Hoxton Hall
- East London's first bishop
- the gentrification of Broadway Market



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THE FRIENDS OF HACKNEY ARCHIVES

Hackney History

volume sixteen

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Abbreviations used in the notes in this volume

HAD	Hackney Archives Department
LMA	London Metropolitan Archives
TNA	The National Archives
VCH	Victoria County History of Middlesex

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From the editor

In its 16th issue *Hackney History* continues to range across the extent of the modern borough from north to south. It also ranges widely in time – from the 16th century until last year; and in approach and tone, perhaps more than in any previous issue. If in part this one has more of a political edge than readers are accustomed to, there is no reason to apologise for that.

In future years *Hackney History* is likely to be published not annually but more intermittently, in part because of the relationship of its production cost to the Friends of Hackney Archives' expected annual income. In answer to the inevitable question when the next issue will be, at present the answer is: when the material is to hand. Potential contributors should not however be deterred from getting in touch.

This year's issue is dedicated to the memory of Jacqueline Bradshaw-Price, who died in August this year. Jacqueline designed the cover for *Hackney History* every year from 1998 to 2009, and in 2005 produced the template for the re-styling of the contents. The borough's archive conservator as well as designer for most of the Friends' other publications, Jacqueline was a multi-talented artist and a good friend to the Archives. Her finest public hour was spent in July 2009, on the fourth plinth in Trafalgar Square (which she used to further her campaign against noise from aircraft, dealing magnificently with hecklers). Required for that project to sum herself up, she described herself, with devastating precision, as 'inventive, curious and persistent'. To which I would add: passionate, compassionate, and full of surprises; a lateral thinker, of unswerving integrity. She has gone from us far before her time, and is hugely missed.

Isobel Watson
November 2010

Hackney, Shoreditch and moneys in the Mint in later-medieval and early-modern London

Christopher Challis

1

In the parish church of St Leonard, Shoreditch, demolished in 1735, there once stood a tomb which, according to Stow, bore the following inscription:

Hereunder lieth Robert Hary Young, and Margery, his Wife; Richard Hary Young, his Son, and Elisabeth and Margaret, his Wives Some Time both Provosts of the King's Mint within the Tower of London: Which Richard Hary Young deceased the 23d Day of August, in the Year of our Lord God 1545, in the 36th Year of the Reign of King Henry the Eighth. [The rest scratched out.] ¹ (fig. 1)

As the architecture suggests, and as the contemporary designation of Richard as 'gentleman' confirms, the Harry Yonges had been no mere artisans. On the contrary, it would appear that on Richard's death his second wife, Margaret, had been 'left substantial', and that no less a person than Stephen Vaughan, Henry VIII's financial agent in Antwerp and under-treasurer designate of a second mint in the Tower, had sought her hand in marriage. Of this overture nothing had come, and nor after Richard's death was there to be a continuation of the line of Harry Yonges, stretching way back into the 14th century, serving the Crown as moneys in the Tower Mint.

Broadly speaking, the English precious metal coinage was produced in these times according to contracts struck between the Crown and senior mint officials. Customarily, a single contractor, the master-worker, was named in a contract but sometimes his office was shared; and from the period of debasement, begun in the reign of Henry VIII for fiscal purposes, and through the fraudulent manipulation of coins both in weight and fineness, other officials were named (though not with complete consistency): the warden, the comptroller, the assaymaster, the surveyor of the meltings and, of particular interest to

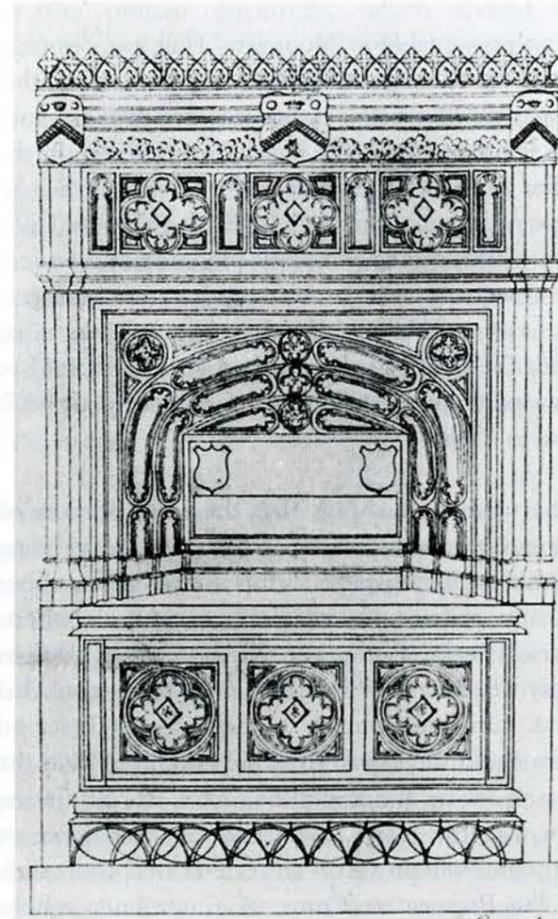


Fig. 1: the tomb of Robert and Richard Harry Yonge, St Leonard's church, Shoreditch, 1545

this brief note, the provost of the Company of Moneys. This associated body of moneys and workmen, bound together by a common skill and interest in the manufacture of coin, had emerged in the principal mint, in the Tower of London, during the later medieval period. The Company's provost or head, who was elected by the whole membership, first made an appearance in the person of Richard Harry Yonge in the later years of Henry VIII; thereafter he was named again in the reigns of Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth before disappearing without explanation after the contract for East India money on 11 January 1601.

The bullion which the contracts attracted to the Mint was brought to the correct coinage standard

by refining (whenever necessary), assaying and melting before being passed to the moneys who transformed the resulting ingots into coins. According to an early-17th century document entitled the 'several works of the moneys now used' no fewer than 16 steps were involved² (fig. 2). The first was to heat the ingots and cast the melt. After annealing, these mouldings were made workable by the hammer, annealed and cut. A third annealing then allowed the blanks to be beaten again and, following a fourth annealing, to be formed into thin plates. Annealed once more and hammered, the blanks were trundled or rolled before being planished to smooth their edges. Final annealing led to blanching (cleaning of the surface) and striking. The projector who penned this list sought to tempt the Crown to embrace more economical methods by reducing the amount of annealing and shaping of the blanks to leave a course of just seven steps: 'melting and casting, cutting, annealing the first time, beating out, annealing the second time, blanching, and coining'.

Whatever was the precise pattern used by the moneys to manufacture coin two things are certain: this pattern could vary over time, as during the Great Debasement when the blanchers were on the master-worker's payroll rather than the moneys,³ and, second, developments in the early years of Charles II's reign brought about irreversible change as machinery superseded the hammer; in future horses pulled rolling mills and strong-armed men swung presses to strike coin into print.

On a cursory view the coming of the Frenchman Peter Blondeau and his new machinery should have signalled the demise of the moneys but nothing could be further from the truth. Chameleon-like, they adapted to and became trained up in the new system so much so that on Blondeau's death in 1672 one of their number, John Colborne, took over as engineer. He in turn was succeeded (1679) by his brother, Robert. Subsequently, in the 1680s and 1690s, the moneys engrossed into their hands the building and maintenance of all the



Fig 2: Moneyers at work, c. 1577. In the background (top right) coinage bars are being received and weighed, or possibly the finished coin is being weighed before being sent to the master-worker. In the centre a seated moneyer hammers the metal into shape while another (lower left) cuts the coin blanks with a large pair of shears. These blanks are beaten in the fire (top left) before being struck into print by another moneyer (lower right) between two dies.

coinage machinery in the Tower Mint and at the time of the Great Recoinage of silver begun in 1696 fulfilled the same function in respect of the five temporary country mints. When, in 1700, John Braint formally succeeded as engineer – thereafter simultaneously to serve the Mint in that capacity as well as the moneyers as provost until the end of the Stuart era – the rehabilitation of the moneyers was complete.⁴

Because the moneyers were sub-contractors to the master-worker it was to him rather than the Crown that accounting was made, and it was he who was the guardian of any documents relating to finance, personnel and the everyday running of the Company. That some sort of archive emerged,

kept presumably at Moneyers' Hall just opposite the Flint Tower, is evident from the fact that when the last provost, Sir Jasper Atkinson, gave evidence to the 1848 Royal Commission on the Mint as to past members in the Company, he was able to be quite precise: 1668, 15; 1670, 10; 1693, 13; 1706, 15; and 1727, 10 plus one apprentice.⁵ Unfortunately, this archive, such as it was, seems to have perished in 1851 almost completely, along with the Company, which had been subjected to two penetrating parliamentary enquiries in 1837 and in 1848.

The upshot of this is that the identification of moneyers' names, places of domicile and standing within the Company, as well as their overall number at any given time, must be sought elsewhere. Paradoxically, a moneyer may have come to light only when he was dead, his name being recorded in a burial register, as in those for St Peter ad Vincula in the Tower, to which the Mint paid the parson for his tithes and the sexton for his duties;⁶ or, like the Harry Yonges, on a tombstone; or through a will proved in an ecclesiastical court such as the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, whose records are now in the National Archives. Also of importance are two lists of moneyers, one of 1696 to be found in the British Library, the other of 1653 in a printed position paper concerning the dispute between Blondeau and the moneyers. In the first, Provost John Braint simply indicated the number of moneyers sent to the five temporary provincial mints set up at the time of the Great Recoinage to facilitate the surrendering of the old money and the issuing of the new. To York went a single moneyer, Thomas Kemp, his apprentice and five labourers. Bristol got two moneyers, George Hopper and John Hill, with five labourers; Chester, a single moneyer, William Nicolls, also with five labourers; and Exeter a moneyer, William Chalkhill, his apprentice and five labourers. The largest contingent, at Norwich, had one moneyer, Edward Seabrook, two apprentices and nine labourers.⁷

In the printed document, which should be read in conjunction with his offer to serve the Commonwealth, Blondeau argued his case for the introduction of mechanised coining at the Mint, claiming that his methods were superior to those of the moneyers who could neither size nor strike coins accurately.⁸ In reply the moneyers asserted a seven-year training by apprenticeship and staunchly defended their competence. It was in support of their position that they attached a note of their members: including their provost, Simon Corbet, there were 59 moneyers supported by 51 labourers in their pay.

Important though these documents may be it remains true that the most abundant sources for the identification of moneyers for this period are to be found amongst the departmental records of central government: the Exchequer, the Chancery, the Treasury, the Mint and the State Paper Office.

One listing from the latter which is worthy of particular note is connected with a dispute amongst the moneyers in which Thomas Thornton, provost since 1626, stood accused by his fellows not only of withholding moneys which were rightfully theirs, but also of dealing dishonestly with the Crown. In 1635 Thornton judged it best to resign but then to the moneyers' dismay two years later the senior officials in the Mint sought to reinstate him. Predictably, to this notion the moneyers stood resolutely opposed, only to find for their pains two of their number – William Nicoll and John Benfield – hauled before the Privy Council and imprisoned in the Fleet. Unsurprisingly, the two sought release and in so doing gained the unanimous support of their fellows: 24 gave their signatures to their petition of 30 December 1637, seven their marks, and in the following month Nicoll and Benfield were released.⁹

In subsequent years this group of 33 expanded to reach, as already noted, 59 in 1653; then, after mechanisation, fell away to give the profile suggested by Atkinson. One blip in this decline

came at the time of the Great Recoinage of silver, when, according to the Mint records, the Company consisted of the provost, 14 fellows and nine apprentices, 24 in all.¹⁰ That such a small number could handle so great an enterprise seems at first sight to be rather unlikely, but in reality it was not. According to Blondeau, writing in 1653, the Company then totalled (in round numbers) only 30. However, he insisted that this apparent disadvantage occasioned by fewness of numbers was completely negated by the simple expedient, in times when heavier coinage was required, of hiring journeymen at 18d or 15d or 12d for half a day's work.¹¹ Exactly how many of these labourers there were during the Great Recoinage is a matter of conjecture, but it is worth noting that attached to a petition of 25 May 1696 by Thomas Neale, master-worker, requesting that he be allowed a share of the coinage then undertaken entirely by the moneyers, is a list of no fewer than 160 names of 'labourers now employed by the Corporation of Moneyers'. In a contemporaneous but quite separate petition, this time from the moneyers to the Treasury complaining that their fees were quite insufficient, the Company itself set the number of labourers at 120.¹²

Two further sources which are of particular interest for the identification of moneyers are to be found amongst the records of the Chancery and the Exchequer: the first gives the names of those who attested (that is to say, vouched for) the accuracy of the returns made at an election of MPs;¹³ the second lists those who claimed by virtue of their service to the Crown to be exempt from certain public responsibilities and financial liabilities. These privileges – enshrined in a royal charter which was renewed time and again during this period – were clearly cherished in principle and invoked in practice. In the 16th century, for example, first Martin Bowes, master-worker, and then Richard Martin, warden, pleaded to be excused from the burden of serving as a sheriff in London, while in 1576 Mint officials and moneyers alike asked for exemption from payment of the subsidy and

fifteenths and tenths granted by Parliament. On this occasion, as in the much earlier certification to the Exchequer (1433) also apparently made in connection with taxation, the listing fell into two parts: the officials came first followed by the moneyers, 46 in all, a division which appropriately enough reflected the normal pecking order of Mint employees. The officials were on the establishment responsible, through the warden, to the Crown, and paid by the Crown; the moneyers were a company or corporation of associated workers led by their provost, and, as subcontractors to the master-worker, were paid by him. As Nicholas Briot neatly put it when complaining in 1630 to Charles I about what he believed to be unfair treatment at the Mint, his problem was that he was neither an officer 'nor of their body or corporation'.¹⁴

For many of those who have been identified by name as forming part of the moneyers' community from early in the 14th century to the end of the Stuart period, no exact address has yet come to light; none the less, some broad conclusions may be drawn. To begin with, given that there was within the Tower a Moneyers' (sometimes called a Great) Hall, with lodgings, a provost's house and, with the coming of permanent mechanisation, separate accommodation for the engineer, it seems odd that so few moneyers are said ever actually to have lived in the Tower. Out of 27 householders there in 1571, only five belonged to Mint officials, just two to moneyers: Bartholomew Wright, with his wife, child and maid, and Eloy Mestrell – the Frenchman who tried unsuccessfully to mechanise the Mint – in a house for himself, his wife and seven others.¹⁵ To be sure, on other occasions connections between moneyers and the Tower are revealed, because a moneyer either described himself, as did Nathaniel Marsh (d.1669), as 'of the Tower', or showed his close affiliation with it by choosing, as did Provost Thomas Denham (d.1605), to be buried in the Tower church of St. Peter Ad vincula, just a short step from the provost's house.¹⁶

Even so, the puzzle remains. Clearly, one solution could be that moneyers do not appear in contemporary records as often as might be anticipated simply because accommodation in the Tower which they may have been expected to occupy was subtle; a practice in the 17th century which was in theory perfectly legal and in reality certainly the case. In 1662 when an effort was made to clear the Mint in order to improve security and give better accommodation for the recently-acquired machinery, Captain Fleetwood, tenant of John Wallis, weigher, made way for the new engineer, Blondeau, on a rent of £16 a year.¹⁷ The origin and frequency of sub-letting is in fact somewhat opaque; as also is the possibility which has been raised that moneyers tended not to live at their place of work quite simply because they wished to escape the restrictive control of the City authorities.¹⁸ Precisely when, how and to what extent this supposed control was exercised has yet to be established but, if it is, how should such a situation be reconciled with a charter which stipulated that no moneyer 'was to do public service, such as serving as juryman, mayor or sheriff, against his will' and each and every one was to be exonerated from fiscal demands such as loans, fifteenths and tenths, and subsidies, as well as from purveyance?¹⁹

A more simple explanation of why so few moneyers seem actually to have lived over their workshops is provided by an examination of William Alingham's plan of the Tower in 1701 (fig. 3).²⁰ Entering the great fortress by Martin Tower, long home to the Mint porter, moneyers and officials alike turned north by the master-worker's lodgings along Mint Street to Legs Mount, then north east past the Moneyers' Hall, south east past the warden's house to the Jewel Tower, then south by the provost of the moneyers' house into the upper or Irish mint.

It is quite clear that this broad disposition of officials and moneyers had evolved over time, as some dedicated tenements or workshops had been moved from one place to another and some whole buildings had been converted from one

function to another; but one thing always seems to have characterized the Mint: narrow confinement within the walls and within those confines repeated competition for space with both the officials of the Tower and its garrison.²¹ The upshot was that, especially at times of great activity, there simply was not space enough for all the moneyers and their labourers.

Coupled with the accommodation problem within the Tower should be considered the lure of the spaces outside. Even the briefest glance at the figures for Mint output reminds us that during this period there were considerable fluctuations in activity, and, accordingly, the attraction for both officials and moneyers of combining their minting roles with other pursuits. Since the moneyers

themselves provided training through their own apprenticeship schemes it should not be expected, nor in practice is it to be found, that these alternative activities always lay rooted in the City. Naturally some young men trained in, even became free of, the City, and subsequently, when they became moneyers, lived within or immediately outside the walls. Essentially, however, it was in the lands beyond – in an ever widening diaspora in Essex and, particularly Middlesex – that they were to be found. Many of these men identified themselves in no more than a general way, simply declaring themselves to be 'of Middlesex'. By contrast others, quite exceptionally, divulged the very street in which they lived: Thomas Austen/Aston I and Thomas II were of Homerton Street, Hackney; Richard Hart II, William Fynor, John Toller II

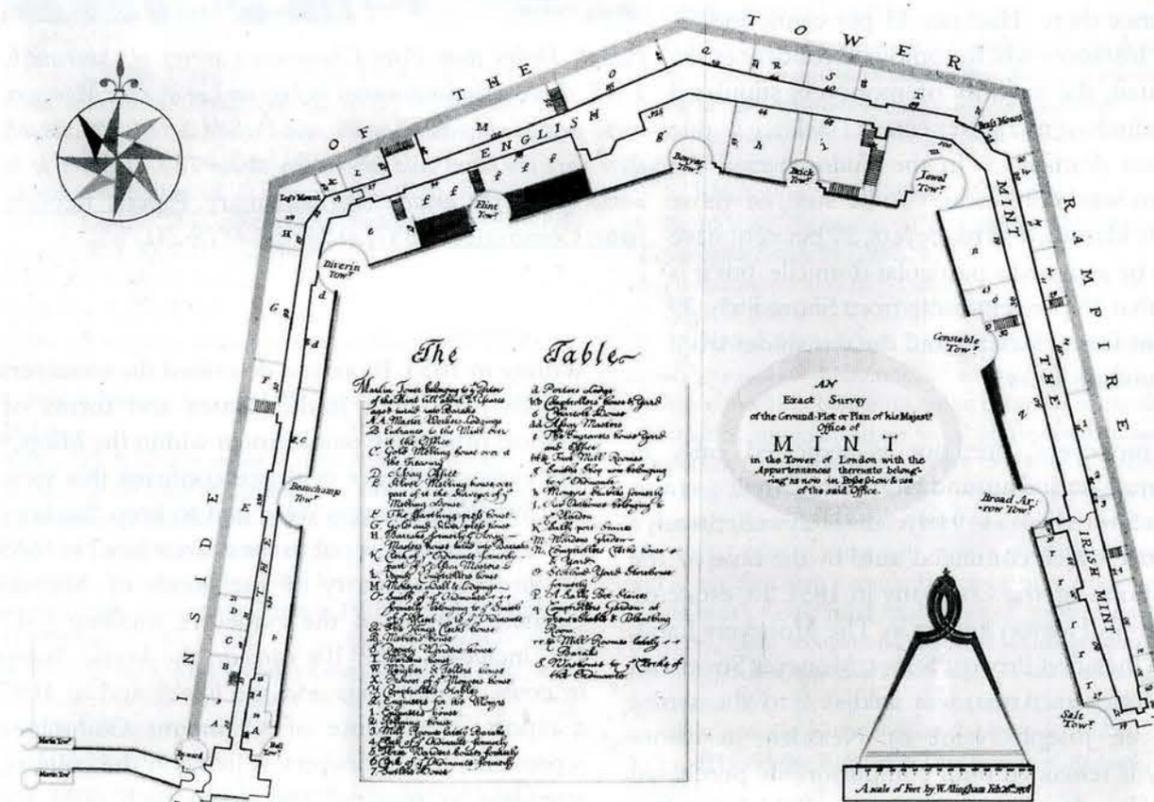


Fig. 3: Allingham's survey of the Mint in the Tower, 1701

of Haliwall (Holywell) Street, Shoreditch. Yet others presented themselves as being of a parish or some other administrative unit: for example, Thomas Bowyer of Knightsbridge and Ebury in Westminster or John Haveryng II of Hoxton, Shoreditch. Most men, however, identified themselves as being of one or two or, less frequently, even more addresses: Chadwell, East Ham, Finchley, Finsbury, Friern (Friern) Barnet, Hackney, Hammersmith, Hendon, High Ongar, Islington, Kentish Town, Knightsbridge, Shoreditch, Stepney, Stoke Newington, Tottenham, Walthamstow, Westminster, Whitechapel and Woodford.

Of these Shoreditch and Hackney stood out, especially Shoreditch, where in the later 14th and 15th centuries roughly 70 per cent of moneyers identified themselves as having their sole residence there (Hackney 11 per cent); and, in many instances where combined residences are indicated, the majority of moneyers stipulated Shoreditch or to a lesser extent Hackney as one of their domiciles.²² In the Tudor period the pattern was more even.²³ To be sure, of those already identified as moneyers, 29 per cent have yet to be assigned a particular domicile, but it is clear that 28 per cent came from Shoreditch, 29 per cent from Hackney and the remainder from surrounding areas.²⁴

The moneyers' presence is indicated early in Hackney—in and around Homerton Street—as also it is in Shoreditch—in Halywell (Holywell) Street, a presence which continued until by the time of the dissolution of the Company in 1851 'its estate of Houses in Hoxton known as The Moneyers Land, which included Provost Street, Moneyer Street and the Moneyers Arms, was sold ... to the senior moneyer, Joseph Nicoll of Neasden, in whose family it remained until compulsorily purchased by the London County Council in 1934-5 for slum clearance'²⁵ (fig. 4).

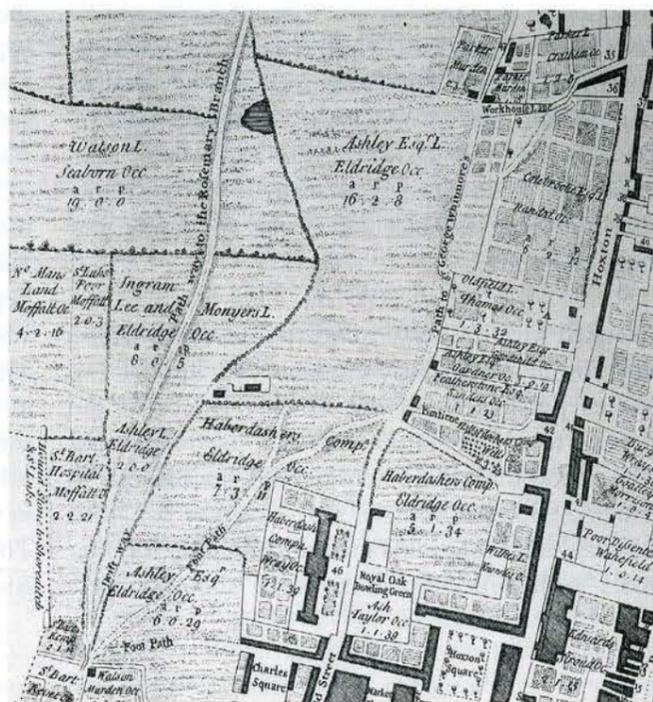


Fig. 4: Detail from Peter Chassereau's survey of Shoreditch, 1745, showing the lands owned by Ingram Lee and the Moneyers, north-west of Hoxton Square and Pitfield Street. Presumably these were the lands said in evidence to the 1837 inquiry to be worth £300 per annum (*Parliamentary Papers, Reports from Committees 1837, Atkinson, 1819-24*).

Writing in 1653, Blondeau described the moneyers as rich men, with lands, houses and farms of support other than employment within the Mints,²⁶ and earlier and later evidence confirms this view. In 1591 the moneyers were said to keep 'hackney horse which they let out to the dearest hire'; in 1665 the probate inventory of the goods of Michael Garnett, provost of the moneyers, totalling £317 10s, included £102 10s outside the house 'being in cows, horses, pigs and the like';²⁷ and in 1697 a report to a House of Commons Committee represented the moneyers as living in the country, attending as required and doing such tasks for as many hours and days (except Sundays) as the master required.²⁸

Thus, despite misgivings which have arisen in the past over those who expressed themselves as living outside the Tower and the City, the restrictions of the Tower and the lure of the countryside did attract moneyers, while the all too intermittent nature of their work made it possible for them to avoid the grind of daily attendance. From Shoreditch and Hackney, to which they went at the beginning of centralised minting, they spread out as we have seen mainly to the north of the Tower, and in the 18th century went even further to Willesden and Neasden, by which time some of the moneyers had become established innkeepers.²⁹

Notes

I gratefully acknowledge the help and advice I have received in the preparation of this article from Robert H. Thompson and Hackney Archives Department.

1. C. E. Challis, 'Three notes on the Tudor mint', *British Numismatic Journal* (hereafter *BNJ*), 68 (1998), 149-52.
2. C. E. Challis, 'Lord Hastings to the great silver recoinage', in *A New History of the Royal Mint, 1464 - 1699*, ed. C. E. Challis (Cambridge, 1992) (hereafter *NHRM*), 305-7.
3. C. E. Challis, 'Mint officials and moneyers of the Tudor period', *BNJ*, XLV (1975), 51-76.
4. Challis, *NHRM*, 362-3.
5. Challis, *NHRM*, 361.
6. See the wardens' accounts running from 1605: TNA E351 and A01, *passim*.
7. British Library (hereafter BL), Additional MS. 18,084 fos. 192-4.
8. BL. 714. h.12. *The answer of the corporation of moniers in the Mint, at the Tower of London, to two false and scandalous libells printed at London, and lately come forth without date* (Printed for the Corporation of Moniers, 1653); W R. Hamilton, 'Blondeau's proposal for reforming the coinage of England', *Numismatic Chronicle*, I (1838-9), (hereafter Hamilton), 171-80.
9. TNA SP16/374 no.60. Privy Council Register (1967-8), 30 December 1637, 19 January 1638.
10. TNA Mint 19/1 no. 268.
11. Hamilton. Compare the practice on the Establishment side when pressure of work caused the charter to be invoked and gravers were pressed to sink irons and engrave. See, for example, the years 1642-44. TNA, A01/1670/49.
12. TNA T1/38; *Calendar of Treasury Papers, 1557-1696* (hereafter *CTP*), 571.
13. J. Freeman, 'Officials and Moneyers at the Tower of London in 1433', *BNJ*, 76 (2006), 303-11.
14. C. E. Challis, *The Tudor Coinage* (Manchester, 1978), chapter 1.5; BL. Harleian MS.698 fos. 55-6; *Calendar of State Papers Domestic* (hereafter *CSPD*), 1624-31, 353.
15. TNA E101/295/2; BL M485/41 (Historical Manuscripts Commission, Salisbury, I no.1650, 534).
16. C. E. Challis, 'Mint Officials and Moneyers of the Stuart period', *BNJ*, 59 (1989), *passim*; *CTP*, 1697-1702, 391 TNA Mint 1/7.5.
17. TNA Mint 1/4, pp.39-40; *CSPD* 1661-2, 548.
18. J. Freeman, 'The Mystery of Coiners and the King's Moneyers of the Tower of London, c.1340-c.1530', *BNJ*, 70 (2000), 71.
19. Challis, *NHRM*, 184-5.
20. TNA Mint 5/141 (MFQ 104).
21. See the suggestion in 1695, for example, that accommodation be found for erecting a new rolling mill and installing coining presses by taking space from the military in Legs Mount and in the barracks adjoining the fining house in the Irish mint. *CTP*, 1557-1696, 478 (TNA T1/xxxv/41), 545; 1702-07, 450.
22. Freeman, *BNJ* 70 (2000), appendix.
23. Challis, *BNJ* XLV (1975).
24. For the Stuart period statistical analysis of the domiciles of the moneyers and their staff seems distinctly premature for the simple reason that out of the total number identified, nearly 400, only ten per cent or so have been assigned a firm domicile.
25. K. J. Valentine, 'North-West London families at the Royal Mint', *Transactions of the London & Middlesex Archaeological Society* 39 (1988), 190.
26. Hamilton; see also BL 714.h.12; *CSPD* 1652-3, 69-70.
27. *NHRM*, 362 n. 333; Challis (1978), 42.
28. TNA Mint 19/1, 2-3; R. Ruding, *Annals of the coinage of Great Britain and its dependencies*, 3rd edn. (1840), II, 465.
29. Valentine, 187. This explanation contrasts markedly with that of an earlier survey based on Elizabethan burial registers of Tottenham High Cross: 'it is hard to believe that these men (moneyers whose names appeared in the registers) were coin makers at the London mint which was just too far away to make daily travel a practical proposition, and in any case such a concentration of mint employees in one parish would itself be difficult of explanation'. D. Avery, 'Male occupations in a rural Middlesex parish (1574-92)', *Local population studies magazine and newsletter*, no. 2 (Spring 1969), 33. See also the surmise that in reality 'moniers' actually meant 'money-changers or bankers', in VCH, X(1995), 96. R. Smyth, *The Obituary of Richard Smyth* (1949), 25.

HAVERYNG/HAVERHYNGE, John (I) (d.1409), of Shoreditch & Hackney probably father of John (II) 1371-1409

HAVERYNG, John (II) (*dtp* 1399), of Hoxton, Shoreditch probably son of John (I) & father of John (III) 1377-99

HAVERYNG, John (III), of Shoreditch probably son of John (II) and father of John (IV) 1414-16

HAVERYNG, John (IV), of Hoxton, Shoreditch & Hackney perhaps son of John (III) 1428-66

HAVERYNG, Richard, of Shoreditch & Hackney 1371-93

HAVERYNG, William, of Shoreditch 1378-1401

HAYNE, John (d.1558), of Shoreditch to 1558

HEYNES, Hugh (d.1561), of Shoreditch to 1561

HILL, John atte (d.1458), of Shoreditch, Hackney, Islington, Haringey & Stepney father-in-law of William Holwey 1428-58

H0L(O)WEY, William, of Shoreditch son-in-law of John atte Hill 1473- before 1522

*HOULFORD, Thomas (d.1645), of Hackney to 1645

HUNGERFORD, William, of Shoreditch, Islington & Hackney 1437-64

HUNTE, Mathew, of Hackney c.1593

HYNE, John, of Shoreditch 1371-95

INGLANDE, Mathew (d.1557), of Hackney to 1557

*LAWRENCE, Thomas, of Hackney 1596-c.1602

MARGRET/MARGARET, John (I), of Shoreditch 1382-1416

MARGRET/MARGARETER/MERGET, John (II), of Shoreditch 1428-46

MATHEWE, Edward, of Hackney c.1598

MERYT, William (d.1570), of Stepney & Hoxton (Shoreditch) to 1570

MODY, John (I), of Shoreditch 1340-51

MODY, John (II) (d.1388), of Shoreditch & St Giles without Cripplegate 1371-88

MODY, Stephen (I), of Shoreditch 1340-51

MOUNDE, John, of Hackney c.1557

MUNE, William, of Hackney c.1576-c.1610/11

*NEWMAN, William (d.1626), of Hackney c.1602- 26

NICHOLS, Thomas (d.1612/13), of Hackney c.1602 - 12/13

*NICHOLS, William, the elder (d.1648), of Hackney 1637-48

*NICHOLS, William, the younger (d.1666), of Hackney to 1666

NIX, Robert (d.1571), of Shoreditch to 1571

NORKYN, William, of Shoreditch 1340-41

PARKER, William (d.1565), of Shoreditch to 1565

PAULE, William, of Hackney 1340-41

PECOSONE, Richard, of Shoreditch 1428

PENTECOST, John, of Hackney & Stoke Newington 1371-93

PORDON/PURDON/PURYDON, Richard, of Shoreditch & Stepney 1428-49

PYE, John, of Shoreditch c.1559-c.76

PYKARNE, Richard (d.1434), of Shoreditch to 1434

REDEF/REDY/RDYDEE/RDYDY, John, of Shoreditch, Stepney & Tottenham 1453-1502

REDEE/REDY/RDYDEE/RYDEN, William, of Stepney, Shoreditch & Islington 1437-72

ROBERTS, Thomas, of Hackney c.1576-c.94

ROBERTS, William, of Hackney c.1593-c.1603

ROBERTSON/ROBINSON, Hugh (d.1585), of Shoreditch c.1576-85

ROBINSON, Thomas, of Hackney c.1576-77

ROLF/ROFFE, William (d.1603), of Shoreditch c.1558-1603

SALTBY/SALBY, John, of Stepney & Hackney ?ironmonger & citizen 1446-48

SAVAGE, Thomas, of Shoreditch 1428

SERLE, Nicholas, of Shoreditch 1531

SHARPE, Thomas (I), of Shoreditch, Newington Green, Islington & Kingsland in Hackney son of Hugh, brother of William, probably father of Thomas (II) 1437-56

SHARPE, Thomas (II), of Islington & Shoreditch probably son of Thomas (I); father of Robert 1446-72

SHARPE, William (II), of Shoreditch & Islington son of Hugh & brother of Thomas 1444-86

*SHELLEY, John, of Hackney c.1602-20

SIMSON, George (d.1597), of Shoreditch c.1576-97

SMITH, John (alias Bryan, d.1571), of Hackney to 1571

SPICER, John (d.1574), of Shoreditch to 1574

SPICER, Richard (d.1563), of Shoreditch to 1563

SPYCER, Richard (d.1594), of Hackney c.1576-94

STEBRUICKE, George, of Hackney c.1576-77

STOUR, William (I) *alias* Colman, of Shoreditch father of William (II) 1340-51

STOUR, William (II), of Shoreditch *filis Willelmi* 1349-51

*STREETE, John, of Hackney c.1594-1626

*STREETE, William (d.1616), of Hackney to 1616

SWETE, John, of Hackney c.1555

SYLVESTER, John, of Islington, Shoreditch & Tottenham 1446-64

SYMOND, John, of Hackney & Stoke Newington probably son of Richard 1371-1401

SYMOND/SIMON, Richard, of Hackney probably father of John 1349-52

SYMSON, Gilbert (d.1582), of Shoreditch c.1576-82

TOLLER, Hugh (I) (d.1397), of Shoreditch 1383-97

TOLLER, Hugh (II), of Shoreditch *temp* Edward IV

TOLLER, John (I) (d.1380), of London, of Shoreditch, ? and of Dorset 1351-80

TOLLER, John (II), of Hoxton & of Haliwell (Holywell) Street, Shoreditch & Islington son of William Toller 1382-1416

TOLLER, John (III), of Shoreditch, Stoke Newington, Hackney & Haringey ?brewer 1414-44

TOLLER, Nicholas, of Shoreditch & Stepney 1437-72

TOLLER, Thomas, of Shoreditch 1391-1416

TOLLER, William (d.1403), of Shoreditch & Hackney father of John (II) Toller 1371-1403

WARLEY, John (d.1603), of Hackney c.1594-1603

WEBB, George (d.1599), of Hackney c.1576-99

WHITE, William (d.1574), of Hackney to 1574

*WIGGINS, William (d.1631), of Hackney to 1631

WOOD, Hugh atte (d.1375), of Shoreditch probably father-in-law of John Clopton to 1375

YONGE, John le (I), of Shoreditch 1340-51

YONGE, John (II), of Shoreditch 1377-93

YONGE, Peter le, of Shoreditch 1340-48

YONGE, Richard le, of Shoreditch 1340-51

A scoundrel and a scandal: Benjamin Walsh and Pond House

2

Ann Robey

Introduction

When writing about Hackney, the 18th century writer Daniel Defoe commented that 'this town is so remarkable for the retreat of wealthy citizens, that there is at this time near a hundred coaches kept in it'.¹ Clapton was a favoured residence for rich City men and Rocque's map of 1745 (*opposite, top*) shows scattered ribbon development in Lower Clapton Road, both north and south of Clapton Pond, interspersed with a number of substantial houses with extensive grounds. Clapton had a number of significant houses – the large and refined Hackney House (c.1727) built for Stamp Brooksbank MP, governor of the Bank of England, but demolished c.1800, and the earlier Clapton House, which stood just to the north of Clapton Pond until 1881.² Well into the 19th century the area remained predominantly rural – the fields busy with agriculture, market gardening and plant nurseries that lay beyond the main roads.

In the 1750s the construction of new waterworks on the River Lea, and the related building of a new reservoir to the north of the natural Clapton Pond, provided the Clapton district with a ready supply of quality drinking water and a watery ambiance which promoted further house building in the area.

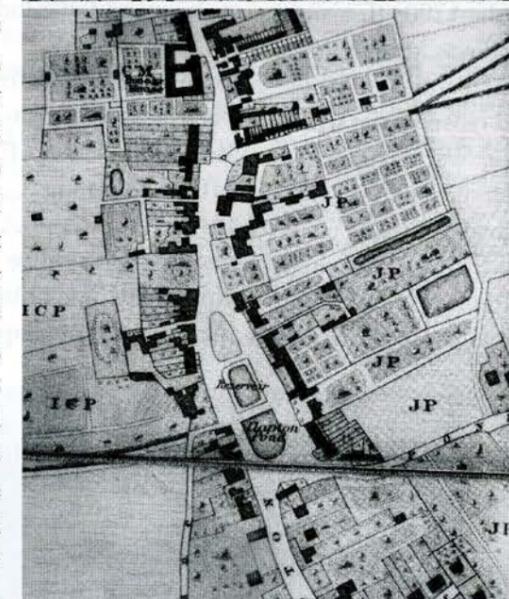
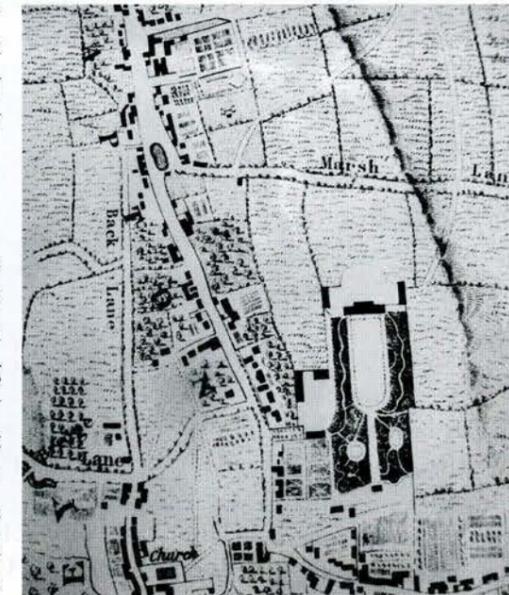
Elsewhere in Hackney there were other houses or villas in large gardens and grounds. Some have survived into the 21st century, including Clissold House (c.1795) in Stoke Newington and Springfield Lodge (early 19th century) in Upper Clapton. Both are 'suburban' versions of the vast neo-classical houses that were being built in the countryside for wealthy landowners. By 1800 merchants, lawyers and other City men were building or purchasing slightly smaller, but no less refined properties all over Hackney. It was a convenient location and just a short carriage drive from central London and also accessible by regular public stage-

coach. Hackney had a half-hourly service from the Bank of England in 1780 and by 1795 Clapton had an hourly service of its own.³

Pond House

Pond House (listed Grade II*) is one of the finest late Georgian houses built in Hackney and despite being neglected and abused for nearly a century⁴ still survives, albeit in a somewhat parlous state. It forms part of a remarkable enclave of picturesque and important historic buildings opposite Clapton Pond. The group comprises Pond House, the adjacent 17th century Bishop Wood's almshouses (listed Grade II) and two surviving houses (Nos. 158 and 160 Lower Clapton Road) that once formed part of the early 18th century St James' Terrace (listed Grade II). Together, they make up the historic heart of the Clapton Pond Conservation Area which was designated in 1971. At one time these buildings formed the centre of the village of Clapton. Even in the mid-1880s the scene looked very countrified, with great trees hanging over the water and white wooden railings around the pond.⁵

Some mystery has always surrounded the origins of Pond House – especially who designed it and for whom. As one of the few medium-sized late Georgian houses to survive in Hackney it is a good example of a stucco-fronted suburban house



Detail from Rocque's parish map (1745, above) and Starling's parish map (1831).

Pond House is the detached house east of the Pond on the Starling map.

built in the Greek revival style. That it is a property of some distinction has long been recognised.⁶ The house is well-proportioned and well-planned, with surviving original interior and exterior features and decoration of high quality. In layout it resembles a small country villa with curved flanking walls to attached wings – although today the southern 'wing' is an adjacent terrace and it seems that originally that wing was just a screen wall with nothing to the side.

Buildings in London dating from between 1793 and 1815 are relatively scarce as Britain was at war almost continuously during that time. Pond House was built by a private individual at a time when building was quite difficult and the house was actually erected during the brief two years of peace after the Treaty of Amiens in 1801.⁷ As Summerson has noted 'an acute shortage of Baltic timber, combined with high taxation of building materials, made building a difficult and expensive adventure for any private person'.⁸

One institution that did flourish during years of war was the Bank of England, which profited from loans to the government to finance the war. From 1788 it was 'the' major building project in the City.

The Bank, designed by John Soane, was perhaps influential on the young stockbroker Benjamin Walsh, who in the 1790s and early 1800s was working in an office adjacent to the Bank, in Angel Court, Throgmorton Street. When Walsh commissioned an architect or builder to design his own house in Clapton in 1802, he chose something with similar clean lines and neo-classical proportions that he recognised in Soane's work in the City, and mixed it with the fashionable idiom of Greek revival.

The builder of Pond House

Benjamin Walsh was born into a City family around 1779.⁹ His father was Francis Walsh, a director of the Bank of England, and he and his two brothers, Joseph and Francis, all worked as law stationers (the profession of those who wrote out legal documents). Sometime during the 1790s Benjamin Walsh became a stockbroker and was known in the City of London as a dashing mercantile character, whose business activities 'sailed close to the wind'. He was involved in the selling of 'war insurance', a type of illegal wager under which the insured would be paid if England and France had not made peace by some future date. By 1800 his fortunes were high and he evidently had the resources to commission an unknown architect to build an up-to-date and beautiful villa in Clapton. It was to be his home and that of his wife and numerous children (they eventually had 12) for just a very short time.

The first mention of Benjamin Walsh in connection with the site of Pond House was in July, 1800 when he insured household contents within a property located at the corner of Pond Lane, Clapton with the Sun Insurance Company. The insurance policy read:



Pond House and St James's Terrace in the 1880s

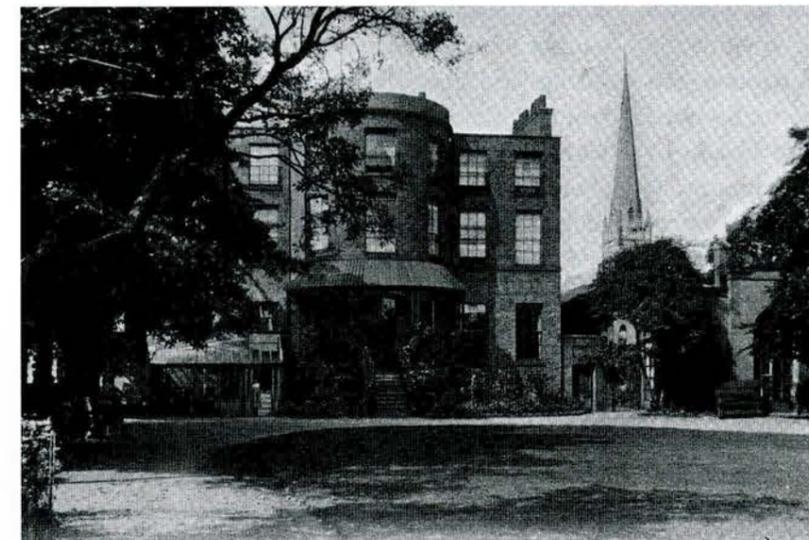
Benjamin Walsh, the corner of Pond Lane Lower Clapton near Hackney, gent on his Household Goods, Wearing Apparel, Printed Books etc, late in his now Dwelling House only situate as aforesaid Brick not exceeding three hundred and fifty pounds. China and glass therein only, not exceeding fifty pounds¹⁰

In February 1802 another policy was taken out which explains a little more.

Benjamin Walsh, the corner of Pond Lane near the Reservoir at Lower Clapton, Gent on a house and offices adjoining situate opposite the Reservoir at Clapton aforesaid, brick, in tenure of no hazardous [trade], not exceeding three hundred pounds.¹¹

These are probably the premises depicted on Rocque's map of 1745 – a small square building just south of the long row of almshouses.

By March in the following year (1803) there had been a dramatic change in what was on the site. Benjamin Walsh, Esq. was insuring 'a house & offices adjoining ... at present unfinished intended for his own tenure'. They were built of brick and insured for a value 'not exceeding nine hundred and ninety nine pounds' and were located opposite the reservoir at Clapton.¹² By the end of July 1803



Rear elevation, 1880s

the house was completed and insured at a value of £2000. The insurance policy reads as follows:

Benjamin Walsh opposite the Pond at Lower Clapton On a house and office adjoining situate at Clapton aforesaid intended for his own tenure. Brick not exceeding eighteen hundred pounds: £1800 Stable, Coach house & Billiard Room with Loft Room & Offices in one Building near Back not exceeding two hundred pounds: £200¹³

The evidence from the insurance policies, confirmed by a 50-year lease taken out by Benjamin Walsh from James Powell in March 1802, shows that Walsh initially leased an older property with a number of associated buildings and garden grounds with the intention of rebuilding.¹⁴ Between 1802 and 1803 he had a house designed and built for him on the site and insured it during the rebuild, when the house was completed but before the erection of the coach house and billiard room.

On 11 March 1803 Benjamin Walsh, Esq. of Lower Clapton married Mary Bidwell Clarke, eldest daughter of Isaac Clarke Esq. of Lower Clapton, at St John's Church, Hackney. By July 1803 Pond House was completed and Walsh and his new bride moved into their new home.¹⁵

In a 1805 Hackney rate book Walsh is listed as next door to William Lynes, who occupied the large property north of the almshouses, and assessed as 'Walsh for a house and garden adjacent and premises' and rated at £120, which was quite high for a Clapton property.¹⁶

Architecture and interior of Pond House

The architect who designed Pond House remains a mystery, though certain elements of the house are Soanean in style, including the plaster cross-vaulted bay at the south end of the first floor corridor next to the secondary

staircase and some of the external features of the 'billiard room' adjacent to the lawn, including the roof-line, niches and blind arches (see figure 6). The timber-fluted Doric columns on the raised Portland stone semi-circular porch, the central double door with raised lions' heads mounted on circular medallions, the carved ox skulls flanking the doors in the curved wings, the Greek key pattern on the gate pillars and the full height semi-circular bow overlooking the garden, all exhibit architectural sophistication.

The unknown architect of the house also emphasised the 'villa' character of the front by recessing the dormer windows into the shallow mansard roof, so that the front elevation appears to be two storeys over a basement, rather than the three that it actually is. The attic storey is concealed behind the cornice and its floor runs across the tops of the first-floor sash windows. The upper panes of the windows are painted panels which conceal the dropped ceiling of the floor above.¹⁷

The three-storey bow in the centre of the rear elevation was designed to exploit the views of the garden. It was originally enclosed at ground-floor

level by a canopied ironwork veranda, accessed by a central staircase with a delicate wrought-iron balustrade that survived into the Victorian era. The semi-circular bow at the rear of the house is matched on the front façade of Pond House by the semi-circular porch and curving quadrant walls to each side which link the main house to 'wing' buildings on each side. These walls contain doors leading to the side of the house. Also depicted on the 1868 Ordnance Survey map is a semi-circular carriage drive with curved paths up to the doors. Internally the most important rooms on each floor contained the bow window – the 'withdrawing room' on the ground floor and the principal bedroom on the first floor. The house was built to impress, and as Benjamin Walsh was a flamboyant character and a man on the make, he wanted a house that would make an immediate visual impact on his peers and Mary, his new wife, for whom the house was prepared as a wedding gift.

In January 1809, when the house was put up for sale, the catalogue described the property in detail. It was 'a singularly handsome and commodious family residence with double coach-house, stabling for four horses, extensive and productive garden, a billiard room, numerous offices and appropriate accommodation for a family of respectability, pleasantly situated in a preferable part of Clapton' and late the residence of Mr Benjamin Walsh.¹⁸ The catalogue helps to see how the rooms were arranged and describes some of the most important aspects of the building.¹⁹ The house was described as 'an elegant and substantial family residence built within a few years' and 'a uniform modern structure, with a Patent Stucco front, and a remarkably neat elevation'.



The 'billiard room' seen from the garden

The property had a 'double coach-house²⁰ and paved yard, an excellent four-stall Stable, and Harness-Room, and a large loft and coachman's room'.²¹ In front was 'a handsome carriage approach enclosed with iron gates and palisades'. In addition, on the lawn, 'contiguous' to the house, was 'a handsome billiard-room 24 feet by 16' which is likely to be the very Soanean-style structure, located to the rear of the former stables which in later years was referred to as the garden room.²²

Internally the house was conventionally arranged with a kitchen (with a side entrance) and scullery, dairy, butler's pantry, house-keeper's and footman's rooms in the basement. Also in the basement were the knife-room, a large arched wine-cellar, beer and coal cellars and a side door which led to the double coach-house. In February 1809 there was a 'cellar of choice wines consisting of about 300 dozen of fine flavoured old port, claret, madeira, sherry, old hock'.²³ A large wine cellar would certainly have been needed for 3600 bottles and the surviving cellar in the basement today is enormous.

On the principal or ground floor was a handsome eating-room (26 by 15 feet) that communicated (presumably with double-doors) with an 'elegant bow-windowed withdrawing room' (24 by 16 feet) and a 'veranda opening to the lawn'.²⁴ Part of the iron staircase that led down to the lawn, can be seen in the photograph (page 20). Also on the ground floor was a breakfast parlour and study. The study was probably fitted with the elegant 'library bookcase' and 'valuable library of books including the English Encyclopaedia, Annual Register from 1753 to 1801, Grose's Antiquities and a beautiful edition of Lavater,²⁵ Hogarth's prints, Cook's voyages, with plates, and the Works of Pope, Johnson, Robertson, Gibbon and other esteemed authors in handsome bindings' that were put up for auction on February 7th 1809.²⁶ The house was entered through a raised portico entrance into a stone hall with a stone staircase. This hall and staircase were probably lit by the 'superb cut-glass Grecian chandelier' sold at the sale of effects.²⁷ The house was built with a back or secondary staircase (in its current position) for the servants.

The first floor contained the principal bedrooms described as 'two excellent sleeping-rooms with dressing rooms', and another two bedrooms, a water closet²⁸ and a rather unusual feature, 'a china-closet on the landing', which might still exist as the large cupboard on the first floor today. On the second floor were two large and convenient nurseries (while living in Hackney the Walsh family included at least seven children), rooms for three servants, a store room and closets.²⁹

The furnishings auctioned were luxurious – 'lofty 4-post bedsteads with cotton hangings, goose feather-beds, French rod cotton window hangings, sofas, capital mahogany French stuffed chairs, with morocco seats, a grand piano-forte by Stodart'.³⁰ Cut-glass Grecian chandeliers, fine old china and Turkey and Brussels carpets were all put up for sale.

Written on the sales particulars is a mysterious note in pencil – 'sold to Mr Bridges for £4010'.³¹ He presumably purchased the lease which was said to have 'an unexpired term of forty-three years from Christmas 1808, at a ground rent of fifty pounds per annum'.³² Covenants were attached to the property to restrain the tenant from occupying the premises as a school, as a place for the reception of lunatics, or from carrying on any noisome trade.

Walsh's decline and fall

In 1808 Benjamin Walsh took his seat in Parliament for the constituency of Wootton Bassett and continued his broking business at Angel Court.³³ Members of the House of Commons were immune from arrest for debt and Walsh – who never made a speech in the House – clearly entered the house as a debtor's expedient, as he was about to be declared bankrupt.³⁴ After Walsh, along with his business partner Nisbett, was made bankrupt, both Pond House and its contents were put on the market in 1809.³⁵ Walsh and Nisbett dissolved their partnership, and managed to get their bankruptcy ended in February 1809.³⁶ They contracted with the Chancellor of the Exchequer for a lottery of 50,000 tickets. This proved a very lucky speculation, as Walsh's debts were soon cleared. But though it seems that he was unable to save his house, maybe some of the contents were retained and moved to a new home in Hackney, where he lived with his family until 1812.³⁷ Walsh and his growing family had lived at Pond House for just five years from July 1803 until the end of 1808.

Walsh had been expelled by the Stock Exchange for gross and nefarious conduct by 1809, but he continued to sell stocks. By 1811 his financial position was dire and his continued indebtedness to close family members, including his brother Joseph, to whom he owed over £1000, led him to undertake a major fraud.³⁸ At the time he had a pregnant wife and seven small children to support.

In November 1811 Walsh committed one of the biggest fraudulent thefts on a fellow MP. He was convicted of attempting to defraud the Solicitor-General, Sir Thomas Plumer. Plumer, who employed Walsh as his stockbroker for many years, had given him a draft of £22,000 with which to buy exchequer bills, but Walsh used it to play the lottery, and lost. He then converted his remaining assets into American currency and set off for Falmouth to sail to America via Portugal, but was brought back by a police officer from Bow Street. Walsh was imprisoned at Newgate before and during his trial.³⁹

At his trial at the Old Bailey he pleaded not guilty and was overcome for much of the court case, hiding his face behind his hands and sobbing. The jury found him guilty of the felony, which could have led to a sentence of death. But the judges were not satisfied with the verdict, and gave a special judgment that although he had the design to convert the money to his own use, there was insufficient proof that it was a felony. He was given a King's pardon and freed from Newgate on 20 February 1812. He was lucky not to have been executed. The House of Commons expelled Walsh on 5 May 1812, and he was once more made bankrupt.

He fled London and in 1813 bought an established newspaper in Plymouth, but within two years he failed as the proprietor of that enterprise and just about avoided a third bankruptcy. In 1812 his sister-in-law Anne published *Poems by a Sister* by private subscription, possibly in an attempt to raise money for the family. The Walsh family were not without friends, as many Clapton and Hackney residents purchased copies, as well as members of the Stock Exchange. The Duchess of York purchased six, as did Thomas Nisbett, Walsh's former business partner.

Evidence suggests that Walsh moved to the Clifton area of Bristol where his wife had connections.⁴⁰ He and his wife raised many children to adulthood.

One son, who went to university in Cambridge, was Benjamin Dann Walsh, who then emigrated to America and became the first State Entomologist for Illinois and a close correspondent with Charles Darwin. In the 1841 census Benjamin Walsh, then aged 72, was living at Lower Wick, Bedwardine in Worcestershire with two unmarried daughters, Mary aged 47 and Rosa aged 39, plus two of his unmarried sisters and two servants. He established himself as a gentleman of some independent means, but was also described in the 1851 census as a 'fruitsterer'. Benjamin Walsh died in 1854. Although styled 'gentleman' he was not a wealthy man, as at his death his only monetary assets were £200 of Stationers' Company stock, plus household stuff, which he left to his unmarried daughters.⁴¹

Pond House after 1812

By 1813 John Carrick, described as a gentleman, was living in the property.⁴² From the mid-1820s Samuel Preston Child and his family lived in Pond House. He stayed there for over 23 years and it became the family home that Benjamin Walsh had hoped for himself. In the 1831 census Child was described as a 'colour maker' or paint manufacturer; he was an extremely wealthy and successful man, trading world-wide in dyestuffs.⁴³ In the 1841 and 1851 censuses he was described as a merchant.

He had a large family, and some of his children were born and brought up to adulthood in Pond House. In 1831, his household consisted of four males, nine females and five servants.⁴⁴ By 1841 Samuel Child, then aged 55, was living in the house with five children (three of whom appear to be triplets, aged 15) and six servants. His wife Jane was evidently away, as she reappears in the 1851 census when Child and his wife and two daughters in their 20s were living there, looked after by five female and two male servants.

During the 19th century the gardens of Pond House were quite remarkable. In 1809 they had contained 'a fruit wall' which ran for 640 feet, the full length of the premises, 'clothed with choice

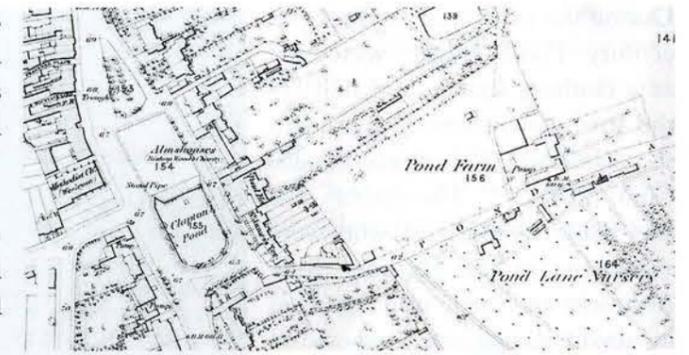
fruit trees in full bearing'.⁴⁵ The sale prospectus of 1809 described the garden as well-stocked and cropped and very productive. Other assets in the garden at the time were a melon-ground and tool and seed houses.

The Ordnance Survey map of 1868 (right) shows the great length of the garden at Pond House. After Mildenhall Road and the Powell estate were built in the 1880s the garden was dramatically reduced in length, back to the length of the property as it existed at the time of Rocque's plan of 1745 (see page 17). When Benjamin Walsh constructed Pond House in 1802-3, he also leased a large long strip of land to the rear of the original plot on which he built his fantastic gardens with their extensive espaliered fruit trees. When Walsh and his family lived in the house, 'two good milch cows' also lived on the premises no doubt to provide milk for his many children.⁴⁶

The house remained in family occupation for much of the 19th century and the gardens remained a particular feature. In 1883, a young photographer, Samuel Gardner, captured its beauty on his camera. His parents had lived in Pond House for some years in the 1860s and early 1870s, and he and his siblings had enjoyed the gardens during their childhood.

In the third quarter of the 19th century a Mr Samuel Underhill lived at Pond House and one of his children was born there in 1877, but after he vacated the premises it was never a family home again. It became a successful girls' school, run by a Miss Pearce throughout the 1880s and 1890s, but closed around 1904.⁴⁷

During that period much of the land between Lower Clapton Road and the River Lea was developed for housing,



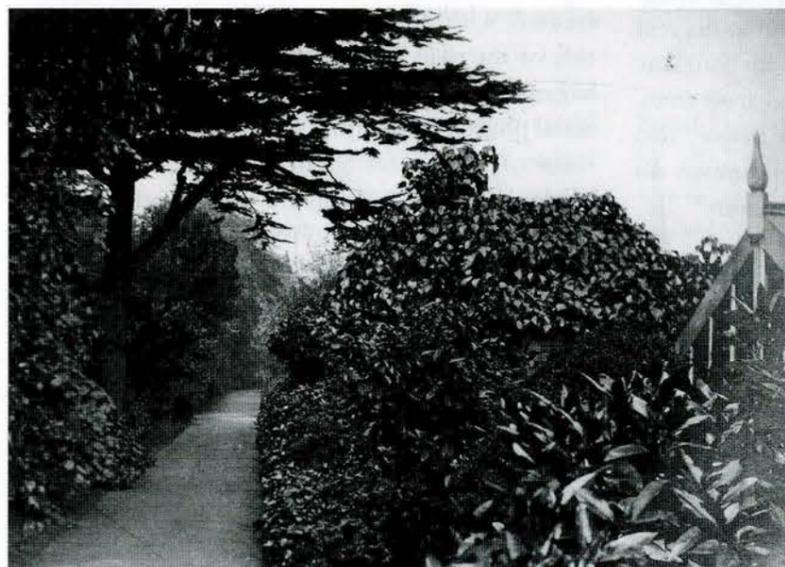
Pond House and neighbourhood in 1868

In the immediate vicinity of Pond House, Pond Farm was demolished and Mildenhall Road was created, with 23 family houses forming the north side of the road built on the garden at the rear. The large garden at Pond House disappeared, although aerial photographs show some magnificent trees in some of the houses' gardens on the north side of Mildenhall Road – remnants of the original Pond House garden. Clapton Pond was altered in 1898, when a public park was created and a set of railings with gates was put up at the same time between the pavement and the front garden of Pond House.⁴⁸



One of Samuel Gardner's photographs of the Pond House garden in the 1880s

During the early years of the 20th century Pond House was used as a clothing factory and in 1939 the freehold ownership passed to the Hackney Volunteers' Social Club (HVSC).⁴⁹ The social club was made up of men who were volunteers in the Hackney Rifle Regiment and many were involved in action during the First World War. They moved to Pond House in 1935 after their former premises opposite Pond House were



Pond House garden photographed in the 1880s by Samuel Gardner

demolished to build Powell House. After World War Two, when membership was at its highest at about 250, the club extended the premises. In 1954 a large single-storey extension was added to the rear of the house (obscuring the ground-floor bay) to be used as a social and function space. The design did not consider the historic fabric and importance of the building, and was basically a large concrete box fronting the garden front of the house which obscured the bay. The club had a club room and bar, a snooker hall, offices, and a variety of flats in the upper floors of the house.

House in consultation with HVCS, but nothing came of the proposals.⁵¹ Eventually the financial drain of retaining the property was no longer viable for HVCS, and in 2008 Delamere Estates purchased Pond House.

Repair works to the roof and windows were carried out without listed building consent; other parts of the house including the stable block were left to rot or were shoddily patched.⁵⁰ In 2001, the house was seen as 'very vulnerable' and had been on English Heritage's Buildings at Risk Register from prior to that date.

By 2000, the club membership was about 100, and eight years later had fallen much lower. During the early 21st century a number of local organisations including Hackney Historic Buildings Trust proposed various schemes to restore Pond

Notes

Thanks to Kevin Murphy for permission to use research undertaken on behalf of KM Heritage in this article.

1. Quoted in B. Cherry & N. Pevsner, *London 4: North* p. 475; Daniel Defoe, *A tour thro' the whole island of Great Britain, divided into circuits or journies*, letter 6, part 1: Middlesex, Hertford and Buckinghamshire (1724-27).
2. By 1799 James Powell had purchased Clapton House, as well as extensive lands in the Clapton Pond area including the lands to the rear of Pond House.
3. VCH X, 4-10.
4. The house has been a constant fixture on English Heritage's *Buildings at Risk Register* and the concern of local residents and conservation groups since the 1980s.
5. In 1895 the pond was drained with the intention of filling it up, but in 1898 the borough council obtained some adjacent land and laid it out as public gardens.
6. The property was listed in 1951.
7. On 2 March 1803 Walsh's house was described as 'at present unfinished': LMA, MS 11936/427/745529 (Sun Insurance policy).
8. John Summerson, *Georgian London* (1988), 135.
9. On some later census returns his year of birth is implied to be 1879, on others 1881.
10. LMA MS 11936/418/704378.
11. LMA MS 11936/424/727753.
12. LMA MS 1936/427/745529.
13. LMA MS 11936/426/750770;
14. MDR 1802/2/457.
15. *The Morning Post*, 11 Mar. 1803; by the time of his trial in 1812, the couple had seven children and another on the way. Lionel D. Smith 'The Stockbroker and the Solicitor-General: the story behind Taylor v. Plumer', *Journal of Legal History* 15 (1994).
16. HAD P/J series of church rate books, 1805.
17. Gordon Higgott, English Heritage Pond House Report (October 2009), 3.
18. A hand-written copy of this notice is at HAD, Bagust vol.5.
19. HAD, Bagust vol. 5.
20. Walsh owned a fashionable landaulet (a small two-seat coupé version of a landau, with two front facing seats and a folding hood). See Bagust, above.
21. Bagust, above. These were undoubtedly contained within the building known as the stables that still survives to the north of the main house.
22. The niches are still visible in part of the building behind the concrete toilet block that was added in the 20th century by the Hackney Volunteers.
23. *Morning Chronicle*, 9 February 1809.
24. Bagust vol. 5.
25. Johann Kaspar Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy* (1788-1799). Lavater was a Swiss physician who argued that

character could be understood from facial expressions and the shape of the head.

26. *Times* 6 February 1809.
27. *Times* 27 January 1809.
28. Indoor toilet facilities were still very rare in 1803 when the house was designed and built.
29. While at Pond House there were probably only about 5 young children.
30. *Times* 27 January 1809.
31. Bagust vol. 5.
32. Bagust vol. 5. As the copy of the sale particulars was in the possession of T. Baden Powell in the early 19th century it is likely that the property was bought by the Powell family as part of their extensive estate in the Lower Clapton area.
33. At his trial in 1812 it was revealed that he had paid £5,000 for his seat in 1808.
34. R. G. Thorne, *The House of Commons, 1790-1820*, I, 291-292; 329; 382.
35. *Times*, January 1809; and the bill of sale, Bagust, vol. 5.
36. *London Gazette*, Feb. 18 1809
37. In 1811, he and his family remained living in Hackney as he caught the stage coach from there to the City on the day of the embezzlement see Lionel D. Smith, *Journal of Legal History*, above. It is possible that they remained tenants in Pond House until 1812, but very unlikely as at the time of the trial he was said to live in Hackney, rather than Clapton.
38. Letter from Benjamin Walsh to Joseph Walsh, 5 December 1811, produced at the trial of Walsh at the Old Bailey in House of Commons Parliamentary Papers Online.
39. There are numerous newspaper reports, Parliamentary Papers, Newgate and Old Bailey records about the crime and the trial.
40. Mary Walsh (d.1822) was buried in Clifton and a large number of subscribers to the anonymous *Poems by a Sister* (1812) were residents of Clifton - see Lionel D. Smith, *Journal of Legal History*, above.
41. TNA PROB 11/2230 (will of Benjamin Walsh).
42. HAD P/J series of church rate books, 1813.
43. His dye works in Bethnal Green specialised in the production of a purple dye called orchilla made from lichens gathered in Indonesia.
44. HAD P/J/Misc/I/1 (parish census, St John at Hackney, 1831).
45. Bagust vol. 5.
46. *Times* 6 February 1809.
47. Bagust vol. 5.
48. Butler Hegarty Architects, Pond House Feasibility Study (2001).
49. Butler Hegarty, above.
50. Amy Erickson, 'Pond House' in Lisa Rigg (ed.) *Hackney: Modern, Restored, Forgotten, Ignored* (2009), 141-144.
51. Butler Hegarty, above.

Hoxton Hall

3

Anthony Burton

Some buildings continue to be used for their original purpose for generation after generation, and acquire, so to speak, a stable personality: the medieval parish church, the Jacobean manor still lived in by the family who built it. Many buildings, especially urban buildings, constantly change use and thus fall into dissipation and decay. Hoxton Hall is an urban building which has seen quite a lot of change in ownership and use, but which has somehow managed to sustain to this day a consistent (if frequently adapted) purpose: social betterment and artistic inspiration.

I

Hoxton Hall was built in 1863 by James Mortimer, who can be described as a 'five-per-cent philanthropist': he wanted to provide decent homes for poor people, but wanted also to ensure that, so far as the provider of the homes was concerned, 'a liberal return may be insured on a judicious outlay'. These words (and others quoted below) are from a set of plans (three sheets), with accompanying leaflet, that he published in 1862, with the title *Healthy Moral Homes. Improved plans for laying out suburban streets and building houses, forming two or more separate dwellings, with a garden attached for each tenant at an extra profit to the builder, and not covering more ground than is now usually given to each house in towns.*¹

This publication seems to be almost the only source of information about Mortimer. He describes himself in it variously as 'architect, land & building surveyor' and 'architect, builder & patentee', the final term reflecting the fact that he took out a patent for his designs. He makes appearances in the London

Post Office directories only for a brief period following the time when he published his plans. In 1863, in the trade directory under 'architects', he is entered as 'James Mortimer & Co., 47 Gresham st EC'. He is still at Gresham Street in 1864, but in 1865 is at 'Union Chambers, Union court, Old Broad street, EC', and in 1866 he is at 'Glenville grove, Mornington road, New cross SE'; then he disappears. His central addresses, which had several occupants, were presumably premises where a small operator could rent a single office.

The New Cross address is somewhat different. It was here that Mortimer seems to have built an estate of the cottages proposed in his plans, and it looks as if he may have ended up living in one of them. His cottages have disappeared, but Glenville Grove and Mornington Road remain as streets, just east of New Cross station, and below and to the north of surviving mid-Victorian terraces in New Cross Road. Where Mortimer's cottages stood, there is now a recent redevelopment of apartments in small blocks at a domestic scale and in a vernacular style: very much in the spirit of Mortimer's proposals, though more up-market.

The plans show that Mortimer's cottages were based on a unit of two-rooms-and-kitchen, which could be combined and stacked on two floors, in various combinations, so that accommodation could be provided for 'the widow who may require one, the new married couple who may require two, or the man with a family who may require from three to ten rooms'. The architectural style of the resulting small buildings could be 'from the plainest to the most *recherché*,' according to the builder's preference. The gardens were small, not much more than 20 feet square, and on the plans are prosaically marked as 'drying or playing grounds'. Mortimer's houses, 'as carried out by him at Glenville Grove, Mornington Road, New Cross, will pay more than ten per cent. upon the expenditure, while the rent for each is not so much as apartments in old-constructed houses, or in new model dwellings'.

This last comment may remind us that other agencies besides Mortimer were grappling with the problem of working class housing. But by the 1860s the larger charities, such as the Society for Improving the Condition of the Labouring Classes, had formed a preference for building large blocks of workers' flats, some of which survive. It is true that they started small. The Society's first effort, the Bagnigge Wells Model Dwellings in Clerkenwell, designed by Henry Roberts in 1846, was a set of cottages.² Dock Cottages in Poplar were a similar experiment of 1849-50.³ More well known were 'Prince Albert's model dwelling houses', semi-detached cottages displayed at the Great Exhibition of 1851 by the Society for Improving the Condition of the Labouring Classes.⁴ But the big charities predominantly built big blocks, and this perhaps suggests that Mortimer's more modest proposals were somewhat out of date, and that this may be the reason he seems not to have succeeded.

His intervention in Hoxton was, anyway, different. Here he built a row of quite substantial houses, now 130-138 (even) Hoxton Street.⁵ While the back streets of Hoxton contained huddled, mean dwellings, this was the main shopping street, still called Hoxton Old Town, but soon to be renamed Hoxton Street. Each numbered dwelling (as the Post Office directories demonstrate) was the premises of a tradesman, such as stationer, cabinetmaker, chemist, chairmaker, corn dealer, foreign fancy goods importer, fur dyer, beer retailer, etc. Mortimer did not waste space giving these tradesmen gardens (or playing space). On the land immediately behind his houses he erected Hoxton Hall. The hall seems to have occupied the same footprint as it does now, but was not so high: it had a narrow stage at the northern end, and a single balcony at the southern end.⁶ It had a modestly decorative façade in Wilks Place, an alley off Hoxton Street, but for many years its main entrance seems to have been an insignificant door (giving on to a narrow connecting passage) in the shopping street.

It seems that Mortimer himself intended to manage his hall. An account of its opening night, on 7 November 1863, states that 'this hall has been erected by Mr James Mortimer for the specific object of affording to the humbler classes an entertainment that shall combine instruction with amusement ... wherein the visitor shall find a half literary and half musical entertainment'. In the hope of effecting 'the regeneration ... of that class of mankind who, even in the present enlightened century have not an idea beyond the pot house bar & the ribaldry that appertains thereto', Mortimer provided "a good drop of beer", a comfortable seat in an elegantly fitted and brilliantly lighted hall, [and] music that would do credit to many a second class Concert room'.⁷ The music was provided at the first night by the Orpheus Quartet, described as 'the finest Glee Union in London',⁸ but doubtless an *ad hoc* group. A Mr Seppings provided magic lantern shows, of which the most entertaining must have been 'The Comic Adventures of a Tiger and a Tub'. The chief attraction was a magician, Professor Logrenia, whose name is recorded in the annals of conjuring,⁹ and who wrote a slim pamphlet on his art.¹⁰ At Hoxton he presented 'the wonderful performing Russian cat, learned Canary birds and White Mice'.¹¹

Intermingled with these turns was more serious matter. Mr Seppings's repertoire of lantern shows included slides ('magnificent dissolving views') of the Prince of Wales's recent (1862) tour to Egypt and the Holy Land. A Mr John M'Gilchrist told 'the story of the Great Battles of the British Army from Hastings to Inkerman' (one battle each evening). And Mortimer himself, using limelight and a model, presented a feature entitled 'Homes of the People: as they are, and as they might be'.¹²

This last effort, combining earnestness and entertainment, was matched by entirely earnest lectures, as this advertisement announces:

Hoxton Hall, High-street, Hoxton. Political Subjects of great importance to the East end of London, and to the Working Classes in general, specially reviewed every

Wednesday evening. Subjects reviewed: The Dwellings of the Poor – The House of Commons under Pitt and under Palmerston. Subject to be reviewed on Wednesday, Nov 18th: The EQUALIZATION of the POOR RATES. Members of Parliament, Churchwardens, Overseers, Poor-Law Guardians, Vestrymen, Parish Officers, Ratepayers, and others, are specially invited to attend.¹³

Reports suggest that the attractions featured in the first programme were intended to be repeated for a week. After that it was announced that 'a variation from those of the former week has been selected, and will be again as often as circumstances require'.¹⁴ But the entertainments do not seem to have gone on for long. Already in the *Shoreditch Observer* of 28 November, we discover an advertisement for opening of the 'Hoxton Hall Dancing Academy' on 7 December, and, the following week, we read that

Mr. C. WINDUST, Professor of Dancing, begs to announce ... that he has taken the above Hall, (which is the finest specimen of the Corinthian Order of Room Architecture in London,) for the purpose of teaching DANCING.¹⁵

However fine Mortimer's architecture may have been, his entertainments evidently failed. Nor is there further evidence that Mr Windust succeeded. A few announcements of other events at the hall have been found, but by 1865 the Shoreditch rate books show that a waste-paper merchant was installed there.¹⁶

In June 2000, Hoxton Hall hosted performances of a music theatre piece, *First Class Evening Entertainments (Part One)*, devised by Post-Operative Productions. This was an updated version of Mortimer's programme, aiming to probe 'the ideological deployment of infotainment and edutainment in contemporary culture'.¹⁷ The director, Nicholas Till, wrote an article about this, offering many post-modern sidelights on Mortimer's efforts, which would have surprised Mortimer.¹⁸

II

In 1866, the hall entered on a new phase of activity as a music hall, McDonald's Music Hall.¹⁹ James McDonald junior, the licensee of the hall, and joint proprietor with James McDonald senior and Thomas Clark, had been manager at Collins's Music Hall in Islington, and presumably saw in Hoxton Hall an opportunity to spread his wings. However, he lost his licence in 1871, and a re-application in 1872 was refused. So Hoxton Hall was a music hall for only five years. When, in later years, its new owners, a Quaker group, opened an extension, they spoke dismissively of the old hall as 'a low class music-hall which lost its licence through misconduct'.²⁰ It is true that the licensing records refer to 'Police complaining' and 'Police report', but the report seems not to survive, so we do not know what went wrong.

Sparse records of performances, however, show that Hoxton Hall offered programmes that were typical of music halls of the time, and do not seem in any way offensive. Of course, Hoxton Hall's brief spell as a music hall came before the halcyon days of music hall, which followed in the last decades of the 19th century and the first years of the 20th. Most histories of music hall dwell on this later period, which was illuminated by celebrities like Harry Lauder, Marie Lloyd, George Robey and Vesta Tilley.²¹ Music hall, which arguably originated in the 1840s, was expanding in London in the 1860s, but this period is usually passed over swiftly by historians, except for the pioneer book, *The Variety Stage: A History of the Music Halls from the Earliest Period to the Present Time*, by Charles Douglas Stuart and A. J. Park (1895), which provides the context for Hoxton Hall's brief involvement. Even in the 1860s, Hoxton Hall was not without competition, notably from the very large and popular Britannia Music Hall, only a few yards south in Hoxton Street. Nearby in Shoreditch High Street were the Griffin Music Hall (later the Shoreditch Empire) and the (short-lived) Eastern Alhambra, and round the corner in Pitfield Street the Varieties Theatre, opened in 1867.²²

Nonetheless, Hoxton Hall could on occasion present a good line-up of well-known performers, even if these have now been outshone by later stars. A benefit night on 12 July 1867 for Harry and Katty King brought to the stage of Hoxton Hall a group of artists on the threshold of successful careers. Arthur Lloyd (1839-1904) came from a Scottish theatrical family, and established himself in London in 1862. He went on in the following decades to become a dominant figure in music hall; a testimony to this is the fact that the principal website on British music hall bears his name.²³ He was married to Katty King, who started out doing a juvenile double act with her brother Harry, but later acted and sang with Arthur Lloyd. William Lingard (1839-1927) appears in the Hoxton programme in 1867 alongside his new bride Alice Dunning (b. 1847). The Lingards pursued their careers in America, where William was celebrated as a female impersonator and quick-change artist, and was especially associated with a post-Civil-War song, 'Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines'. Annie Adams (1843-1905) first achieved fame in 1862. She sang both comic songs and serious ballads, and was therefore known as 'Queen of the Serio-Comic Vocalists'. She had a big voice, a big personality, and a big physique. Jolly John Nash (1830-1901), though a man of distinguished bearing, made a successful career by specialising in laughing songs. He was a friend of Arthur Lloyd, and they both performed privately for the Prince of Wales. Fred Albert (1845-1886), who specialised in topical songs, gave up a career in a City merchant's office to go on the halls, and some of his earliest appearances were at Hoxton Hall. 'It may here be remarked that there is no truth in the oft quoted but utterly erroneous report that this singer had a wooden leg'.²⁴ A programme from 1870 has a less distinguished line-up, but included Emma Kerridge, well known as a singer, and Will Bailey, active both as singer and manager.²⁵

Most music hall artists wrote their own songs, which became their trademarks and were usually published with fancy (often pictorial) covers. This

holds true of many of the Hoxton Hall artists, so there exists a considerable repertoire of their songs, which could be recovered from obscurity, and might again rouse the echoes in Hoxton Hall.

It was during McDonald's tenure of the hall that its echoes were no doubt enhanced, for he enlarged it. He raised the roof, in order to accommodate two galleries running round three sides of the auditorium, replacing the one small gallery at the back. The hall has to a large extent retained this form ever since, though there have been small changes, and architectural historians, puzzling over details, have attempted several conjectural reconstructions.²⁶

III

After the failure of McDonald's Music Hall, Hoxton Hall was dark for a few years. Advertisements offering it for hire or sale have been traced. In one, it is said to be 'capable of holding 1000 persons' and to be fit for 'Concerts, Amateur Performances, Lectures, Wax-work exhibitions or any other Entertainments'. Another declares it 'Suitable for Bijou Theatre, Public Entertainments, Gymnasium, Lecture rooms etc.'²⁷ It was eventually taken over by a temperance organisation.

Drunkenness among the poor, uncomfortably evident in the streets, was recognized as a social problem in early 19th-century Britain by both politicians and philanthropists. They attempted to impose control by rational and legislative methods, but realised that some kind of moral appeal in favour of abstinence or temperance was also necessary. Their attempts at 'suasion' acquired a greater emotional force when combined with Evangelical religion.²⁸ The 'Gospel Temperance' movement presented sobriety as a factor in salvation, and gave it a spiritual dimension. Gospel temperance originated in America, precipitated by 'the hard drinking of the frontier states'.²⁹ One small local initiative, the Blue Ribbon Movement, was galvanised by a charismatic speaker, Francis Murphy, and developed national influence in the



William Noble, from P. T. Winskill, *The Temperance movement and its workers* (1892)

early 1870s. In 1877 its work was witnessed by a visiting temperance enthusiast from England, William Noble. He had been 'a wilful and unruly boy', and was sent to sea. In the Navy he 'learned to love strong drink', but was converted to temperance in 1871.³⁰ Impressed by the Blue Ribbon Movement, he resolved to introduce it to England, and did so at a mass meeting at the National Standard Theatre, Shoreditch, on 10 February 1878.³¹ When his efforts were crowned with success, he looked for permanent premises, and found Hoxton Hall.

He was fortunate in having a devoted financial backer. William Isaac Palmer, a member of the wealthy family which ran the biscuit-making firm, Huntley and Palmer, in Reading, had been converted to the temperance cause when still at school, at the age of 13, and made it his life's work. He put up the money to buy Hoxton Hall,

and Noble, a fine speaker, known as the 'master of pathos and humour',³² drew packed houses. Starting with once-a-week meetings on Sundays, he soon held meetings every evening at 7.45 p.m., with 'Samuel Cross (of America) on the "Smith" American organ' to accompany the hymns; and also children's meetings every night at 6 p.m., and women's meetings every Monday and Wednesday at 3.00 p.m.³³ Indeed, Hoxton Hall's activities were extended

into areas that were only remotely connected with temperance. Like many other temperance halls throughout the country, Hoxton Hall became the centre of a myriad of activities that filled the hall almost every minute of every day. ... Attempts were made to balance educational and religious functions with those that were strictly social. Especially on Saturday evening, a popular drinking night, great efforts were made to attract an audience to social events that would entertain for the price of one penny, or even for nothing at all.³⁴

Noble's work always remained concentrated on Hoxton Hall – on the first day of January 1883 he announced his '1788th consecutive nightly meeting'³⁵ – but the Blue Ribbon movement expanded into the rest of Britain under the inspiration of another charismatic American, Richard T. Booth. From a village in New York State, he joined the Blue Ribbon Movement in 1877, and came to England in 1881. It was recorded that by November 1882 he

had conducted twenty-eight distinct missions. He had visited fifty towns... As a result of his labours, between six and seven hundred thousand people had signed the Total Abstinence pledge, whilst more than a million Blue Ribbons had been distributed.³⁶

The twist of blue ribbon had been adopted as the movement's badge because Moses (though not with temperance on his mind) had instructed the children of Israel to wear on their garments 'a ribband of blue' (*Numbers*, 15:38). Soon blue ribbons were everywhere in Britain.

On the breasts of noblemen, clergymen, merchants, tradesmen, mechanics, labourers, shoeblacks, &c., the little piece of blue ribbon told its own story. Women, also, from the elegantly-dressed lady to the humble domestic servant, wore the same symbol, either in a gold brooch, a silver buckle, or in its unadorned simplicity.³⁷

Like most such surging trends, the Blue Ribbon Movement eventually lost momentum. At a meeting at Exeter Hall on 18 May 1885 some enthusiasts for the blue ribbon were speculating: 'who could tell but one of these days the Queen herself, along with the Prince of Wales, would not be found wearing it'. But William Noble already admitted that there had been a reaction. 'He had heard this Blue Ribbon work described as merely a wave – an outburst of gush.'³⁸ And there were tensions between Hoxton Hall, as the movement's British headquarters, and the rapidly spreading local groups inspired by Richard Booth's rampaging missions.³⁹ The work went on at Hoxton Hall, but the movement declined. What made the difference for Hoxton Hall was the death of W. I. Palmer in 1893. His executors had to decide how to dispose of Hoxton Hall. They could, perhaps, have given the hall to the Blue Ribbon Movement, but instead they decided to give it to a Quaker charity, for the Palmers were a Quaker family.

IV

The Bedford Institute Association (BIA) was a body devoted to charitable work in the East End of London, run by the Society of Friends, or Quakers. It dated its origin to 1849, when the Devonshire House Friends' Meeting, in Bishopsgate, set up a school in Spitalfields. This grew, and became the Bedford Institute, acquiring a fine building in 1865 (replaced in 1895 by a larger building, which still stands, though no longer fulfilling its original purpose). The name Bedford was chosen in tribute to Peter Bedford (1780-1864), a Spitalfields business-man, who had devoted himself to charitable work among the poor, and especially with juvenile delinquents. As the Bedford Institute prepared to expand its work, it took the name Bedford Institute Association in 1867.

The Association produced annual reports, various occasional pamphlets, and two histories of its work,⁴⁰ so there is no need to go into its activities in detail here. It aimed to encourage an awareness of spiritual values through its Quaker ethos and quiet observances, but its efforts mostly went at first into practical help for the poor: sick-visiting, free meals, clothing clubs, sewing classes, carpentry workshops, and so forth. It opened branches: Peel (Clerkenwell, 1867), Deptford (1870), Bethnal Green (1874), Bunhill Fields (1874), and Barking (1891). In 1895, Hoxton Hall came to join this group. Later branches opened at Ratcliff (1899), Forest Gate (1900), Walthamstow (1903). Some of the branches declined, but the Association usually had at least five of them in operation.

Hoxton Hall's work for the Blue Ribbon Movement meant that it was already involved in the kind of social programmes the BIA supported, so, to a considerable degree, it went on as before, though under new management. William Noble continued to be associated with Hoxton Hall right up to his death in 1936.⁴¹ The BIA's work expanded from alleviating the material needs of the poor, to providing educational and social activity which would develop personality. Consequently, in 1911 (as the Association's report reveals), Hoxton Hall was providing a range of facilities. So far as religion went, there were Sunday evening services, open-air meetings and a Sunday school. Temperance work continued with a gospel temperance society and a Band of Hope. In addition there were also an adult school, a women's school, a brass band, a choir, a 'Help-One-Another Society', 'free and easy meetings' on Wednesdays, a debating society, a 'Friendly Folks' League', a young men's club, 'Crusaders of Peace'; and a penny bank.



The New Institute, 1910

There were three notable developments at Hoxton Hall in the early 20th century. The first was the building of an extension, on land to the east of the music hall. A mission hall briefly appeared in 1909, to be replaced in 1910 by a three-storey wing, designed by Shoreditch architects Lovegrove and Papworth.⁴² Hitherto, the music hall had been the principal available space at Hoxton Hall, and activities could spread only into backstage areas or the cellars. Now the 'New Institute' offered a series of offices and meeting rooms, which have provided essential accommodation for Hoxton Hall's work ever since. The complex of rooms, arranged round a light-well, is somewhat higgler-muggler, but the architects tried to provide a seemingly façade to Wilks Place, in a subdued 'Arts and Crafts' style, and took some trouble over fenestration. This building celebrated its hundredth birthday in 2010, when plans were unveiled to upgrade it as part of a master plan for the future.

A second notable feature of Hoxton Hall was a subsidiary organisation which it hosted, the Girls' Guild of Good Life. This had been founded in 1885, in Blue Ribbon days, by Mrs Sarah Rae. The 1880s saw a burst of enthusiasm among philanthropic ladies for starting girls' clubs. Maude Stanley (daughter of Lord Stanley of Alderley), who ran one in the Covent Garden area, brought them together in the Girls' Club Union. Her book *Clubs for Working Girls* (1890) lists 28 of them, including the Hoxton Guild. The motivation behind such clubs was obvious. In Maude Stanley's words:

The great mass of girls employed industrially in London, whether in factories or workshops, have their homes with their parents, brothers and sisters in but one or two rooms... How can the work-girl find the recreation she must have after ten or eleven hours of monotonous work? ... Our work-girls ... seek their recreation where alone they can find it, by loitering about the streets after dark when work is over, with some chosen companion; often it is with girls, sometimes in rough play with boys and lads. After a time the walk round, the looking into shop-windows, the passing by the glaring gaslit stalls in the evening markets, cease to have interest. Then comes, according to their means, the visit to the music hall, the cheap theatres, the gin-palaces, the dancing saloons, and the wine shop; then soon follow other temptations, the easy sliding into greater sin, the degradation and the downfall of all womanly virtue. And we may ask how has this catastrophe come about? From the innocent and natural wish of the child to play, to be amused, to stretch her wearied limbs after her long day of work. (p.12)

So the clubs were created, in the first place to provide amusement, and, through that, to attract the girls to higher things.

The Hoxton Guild issued annual reports,⁴³ which show that its fortunes were supervised by a band of noble ladies, such as (in 1892-3) Adeline, Duchess of Bedford, the Countesses of Camperdown and Tankerville, Lady Henry Somerset, and Alice, Lady Bagge. In the 'grateful thanks' section of their report, they usually managed to mention donations (e.g. 'lovely daffodils') from the Queen. The Guild's general activities included gospel meetings, 'afternoon pleasant hours', and singing. For senior

girls there were practical classes in stencil work, rug-making, enamel work, lace work, basket-making, fancy work and art repoussé work, while juniors could do plain needlework, scrap books, pasting and painting, and junior drill. The cover of the 1892-3 report, typographically decorative, and with an illustration of a girl washing dishes, proclaimed 'Good Wives for Working Men. How we try to train them in the Girls' Guild of Good Life'. This somewhat restrictive view of the prospects of Hoxton girls did loosen up somewhat, for, in the third of the developments just mentioned, the Girls' Guild set up a hostel for working girls.

Queen Mary's Hostel opened at 128 Hoxton Street in 1929. As the Guild's report for 1922 states, it was 'intended for business girls, nurses, teachers, students or girls visiting London. ... There is central heating, unlimited hot baths, a large lounge and recreation room, and dining room. Laundry and drying room for use of the residents'. This must surely have made a modest contribution to women's liberation, in offering to working girls the chance of living an independent life in the great city. The Guild closed about 1954, and the hostel sank into dereliction. In the 1990s, however, complicated negotiations recovered it, and it is now (from 2003) run by a company called Hoxton Workspaces, which is a trading arm of Hoxton Hall. Refurbished to provide studios for small creative industries, it makes an appropriate contribution to the current mission of the Hall, while bringing in a steady rental income.

The Girls' Guild also provided a launch-pad for a truly extraordinary woman, Olive Christian Malvery.⁴⁴ She was recruited to help by the Guild's founder and presiding spirit, Sarah Rae, and when she was married at St Margaret's, Westminster, in 1905, all the Hoxton girls were transported over there to act as bridesmaids. But the achievements of Miss Malvery (Mrs Mackirdy) were entirely individual and enterprising. She was one of the very earliest of women investigative journalists.⁴⁵ Assisted (perhaps inevitably) by a man friend, she



Olive Christian Malvery in various disguises

donned disguises and went out into the slums for short periods to work as a coster-girl, a coffee-house waitress, a factory hand, a street singer, a match-seller, and many other occupations. She reported her experiences in a series of articles in *Pearson's Magazine*, under the title 'The Heart of Things' in 1904-5; these were collected in book form in *The Soul Market* (1906). She writes vividly, with compassion, and an enlightened attitude that seems quite modern. Her views became somewhat more eccentric in time, and she died young in 1914. But she is perhaps the most shining light ever to have been associated with Hoxton Hall.

During the First World War, the Bedford Institute Association managed to carry on its work, though somewhat incommoded by Zeppelin bombing

raids. The Second World War was much more disruptive. Hoxton Hall's cellars were turned into an air raid shelter to accommodate 300 people. In September 1940, 600 people crowded in. The stress of the situation led to the breakdown and eventual retirement of the man in charge of Hoxton Hall, but the resident caretaker, Harry Walker, indomitably 'fathered the shelterers through their troubles', organising a canteen.⁴⁶

V

After the War, the Bedford Institute Association found that many of its premises had suffered damage, and it therefore transferred its headquarters office to Hoxton Hall, where it remained from 1947 to 1977. The warden of Hoxton Hall, John Hoare, became secretary of the Association. He

had had, as assistant warden, a young Quaker from Wigan called May Scott (1911-90), who became 'organizing secretary and club leader'. Working in tandem with others, she clearly made herself indispensable, and in 1957 she became warden. So strongly did she become identified with Hoxton Hall ('I have never wanted to work anywhere else', she said)⁴⁷ that the hall was generally referred to in the area as 'May Scott's'.

On the whole, she was able to maintain programmes similar to those of the past. In her view, there was still a stable community in Hoxton. Families who had lived there for generations continued to live there even after the War, owing to 'the thoughtful rehousing policy of the former Shoreditch Borough Council, who rehoused whole communities together'.⁴⁸ So, as the BIA's 1967 centenary report recorded,

our Warden, May Scott, has built up a Neighbourhood Centre which caters for people of all ages. ... There are classes in painting, pottery, fabric printing, toy making, dancing and shoe-repairing; there are clubs for children, teenagers and old people; there is a playroom five mornings a week where small children are looked after while their mothers go shopping; there is a meeting for housewives where they hear about and discuss matters of mutual interest and concern; there are outings to places of interest and summer holidays for children.⁴⁹

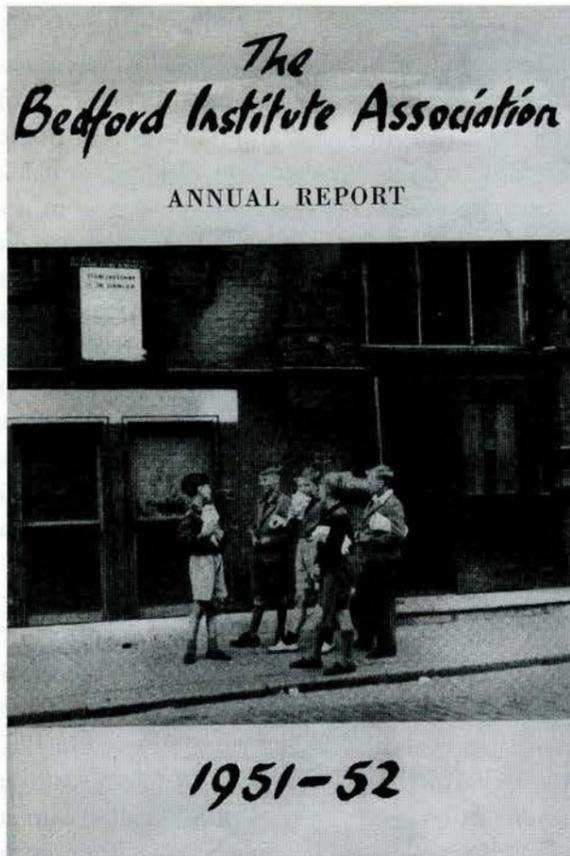
May Scott was clearly happy to take her share of the humdrum work: a volunteer was quoted in the report for 1964-5 as saying, 'I help May cook old people's dinners'. But she also responded to the world as it was. The international connections of the Quaker movement enabled her to attract to the Hall 'working parties from Friends Work Camps and International Voluntary

Service', and to set up 'a holiday club for school-children during the whole of August run by about a dozen United Nations Association volunteers of very mixed nationalities' (1967 report). At home, she explored new sources of funding, available within the welfare state, securing grants from, for instance, the London Borough of Hackney and the Inner London Education Authority. And within Hoxton Hall she accepted whatever her clients got up to. Ros Bacon recalled, of the 1960s, that 'May Scott was an incredibly patient and kind person, although her patience was sorely tempted at times by the geezers of the area! She allowed a boy to practise drums in one of the rooms - a modern concept for those days, although you really knew that she didn't like the din.'⁵⁰

Above all, May Scott presided over Hoxton Hall's rediscovery of theatre. Music hall had declined to the point that it was ripe for rediscovery as part of the British heritage. This duly occurred in 1963 when Hoxton Hall marked its centenary with an exhibition on the history of music hall, mounted by the British Music Hall Society, itself founded in that year. Music-hall performances were revived in the years following.



May Scott and friend



Bedford Institute Association annual report, 1951-2

More important, May Scott welcomed a group of teachers involved in contemporary theatre. Having trained together at the London Institute of Education, these enthusiasts formed in 1970 an amateur group, Nevers Square Theatre, which at first used Hoxton Hall as a rehearsal space, and then mounted productions in the theatre, notably Victorian melodramas and a version of *Child of the Jago*. A team of seven generated their productions communally.⁵¹ When May Scott retired in 1974, one of the group, Terry Goodfellow, took over as warden. He wrote:

Our programme reflected our experience of Hoxton Hall: it was a place we were fond of. We had experienced much there together. As teachers in a variety of London educational establishments, we sensed disillusionment both in ourselves and others; the relative apathy of our working lives contrasted strongly with the enthusiasm

and unity which we found within ourselves. This was our driving force; drama was a means. Because we wished to share and transmit our own experience, we saw the project as having a primarily educational concern.⁵²

Hoxton Hall's new direction was recognised when a new charitable trust was established to run it: the Hoxton Hall Friends Neighbourhood Centre and Theatre. By the late 1970s the Bedford Institute Association was in decline, since the welfare state had assumed many of the tasks which the Association had previously undertaken. From June 1977 the BIA handed over the running of Hoxton Hall to the HHFNCT. The BIA thereafter split into two parts. Its activities, reconfigured to match current needs, are now run by a body called Quaker Social Action. Its portfolio of property, much reduced, is run by the London Quaker Service Trust, which remains the owner of Hoxton Hall and leases it to the body which currently operates it.

VI

The Hall at first seemed to flourish as an arts centre. Some funds were found to support architectural work on the building, as part of which Hoxton Hall at last acquired a dignified façade on Hoxton Street, number 130 being adapted by architect Adrian Betham.⁵³ The Hall's more traditional community work withered, being replaced by educational initiatives. In addition to its work in drama, it started classes in visual arts and music. Terry Goodfellow's successor (in 1990) as Director of Hoxton Hall was Christine Bowler, and in her time grants were obtained, notably from the Arts Council, which enabled Hoxton Hall to function as a recognized venue for experimental performances. It hosted events presented by English National Opera, the Almeida Theatre, the International Mime Festival, the Spitalfields Festival, and many *avant-garde* drama groups.

In 2003, however, a number of funding sources dried up, and a financial crisis loomed. Eighteen months of agonising re-appraisal, assisted by the Arts Council recovery programme, left Hoxton Hall



Flier for Hoxton Hall events, February 1984

considerably slimmed down as an organisation, and with its previously wide-ranging programmes now concentrated on youth arts work.⁵⁴ Now run (since 2004) as a not-for-profit company recognised by the Charities Commission, under the name Hoxton Hall, it has been gradually rebuilding itself, with some success.

In the somewhat chilly light of the current world recession Hoxton Hall might seek credit as an example of how, in the 'voluntary sector', a staff of young, energetic and ingenious people can run socially useful services as a contribution to the 'Big Society'. After all, it has been doing that for almost a century and a half. While circumstances in Hoxton have considerably changed for the better since 1863, there is still a place for Hoxton Hall's work, which continues to combine social and artistic concerns, using creativity to animate local life.

Notes

1. There is a copy in the British Library, press mark 1731. b.26.
2. www.workhouses.org.uk under 'Model Lodging houses' (as at 17 June 2010).
3. See Stephen Porter (ed.), *Survey of London, XLIII: Poplar, Blackwell and the Isle of Dogs* (1994), 21-2.
4. See Jeffrey A. Auerbach, *The Great Exhibition of 1851: A Nation on Display* (1999), 111.
5. John Earl in *Hoxton Hall Conservation Management Plan. Volume 1/... Guidelines*, Tim Foster Architects, (2006), 3.1.2.
6. John Earl, 3.1.6 and illus. 29.
7. *The Era*, November 1863, quoted in Terence Goodfellow, *Hoxton Hall: A Short History* (1977), 4-5.
8. *Shoreditch Observer*, 14 Nov 1863, 4, col. 2.
9. David Price, *Magic: A Pictorial History of Conjurers in the Theatre* (New York, 1985), 98.
10. *Logrenia's Wizard Guide; or, Magic Made Easy*. By Logrenia, the Celebrated and Renowned Wizard (New York, n.d.), listed in Raymond Toole Stott, *A Bibliography of English Conjuring 1569-1876* (Derby, 1978) vol.2, 54.
11. *Shoreditch Observer*, 7 Nov 1863, 1, col.2; partially quoted in Goodfellow, above, 6.
12. *Shoreditch Observer*, 7 Nov 1863.
13. *Shoreditch Observer*, 14 Nov 1863, 4, col.2.
14. *Shoreditch Observer*, 14 Nov 1863, 3, col.2. For reviews see *Shoreditch Observer*, 7 Nov 1863, 2, col.2; 21 Nov 1863, 3, col.3.
15. *Shoreditch Observer*, 28 Nov 1863, 4, col.1; 5 Dec 1863, 4, col.2.
16. Goodfellow, 7.
17. www.post-operative.org/products3.html, (as at 18 June 2010).
18. Nicholas Till, 'First Class Evening Entertainments: Spectacle and Social Control in a Mid-Victorian Music Hall Programme', *New Theatre Quarterly* 20, (2004), 3-18.
19. For otherwise unattributed information in this paragraph, see Goodfellow, 10, 14.
20. In the leaflet accompanying the opening of the extension: see below, note 42.
21. Such books as W. MacQueen-Pope, *The Melodies Linger On: The Story of Music Hall* (1950), Raymond Mander and Joe Mitchenson, *British Music Hall: A Story in Pictures* (1965), and M. Willson Disher, *Winkles and Champagne: Comedies and Tragedies of the Music Hall* (1974), do, however, give information on the later careers of some of the artists mentioned below.
22. See chapter 8, 'Entertainment', in David Mander, *More Light, More Power: An Illustrated History of Shoreditch*, 1996.
23. www.arthurhulloyd.co.uk, (as at 18 June 2010).
24. Charles Douglas Stuart and A.J. Park, *The Variety Stage* (1895), 107.

25. The playbill for the 1867 show, and a photocopy of the programme for the 1870 show are in the Hoxton Hall archive.
26. See John Earl, sections 3.1 and 3.2.
27. Goodfellow, pp.17-18.
28. Kathleen Heasman, *Evangelicals in Action: An Appraisal of their Social Work in the Victorian Era*, (1962) ch. 8, 'Gospel Temperance'.
29. Heasman, 129.
30. P. T. Winskill, *Temperance Standard Bearers of the Nineteenth Century* (1897-8), vol. 2, p.283.
31. Goodfellow, 20.
32. Lilian Lewis Shiman, *Crusade against Drink in Victorian England* (1988), 121.
33. Flier in Hoxton Hall archive.
34. Shiman, 111-12.
35. Admission ticket in Hoxton Hall archive.
36. Ernest Blackwell, *Booth of the Blue Ribbon Movement: or the Factory Boy who Became a Temperance Evangelist* (1883), 318.
37. P. T. Winskill, *The Temperance Movement and its Workers* (1892), vol.4, p.33.
38. *The Blue Ribbon Official Gazette and Gospel Temperance Herald*, 3 June 1885, 170.
39. Shiman, 117.
40. *Quaker Street: The Bedford Institute Association Centenary Report*, 1949; and *Bedford Institute Association Centenary Report: Quaker Service in East London*, 1967. These and other BIA publications are held in the Library of Friends' House, London.
41. His death was recorded in the minutes of the Hoxton Hall Committee meeting of 26 June 1936: Hoxton Hall archive.
42. John Earl, para.2.10. See, in the Hoxton Hall archive, the leaflet: *The Bedford Institute Association. Setting of the First Memorial Stone of the New Institute On Saturday, 11th June, 1910, Programme of Proceedings*.
43. A set of the reports is in Hackney Archives.
44. See her entry (under Malvery) in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.
45. See Judith R. Walkowitz, 'The Indian Woman, the Flower Girl, and the Jew: Photojournalism in Edwardian London', *Victorian Studies*, 42 (1998-9) 3-46; and Ellen Ross (ed.), *Slum Travellers: Ladies and London Poverty, 1860-1920* (Los Angeles, 2007), 136-8.
46. Vera Brittain, *The Bedford Institute in London's Blitzkrieg*. The 74th Annual Report of the BIA [1941], p.13.
47. *Hackney Gazette*, 1 November 1974, 10.
48. *Hackney Gazette*, 1 November 1974.
49. The Minute Books of the committee which ran Hoxton Hall (in Hoxton Hall archive) provide a record. See also Olive Tyson, 'Bringing Together the Generations. Play, Art and Drama at Hoxton Hall', *The Friend*, 25 February 1966, 228-30.
50. www.londononline.co.uk/reviews/11303 (as at 20 June 2010).
51. See 'The Launch of Hoxton Hall as a Community Arts Centre', paper in Hoxton Hall archive.
52. Terry Goodfellow, 'Dramatic Developments at Hoxton Hall', *The Friend*, 19 December 1975, 1445.
53. John Earl, para.3.2.16.
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'The omnibus bishop' - William Walsham How



Julia Lafferty

Introduction

By 1879, residents of Clapton had become accustomed to the sight of horse-drawn trams clattering along the Upper Clapton Road, ferrying local residents to and from their places of work in the City of London. But there was one passenger who always attracted the attention of the travelling public whenever he boarded one of the white-liveried trams outside the Swan public house at Clapton Common.

Dressed in gaiters, apron and shovel hat, the newly appointed suffragan bishop of East London, William Walsham How, eschewed the private carriage, which was the established mode of transport for holders of his high office, in favour of public transport, thereby becoming known throughout London's East End as 'the omnibus bishop'.

In modern times William Walsham How is best known as a hymn writer. *The Dictionary of Hymnology*, published in 1907, recorded that the bishop's hymns in common use at that time amounted to nearly 60.¹ He wrote *O King of Kings*, the hymn appointed for use in all churches and chapels throughout the Empire to celebrate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897. Sir Arthur Sullivan, who set the words to music, wrote to its author 'I have rarely come across so beautiful a combination of poetry and deep religious feeling'. Today his hymn *For all the saints who from their labours rest* is sung (to a rousing tune by Vaughan Williams) throughout the English speaking world to celebrate the Christian festival of All Saints' Day or All Hallows.

He was also the author of a number of popular publications for both clergy and layman, including *Commentary on the Four Gospels* written for the SPCK, and *Pastor in Parochia*, based upon his experiences as a country clergyman. But it was the social impact he made during his period in office in East London which earned him a special place in public affections, and his tireless work to improve the social conditions of the poor, and in particular children, left a lasting legacy.

Early years

William was born on December 13 1823 in College Hill, Shrewsbury, the eldest son of solicitor William Wybergh How and his wife Frances. His mother died when William was in infancy and he and his younger brother Maynard were brought up by his stepmother, along with the two daughters of his father's second marriage.

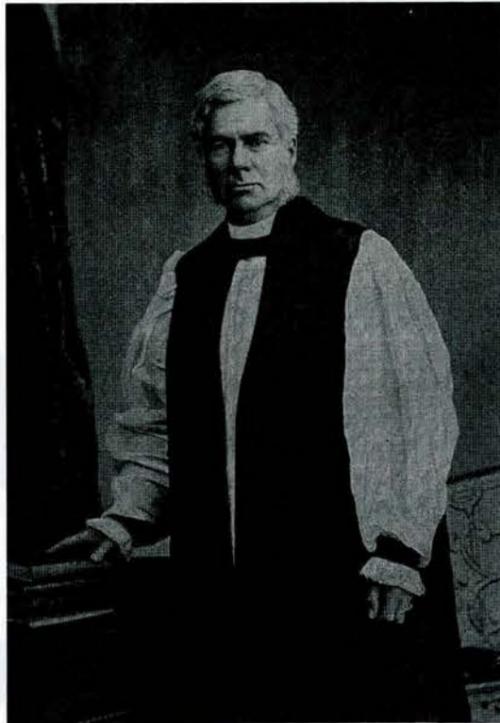
As a young boy, William took pleasure in making friends with the dogs of the neighbourhood. This was a characteristic that stayed with him throughout his life, for he was rarely without a pet dog for a companion, from the beloved brown spaniel Tom of his younger days to the little black Schipperke, Skipper, which was often seen nestling in the Bishop's arms in the last year of his life.

The first of the hymns for which he was later to become famous was written when he was just 12 years old, the subject being the transformation of the butterfly as a type of Resurrection. The How family always held a 'hymn time' on Sunday evenings, and this inspired William to further compositions during his teenage years.

William attended Shrewsbury School where Charles Darwin had studied two decades earlier. He developed an early interest in botany, and formed a horticultural society amongst some of his schoolfellows, which predated his later activities as a collector of rare and unusual plants.

Holy orders

In 1841 he went up to Wadham College Oxford with the intention of becoming a lawyer, but it was during the early part of his studies there that he changed his mind and determined to take holy orders. However this did not deter him from participating fully in the social life of the College. In a letter written in December 1844 he wrote -



William Walsbam How

Several of us went and made hay in Simcoe's room today, wheeling his bookshelves round with their faces to the wall, turning all the tables and chairs with their legs up, & c. &c, and when I came in I found all mine done too.

Every book turned in the shelves with its back to the wall, and my desk on the top of one bookcase and my coat on another!

It was perhaps this enthusiasm for College social activities that accounted for his obtaining only a third class degree. While at Oxford he continued to pursue his botanical interests and obtained a Goodridge's Botanical Exhibition.

At the age of 21 it was not possible for him to go for ordination for some time, and he therefore decided to read for a divinity degree at University College, Durham, following which he joined the band of curates at Kidderminster under the Revd. T. L. Cloughton, afterwards bishop of St Albans, in December 1846.

This was to be a very happy time in his life. He wrote to his brother 'I like all the curates better the more I see of them. Whateley, Douglas, Kewley and Tate, are four you might pick out of all England as fellow-workers, and good and pleasant friends: and I am sure if Carlyle knew Cloughton, and thought as we all do, he would write a new chapter in his 'Hero-Worship' on the 'Hero-Vicar'.

His fellow curate W. W. Douglas was to assume a special significance in his life. After he became acquainted with the Douglas family, the eldest Miss Douglas, Frances Ann, began to feature increasingly in his letters to his family.

In the autumn of 1848 his stepmother died and he decided to return home to be a comfort to his father and sister, and he received permission from the bishop to leave the curacy before his appointed two years were up. For three years he lived quietly at Shrewsbury until the opportunity of a living at Whittington, which was about 17 miles from the family home, presented

itself. In the intervening period he had married Frances Douglas in November 1849, and they had had their first child, Maynard, soon to be followed by a daughter, Nell. It was during this time that William wrote his first book *Plain Words*, a compilation of short sermons, which was to achieve great popularity and in the next 30 years was published in 48 editions.

William was to remain in the country parish of Whittington for 28 years. During this period the Anglican church was facing a number of challenges, as his son Frederick makes clear in his book *Bishop Walsbam How: A Memoir*.²

It was a critical time in the history of the Welsh diocese to which he now belonged. The evangelical movement had taken a firm hold on most of the clergy: forms and ceremonies were considered of little importance, and even orders and sacraments were of secondary account. The religious census of 1851 made out the contrast between the attendance of Church people and Nonconformists at public worship to be very glaring, and it registered the high water mark of Dissent.

However, such differences were often transcended by the affection with which William came to be regarded in the parish, as illustrated by an incident also recorded by Frederick:

He was great friends with one old woman, the wife of a local preacher among the Primitive Methodists, and he was always delighted to tell how, seeing her one day in church, he asked her how it was she had deserted her chapel. 'Well sir,' she replied, 'you see my old man be preaching at our chapel today, and I can't abide he!'

The parish of Whittington, which he had found in a state of neglect, was soon transformed by William's energy and organisational ability. Church services were improved, with a choir regularly trained by the rector, and all manner of social gatherings and events became a regular feature of parish life. In addition he undertook the role of diocesan inspector of schools from 1852-70, rural dean of Oswestry from 1853-79, prebendary of Llanfynydd and chancellor of St. Asaph's Cathedral from 1859-88, select preacher at Oxford in 1868-69, and proctor of the diocese of St. Asaph from 1869-79.

Family life

Frances proved to be an invaluable assistant to her husband, organising mothers' meetings, clothing clubs

and visiting the sick. Her son Frederick recalled how dedicated she was to the welfare of parishioners:

Wet or fine, night or day, no one ever hesitated to send for her at once, and one of her sons recollected being got out of his bed in the middle of a cold winter's night to accompany her to a cottage a mile and more away, from which a messenger had come to summon her to the bedside of an ailing child.

However, the burden of parish work in addition to bringing up a family of five (her first child Maynard died in infancy) was to prove too much of a burden for Frances who, during the later years at Whittington, suffered severe attacks of bronchitis and asthma. Her ill health was to prove a source of anxiety to William when he was first approached by the Bishop of London about his nomination for the new post of suffragan bishop for East London. The practice of appointing suffragan bishops had fallen into disuse but was being revived; this was to be the first appointment in the diocese of London.

In a letter of February 21 1878 to his friend Rev H. W. Burrows William wrote

At home she [Frances] has so many dear friends of various ranks that in all her illnesses she was never lonely. I fear she is never likely to be strong again, and, though she says she is quite ready to make the sacrifice, it is so great a one that I do not know whether I ought to allow her to make it.

Preferment

Had high office in the Church been his goal, William could have taken advantage of a number of offers of preferment which presented themselves during his years at Whittington. His biographer records that he declined offers of the bishoprics of Natal and Capetown, and nomination for that of Jamaica. At various times he also declined the bishoprics of Manchester and Durham, a canonry at Winchester, and livings at Brighton and Windsor which entailed royal appointments.

William was 55 years of age when he finally accepted the office of suffragan bishop of East London. The Bishop of London found himself with the valuable living of St Andrew's Undershaft, St Mary Axe in the City at his disposal, and this was to provide an income of £2,500 a year for the new bishop's stipend. But William was under no illusions about the challenges that lay ahead,

as he made clear in a letter to his son Harry:

The Church is *nowhere* in East London. God grant I may have grace and strength to do some little good, and at least to cheer and encourage the poor broken-down clergy there.

An article in the magazine *The Worker* for July 1890 described the conditions which William was to encounter on his move to East London:

A church cruelly under-manned, and struggling to provide the bread of life for 700,000 people, mostly poor; this was the church over which Bishop Walsham How was called to preside. The clergy were too few, and many of them were disheartened; jaded by the overstrain against too great odds; jaded by the unlovely pressure of their surroundings; jaded sometimes by illness, sometimes by old age. The endowments were sufficient for the incumbents in almost every case, but were not sufficient to provide assistant clergy, or lay workers, male or female. The paid Church workers, therefore, like the clergy, were too few. In parish after parish the necessities of Church life were lacking or inadequately provided. In the very corner of England, where the Church needed her fullest equipment, was that equipment utterly inadequate.

The London correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* first broke the news of the proposed appointment on March 25 1879:

I understand that the frequently expressed wish for the appointment of an additional bishop for the eastern division of the diocese of London is at last likely to be gratified, and that Canon Walsham How will in all probability be selected for the post.

The article caused consternation in the Church hierarchy as the assent of the Crown had not been formally given, but on 4 July 1879 William received the letter of appointment from the Prime Minister. His appointment was warmly welcomed by the rector of Hackney, the Revd. Arthur Brook, who was to become one of William's closest friends and supporters. On St James's Day 1879 he was consecrated Bishop of Bedford. William referred to this title as an 'absurdity', and it was always a source of annoyance to him, being both anachronistic and meaningless. Only certain titles named in an Act of Parliament passed in the time of Henry VIII could be used at this time, and although Bedford had no connection with the East End, it was the nearest to London then available. The Act was

amended in 1895 to allow for the more appropriate title of Bishop of Stepney.

The bishop's residence

The issue of a residence for the new bishop was resolved by an offer from Richard Foster, who had acted as benefactor to a number of London churches, including St Matthias in Stoke Newington. For the past twenty years Foster had lived at Stainforth House, one of a pair of detached villas dating from the turn of the century which occupied a site overlooking Clapton Common. He was proposing to leave London to live in Chislehurst, and he offered Stainforth House as the residence for the newly appointed bishop.³

On viewing the house William wrote to his sister Minny

The house is a very good one: there is a nice garden, and a small field, capable of supporting two cows. The house stands high, and on gravel, so is very healthy. It is quite rural at the back, looking down the slope of the ridge to the River Lea.

William was particularly delighted with the garden, which he discovered possessed a fern-house stocked with many plants in which he had a particular interest. His son Frederick described how much the Bishop appreciated his garden:

This garden and fernery were of the greatest possible service during his nine years of arduous work in the East End for they afforded a never-failing refreshment and interest to one with his passion for flowers and ferns.

As William was also to discover, Frederick Hanbury who, in addition to his business interests in the pharmaceutical company Allen & Hanbury, was regarded as a botanist of considerable note, lived close by at 63 Clapton Common. 'Botanical chats' with Mr Hanbury were to become a regular feature of life at Clapton, and William noted 'he has far the best herbarium I ever saw'. Hanbury was later to donate his herbarium of 12,000 plant specimens to the Royal Horticultural Society; it formed the basis of the RHS herbarium at Wisley.

Life in East London

The new Bishop's responsibilities covered the parishes of Bethnal Green, Hackney, Shoreditch, Stoke Newington and Whitechapel, and he exercised the Bishop of



Stainforth House, Clapton Common, photographed by R. Hanbury, 1906

London's rights of patronage in the area. William's first week in his new diocese gave an indication of how much his work in East London was to differ from the life of a country clergyman in Whittington which he had documented in his book *Pastor in Parochia*.⁴

Extracts from a letter from William to his friend Mrs Maclagan, written from Stainforth House on October 4 1879, give a flavour of how different was his new area from his former rural parish:

I have spent this week in the south part of the district, chiefly at Whitechapel, and have been initiated into a little real East London life. Among a multitude of other things, I addressed 1200 children, rows and rows of girls without anything on their heads and many without anything on their feet, in Whitechapel church one afternoon at a quarter to five. All of them came voluntarily, in answer to our invitations sent round the parish.

.....
I went one night, late, to address the men in the long low kitchen of a Whitechapel lodging-house, where they make up two hundred beds (by no means one of the largest). It was a curious sight, some of the men were smoking, some drunk, some snoring, many with hats and caps on, and one combing his head all the time with a bit of broken comb. But they listened.

.....
I also attended the Feast of Tabernacles in a large Jewish synagogue. I am afraid they gave Mr Kitto and me the

'chief seats in the synagogue' and we were the only Gentiles present.

The sight of the new bishop making his way around East London was to provoke a perplexed reaction from the local population, as William was to report in a speech at a dinner held by Nobody's Club:

Again, it was only the night before last that a small boy in Poplar shouted to another as I passed, 'Here's a Scotchman; look at his legs!

At the time of William's appointment, the capital was undergoing a period of rapid urbanisation and inward migration. Transport developments in turn created the conditions for a speculative building boom in formerly semi-rural areas such

as Clapton, transforming them into thriving Victorian suburbs. A severe agricultural depression resulted in an exodus of rural dwellers into the major towns and cities in search of work. At the same time, revolutions and political struggles across Europe and persecution of Russian, Ukrainian and Polish Jews resulted in a dramatic increase in London's immigrant population, many of whom settled in East London, often in grossly overcrowded conditions. The abundance of semi- and unskilled labour led to low wages and conditions of abject poverty amongst such communities. The Anglican Church therefore faced many social challenges, and was at the same time under threat from Non-conformism and increasing secularisation amongst sections of the population influenced by socialism and advocates of communism such as Karl Marx, who had produced the first volume of *Das Kapital* in 1867. In addition, a new spirit of enquiry and critical analysis had been generated by recent scientific discoveries in geology, physics and biology which were calling into question the old religious certainties.

Strife at St Thomas's

Internal strife was also causing disharmony within the Church, as was apparent on William's own doorstep. St Thomas's Church, which faced the Bishop's residence across Clapton Common, had in the recent past experienced an acrimonious protest by members of the congregation against their vicar, Revd. F. W.

Kingsford. Following damage to the church caused by the explosion of a gunpowder store in Erith in October 1864, Kingsford had redecorated and reorganised the church interior, installing a new altar, altar rail, choir seats and priest desks, and in November 1865 wrote to the church members introducing changes to Holy Communion in line with the practices of the Oxford Movement. The changes raised a storm of protest, with people slamming the pew doors as they stormed out of church when the vicar appeared in the pulpit wearing a surplice instead of a black gown. Kingsford was taken to the Court of the Arches on three occasions by parishioners with a long list of complaints, and was eventually forced to remove the choir seats and priest desks he had installed, but the rest of his innovations remained.

The initial awkwardness which William had felt about attending services at St Thomas's was soon put aside and he became a regular attender at daily morning prayer. The vicar was keen to introduce the wearing of vestments at St Thomas's, but postponed their introduction when he heard of the Bishop's reservations, and a lasting friendship developed between the two men.

The bishop's strategy

William set about the task of reinvigorating the Anglican Church in East London with characteristic determination and energy. After a period of consultations, he announced that the cornerstone of his strategy to re-energise the Church was 'to fill up the gaps in the ministry, clerical and lay'. The agency through which this strategy was to be delivered was the East London Church Fund, which was launched at the Mansion House in the City of London in June 1880. In its first year the fund brought in £11,527 and work began immediately to provide sufficient clerical and lay workers for the bishop's hard pressed and understaffed parishes to be able to cope with what was termed by one churchman 'a sort of ecclesiastical Botany Bay'.



The chapel at Stainforth House

It was with the active encouragement of the bishop that an East London Deaconesses' Home was opened in 1880 to provide deaconesses and church workers for East London. Besides the deaconesses and probationers, 32 associates were connected with this home. The associates were mainly women of independent means who did not intend to become deaconesses, but devoted as much time as they could to the work. They lived with the deaconesses, wore the appropriate robes and conformed to the rules of the home, but paid their own expenses. These associates were an important part of the workforce. They formed a valuable tie connecting the sisters with sources of influence and aid to which they otherwise might not

have had access. Duties undertaken by the deaconesses included nursing the sick, organising meetings and activities for women, Sunday school teaching, Bible classes and night schools to teach general and practical knowledge, as well as generally ministering to the poor.

The Eton Mission in Hackney had its beginnings in William's work to win support from public schools and universities for East London causes. He took every opportunity to use his skills of oratory to raise funds for the East London Church Fund, and in one instance a cheque for £500 was put into the offertory bag of a West End church where he was preaching. £2000 a year was given by another donor to build mission rooms in parishes where they were required. It was in large measure due to his efforts that by 1903 Hackney contained 23 Anglican churches, many with ancillary missions.

It is also thanks to his good offices that the first boys' home under the auspices of the Waifs and Strays Society, later to become the Children's Society, found a temporary home at the Woodlands, a house neighbouring his own and now known as 98 Clapton Common. He was president of the society for many years, and also served as a vice-president of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. His charitable

activities were supported by Queen Victoria's daughter Princess Christian, who took a personal interest in his work to help the children of London's poor, and he was invited on a number of occasions to preach before the Queen at her private chapel at Windsor.

Leisure interests

The enthusiasm and energy which William brought to his work in East London was also evident in his leisure activities. He was a keen fisherman and ventured as far afield as Norway and the Ardennes in his pursuit of salmon and trout. On one occasion, following a confirmation in a rural parish church, he was discovered soon afterwards trout fishing in a nearby pool, still dressed in his bishop's shovel hat and apron. He enjoyed skating until late in life, and at the age of 59 broke a bone in his leg as a result of a fall while exploring a glacier during a holiday in the mountainous Pontresina district of Switzerland.

He also kept up to date with the literary scene as far as his official duties would allow. He maintained a lifelong friendship with Victorian novelist Jean Ingelow and entertained Miss Ingelow at Stainforth House in company with popular authoresses of the time Charlotte Yonge and Edna Lyall. His correspondence records an encounter with Robert Browning at the home of the Master of Trinity College Cambridge in June 1889. His description of Browning as 'a jolly, chatty, cheery old gentleman' is somewhat at odds with the popular image of the celebrated poet.

He maintained a lively interest in social and political activities, and towards the end of his period in East London attended a debate at Toynbee Hall between Benjamin Jones, a leader of the Co-operative movement and H.H. Champion for the Socialists, whom George Bernard Shaw described as having "an unregenerate taste for pugilism". William obviously formed the same opinion as Shaw about Champion who, he wrote, 'looked as if he could bite', while recognising the power of his oratory and his effect upon his audience. He noted also 'There were a good many very strong-minded females present, some obviously Socialists, applauding Champion'.

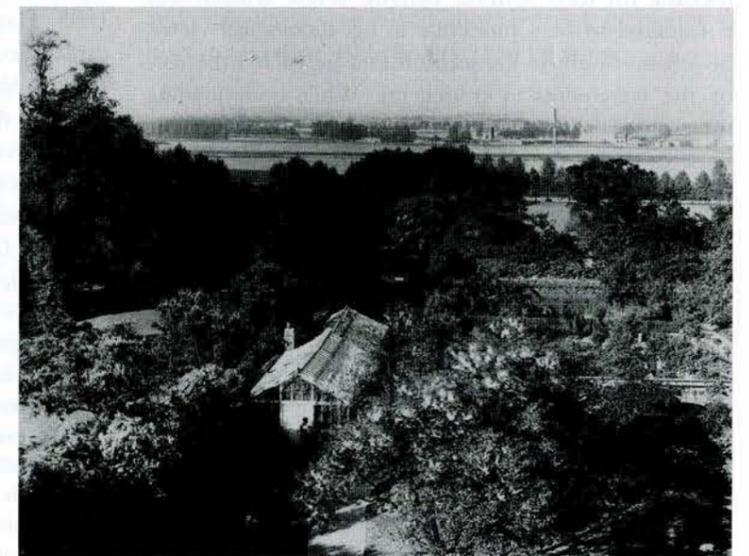
William was a sociable being and established the practice at Clapton of entertaining his clergy and their wives to lunch at Stainforth House each Thursday. These were recalled as being convivial affairs by participants, and one of his clergy recalled being told by his Bishop that 'a man who makes religion a gloomy thing is guilty of treason against religion'.

He was an enthusiastic participant in the parties he organised for local children at festive times such as Christmas, as was recorded by his son:

After tea the children invariably had a kind of sham bazaar, for which they were provided with paper money, and were able in this way to choose what present they each preferred. During this process the Bishop would generally have some little one in his arms, helping her to choose, and giving her thus a better chance than if she had been crowded by the bigger ones, or he would be busy showing some little purchaser how to work a mechanical toy, or advising in the choice between a book and a box of pencils.

Salvationists

William also had the distinction of being the only bishop to preach to members of the Salvation Army. The Army's leader, General William Booth, became one of William's neighbours when in 1880 he moved with his family to 114 Clapton Common. Booth wrote 'The houses on the Common look on to the Common, and the tram-cars passing in the distance, the children at



View across the garden to the Lea valley

play, the cows grazing, dogs swimming about the pond, all together make the look-out quite lively’.

There was some talk of the possibility of union with General Booth’s organisation but the leading Anglican periodical, *The Church Times*, made clear that this would only be possible on the following terms:

We are inclined to think that, before sanctioning any kind of arrangement for cooperation with the Salvation Army, our Bishops should not only require that all its members be baptised and also confirmed, or express their willingness to be confirmed, but that they shall periodically attend classes for instruction in Church doctrine, and once at least every Sunday, be present in Divine service in their respective parish churches.⁵

It is not likely that the autocratic William Booth would have ever accepted such demands, but on the evening of 9 June 1882, some 200 members of the Salvation Army’s Stoke Newington corps attended a service sponsored by St Faith’s Church and addressed by Bishop Walsham How. Since its establishment as a mission chapel in 1868, St Faith’s had been a stronghold of ritualism, supported by its vicar, Thomas W. Belcher, and it had functioned as a centre of social and missionary work. It is not clear how Belcher first made contact with the Salvationists of Stoke Newington corps, but apparently he had received approval from the Salvation Army’s headquarters to hold a special meeting for their spiritual benefit. While William was considered to be a moderate in his theological views, he left no doubt in his sermon that he valued the role of the sacraments in church life. While commending the evangelical work done by Salvationists amongst the poor of Britain’s inner cities, the bishop urged them to accept baptism and Holy Communion as laid down by Jesus in the Scriptures, and confirmed by apostolic practice in the early church. The service and sermon was fully reported in *War Cry*, with an engraving of the Bishop in the pulpit. However when Belcher arranged for the sermon to be reproduced in booklet form, the Salvation Army leadership decided that it should not be circulated amongst their members.⁶ This was to be the last time that such an event took place.

Evolution

On 28 August 1887 while on a family holiday in Barmouth, Frances How suffered a severe attack of asthma from which she did not recover. She was buried

in Whittington alongside the son whom she and William had lost when an infant.

Exactly one week after Frances’s death, William preached one of his most memorable sermons on ‘The Bible and Science’ to the British Association in Manchester Cathedral. While many of his contemporaries in the Church had been appalled by Charles Darwin’s theories of evolution and what they perceived as the challenge to the truth of the Bible, William took a much more enlightened view. He observed that Darwin’s work included facts and theories that were difficult to dispute, and cautioned against ‘a hasty denunciation of what may be proved to have at least some elements of truth in it, a contemptuous rejection of theories which we may some day learn to accept as freely and with as little sense of inconsistency with God’s word as we now accept the theory of the earth’s motion around the sun, or the long duration of the geological epochs.’

Thomas Henry Huxley, known as ‘Darwin’s bulldog’ and a leader in the scientific debate in England, cited the sermon to the British Association in his book, *Science and Christian Tradition*. Huxley applauded the Bishop’s position which he said should be ‘warmly appreciated by all honest and clear-headed men.’⁷

However, William was to find himself in conflict with a celebrated supporter of Darwin’s theories when Thomas Hardy published his novel *Jude the Obscure* in 1895. Hardy declared that he had been ‘among the earliest acclaimers of *The Origin of Species*’, and described *Jude the Obscure* as concerned with ‘the deadly war waged between flesh and spirit’. The novel received a hostile reception as it was viewed by many as a challenge to the conventions upon which Victorian society was based, and in particular the institution of marriage and the religious foundations which upheld it. An article in *The Times* reflected the public mood:

In one passage it is said of a narrative by Jude ‘That it was told while they walked up and down over a floor, littered with rotten cabbage leaves and amid all the usual squalors of decayed vegetable matter and unsaleable refuse’. A little too much of these elements has got into *Jude the Obscure* ...much of it reads as if it were an argument of no very novel kind for the reversal or revision of some social institutions.⁸



The bishop’s omnibus: a horse tram at Upper Clapton

William wrote to the editor of the *Yorkshire Post* in terms which seem extreme by modern day standards, but which reflected prevailing Victorian values:

Sir

Will you allow me to publicly thank you for your outspoken leader in your today’s issue denouncing the intolerable grossness and hateful sneering at all that one most reveres in such writers as Thomas Hardy?

On the authority of one of those reviews which you justly condemn for this reticence, I bought a copy of one of Mr Hardy’s novels, but was so disgusted with its insolence and indecency that I threw it into the fire. It is a disgrace to our great public libraries to admit such garbage, clever though it may be, to their shelves.

Hardy was much disturbed at the book’s reception and in a later postscript to the book’s preface he wrote:

So much for the unhappy beginning of ‘Jude’s’ career as a book. After these verdicts from the press its next misfortune was to be burnt by a bishop - probably in his despair at not being able to burn me.

Jude the Obscure was to be Thomas Hardy’s last novel. In 1898, he announced that he was abandoning novel writing and would in future be devoting himself to poetry.

‘The model bishop’

After the death of his wife, William’s eldest son Frederick and his wife came to live at Stainforth House to give him support and assistance. In February 1888 William received a letter from Lord Salisbury with the offer of the newly created see at Wakefield. At the age of 64, and still suffering the pain of bereavement, the thought of relocating to Wakefield to organise a new and difficult diocese filled him with dread. In a letter to his son Harry of 10 February 1888 he wrote:

My Dearest Boy

They won’t leave me alone when I am so happy and contented. I have got to leave East London after all. Lord Salisbury yesterday asked me to go to Wakefield, and I have had an interview with the Bishop of London this evening, and he says it is my duty to go. So I have said ‘Yes’. It is dreadful - about the most unattractive post on the bench, but one must not choose for oneself, and I dare not again refuse what others think I ought to do.

William’s farewell to the clergy of East London was at St Andrew’s Undershaft, where he invited them all to join with him in celebrating Holy Communion on the morning of 3 May. In his address he told them ‘I leave a band of brothers, than whom I shall never find any more faithful, more generous, and more devoted’.

At his last meeting of the East London Church Fund on 23 April 1888 his speech contained the following passage:

When I first came to East London I was told that East Londoners were very like Yorkshiremen in character, that they were at first a little rough, if not rude, but that when you had gained their confidence they were very true, very hearty, and very generous. I found East Londoners like that; and it is a great comfort and satisfaction to me to hope that I may possibly find Yorkshiremen not unlike East Londoners. There is another physical resemblance between East London and the diocese of Wakefield; for there flows through the latter diocese a river which is even dirtier than the river Lea. I heard some years ago, Professor Huxley speak of East London. He said that there seemed to be inscribed over it, 'No hope here', and that he had never met with any savage life which he thought more intolerable, more absolutely miserable than the life of the East Londoner...

Now I believe that things have improved, and that they are improving. Mind, I do not lay it all down to the action of the Church, but I believe the Church has acted very considerably in improving things, and that she has brought a great deal of life and light and hope to the people of East London.

This is borne out by an encounter on William's final trip by horse-tram:

His work there was finished; it was his last day; just once more he took his place in the familiar white tram-car; to his surprise the conductor asked him for his ticket, which is usually thrown away by the passenger. 'What do you want it for?' said the Bishop. 'P'raps you won't be coming with me again,' said the man, 'and I should like to keep it for a remembrance'.

Revd. H. L. Paget, later to become bishop of Stepney, summed up the reason for the bishop's popularity with the people of East London:

A bishop who ran to catch trams and omnibuses, who would fly from Tottenham to Wapping, from Bromley to Whitechapel, to preside at a very humble parish festival, was a new figure in the English hierarchy. People liked him for the same reason that Israel and Judah loved David - because he went out and came in before them... The neat well-built figure, the crisp grey hair, the bright brown eye, and the mouth, so whimsical and sympathetic, with

its trick of becoming suddenly very firm and set if he heard or saw what he did not like, this was not the sort of thing to pass unnoticed in the life of the East End.

William took up his appointment as the first bishop of Wakefield in May 1888. This is not the place to expand on his work in Yorkshire, except to note that there his interests, and personal modesty, were as apparent as they had been in London. During his time in Wakefield he took his seat in the House of Lords in 1891.

William died suddenly on 10 August 1897 while on holiday in the west of Ireland and was buried at his former country parish of Whittington. The 18 foot high memorial cross which was erected to mark his burial place is still a feature of the Garden of Remembrance at Whittington. In the April following his death a memorial window in St Thomas's on Clapton Common was dedicated by the Bishop of Stepney. He is also commemorated by a brass plaque on the north wall of the church of St Andrew Undershaft in the City, and by the bishop's chair on the north sanctuary wall of St Andrew's, Fulham, which bears an inscription dedicated to 'the model bishop of our time'.

Notes

Unattributed quotations are from Frederick How's biography of his father, cited below.

1. J. Julian, *A Dictionary of Hymnology, setting forth the origin and history of Christian hymns of all ages and nations* (1907).
2. F. Bagust, *Some Notes on Clapton Past and Present* (1919-1929), at Hackney Archives Department
3. F. D. How, *Bishop Walsham How: A memoir* (1898).
4. W. W. How, *Pastor in Parochia* (1868).
5. 'The Salvation Army', *The Church Times*, 2 June 1882.
6. W. W. How, *The Church of England and the Salvation Army* (1882).
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8. *Times*, December 18 1895.

See also: VCH, I; Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.

The gentrification of Broadway Market



William Bradley

Introduction

Broadway Market is a street that runs south from London Fields to the Regents Canal in Queensbridge ward, one of the poorest wards in Hackney. A thriving commercial street, with a daily market until the mid-20th century, Broadway Market fell into deep decline during the 1970s and 1980s. The street became dilapidated. Many shops were empty, windows were boarded up and the street became infamous as a hotbed of crime.

During the 1990s the street began to be upgraded. Shops were re-fitted and new business flourished. The area gentrified. In 2004, the Broadway Market Residents and Traders Association (BMRTA) established a new farmers-style Saturday market. Under the banner 'Quality, Speciality, Variety', their mission statement declared:

The Saturday market is to act as a catalyst for the regeneration of the Broadway neighbourhood: to revitalise the area socially, economically and environmentally...we serve all income groups as well as all cultures...Stalls and shops on Broadway reflect the rainbow culture that gives the neighbourhood its vitality. They will continue to serve the whole community: all races, genders and religions.

The Saturday market was an instant success. It complemented the upgrading of many of the streets' permanent retail spaces and has since perpetuated further change, as a more extensive boutique and café culture has become established. Broadway Market is now central to the so-called 'New East End'.

Yet not everybody is positive about the Saturday market; local tension has been rife since it was established. Many longer term and less affluent residents believe that the market has acted not as a catalyst for socially inclusive regeneration, but as a spur to social exclusion and further gentrification. This concern has been highlighted by the activist newspaper-cum-political party, The Hackney Independent, who state that:

This new open air market only caters for the wealthy...[We have] called for a more inclusive policy that reflects local needs.

Another local newspaper has voiced similar opinions:

This isn't regeneration, this is a perfect example of the divided Britain that Blair has left us; a corner of Hackney where society is stratified into race and class divisions – and celebrated as a success.¹

Over the past 15 years, a new cultural landscape has been produced at Broadway Market. Who has been involved in its creation, and what have been the effects? What sorts of exclusion and displacement have resulted from the gentrification of Broadway Market and how do these exclusions operate? To what extent has the BMTRA achieved its goal to act as a catalyst for a socially and economically inclusive regeneration of the Broadway neighbourhood? What has been the role of different actors, including the media and local government in shaping the current landscape of Broadway Market? In what ways might the pursuit of an authentic urban lifestyle have led to exclusion at Broadway Market? These are some of the questions that this research set out to answer. The bulk of the research was conducted through a series of in-depth interviews with a diverse range of local stakeholders: local



Broadway Market from the south, about 1912

businessmen, political activists, members of the BMTRA, artists, journalists and writers. These in-depth interviews were supplemented by less formal conversations with others involved in the market, including traders, estate agents and passers by.

'Gentrification'

First, a little context - what is gentrification? The term was first coined in the 1960s by the urban sociologist Ruth Glass, who identified and wrote about processes of class succession and displacement, initially across areas of inner north London. Glass, a Marxist and refugee from Nazi Germany, used the term as an ironic allusion to the English 19th century gentry, whose habits were mirrored by contemporary upper-middle class households, purchasing properties in the traditionally deprived East End of London:

One by one, many of the working class quarters of London have been invaded by the middle classes... Shabby, modest mews... have been taken over, when their leases have expired, and have become elegant, expensive residences... The social status and value of such dwellings are... enormously inflated by comparison with previous levels in their neighbourhoods. Once this process of 'gentrification' starts... it goes on rapidly until all or most of the original working class occupiers are displaced and the social character of the district is changed.²

Glass's emphasis on class change has ensured that her work retains its relevance today. Gentrification, defined, then, is: 'the production of urban space for progressively more affluent users'.³ This research is premised upon the concept of gentrification as a term that refers to a *negative* process of change.

Development of Broadway Market

Broadway Market lies along a route running north-east - south-west, an ancient trading route for the transportation of produce and livestock from the fields of Essex and Epping Forest to the markets and slaughterhouses of London. The canal aided the development of the area, with the built form of the street having been substantially developed by 1850. It became known as the Broadway in 1881 and was renamed Broadway Market in 1937. The popularity of the market reached its zenith in the Edwardian era and this prosperity continued through until WW2.

Bob Cooke, the owner of F. Cooke's pie, mash and eel shop (9 Broadway Market) grew up on the street during its heyday:

The market... you know, had all your fruiterers, your veg people, all along the Broadway. Generations: [families such as] Hansells, Wrights, right the way along the Broadway. I can remember there was eight butchers along the Broadway at one time.

But this was an area of industry and manufacturing, which was strongly affected by the decline of London's industrial economy. As factories closed, workers moved away and as the first supermarkets opened, trade on the market declined. Bob Cooke also witnessed this decline first hand:



Broadway Market, north west side, about 1980

Late 70s, early 80s really started to decline. Lots of people moved out the Broadway, stalls went, shops closed. A lot of corrugated iron.

Despite a few daily market stalls persisting, both the street market and many of the retail spaces deteriorated. Alistair, the current Saturday market assistant-manager described how when he was younger, parts of the area would be avoided at all costs:

I would walk an extra half an hour to avoid the top of the road and London fields after a shift in The Dove [a pub on Broadway Market]... it was a no-go area, infamous for rape.

Iain Sinclair, a prominent Hackney author and long-term resident recalls how the area was home to a diverse range of squatting and anarchist communities:

Astrid Proll,⁴ who was on the run in Hackney, lived in a lesbian community off the back of Broadway Market.

The area was typical of much of de-industrialized and abandoned inner London, attracting artistic activity and associated alternative anti-establishment cultures due to its low rent. Iain further describes

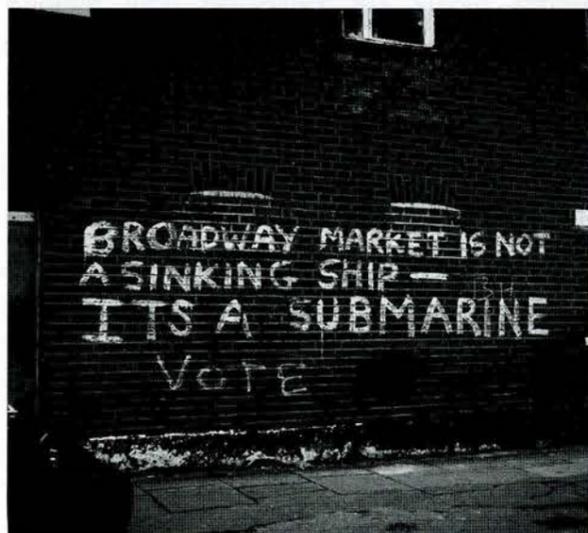
how he once used the street as a location with some film students he was teaching at the time:

It was absolutely right; [it] had the feel of a gothic run down film set.

Tony, the proprietor of Bradbury's hardware store (79-81 Broadway Market) moved to the area during this period, remembering how

it was almost like 77 per cent shops shut and boarded up. It was scary to walk there you know. Four or five o'clock everyone disappeared. It was a rough area at that time.

Patrick Wright, who wrote about this area of East London in the 1980s,⁵ describes Broadway Market as a street that felt beyond hope of improvement and recovery. A famous piece of local graffiti confirmed such opinions:



Yet in the early 1990s, the submarine began to resurface as some of the abandoned shops were reopened and a new class of people began to move into the area. The Dove free house was pioneering in the street's re-imagining. The street was also targeted by Hackney Council as a focal point for regeneration. New paving was laid down and lighting repaired on London Fields in an attempt to add value to the commercial property the Council had begun to dispose of. Yet it was also this process

that led to controversy surrounding the 'Battle for Broadway Market.'

The battle for Broadway Market

In 1999, a number of years before the establishment of the Saturday market, Hackney Council began to sell some of its commercial properties on Broadway Market, including a café (number 34), managed for thirty years by local resident Tony Platia. Traders began receiving 28 days' notice that their premises were to be auctioned to the highest bidder. In a less-than-transparent process⁶ and despite repeated attempted bids from Platia, the café was sold to Roger Wratten, a property developer from Tunbridge Wells, adding to his growing portfolio of premises on the street. This prompted local outrage, inflamed by Wratten's plans to demolish and replace the café with luxury flats. In November 2005, days before demolition was to commence, angry locals barricaded the café wielding a banner proclaiming, 'We want our café not yuppie flats!'

Up to 60 people occupied the building on a 24/7 rota. The café became a living space, serving food and drink to protesters and passers-by. These events attracted such media interest that the story reached the front page of *The Guardian* newspaper. Tony Platia was not the only tenant to feel the effects of the council sell-off. Spirit, a well-known Rastafarian who owned the Nutritious Food Galley (71 Broadway Market), was also notified of the imminent auction of his property. Despite Spirit's attempts to buy the premises by sending a cheque to the council for the required deposit, it was sold to Broadway Investments Hackney (a company registered in the Bahamas) for less than the £100,000 offered by Spirit. Further protest ensued, and allegations of corruption spread through the area, but Spirit was finally evicted in November 2008.

Processes of capital disinvestment and reinvestment, property upgrading, local aggravation, displacement, exclusion and



34 Broadway Market in 2009

resistance have all been played out along this one street, making it a microcosm of events occurring elsewhere in the UK and internationally. But what have been the effects of these processes – gentrification – on the local area and its community?

Media attention surrounding Broadway Market has been extensive, including reports of the occupation in both national (*The Guardian*, *The Independent*) and local press (*EASTeight* magazine, *The Hackney Gazette*), left-wing activist media (e.g. *WorkersLiberty.org*, a magazine for international working class solidarity and socialism; *Hackney Independent*, a political party and newspaper dedicated to working class community activism) and increasingly regular write-ups in the food and property sections of *The London Paper*, *Time Out* and lifestyle sections of national weekend supplements. The market has even generated its own fanzine, 'The Eel' and a documentary has been made about the battle.

The role of the Council

The role of Hackney Council in the gentrification of Broadway Market has reached near mythical status. Any mention of the council to those involved with the market immediately produces outbursts of rage: corruption and incompetence being the most frequent of allegations. But what is the truth behind these stereotypes and what role have the council played, if any, in the last two decades at Broadway Market?

The unique high-end consumption landscape of the Saturday market was created with no direct involvement from Hackney Council. They had attempted, but failed, on a number of occasions to establish a street market of various kinds prior to the establishment of the current Saturday market. A flower market lasted only a number of weeks, along with another equally unsuccessful arts and crafts market. When the current Saturday market was established by the BMTRA, it was in the face of heavy Council opposition. Andrew Boff, a local politician and member of the BMTRA recalls how:

the council were embarrassed as they were not able to do the job themselves, and consequently tried to both take over the market and then shut it down.

Whilst commercial space of the Saturday market was not strategically produced by the council, the upgrading of a number of the permanent commercial spaces of the street has been made possible through their intervention. The premises from which Spirit was evicted in November, for example (an eviction that was driven directly by local government policy) has subsequently opened as an up-market fishmongers. It is clear then that Hackney Council, to some extent, had a vision to regenerate the market, a desire to create a new brand and identity in support of their future vision of Hackney as an upmarket destination. Hackney Council may thus be viewed as a catalyst for the upgrading of the street.

Interviews revealed how the struggle between the council to impose its view on the landscape and resistance from local residents is not an exclusively contemporary phenomenon. Bob Cooke, a local shop owner, recalled that in the late 1960s the council put a compulsory purchase order on a block of houses toward the southern end of the street, including his father's (now his own) shop, with the aim to replace these (now highly desirable) historic properties with modern housing estates. This prompted the formation of the BMTRA, (initially the Broadway Market Action Group) as a conservation group who campaigned to protect the street from demolition. The Broadway Action Group was successful, with the purchase being lifted around 1973-4.

What might explain the failure of Hackney Council to act in a sufficiently imaginative, proactive and entrepreneurial manner and fail to establish a successful new street market? How might this relate to changing structures of governance in the wider London region? Hackney Council is currently a Labour-governed borough, both its parliamentary constituencies are represented by Labour MPs, and the borough has been in Labour's control for the majority of its existence (since 1965). During the 1990s the Borough underwent a period of changing coalitions, including the transition to New Labour. How might this have affected the policy agenda with regards to gentrification? New Labour's acceptance of neo-liberal economic policy and free-market attitude may have been a factor in wider government policy discourse's acceptance of and promotion of gentrification as social policy. This was also the period between the abolition of the Greater London Council in 1985 and the creation of the Mayor of London in 1999, when planning powers were devolved to the London boroughs. This period is often characterised as one of fragmentation and decline of effective strategic planning. Yet Raco and Henderson argue that despite the emergence of the London mayor and associated reforms to the planning and local government systems, the importance of local

authorities in regeneration schemes is as important as ever.⁷

The Broadway neighbourhood today

Into what socio-economic context has this market been established? Broadway Market lies in the Queensbridge ward of the London borough of Hackney. Compared to Hackney averages, Queensbridge ward has a higher proportion of black residents and over 40 per cent of the ward is of a non-white ethnic background.⁸ Socially, 23 per cent of the ward's population reside in the lowest social stratum classified by the 2001 census (band E: state benefits/unemployed) and 19 per cent in the second lowest stratum (band D: semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers). Compared to a national average, this is an unusually high proportion residing in the lowest bands. 31 per cent of the working population (aged 16-74) have no qualifications and 58 per cent of housing is rented from either the council or a housing association, a much greater proportion than both the London and national average.⁹ The majority of this social housing is located in the 20th century housing estates that surround Broadway Market.

Economic activity rates in Hackney are lower than the national average, and even lower in Queensbridge than the Hackney average. In 2001, less than half the residents of working age were in employment, and residents' health was also worse than the Hackney average. The 2007 English Indices for Deprivation ranks Hackney as the most deprived local authority area in England, and the 2001 census statistics indicate that Queensbridge ward is poorer and more deprived than the borough average. The Index of Multiple Deprivation, calculated by the Department for Communities and Local Government, gauges levels of deprivation across a number of variables including employment, health, crime and education. Much of Hackney falls into 'super output areas' (SOAs) that are classified among the 20 per cent most deprived in the country. Seven SOAs make up the Queensbridge Ward, which itself is ranked as

the 19th (of over 600) most deprived ward in London (Hackney Council, 2004). Yet despite these statistics that indicate the deprivation and poverty of both Hackney and Queensbridge Ward, house prices over the last 10-15 years have risen steeply. The table (right) shows the rise for the Borough.

Property prices per square metre rose by 320 per cent between 1996 and 2006 in Hackney, the biggest rise in London.¹⁰ In 2002 median house prices in Hackney were in line with the London average, and well above the national equivalent. Despite the dominance of social housing, house prices in the ward are generally higher than the Hackney average.

These statistics present something of a paradox. One of the poorest and most deprived wards in Hackney contains some of the highest house prices in the borough. Furthermore, it plays host to one of the most expensive markets and some of the most exclusive boutiques in this area of London. As a landscape, Broadway Market corresponds closely to what Berry has termed 'islands of renewal in seas of decay'.¹¹ Given this paradox, in what ways has Broadway Market been represented over the last 10-15 years and how is the street portrayed today? The following section will analyse media narratives and perceptions of the market in order to determine how they have encouraged the development of this new cultural landscape.

The power of the media

Media coverage of Broadway Market from the early 1990s is sparse and focussed predominantly on crime. Reports included an armed robbery at the local post office and gun crime.¹² A description from 1994 of the market reads:

Broadway Market in Hackney is a bleak street. The stark outlines of high-rise blocks loom over its rooftops. Some of the shop windows are boarded up, others covered with steel grilles.¹³

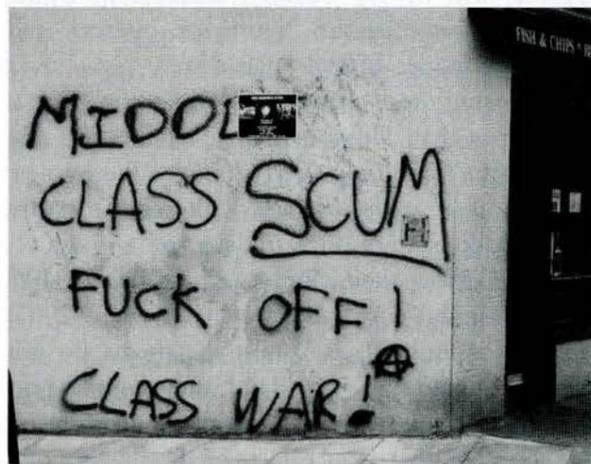
Median house price indicators, 2002	Queens-bridge	Hackney	London	England and Wales
Flats	£166,250	£160,000	£160,000	£111,000
Terraced	£270,000	£250,000	£180,000	£80,000
All dwellings	£186,250	£180,000	£181,000	£110,000

The area was portrayed as an unlikely tourist attraction and 'sadly dying area'.¹⁴ Yet during this period the media became increasingly aware of the Dove, a pub on Broadway Market. Apparently 'putting its violent past behind it'¹⁵ the Dove was renovated and re-branded (including a name change from the Goring Arms) focussing on speciality Belgian beer. As one commentator noted 'The pub could have been designed with Guardian readers in mind'.¹⁶ The Dove quickly became popular with a trendy middle-class crowd, a cultural attractor on a street that was still perceived as run-down and dangerous. 'Pub of the Year' in 1996, well before Broadway Market began to receive much mainstream positive media attention, the Dove was fundamental to the re-imagining and re-imagining of Broadway Market for a new socio-economic group.

By the turn of the century, more shop fronts were renovated, more boutiques opened and more newspaper lifestyle pages were given over to endorsing these changes. By 2006 articles such as 'Hipper than Hoxton: why Haggerston is the place to be' (*The Independent*, 2006), 'Where to be truly cool' (*Evening Standard*, 2006) and 'Scruffy street markets were once the sign of a down-at-heel area. Now their vibrant, ethnic buzz marks out a desirable location' (*Mail On Sunday*, 2007) became commonplace. Whilst the media do not cause an upgrading of this kind, they capitalise on it for their own gain¹⁷ and are often unaware of the consequential social effects of the changes that they endorse.

Today, Broadway Market is portrayed for its cool lifestyle image of cultural consumption. The Cat and Mutton and Dove pubs, for example, are referred to as the hangouts of choice for 'hipsters', or 'good-looking Hackney locals'.¹⁸ The market is represented as a 'hotspot for trendsetters and celebrities',¹⁹ where a 'multicultural melee... shares the bustle with the preening punters who use the market as an impromptu catwalk'.²⁰ An article subtitled 'East London Rocks' declares that at the Cat and Mutton pub, 'the boys look better than the girls but the girls still look good'.²¹ Endorsements from celebrities and artists, informing the public that Broadway Market is 'the place to be'²² adds to the re-imagining of this destination, bolstering its new sense of place, but also creating a discursive space that draws curious consumers, eager to involve themselves in this desirable lifestyle image and 'local community'. What is most revealing about this analysis is the speed with which the imaginations and perceptions of the area have shifted. The badly paved street is no longer inefficient for traffic, but cool. The danger and seediness of the street that kept so many away is no longer ugly, but authentic.

One commentator notes how the 'community's sense of stability, and more wholesome side, comes from the families flocking to the... Victorian

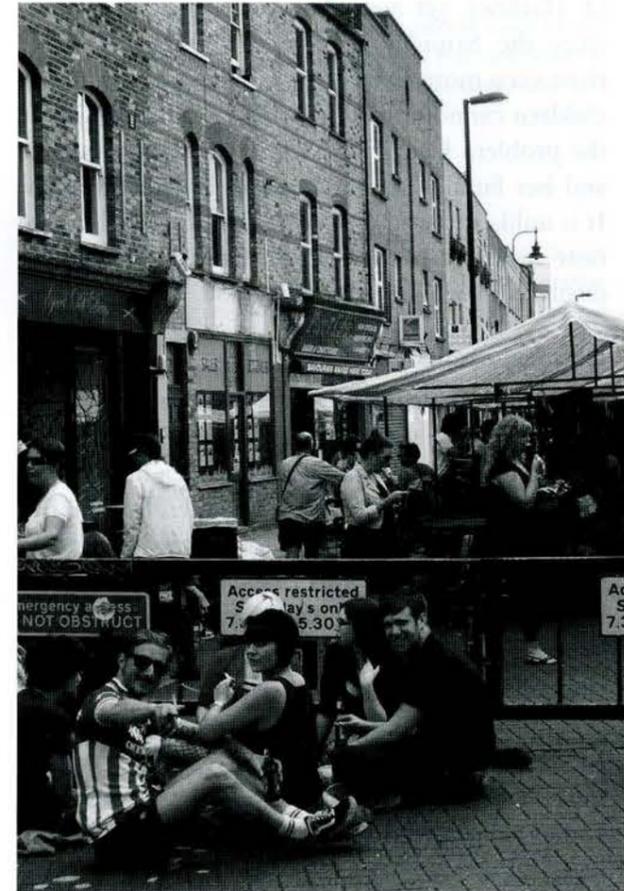


Graffiti in Broadway Market. 1982

houses...worth £100,000 more than six years ago'.²³ This uncritical reference to the processes causing so much local anxiety is common to many media narratives, and these discursive representations appear to celebrate the gentrification process. A feature in the *London Paper* notes how 'all the locals know Spirit',²⁴ yet fails to mention his eviction. The common thread is a celebration of the new cultural landscape combined with a lack of awareness of underlying social processes, which themselves were so prevalent in the media only a few years ago. Furthermore, embodied in such representations is the notion that what makes this area desirable is its gritty urban edge. Yet this 'edge' is not to be participated in, but observed and consumed. As the owner of the now heavily gentrified Cat and Mutton pub commented, 'The White Lightning brigade have not entirely disappeared'.²⁵

At the same time as the street was becoming increasingly well-known among the affluent middle-classes, a different opinion was beginning to surface, as this piece of graffiti (left) from the market shows.

As detailed previously, the occupation of Tony Platia's café received much media attention and local support. Despite intense coverage at the time, interest in the community resistance appears to have faded, much like the occupation itself. The media, at first leaping upon the occupation, then romanticising its community spirit, finally appear to have helped in forming a collective amnesia about this important event. Why might this have happened? Could the hype surrounding the occupation have been little more than an opportunity to promote an up-and coming area rather than a real interest in the plight of Platia or any real commitment to social justice? To what extent may the occupation have been part of the wider gritty aesthetics of the inner city urban environment and simply a factor in protesters search for authenticity? Focus will now turn to the negative effects of gentrification at Broadway Market in attempt to answer these questions.



Outside the Cat and Mutton, 2009

Landscapes of exclusion

In order to explore the different ways in which Broadway Market and the Saturday market contribute to social exclusion and displacement, three contrasting perceptions of the effects of the regeneration will first be outlined. Three local businessmen were interviewed because they had all witnessed the decline and re-birth of the market first hand. Newest to the area, the proprietor of Bradbury's hardware store expresses an overwhelmingly positive attitude to the regeneration of the market. Having moved to England from India as a young man, relocating to Broadway Market in the late 1980s, he now believes that

to live anywhere in the UK, this is the best place to live! Its such a good community here, this like small village.

The second businessman, owner of a traditional pie and mash shop, himself born in Broadway Market, offers a much less celebratory outlook. He believes that it is good to see the market busy again, but that he, personally, has reaped no benefit from the regeneration. His trade has declined heavily over the years, and unlike others businesses on the market, has not seen an improvement since the establishment of the Saturday market and the crowds that it draws:

To be honest, I'm resigned to the fact. Things move on.

The third businessman, owner of Tidbury's butchers, a fixture on the street for over 60 years, has a mixed view of the change. Whilst believing that overall there has been a good improvement, and whilst his business has improved, especially on Saturdays, he is disillusioned by the nature of the people using the market and the way that it is used. Recalling how busy the market was when it first opened, the abundance of cafes and bars appears to be an issue with many long-term residents:

People come up here now to get something to eat ... everyone is walking around eating!

It is clear then that the effects of the gentrification of the area and the regeneration of the street market are highly subjective. Opinion depends on individual experience. Yet even those with an overwhelmingly positive view of the regeneration on the market recognise that there have been a number of negative consequences. The first of these is the nature of the produce for sale at the Saturday market. When established, it was not the aim to provide a cheap food market. The BMTRA did not want to challenge Ridley Road, but focused instead on quality, speciality and variety. But others argue that this is unjust:

If you're talking about elderly people, they've gotta get on a bus. Why should they have to travel just to get affordable food? Why can't they get it here?

Economic exclusion

In 2005, the *Hackney Independent* conducted a survey of these estates in order to gauge residents' opinion about the new Saturday market. 100 households were questioned from the Whiston and Goldsmiths estates. The results showed that whilst most residents were glad to see some activity in the market, 93 per cent thought the market was too expensive and 83 per cent that the market was not aimed at them.²⁶ Many of the local businessmen recalled how their customers from the local estates regularly complain to them about the prices on the market, particularly in the last 18 months. Louise Brewood, the founder of the Saturday market and its manager for many years, ensured that stallholders charged only what their food was worth. She challenged them on their prices and sometimes forced them down. Louise no longer manages the Saturday market and believes that this regulation has now been lost. Complaints about the cost of the market are now being made not just from estate residents, but also from well-off shoppers, as one businessman pointed out:

Even the well-to-do shoppers are complaining that it's too expensive now – not that they can't afford it, but that it's no longer value for money.

Asking a member of the *Hackney Independent* about the local benefits of the market, the response was blunt:

The market is of no benefit to the local area... it benefits the pockets of the stallholders who on other days could be anywhere else in the south of England at a similar market.

The extent to which the Saturday market has economically regenerated the Broadway neighbourhood, the key strategic mission of the BMTRA, is thus questionable and dependent on a subjective definition of economic regeneration. How have the wider economic effects of the market's regeneration led to exclusion and displacement? Property prices in the area rose steadily from the early 1990s in line with other parts

of Hackney, yet according to local estate agents, since the Saturday market in 2004, prices have risen even more sharply. As families grow up, their children cannot afford housing in the area. This is the problem facing the Saturday market's founder and her family; her children are in their twenties. It is unlikely that they will be able to afford to live near their mother. They will almost certainly be displaced from the neighbourhood.

Cultural exclusion

It is clear then that the Saturday market is responsible for economic exclusion of many of the local residents of the Broadway neighbourhood and especially those from the council estates. But the cultural exclusion of the Saturday market is also a serious problem. As the estate survey revealed, residents felt that the market was not something that they could participate in. Culturally, the consumption practices of a farmers' market, the artisanal, pretentious and elitist nature of the food for example (a common example given is the stall that sells over thirty varieties of olive oil), compared to a traditional street market, are great:

Where are the elements that are not part of organic food or retro clothes? I don't think at all that it's a representative market of the area.

Hackney Independent's survey also questioned a number of shoppers on the market, concluding that the market was populated by 'a new breed of rich, self-interested young professionals...[with] no idea that the area is becoming divided'.

Both what the Saturday market sells and the way that the space is used are culturally exclusionary. Hackney has long been a destination for middle class Bohemians seeking alternative lifestyles. But those who have lived there since before the regeneration of the street market notice the distinct social change that has accompanied the latest wave of gentrification:

There have always been middle class people living in Hackney. There was also interplay, so you could go to a

party and all these people would be talking together and having a universal look at the world. But now there is only exclusion, with the kind of exclusionary mind-sets that go with it.

Iain Sinclair remembers how

in the 70's there was no feeling of us versus them. It was all open, run down territory...[But today] the market services a particular community and I don't think it trickles down in any way to the people around...[They (less affluent residents)] may have better food shops, but do they want to buy olive oil? They don't. Do they want a nice looking book for twenty pounds? Probably not.

Concern over tension between different social groups is also apparent amongst local businesses. Many old customers will not come to shop on a Saturday, temporarily being excluded from their own street by the alienating conspicuous consumption of those at the Saturday market. Those not part of the market's 'performance' walk on set and find themselves threatened by what they see. Hari Kunzru, a local journalist and novelist who covered the events surrounding the occupation, believes that there is more than just a problem of social exclusion:

I think there's an almost total apartheid.²⁷

The ways in which the different spaces of the market appeal to different social groups is very apparent. Observations from the market on any day will show the subtle ways in which the different areas of the market operate for different social groups. David Panos recognises the exclusionary nature of these differences:

Something that has always fascinated me is how you can have two completely different places, where the cost of a cup of coffee might not be that different, but the way the space is coded, culturally, and all the semiotics are completely exclusionary.

The Saturday market appears not to be a place to purchase good food for the rest of the week, but a destination, a day out. A walk around the site on a

Saturday confirms this. A large proportion of stalls are selling hot food, for immediate consumption, with many people on the street eating and drinking. The market's previous manager understands this problem as simply mismanagement. Stalls are selling goods that they think will sell, including hot coffee, fresh cups of juice and 'real' beef burgers. Rather than continuing in line with the BMTRA's original mission, the Saturday market has become a meeting place, but critically, a meeting place for a certain kind of people. Just as media representations of the market pay no attention to the social realities of Queensbridge ward, neither do the market-goers:

It's not what's happening four streets away... It's quite uncomfortable walking through somewhere that is a performance zone, not anything else...no relation to the facts, geography and social history of the area.

As well as the general concern about the cultural mismatch between the market and longer-term residents of the area, there are more specific concerns about racial exclusion. Anyone visiting the street over the course of a week can witness this issue being played out. The benches situated on Benjamin Close, halfway up the market, are, during the week, a meeting place for the area's elderly Jamaican community. On a Saturday, the same space is transformed and re-coded, populated instead by a temporary street café and young students drinking beer. This temporary but periodic example of displacement of the working class indicates wider social processes at play and represents an episodic challenge to these citizens' right to their own space.

This analysis has shown that the original intentions and goals of the Saturday market, and its subsequent mismanagement, as voiced by a range of stakeholders, has resulted in the exclusion of many people from what used to be their shopping street. The Saturday market has been integral to the production of space for more affluent social groups.

Authenticity?

A number of academics have considered whether the aesthetic concept of *authenticity* might be used in order to move beyond the construct of gentrification in describing socio-spatial change. This hypothesises that educated urbanites have come to prize what they regard as 'authentic' urban life: ageing buildings, art galleries, boutiques, neighbourhood old-timers, old family-owned shops and of course high-class food markets. To what extent might the processes of gentrification at Broadway Market represent pursuit of an 'authentic' urban experience?

The Cat and Mutton pub at the London Fields end of the market appears to exploit its own rich history in a search for authenticity. The pub's website notes how it has been a fixture in the area since the 1700s, and details its history as a drinking hole for farmers bringing their livestock to market. Yet the deliberate and conscious effort to associate the current incarnation of gastro-pub with this 'authentic' history is itself a factor in the exclusionary nature of the space. A local journalist, Hari Kunzru, believes that pubs of Broadway Market are the clearest map of the area's social divide:

Cat and Mutton and Dove for the gentrifiers; Perseverance and Albion for the working classes.

The Cat and Mutton and the Dove cater exclusively for middle-class tastes. Offering speciality continental beers at three or four times the price of beer in the Albion and the Perseverance, these pubs price out less affluent local residents. The Dove, an original outpost of difference, has become a means of exclusion.²⁸ The concept of authenticity appears to have been used as a brand by these pubs, but in what ways might the new Saturday market also seek authenticity? Louise Brewood explains her rationale behind the concept of the Saturday market as being

more than just a food market. I wanted to create all the good things about the old market, which was a good street market.

Evoking a fantasy of the past, I argue that Broadway Market can be read as an exercise in pastiche, symptomatic of a nostalgia for a simpler, less complex and threatening world.²⁹ The legacy of British working-class culture,³⁰ specifically a traditional East End street-market culture, have been re-interpreted through Broadway Market, now perceived as an authentic and traditional urban space. Yet the reality provides only for the tastes of the middle classes. The Saturday market engages with the absent presence of working class communities. In doing so, the market becomes exclusionary. Street markets were egalitarian public spaces where anyone could sell anything. For those accustomed to the more traditional East End street markets, such as Hoxton market or Ridley Road, Broadway Market today feels like a 'theme-park market; a controlled market'. Others familiar with Broadway Market during its darkest days find the transformation difficult to accept, almost fantastical. Patrick Wright, for example, widely known for documenting the realities of post-war housing in Dalston, comments, with regard to the Saturday market: 'Is this real? Do these people know where they are?'³¹ Iain Sinclair, also familiar with the area through the 1980s, has a strong view of the way in which the spaces of the market are used:

It's like pretending that you are living in Cotswold landscape... There is this idea that we have wandered into a country town in France where there is a square and a bunch of food... people pretend they are in provincial France and swanning around in the country. It's a total theatre and has no reality.³²

A further example of the ways in which the Saturday market has selectively appropriated and re-imagined the past are the claims made regarding the *local* nature of the Saturday market. Sceptics question the extent to which these claims are true. Many traders come from outside the immediate area, with some trading at Portobello and Borough markets on other days. The perception that profits are ploughed back into the local community is thus, to some extent, untrue. As the *Hackney Independent* believe:

The idea is to attract people from outside the area to buy stuff that comes from outside the area. The money comes in and then goes out again. There is no benefit for local people.³³

What have been the effects of such bourgeois lifestyle choices? The BMTRA established the market in order to serve all income groups and all cultures, and to act as a catalyst of regeneration for the entire Broadway neighbourhood. Yet the 'entire Broadway neighbourhood' is dominated by social housing and populated by arguably the poorest demographic in Hackney. Far from serving all income groups and cultures, I argue that the market has served and continues to serve a partial segment of the local population. The Saturday market has acted as a cultural lever in the production and claiming of space, in doing so becoming a powerful means of displacement.

A future for Broadway Market?

One aim of this research is to reflect on the future of the market. What could be done to overcome the perceptions of nostalgia, elitism and pretension and to ensure that the distinctive character of similar markets and streets survive, but in a more socially just and inclusive way? If property prices in the area continue to rise on their pre-recession trajectory, a rise in commercial rents is inevitable. Smaller shops on the street are likely to be replaced by those that can afford higher rents. Further commercial displacement is potentially damaging for the area, as Zukin points out with reference to commercial gentrification in New York:

The arrival of chain stores in areas that had previously depended on small individually owned shops disrupts social bonds, as long-term residents must decide between shopping at the corner bodega – whose owner may offer credit – or switching to a well-stocked but impersonal supermarket. Residents may not even face a choice if... stores are replaced by new 'luxury' condos'.³⁴

Platia's café, bought by the developer Roger Wratten, now over five years ago, is to be replaced by 'new 'luxury' condos'. Currently empty, boarded up and protected by razor wire, the premises has

been granted planning approval.

But what, if anything, can be done to slow or prevent such processes from occurring? Few cities have laws that protect old store survival but they do have the power to control retail development through the planning process. Whilst local residents have the ability to oppose planning applications the effectiveness of this opposition is limited. There is an urgent need to reform public policy as it currently fails to protect local shops.

Andrew Boff, a local resident, member of the BMTRA, politician and also London Assembly member has a number of plans to pursue legislation that will prevent streets such as Broadway Market from losing their local distinctiveness. Learning from his experience with Broadway Market, he has two proposals in the pipeline. The first is a review of the London plan that would give more power to local authorities to be able to turn down applications from large developers, citing the damaging effect upon the local economy. This would involve an alteration to planning law that is currently geared towards the national economy, to allow for greater consideration of the local economy and local distinctiveness of place. The second plan is more radical, involving the proposal that local authorities should have the power to designate 'business conservation areas'. No tenant would be able to trade with more than six in their chain of business (an arbitrary number, but to prevent disrupting modest, non-corporate chains of business) thus preventing chain stores from trading within the conservation area. Without the bottomless bank accounts of the corporations, rents would be kept low thus allowing for the survival of small, distinctive businesses that are key to retaining an area's character.

This presents a conundrum. Those with the power to prevent the negative effects of gentrification, the councils, are exactly those who have been accused of promoting gentrification and implementing bland identikit regeneration schemes. Is this second

proposal radical enough? How will these changes prevent the problems of exclusion that have been uncovered by this research? To what extent might Boff's proposals ensure that a greater proportion of the *entire* community of the Broadway Market were able to participate in its consumption? These changes to planning policy may institutionalise the development of high-end boutique style consumption landscapes and the initial stages of the gentrification process, doing little to prevent the exclusionary effects. It doesn't fix the route cause as identified by this research: his plans would only affect the material landscape, not the socio-economic landscape of the people.

The gentrification of Broadway Market and the regeneration of the Saturday market have been widely hailed as a success, a new urban renaissance. I argue that this perception, in corresponding to an increasingly uncritical acceptance of gentrification in academic, journalistic and policy discourse, fails to understand the underlying social dynamics, tensions and exclusion that these processes cause and sustain. As Zukin et al. note, 'the right to the city passes through the right to shop there', but for many residents of this part of Hackney this right has been eroded. The Saturday market was established with the intention to act as a catalyst for a socially and economically *inclusive* regeneration of the area. This research has revealed that the Saturday market has acted as a catalyst for a socially and economically *exclusive* regeneration of Broadway Market.

Notes

An unabridged version of this paper, including a full bibliography and a table of interviews undertaken with local residents and traders, is deposited at Hackney Archives Department.

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The Friends of Hackney Archives

The Friends, an independent charity run by volunteers, was formed in 1985 to support the work of Hackney Archives and act as a focus for local history in Hackney, Stoke Newington and Shoreditch. Through the donations fund the Friends have purchased a wide range of archive and printed material for the local history collection, including manuscripts, estate records, playscripts, pictures and printed books, and, notably, two important collections of theatre posters.

Membership is £10 per year (£20 for overseas members). Members receive the regular newsletter *The Hackney Terrier* and (in a year when it is published) the journal *Hackney History*.

Enquiries can be addressed to the Friends of Hackney Archives c/o Hackney Archives Department. At the time of going to press the address is 43 de Beauvoir Road N1 5SQ, telephone (020) 7241 2886. The Archives will move to new premises in the spring of 2011 but the email address will remain archives@hackney.gov.uk.

Other publications

Some back numbers of *Hackney History* are still in print at £4.00 each. A list of these and their contents is available on request.

Bill Hall's three local history DVDs - *Church Street: the narrow way* (about the old centre of Hackney); *Four Hackney Houses* (about Brooke House, Balmes House, Shacklewell manor house, and Barbers Barn) and *Stoke Newington* - are £6.95 each.

Discover Stoke Newington by David Mander and Isobel Watson, and *Under Hackney: the Archaeological Story* by Keith Sugden and Kieron Tyler are £4.95. The leaflets *Discover De Beauvoir Town* and *Historic Hackney: a walk from Hackney Central Station* are also available at £1 each.

Please check the website (www.hackney.gov.uk/archives) or contact Hackney Archives Department as above for availability and postage.