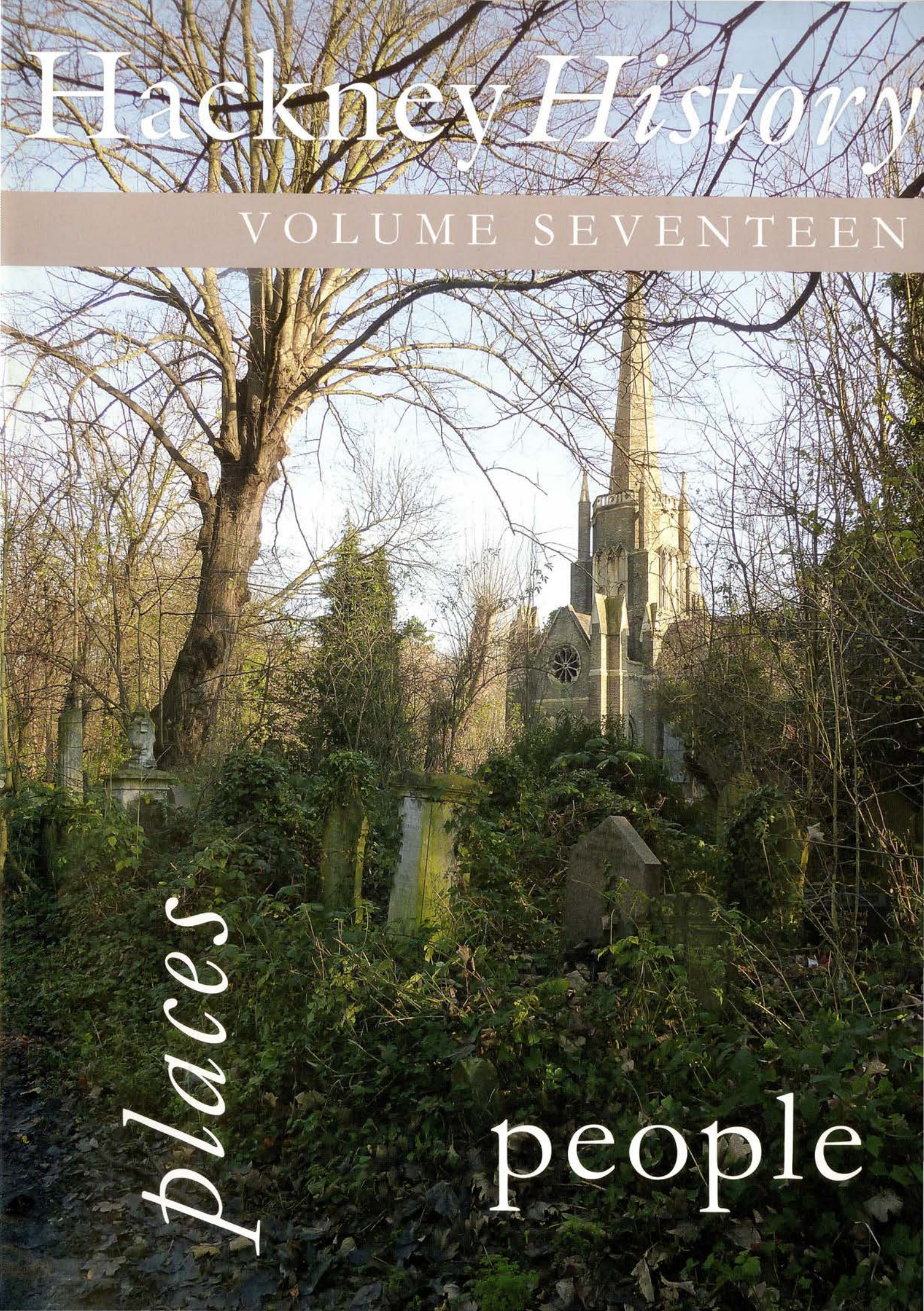
Hackney History

VOLUME SEVENTEEN



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Hackney *History*

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- a Victorian doctor with controversial views
- the mysterious disappearance of a Lower Clapton clergyman
- decoding the burial registers for Abney Park
- buried treasure and the story of the family who buried it

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THE FRIENDS OF HACKNEY ARCHIVES

Hackney *History*

volume seventeen

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THE FRIENDS OF HACKNEY ARCHIVES
2013

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Abbreviations used in notes in this volume

HAD	Hackney Archives Department
LMA	London Metropolitan Archives

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Stamped with their private stamps:

the tokens of the 17th century

Robert H. Thompson

Introduction

The intention in this article is to indicate what is known about 17th century tokens, and why historians of them must largely manage without primary documents. The completion of a 35 year project to catalogue, in the *Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles,* the tokens in the Norweb Collection of Cleveland, Ohio, USA, provides the occasion. Part VIII of the *Sylloge*, Middlesex and Uncertain pieces, includes Hackney.[1]

William Robinson introduced his history of Hackney with high-flown language reminiscent of Dr Johnson: 'The author has some gratification to reflect that he has not passed uselessly through the world... that his labour has preserved some ancient memoranda of Hackney as it was in the olden time', and 'In order to make the present account of Hackney as useful as he could... he has given some account [amongst other monuments] of coins, tokens, &c'. However, as a document-based historian he was puzzled by tokens, while acknowledging that some of them were of 'interesting design and elegant execution':

> The tradesmen of Hackney in the seventeenth century... had their Tokens; but it does not appear that there was any particular design in these tokens, other than perhaps to extend their connexions, or to encourage good feeling.

It is clear from the context that the meaning of this second 'design' is purpose, aim, or intention.[2]

Small change

In the 16th century tradesmen began to supply a need neglected by the Royal Mint through issuing tokens in lead.[3] By the reign of James I these had become essential for the conduct of petty retail transactions, at any rate in London, but the King, describing them as 'some derogation to Our Prerogative Royall', prohibited them, and granted a patent for the coinage of farthings in copper to John, Baron Harington of Exton.[4] These royal farthing tokens continued under successive patent holders until 1645, when the remaining stock was to be melted.[5]

However, some kind of small change had become indispensable. Lead tokens continued, and tokens of a new kind appeared, issued mainly by private tradesmen. The earliest were dated 1648, which in modern reckoning probably means 1649 after 30 January, when Charles I was beheaded, so that the royal prerogative over coinage was extinguished, and before the end of the Old Style year on 24 March.[6] One or two of those 1648-dated tokens were issued at the King's Head in Tower Street, by the main exit from the Tower of London where the tokens of the main series were minted, so that the note by Browne Willis MP (1682-1760) that 'This is the first ever coined' may well be correct, even though not recorded until c. 1740.[7]

After the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660 there was much discussion of the need for small change, but nothing was done until 1672, when *A Proclamation For making Currant His Majesties Farthings & Half-pence of Copper, And Forbidding all others to be Used* admitted that several persons and corporations had presumed to cause 'certain pieces of Brass, Copper, and other Base Mettals to be stamped with their private stamps; and then imposed those pieces upon Our poor Subjects for Pence, Half-pence, or Farthings'.[8] Some embarrassment at this may be detected in the choice of the type of Britannia for His Majesty's farthings and halfpence, as a reminder that the Romans had brass money.

Though 'Copper be Foraign, and Tin a Native Commodity', copper was recognised by Sir William Petty FRS (1623-1687, political economist and writer on the subject of money) to be the best for base metal coinage, as the most durable and inimitable.[9] Some tokens are of brass, and analyses have shown that even tokens appearing to be of copper are actually low-zinc brass.[10] Occasionally, as for the mayor of Oxford and certain London tradesmen, pieces are denominated **TOKEN**, a term explained in 1644 as 'not the name of any lawfull coyne or money, but onely a token, or an acknowledgment, that the partie which payes it out, gives it onely as a token... to be ready and willing at all times to take it againe'.[11] Nevertheless, money may be defined as what is commonly offered or received for the purchase or sale of goods, services or other things, so for the practical purposes of most people tokens *de facto* were money.[12]

In 1665 (when plague was approaching) the master of the Cock ale-house at Temple Bar shut up his house, and advertised that 'all persons whatsoever, who have any Accompts with the said Master, or Farthings belonging to the said house, are desired to repair thither before the 8th of this instant July, and they shall receive satisfaction'.[13] A willingness to redeem their tokens appears also in the promise by Lawrence Righton of Dorchester to re-take 'a Certaine Brasse Coine... att ye same rate he now passeth them, being halfe pence' in case they be put down; in such legends as **THIS FARTHING WIL BE OWN'D | IN TETBVRY**; in the Winchester proclamation of 'brasse Halfe-pence and Farthings [which] this Citty shall exchange... for current money of England'; and in the bond that Thomas Walters of Youghal 'shall from time to time as often as thereunto desired by any person or persons to exchang the said tookens or pence, and such his exchange to be sterlinge money'.[14] The problems caused by this privatised money may be illustrated from Lincoln in 1669:[15]

> Whereas by the multiplicity of halfpennies and farthings of many several stamps uttered, paid out, and spread abroad by several particular tradesmen and private persons within this city (for private profit and gain), the citizens and inhabitants... are at much loss and trouble by their receiving halfpence and farthings of so many several stamps that they cannot without much trouble distinguish the owners... nor sort them in such manner as to send them to the owners to change, and after all that pains and trouble many times cannot have them changed..., and sometimes the owners do absolutely refuse to change the same, and some persons that have put forth such farthings are since dead or removed far from this city...

Thus, tokens were issued across England, Wales, and Ireland (where tokens are dated as late as 1679), also on the Isle of Man where Tynwald in 1679 ordered that

> no copper or brass money... shall pass... but that the said [brass money called Jno. Murrey's pence]... may still pass;[16]

although not in Scotland with its distinct monetary system, except that pieces issued in Edinburgh by Sir William Dick of Braid (d. 1655) were 'allowed to be current amongst his Colliers and Salt-Makers'.[17] The number of places bearing similar names means that re-attributions continue to be made on the evidence of finds and the documentation of issuers, but there is a clear correlation of token-issuing with market towns, and therefore with a quickening trade and commerce.[18]

Grocers and vintners were prominent among token-issuers, doubtless because they worked at a common

interface between supplies of small coin ready for payment at short notice, and large numbers of manual labourers not otherwise provided with small change. Hence the tokens were associated with 'every Tavern and Tippling-House (in the days of late Anarchy among us)'.[19] Coffee-house keepers are also in evidence amongst token-issuers, one of whom advertised in 1658 the novelty of the drink called *Tcha* [tea].[20] There is a great variety of retail trades represented, however.

Manufacture

Tokens of the period 1649-72, except for a small number from engraved dies, were struck with dies sunk from letter and pictorial punches. Use of such dies required more force than could be delivered by hand, and surviving dies were designed for use in a screw press.[21] This places their production in an established mint, which for England and Wales implicates the Tower of London, where David Ramage (d. 1661) was 'Farthing-maker'.[22] For Ireland some tokens were struck in Dublin and Waterford.[23] A prudent issuer like the City of Norwich, when ordering farthings in 1667 through its Member of Parliament, might request him to 'take care that the stamp of the said farthings be sent down',[24] but the small number of surviving dies suggests that this option was exercised rarely, and that dies retained after an initial order were stored at the Tower of London. Any dies surviving there until 1851, when minting was nationalised, were doubtless destroyed like the moneyers' archive, which (according to tradition within the Royal Mint) was taken home by their last provost Sir Jasper Atkinson, and burned in his grate.[25]

Further research, once local records of issuing corporations have been exhausted, is likely to be archaeological. Occasionally records survive of exceptional arrangements like the Subscribers of Shaftesbury.[26] There may be incidental references, as in the diary note by William Dugdale, Norroy King of Arms, that 'John Salmon, of Chester, maketh brass pence wth Armes upon them (3 salmons) to disclayme him'.[27] Some issuers were indicted for setting out 'farthings & halfepence without any authority, to the great aggrivance of the Cittizens', as so far found for Herefordshire and Wiltshire.[28] One charge was that the tokens were too light, e.g. Simon Rolfe, clothier of Salisbury, was indicted for striking halfpennies of which four were worth only one penny. Individual weights vary greatly, even for die-duplicates, yet the City of Gloucester ordered farthings in 1669 which were to be 'of the full weight of a Bristoll farthing'.[29] It appears that any specification would have been of a minimum weight.[30]

The tokens themselves are consequently the principal source of information. The catalogue by Williamson is very out-of-date; a helpful summary by Dickinson is itself in need of revision; the completed Norweb sylloges provide illustrations, technical details, and documentation where available, but they are by definition confined to a single (though very comprehensive) collection.[31]

The devices chosen by individual token-issuers often represented their trade by means of the arms of the relevant London livery company, and not (where distinguishable) of a local company, e.g. John Collibeer in Exeter put on his token the arms of the Worshipful Company of Weavers of London, and not the arms of the Weavers and Fullers of Exeter.[32] Many family arms seem to have been authentic, e.g. Gervis Maplisden of Maidstone, whose undated halfpenny bore the arms of Maplesden, appeared at the 1663-8 Heraldic Visitation of Kent; and Gideon Hayne, merchant of Trim in Ireland, with a token bearing the full achievement of Hayne of Dorchester, had been recorded at the age of five in the 1623 Visitation of Dorset.[33] On the other hand, Simon Rolfe in Salisbury put elaborately-mantled arms on his 1666 halfpenny, yet when his son Samuel Rolfe, Merchant Taylor, appeared at the 1687 Visitation of London, the verdict was 'No Arms produced, and no Ped[igree] to be found in any of the late Visitations of Wilts.'[34]

Hackney tokens in the Sylloge

From about 1667 circular tokens were varied with octagonal (9456), heart-shaped (8152), and square (8153) flans, all three from Hoxton. These are sometimes seen as a 'gimmick' to shore up a manufacturing business past its peak; but another possibility is that increased activity by informers such as John Garill induced the moneyers to offer, and issuers to accept, a more obvious means to distinguish their tokens from coin of the realm.[35]

Publication of the Norweb Collection now covers Hackney, so avoiding the need to repeat illustrations, but further information may be advisable.[36] 'Sylloge' was a term revived for a type of catalogue which did not aim to be complete for a series but concentrated

on individual collections, much more practical for coins which circulated widely, are collected worldwide, and continue to be discovered. The final volume of Norweb tokens is devoted to Middlesex outside the City of London, and, because it was a work in progress right to the last, the arrangement is less than ideal.

Thus, of many places called HOG LANE, the one on the border of Finsbury and Shoreditch, part of which became Worship Street, was presumably the location of John BAVET with a rare surname and an undated token **(left)** bearing wife's initial A, for there is a Prerogative Court of Canterbury will of 1675 for John Bavitt, St Leonard Shoreditch, weaver, whose wife was called Ann (Norweb 9455). The correction of John Clark's octagonal token reading HOGSDON [Hoxton] from a supposed HODSDON has been published separately (Norweb 9456).[37] There is a lozenge-shaped piece naming Andrew | Tucker | 1669, obverse a Sea-horse, of which one specimen was found in Hoxton, but there is no trace of a person of that name locally, whereas sea-horses occur in the arms of Tucker of Exeter (Norweb 9354).

Local examples

Otherwise the arrangement should be straightforward: Shoreditch 8148-8163; Clapton 9116; Hackney 9135-43; Kingsland 9217; Mare Street 9218; Newington Green 9222; Stoke Newington 9244. Possible additions would be from COCK LANE (one such lane was on the Bethnal Green and Shoreditch border): Robert Greene, 1656, Richard Norman, baker, and Joseph Ward (Norweb 9285-7); and from NEWINGTON, Lawrence Short (Norweb 9298).

Significant pieces are: 8148 THE COCK AT COCK around a Cock, rev. LANE END IN SHORDICH around A|TG, unfortunately worn but there is a better specimen in the British Museum; this confirms the existence of what the English Place-Name Society could only guess at, that the Cock was the sign of an inn [or rather, a tavern]. Other signs may be named as follows, in brackets where inferred from the device, with a query where identity is uncertain.

8149 Holywell Court: [Ensign?]: Waker, Edward, wife M.

8150 **(above)** Holywell Lane: [Lion]: Bannister, Edmond, 1668; born 1630, Cordwainer (shoemaker) and Master of the Cordwainers' Company in 1691; married in 1666 as his second wife Elizabeth Crofts, whose initial is on the token.

8151 **(above)** Hoxton: [Sun]: King, Margaret, 1668.

8152 Hoxton: [Feathers]: Phillips, Grace; heart-shaped.

8153 Hoxton: White House: Tanner, Ezekiel, 1668, perhaps the man of that name born 1635 in the parish of St Bartholomew by the Exchange, and married in St Vedast in 1663; by 1894 the White House was part of Hoxton House Asylum; square.

8154 Long Alley: [Star]: Fulwood, Mary.

8155 Long Alley: [Three Tuns]: Greenehill, John, 1671.

8156 Long Alley: [Baker's Peel & Scales]: Leawood, Thomas, baker.

8157 Long Alley: Three Horseshoes: M., W. & T. Spelled AT THE 3 HORS SHOWES.

8158 **(above)** Shoreditch: [Bear]: Gateley, Thomas, 1664, wife A.

8159 Shoreditch: [Gridiron]: Parson, John, 1668.

8160 Shoreditch: Crown: S., N. & L.

8161 Shoreditch: Falcon: E., J. & S.

8162 Shoreditch: Jane Shore: WILLIAM GILLAM AT THE around two persons standing side by side holding hands, on the left Jane Shore, on the right in cloak and hat [King Edward IV]; rev. IEAN SHORE IN SHORDICH around HIS|HALFE|PENNY. Elizabeth [Jane] Shore, mistress of Edward IV, died 1526-7(?); administration for William Gillom 1670.

8163 Shoreditch: Rose & Crown: P., S., 1652.

9116 Clapton: Flower-de-luce: G., J. & J. 'Flower-de-luce' is an obsolete form of 'fleur-de-lis'.

9135-6 Hackney: Davis, John & E[lizabeth?], 1667; 'weaver' in 1691 will.

9137 Hackney: Perry, William, 1669; wife L.; presumably the William Perry with four hearths in Little Homerton, 1674.

9138 Hackney: [Lamb]: Procter, William, brewer; wife S.

9139 **(left)** Hackney: Green [Man]: Braine, John, 1667. John Brain was married in 1666; churchwarden in 1686; will of John Brayne, victualler, proved in 1692.

9140-1 **(above)** Hackney: Mermaid tavern: P[eppiatt], J[ohn] & M[ary]. John Peppiatt was apprenticed a Vintner in 1633; Mary was buried 1655, and John senior in 1669.

9142 Hackney: [Pie?] tavern: B., T. & A., 1651. The device hitherto was called a cock, but it is from the same punch as the next, so most likely it was intended to be a Pie, otherwise a magpie.

9143 Hackney: Pie tavern: C., J. & H., 1656; see also 9142 above.

9217 **(above)** Kingsland: [Checkers]: Perry, John, 1663; wife E.; 3 hearths, 1674.

9218 Mare Street: White [Hart]: Nickolls, Ann, 1668. Widow Nicholls had 3 hearths in 1674.

9222 Newington Green: [Salutation]: IOHN BALL AT THE BOARDED around two gentlemen saluting each other, reverse HOVSE NEERE NEWINGTON GREEN around HIS|PENNY. Once I wondered whether this might be a boarding house, or floor-boarded, even a bawdy house, but the late Stan Tongue, borough archivist, put me right: it must mean weatherboarded ('clapboarded' in the USA). The English Place-Name Society and others associate Balls Pond Road with John Ball, but the administration of his estate took place in 1682, whereas a Thomas Ball was there in 1645, and in 1663 Ann Ball occupied a house with no fewer than 16 hearths. Thus the name seems to be earlier than John,

and perhaps the physical survival of his token misled commentators.

9244 Stoke Newington: Wells, Thomas, chandler, 1668; wife M[ary]. He was apprenticed an Apothecary in 1661, and buried in 1704. Reattributed from Newington (Butts), Surrey.[38]

9455 Hog Lane: [Horse & Dog?]: Bavet, John & A[nn]; Weaver, as mentioned above.

9456 Hoxton: [Two Brewers?]: Clark, John, 1668; octagonal.

Incident in Shoreditch High Street

In Part III of the *Sylloge* of Norweb Tokens (1992) we published the following under Huntingdonshire because the identity of the first-named place was uncertain:

THO: IOHNSON OF INFEILD around a crowned rose [i.e. Rose & Crown],

reverse AND S[T] IVES HIS HALF PENY around the Poulters' [i.e. Poulterers'] arms.

We suggested that the first-named place be identified as Enfield, lying just off the London to Berwick road which also passed through Huntingdon, and where there was a Rose & Crown by 1690-98. This seemed reasonable, but with such a common personal name, unproven, although a specimen found in Lincolnshire helped to re-direct it from St Ives in Cornwall. However, in 1999 our good friend Gary Oddie questioned the Enfield attribution because the distance between the two localities is two Standard Deviations beyond the mean distance of 27.4km for tokens associated with more than one locality; though non-scientists may question the relevance of this to human actions. The issuer could have been the Thomas Johnson made free of the Poulters' Company in 1658, and he might well have been the Thomas Johnson of St Ives who stated in 1662 that he was often entrusted to receive goods sent from King's Lynn for transmission to London, and the 'Mr Johnson' who in 1696 presented a petition of the 'Northern' carriers against one Littlehale, who pretended to be a Surveyor of the Highways, and was demanding protection money from the wagoners, taking their geese, turkeys and ducks without paying for them. Thomas Smith, carrier of St Ives, complained that Littlehale made him unload his pack-horses in Shoreditch, and pay £12 10s before he could have his horses and goods to go on his journey.[39] See more on the reverse of plate 53. It would be interesting to know more about Littlehale and this incident, but happily Dr Oddie now accepts that we have 'a most interesting and quite convincing argument for Enfield'.[40]

Notes

1. British Academy, Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles 31...62: The Norweb Collection... Tokens of the British Isles 1575-1750, Part I [–VIII], by R. H. Thompson and (from Part III) M. J. Dickinson (1984-2011). Part VIII: Middlesex and Uncertain pieces, with 1,617 entries on 68 plates, was published in July 2011. Abbreviations include BNJ=British Numismatic Journal; SCBI=Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles.
2. W. Robinson, *The history and antiquities of the parish of Hackney, in the county of Middlesex* (1842-3), i, vii, 32. The same words were repeated in *A short history of the London Borough of Hackney* (1967), 9, by R. P. B[ateman], borough librarian, published when the present writer was an Assistant Reference Librarian.
3. Sir R. Cotton, *Cottoni posthuma: divers choice pieces* (1651), sig. O4a-b: 'The manner and meanes how the kings of England have from time to time supported and repaired their estates, written... [1611-12]'.
4. [England & Wales, *Sovereign*]. *Stuart Royal Proclamations*, Vol. I, ed. J. F. Larkin and P. L. Hughes (Oxford, 1973), no. 128.
5. T. Everson, *The Galata guide to the farthing tokens of James I & Charles I* (Llanfyllin, 2007), p. 74.
6. G. C. Williamson, *Trade Tokens issued in the Seventeenth Century* (1889-91), Kent 183, London 91, 210, 588, 597, 730, 1418, 1539, 2162, 3220, 3304, Southwark 3, Suffolk 168.
7. R. H. Thompson, 'Central or local production of seventeenth-century tokens', *BNJ* 59 (1989), 198-211, pl. 16; J. G. Milne, 'Seventeenth-century tokens: the Browne Willis cabinet', *BNJ* 26 (1951), 333-8 (pp. 333-4).
8. *Seventeenth-century Economic Documents,* ed. Joan Thirsk and J. P. Cooper (Oxford, 1972), pp. 680-1; cf. C. W. Peck, *English Copper, Tin and Bronze Coins in the British Museum 1558-1958,* 2nd edn. (1964), 605-6.
9. R. H. Thompson and M. J. Dickinson, *SCBI 49: The Norweb... Tokens... Part VI* (1999), p. xvii. Petty's manuscript, now in the British Library (Add. MSS 72865, f. 150a), has too few minims, but one too many for *imitable* as usually printed.
10. M. B. Mitchiner et al, 'The chemical compositions of English seventeenth-century base metal coins and tokens', *BNJ* 55 (1985), 144-63.
11. *A Remedie against the Losse of the Subject by Farthing-Tokens* (1644); cf. Peck (n. 8), pp. 585-8, who gives the drop-title from page 1.
12. C. E. Challis, *Currency and the Economy in Tudor and early Stuart England* (London, 1989), p. 23.
13. *The Intelligencer,* [ed. Sir Roger L'Estrange], 5 July 1665, p. 531; *SCBI 59: The Norweb... Tokens... Part VII* (2007), pp. xi-xii, is less correct.

14. C. H. Mayo, *The Municipal Records of the Borough of Dorchester, Dorset* (Exeter, 1908), p. 511; Williamson (as n. 6), Gloucestershire 164, Hampshire 231n., *SCBI 49* (as n. 9), no. 6364 and heading.
15. Hist. MSS. Com. 37, *14th Rep. VIII, Lincoln,* pp. 105-6; cf. A. Smith, *A Catalogue of the Town and Trade Tokens of Lincolnshire issued in the Seventeenth Century* (Horncastle, 1931), pp. 25-26.
16. C. Clay, *Currency of the Isle of Man* (Douglas, 1869), pp. 54-5; J. R. Dickinson, *The Lordship of Man under the Stanleys* (Manchester, 1996), pp. 161-2.
17. R. Thoresby, *Ducatus Leodiensis...; to which is added... a Catalogue of his Museum* (1715), no. 759.
18. R. H. Thompson, 'The monetisation of the English economy as documented by seventeenth-century tokens'. In: *Actes du XIe Congrès International de Numismatique, Bruxelles, 1991* (Louvain-la-Neuve, 1993), iv. 277-89: maps.
19. J. Evelyn, *Numismata: a discourse of medals, antient and modern* (1697), p. 16.
20. K. Rogers, *Old London* (1935), p. 76, *SCBI 49* (as n. 9), p. xvi, both misprinting *Tcba* as *Teba*.
21. R. H. Thompson, 'Mechanisation at the 17th-century London mint: the testimony of tokens', *Metallurgy in Numismatics,* 3 (1993), 143-53: 2 pls., esp. 146-8.
22. Above, n. 7.
23. C. Gallagher, 'Post-Restoration Irish tokens: a documentary perspective', *British & Irish Tokens Journal,* 1 no. 1 (Aug. 1980), 11-28.
24. Williamson (as n. 6), p. 868.
25. Ex inf. Graham Dyer OBE FSA, formerly Librarian and Curator, the Royal Mint; cf. Sir J. Craig, *The Mint* (Cambridge, 1953), p. 319; M. Lewis, *Ancestors* (1966), p. 199; C. Challis, 'Hackney, Shoreditch and moneyers in the Mint', *Hackney History,* 16 (2010), 4-15 (p. 6).
26. Maureen Weinstock, *Studies in Dorset History* (Dorchester, 1953), pp. 55-62.
27. Sir William Dugdale, *The Life, Diary and Correspondence,* ed. William Hamper (1827), p. 130.
28. J. W. Lloyd, 'Herefordshire tokens of the seventeenth century', *Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club,* 16 (1900-2) 69-70, 244, 302; E. G. H. Kempson, 'Indictments for the coining of tokens in seventeenth-century Wiltshire', *BNJ* 43 (1973), 126-31.
29. R. H. Thompson, 'Gloucester Farthings, 1657-1662', *BNJ* 45 (1975), 77-91, pl. vii.
30. R. H. Thompson and Janet Gyford, 'The Witham hoard of 17th-century tokens and George Robinson the issuer', *Essex Archaeology and History,* 20 (1989), 133-42; cf. Thompson (n. 21), p. 144; R. H. Thompson, 'Edward Nourse and a farthing's worth of copper', *BNJ* 70 (2000), 147-50.
31. Williamson (as n. 6); M. Dickinson, *Seventeenth-century Tokens of the British Isles* (1986; 2004); R. H. Thompson and M. J. Dickinson, *SCBI The Norweb... Tokens... Part I–VIII* (1984-2011).
32. R. Izacke, *Remarkable Antiquities of the City of Exeter,* 2nd edn (1724), Procœmium p. 64; cf. A. C. Fox-Davies, *The Book of Public Arms,* new edn. (1915), p. 838.
33. *A Visitation of the county of Kent...* [1663-8, by Sir E. Bysshe], ed. Sir G. J. Armytage (1906), p. 105; *The Visitation of the county of Dorset taken in the year 1623, by Henry St George and Sampson Lennard,* ed. J. P. Rylands (1885), p. 54.
34. *The Visitation of London begun in 1687,* eds. T. C. Wales, C. P. Hartley (2004), p. 162. The token-issuer would have been either Simon Rolfe (d. c.1667 aged 60) or his son Simon, aged about 53 in 1687.
35. G. C. Boon, 'Harty Dvbble [DVBBLE] tokens', *Spink Numismatic Circular* 100 (1992), 345-6; Stella Greenall, 'The distribution by date and place of odd-shaped 17th-century tokens', *Newsletter–London Numismatic Club,* 7 no. 17 (Feb. 1993), 19-22; R. H. Thompson, 'Octagonal tokens from Wapping found near Shudy Camps, Cambridgeshire, and associated finds', *BNJ* 78 (2008), 258-60. A single square token is dated 1666: Norweb v.5296 = Williamson Warks.49.
36. *SCBI 62: The Norweb... Tokens... Part VIII: Middlesex and Uncertain pieces,* by R. H. Thompson and M. J. Dickinson (2011). 68 plates.
37. R. Thompson, 'Tis a mad world at Hoddesdon: John Clark's 1668 halfpenny', *Spink Numismatic Circular* 118 (2010), 6-7.
38. R. Thompson, 'A mite added to Stoke Newington's history', *Hackney Terrier* 78 (2008), 6-7.
39. House of Commons, *Journals,* 11 (1693-97), 511; reproduced in D. Gerhold, *Carriers and coachmasters* (Chichester, 2005) 52.
40. G. Oddie, 'Family arms on tokens etc' [email to R. H. Thompson, 11 December 2011].

Edward Berdoe:

a doctor with a dilemma?

2

Christopher Derrett and Denis Gibbs

Introduction

The historical stereotypes of late 19th century medicine are represented in George Bernard Shaw's play *The Doctor's Dilemma (1906).* The play includes two contrasting characters who exemplify some of the issues dividing the medical establishment at the time. Sir Colenso Ridgeon[1] is an establishment figure who endeavours to maintain the social order whilst promoting laboratory-based scientific progress: Dr Blenkinsop, a less prosperous friend from medical school, is a general practitioner in a poor area and represents the traditional, patient-centered doctor working in the community.

The subject of this biographical essay, Dr Edward Berdoe (1836-1916), was a general practitioner in Hackney and Bethnal Green for 39 years. He grew up in the age represented in Shaw's play and is more redolent of a Blenkinsop than a Rigeon. This is the story about a passionate man who like Shaw was deeply opposed to animal vivisection.

We do not know whether Berdoe felt himself to be on the horns of an ethical dilemma, but it appears his strategy of propaganda was viewed by many of his professional colleagues as misguided and disloyal to the medical establishment. His obituary, published by the *British Medical Journal* on 11 March 1916, just a few days after his death, acknowledged that he had been a man of considerable ability and wide interests but went on to record that

> His outlook was coloured by prejudice .... There is no reason to doubt his sincerity and this makes it all the more lamentable that a man of his unquestionable ability and high character should have allowed himself to be carried away by fanaticism.[2]

What had Berdoe done to receive such a damning final judgment and what had the obituarist failed to mention?

We have looked into Dr Berdoe's personal and professional life, most of which was spent in the East End.

Early career

We know little of Edward Berdoe's origins but he was born in St Pancras and may have spent time in Ireland.[3] As a boy and then a young man in London in the mid-19th century, Berdoe served an apprenticeship with a chemist and druggist, equipping him to earn his own living and become independent. By 1857 he was working as a pharmacist's assistant in Colney Hatch, Middlesex. It is a measure of his self reliance and of the confidence he had in his professional future that at the age of 21 he proposed marriage to Mary Inskipp of Hastings. She was one of six daughters of a building surveyor, Walter Inskipp.

In 1862 Berdoe enrolled as a part-time student at Regents Park College, a Baptist educational foundation,[4] and in 1864 he took the 'Major' examination of the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, which entitled him to become a member of the Society and a pharmacist proprietor. Having achieved professional recognition, Berdoe moved to Bethnal Green and took over a pharmaceutical chemist business at 511 Hackney Road, close to the junction with Mare Street. In Berdoe's time, Hackney Road was a relatively prosperous shopping thoroughfare surrounded by much poverty. Nearby businesses included a brewery, a cheesemonger, a tripe dresser, an auctioneer, a photographic artist and a perambulator manufacturer.[5]

At this time chemists and druggists sold a wide range of products including paint and petrol. Many medicines and some household products (e.g. soap) were made and/or packaged on the premises. Dentistry (teeth pulling) was also a service commonly provided at chemists' shops,[6]

Berdoe's premises in Hackney Road, still surviving, but much altered

and Berdoe learnt and practised this skill[7] which he passed on to his eldest son, who worked as his assistant.

Berdoe's original modest Victorian brick shop is still standing (above), but it has been much altered and is currently occupied by 'Gorgeous hair and nail saloon' offering a range of beauty-enhancing services.

The Berdoe family home was initially at 56 King Edward's Road, then a leafy residential street. Traces of the original house have now disappeared.

Whilst developing his pharmacy/dental practice with the help of his son and several staff,[8] Berdoe continued his studies at Regents Park College. In 1873 he took the Preliminary Arts Examination, a necessary requirement for entry to medical school,

A turn of the 20th century view of King Edward's Road: the Berdoe house was on the right, in the middle distance

and in the same year he enrolled as a medical student at the London (now the Royal London) Hospital in Whitechapel.

Medical studies

The London Hospital Medical College (LHMC) is the oldest English medical school,[9] but by the second half of the 19th century it was in direct competition with many other metropolitan colleges[10] which were trying to gentrify medical education and eradicate the stereotype of the debauched and undisciplined medical student. In an effort to remain in the educational vanguard, the London had opened new prestigious college premises in 1854[11] offering an organised programme of teaching, with assessment based on regular formal examinations. As a man with a nonconformist education and temperance tendencies, Berdoe would have viewed these innovations with approval. The school was also developing a scientifically based curriculum with an emphasis on anatomical dissection, pathology and physiology. The clinical teaching was based on bedside observation and new technical developments, notably the microscope, the ophthalmoscope, the stethoscope and antisepsis,[12] were being introduced.

During his time at 'the London', Berdoe's teachers included such luminaries as Jonathan Hutchinson (the surgeon, ophthalmologist, dermatologist and leading authority on syphilis),[13] John Hughlings Jackson (who laid down the foundations of modern neurology),[14] and Andrew Clark (a man of profound Christian faith, who later became Gladstone's doctor and President of the Royal College of Physicians).[15] A fellow-student, two years his senior, was the surgeon Frederick Treves, who took care of Joseph Merrick (the 'Elephant Man') and operated on Edward VII's life-threatening appendicitis.[16]

Berdoe would also have come under the influence of Edward Aveling, a socialist and atheist, who taught comparative anatomy at the London.[17] Aveling was a major player in the development of the intellectual socialist movement, and became the partner of Karl Marx's daughter Eleanor. He later assisted Frederick Engels in translating *Das Kapital* into English.

Berdoe was not a typical medical student; being both a mature age (37) and an independent family man. During his final year, he was awarded a hospital gold medal scholarship for 'zeal, talent and humanity',[18] worth £20, and was appointed to one of the prestigious dresserships.[19] He obtained medical and midwifery qualifications, Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries (LSA), Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh (LRCP Edin.)[20] and Licentiate in Midwifery (LM Edin.) after only three years' study. A year later he became a Member of the Royal College of Surgeons (MRCS)[21] and entered general practice. Berdoe's progress should be seen in the light of today's training for general practice which takes a minimum of nine years.

An early 20th century view of the Hackney Road. Berdoe's premises were behind the tram, on the left

In practice

An overproduction of doctors in late 19th century Britain led to overcrowding in the medical profession.[22] This did not appear to impede Edward Berdoe, who, after qualification, quickly became established as a private general practitioner working from his Hackney Road chemist shop. As was customary at this time, he took on additional appointments to supplement his income, serve poorer patients and 'protect his turf'. He was a medical referee for two life insurance companies,[23] Medical Officer for the Metropolitan Water Company, and doctor of the Provident Association, a friendly society.[24]

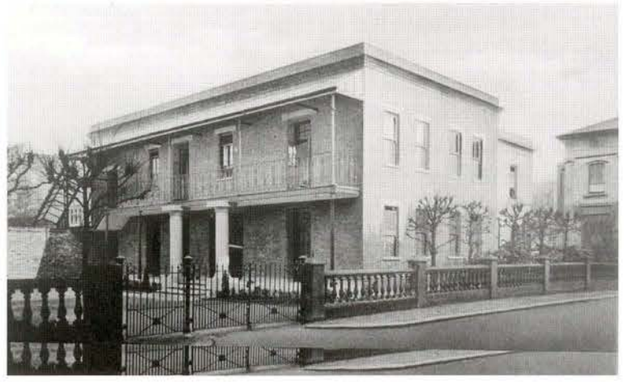
Berdoe was also a doctor to Queen Adelaide's Dispensary (QAD) located just a short distance south west of his Hackney Road premises. The QAD was one of several charitable dispensaries in east London which provided outpatient medical and dental care for poor people with chronic and infectious diseases and women and children who were not eligible for treatment at the voluntary hospitals.[25] Dispensaries provided highly-subsidised care within the community, but patients had to be recommended,[26] and not all were regarded as 'deserving'. The QAD building in Pollards Row, Bethnal Green has now been converted to private housing, but the façade remains unchanged.

In 1879 Berdoe was appointed as medical officer to the Bethnal Green Union (1st District) workhouse which was located in Waterloo Road to the south-west of Victoria Park. The Victorian poor law provided a deliberately uncomfortable 'safety net' for indigent paupers, and the Bethnal Green workhouse accommodated around 1400 inmates,[27] a high proportion of whom were elderly, frail or mentally ill. Berdoe held this appointment for 22 years, and during one year it is recorded that he saw 185 patients at the workhouse dispensary, 242 patients at their homes and had 4 midwifery cases. He was the most highly remunerated of the five medical officers and received an annual retainer of £120/year + £6-10s (£6.50) 'for lunacy work'.[28] We know that Berdoe had his own private office, as workhouse records of 1896 report that 'It was resolved that Mr Foskett be asked to tender for making a cupboard for Dr Berdoe's room'.[29]

The poor law guardians required the medical officer to live near the workhouse, and so Berdoe moved his family to Tynemouth House, 121 Bishops Road, close to what is now the Bonner gate of Victoria Park. This was a substantial residence, conveniently located across the road from the workhouse and just 5 minutes walk from Berdoe's Hackney Road surgery premises. The building was irreparably damaged by enemy bombing in World War 2.[30]

Although educated in the Baptist tradition, Berdoe embraced Roman Catholicism at some time later in

his life. In 1905 he was the first medical officer to be appointed to St Joseph's Hospice for the Dying.[31] In its early days there was no resident doctor, and the hospice was run by the Irish Sisters of Charity, who were Roman Catholics. Many of the patients were suffering from end-stage tuberculosis and care would have consisted of basic nursing and spiritual support, but the medical officers (there were four in all) regularly visited the hospice and were presumably required for the issuing of prescriptions and signing of death certificates. Berdoe is recorded as a donor to St Joseph's in the early years.[32] In his will he left a bequest of £10 to the rector of the RC Church of St John the Baptist, which has always been closely linked with the hospice[33] and where Berdoe's funeral service was eventually held.



St Joseph's Hospice in 1915

Berdoe and vivisection

In France, in the middle of the 19th century, Claude Bernard was establishing the foundations of modern physiology by experimenting on live unanaesthetised animals. This led to disquiet in Britain, to the formation of a Royal Commission and subsequently to the passage through Parliament of the Cruelty to Animals Act 1876. At this time, the general view of the medical establishment was that vivisection was necessary for scientific progress, but Berdoe and many influential lay people believed the practice was unethical and unnecessary.

In 1885 a painting *Vivisection – the last appeal* by J. McClure Hamilton was exhibited in London. The artist is believed to have been inspired by accounts of the activities of Claude Bernard.

Lines were drawn between the antivivisectionists, represented by the Victoria Street Society (later the National Antivivisection Society) and supported by celebrities such as George Bernard Shaw; and the animal experimenters, who formed the Association for the Advancement of Medicine by Research and the Physiological Society, with the support of many notable scientists of the day, including Charles Darwin. Berdoe became a medical adviser to the Victoria Street Society, and with the support of its founder, the indomitable feminist journalist Frances Power Cobb, he wrote a novel that contrived to link vivisection with the activities of the large metropolitan hospitals and medical colleges.

In 1887, Berdoe's novel, *St Bernard's: the romance of a medical student,*[34] was published under the catchy pseudonym 'Aesculapius Scalpel'. Berdoe modelled his fictitious hospital, St Bernard's, on his alma mater, the London Hospital. In the book he describes contemporary medical practices and medical training in terms that would have shocked many readers. He followed up the novel with a further book, *Dying Scientifically,* in which he wrote that 75 per cent of the novel was based on fact and only 25 per cent was fiction.[35]

St. Bernard's formed part of a genre of antivivisectionist fiction written at this time.[36] In it Berdoe not only attacked the use of live animals in physiological experiments but also criticised the system by which hospital consultants and medical students made use of charity patients as 'clinical material' for teaching and research. He also used the book to express his disapproval of alcohol, his

opposition to vaccination and to advance his views of the rights of women.

One of the darker characters is a Dr Robert Day, who is a thinly disguised depiction of Robert Knox, the disgraced anatomist from Edinburgh. Between 1827 and 1828 Knox purchased 'fresh' cadavers from the notorious murderers Burke and Hare but was not prosecuted after the case came to light. However his professional reputation was damaged irreparably, and he had to move away from Edinburgh. He lived in exile and practised medicine in Hackney until his death in 1862.[37]

The hero of Berdoe's novel is the well-heeled Harrowby Elsworth, who enters St Bernard's Hospital as a medical student. He starts his studies promisingly with worthy ambitions and impeccable lifestyle, but is led into selfish dissolute ways by his disreputable colleagues who use and abuse laboratory animals and hospital patients. Eventually Elsworth sees the light and decides to take time out doing charitable medical work overseas.

Meanwhile the author introduces the reader to a deliciously gothic physiologist/surgeon, Malthus Crowe, who, having married for money, poisons his wife with toxic fungi which he tests out first on animals and then on hapless hospital patients. Crowe's crimes are discovered by his ambitious assistant, Mr Mole, who blackmails him and succeeds in taking over his academic posts.

Crowe commits suicide, and the novel ends happily with the hero, Elsworth, falling in love with the intelligent and high principled heroine, Mildred Lee. The pair return to England to start a model 'Nightingale' hospital in east London, where scientific research is eschewed and the poor are cared for by professional nurses and doctors applying traditional medical methods.

Berdoe and Frances Cobb took a great deal of trouble to publicise *St Bernard's,* [38] and managed to get it widely reviewed. The *Morning Post* considered the novel exposed a 'picture of cruel abuses, which will have much weight with a large circle of readers'[39] whilst the *Spectator* opined that 'if this book represents, even approximately, what goes on in our great teaching hospitals, we have amongst us a monstrous iniquity'.[40] However, although the novel touched a nerve for the popular press and was reprinted several times, professional publications dismissed it as 'a gross calumny'.[41]

At this time, the income of a voluntary hospital was critically dependent on reputation. Many of Berdoe's former colleagues at the London Hospital would have regarded the publication of *St Bernard's* as a treacherous act by a gifted alumnus. Berdoe defended his actions in *Dying Scientifically,* in which he wrote

> I love my old hospital in which I passed some of the happiest years of my life. I never met with anything but the utmost kindness from everybody connected with it.[42]

Berdoe went on to edit the *Zoophilist*, the house journal of the Victoria Street Society, and to publish a number of books[43] attacking vivisection

and its proponents, notably Stephen Paget (son of the great surgeon, James) and Lord Lister.[44]

By the end of the 19th century the anti-vivisectionists were on the defensive, and unable to deny that animal experimentation was lending support to the understanding of infection and the production of vaccines for a range of infectious illnesses.[45] They also began to disagree among themselves about whether all animal experimentation was wrong, or whether some animal testing might be morally justified. In 1898, opinions in the National Antivivisection Society (NAVS) were divided about whether to oppose all animal experiments or to press for greater regulation. The resulting arguments led Frances Power Cobb to leave the NAVS to form a rival society, the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection.

Other writings

During his early years of practice, Berdoe read and admired the works of Robert Browning, a popular poet of the Victorian period.[46] Browning's writings may have stimulated Berdoe's spiritual development and influenced his thoughts about animal vivisection. In 1881 Berdoe was one of the founding members of the Browning Society. He also wrote about Browning's poetry and in 1892 published the *Browning Cyclopedia*[47] in which he attempted to explain the language of Browning to a mass audience. Despite some disparaging reviews from the more erudite press, Berdoe's *Cyclopedia* clearly appealed to many Browningites, as it went into several editions and remained in print for many years.

Another book by Berdoe was *The Origin and Growth of the Healing Art* [48] in which he tried to embrace the whole gamut of international medical history in a single volume. This proved to be rather over-ambitious, but is an indication of the author's enthusiasm and energy.

The vaccination controversy

Berdoe's career spanned the period when germ theory was being elucidated. The laboratory researches of Pasteur and Koch had questioned the traditional Victorian view that cholera, typhus and typhoid were spread by bad smells (miasmas), and the epidemiological studies of Dr John Snow had demonstrated a link between cholera and impure drinking water. By 1890, most people accepted that microorganisms were present in the bodies of patients with infectious diseases, but some, including Berdoe, were still not convinced that germs caused the diseases.

A view of Approach Road, Bethnal Green, with Sewardstone Road to the left. Berdoe's home was to the left, just out of the picture.

Although Jenner had demonstrated the value of vaccination in the prevention of smallpox more than a hundred years earlier, at the end of the 19th century there was still much debate about the religious propriety, efficacy and safety of vaccination. In east London the compulsory Vaccination Acts were unpopular. Concern was based on reports of a number of cases of blood poisoning following vaccination,[49] and also a recognition that the lymph used by public vaccinators, which was derived from the pustules of previously vaccinated paupers, was sometimes infected with syphilis.

Berdoe was a passive supporter of the anti-vaccination movement, although his opinions were not as vigorously expressed as those relating to vivisection.

Berdoe's family

Edward and Mary Berdoe were married for 45 years and had a large family, five daughters and four sons. Two of the sons died in childhood, aged two and five. His elder son, Edward Walter, trained as a dentist and assisted his father in his early years; he died at the early age of 45. A younger son, Francis, also assisted his father as a chemist's assistant, but he also died young, aged 38. Of the daughters, one, Annie, became a Roman Catholic nun and retired to a convent, and one, Julia, married a doctor. The other three daughters remained unmarried and lived at home.

Later life

Mary, Berdoe's wife, died from influenza in 1902. Her obituary records that

> a painful circumstance … was that it occurred in the absence of her husband who … owing to being very busy on account of the epidemic of illness at present prevailing, was unable to return from visiting his patients...[50]

Mary was buried in a vault in Abney Park Cemetery, in Stoke Newington, together with her two sons who had died in childhood.[51]

During the period 1902 to 1905 Edward Berdoe lost his wife and his two adult sons. He gave up his poor law practice and appears to have stopped writing. For the last 10 years of his life he had the company and support of his remaining daughters.[52]

In later life, Berdoe had also begun to suffer the late effects of childhood poliomyelitis.[53] Nevertheless, despite declining health, he continued to work as a single-handed GP into his late seventies and the early years of World War I. When he died in 1916 he was an elderly, frail individual. Berdoe was buried alone in an unmarked grave in the Roman Catholic Cemetery in Kensal Green.[54] His writings and rather fanatical propaganda had generated such ill feeling between him and the medical establishment that contemporary eulogies were muted, and as we have seen, the *British Medical Journal*'s obituary was positively hostile. There is no substantive memorial to mark the life of this remarkable, talented, energetic and obsessional man. However the campaign against animal experimentation, to which Berdoe contributed so much, remains active to this day.

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank the staff of Tower Hamlets and Hackney Archives Departments, St Joseph's Hospice and the libraries of the Royal Society of Medicine, the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, Reading University and William Shupbach of the Wellcome Library. In particular they are grateful to Jonathan Evans (Royal London Hospital Museum and Archives) and Dee Cook.

Notes

1. Shaw based the character of Rigeon on the bacteriologist Sir Almroth Wright, of St Mary's Hospital, Paddington, who developed a vaccine for typhoid fever in 1896.
2. *British Medical Journal*, i (1916), 398-399.
3. See census returns. An obituary in *The Star*, 7 March 1916, describes Berdoe as 'a genial Irish doctor'.
4. Regents Park College was located in Holford House on the north west corner of Regents Park . It later moved to Oxford and is now part of the University of Oxford. The college retains its strong links to the Baptist church.
5. Kelly's London Post Office Directory. 1867.
6. Personal communication, Royal Pharmaceutical Society library.
7. Edward Berdoe's name appeared in the first dental register and he remained on the register until his death.
8. 1871 census for 511 Hackney Road.
9. The LHMC was founded in 1785. A podcast history of the Medical College by Jonathan Evans, archivist, Royal London Hospital (RLH) is at http://www.qmul.ac.uk/media/av/podcasts/58898.mp3 (23 October 2012).
10. K. Waddington, 'Mayhem and Medical students: Image, Conduct and Control in the Victorian and Edwardian London Teaching Hospitals', *Social History of Medicine*, 15 (2002), 45.
11. A. E. Clark-Kennedy, *The London*, (1963) II, 24
12. John Couper (1835-1918), a pupil of Lister, is credited with introducing carbolic spray and dressings at the London (Jonathan Evans, RLH archives, personal communication).

13. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004), hereafter *ODNB*.
14. *ODNB*.
15. Obituary, Sir Andrew Clark, *British Medical Journal* 11 Nov 1893, 1055-1058.
16. *ODNB*.
17. Royal London Hospital Archives (hereafter RLHA), RLHA MC/A/13/1.
18. Clark-Kennedy, *The London*, II, 22.
19. RLHA, Student Register MC/S/1/5.
20. In 1876, LSA was sufficient qualification for medical registration but many able students sought the more prestigious LRCP, which in Edinburgh required only 3 years study (as against 5 years for the London College) and could be combined with LM.
21. Although not required, at this time most doctors aiming to be general practitioners sought triple qualifications in medicine, midwifery and surgery.
22. A. Digby, *The Evolution of British General Practice 1850-1948* (Oxford 1999).
23. The Royal Liverpool Victoria Friendly Society and the Wesleyan and General Insurance Society; see EB Medical Directory, entry 1888.
24. Friendly societies provided a means by which working men could insure for their medical care (and burial) but women and children were generally not covered by such arrangements.
25. I. S. L. Loudon, 'The origins and growth of the dispensary movement in England', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 55 (1981), 322-342.
26. Patrons of dispensaries were issued with letters of introduction which they could give to people seeking medical treatment. Some rich patrons passed these letters of referral to local clergy for distribution. See the Journals of Revd. Woodroffe, Curate of St Matthew's Bethnal Green, in Bishopsgate Institute Library. http://www.bishopsgate.org.uk/content/1417/Woodroffe-Journals (30 November 2012)
27. http://www.workhouses.org.uk/BethnalGreen/ (30 November 2012)
28. LMA, Bethnal Green Board of Guardians minute books, BEBG/261/001.
29. LMA, Bethnal Green Board of Guardians, Dispensary Committee Minutes 4th June 1896.
30. See map 52 in Saunders, (ed.), *London County Council Bomb Damage Maps 1939-1945* (2005).
31. St Joseph's Hospice for the Dying, report, 1907.
32. St Joseph's Hospice Archives.
33. Will of Edward Berdoe, 29 September 1909.
34. Aesculapius Scalpel, *St Bernard's, the romance of a medical student* (1887).
http://archive.org/stream/stbernardsroman00berdgoog#page/n2/mode/2up (25 October 2012).
35. Aesculapius Scalpel, *Dying Scientifically: a key to St. Bernard's* (1888).
36. C. Pittard, *Purity and Contamination in Late Victorian Detective Fiction* (Farnham, 2011).
37. *ODNB*. Knox lived at 14 Hackney Terrace, now 46 Cassland Road, from 1845-1955. At the time of his death in 1862 his address was 9 Lambe Terrace Hackney. See S. R. Collinson, 'Burke's Last Victim', *Terrier* no. 14 (1989).
38. Reading University Library, letters from W. S. Sonnenschein to E Berdoe, Special Collection MS3280.
39. 20 October 1887.
40. 17 December 1887, 23.
41. K. Waddington, *Dying Scientifically: gothic romance and London's teaching hospitals* (Oxford 2012). http://www.academia.edu/1721140/Dying_Scientifically_Gothic_romance_and_Londons_Teaching_Hospitals
42. 'Aesculapius Scalpel', *Dying Scientifically: a key to St. Bernard's* (1888), 12.
43. e.g E. Berdoe, *Broken Gods: a reply to Mr Stephen Paget's Experiments on Animals* (1903).
44. It is ironic that in 1896 Lister was appointed consulting surgeon to the London Chest Hospital, just 100m from Berdoe's home.
www.bartsandthelondon.nhs.uk/assets/docs/history_in_the_making.pdf (29 October 2012).
45. C. Lansbury, *The old brown dog, women, workers, and vivisection in Edwardian England* (Wisconsin, 1985).
46. Browning made one of the first phonograph recordings in 1889 , http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lyMk0m9t-K0 (30 November 2012).
47. E. Berdoe, *The Browning Cyclopaedia, a guide to the study of the works of Robert Browning* (1892).
48. E. Berdoe, *The Origin and Growth of the Healing Art: a popular history of medicine in all ages and countries* (1893).
49. London Society for the Abolition of Compulsory Vaccination, *Testimonies of medical men on the protection supposed to be afforded by vaccination from 1805-1881* (1881).
50. 'Death and Funeral of Mrs Berdoe', *Eastern Argus and Hackney Times*, 8 March 1902, 2.
51. HAD, Abney Park Cemetery Records.
52. 1911 census, 121 Bishops Road, Bethnal Green.
53. Berdoe's death certificate (1916) records his cause of death as chronic anterior poliomyelitis and pulmonary oedema (fluid on the lungs).
54. St Mary's Roman Catholic Cemetery, Kensal Green, cemetery records.

W. Pedr Williams,
the disappearing minister of Lower Clapton

3

Sally England

The scrapbook

Even after nearly ten years working in the Local Studies Library at Hackney Archives, I still occasionally find previously unknown treasures within the collection. Such was the case with an unprepossessing, somewhat battered scrapbook, the spine of which simply read 'Lower Clapton Congregational Church'. Expecting to find old parish magazines, newsletters, and similar ephemera, the volume instead opened up onto a collection of newspaper cuttings charting the mysterious disappearance in early 1894 of the church's then pastor, the Revd. W. Pedr Williams. The only other item within the scrapbook is a printed statement of receipts and expenditure for the Hackney Benevolent Pension Society's Diamond Jubilee bazaar of June 1898. There is no indication as to who compiled the material or how it entered Hackney Archives' collections.

The scrapbook tells the public side of the story, but the cuttings it contains pose as many questions as they answer, and the full tale can probably never now be uncovered. It also throws light upon a variety of different aspects of the incident: the growth of national and international interest in a relatively minor local event; the media scramble to find juicy angles on a story which refused to develop for days at a time; the seemingly shameful causes behind Williams' personal crisis; and the reactions of the deacons and congregation at Lower Clapton Church itself.

The cuttings give little biographical information on the Revd. Williams, but it is possible to piece together something of his life and career prior to Clapton from Charles Surman's biographical index of Congregationalist Ministers,[1] the Congregational Year Book for 1932, *Who's Who in Wales* for 1920 and various newspaper articles and announcements.

William Pedr Williams

William Pedr Williams was born in Ince, Lancashire, in 1863, and appears to have been brought up by his grandparents in Holywell, Flint. He was briefly apprenticed to a joiner, but the call of the church was strong and he gave up his apprenticeship to attend the newly opened University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire in Cardiff, after which he trained as a Congregational minister at the Memorial College in Brecon. He left after completing only two years of the three year course and moved to Merthyr Tydfil to take up his first pastorate at Troedyrhiw, minus a degree but plus a wife – Katherine Morris, the daughter of his college principal.

The Rev. Pedr Williams. (Photographed by T. Protheroe, Clifton.)

REV. PEDR WILLIAMS.

Williams' next appointment soon followed in 1885 at Whitefield's Tabernacle in Bristol, where he soon gained a reputation as a popular lecturer, preacher and minister:

> The Rev W. Pedr Williams, though probably the youngest minister in the city, has entered upon his duties with so much Christian zeal and fervour that at the end of his first year's pastorate the Church is found much revived and strengthened…[2]

It was inevitable that so young and dynamic a minister would prove attractive to congregations elsewhere and in 1888, when he was only 25, the deacons of Lower Clapton Congregational church invited him to become their pastor following the departure of the Revd. Frank Soden, who had served them well for 32 years. The deacons' minutes for the church are now held at Hackney Archives, and from them the events leading up to Williams' disappearance can be reconstructed.

Invitation to Clapton

The minutes for 20 August 1888 record the deacons' interest in Williams:

> In now looking forward to the future Mr N said the Deacons had after much consideration agreed to strongly recommend the Church to give a cordial invitation to The Rev W. Pedr Williams of Bristol who had preached for us on two occasions and whose sermons judging from the general and almost universal expression of opinion on the part of the Congregation had been highly appreciated.

'Mr N' was Ebenezer Newell, a local sweetshop owner, chairman of the London Congregational Union and a leading deacon at Lower Clapton, whose name is the first to appear in the roll of church members. Newell was among the signatories of a letter from the deacons dated 13 September 1888 officially inviting Williams to take up the pastorate, and it was also Newell who - quite inadvertently – may have helped spark Williams' subsequent mysterious behaviour.

The September letter, the text of which was transcribed in the deacons' minutes of September 19, offered Williams 'a very hearty and loving invitation' and cites 'The high testimony we have received from unimpeachable sources of information as to your unsullied reputation as well as to your qualities as a preacher of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, combined with our personal experience of your power in the pulpit…'

An energetic and effective preacher appears to have been needed by the Church, the letter also referring to a reduction of the congregation, apparently due in part to the Revd. Soden's declining health, as well as 'other causes'.

> Still we are satisfied that the lost ground can be speedily regained if you can agree to our desire as before expressed.

The letter closes with a commendation to Williams of 'the Divine Guidance in this crisis of your history'. But Williams' true crisis was yet to come.

Early years

The minutes also note that a separate letter was enclosed with the invitation from deacon Robert Dummett, detailing the church's financial situation and guaranteeing Williams a stipend of £500 for the first year, to be increased as soon as demands upon the church's funds would allow.

Williams replied on 17 September, thanking the deacons for their invitation and acknowledging that time, consideration and prayer were needed before he could offer them a response. A second letter of 1 October explained that Williams could still not make a decision and that he was currently 'passing through a period of most acute anxiety', having received competing offers of pastorates in Westminster, Stepney and Hanley.

Williams wrote again on 17 October, his letter recorded in the minutes of 1 November, this time stating his acceptance of the Lower Clapton offer which he intended to take up in January 1889 after having remained at his present post in Bristol to ease it through its own transition caused by his departure. Williams' signature appears at the foot of the minutes of a meeting held on 29 November, although the brevity of these - only half a page covering two short items – suggests it may have been an extraordinary meeting of the deacons convened to coincide with Williams' visit to his new church.

For the next few years all seemed to be well with both Williams and the church, though Ebenezer Newell died in February 1893. Williams conducted the final graveside solemnities at Abney Park Cemetery, having been involved in an initial service alongside the Revd. Frank Soden. The introduction to Soden's published memorial address[3] says of Newell that 'his lot was cast in narrow ways, and within a limited sphere, he was clothed upon with humility; but his whole character shone with the beauty of holiness and as charged with spiritual force.'

The surviving material suggests that Newell was much loved and respected and that his passing was a genuine loss to all who knew him, though for Williams it may have been more serious. When at the second funeral service he preached from John i 47 – 'Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!' – Williams may have already been anxious about his own conduct compared to that of the man he was remembering. Williams was surrounded by a very public grief, but inside he carried the weight of a problem that Newell had not managed to take to the grave with him.

The minister goes missing

Early in 1894 Williams suffered an acute personal crisis. He was due to give a lecture to the Lower Clapton Literary Association on Wednesday 14 February on 'Ins and Outs: Private, Personal, Social and Public'. An assembly of 500 filled the church to capacity, but there was no sign of the speaker. After an hour of waiting and confusion the audience was dismissed and the admission money refunded.

What had become of Williams? No statement was forthcoming from the church officials and little information given to the congregation regarding their missing pastor on the following Sunday, but by the next day both local and national newspapers had got wind of events. It is from here onwards that the scrapbook found in the Local Studies Library comes into its own, the newspaper cuttings recording how the media seized upon the irresistible story of a well-known and much respected member of the religious community apparently fleeing from some secret misdemeanour.

What that secret might be and where Williams had gone were questions begging to be answered, though the newspapers initially had very little information upon which to build a gripping story for their readers. Williams' disappearance was said to have caused 'Much surprise and not a little excitement' (*Hackney and Kingsland Gazette*), 'Profound excitement' (*The Sun*), and 'no little excitement' (*The Star* and *The Echo*), though it was not made clear exactly amongst whom this agitation was occurring.

Press reaction

From the outset, speculation was the order of the day. 'Considerable difficulty has been experienced in arriving at the facts of the case owing to the reticence of those in authority at the church and elsewhere…' complained the *Gazette*, admitting that 'Speculations as to the cause of Mr Williams' disappearance are many and varied', although it also stated that 'Domestic trouble is urged by those who know him best' despite its grumble about nobody being prepared to tell them anything.

Emphasis was placed upon how out of character the disappearance was compared to Williams' usual behaviour and his standing within the community, and the consequential distress caused to his friends and family. *The Echo* claimed to have telegraphed friends

in Williams' home town of Holywell in the hope of tracking him down, but reported that 'This appears to be the first indication they have had of his absence, and they have replied that he has not reached that town'. The paper may have resorted to contacting Holywell due to drawing a blank in finding anyone in London who would speak to them, although *The Star* did report that 'The rev. gentleman's wife is lying in a state of prostration at her residence in Amhurst-rd., brought about by her husband's absence', though who passed on that particular titbit is not revealed.[4]

A view of Amhurst Road in the early 1870s

Doorstepping is obviously nothing new, as revealed by *The Morning* of 20 February, which reported that after twelve days with no word from Williams and no official explanation for his disappearance, a member of its staff had sought out the family home at 197 Amhurst Road and intercepted Robert Dummett (erroneously referred to as 'Dommett'). The deacons had still not made any statement and Dummett was at first reluctant to speak to the reporter:

> I cannot tell you anything … beyond what has already been published. If you call upon me in two or three days' time I will give you all the information in my power. At present we are not in a position to say anything as to Mr William's absence. We do not know where he is.

But the man from *The Morning* did not give up easily. He probed as to the financial state of the Church and into Williams' domestic situation.

'He has four children,' replied Dummett, 'but what of that? I have five children myself, but I have never run away from home yet.'

Still the journalist persisted, and at last Dummett admitted a few facts, including that Mrs Williams had received an undated note from her husband, postmarked Richmond, advising her that he intended to visit Margate.

The Star of the same day repeated the story and had obviously also visited the Williams' home, declaring that on enquiry there they were informed that Williams 'had lately been suffering from indifferent health, which had been aggravated by mental worry and overwork, and that it was in order to recruit his strength and he left for a change of air.'

A busy pastor and successful preacher might understandably need a short holiday to restore his vigour, but the sudden and unexpected nature of Williams' disappearance and the silence on the matter of the Church authorities could only suggest that there was more to the story than that. The newspapers were not going to give up on the mystery: even if Williams' whereabouts remained unknown, rehashing what they did know and speculating upon the reasons for his disappearance regularly filled column inches.

By Wednesday 21 the *Hackney Gazette* had something new to report upon. Not only had 'a prominent Non-conformist' suggested that Williams had left for Queensland (for whatever reason is not explained) but an acquaintance had seen him on the morning of his disappearance, equipped for a journey carrying two portmanteaus, various hats, and a large number of bank notes. A few days in Margate was one thing, but the quantity of Williams' luggage suggested that he had a more distant destination in mind.

Scotland Yard becomes involved

Still the Church deacons said nothing, although on 20 February Dummett had finally gone to Scotland Yard to report the disappearance, with an official description being subsequently circulated:

> Missing since the 8th inst., the Rev. Pedr Williams, of 197 Amhurst road, Hackney. Age 30, height 5ft. 7½ in., sallow complexion, dark hair, thin, small dark moustache, broad build, large head, upright carriage, short legs, long body. He has a deep voice, and walks with very firm steps. Dress – gray frieze overcoat with velvet collar, dark-gray suit, and high silk hat.

It may have been this description that prompted a Mr Outhwaite of Lee in Kent to write to the deacons, telling how on Saturday 10 February he had seen Williams at Waterloo Station on the platform for the special train to Southampton which connected with the SS City of Paris, due to depart for New York. It was known that the SS City of Paris had run into mechanical difficulties when less than a thousand miles out at sea and had had to turn back to Queenstown (Cóbh) in Ireland[5], where Williams was also reported as being seen walking on the quay waiting to board the SS City of Berlin which, along with the SS Anchoria, was to take the passengers on to their destination. The passenger list for the SS City of Paris was checked, but no Williams was mentioned, nor did Cunard officials in Southampton recognise him as any of the passengers who had boarded, so was he travelling in disguise under an alias? In the days before ship-to-shore telegraph, all anyone could do was to wait until the SS City of Berlin docked in New York.

Further information as to William's personal situation was published in the *Independent and Nonconformist* of 22 February, which finally confirmed what many had suspected to be the reason behind William's flight.

> Mr Williams was pressed with financial difficulties, partly arising from his having become security for friends. Had he made known, fully and accurately, his position to those who were intimate with him, these difficulties would probably have been surmounted. The course he had evidently preferred to take has only increased the difficulties and added to the pain of those who knew and loved him. Much sympathy is naturally felt for his relatives, also for the church which in so many ways has most loyally sustained him.

On the evening of Thursday 22 February the church deacons, led by Dummett, issued a formal statement during the usual weekly service. He explained that they had held back from saying anything as both the church secretary and Mrs Williams had received letters from Williams indicating that he intended to return within a few days. Why they still remained silent after he remained missing is not clear, especially as no ordinary or extraordinary meeting of the deacons is recorded as being held until 26 February. There must have been much agitated discussion in private, but exactly what was said and by whom is impossible to know. Today an official press statement from the church would be demanded as soon as events proved serious, but in 1894 the pastor's disappearance 'seems to have been borne by the deacons of his church with considerable equanimity for a good while,' as the *Chronicle* noted somewhat sardonically.

Having already admitted their vexation at Williams' having arranged for a stand-in preacher without consulting them, the deacons also appear annoyed at his not having admitted his financial problems to them:

> He was a most reserved man, and took no one into his confidence on these matters; but had he opened his heart to us all this sorrowful affair might have been avoided.

However, ultimate blame for the financial crisis was subtly shifted towards Williams' wife and family rather than the man himself:

> Ever since his marriage Mr Williams has been overburdened with debts … coupled with the fact that the doctor has never been out of his house for years, that his delicate family was a constant drain upon his resources…

The idea is echoed in a letter from fellow Congregational minister Henry Bennett of Uxbridge, published in the *Chronicle* of 24 February:

> All his difficulties appear to have resulted from a too early marriage. Ever since poverty has held him in its close grip, and he has not been resolute enough to free himself. He has ever hoped for the best, but sickness in his home has come, entailing expense and hindering him from doing what he expected.

Scotland Yard held no confidence in the theory that Williams had fled to America, even though it had now been ascertained that he had a cousin there who had advised him that the City of Paris was a splendid vessel to travel on. The police continued to pursue their enquiries on home turf, although *The Sun* of 23 February noted that not only had Williams been positively identified at Queenstown, but that he had booked his passage in his own name which, according to *The Times*, somehow suggested that someone within the family had known in advance what he intended to do. This was vehemently denied by Miss Morris, the relative noted as staying with Mrs Williams at Amhurst Road, although whether she had arrived before or

because of Williams' disappearance, and how much she actually knew, is not recorded.

The SS City of Berlin was due to arrive in New York on Sunday 24 and Mrs Williams was certain, said Miss Morris, that if he was on board then they would receive a cablegram by the 25th at the latest. But no news came, and a new theory began to gain ground that Williams had not absconded abroad at all but had in fact committed suicide.

'A fugitive and a wanderer'

At this point the newspapers picked up on what had been the text for Williams' final sermon at Clapton before his disappearance - Genesis iv 13-14: 'And Cain said unto the Lord, my punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold thou has driven me out this day from the face of the ground and from thy face shall I be hid, and I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth.' It was said afterwards that even for Williams, the sermon had been particularly powerful and moving, and subsequent events now suggested that there was more to the choice of text than had at first appeared.

The Morning again sent a correspondent to Clapton to dig up more information, no doubt preferably the incriminating kind, and was able on 27 February to report that Williams' debts amounted to £840 whilst his annual stipend was only £600. One creditor was due about a quarter of the outstanding sum but insisted that they had not pressed Williams for repayment. The remainder of the sum was owed to doctors, tradesmen and 'other borrowed moneys'.

The sickly Mrs Williams presumably being off-limits, the journalist managed to speak instead with Robert Dummett's wife, 'a personal friend of the wife of the missing pastor, and, therefore, knows every in and out of Mr William's career while he has been at Clapton.' Mrs Dummett revealed that her husband had telegraphed a friend in New York, asking them to meet the Berlin when it docked and see if Williams was on board, although having heard nothing they were coming to the conclusion that the pastor was in fact in hiding somewhere in London or 'some quiet country town'. Mrs Williams 'is in a very agitated state …She is prepared to go any distance to see her husband, and immediately we can get any definite clue to work upon she will set out in search of him.' Mrs Dummett could not understand Williams' silence. 'He must know through the papers how anxious we are all about him, and he ought, as a Christian man, to communicate with his wife. The only conclusion I can come to is that he has overworked his brain, and for the time being is hardly accountable for his actions…'

Mrs Dummett hinted that she did not believe that Williams' financial woes were the only reason behind his disappearance, and in doing so suggests that Mr Dummett was either unaware of his wife's interview with the press or was not present at it:

> There was something else behind – something that Mrs Dummett did not want to make public. It might be domestic – a hasty spoken word – a misinterpreted sentence – in fact a thousand things, but Mrs Dummett would not further refer to it, as she was not sure she ought to do so.

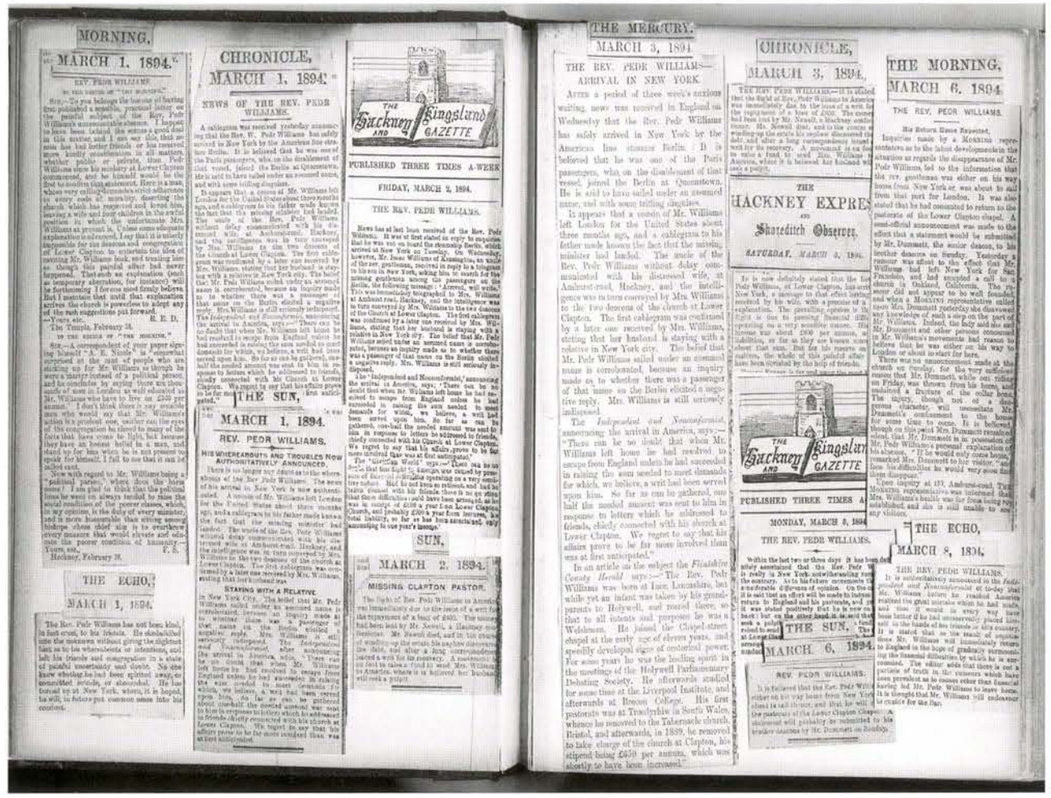
Maybe Mrs Dummett was worried that her own hastily spoken words might get her into trouble with her husband should she say too much. She repeated Mr Dummett's annoyance that Williams did not disclose his troubles or come to his friends for help:

> Why, if he had come to my husband and told him his trouble he would at once have helped him. He might have had £1000 and welcome, if he had wanted it. That will show you how highly we appreciated his talents and services.

It also shows how much accessible money Robert Dummett had that the pastor did not. As with the deacons' statement, Mrs Dummett's interview very much conveys a feeling of deep hurt at a respected and well-liked man being unable to turn for help from those closest to him in his hour of need.

Not everyone was as sympathetic to Williams' situation. A letter in the following day's copy of *The Morning* from Arthur E. Nicole took a very different and perhaps more familiar stance:

> I am surprised at the cant of some people who are sticking up for Mr Williams as though he were a martyr, and trying to show that he has been hardly dealt with by the press. Suppose the rev. gentleman had been a City man instead of a 'political' person, how many people would have taken the trouble to excuse him? Why, sir, with a salary of £650 per annum, he ought to have been well able to keep his position, and steer clear of difficulties and debt. There are thousands of men in London as well brought up and educated as Mr Williams that are compelled to live on £100 per annum and do it respectably, too, without leaving their wives and families.


MORNING,
MARCH 1, 1894.
REV. PEDR WILLIAMS.
CHRONICLE,
MARCH 1, 1894.
NEWS OF THE REV. PEDR WILLIAMS.
THE ECHO,
MARCH 1, 1894.
THE SUN,
MARCH 1, 1894.
REV. PEDR WILLIAMS.
THE Hackney Kingsland AND GAZETTE
PUBLISHED THREE TIMES A-WEEK
FRIDAY, MARCH 2, 1894.
THE REV. PEDR WILLIAMS.
SUN,
MARCH 2. 1894.
MISSING CLAPTON PASTOR.
THE MERCURY.
MARCH 3, 1894.
THE REV. PEDR WILLIAMS—ARRIVAL IN NEW YORK.
CHRONICLE,
MARCH 3, 1894.
THE HACKNEY EXPRESS AND Shoreditch Observer.
SATURDAY, MARCH 3, 1894.
THE MORNING,
MARCH 6, 1894.
THE REV. PEDR WILLIAMS.
THE Hackney Kingsland AND GAZETTE
PUBLISHED THREE TIMES A
MONDAY, MARCH 5, 1894.
THE REV. PEDR WILLIAMS.
THE ECHO,
MARCH 8, 1894.
THE REV. PEDR WILLIAMS.
SUN,
MARCH 6, 1894.
REV. PEDR WILLIAMS.

Lost and found: press coverage of Williams' arrival in New York, collected in the Hackney Archives scrapbook

It was only on 26 February, three weeks after Williams had walked out of his house and disappeared, that the church deacons officially met and discussed the matter of their absent pastor, and even then the situation was the third item of business to be minuted. Nothing new was revealed. It was reaffirmed that 'every step had been taken to ascertain the reason' for the disappearance and the deacons requested that the congregation trust them in their enquiries and to await any news to be given as and when the deacons received it. Dummett mentioned his having written to 'a passenger on the Berlin to New York for information as to whether Mr Williams being on board' – a slightly different version of events to that reported by Mrs Dummet but presumably the same. It does seem a somewhat odd coincidence that Dummett should just happened to be acquainted with someone else also sailing to New York on the very same vessel that Williams was presumed to be on. Did he know more than he let on?

News from New York

On Tuesday 27 February the SS City of Berlin finally docked in New York, but the British papers of the next morning still had nothing new to report. Only *The Sun*, presumably an evening paper, could state that the *Independent and Nonconformist* had received a cablegram stating that Williams had indeed been on board the ship and that he had 'sailed under an assumed name and with some trifling disguises'. Over the next few days messages flew back and forth across the Atlantic, with newspapers gradually piecing together just why Mr Williams had fled to America and speculating as to what he was going to do next.

The Echo, its previous reports having remained objective, now decided on which side of the fence it was sitting:

> The Rev Pedr Williams has not been kind, in fact cruel, to his friends. He skedadelled into the unknown without giving the slightest hint as to his whereabouts or intentions, and left his

friends and congregation in a state of painful uncertainty and doubt. No one knew whether he had been spirited away, or committed suicide, or absconded. He has turned up at New York, where, it is hoped, he will in future put common sense into his conduct.

The sickly Mrs Williams was too ill and upset to make any comment, but there were rumours that her husband would stay in America and either try to find another ecclesiastical post or attempt to qualify for the Bar. The possibility was also mentioned of setting up a fund to pay for Mrs Williams' passage to join him.

Return to Amhurst Road

However, on Thursday 8 March the story broke that Williams would return home, that he had realised before he had ever reached New York that he had made a great mistake. A week later he arrived in London and was reunited with his wife at Euston Station before driving home to Amhurst Road. Williams stated that he was not 'ashamed in any way of what had happened, and he was quite sure that he could give a satisfactory explanation to everyone concerned.'

THE STAR.
7 APRIL. 1894.

CLAPTON KEEPS ITS PASTOR.

A specially-convened meeting of the members of the Lower Clapton Congregational Church has been held for the purpose of receiving the resignation of the Rev. W. Pedr Williams as pastor. There was a large attendance, but the voting was confined to the adult members of the church, as required by the trust deed. A resolution was submitted declining to accept the resignation, and asking Mr. Williams to continue as minister. The vote, which was taken by ballot, showed only 21 dissentients. On the result being made known to Mr. Williams he agreed to remain as pastor, and to recommence his ministry at the end of the present month. In the meantime arrangements have been made for the supply of the pulpit, the Rev. Andrew Mearns and the Rev. D. Burford Hooke conducting the services on Sunday.

An interview by a representative from the *Western Mail* was widely reprinted and apparently solved much of the mystery of the missing minister. It appeared that his annual stipend was not enough to support Williams, his wife, four children and servants, especially when Mrs Williams and the children were all sickly. One child had needed an expensive operation the previous year, and another financial drain had been a rented holiday home at Sandgate, Kent, taken in the hope of improving the family's health. Williams also admitted to excessive hospitality being offered at Amhurst Road, that he and his wife had 'somewhat over-estimated in the past the extent of their duties in sustaining the dignity of their position in life…'

Williams himself said he believed that 'I had overtaxed my brain by study, preaching, and lecturing,' though the unpaid debt must have been hanging over him and may have been part of 'the awful load pressing upon [my brain]' from which the long ocean voyage 'had the effect of relieving my mind', but the newspapers made much of the fact that Williams owed £400 to the executors of Ebenezer Newell. He had failed to repay the debt before Newell's death, and there were allegations that a writ for recovery of the full amount had been issued, triggering Williams' flight. In fact an arrangement had been made in August 1893 for Williams to pay back £230 in instalments, and although the most recent payment had been missed, no pressure for repayment had been made.

One item raised at the deacons' meeting of 29 January 1894, just days before Williams' disappearance, was the question as to what steps had been taken in regard to a memorial to Newell. Williams replied that 'the matter had already received the attention of the deacons but as there were so many obligations at present on the church it had better be left for another period'. Williams' response sounds somewhat perfunctory considering the outpouring of love and grief there had been at Newell's death. Was the question of spending the church's money upon Newell's memory when his own debt remained unpaid the final straw that broke the camel's back and triggered Williams' desperate flight?

The reunited family went away for a while to recover from their traumatic experience, after which Williams returned to his church to discover his fate as its minister. Minutes of the meeting of 26 February record a vote of confidence in the deacons 'in the trying circumstances they have to meet' and those of 5 April mention letters of sympathy having been received from other local Congregational churches, presumably both items referring to Williams though neither specifically stating this. The latter meeting did, however, address a letter of resignation from the pastor dated 19 March in which he stated that he wished to relieve the deacons of 'all personal embarrassment in considering my case'. Church members and congregation met on the evening of Thursday 6 April to discuss whether or not the resignation should be accepted, with a ballot taken

which resulted in 120 votes in agreement that it should not, 21 against, and 9 neutrals. Williams was shown the result and agreed to stay.

Williams' first sermon on his return to his church, given on 29 April took the theme 'The return to the old self'. No personal remarks were made, but none of the congregation could have failed to know what Williams was alluding to in his speech about men drifting away, their vessels having slipped their moorings without their noticing it, and the subsequent struggle to regain their former lives.

Interview with the incumbent

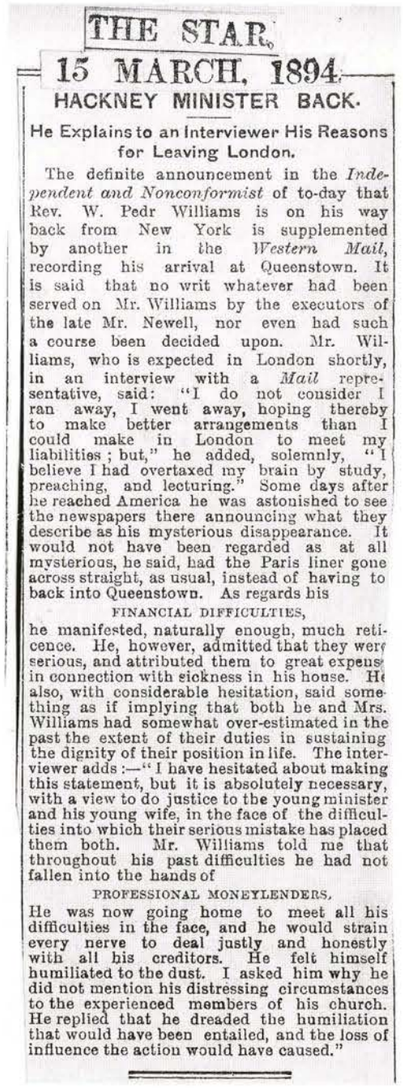
An interesting thumbnail portrait of Williams is found in the notes of an interview conducted as part of Charles Booth's great survey into 'The life and labour of the people of London'.[6] The interview with Williams is undated but must have taken place during the autumn of 1897, given its place in the notebooks' chronology, and took place at the new family home of 15 Filey Avenue, Stoke Newington.

The man does not seem to have made a good impression: 'He may be a good preacher but one should not have guessed it, as his manner & way of speaking is hesitating', though it is noted that his success in rejuvenating the congregation at Lower Clapton 'accounts for his recall, all to be forgiven & forgotten, after he ran away because of debt, as I believe happened some years ago.' The context suggests that Williams himself offered this information rather than the interviewer assuming it from previous knowledge, and suggests that financial problems were indeed the cause of his disappearance rather than overwork as claimed at the time.

The note of the interview closes with the observation that 'one could not call Mr Williams an attractive or forcible personality but he seems genuine – a speaker of truth I should say - & he must have eloquence.' Whether Williams' oratorical skills had suffered over the years or if he was more commanding before an audience than a single man we will probably never know.

Final years

Williams was to remain at Lower Clapton for a further 12 years until he accepted an invitation for the post of minister at Musgrave Road Congregational Church in Durban, South Africa. A farewell meeting was held on 19



THE STAR,
15 MARCH, 1894.

HACKNEY MINISTER BACK.

He Explains to an Interviewer His Reasons for Leaving London.

The definite announcement in the *Independent and Nonconformist* of to-day that Rev. W. Pedr Williams is on his way back from New York is supplemented by another in the *Western Mail*, recording his arrival at Queenstown. It is said that no writ whatever had been served on Mr. Williams by the executors of the late Mr. Newell, nor even had such a course been decided upon. Mr. Williams, who is expected in London shortly, in an interview with a *Mail* representative, said: "I do not consider I ran away, I went away, hoping thereby to make better arrangements than I could make in London to meet my liabilities; but," he added, solemnly, "I believe I had overtaxed my brain by study, preaching, and lecturing." Some days after he reached America he was astonished to see the newspapers there announcing what they describe as his mysterious disappearance. It would not have been regarded as at all mysterious, he said, had the Paris liner gone across straight, as usual, instead of having to back into Queenstown. As regards his

FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES,

he manifested, naturally enough, much reticence. He, however, admitted that they were serious, and attributed them to great expense in connection with sickness in his house. He also, with considerable hesitation, said something as if implying that both he and Mrs. Williams had somewhat over-estimated in the past the extent of their duties in sustaining the dignity of their position in life. The interviewer adds:—"I have hesitated about making this statement, but it is absolutely necessary, with a view to do justice to the young minister and his young wife, in the face of the difficulties into which their serious mistake has placed them both. Mr. Williams told me that throughout his past difficulties he had not fallen into the hands of

PROFESSIONAL MONEYLENDERS.

He was now going home to meet all his difficulties in the face, and he would strain every nerve to deal justly and honestly with all his creditors. He felt himself humiliated to the dust. I asked him why he did not mention his distressing circumstances to the experienced members of his church. He replied that he dreaded the humiliation that would have been entailed, and the loss of influence the action would have caused."

March 1906 when Mrs Williams was presented with a brooch and a pair of ivory hair-brushes, and Williams with a cheque for £320 from the church and congregation 'as a mark of friendship and affection'. All was, as the Booth notebook recorded, forgiven and forgotten regarding the moment of despair of 1894.

After serving in South Africa for 10 years Williams returned to Wales, working at St Paul's in Swansea before finally moving to Sneyd Park, Bristol, in 1926. Following the death of his wife in 1928 Williams retired

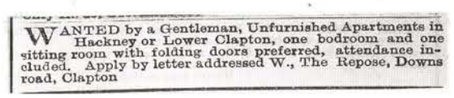
to London, living in Hereford Road, Hammersmith until his death at the age of 68 in May 1931. His funeral service was held at Lower Clapton Congregational Church and he was interred in Abney Park Cemetery alongside his wife. A tablet to his memory was unveiled at his former church in January 1934.

Ironically Williams' final home was just a few doors away from the house where once had lived Guglielmo Marconi, developer of the radio telegraph system that allowed the ship-to-shore transmissions which could have had such an impact on Williams' disappearance had they been available at the time.

The final cutting pasted into the scrapbook, undated and presumably from the classified section of a local newspaper, offers only another puzzle:

> Wanted by a Gentleman, Unfurnished Apartment in Hackney or Lower Clapton, one bedroom and one sitting room with folding doors preferred, attendance included. Apply by letter addressed W., The Repose, Downs-road, Clapton.

'W' must be Williams, since all other cuttings relate to him, but why was he looking to rent rooms when he was already in financial difficulties? The address given for reply was that of Robert Dummett and raises the possibility that the scrapbook may have been compiled by Dummett himself, for surely only someone who knew of the publication of the 'wanted' notice would have included it amongst the cuttings. We seem to be back amongst Mrs Dummett's veiled hints of darker reasons for Williams' disappearance, and Mr Dummett just happening to know someone on the same ship to New York. Was there more to the mystery that only the Dummetts knew? Whatever Williams' deeper secrets may have been, the scrapbook divulges nothing more.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Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Edmund Lyon for his assistance in sourcing obscure newspapers, and especially to Gerard Charmley for his invaluable help in sharing additional material on - and a fascination with - the life of W. Pedr Williams.

Notes

1. The original card index compiled by Surman is held at Dr Williams's Library of English Protestant Nonconformity and is now available online.
2. *Bristol Mercury and Daily Post* 2 February 1886.
3. Held in the Local Studies Library at Hackney Archives at SR 233.92 LOW.
4. Very probably 'Miss Morris, a relative of the Rev. Pedr Williams' whose interview with 'a correspondent' at Amhurst Road was reported in *The Star* of 24th February.
5. Possibly the source of the idea that Williams had left for 'Queensland'.
6. Booth notebooks, B190, 111-124, in the library at the London School of Economics. The entry has been erroneously catalogued as an interview with Revd. 'Peter' Williams.

The Abney Park way of death:

an archivist's perspective

4

Siân Mogridge

Introduction

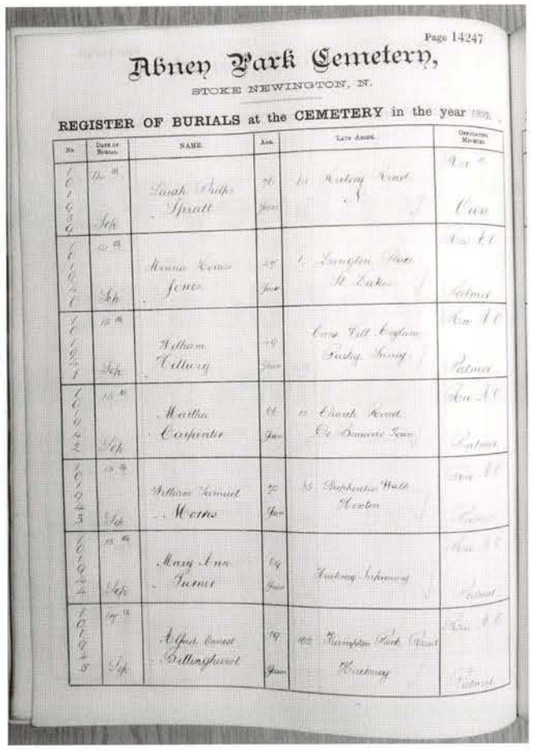
I've been interested in Abney Park Cemetery for some time. Its beginnings were wonderfully idealistic. It was founded by a group of non-conformists to be open to all, irrespective of denomination or religion, and provided with an amazing arboretum stocked by the locally based (but internationally known) Loddiges Nursery. I have often wondered what it would have been like to walk around the cemetery in those days. Its slow decline is a sad contrast. By 1900 shrubberies had started to be dug up to create room for more graves, and during the 20th century paths, drives and verges also fell prey to the need for more burial space, as the cemetery became more and more crowded.[1]

As an archivist, the cemetery's records have naturally been of particular interest to me. The London Borough of Hackney bought the cemetery for the grand total of £1.00 in 1979, following the bankruptcy of its then owners several years earlier. Hackney Archives was the obvious place to deposit the cemetery's records, and they arrived with us in several batches in the late 1970s and mid-1980s.

The survival of the corporate records of the Abney Park Cemetery Company is rather patchy, but fortunately the burial registers themselves have fared better. We often have enquiries at Hackney Archives from genealogists wishing to trace ancestors buried at Abney Park, as do the staff and volunteers at the Abney Park Cemetery Trust, who have managed the cemetery for the last 20 years. The basic burial information is fairly easily understood, and the Cemetery Trust have helpfully put much of it in an on-line database.[2] However there are a number of other details included in the burial registers which are not so easy to interpret, and which have intrigued me for several years.

In common with many present-day office workers (myself included!), the clerks who entered details into the registers used abbreviations and specialist terms which make little sense to a reader not familiar with the way their organisation operated. Also in common with many modern working practices, they completely failed to provide a key to their terms and abbreviations. They had no reason to do so. Everyone who needed to understand them already knew what they meant.

This article is an attempt to help readers and users of the records to a better understanding of the burial registers. I have tried to do this partly through studying the registers themselves and partly through looking at other records which shed some light on the registers. I have also examined the burials which took place over a specific four-week period to see what information might be gained from looking at a group of burials rather than individual register entries. Since the registers cover a period of over 130 years, I had to narrow the focus quite a bit, and most of the records which I looked at were from the last two or three years of the 19th century.



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Abney Park Cemetery,

STOKE NEWINGTON, N.

REGISTER OF BURIALS at the CEMETERY in the year 1900.

No.	Date of Burial.	NAME.	Age.	Late Abode.	Officiating Minister.
106305	10th Sept.	Sarah Ann Spratt	76 Years	18 Rectory Road N.	Rev. C. Cam
106306	11th Sept.	Minnie Louisa Jones	25 Years	1 Langdon Place St. Lukes	Rev. H. Palmer
106307	12th Sept.	William Tillbury	46 Years	Cross Hill England Surrey Surrey	Rev. H. Palmer
106308	13th Sept.	Martha Carpenter	61 Years	11 Church Road Ch. Barnets Town	Rev. H. Palmer
106309	13th Sept.	William Samuel Morris	72 Years	65 Stephenson Walk Hexton	Rev. H.
106310	15th Sept.	Mary Ann Turner	64 Years	Hackney Infirmary	Rev. H. Palmer
106311	17th Sept.	Alfred Ernest Billingshurst	29 Years	102 Brampton Park Road Hackney	Rev. H. C. Palmer

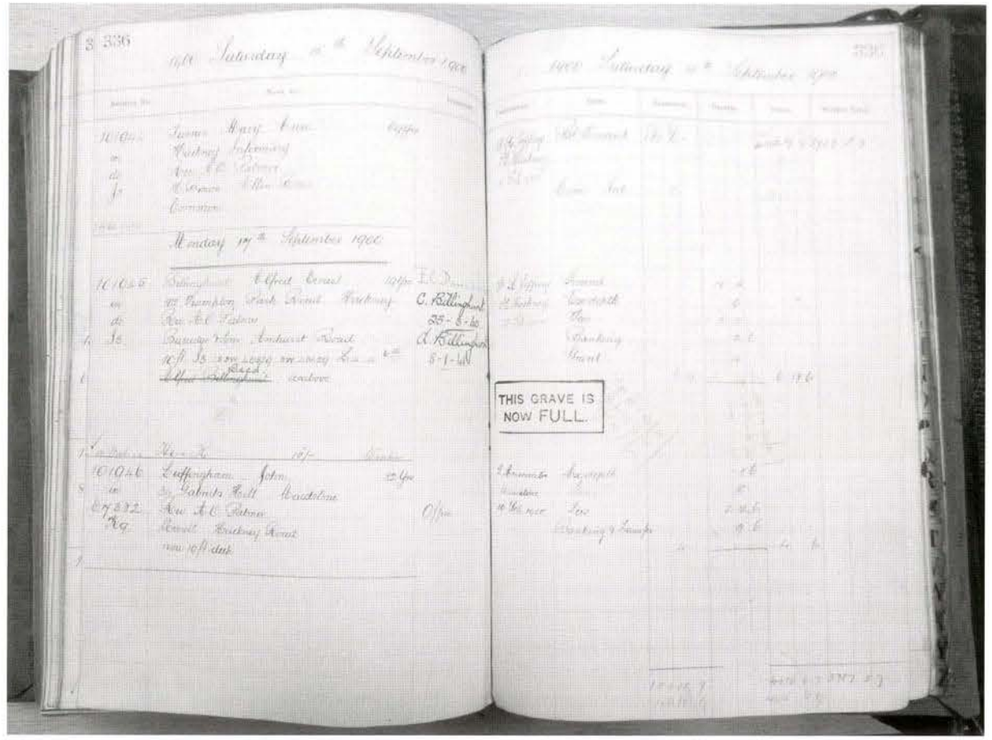
A page from the 'official' register, from 1900

grave location, plus other less easily identifiable notes. On the right hand page are the itemised costs for each burial.

The second set of registers looks more like an internal administrative record, while the first set looks more official, as though it were available for outside access. For ease of reference I'm therefore going to refer to them as the 'official registers', and the 'administrative registers'.

Decoding the registers

The administrative registers are definitely the more useful of the two, and the first thing I did was to spend some time just looking through entries, trying to separate out the different bits of information. I was helped by an earlier volume of the official registers, from 1885.[3] At this date the official registers contained a lot more information than they did in 1900, and while they did not include all the details that can be found in the administrative registers, a comparison with their



S 336

1900 Saturday 1st September 1900

Monday 3rd September 1900

THIS GRAVE IS NOW FULL.

An opening from the 'administrative' register, from 1900

clear, headed columns helped with identifying the pieces of information which were common to both.

Other bits of data could be interpreted after a little thought. I was puzzled for a while by the information on the officiating minister. If you look at the registers for different dates there is usually one minister who was carrying out the majority of the burials; for instance in 1885 it was the Revd. J. H. Edden, while in 1900 it was the Revd. A. O. Palmer. This makes some sense: presumably the cemetery had a resident minister who was available for conducting services. However I also came across a number of entries for a 'Rev Own' officiating at burials. It took me a few minutes to work out that this was not an additional minister attached to Abney Park, but merely a piece of clerk's laziness. When the family brought along their 'own' minister to conduct the service, there was generally not much effort made to find out his name.

I soon found that being able to identify the first burial in a grave can be very useful. Every burial has a running burial number, which is recorded in both sets of registers. However every burial also has a grave number. Confusingly, the grave number is the burial number of the first person who was buried in that grave. To add to the confusion the cemetery altered the burial numbering system in 1908, removing 110,000 from the current number. They added the letters 'RN' (perhaps standing for 'revised numbering') in front of the grave number from this date onwards, to avoid confusion with earlier burials. So the last burial on 3 April 1908 was number 113802, while the first burial on 4 April 1908 was number R/N 3803. The change from six digits to four would have been more convenient, but may also have helped to make the cemetery appear less crowded than it actually was by this time.

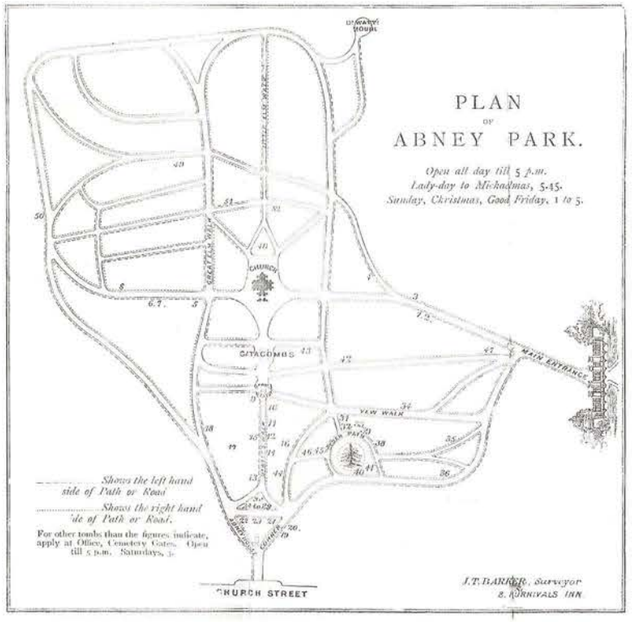
In the administrative burial registers, the first burial entry for a grave contains additional information. If

A tale of two registers

The first complication is that Hackney Archives holds two sets of over-lapping registers for the cemetery. The first set runs from its foundation in 1840 up to 1927. The second covers the years 1840 to 1978, the full life-time of the cemetery. I've always been curious as to why it was necessary to keep two sets of registers for so many years.

The first set (above, right) is straightforward and easy to understand. The registers give standard burial information for each entry: burial number, date of burial, name, age, last address and the name of the minister officiating. This is all laid out in clear columns.

The second set (opposite page) contains all the information listed in the first set, along with the name of the undertaker, the date of the death certificate, the name and district of the registrar who signed the certificate, and the part of the cemetery in which the burial took place. This is laid out on the left-hand side of each double page, and arranged a lot less clearly than the information in the first set of registers. There is sometimes additional information on the left page – some that seems to be a more detailed reference to



This cemetery layout, published in 1883, is still accurate

it is a private grave (one where the ground has been purchased, so that only the person who owns the grave may bury people there) then the name and address of the grave owner is recorded. Sometimes, helpfully for family historians, a grave owner's name is crossed out upon his or her death, and the name of a new owner is put in. The dates and brief names of further burials in the same grave are sometimes marked, enabling the researcher to look up these register entries as well.

Common graves

Common graves do not have details of grave ownership. Common graves were large graves opened by the cemetery and filled up over a period of a few weeks or a couple of months. People would pay for burials in a common grave, but the fee would only be for the burial itself – with a private burial you would have to pay to purchase the ground as well. As a result, common graves would contain more burials than private graves, and would be of people unconnected to each other, except that they happened to die within the same time period. Unlike the official burial registers, the administrative registers helpfully tell you if a burial is a common burial ('com int' is the abbreviation sometimes used, for 'common internment').

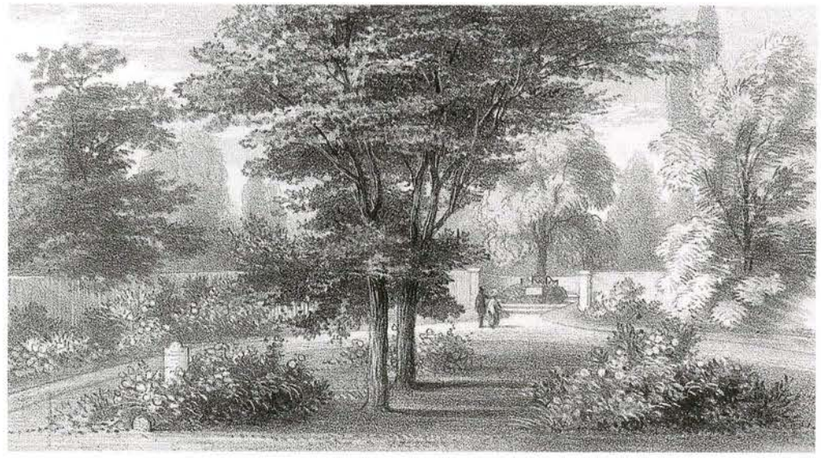
Finding the plot

Each burial entry in the administrative register gives the grave square that the burial may be found in. This corresponds to grid squares which were used to map Abney Park Cemetery. These can a give a rough idea of where a burial took place, however there would still have been hundreds of burials within each square. The first burial entry for each grave in the administrative registers seems to give more specific information, usually in the form '3S 17224' (from grave no. 101907, opened in September 1900) or '9E 74540 2S 3E 105449' (from grave no. 107199, opened in January 1904).[4] I was particularly interested in finding out if these definitely were locations and how they worked. Family historians looking up ancestors in the burial registers often want to be able to look at the actual grave. Since Abney Park is now a nature reserve, it can be quite hard among the trees and shrubs to see a grave at all – any information that the registers could give which would help in locating them would be useful.

The obvious thing to assume was that the numbers and compass directions indicated distances from existing graves. So grave no. 107199 (above) would be east of grave 74540 and south-east of 105449. However one of the first graves I looked at was no. 77657, first opened in December 1885.[5] This confusingly locates the grave as being '2E 3W 65059', which is a nicely contradictory set of directions. For some time I thought that the mix of numbers and letters must refer to something else, or that there was some other way in which they identified the grave's location. However a detailed comparison of the registers and the photocopied plans of Abney Park at Hackney Archives showed that the obvious interpretation of the locations is the correct one. The entry for grave no. 77657 must be an error, but gives an important lesson – just because a document is in an archive, don't assume that it can't contain typos, or their hand-written equivalents.

In some cases the location also gives a row number. This might indicate how far back from the path the

burial was situated. However, since some paths were narrowed later on in order to fit in more burials, the row number in the register may in some cases be fairly meaningless. Interestingly, for private graves the depth remaining in the grave is also given.



An early view of Abney Park, in the 1840s

The main item that the administrative registers contains and which is not included in the official registers, are the costs associated with each burial. These vary widely, but I found that common burials are usually cheaper, unsurprisingly, while private burials have a much greater variety of charges associated with them. Some of these I could make little sense of. Abbreviations like 'e serv' and 'ex depth' could be explained as 'early service' and 'extra depth', which seemed sensible in terms of a burial record, but how early did services have to be to attract an extra charge? Charges for 'banking' and 'turfing' presumably related to how the grave was finished off, but what did 'grant' and 'stones' mean?

Finally there was the question of the commission. This appeared on most burials, both private and common, for the period that I looked at. It always amounted to 5 per cent of the total cost, rounded down to the nearest 5 shillings. Who was it paid to?

More useful, more efficient

Fortunately the registers were not the only documents I had available. While looking through the catalogue of the cemetery's records I came across two other items which proved extremely helpful, particularly as they date to within a couple of years of each other. The first is a report of 4 June 1898 commissioned by the Abney Park Cemetery Company from Knox & Co, chartered accountants.

Knox & Co were instructed to 'investigate the system employed in recording the details of the accounts and statistics of [the cemetery company's] business' in order to improve its usefulness and efficiency. They came up with some interesting facts. Most notably they found that the way Abney Park's system worked meant that the details of every individual sale of a private burial plot had to be recorded in 13 separate books. It's clear that they thought this was ridiculous as well as unnecessary (although they phrased it a bit more politely!) and they made a number of recommendations. What is of particular interest to us is that they listed the entries in the 13 different books and ledgers by describing the process of purchasing a grave.

Knox & Co's report answered a number of my questions. For instance the 5 per cent commission was paid to the undertakers, rather than the cemetery official responsible for completing the sale (as had been my best guess). In fact the report describes how 'a person calls at the cemetery (upon the introduction of an undertaker)', suggesting that the role of undertakers in providing custom for the cemetery was important.

The report also identifies both the sets of registers in Hackney Archives. The official registers are called the 'register of burials' and the report states that 'from this book the certificates of burial are made out in exact duplicate', which would explain why they are so clearly and formally laid out. The administrative registers must be the 'general register'. As it happens, Knox & Co recommended that both sets of registers should be discontinued, in favour of putting more information into one of the other 11 volumes. It is clear that this

part of their report at least was not followed, and it would be interesting to know whether any attention was made to their recommendations at all, or whether administrative inertia led to their suggestions being ignored.

Other types of record

I have only been able to identify one other set of records listed in Knox & Co's report. These are what they describe as the 'purchase books' (for private graves) and their common grave equivalents, imaginatively known as 'common books'. Knox & Co make the following comments on them:

> The information contained in these books is available from several other sources but the books are of a portable size and are used by the foreman in marking the pegs and in checking, on the spot, the correct position of graves. We therefore advise the continuance of these books.

These seem to correspond with the small volumes of 'private grave registers'[6] and 'common grave registers'[7] at Hackney Archives. They are in very poor condition and are not available for public access, however I was able to get a glance inside one or two of them. While the accountants were right and the information they contain is mostly duplicated in the registers, I did find one useful thing. This was a small sketch plan showing the location of a particular grave in relation to neighbouring graves, which confirmed the way the locations given in the administrative registers work.[8]

I have not been able to find any sign of the other ten volumes mentioned by the report, including cash books and registers, receipt books, and the day book, described as 'practically a diary of internments due each day'. It is a little frustrating to know that these records, which certainly once existed, and which must have given a lot more information both about individual burials and about the running of the cemetery, have just disappeared.

The second useful document I came across was a scale of charges and regulations for the cemetery from 1900. This lists burial fees and the cost of buying private graves, plus the various extra charges that could be levied. It helps explain some of the oddities about the prices for different burials. For instance even among

A view taken by George James in the 1870s

the private graves there was a wide variety of costs. The ground purchased for a private grave could cost anything from £3/3/0 to £15/15/0, depending on its location. Underground brick vaults cost even more. The price of a burial within a private grave depended on the original cost of the ground – the burial fee was higher if the grave plot was a more expensive one. There were also lower prices for burying a child under ten or a still-born baby. Common burials had an additional price category for children under three, a depressing reminder of how often such burials took place.

The times when burials could be carried out were strictly limited. There is a line in larger type at the bottom of the list of charges stating 'interments on week days between 10 am and 5 pm' but it wasn't quite as straightforward as that. The mornings (up to 1.30 pm) were for burials officiated over by a minister chosen by the family or friends. The afternoons, from 2 pm onwards, were for burials at which the company's chaplain officiated. Any burials prior to this time by the resident chaplain incurred an early service fee (as marked in the administrative registers). Any burials at

all after 4.30pm also incurred a fee.

Placing burials in context

With the help of the light shed on the burial registers by the 1898 report and the 1900 scale of charges, it seemed to me that it would be worth looking at a number of entries from the administrative registers and seeing what could be learnt from them as a group. This might help to give more information on individual entries, by showing how they compared with other burials.

I was only able to look at one month, a fairly small sample. It seemed sensible to choose a date that was near in time to the accountants' report and the scale of charges, so I settled on September 1900, taking the four weeks from Saturday 1 September to Friday 28 September (the Cemetery Company's administrative week finished on a Friday).

During this period there were 103 entries in the register. Six of these were for burials that are labelled 'not used', and that seem to relate to grave plots that were purchased in advance, not for a specific burial. I have left these six out of most of my calculations.

Common or private?

By far the most interesting results were those which gave more information about the differences between common and private burials. During this four-week period there were 63 private burials (excluding the six unused grave plots) and 34 common interments. Of the private burials 44 were of people being buried in existing graves, while the remaining 19 had new grave plots purchased for them. It seems that in most cases families only purchased a grave plot when there was a need for one. The six graves that were purchased but not used during this period seem to be the exception rather than the rule. Of those six, three were bought by the same person, in the same part of the cemetery, which seems a remarkable degree of forward planning (the only name given is 'Jeffreys', grave numbers 101925-101927). The report of the accountants, Knox & Co, describes how a foreman would accompany the person purchasing a grave plot, to help them choose the ground they wanted. The spread of new private graves across the cemetery in September 1900 reflects the wide choice of location that purchasers could have. The 25 graves (including the six unused plots) were spread across 19 of the cemetery's squares. By contrast there were nine common graves open at some point during this month, across three of the cemetery's squares. The three common graves that were actually opened during this month (grave numbers 101894, 101944 and 101983) were all within square number J3.

How much choice of location did people get if they were paying for a common burial? It's hard to tell. Knox & Co's report does not make it clear whether their description of a customer choosing ground refers only to those purchasing grave plots, or whether it could refer to common burials as well. Since multiple common graves were clearly open at the same time, perhaps friends and relatives did get some choice in where burials took place.

To my surprise, they also got the opportunity to mark the burial spot. I had assumed that common burials would have no memorial, since a common grave would

Another George James view from the 1870s

usually have more than ten burials in it, and sometimes as many as 20.[9] However the scale of charges gives ten shillings as the cost 'for permission to place inscription on stone fixed by the Company over a common grave'. The list of regulations on the back of the scale of charges gives additional information -

> no Monument or Grave Stone may be erected, except over Graves wherein the exclusive right of Burial is purchased

and

> no Memorial will be allowed to remain upon any Grave for more than 14 years from the date of the first Interment .... unless the exclusive right of Burial has been purchased.

Monuments, stones and memorials

I have not been able to figure out the difference between a 'Monument or Grave Stone', which were not allowed on common graves, and a 'Memorial', which, it seems, was allowed. Lower down the page the document unhelpfully states that 'regulations referring to Memorials are issued separately'. However it does seem to be the case that memorials on common graves could have been removed by the company after the 14 years were up, with the result that anyone searching for the location of a common burial – over a third of the burials during the period I have been looking at – will not have an easy task ahead of them.

Those looking for private burials should have slightly less trouble, since in most cases they are likely to have had a 'Monument or Grave Stone'. In fact the charge listed as 'stones' in the administrative registers, which initially made no sense to me, is probably for the service described in the scale of charges as 'removing and re-placing other memorials according to size and structure'. In other words, if the stone on an existing grave needed removing in order to place a new burial inside, you were charged for it. Of the private burials in September 1900 none of those which were burials in new graves were charged for 'stones', which fits, while of the existing private graves, 32 out of 44 do have it as a charge. Possibly the remaining 12 burials were placed in graves where any stone memorials did not need to be removed, or where ones had not yet been put in place. So far as I can tell from the regulations, the cemetery company did not require people to place a memorial of any sort on a grave they owned, although the company did require that any such monument 'must be kept in good order and condition'.

Adults and children

One of the things I chose to look at was the ages of the people buried at Abney Park in September 1900. Of the 97 burials, ten were of babies under one year old. Another three were of children, aged five, six and ten. The adults ranged in age from 19 up to 88, with the average age of adults at death being just over 56 years. However breaking down the average age by sex and by type of burial produced some striking results. Excluding children, the average age at death for those buried in private graves was 62 for women and 52.9 for men. For those buried in common graves it was 58.1 for women and 39.1 for men. This comes from a small sample: for instance there were only 15 men buried in common graves during this period. Nevertheless it is hard not to think that it shows a link between age at death and social status and wealth, as reflected by the type of burial, as well as raising the still-persistent question about life expectancy of men and women.

Of the children, all three above the age of one year were buried in private graves, but this is too small a number to have any significance at all. Of the ten babies, eight were buried in common graves. Again the assumption immediately springs to mind that this was due to higher infant mortality among those with lower incomes and from lower social backgrounds. This might well be true. However in this case I think the assumption needs to be treated with care. The two babies in private graves were both buried in existing graves. In a period of higher infant mortality than we are used to, it is possible that people might not have considered purchasing a new grave for an infant under one year old. Without knowing more about burial practices and attitudes to children at the time, which the registers on their own do not give us, it is hard to say if this high percentage of babies buried in common graves reflects differing infant mortality in different segments of society, or differing attitudes towards the burial of babies and adults.

In choosing a minister to officiate at the burial service the majority, 74 in all, chose to go with the Revd. A. O. Palmer, the company chaplain at the time. However a few, fairly evenly distributed between private and common burials, had their own minister officiate. It's impossible to tell whether this indicates people who had

a friend or relative who was a minister, people who were particularly attached to their own minister and church, or something else. It may reflect a denominational divide; the Revd. Mr Palmer does not appear in Crockford's Clerical Directory for 1900, so it is unlikely that he was a church of England minister. This is not surprising for a cemetery with non-conformist origins. However Abney Park was open to all, so perhaps some of those who brought their own ministers were committed Anglicans, or not Christians at all. One of the things the burial registers do not record, perhaps deliberately, is the religious affiliation of the deceased.

Plenty more to do...

Some of the questions I had about the entries in the burial registers still remain. For instance I haven't been able to tie all the charges in the administrative registers to items listed in the printed scale of charges (the term 'grant' is still a mystery to me). There are also a number of heavily abbreviated notations on many of the entries for the first burial in a grave, which seem to have been written at a later date. Some involve sums of money, but I can't work out what they are for. Nevertheless I feel that I at least have a much better understanding of the registers than I did, and I hope that the documents I have highlighted here will make the registers a bit more intelligible to other researchers.

Notes

Most of this article has focused on four specific sources, all of which can be found in the collections of Hackney Archives. The series referred to as the 'official registers' are the volumes D/B/ABN/002/001-040. The 'administrative registers' are D/B/ABN/007/001-118 and the specific volume in which the burial entries for September 1900 can be found is D/B/ABN/007/055. Knox & Co's report on the Cemetery's record keeping practices is D/B/ABN/002/074. The scale of charges is one of the documents in D/B/ABN/001/065.

1. Paul Joyce, *A guide to Abney Park cemetery* (1994), 61-2.
2. freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~abneypark/abneyy.html
3. HAD D/B/ABN/002/028.
4. Burial registers, D/B/ABN/007/060.
5. Burial registers, D/B/ABN/007/037.
6. Private grave registers, D/B/ABN/002/064/001-017 and D/B/ABN/002/108.
7. Common grave registers, D/B/ABN/002/065/001-009 and D/B/ABN/002/109.
8. D/B/ABN/002/065/007, grave R/N 10100.
9. From a look through volumes of D/B/ABN/002/065.

Stoke Newington's double eagles:

the story of the 'Hackney hoard'

5

Ian Richardson

Every year the British Museum's Department of Portable Antiquities and Treasure records close to a thousand discoveries of potential treasure made in England. These are finds of gold or silver objects, and groups of coins or prehistoric metalwork. The finds are reported to the local coroner, and if he or she agrees that they meet the legal definition of treasure according to the Treasure Act 1996, the items officially become the property of the Crown and may be placed in a registered museum, with the finder of the treasure and the owner of the land sharing a reward equal to the market value of the items. The law is designed to prevent the most important historic artefacts from disappearing into private hands, and to see that they are made available for the public to enjoy. Regardless of whether the items ultimately join a museum's collection, it is important that they are reported and the information on their provenance and context within the landscape is recorded. It is this information that holds the most value for archaeologists and historians and allows them to piece together a picture of humankind's past activities. On the rare occasion, finds are made which provide more than a small piece in a large puzzle, and produce a rich tapestry of a story with the ability to inform, inspire and enthrall. The discovery of the 'Hackney hoard' was one such event.

In June 2007, two residents were working with a volunteer to create a shallow frog-pond in the back garden of a community home in Stoke Newington. The crew removed the turf in a small square and then, slightly deeper down, they came across a glass jar with a screw-top lid. When they looked inside, they found 80 large gold coins, wrapped in wax paper in groups of ten. Many of the coins had an image similar to the Statue of Liberty on one side, so it was reasonable to deduce that they were from the United States of America. Care-worker Terrence Castle, who had been overseeing the digging, recognized the significance of the coins and immediately contacted the Museum of London to report the find. The Museum hosts a Finds Liaison Officer (FLO), an archaeologist who works for the Portable Antiquities Scheme, a network of experts which records archaeological finds (treasure and non-treasure finds) made by members of the public, on its online database.[1] The FLO for

The 'Hackney hoard' of 80 gold double eagle coins was discovered in a glass Kilner jar with the coins wrapped in wax paper in groups of ten. The jar and papers and one of the coins are now in Hackney Museum.

Greater London, Kate Sumnall, took the call about the coins and collected them and brought them to the Museum for inventorying and cataloguing.

To be classed as treasure under the terms of the Treasure Act 1996, single archaeological finds, objects from graves and so-called votive (religious) deposits need to be at least 300 years old at the time of discovery. However, while this discovery comprised a group of modern coins dating to the early 20th century, it also appeared to meet the necessary criteria for treasure because it was made predominantly of precious metal and had apparently been buried with the intention of future recovery – in other words it had been 'hoarded' away. The find was therefore reported as potential treasure to the coroner of the Inner North London district, Dr Andrew Reid, and began to be referred to as 'the Hackney hoard'.

Mrs Sumnall and her colleagues catalogued, weighed, measured and photographed the coins, and Dr Barrie Cook of the British Museum prepared a report on the coins for the coroner. They were all American $20 gold coins called 'double eagles' (the 'eagle' being the $10 gold coin), minted between 1854 and 1913. The standard weight of double eagles was set at 33.44g and they were composed of 90% pure gold and 10% copper-alloy – a fineness of almost 22K and marginally less than that found in British sovereigns.[2] Double eagles were made by the United States between 1850 and 1933. Despite their large size and the amount of wealth they represented, they were not rare coins; in the early part of the 20th century, the mints produced millions of these, with the 3rd U.S. Mint of Philadelphia (now the Community College of Philadelphia), producing the lion's share.[3]

Once the coins had been thoroughly studied, the questions were, why were these 80 gold coins buried in a back garden in Hackney, and who buried them? When studying discoveries of coins from earlier periods of history, numismatists and archaeologists generally assume that deliberately-buried hoards are placed in the ground – for safekeeping or otherwise – soon after the date of the latest coin in the hoard. This makes logical sense, because someone slowly accumulating their wealth over time would add contemporary coins to the collection through the years, and it is assumed that this collection would continue right up to the time of burial. Similarly, an individual burying a hoard as a response to a sudden and immediate threat, who hadn't been systematically collecting coins but who was quickly gathering their liquid wealth at the moment, would more likely have in their group coins minted near to that time.

As the date of the latest coin in the Hackney hoard was 1913, initial theories were that the hoard was buried around the time of the First World War. The coroner's office commissioned a visiting scholar at the Museum of London to investigate further, but despite a search of the Hackney Archives for information on residents of the property and road from the years 1913 to the late 1930s, there was no particular indication that anyone living at the residence in those years had owned or buried the coins. It was important to find out, not simply for curiosity's sake: the legal status of the coins as treasure depended on whether or not the original owner of the coins, or their heirs, could be identified. The coroner and the British Museum decided that diligence required that they appeal for information from the general public on the likely original owner of the

coins, and a short press statement was made by the coroner's office on 11 October 2010, announcing the opening of an inquest into the find and asking for anyone with information to come forward. Up to this point, news of the discovery had not been announced, not least to discourage false claimants from coming forward.

This photograph of the 'Hackney hoard' coins clearly shows the two different renditions of the double eagle coin, the first version featuring the head of Liberty in profile, and the second, redesigned version showing Liberty striding forward.

After several harmless but irrelevant contacts by individuals whose relations had at one time lived in the area, the breakthrough came when local Hackney resident Stephen Selby, who had seen the appeal and embarked on research of his own, passed the coroner's office a copy of an article from *The Times* in 1952, which related the story of a treasure trove[4] inquest for an almost identical group of American gold coins, from the same property. In that case, the coroner had declared that the coins were not treasure trove because a claimant had come forward whom the coroner determined had a superior claim to the coins. That man's name was Martin Sulzbacher.[5]

This information changed the course of the case of the Hackney hoard. The coronial files from the 1952 inquest, which had been sent to the London Metropolitan Archives, had not been retained, and the treasure trove file in the British Museum's archive was woefully thin, owing to the fact the coins had not been declared treasure trove. (This is also likely to have resulted in the 1952 discovery having not been recorded in a compendium of coin hoards by Brown and Dooley;[6] had it been so, the coincidence of the findspot would have been spotted earlier and prompted research into the original case.) Nonetheless *The Times'* article had imparted a critical piece of data about Martin Sulzbacher which allowed for more investigations to be made immediately – he was a Jewish refugee who had fled Nazi Germany just before the Second World War, and during the war he had been interned by the British Government.

I went to the National Archives at Kew and retrieved the Home Office records providing evidence of Martin Sulzbacher's internment as a 'male enemy alien - refugee' and his deportation to Australia aboard the SS Dunera in 1940. These records showed that Martin was born in 1896 in Frankfurt, Germany and so it was unfortunately likely that he had passed away, which meant that the next step was to search for any of his living heirs. Here, the power of the internet demonstrated its virtue and it only took a few keystrokes for my colleagues at the British Museum to find a Sulzbacher – Max – who had written letters, now posted on the internet, to the editor of a journal of the Association of Jewish Refugees[7] containing vignettes of his father's story which matched what had been gleaned from *The Times* article and the Kew records. It was logical then to make Max Sulzbacher aware of the recent discovery and to invite him to comment on it. It was initially difficult to trace Max's current whereabouts, as he and other members of his family had migrated to Jerusalem. However in a stroke of fortune a colleague at University College London had a relation who was friends with a Sulzbacher relative, and the contact was established. Max Sulzbacher was then able to respond, and it is thanks to him that the remarkable and tragic story of the Hackney hoard can be understood.

Martin Sulzbacher had moved to Dusseldorf in 1914. He was still living there in the 1930s with his wife and children, and they witnessed the steadily worsening treatment of Jews at the hands of the Nazis. Like many others he foresaw even graver things to come, but his was not a straightforward position. Ideologically, the National Socialists, who gained control of the German government in 1933, were eager to have German Jews leave the country, however the emigration laws of the Weimar Republic (which the Nazis inherited) ensured that the state seized most of the assets of emigrants upon their departure, and this did little to encourage legal emigration.[8] The problem of finding a suitable destination was also a difficult one, as most other Western countries had restrictive quotas on the number of immigrants allowed to settle. Historian Michael Marrus makes the argument that in their early years in power Nazi leaders were conscious of their fledgling, if growing, status on the international stage, and they were wary of being perceived to have initiated a refugee crisis through overly harsh official policies towards Jews. This became less of a concern for the Nazis in 1938, as it became apparent that few countries would stand up to their aggressive politics, illustrated most recently in their takeover of Austria.[9] The reluctance of foreign countries to assist in resettling Jews was harshly underlined at the conference at Evians-les-Bains, France, in July 1938. The American President Franklin Roosevelt had called for a conference to address rising concerns of a refugee crisis in Europe. This was attended by 32 nations whose primary motives were to ensure that none were pressured into relaxing their tight control on immigration.[10]

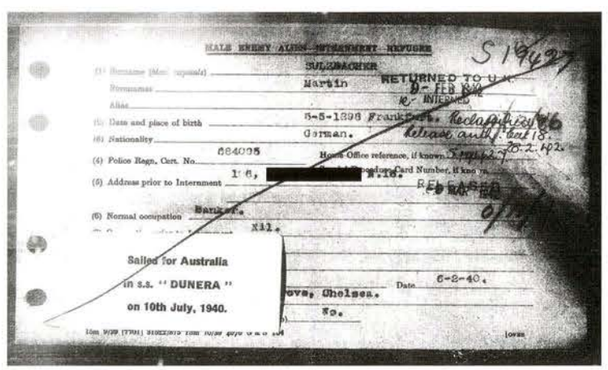
The official British attitude at the time was that it was not a country of immigrants, and indeed potential immigrants were scrupulously screened to ensure only the most desirable were allowed to settle.[11] In order to secure residency in Britain, Martin had to ensure that he was not taking away the job of another person, and so in 1938 he set himself up as a seller of Jewish books in North London, and transported his family to the country via the Netherlands, managing to hide away much of his savings in the forms of gold bullion – which must have included the double eagle coins.[12] It was fortunate that he had done so, for those Jews who remained in Germany from 1939 onwards were systematically murdered.[13]

Safe in London, the Sulzbachers were settled in Hackney until the beginning of the Second World War. Britain entered the war on 3 September 1939 when it declared war on Germany, but after the fall of Poland at the end of that month, the war entered a 'twilight phase' when little action by British forces, other than at sea, took place.[14] At the start of the war, the British Government, naturally concerned about the threat of espionage and fifth-column activity, embarked on a programme of systematic categorisation of residents who were citizens of the countries with whom she found herself at war (Germany and eventually, in 1940, Italy), based on the likely threat they posed to national security. In total there were just over 73,000 registered Germans and Austrians living in Britain. The government set up 120 tribunals – often composed of just a single magistrate and clerk – to class these individuals.[15] They were placed in categories labelled 'A' (most dangerous, with immediate detention recommended), 'B' (those about whose loyalty the tribunal could not be absolutely certain) or 'C' (unlikely to pose a threat, and therefore allowed their freedom, with only normal alien resident stipulations applied). In this initial survey of 1939, only 569 were determined to represent enough of security risk that they were placed in category 'A' and directly interned. The vast majority of these alien residents were ascribed a category of 'C', with more than 55,000 of these noted as being victims of Nazi persecution.[16]

The situation changed during and after May 1940, with Germany's overwhelmingly successful invasion of the Low Countries and France, when Britain was suddenly 'alone' and only the English Channel separated the country from Hitler's forces. With invasion suddenly a very real possibility, the government revisited its internment policy. On 12 May all men of any category, aged 16 to 60 and residing in the highly secured areas along the east coast of England were interned; this was followed on 16 May by the internment of all enemy aliens of both sexes in category B, and shortly afterwards the government started to round up all category C aliens as well. The irony was that many people who had been persecuted by and had fled the Nazi authorities ended up being interned by the British Government, a point not lost on citizens and aliens alike. However the worry among many was that it was difficult to validate every backstory, and there was a strong opinion that the best way to prevent potential fifth-columnists from wrecking havoc was to jail every enemy alien. At this

point in time (May 1940), even the UK's *Jewish Chronicle* supported the internment of newly arrived enemy aliens (though this stance would change in a few months) and a poll by the group Mass Observation showed a return of 55% of respondents favouring blanket internment.[17] Uneasy at housing large groups of these internees (as well as a few genuine German prisoners of war) in the British Isles, the government gained the consent of its overseas territories to send them abroad, and several boat loads of refugees and prisoners were sent to camps in Canada.

Martin Sulzbacher, housed on the Isle of Man, had been destined for Canada himself and was duly embarked aboard the *SS Arandora Star* from Liverpool on 1 July 1940 with other German and Italian internees. Only a day into its voyage this ship was torpedoed by a German U-boat off the coast of Ireland with the loss of over 800 of its passengers and crew.[18] Thankfully Martin survived and like 500 others was collected by a passing Canadian destroyer and returned to the UK at Glasgow, having lost all of the possessions he had been allowed to bring with him. In a move devoid of any sympathy for their traumatic experience, the government promptly put Martin and most of the other surviving internees aboard the *SS Dunera*, which with other enemy aliens was loaded with 800 people beyond its normal capacity. The *Dunera* left Liverpool on 10 July 1940, arriving in Australia on 6 September 1940, where the appalling conditions on board and evidence of gross mistreatment of the internees led to the eventual court-martialing of several soldiers from the crew escorting them, including the person in charge, Major William Patrick Scott of the Auxiliary Military Pioneer Corps (though he was reprimanded, he did not suffer a demotion or any further punishment).[19] Martin himself, with the other class 'C' internees aboard, was sent to a camp several hundred miles west of Sydney.

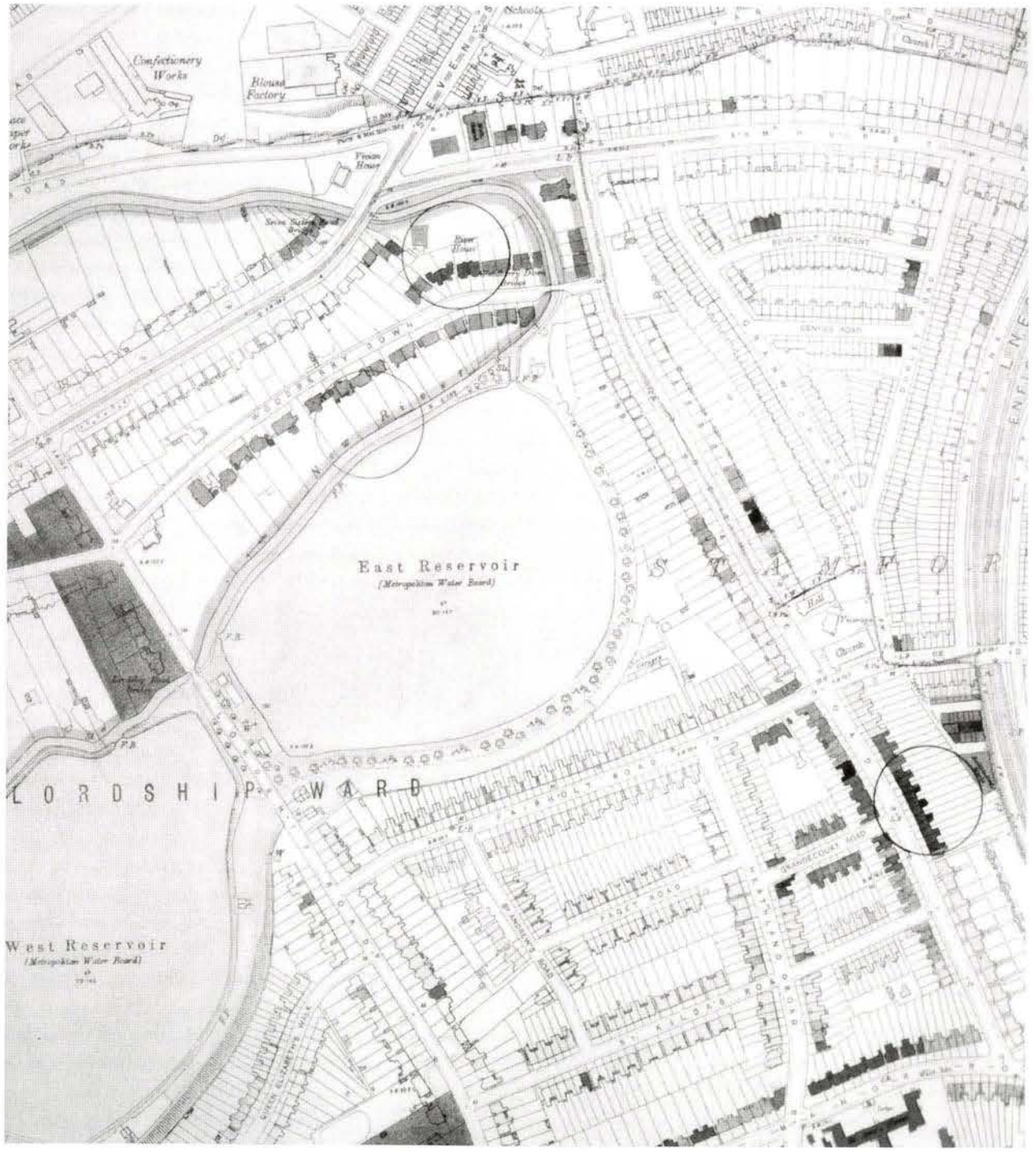

MALE ENEMY ALIEN INTERNMENT REFUGEE
SULZBACHER
Martin
RETURNED TO U.K.
9 - FEB 1940
INTERNED
5-5-1898 Frankfurt.
German.
684095
Home Office reference, if known
Card Number, if known
(4) Police Regn. Cert. No.
(5) Address prior to Internment
(6) Normal occupation
Banker.
Nil.
Sailed for Australia
in s.s. "DUNERA"
on 10th July, 1940.
Date 6-2-40.
Chelsea.
No.

This is the record of Martin Suzbacher's internment during the Second World War and his transhipment to Australia aboard the 'Dunera'.

Meanwhile Germany had begun preparations for the invasion of Britain, the operation code-named *Sea Lion*. The major prerequisite for the invasion to take place was the acquisition of complete air superiority by the German Luftwaffe. On 10 July 1940, launching from bases in Belgium and France, German planes began the task of eliminating the Royal Air Force (RAF) as a serious opponent, and the Battle of Britain was engaged. Initial attacks by the Luftwaffe against coastal installations and convoys were ill-planned and it suffered proportionately higher rates of attrition than the RAF. It was not until the end of August that the German air forces focused their attention specifically on RAF bases that they began to seriously punish the British and threaten their ability to maintain an effective defence.[20]

While the RAF hung on stubbornly, Germany proceeded with preparations for a seaborne invasion of the island, and at the beginning of September, attack seemed imminent. Large troopships embarked on deceptive manoeuvres in the North Sea. On September 7, London was bombarded in a massive assault by over 600 bombers and the 'Blitz' erupted in full-force, and these events conspired to convince some elements of the British government to issue the codeword signaling the invasion ('Cromwell'), resulting in a good degree of panic in the south east of the country. The attack never came, however, as Hitler found excuses to delay, including the continued survival of the RAF.[21]

Scholars today argue that the reason for the failure of the Luftwaffe to nullify enemy fighters lay in its ill-conceived shift in target priorities, moving from attacks against industrial and military targets to a concerted bombing effort on the built up city of London.[22] The initial stage of the battle of Britain had seen the RAF struggle in the face of destruction of its aerodromes and radar installations. During the Blitz against London and other cities (in response to British bombing raids), the RAF



The north-west portion of what is now the London borough of Hackney, where the Sulzbacher family lived in 1940, was heavily affected by bomb damage during the Blitz. On this extract from the London County Council bomb damage map, the depth of shading represents the relative degree of damage to buildings.

was given vital breathing space in order to gather its resources and train new pilots. While the cities burned, the Luftwaffe lost the initiative, and eventually Hitler's attention focused elsewhere, to the East.

Nonetheless the next several months were to be a true test of British, and in particular, Londoners', resolve. Indeed in the metropolitan borough of Hackney, over 1,000 homes were destroyed and over 3,500 badly

damaged in the months of September and October, 1940.[23] In Stoke Newington over 170 people killed when the Coronation Avenue shelter, off Stoke Newington High Road, was bombed on 13 October.[24] Tragically, on the night of 23 September, Martin Sulzbacher's residence was totally destroyed by an explosive bomb, and his father, mother, brother, sister and sister-in-law, who were home at the time, perished in the attack. Martin was to learn of this from his camp commandant, and forced to grieve alone.[25] Martin's wife Hanna had earlier been interned and their children evacuated, and after the bombing Hanna was allowed a short period of leave to visit the site, to see if there was anything to recover. As Max Sulzbacher pointed out, in a twist of fate it was the practice of internment which saved Martin, his wife and children from death in the Blitz.[26]

After several years the government, which had faced criticism by opponents of the internship of foreigners,[27] relaxed its stance on those under guard, and began to bring back those who were willing to come. Martin Sulzbacher ended up returning to the UK in late 1941 after travelling via the Pacific Ocean and Panama Canal, so that in the end he had actually performed a round-the-world trip as part of his internship! He was fully-released in the spring of 1942, and when he arrived in London, he found his property still devastated and full of rubble.

Martin went to his safety deposit to access his savings, but discovered to his distress that only one gold coin of his previous collection remained. He learned from a neighbour that, when he had been interned, his family had removed most of the coins from the safe for fear that in the event of a successful invasion of Britain, the Nazis would naturally seize all of the possessions stored in banks, as they had done in the Netherlands and France. So the Sulzbacher family had buried Martin's gold, but had not divulged the location to anyone outside of the household, figuring that at least one of them would survive the crisis to recover the coins. Tragically, that was not to be the case, and upon his return Martin was left with little clue as to where the coins had been sequestered.[28]

At the original treasure trove inquest of 1952, Martin told the court how he continued to pay ground rent on his property in Hackney until the end of the war, in the hope that the coins could somehow be located amidst the rubble, but with no luck.[29] Eventually the surviving Sulzbacher family received compensation for their destroyed property, and were able to purchase a home in Golders Green they had been renting.[30] The site in Hackney was taken over by the council, and it was whilst the grounds were being prepared for a new building that a workman discovered the group of 82 American gold coins. These coins were reported to the coroner, W. B. Purchase, who conducted the treasure trove inquest at which Martin Sulzbacher gave his story and testified that he was the rightful owner of the coins. In the end the coroner and the jury accepted Martin's claim and declared that the coins were not treasure trove, and that they belonged to him. Unfortunately for the Sulzbacher family, the exchange controls in place at the time forbade private ownership of so much foreign gold, and Martin was forced to exchange the coins with the Treasury for sterling at a rate below which he might otherwise have been able to command.[31]

With this information at his disposal, and given confirmation of the facts of this story from several independent sources, the coroner in the case of the 2007 discovery, Dr Reid, accepted that it was overwhelmingly likely that the 80 gold coins discovered by the four finders were *addenda* to the 1952 discovery, and had once belonged to Martin Sulzbacher. Martin had, however, passed away in 1982 and so the legal status of the coins depended on the existence of Martin's heirs, and as already mentioned it was established that Martin's son Max was alive and well in Jerusalem. In this matter it was important to note that details of Martin's story had been posted by his son in the *AJR Journal* website *prior* to the 2007 discovery of the coins, so there was no question of any sophisticated attempts at deception. Additionally, Max was able to supply a birth certificate confirming his relationship with Martin, and the signed assent of his siblings to act on their behalf with regards to their father's estate. Max Sulzbacher was also able to produce the very detailed obituary he had written for his father in 1982, which contained many of the facts related above. All in all, it was clear that Max Sulzbacher had the best claim to the coins found in 2007, and the coroner duly acknowledged this by declaring that the coins were not 'treasure' at the conclusion of the inquest in April 2011.

Subsequent to the inquest, Max Sulzbacher graciously donated one of the coins from the hoard to Hackney

Museum, where it is on display and aptly complements the museum's exhibition on immigration to Hackney. I understand that a reward was also given to the finders of the hoard, to acknowledge their diligence and goodwill in reporting the find. The bulk of the coins were sold at auction at the end of November 2011, and I believe it is the intention of the Sulzbacher family to use the money to repair family graves in Enfield, which seems a very fitting purpose.

The British Museum and University College London, who were grateful for the permission of the landowner and residents at Martin Sulzbacher's former address, carried out a one-day archaeological investigation of the site of the recent discovery. The purpose of this scoping exercise was to attempt to ascertain whether there was any obvious context for the burial of the coins within the back garden, and also to ensure that all of the coins that had been buried were recovered and accounted for. To do this, a 3m x 1m trench adjacent to the pond was excavated to a depth of 0.5m and a metal detector was employed to search both the spoil from the trench and the surrounding garden for signs of any remaining components of the hoard. None were found, however the detector located several unassociated metallic artefacts including a copper penny minted in 1940, the date of the destruction of the property. The trench revealed a layer of frogged bricks that were possibly remnants of the rubble from the original houses which were buried when the property was cleared and redeveloped in the 1950s. This is unclear, however, as records make reference to the fact that after destruction of the properties and prior to construction of the current buildings, the space was used as a refuse dump by heavy lorries.[32]

A team from University College London and the British Museum excavates a trench adjacent to the small pond where the hoard was discovered. No evidence of any further burials or coins was found.

The story of the Hackney hoard has already had greater impact than many finds of potential treasure. It has been profiled in the ITV television series 'Britain's Secret Treasures', and has been the inspiration behind an exhibition at gallery8 in Hackney Central (from 22 July 2011 to 28 August 2011).[33] The archaeological finds that are reported to the British Museum often provide important information about our distant past, but this find is significant in two ways: it allows for the re-examination of an aspect of our recent history about which little is taught – though the shameful deportation and internment of American citizens of Japanese descent during the Second World War[34] is fairly well known, I had little previous knowledge of British

internment of enemy aliens before encountering it here - and it is tied to a fascinating human story of courage, tragedy, and determination. Would that all finds had so much to tell.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank colleagues at the British Museum, Museum of London, Hackney Museum, University College London, St Pancras Coroner's Court and the National Archives (Kew) for their assistance both in the processing of this treasure case and in locating additional information on the background of this story. I would also like to thank Max Sulzbacher for his comments and suggestions on the first draft of this article.

Notes

I am indebted to Max Sulzbacher for the provision of a copy of a history of his father's life which he wrote on the occasion of Martin Sulzbacher's passing. Many of the references to Martin's personal story come from this document.

1. See http://finds.org.uk for more information.
2. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Double_eagle (as at 29 July 2012)
3. http://www.workshopoftheworld.com/center_city/mint.html (as at 8 August 2012)
4. The common law of treasure trove governed ownership of objects found in the ground until 14 September 1997, when the Treasure Act 1996 took effect.
5. The Times, 13 March 1952, 2.
6. I. David Brown and Michael Dolley, A bibliography of coin hoards of Great Britain and Ireland, 1500-1967, Royal Numismatic Society, 1971.
7. http://www.ajr.org.uk/ajr-journal
8. One exception to this was an official 'transfer agreement' or *Ha'avara* agreed between the German Government with Zionist authorities in British-controlled Palestine, which allowed for Jews wishing to move there to place their wealth in specially protected accounts that could then be drawn upon from Palestine at a fraction of their original value. From: Michael R. Marrus, *Unwanted: European Refugees in the Twentieth Century* (1985), 212.
9. Marrus, 212-213.
10. Marrus, 170-171.
11. Marrus, 150-153.
12. Max Sulzbacher, *Obituary for Martin Sulzbacher* (1982), unpublished, 6. Max Sulzbacher also relatesnthat he asked his father why they hadn't settled in the Netherlands, to which his father replied that it was too close to Germany (personal communication).
13. Max Sulzbacher relates that years afterward he and his wife visited Dusseldorf and were presented with a book of all the Jews from there who had been killed by the Nazis, and Max recognised the names of some of his old school friends (personal communication).
14. For a detailed account of this period of the war, see Winston Churchill, *The Gathering Storm: The Second World War Volume I* (2005), 359-601.
15. Erich Koch, Deemed Suspect: A Wartime Blunder (1980), 10. The author was himself interned and sent to Canada, where after his release he volunteered to serve in the Army but was rejected due to his flat feet! He then went on to have a career in the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC). Koch says the magistrates did their jobs with efficiency and professionalism, but acknowledged that individual biases (such as anti-bolshevism) could also determine the outcome of a hearing. Max Sulzbacher's obituary of his father attributes his father's internment to the magistrates' anti-semitism, which contributed to the magistrate failing to allow Martin Sulzbacher legal representation and his condemning of Martin on the basis of his violation of (Nazi) German laws regarding the export of money.
16. Ronald Stent. *A bespattered page? The Internment of His Majesty's 'most loyal enemy aliens'* (1980), 35-37.
17. Koch, 12-22.
18. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SS_Arandora_Star (as of 29 July 2012)
19. Stent, 114-133.
20. Andrew Roberts, *The Storm of War: A new History of the Second World War* (2009), 93-100.
21. William Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich: A History of Nazi Germany* (New York , 1990), 768-771.
22. Roberts, 100.
23. Juliet Gardiner, *The Blitz: The British Under Attack* (2010), 26.
24.http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/26/a2090026.shtml (as at 8 August 2012). There is a poignant memorial to this bombing in Abney Park Cemetery, Stoke Newington.
25. Sulzbacher, 9.
26. Personal communication.
27. Koch, 68.
28. Sulzbacher, 10.
29. Hackney Gazette, 14 March 1952, 1.
30. Sulzbacher, 11.
31. Hackney Gazette, 1.
32. Hackney Gazette, 1.
33. http://www.galerie8.co.uk/cat/exhibitions/exhibitions/hackney-hoard-exhibition-23-june-28-august-2011/attachment/_dsc0081/
34. David M. Kennedy, Freedom From Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929 – 1945 (1999), Oxford: Oxford University Press, 748-760.

Contributors to this issue

Dr Chris Derrett has worked as a general practitioner in Hackney for the last 18 years . He has a special interest in the medical and social history of east London. He guides medical history walks for health care professionals who work in the area.

Sally England is Local Studies Librarian at Hackney Archives, and also organises and usually writes the regular history page in the Council's *HackneyToday* newspaper. She doesn't have any spare time as she is too busy co-running an online business dealing in 1920s English china (http://www.beauville.co.uk), playing sangban in the band DrumClub which explores the traditional rhythms of the Malinké peoples of West Africa, and being part of a multi-award winning group of Peckham guerrilla gardeners (http://holbeck-row.blogspot.co.uk).

Dr Denis Gibbs is retired after a career as a consultant physician, most of which was spent at the Royal London Hospital, and part of which was spent in Lichfield. He lived in Hackney for over 20 years and now lives in Appleford, Abingdon, Oxfordshire.

Siân Mogridge qualified as an archivist in 2003 from Liverpool University. She worked at the Corporation of London Records Office and the London Metropolitan Archives before moving to Hackney Archives six years ago. She has enjoyed her time there so far and is looking forward to working with the collections in the new building at Dalston.

Ian Richardson is Treasure Registrar in the Department of Portable Antiquities and Treasure at the British Museum. His expert team has seen many significant archaeological finds acquired by public collections under the Treasure Act 1996, including the Staffordshire Hoard of Anglo-Saxon gold and the Frome Hoard of 52,000 Roman coins. He was recently involved as associate producer in the ITV1 series Britain's Secret Treasures, featuring finds made by members of the public.

Robert H. Thompson has finished cataloguing the Norweb collection of tokens, unless he produces an index to all eight volumes, but currently he is indexing, for publication by the London Topographical Society, William Morgan's huge and beautiful 1682 map of *London &c. actually survey'd,* which extends from Limehouse to Lambeth, New River Head, and St James's Park.

Acknowledgments

Thanks for kind permission for access to and use of images to Robert Thompson (pages 6 and 7), Dr Denis Gibbs (page 15), Tower Hamlets Local Studies Library and Archives (pages 13 and 16), the British Museum (pages 39, 40 and 43-5), and the London Borough of Hackney Archives Department.

The editor would like to thank all the staff of Hackney Archives Department, also Robert Thompson, Robert Whytehead and Elizabeth Green for their support during the preparation of this issue. Special thanks to Sally England, Siân Mogridge and Natasha O'Neill, and (last but far from least) to John Finn for advice on the cover and for patiently rescuing the file. Thanks also to Josephine Boyle, who undertook, for the umpteenth time, the thankless task of proof-reading. She also wishes to communicate encouragement to those intending contributors who are working on, or perhaps merely contemplating, material for volume 18. Do get in touch; it is even now being planned.

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.

Members receive the Friends' 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, 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 available at £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 details and postage.