

# The Hackney Terrier



The Friends of Hackney Archives Newsletter

No. 68 Spring 2005

## An Auction Success !

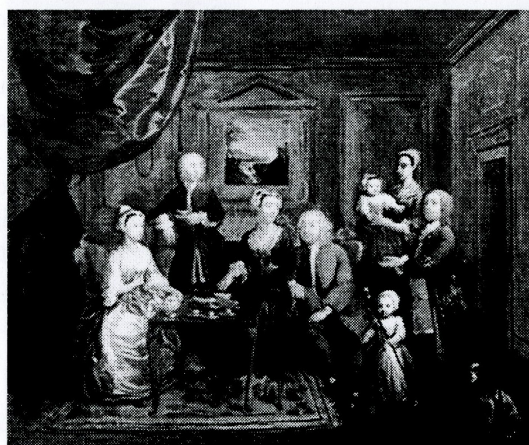
The Friends have acquired two notebooks at auction in Chichester. They date to the early 18th century. One contains drafts of letters by the merchant Henry Norris, of Grove Street in Hackney, many of them to his son Hugh who was managing (or rather neglecting) his business in Stockholm, and to other business friends about problems with placements for their sons and apprentices. The other contains all sorts of details about the planting of Henry's garden (now submerged somewhere to the east of Lauriston Road) with fruit trees; his cellar; statistics about the turnover of the Hackney turnpike trust; and various accounts compiled by his grandson Henry Handley Norris, rector of South Hackney, especially about the works he undertook refurbishing the Grove Street house and garden in the 1790s. A detailed account of these records, and their place in the Norris archive as a whole, is planned for Hackney History.

The auctioneers' estimate was £400 for these items; in the end we paid a frightening £800 to secure them, plus commission. So a grateful vote of thanks to the generosity of Friends and other users, who over the years have contributed to the donations fund which makes such purchases possible; and thanks also to the National Archives, who alerted us to the listing of these items in the Chichester sale. We intend, when funds become available, to sell the notebooks to the Borough for the permanent collection, in order to replenish the Friends' war chest; in the meantime they remain Friends' property, deposited in safe custody at the Archives, where they can be seen and consulted as part of the estate papers (D/F/NOR).

Isobel Watson



*One of the Norris journals acquired at auction.*



*Family portrait of Henry Norris painted by Gawen Hamilton, c1736. Henry is seated, a son to his right.*

## From the Chair of the Friends of Hackney Archives

In the past, this has traditionally been the slot in the newsletter in which news is brought to you about changes, and comings and goings, at Hackney Archives Department. On this occasion the report comes from me, and I can only report to you what I know, from the outside.

Hackney Council's Community and Leisure Directorate, within which the Archives forms an independent unit, has been working on an internal reorganisation since the summer of 2004. Some results of this have recently become clear. From 1st May, Hackney Archives Department will form part of the reorganised Libraries, Archives and Information Service. The Head of Archives post is being abolished, a new post of Principal Archivist with primary professional responsibility for the service (but on a lower pay scale) being put in its place. The Principal Archivist will report to the Archives and Information Manager, another new post, whose portfolio will also include the reference library, computer cataloguing, digital development and information management. The Archives and Information Manager will be one of three senior managers under the new Head of Libraries, Archives and Information, Nicola Baker.

The Friends expressed to Carole Stewart, the Assistant Director piloting this restructuring, your Committee's view that we see little benefit to the Archives in being (in effect) buried under extra layers of Libraries management, when the Department has been so successful – and so widely recognised – for its achievements and innovation as an independent unit. She has replied that 'the role and importance of Hackney Archives is not being diminished and will continue to contribute to the work of the Directorate at a senior and influential level within the organisation'.

At the end of March some staff contracts come to their appointed end. In particular, we have known for some time that we would be saying goodbye to Janine Phillips, and we thank her for her most valued contribution to getting the WebCat on line and on time. Catherine Taylor also leaves us, and her calm efficiency and expertise will be much missed in the searchroom - we congratulate her on her

well-deserved appointment to manage local studies at Chiswick.

As his post will no longer exist on 1 May, David Mander has in effect been made redundant, and will be leaving the Council later that month. Readers will be very aware of the outstanding leadership David has given to the Department over 22 hard-working years, and of course we see him go with almost inexpressible regret. We are however no less dismayed by the Directorate's failure to ensure that the shape of revised arrangements for the Archives staff was settled in good time to ensure continuity in and maintenance of the service. Though Ted Rogers and Elizabeth Green, in whom the Friends have great confidence, remain in post, we would have expected the new Principal Archivist to be identified by now. However it has only very recently been decided that this post should be advertised.

Reduction in staff numbers makes more limited opening hours inevitable, and if numbers fall further it will become harder to guarantee advertised opening times. In the last day or two (as I write) a worrying position has been belatedly ameliorated, as Sally England, who has made such a thorough and imaginative job of creating the WebCat, has had her contract extended till the end of June. We put our trust in Nicola Baker, who takes up her appointment as Head of Libraries Archives and Information on 18 April, to end, as swiftly as possible, the present uncertainty for the shape of the future service.

Readers with comments or questions on any of the above can contact me at [friendsofhackneyarchives@hotmail.com](mailto:friendsofhackneyarchives@hotmail.com) or 29 Stepney Green E1 3JX.

Isobel Watson

### 'TERRIER' BACK NUMBERS

Many issues are now out of print, and of others there are between one and three copies left. For issues up to no. 61, while stocks last copies can be supplied (at £1 each post free) of nos. 3, 11, 12-18, 20-40, 42, 44-47, 51 and 58-61. Please check availability before ordering, or write a cheque (payable to Friends of Hackney Archives) stating a maximum payable.

## Other Hackneys

Long standing members of the Friends may recall a piece we ran on Upper Hackney, just outside Matlock, in Derbyshire. Now as an addition to the series here are two other familiar local place names in another context.

### Dalston, Cumbria

Dalston in Cumbria is on the banks of the Caldew river four and a half miles south of Carlisle, and today is a prosperous commuter village for people working in Carlisle. The village centre includes St Michael's Church, which has what appeared to be a flourishing flower festival in progress when I visited in August 2004, the Blue Bell pub on the main green, and opposite, sharing space with a small shop, Dalston Library.



*Dalston Library, Cumbria*

The historic Dalston parish was six miles long and three miles wide. The History, Gazetteer and directory of Cumberland of 1847 notes the variety of mills along the banks of the Caldew within the parish - three for cotton production, two for corn, one iron and one flax mill. (I am indebted to the Images of Cumbria website produced by Steve Bulman, which contains a full transcript of the Dalston parish entry).

There was a Dalston family, descended from Robert de Vallibus by Ranulph de Meschines in the early 12<sup>th</sup> century, who changed his name to Dalston. The last of the line, Sir George Dalston, died prior to 1761, when the family still lived at Dalston Hall in the manor of Little Dalston. Dalston barony was lost when Cumberland was granted to David of Scotland in the reign of King John and passed to the bishop of Carlisle in 1230.

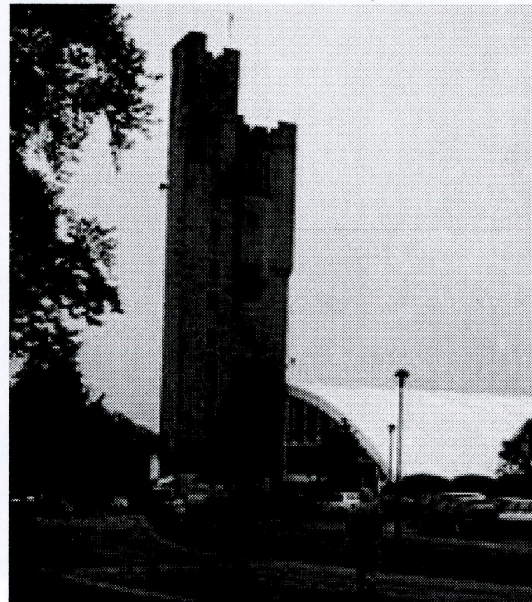
### Haggerston, Northumberland

London Hackney people would hardly associate Haggerston with holiday camps, but this has been the fate of the former Haggerston Castle.

Haggerston Castle in the parish of Ancroft, lies just east of the A1 about one and a half miles north of the junction with the road to Holy Island. The 1:50 000 Ordnance Survey map is misleading, as it looks as if there is an extensive village, but this is the modern roads and chalets of the holiday camp in the grounds of the former estate. Some estate cottages and what looks to have been the estate manager's house survive to the north. We discovered this the hard way - driving back down the A1 looking for the village when all that was on offer were signs for the holiday camp!

A castle at Haggerston was mentioned in 1311. In 1772 it consisted of a square tower with four floors. This was demolished in 1805 when a later house was built on the site. It would appear that Haggerston Castle was completely rebuilt in 1893-7 to designs by architect R. Norman Shaw for Thomas Leyland. The tower dates from this period of the house, and is all that survived the demolition of the remainder of the house in 1933.

*Cont. on page 7*



*The ruins of Haggerston Castle, now transformed into a holiday camp.*

# Webcat Launch

Hackney Archives Department's Webcat was launched on the evening of 14th March 2005 by the Speaker of Hackney Council, Geoff Taylor. Webcat, financed by the Heritage Lottery Fund and powered by Adlib software, is believed to be the first fully functioning cross-domain search-engine in a London or indeed a UK record office, able to retrieve information from both the archive and local studies library electronic catalogues.

**Sally England, Webcat Project Manager, describes the highs and lows of her Webcat experience:**

The funds for the project were granted to HAD in the autumn of 2002 and, along with Project Administrator Julia Hoffbrand, I came on board in the summer of 2003 as Webcat Librarian. Information was taken from existing card catalogues, checked and amended, then transferred to the electronic system. The former Stoke Newington local studies collection was a major challenge as it used a

different classification system to that now employed at HAD so each item had to be individually assessed and reclassified before being assimilated into the library stock. Often the local connection was obvious and thus why an item had been included within the collection, sometimes a careful reading of a book was required, but many items posed contextual problems which could only be solved by considerable research. Information was garnered from sources ranging from the 1885 edition of the Dictionary of National Biography to cutting-edge on-line electronic search tools. Knowledge held by other members of HAD was invaluable and I must thank them all for their patience with my many queries and all-too-frequent demands of 'Why on earth have we got this?'

Researching the books and pamphlets within the Daniel Defoe collection was an exciting challenge. Printed at a time when the author's name was rarely included, the majority of these had come from Rochdale Public Library in the 1920s and all



*Launch of the Webcat online catalogue, held at Hackney Archives Department on Monday 14 March 2005. Guests included Councillor Geoff Taylor, the Speaker of Hackney Council, Nicola Baker, newly appointed Head of Libraries, Archives and Information Service and Councillor Nargis Khan.*

were catalogued as the work of Defoe. It was now important to revisit these attributions in the light of modern scholarship to ascertain whether Defoe was still believed to be the author. Visits to the British Library to consult the English Short Title Catalogue proved invaluable, as did the acquisition of the most recent Defoe biographies and bibliographies. This also led to contact being made with the eminent Defoe scholar Maximilian Novak, Emeritus Professor of English Literature at the University of California, Los Angeles, whose help and advice were invaluable. Many of the Rochdale items are now not ascribed to Defoe and in fact many never were: it appears that no research was made into their authorship at the time of acquisition, rather they were all just lumped under 'Defoe' and so they remained for some 80 years.

Probably the most rewarding outcome of the project was the finding of the William Warbis hand-made books of poems by Edgar Allan Poe and the reuniting of the 4 generations of the Warbis family at HAD in August 2004 as reported in the special summer edition of the Terrier. Also last summer, Julia Hoffbrand moved on to work at the Royal Pharmaceutical Society and is now Assistant Curator, Social and Working History at the Museum of London. We all wish her well for the future and



*Sally England, Webcat Project Manager and Janine Phillips, Webcat Assistant Librarian, hold up the last catalogue card.*

are extremely grateful for her hard work in helping set up the project and for the inroads she made into transferring the old card catalogue information. Julia was eventually replaced by Janine Phillips



*Sally England, Webcat Project Manager, talks about the project at the launch party on 14 March.*

who had worked with me previously at English Heritage and whom I knew had the professional skills and aptitude needed to finish the project on time. Janine's quick grasp of the problems posed by the card catalogue was matched only by her ability to resolve them unaided, and her recent work in auditing and reshelving the pamphlet and oversized book collections is a major achievement.

I must thank the HAD team for all their hard work in organising and facilitating the Webcat launch party, with special thanks to Jacqueline Bradshaw-Price who designed the project logo, to Ivy Davis for a splendid buffet, and to the Friends of HAD for providing wine for the evening. It was probably inevitable that there would be a last-minute IT glitch. Webcat had worked perfectly in the afternoon but by the time guests had begun to arrive and were keen to see the product in action, we discovered that all was not well. Webcat would find items searched for but was unable to display their full details. Luckily everyone was very understanding and I'm happy to report that the trial version of Webcat is now available via the Archives home page on the Hackney Council website at <http://www.hackney.gov.uk/archives/webcat.htm>

## Obituary

### T.F.T. Baker 1935-2004

Tim Baker, christened Thomas Francis Timothy but always known as Timothy or Tim, was born in December 1935. He was at school at St Peter's College Radley, and later went to Hertford College, University of Oxford, where he read Modern History, graduating in 1959. After graduation he undertook research for a B.Litt. on Burgundy in the 15th century, in particular the Netherlands, but decided not to complete it. He later went to work on the History of Parliament, where he contributed biographies of Commons' MPs to the section for 1509 to 1558, under the editorship of Professor S.T. Bindoff. It was probably Bindoff's support that helped Tim secure the post of Local Editor, later renamed County Editor, for the Victoria County History of Middlesex in 1967. He remained County Editor until his retirement in July 2001.

Under his editorship progress on the Middlesex History was speeded up. He completed the editing of volume 4, published in 1971, and between then and his retirement contributed parish articles and edited seven more volumes, published between 1976 and 1998.

In addition to work produced as part of his employment, he also wrote books for the publishers, Cassell Ltd. He produced for Cassells an abridgement of Winston Churchill's four-volume History of the English-Speaking Peoples, which was published in 1964 under the title The Island Race; it was re-issued in paperback in 1972. He also wrote two other books for Cassells, The Normans, published in 1966, and Medieval London, published in 1970.

Tim had many cultural interests outside history. In his younger days he was a fine draughtsman and artist, and throughout his life he not only read widely in English Literature but also wrote poetry himself. He was particularly devoted to the visual arts, and an assiduous visitor to art galleries both in Britain and around Europe. At his funeral, the address given by one of his closest friends summed up his most outstanding qualities as goodness of heart and equanimity. He is survived by his wife Prudence and their three sons, James, Alexander, and Jonathan.

Patricia Croot and Diane Bolton

### David Mander remembers Tim Baker...

I must have first encountered Tim Baker when I joined the committee of the Victoria County History for Middlesex in 1983. He was a tall, bespectacled, gentle and slightly hesitant in manner, but very thorough and patient in application. Tim's reports on the editorial progress made by the volumes under his charge, which in my time on the committee comprised Vol VIII Islington and Stoke Newington (1985), Vol IX Hampstead and Paddington (1989), Vol X, Hackney (1995) and Vol XI Early Stepney with Bethnal Green (1998), were the main stay in terms of substance of those meetings. Following on from the increasing difficulties of financing the Middlesex work and necessary details of administration, they reminded the committee of the academic purpose of the work and the quality of the research undertaken by Tim and his colleagues.

Tim undertook the work on the Hackney volume himself, familiarising himself with the area by forays on foot. Not all the research was undertaken at Hackney Archives, but he spent considerable time, building on secondary sources and making use of our older and more recently catalogued records. Tim was happy to help with some issues that remained unresolved at the time - one I recall being the location and history of the curiously named Pacifico's almshouses, which turned out to be for Sephardic Jews funded from an endowment made by Emmanuel Pacifico in 1851 and built at the southern end of London Fields. I hope that the Hackney volume benefited by the close working partnership that developed between Tim and the record office. For Hackney folk the thorough volume on Hackney will serve as a permanent local memorial to Tim and his long hours of research.

#### Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park Open Day

On Monday 30th May between 11 and 4 the Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park, Southern Grove E3, invite everybody to their annual open day. A history stall is one of the many features. Information from [www.towerhamletscemetery.org](http://www.towerhamletscemetery.org).

## Website

### “A Pleasant Paradize”

Hackney's glorious gardens – not an idea immediately associated with the landscape of the Inner London Borough. Yet Hackney has a distinguished place in the history of gardening, having had important gardens of its own and been home to nurserymen whose techniques and plant introductions influenced the whole of British gardening.

As part of Hackney Archives Department's activities for the 2004 Archive Awareness Campaign an online exhibition looking into this aspect of Hackney's history was created. It is now available through our homepage at [www.hackney.gov.uk/archives](http://www.hackney.gov.uk/archives). Here you will find information about the history of gardening, stories about Hackney gardens and gardeners and the story of Loddiges Nursery, the largest hothouse in the world which supplied the Duke of Devonshire's gardens at Chatsworth and the Botanical Gardens at Kew.



*An illustration from The Gardener's Magazine of 1826, which shows the summer costume of a journeyman gardener: straw hat, cotton jacket and trousers.*

*cont. from page 3*

Leyland had his own private zoo at the castle and built brick enclosures, possibly to house buffalo. Northumberland had featured in the itineraries of Buffalo Bill and perhaps Leyland hoped to attract a wider audience to his project. An animal shelter, possibly for antelope, and also dating from the Leyland period survives to the south of the Castle site. The zoo was not a success and closed prior to the sale of the estate in 1933.

Just to the west of the A1 is Haggerston Dovecote, a small tapering tower some nine metres high, which probably started life as a windmill in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and was converted to a dovecote in 1828. New Haggerston, which we did not visit, lies a three quarters of a mile further east from the A1. This replaced a medieval village, which lay to the north and west of Haggerston Castle. Decline did not set in until the 17<sup>th</sup> century, but by 1769 New Haggerston was established and the old village had gone. Only traces of medieval ploughing remain on the former site. (Historical information from [www.keystothepast.info](http://www.keystothepast.info))

David Mander

## Book review

### Hackney Memories

Alan Wilson  
Sutton Publishing, 2004  
ISBN: 0750937165  
£14.99

This is a very personal account of growing up in Hackney as a working class boy. The author was born in 1928 and the book covers his childhood years until the Second World War in 1939 which clearly marked a turning point in his life, the dividing line between the innocent pleasures of childhood and dealing with momentous world events, such as the war.

The author deals not only with the change in the landscape of Hackney, but also the change in values. His anecdotes convey the importance of family life and the church in pre-war society. The book is infused with a sense of nostalgia, both for childhood and a Britain where King and Empire are important and held up as certainties.



In one interesting chapter the author talks about the fact that the Hackney of today is both familiar and foreign to him. There are aspects of the landscape from his childhood that survive such as St. Luke's and St. John's churches, the old railway bridge that spans Mare Street and Hackney Empire (now restored), but other aspects that have gone for good, such as the 'cosy' slums and horses and trams in the streets.

The book is full of a wealth of historical detail, such as the history of the Tea Pavilion and the Lido in Victoria Park, as well as the fact that the London and North Eastern Railways marked the year of the Silver Jubilee (1935) with a gleaming new locomotive, known as the Silver Link. The author's description of the "tuppenny rush"- going to the cinema on Saturday mornings - is particularly vivid, as well as his accounts of the operations of illegal street bookies.

Summer holidays included trips to Southend-on-Sea, Margate and Ramsgate. I found particularly poignant the author's description of the fate of the *Queen of the Channel*, one of the pleasure boats that plied their trade at Southend, which was later sunk off Dunkirk.

The author finally achieves his ambition of winning a scholarship to a grammar school, the gateway of opportunity for a working class boy. However the war changes all this. He is evacuated to the countryside and both the house where he grew up in Darnley Road and Beale Place in Bow, where he was born, were destroyed.

Elizabeth Green

## PARKING NEAR HACKNEY ARCHIVES

After invoking the Council's complaints procedure, the Friends have finally received a reply to various points we have been attempting to put to Hackney Parking Services about the availability and cost of parking in bays near the Archives. The good news is that the reply confirms that a type of corporate permit is available which is not specific to particular vehicles, and could therefore be 'bookable' by drivers visiting the Archives for use one at a time in any available bay. The bad news is that the annual cost of such a permit would be £1,350 (much more than the standard business permit, which is not appropriate to our needs).

When the Friends' Committee originally discussed this problem in principle, it was felt that it might be possible to devise a system whereby the cost of an annual permit, if available, was met by a daily charge to drivers making use of it. Given the very high cost of the permit now on offer, even if it was in paid-for use on virtually every day on which the Archives are open to the public, the cost per day would probably have to be in excess of £7.00. Our impression, from a survey undertaken last autumn, is that the demand for such a facility would be nowhere near high enough even to keep the cost down to this level (indeed, that there is unlikely to be much demand at all). However, please let us know your views. If you would be keen to 'rent' a corporate permit for a day, what would you be prepared to pay for it?

(Ordinary meter charges for parking between 9.30 and 5.00 amount to £15.00, and the maximum stay is 4 hours.)

Isobel Watson

### Credits & Contacts

*The Hackney Terrier*, which appears at least three times a year, is published by the Friends of Hackney Archives and produced by Elizabeth Green. The Friends constitute an independent charity (no. 1074493) and membership is open to all: the subscription is £10 in the UK (plus £2 for each additional member at the same address) and £20 sterling overseas. The subscription runs for a calendar year and includes a copy of the journal *Hackney History*. Contact details are:

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