

The Hackney Terrier

The Friends of Hackney Archives Newsletter

88



Summer 2012

New Acquisitions

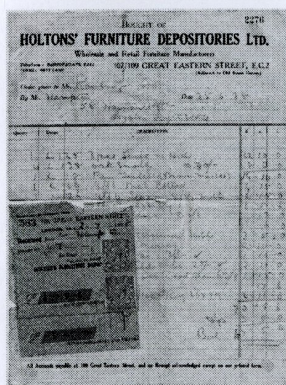
We have a year's worth of accessions to catch up on. It's going to be hard picking just a few, but these should give you an idea of the variety of archives we receive.

Lloyd Attree & Smith

Last year we were lucky to be given the records of the men's tailoring firm Lloyd Attree & Smith, kindly donated by the Lloyd family. The business is most well known for creating the 'octagon tie', mentioned by WS Gilbert in one of his 'Bab Ballads'. Founded in 1857 at Wood Street in the City, in 1899 the company built a large factory on Shacklewell Lane where they stayed until the 1970s. The collection contains advertising images, memo books, photographs, newspaper cuttings and a 'style oscar' won at the National Association of Outfitters annual convention in 1956. It also, excitingly, includes a box of tie samples in a variety of shapes and sizes, some quite unusual.

Papers of Rose & Jim Hobden

This is a rather different accession – a collection of family papers. For much of the 20th century,



Rose and Jim Hobden lived at 71 Egerton Road, Stamford Hill. Last year we were given two large boxes of their papers – letters, postcards, photograph albums and other documents – by the Hobden's son's executor. The earliest correspondence

between Jim and his future wife dates from the 1920s – Egerton Road is given as Jim's address even then. The papers then carry on through the couple's marriage, the Second World War (the collection includes ration books) and family holidays, with the last items dating from the 1980s. Records of organisations and businesses do not always survive well but personal records of ordinary people tend to have any even poorer survival rate. This wonderful collection gives a picture of life in Stamford Hill covering five or six decades.

Small Items

The majority of accessions that we receive are not large collections but individual items that members of the public bring in to us. We've had a number of particularly nice ones recently, all of them given to us by members of the family concerned. One of them, like the Hobden papers, helps in giving a picture of home life. In 1928 William John Hampton got married and seems to have set up home for the first time. The record we have been given is a receipt (below left) for furniture bought at Holton's ►

Archives Opening Delayed

At the meeting of the Friends last November, it was announced the collections would be moved to their new home by April 2012. Unfortunately, this hasn't happened as the climatic conditions in the storage area are not sufficiently stable. The Search Room is offering a partial service at Dalston CLR James Library, Tuesday to Saturday. Please see www.hackney.gov.uk/archives for opening hours. No appointments required. You can contact us via archives@hackney.gov.uk or 020 8356 8925. As soon as we have a definite date for the resumption of a full service, we will inform members.

Libby Adams, Principal Archivist

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Depositories Ltd on Great Eastern Street. The total sum spent comes to £67.5.6 – a large amount at the time. His purchases include a three-piece suite in hide at £22.10.0, a bedstead at £4.15.0 and a sprung mattress at £2.15.0.

We've also been given a photograph from the mid-20th Century of a family group in a hop field in Kent. The people shown are the Slack family of 23 Bradstock Road, Homerton. Like many other urban families who couldn't afford a break, they chose to go on a working holiday. Travelling to Kent to help with hop picking meant a change of work and scene and a chance for the children to run about in the countryside.

Appropriately for this year we were handed a telegraph from Buckingham Palace to PT Perkins, a household goods shop on Clarence Road. The last two lines of the



The Slack family on a hop-picking holiday in Kent

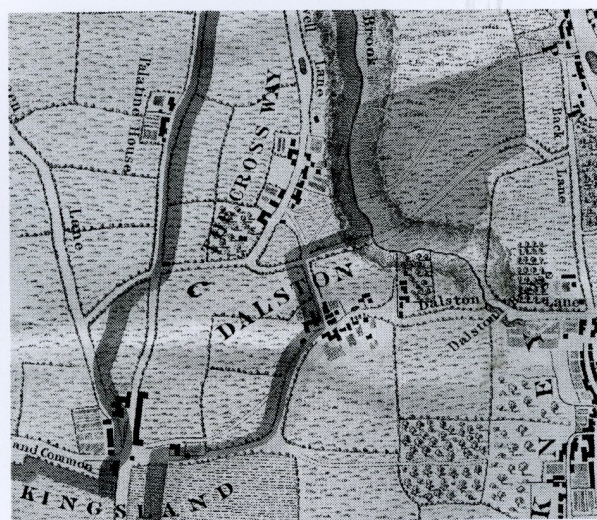
telegraph are missing, but the first two read “THE MESSAGE OF GOOD WISHES CONTAINED IN YOUR TELEGRAM WAS MUCH APPRECIATED BY THE KING WHOSE SINCERE THANKS...” The date makes the message perfectly understandable – July 1935, a couple of months after George V's Silver Jubilee.

Siân Mogridge, Archivist

History of Dalston Exhibition

A series of four new exhibition panels is now on show at Hackney Archives. Using images, maps and documents from the collections, it charts the history of the area around the archives' new home in the Dalston CLR James Library. The exhibition tells the story of how a tiny rural hamlet developed into a bustling London suburb. The panels will be on display in the Local Studies Library area of the Search Room for the next few months, so do drop by and take a look.

Sally England, Local Studies Librarian



Visits to Hackney Archives

There have been a number of group visits to the archives since we opened in our new building

Schools

The first visit was from a group of Year 5 pupils from Colvestone Primary School on 31 January. Their visit was part of a project called Taste of Hackney: “an oral history project exploring the history of Ridley Road market as told by the people who have lived, worked and shopped there during the 20th century”. This Heritage Lottery funded project was co-ordinated by Different Drum Productions.

The project aimed to bring together pupils from Colvestone School and members of Age UK Hackney to work collaboratively with community artists from Different Drum Productions to produce “a customised iPhone and Android app to guide the listener through the market, unearthing its forgotten stories”. The workshop at Hackney Archives aimed to introduce the group to using our historical resources to research the market’s history. They looked at historic maps, newspapers, images and video footage. The new Search Room worked well, in conjunction with the Education Room next door to it. This is large enough to accommodate 30 schoolchildren in different groups, without being too disruptive to other Archives users.

We had another visit on 27 March, this time by pupils from Holy Trinity School. This was part of a broader project to familiarise students from the school, which is right next door to the new CLR James Library, with the new library and archives. Year 5 students are working with performance poet Adisa on a number of different activities, many of them based around the writings of CLR James. On their visit to the Archives, the students tried to trace the

route from school to their homes on historic maps, looking at what had changed; looked up newspapers for the dates of their birth; and chose images that they particularly identified with – for example historic images of their streets or of places they know – from the image database.

The Archives has also been working more closely with Hackney Museum in relation to our work with schools. One result of this was the Teachers Forum, co-ordinated by Hackney Museum, and held during the launch week for the new CLR James Library in the last week of February. The purpose of the event was to introduce teachers at local schools to the different offers from the Archives, Museum and Library and to provide teachers with an opportunity to discuss what they would like from us and how best to publicise our services to schools. The event included a tour around the Search Room, Conservation Room and basement storage rooms to introduce teachers to the new spaces that could be utilised for class visits to the Archives. A number of teachers expressed interest in working with us to develop sessions for schools, such as one on Victorian Hackney.

Mapping the Change

Another event held during the new building’s launch week was the first workshop to introduce people to the Mapping the Change project. Mapping the Change is a Heritage Lottery funded project to record changes that occur in local people’s lives as a result of London hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2012. It’s being led by Hackney Museum and has a number of different elements, including a project focussing on the Archives, promoting it to Hackney residents as a service to support the development of community archives in Hackney, as a way of ensuring sustainability for the principles of the Mapping the Change project. ►

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The workshop aimed to introduce people to the project. The idea is to recruit a group of volunteers who will learn about the Archives, develop research skills and then act as ambassadors for the Archives in the wider community, encouraging people to document changes in their local area and donate material to the Archives. The session included an introduction to the different resources in the search room, such as historic maps, photographs, street and trade directories and local newspapers on microfilm, as well as a tour of the conservation room and the basement storage areas.

There was also an opportunity for tea in the education room and for participants to talk about their interests and how they'd like to be

involved with the project. A second Mapping the Change workshop was held at the end of March. This time there was more opportunity for participants to do their own research. Twelve people attended each of these workshops and some have expressed interest in further participation in the project.

Other Visits

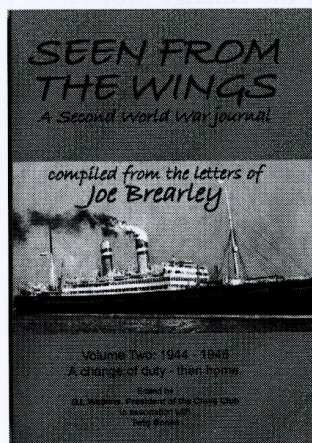
The architecture charity Building Exploratory's activity group for older people, the Senior BEEs, had a group visit to the Archives and were shown round the new Search Room and the basement storage areas.

Elizabeth Green
Access and Outreach Officer

Recent Additions to the Local Studies Library

Sally England, Local Studies Librarian

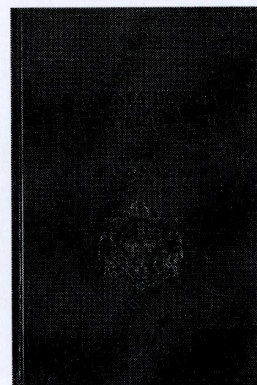
Many thanks to GL 'Willie' Watkins (Hackney Archives Friend and chairman of the Clove Club organisation for former members of Hackney Downs School) for not one but two kind donations to the Local Studies Library.



The first of these is the second volume of *Seen From the Wings: a Second World War Journal Compiled from the Letters of Joe Brearley*, edited by Mr Watkins. Brearley was deputy headmaster at Hackney Downs School, where he taught English to

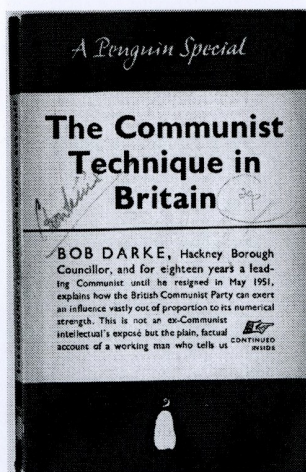
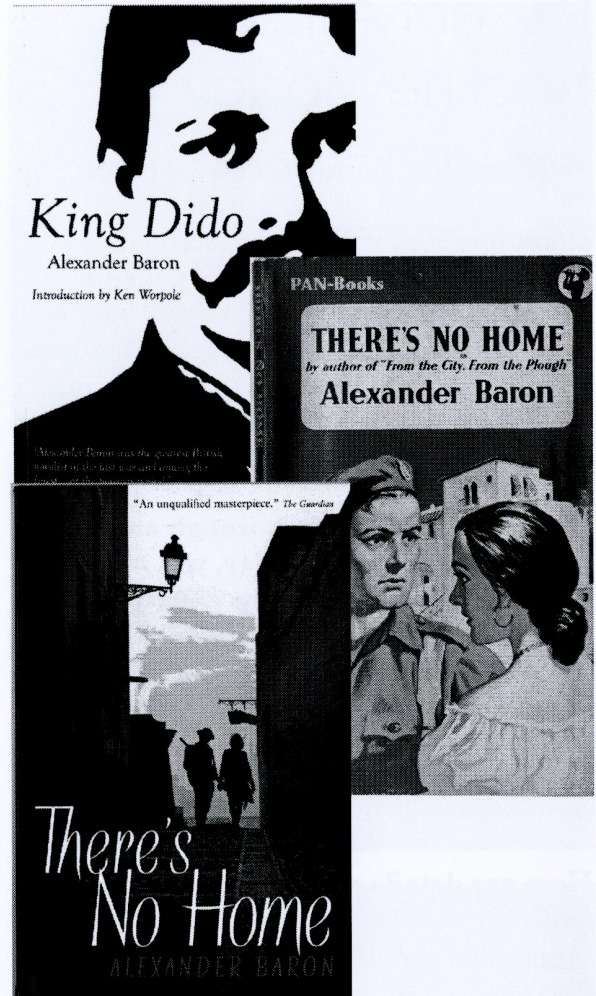
Harold Pinter, but this volume of his memoirs, covering the years 1944 to 1946, has no direct reference to the school. (Shelved at 920 BRI)

The second donation is *Hackney Downs 1876-1995: the Life and Death of a School* by former pupil Professor Geoffrey Alderman. This follows Alderman's 1971 book *The History of Hackney Downs School*, updating the story up to the closure of the school, using previously unpublished material. (Shelved at 377.2 HAC)



Joseph Bernstein was also a pupil at Hackney Downs School after attending Shacklewell Elementary School. Under the name Alexander Baron he went on to become a prolific author and screenwriter. Ken Worpole has kindly donated both a new and a vintage 1960 edition of Baron's 1950 novel *There's No Home*, set during the Allied invasion of Sicily, plus a new edition of *King Dido* (1969), the story of a docker-turned-criminal, set in Bethnal Green, for which Professor Worpole has written the introduction.

(Shelved at 823 BAR)



Ken Worpole has also very kindly given a 1952 first edition Penguin special of *The Communist Technique in Britain* by Bob Darke, who was at the time one of two Communist councillors in Hackney. The book paints a colourful if controversial picture of flourishing local trade unionism and Communist party membership at a time when the Jewish community made up the borough's largest ethnic minority.

(Shelved at 321.71)

Recent Articles in Hackney Today

Sally England, Local Studies Librarian

Don't forget that Hackney Archives contributes a regular history page to the council's fortnightly free newspaper *Hackney Today*. The page looks at stories and events both past and present using material from the archive collections and Local Studies library.

If you live outside the borough and do not receive *Hackney Today*, you may be interested to know that an electronic copy (PDF) of the latest issue is available online at www.hackney.gov.uk/w-hackneytoday.htm. You can also access back issues by clicking on the tab to the left of that page. Articles can be found on page 23 of earlier issues, page 25 of later ones.

Here are details of a few of the articles (with the number of the issue they appeared in) published since the last *Terrier*:

FRIENDS AGM

The Friends AGM will be held on Wednesday 18 July 2012 at

***Hackney Archives,
CLR James Library
Dalston Square***

The meeting will begin at 6.30pm.

Please let us know by 11 July if you are planning to attend.

255 A Clean Sheet

The story of the Millfields Disinfecting Station, opened in 1902 to help combat the spread of infections and disease at a time when illnesses that today cause only temporary discomfort were major killers.

257 Price of Travel

How the problem of road maintenance was solved from 1713 onwards by the establishment of Turnpike Trusts and the building of toll gates to exact charges for using the roads.

260 Death Beds

The history of watercress farming in Hackney and how such a humble concern was the cause of 35 deaths in 1903, signalling the end of the industry.

266 Pond Life

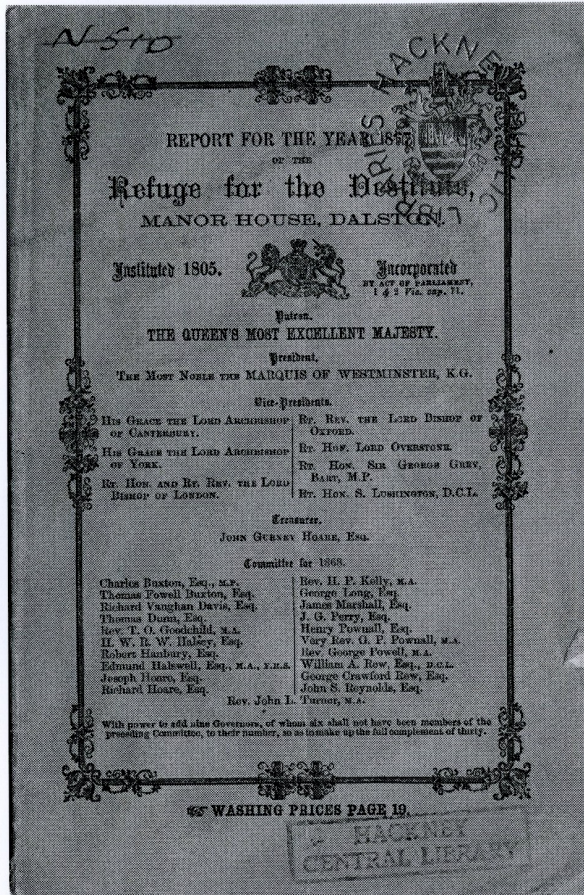
The history of Clapton Pond, one of the few surviving reminders of Hackney's rural past and now an award-winning green space and community focal point.

273 Great Expectations

In celebration of the 200th anniversary of the birth of Charles Dickens, a look at his relationship with Hackney in words and pictures.

276 A Second Chance

An account of the Refuge for the Destitute, with extracts from the organisation's minute books telling the sad stories of the women who applied for shelter there.



KINGSLAND GATE 1860

Clockwise from top left: Refuge for the Destitute report 1877, Clapton Pond, Morning Lane watercress beds, Dickens and friends, Kingsland Tollgate 1860

Joe Coral, Bookmaker

One of the joys of collecting ephemera is the unexpected find. I recently came across an advertisement that came into this category. In a programme from the Alex (Alexandra) Theatre, Stoke Newington Road from 10 April 1950 there is a one-page advertisement for Joe Coral, Turf Accountant. It is probably significant that the head office at this time was at 91 Stoke Newington Road, very near to the theatre. I can find no similar advertisements in programmes for the Hackney Empire from about this period.

The logo 'No limit – Anything' was probably a common claim to reliability and assurance by bookmakers at this time. Cooper, Bretts Ltd made a similar claim of 'Genuine No Limit Rules' in an advertisement in a Hackney Empire programme dated 9 March 1953.

My eye was drawn to four words in Hebrew text printed upside down under the rubric 'No limit – Anything' in the Coral advertisement. They read in Yiddish 'Vifeel Iyar Ha'aretz Gloost' which means 'However much your heart desires' or in a freer translation 'How much you want'. The advertisement was obviously aimed at Jewish gamblers. In 1950 the area around the Alex Theatre had many Jewish inhabitants and in 2011 there is still a synagogue in Walford Road.

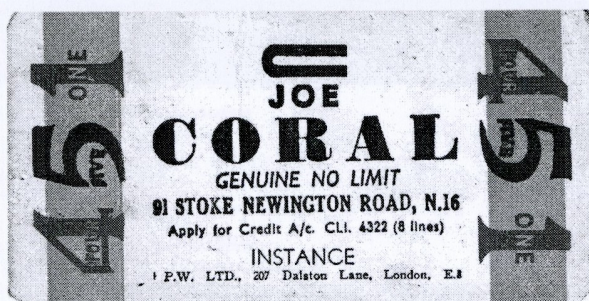
Gambling was a common addiction for young Jewish men during this time. There were many Jewish families who were ruined financially by the habit, which would have been enhanced by the 'No limit – Anything' attraction. The only explanation I can give for printing the Hebrew text upside down

is a mistake by the copywriter. Hebrew is written and read from right to left and many scholars can read the text from any direction. However, I do not believe that these scholars would have been customers of Joe Coral!

A further interesting piece of ephemera in my collection is an advertising card from about the same time for Joe Coral with the logo 'Genuine No Limit'.

The Coral Empire was founded in 1926, probably originating from a stand at Clapton's greyhound track. Joe Coral (1904-1996) left school at the age of 14. According to biographical accounts he was taking bets in a Stoke Newington billiards hall during the General Strike of 1926. By 1930 he had a network of between 70 and 80 street runners. (For an illuminating account, see 'The Bookies' Turning' by Robert Bartrop, *Hackney Terrier* no.11, Summer 1988). By 2010 Joe Coral employed 11,500 people with an annual turnover of over £2 billion and in 2011 had over 1600 betting outlets, including one that now occupies the Old Town Hall, Hackney.

*Dr Melvyn Brooks, Friend of Hackney Archives
Tel Shalom, Karkur, Israel*



The Hackney Terrier is published by the Friends of Hackney Archives, Dalston CLR James Library and Hackney Archives, Dalston Square, London E8 3BQ 020 8356 8925, archives@hackney.gov.uk Contributions to future issues should be sent to Sally England at the above address.