
New to Hackney Archives

Acquisitions, loans and deposits

The New Look Terrier

You will have noticed the last Terrier's new look, which along with the introduction of Friends Interests is part of our drive to make the Terrier more interesting, attractive and readable. We hope that you approve of these changes.

One omission last issue was a caption for the cover photograph. Many of you probably concluded it was from the Law loan of photographs, which indeed it is. The view is of Link Street, taken from Morning Lane and including Balls Buildings (as mentioned in many certificates, census returns and directories!) on the right (now the site of Marian Court).

Hackney History Mini-Fair

Enclosed with this Terrier you will find details of the first Hackney History Mini-Fair. This ground-breaking event will take place at the Department from 11.00am to 4.00pm on **Saturday 1 July**. It will be followed by the Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Hackney Archives. We hope that as many Friends as possible will be able to attend, and stay for the AGM afterwards.

HAD staff will be on hand to answer your archive, family history and conservation enquiries; the East of London Family History Society, the London & North Middlesex Family History Society and the Hackney Society will run book stalls; and Hackney Museum will be demonstrating some of the displays they will be using in their new premises in the Technology and Learning Centre (TLC) in Mare Street. Alex Sydney of the Museum has bravely agreed to identify mystery objects which people may bring along, but he will not be

able to value them.

As well as attending this event, we still need a few more Friends to act as greeters and stewards for the Mini-Fair. If you are willing and able to undertake these far from onerous duties - if only for part of the day - please get in touch with Martin Taylor at HAD.

New Census Indexes

1851 Hackney

1841 Stoke Newington

As you will have seen from our cover, the 1851 census index for Hackney (including Stoke Newington) has now been published.

A joint enterprise of the East of London Family History Society and the London & North Middlesex Family History Society, the index is in two parts (Surnames A-J and K-Z), each containing six fiche, 12 fiche in all. The accompanying booklets note the format of the index and include a map of the Hackney registration district, together with a note on Hackney churches to 1851.

The 1841 index for Stoke Newington has also been published on fiche by the East of London Family History Society. It comes with an introduction by our Chair, Isobel Watson, in the form of a short description of Stoke Newington in 1841.

So if you're flummoxed by those missing ancestors, try the new indexes! You will be very welcome at HAD, or you might prefer to commission work from our search service, details available on request, or on our pages of the Council's website at www.hackney.gov.uk

Archive Acquisition...or Not!

The inhabitants of Hackney, and the local history community in general, lost out on 19 May, when Senior Assistant Archivist Martin Taylor was outbid at an auction at Christie's in South Kensington. The lot in question was an 1803 plan of the Norris estate in South Hackney. Originally part of the Norris estate papers deposited at HAD via the British Records Association, it was held back by the solicitors' firm at the time of deposit. The bidding was quite intense and the lot finally went for £800, more than HAD could afford, even with help from the Friends.

It seems likely that it was bought by a dealer; we would not be at all surprised should we be offered the plan at an even higher price by the said dealer. HAD did have a photographic copy of the plan made for reference, which is in the map cabinet. No copy however can ever fully represent the original document. Some might say that it is outrageous that an important piece of the local community's history should be appropriated by a dealer or private collector. Perhaps if any Friend becomes aware of the current whereabouts of the plan, they would let us know.

Local History Library

Recently acquired publications include:-

Tracing your ancestors in the Public Record Office, Fifth edition, edited by Amanda Bevan (Public Record Office 1999). This is one of the most important family history manuals around. If you don't have it, ask Father Christmas for it!

Immigrants and Aliens: a guide to sources on UK immigration and citizenship, by Roger Kershaw and Mark Pearsall (Public Record Office 2000). An important guide for those family historians who have discovered that their ancestors were immigrants to the UK.

Office News

The budget for 2000/2001 has now been set at the figure we were expecting. There have not been any further cuts - yet. Summer is coming in, as is Hackney's annual spending moratorium. It was imposed on 5 June because of an apparent deficit on last year's accounts. We hardly need to add that HAD came in on budget in 1999/2000.

Phase III of *Hackney on Disk* has been formally signed off by the Heritage Lottery Fund. A web version of the database will soon be up and running on the Hackney Council site.

On 3 May Martin Taylor gave a talk on Hackney history to the Vanguard Project, semi supervised residential accommodation for adults with learning difficulties.

Our work experience pupil from Skinners' School has now finished. We will be taking two work experience placements over the summer.

Work on the second edition to the guide to HAD's holdings is now complete, and Jacqueline Bradshaw-Price is working on the cover design. We expect it to be published during the summer, and will let Friends know when this happens.

Hackney History 1

A small cache of copies of the first edition of *Hackney History* (thought to be out of print) has been discovered during building work at Isobel Watson's house! Cheques for £4.30 (£3.50 + 80p p&p) should be made payable to Friends of Hackney Archives and sent to Isobel, at:
29 Stepney Green
London
E1 3JX

Hackney History 6 will be published in the summer.

FEATURES

The Law Photograph Collection

As mentioned in the feature on the Law Collection in the last Terrier, Brian Law has contributed a short biography on his father Walter, which is reproduced on the page opposite. There was not enough space in the last Terrier to feature as many of the photographs as we had hoped, so we have made sure we do have enough space this time!



Above: Link Street, from Homerton High Street.
Below: Gasgoyne Road, from Well Street Common; large houses awaiting demolition for an LCC housing development.



Above: The yard behind the Coach & Horses, Homerton High Street.
Below: Dalston Lane, opposite Ritson Road; now the site of Martel Place, entrance and car-park for the Kingsland Shopping Centre!



Also mentioned last time was the subsequent loan of the paintings generated from the photographs. As yet we have not had time to catalogue and digitise the paintings. When we do, we will of course reproduce some examples in a future Terrier.



Left: Little Hill looking towards the River Lea. Right: the less romantic and windowless backs of the Little Hill cottages with the Robin Hood rising above. Only the pub survived the late 1930's slum clearance.

WALTER HENRY LAW 1899-1974 *by Brian Law*

Walter Law, known to everyone as Wal Law was born 24th March 1899 at Brunswick Street, Haggerston. The eldest of seven children of Walter Law, a shoemaker, and his wife Leonora, the daughter of a German immigrant named Karl Tschierschke. By 1902, when the third son was born, the family had moved to Mabley Street, Homerton. Mabley Street, in particular number 41, remained the family home until the 1950's.

At an early age he showed a flair for drawing and his burning ambition was to be an artist. His father had strong objections to this idea as he wanted him to work for him as a shoemaker together with the rest of his sons. However, he won a grant enabling him to go to art college and eventually he emerged as a successful commercial artist with a studio in New Court, Holborn promoting himself as an advertising artist and illustrator. His work included drawing for womens' clothes catalogues, Gaiety Magazine and in particular, the front cover picture of the Church Army Gazette which he did for many years from the 1930's to the 1950's.

He always had an interest in the local history of Hackney and in particular its

buildings. When he married in 1924 he lived in Bethnal Green and this interest extended to that borough as well. Prior to the 2nd World War he spent his leisure time painting, in water-colour, buildings and streets in and around Hackney and for that purpose he would take photographs on a Brownie box camera to assist with the detail of his paintings.

During the war most of the advertising work ceased to exist and afterwards photography took over this aspect of his income. Therefore he needed to supplement his income and commenced teaching art at Bethnal Green Men's Institute in Bethnal Green Road. At weekends and on summer evenings he would take parties of adult students into Hackney for drawing and painting sessions and again the photographs were to assist the memory when completing the work back in the class room. Eventually, he gave up commercial work completely and worked full time teaching art in both day school and evening institutes.

The photographs have survived the passage of time but very few were annotated with the locations. Accordingly, Hackney Archive Department have been faced with a massive identification task. This has been achieved with few exceptions. The paintings and sketches that he made using these photographs are currently in the custody of his 98 year old widow.

A HACKNEY NOTEBOOK

'Be Prepared': The 59th Hackney Scout Group in the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s by Kenneth Neale

This is the second article from one of our Friends, Kenneth Neale, who has kindly written a series of reminiscences of his early years in Hackney.

It is a normal human sentiment to wish to belong to some formal entity, be it a family or a social institution, that will serve to offer an identity and purpose in life. Such can also be expected to provide a sense of security, definable status, companionship and various educational or recreational experiences. For most people, beyond the family association, those essential ingredients in a stable and creative life, will be sought in church or chapel, a club, a sports team, trades union, a craft guild, a cultural society or some other social organisation of that kind. In my generation one such was Baden-Powell's scout movement and, in a wider context of international conflict, the armed services.

As a very small boy my burning ambition was to join the junior branch of the movement, the Wolf Cubs. I can remember being deeply disappointed when in 1927, just seven years old, I was turned away as the minimum age was eight which then seemed far away. However, that year passed, much more slowly than now, and I was accepted into the pack of the 59th Hackney scout group. This was based at the Glyn Road Mission, Clapton later destroyed, along with our own nearby home, in the air raids on London.

Most of the 59th cubs were from very poor families and the initial cost of the uniform, without which one did not fully belong, was too much to find for a single payment. So the various items, jersey, scarf, socks, cap (and a woggle of course) were purchased by instalments until the proud day when the aspiring recipient could parade in the entire outfit. Hopefully, that would in time be further embellished by

the pack's insignia on enrolment and, subsequently, by badges of competence or proficiency and marks of rank which were the status symbols much admired in the movement.

The evening meetings were held in the small upstairs hall at the mission, the cub master (Akela) being a Mr Newbury who we all thought to be efficient but very strict. He was followed by Mr. Matthews a more gentle personality but less effective. We tied and untied countless knots with varying degrees of dexterity, played games devised to develop our character and test our skills. A centrepiece of it all was chanting in unison and responding to Akela's injunction 'Do your best' with 'We'll do our best'. It was rather naive I suppose but very 'British' and certainly sincere.

I progressed to become a 'Seconder' and then a 'Sixer' but on the whole it turned out to be a rather more prosaic experience than that which I had so eagerly anticipated. The games were fun and I quite liked the meetings but overall the cubs lacked that element of purpose that I needed to inspire my undiluted commitment. Football and cricket were already serious rivals and I was soon setting my sights on the scout troop to which I duly graduated and from which I derived more satisfaction. The movement's motto was clearly linked with the founder's initials, but were also a fair reflection of the activities and philosophies on which its training prospectus and purposes were based.

The resources of the East London scout troops were very limited, but by dint of self-sufficiency, good morale and modest altruistic aspirations they generally measured up to the standards set by 'B.P.' and gave us something to strive for and to be proud of. There was genuine purpose and an obvious and rewarding identity. We learned numerous simple practical skills, including first aid, which were valuable in developing personal confidence and preparing us to be useful members of our socially inhibited and introspective community down by the River Lea.

The annual highlight of scouting for us was the summer camp to which we all went in a locally hired lorry, loaded with tents and kits, which would not be allowed on the roads today now that the safety regulations are more stringent. A popular venue for these was at Lane End, near High Wycombe and the Chiltern Hills. There we enjoyed the delights of the English countryside, good fresh air and much else that was not readily available on the menu of daily life in the Hackney of the 1920s and 1930s.



59th Hackney Scouts Ernest Rider and George Callow and an unknown Cub collect paper for the war effort, 1941. HAD P14905.1

My first patrol was the Owls, of which my Drummond cousin had previously been the patrol leader. When I, in turn, became a patrol leader, the Kangaroos were entrusted to me. By then I was enjoying the scouts, but was not as successful as my younger brother who was a King's Scout and eventually Troop Leader. Nevertheless, more responsibility came my way when our scoutmaster left in circumstances that we thought amounted to desertion; he got married! The Hackney Scout Commissioner made me acting-Scoutmaster as I was too young for the substantive rank; and presumably because there was nobody else available.

Just before then, the 59th Hackney had won the annual athletic championships held on the running track in Victoria Park, with virtually all the points being gained by my brother (most of them for he was a

good athlete) and myself. It was the first, very handsome and only such trophy that the troop ever won I think.

Sterner tests and another accolade were in store for us when war broke out in September 1939. The war effectively ended my association with the scout movement though I did belong to the Deep Sea Scouts, at least nominally, when I was in the Royal Navy. Inevitably, we had in reality, no time for scouting. 'Be Prepared' - we were. The troop was ready

and available to serve the local community in a struggle in which virtually the whole population was engaged. Before the bombing of London began we collected waste paper for the war effort and helped in whatever ways we could to support the local emergency services as they prepared for the expected aerial onslaught. When the Blitz began the older members of the troop served as Police 'orderlies' and worked alongside the Fire and Rescue teams. We ran messages, carried

food and drinks to the air raid wardens' posts and police posts and, at the incidents, helped injured people with minor first aid, to find their families and friends and to recover some of their property from their destroyed or damaged homes. The dead and seriously injured people were, of course, beyond our capacity and we simply carried out what minor services or chores we were asked to perform by the ambulance teams and rescue squads who did sterling work and set us a fine example of service.

None of this had been foreseen when we joined the movement in which we expected to enjoy ourselves and become better citizens through the benefits of the training and experience we were to be given. In the event, the 59th Hackney scouts proved themselves in difficult and dangerous circumstances and, 'did its best' when called upon, a response which would surely have gratified BP.

Friends' Interests

We are very pleased that our members interests feature has proven to be so successful and that you are still responding. Thank you, and keep them coming!

LAMBERT Samuel (c1785-1834) Tobacco Pipemaker at Kingsland High Street, Hackney from 1809 to 1834. **Mr & Mrs E Blackman, Coombe Barn Cottage, With-eridge, Tiverton, Devon, EX16 8PT.**

EDWARDS in Hackney 19/early 20C
KERRISON in Hackney 19/early 20C
HERRTAGE in Hackney early 20C
DIGGONS in Stoke Newington 19/20C
Miss S A B Johnson, 10 Grosvenor Court, 6 Suffolk Road, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH2 5SX

WICKS Henry & Thomas (father) c1851, Doll Maker, Shoreditch
WICKS James c1831, Hackney
Mrs L M Kicks, 2 The Roses, Salway Hill, Woodford Green, Essex, IG8 9BN

BOSTON Joseph (1808-1861) Veterinary

Surgeon in Hackney and Ann (nee Stan-ner) **Mr Terry Boston-Marsh, 21 London road, Canterbury, Kent, CT2 8LN**

POLSTON James & Ann (nee Andrews) VACHE Georgiana (1809-1895) Silk Weaver, both pre 1842.

BAUGH Thomas c1831 Shoreditch
Mrs E Morley, Thwaites, Fersfield, Diss, Norfolk, IP22 2BP

If you share an interest in any of the families or subjects above, why not get in touch with the Friend who is advertising, and pool information?

If you would like to make public your subjects of research, please drop a line to Martin or Michael, giving your name, contact address and your specialised interest. We have decided it is better not to advertise people's telephone numbers, but we would be happy to include e-mail addresses. Please state whether the family you are researching lived in Hackney, Shoreditch or Stoke Newington.

Friends of Hackney Archives Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Hackney Archives will take place at Hackney Archives Department at 4.00 pm on Saturday 1 July 2000.

This will follow on from the Hackney History Mini-Fair, which we hope as many Friends as possible will be able to attend.

Once again we are asking for volunteers to join the Committee. If you are willing and able to become a member, please drop a line to Isobel Watson, Chair of the Friends at 29, Stepney Green, London, E1 3JX.

Credits & Contacts

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