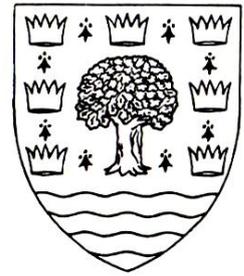


Ilford Historical Society

Newsletter No.109 August 2012

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Dear Reader

After the Queen, we welcome 'The Torch' to Ilford



Photograph Janet Seward

The first announcements told us "The 70-day relay will begin at Land's End, Cornwall, on the morning of 19 May 2012 and travel an estimated 8,000 miles around the UK before arriving at the Olympic Stadium on 27 July for the lighting of the cauldron at the Opening Ceremony." The flame (carried by 8,000 torches) was treated to more experiences on its ten week journey than any one person could expect in the last 10 years, before it arrived to open the Olympics.

The torch was welcomed on its way through Ilford on Sunday 22 July. It was carried from the Redbridge Cycling Centre on Hog Hill at 7.20am, crossing Fairlop Lake on a boat, then from Fullwell Cross it went down Barkingside High Street to Gants Hill, around Valentines Mansion, through Ilford Town Centre and on down Ilford Lane to Barking. It spent two hours on the journey and was carried by 27 torchbearers who were greeted by choirs, Bollywood Dancers, drummers and great deal of cheering and flag waving.

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Janet Seward enjoyed the spectacle “I joined a steady stream of people walking in the sunshine towards Ilford Town Centre early on Sunday morning, 22nd July. Police vans with ‘Heddlu’ on the side were parked outside the police station: the Welsh were here to police the Olympic Torch event! Some things hadn’t changed, the drinkers were cosily ensconced on the benches in front of ‘Fitness First’ (surely not a good advert). The area in front of the Town Hall was moderately crowded and there was plenty of entertainment to keep everyone amused. The event was well branded. Samsung were handing out flags and plastic tubes to wave and Coca Cola were handing out drinks and plastic discs to bang. A different sort of brand sneaked in when City Gates distributed ‘Jesus - Light of the World’ balloons. As the torch got nearer, drummers started drumming and the Mayor and Mayoress and the Leader of the Council stood at the bottom of the steps of the Town Hall to greet the torch. There was a false start when torch bearers who were to carry the flame further along the route came along and caused some confusion as we desperately looked for the non-existent flame and felt a little foolish that we couldn’t see it. At last it was here and it was well worth the early start. We watched as the flame was passed from one bearer to another.”

Georgina Green saw a different side of the torch relay “I was on duty at Valentines Mansion from 7am to be a welcoming face at the Reception desk for all our visitors. The Mansion was used as a change-over venue so we had 20 or so torch bearers who were briefed on their task. The ‘Golden Years Dance Troupe’ and ‘Upbeat Choir’ performed to entertain the crowds waiting for the torch to arrive at 8.45am. When it came, those who had already carried the flame were dropped off and the new torch bearers boarded the coach which would take them to their starting point. Meanwhile the police escort had an opportunity to use the facilities and were very grateful for a quick cup of tea and a Danish pastry (not something offered at many change over points, it seems) before continuing on their journey. It was wonderful to see the torch being carried around the Mansion with the flower beds so colourful in the bright morning sunshine. I felt privileged to play a part in this little bit of history, and I think Valentines will be remembered, both for the beautiful venue and the Danish pastries.”

Servants

Georgina Green’s article in our April newsletter, about servants and others at Valentines Mansion, showed how some servants moved quite a distance from their birthplace. For example in the 1881 census Richard Bale, coachman, had his place of birth as Barnstaple, North Devon; Martha Findlay, servant, was born in Sussex and Martha M Findlay, presumably her daughter, was also born in Sussex. Another servant, Margaret Robinson was born in Scotland and Helen George was born in Frome, Somerset. This isn’t an unusual pattern, personal servants of wealthier families often moved with the family whilst lower status workers such as gardeners usually came from near at hand.

This could indicate that servants ranked as domestic chattels, to be moved at will with the family. Or it could indicate that a servant felt he or she had a secure niche and wanted to keep it. Perhaps a move to another area might appeal.

There is some evidence of this happening for more middle class families. According to the 1911 census nearly a quarter of families in Thorold Road had a live-in servant though many more would have had a daily help. Most servants shown were born locally but there were exceptions.

In 1901 the census shows at 9 Thorold Road, Arthur F Purser, a director of a publishing company, born Atherstone, Warwickshire, with his wife Kate, born Devizes, Wiltshire. The servant, Harriett Hollis was born at Wootton Rivers, Wiltshire, which suggests she had either moved to Ilford with Kate or perhaps had come on a recommendation by family or contacts back in Wiltshire.

At 128 Thorold Road the 1911 census shows widower George Fox, a Customs and Excise officer, born in County Mayo, Ireland, with five children, all born in Stafford. George Fox was in an occupation where he might have been expected to move with the job. His servants, housekeeper Elizabeth Onion, aged 55, and her daughter Agnes aged 28, and listed as a general servant, were also born in Staffordshire. So it seems likely that Mr Fox, sadly left a widower with children in Staffordshire, brought servants with him to Ilford, unless of course they were recommended to him.

Unfortunately servants left few records. Some probably had happy lives, in so far as domestic drudgery could be happy, but there is evidence to the contrary.



In January 1911 the *Ilford Recorder* reported a case at Stratford Magistrates Court where Mrs Louisa Jeacock of Northbrook Road was fined 5s with 14s 6d costs for assaulting her servant Emily Britten.

The level of fine, roughly £75 today, contrasts with a £2 fine (roughly £600) with £1 9s costs, levied in the same period on James W King, a Seven Kings newsagent on a charge of selling improper postcards. As the postcards were openly on sale they may have been more Donald McGill humour than top shelf pornography. One assumes that the policemen of the time had fun looking at the evidence. So indecency rated rather worse in the Magistrates eyes than assault, though with the costs Mrs Jeacock would have been out of pocket. At least a prosecution was brought and the assailant found guilty.

Edwardian issues of the *Ilford Recorder* carried many adverts both from those wanting servants and those seeking positions. In January 1906 the residents of 159 Thorold Road sought a general servant, aged about 18, whilst in the same issue Mrs Rix, of 185 Ley Street, describing herself as a “respectable woman” looked for daily work charing, sewing, nursing etc. Many from Ley Street advertised for work - a street of smaller terraced houses more working class in character than the neighbouring Commonwealth Estate.

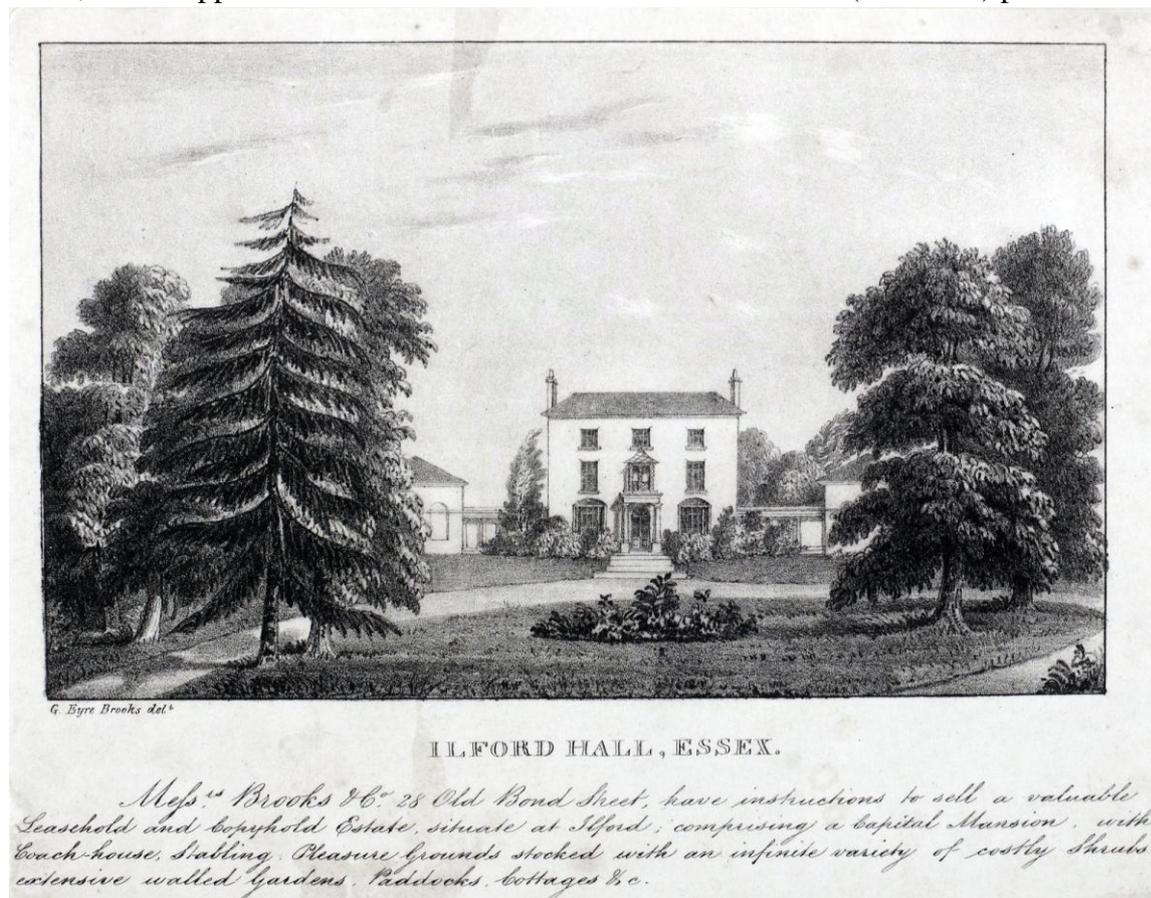
Wages ranged from £14 - £18 a year for a live in servant though those with special skills might have earned more. They could expect to be fed and provided with a uniform for this money. Washing may have been one of the servant’s duties but increasingly this was sent out to one of the Sanitary Laundries or perhaps to a local washerwoman.

Much working class life has been described as “hidden from history” and this is particularly true of the lives of working class women. Lacking industrial organisation like trades unions, servants are often ignored in studies of the Edwardian and Victorian periods. They deserve greater study and perhaps a future historian will look at their roles in Ilford society.

© *Roger Backhouse, April 2012*

Ilford Hall

While browsing at the Essex Record Office a few months ago, I came across a picture of Ilford Hall, Essex. For those of you who don't know, it was on the north side of the High Road, on the opposite corner of Hainault Street to 'The General' (Havelock) pub.



Picture Copyright Essex Record Office. Mint Binder, Great Ilford, 1/14

I have not been able to date the picture, but The Royal Arcade was opened in 1879 connecting 28 Old Bond Street with 12 Albemarle Street, so it must be before that. Staff at the Essex Record Office tell me that Brooks seems to have been flourishing about 1840.

I have made the following notes of who lived at Ilford Hall from various Directories:

White's Directory 1848: Wm Haslehurst Esq (Ilford Hall)

White's Directory 1863: Emanuel Franghiadi Esq (Hall)

Kelly's Directory 1866: Emanuel George Franghiadi Esq (Great Ilford Hall)

Kelly's Directory 1870: Emanuel George Franghiadi Esq (Great Ilford Hall)

Kelly's Directory 1874: Emanuel George Franghiadi Esq (Great Ilford Hall)

Kelly's Directory 1886 and 1890: not listed?

From the census returns etc. on Ancestry.co.uk, we can see that Emanuel George Franghiadi was born about 1813 in Greece and married Constance (Harman?) at Greenwich in the spring of 1858. She was considerably younger, having been born around 1829 in London. She must have been his second wife as the 1861 census shows them living at Paddington with three children aged 15, 11 and 9, and a two year old son, Paul.

Emanuel was away from home on the night of the census in 1871 (perhaps he was in Greece?) but Constance is shown as a Merchant's wife, living at Ilford Hall. Paul is not shown but two more children had been born: Mary aged 8 and Emanuel aged 6. The family had three servants:

Annie Adams, a cook aged 31 who was born in Andover

Emily Woodman, a housemaid aged 30 born in Werrington, Middx

Ann Engle, a nurse aged 29 who was born at Mile End.

George Tasker writing in *Ilford Past and Present* (1901) says p.95

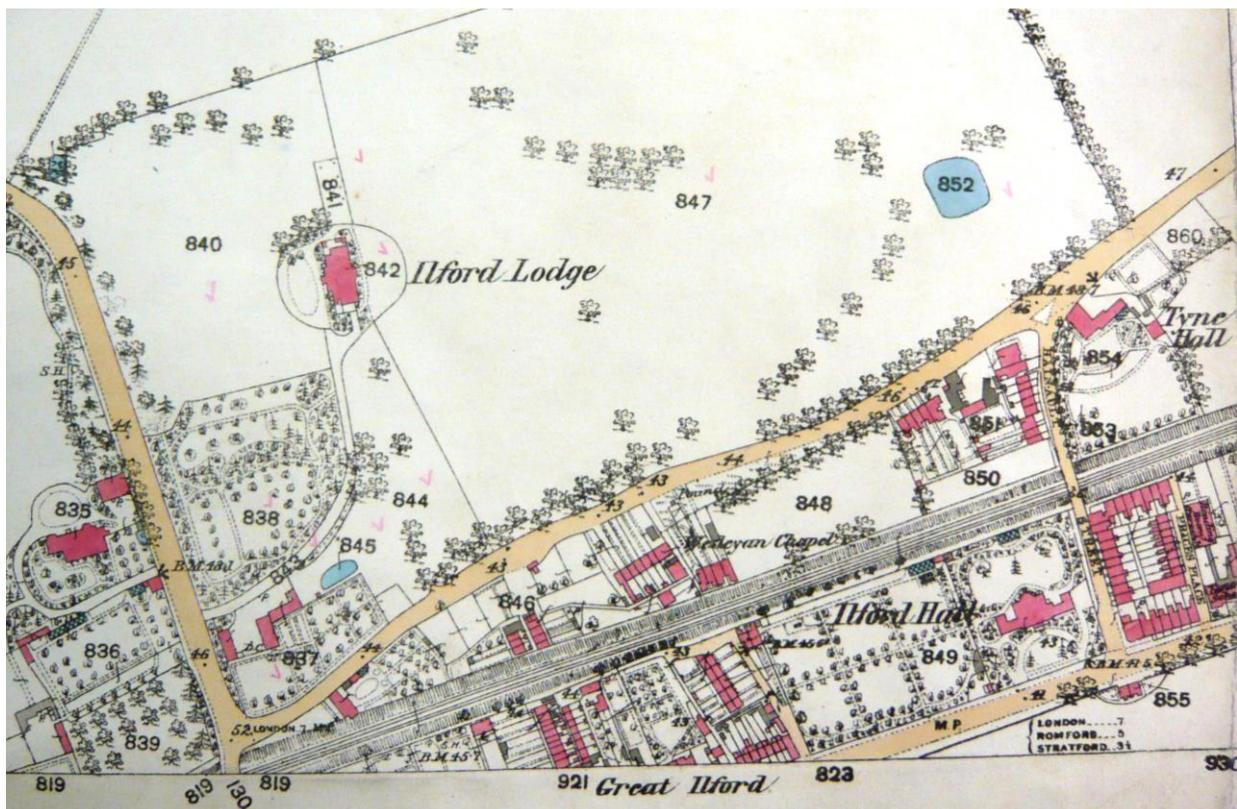
“Ilford Hall still stands ... and the length of its grounds is indicated by the long wall facing the High Road; its great frontage makes it exceedingly valuable.”

The photograph he included shows the house little changed from the drawing on page 4, but the wall gives the impression the grounds are smaller. The drawing may have some poetic licence.

Tasker goes on to mention temporary use by the Council while the Town Hall was being built on the opposite side of the High Road. He then says “Ilford Hall was rented by Miss Ward from the lessee, Mr Aaron Withers, for her High School for Girls and Kindergarten. A syndicate purchased the property from the freeholder, Mr Joseph Pedley, and the erection of shops began in the spring of 1901.

A few years ago the late Mr Charles Godfrey, a relative of the celebrated band-master, Dan Godfrey, rented the place.”

© Georgina Green, July 2012



Ordnance Survey Map, 25 inch, 1st edition Sheet 73.4 (surveyed 1862 & 1863, Zincographed 1879)
Photograph Georgina Green, with thanks to Ilford's Local Studies and Archives.

A legacy of names - in search of Thorold Road

Street names can tell us something about local areas. They may say something about the people who developed the area, about their aspirations, political allegiances and even the age of the properties. Examples in Ilford chosen by developers include the “Boer War” names of Seven Kings such as Mafeking, Colenso and Ladysmith Avenues and the upmarket names such as Mayfair Avenue and Kensington Gardens used by Peter Griggs to make his development off the Drive seem classy, a tactic still used by developers today. Cameron Corbett’s use of Scottish place names for his houses is well known but not every name has clear origins. Most show little originality.

Thorold Road, where I live, is an unusual street name. At a long ago Ilford Historical Society discussion on road names it was suggested Thorold might have been one of the Saxon “Seven Kings” but other than that, no clues. The origins of streets nearby seemed obscure too. Finding origins of local street names led a trail across southern England and into murky parts of Victorian finance and crime.

Thorold is a name with Lincolnshire associations. There are Thorold Arms pubs in Harmston and the village of Marston, just off the A1 north of Grantham. The Reverend Henry Thorold lived at the nearby vicarage. He was a housemaster at Lancing College and a noted antiquarian, who wrote several Shell Guides. Another cleric, Anthony Wilson Thorold, (1825-1895) was Bishop of Rochester and later Bishop of Winchester. Neither family has any clear association with Ilford.



*Thorold Arms sign at Marston Lincolnshire (it also serves as the village post office and shop!)
Photograph Roger Backhouse.*

Early Ilford development

Thorold Road was named and partly occupied by 1890. According to surviving rate books most houses were then owned by J.W. Hobbs and Co. Hobbs and Co of Croydon was part of the Balfour group, set up by Jabez Spencer Balfour and closely linked to the Liberator Building Society. Associated companies included the House and Lands Investment Trust, Building Securities Company, Real Estates Company and the London and General Bank.

Balfour was one of the 19th century’s most spectacular financiers. Son of a Congregational Minister, his mother was a noted temperance lecturer. He built up his property empire supported by the Liberator Building Society, which he effectively managed to become the largest building society in the country drawing heavily on funds deposited by nonconformists. A staunch Liberal and supporter of Home Rule for Ireland, he became MP for Tamworth and later for Burnley, though he failed to be elected for his home town of Croydon

His Lands Allotment Company bought the Ilford Lodge Estate (see map page 5) for £52,000 in September 1882, selling it to the House and Lands Investment Trust in January 1883 for £60,000 and then later the same month to J. W. Hobbs and Co for £74,000. It is likely no money changed hands, these were book transactions loading debt on to Hobbs and Co. This marked the start of major housing developments in Ilford.

Though the Lodge survived until the 1970s, the developers laid out roads and began building almost immediately. Balfour Road is almost certainly named after Jabez Spencer Balfour, (*not* Arthur James Balfour who did not become Prime Minister until 1902.). Wellesley Road is named after his Wellesley House in Croydon and Granville Road comes from H. Granville Wright, solicitor to the Balfour group. Morland Road was where Hobbs and Co had their offices in Croydon.

Unfortunately the tactics of internal buying and selling were widely practised by the Balfour group but like other property bubbles could only be sustained so long. The Balfour group went spectacularly bankrupt in 1892 ruining many thousands. There were suicides, and several directors including J. W. Hobbs and Granville Wright were prosecuted for fraud. Parliament then passed the first Building Societies Act to regulate the sector and provide better security for Society depositors.

Balfour fled to Argentina, where after derring-do by Scotland Yard detective Inspector Froest, he was arrested and brought back to England for trial. He was convicted and served thirteen years in prison but on release wrote an account of his prison experiences for Lord Northcliffe's newspapers. Never short of *chutzpah* he then set himself up as a mining consultant, despite lack of experience. Balfour was on his way to work in Malaya when he died on a train to Swansea.

It is unlikely many residents of these roads in Ilford know their names came from a gang of fraudsters but there may be other connections across London. Balfour has a road named after him in Norwood Junction, near his home.

And what about Thorold ?

Google maps locates Thorold Roads in Bitterne (Southampton), Eastleigh (Chandlers Ford), Farnham, Chatham, Bowes Park (Haringey) and a Thorold Close in Croydon.

Checks with Local Studies librarians and archivists suggested that Farnham and Eastleigh, and possibly Chatham, had links with the former Bishop of Rochester (1877-90) and of Winchester (1890-95), Anthony Wilson Thorold. For example, Farnham's Thorold Road is next to the castle, once home of the Bishop of Winchester. Thorold Close in Croydon, a recent development, was named from the same man, who'd occupied the nearby Selsdon House. However, it didn't seem likely that the non-conformist J.S. Balfour would name a street from a Church of England Bishop.

For Thorold Road, Bitterne, Southampton Local Studies Department suggested a different origin. The National Liberal Land Company (NLLC) had bought the land in 1882 and then sold it in small lots to private developers over the next 15-20 years. One of the leading lights in the NLLC was the Rev. James Edwin Thorold Rogers (1823-1890) who was an academic political economist and Liberal MP for Southwark. Oddly, the Concise Dictionary of National Biography does not mention his role in the NLLC even though he was chairman. Another road was named after Richard Cobden, the leading advocate of Free Trade and a great Liberal hero.



Thorold Rogers caricature by Leslie Ward from Vanity Fair

The NLLC also bought land in Bowes Park, London N22, for resale. An advertisement in the Standard in May 1882 offered 84 freehold building plots for sale. The company later dropped “Liberal” from its title and became the National Land Company in 1893.

Given that developers usually gave names to streets, that other local roads have Balfour Group links and that Thorold Road houses were owned by Hobbs and Co of the Balfour Group, it seems certain that Thorold Road, Ilford, has some link between the NLLC and Balfour’s group. Both Balfour and Thorold Rogers shared strongly Liberal political views and were engaged in the same type of business. But the precise link needs further investigation.

Other roads

What of the other local roads, Coventry, Myrtle, Bathurst Roads and Warwick Gardens? We may have clues from other places.

The Balfour group bought land across the south east including Romford, Thurrock and Sutton. There is a Balfour Road near Norwood Junction Station (SE25) . The road patterns suggests 19th century development and very close by there is a Coventry Road – an unusual name in London. This seems too much for coincidence. Again, a Balfour group link is suggested but at present we lack detail.

In Sutton, a Morland Road is near Wellesley Road, Myrtle Road and Warwick Road. Now Warwick is a name frequently used to suggest high class, so it may be coincidence that in Ilford Warwick Gardens adjoins Wellesley and Coventry Roads. But in Hanwell, London W7 Balfour Avenue is again near a Myrtle Road.

Other Balfour Roads are probably named from Arthur James Balfour who was Conservative Prime Minister from 1902 to 1905. Such roads are often near Salisbury or Cecil Roads, named after Lord Salisbury (Robert Arthur Talbot Gascoyne-Cecil) the Prime Minister he succeeded.

However, links between Balfour and Cecil may not be entirely Conservative, Jabez Spencer Balfour’s sister was called Cecil. For example in South Wimbledon (SW19) Balfour Road is next to Cecil Road, not far from Granville Road, and nearby names are those of Liberal politicians, Milner, Palmerston, Gladstone and Cobden. Quite likely there is a Balfour group connection still to be researched.

In Ilford Balfour names adjoin what estate agents like to call the “sought after Commonwealth estate” with names taken from leading cities in the former English settled empire, developed after Balfour and Co had left the scene. It is perhaps coincidence that there are similar clusters of names in Tilbury and Boston Manor (Northfields) – where there is also a Balfour Road nearby. And near Balfour Road in Wimbledon there are Brisbane and Melbourne Roads. Clearly there is more research to be done. Council records, as yet unexamined, may give clues as to who suggested names and the records of the Balfour Group, held in part in Croydon Library, may help. What began as a search for the origins of one street name leads to studies of housing development and property speculation across the south east that await an enterprising researcher.

I’d like to thank the Local Studies Library staff of Southampton, Croydon, Redbridge and Medway for their considerable help with this research.

© **Roger Backhouse, 6 July 2012**

Listed Buildings in Aldborough Hatch

<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/listing/listed-buildings/>

There are several interesting old farm buildings at Aldborough Hatch, but only one is listed, and it has been very much altered since the listing was carried out:

BARN AT ALDBOROUGH HOUSE FARM, OAKS LANE

Grade: II

Date first listed: 22-Feb-1979

Circa 1730. Formerly the chapel attached to Aldborough Hall. Small rectangular building with steep pitch tile roof. West front of brown brick with gable. Rusticated quoins. Arched entrance with brick quoins and keystone. Semi-circular fanlight. Blank window over. Brick band course



Photographs taken in 1988, Georgina Green

The barn was largely destroyed in the hurricane in October 1987, but has recently been lovingly rebuilt and is now used as a private home.



Photographs taken in 2011, Georgina Green

THE CHURCH OF ST PETER, ALDBOROUGH ROAD, also Listed Grade II on 22-Feb-1979.

1862, by A.Ashpitel. A small church in decorated Gothic style. Nave with projecting porch on south and chancel. Kentish ragstone. Steep pitch slate roof with small gable, louvred vents on each side. Small belfry and shingle spire on north side of chancel. Interior with pitchpine roof. Some stained glass by Hardman's. Interesting organ with painted and stencilled decoration by N. H. J. Westlake. From the International Exhibition of 1862.

Ron Jeffries, author, historian and long time resident, will tell us a lot more about the Aldborough Hatch “village in the suburbs” at our meeting on 8th October.

The Story of Redbridge Museum

In the December 2011 newsletter I explained how the Local Studies Library was opened in 1986. Long before this the Reference Librarian, Peter Wright, was collecting documents, photographs and objects relating to the borough in the hope that Redbridge might have a museum one day. An item in *The Post*, 2 May 1979, appealed for items, and the leaflet shown here was issued from the Reference Library while it was at 112B Ilford High Road.

Once the Local Studies Room opened in 1986 it was used to display materials from the items collected, in lieu of a museum.

In the autumn of 1987 the Libraries Committee discussed the idea of a museum for the borough and although not dismissing the idea, declined to take the scheme forward as there were “no resources currently available.” The idea may have been shelved by the council but local historians in the borough were not put off so easily. A press campaign was launched in the autumn of 1988

with Harts House at Woodford Green, the old Rectory at South Woodford and Valentines Mansion all put forward as a possible home for the many artefacts being held around the borough. Officers of the four local history societies in Redbridge met to co-ordinate a petition which was presented to the council by Peter Wright in October 1989, signed by well over 8,100 people asking the council to consider the foundation of a museum for Redbridge.

The petition seemed to have worked with assurances from the council that something would be done. But agreement in principle did not produce action so a further press campaign was launched in the summer of 1991. The council then announced its intention to use Valentines Mansion as a home for the museum. The building is owned by the council and at that time was used as offices for the Housing Department. New office accommodation was nearly ready so it was announced that once the building was vacated, it would be used by the Registrar, as an archive store and for a borough museum.

Valentines Mansion seemed an ideal choice for the museum. Built in 1696, it is the oldest surviving family house in Redbridge, not grand, but with an interesting history and situated in a park setting. However the delight was short-lived when it was discovered that the museum would be housed in the Victorian dairy wing, rather than the house itself. Then the Essex Record Office decided the part designated for archives did not meet the required standards for humidity and temperature control. The final blow came when changes in legislation meant that the Registrar and his staff could conduct a wedding ceremony in a much wider range of venues, thus lessening the pressure on their premises. They decided to stay put. The plan for a museum at Valentines was finally laid to rest in September 1995 when it was announced a museum would be opened within Ilford Central Library.

The plan was “a very ambitious project and a very exciting one”. Estimated to cost around £450,000 it was intended to “use the latest computer technology to give school children on-line access to its files”. There was considerable concern at the council’s determination to focus on a virtual museum, but thankfully the reality is a blend of various types of museum presentation, including an imaginative “hi-tec” section as well as traditional displays.



The next step was to advertise for a Museum Officer and at Easter 1996 Vicky Knapman took up her post. Young and enthusiastic, with experience at the traditional Victoria and Albert Museum and the more modern Museum of the Moving Image, she proved to be a very good choice. One of her first initiatives was to make contact with all those who had some knowledge of the history of the borough and officers of the local history societies. Questionnaires were prepared to discover just what local people wanted from their museum. Plans were sketched out, bids for funding prepared and more staff were appointed. Hannah Gould (Assistant Museum Officer), Laura Williams (Education and Events Officer) and Gerard Greene (Collections Officer) proved to be a well-balanced team bringing a wide range of experience and expertise to help build the new museum.

In order to increase interest in our local heritage, events were organised at branch libraries across the borough. These ranged from activities for children to reminiscence sessions for older people. A series of displays were prepared as “taster” exhibitions at the Central Library with themes like “Dance Hall Days”. This echoed times when the Ilford Palais and the Hippodrome were the high spots of local entertainment and people were invited to donate mementoes of that time to the museum collections.

Gradually the funding red-tape was cut through and the Heritage Lottery Fund awarded £182,000 towards the Redbridge Museum. The borough invested a further £260,000 in the scheme. Plans started to become a reality as contractors were selected to build the various sections of the museum. Vicky and her team now had a deadline which focussed attention on the many details which had seemed less important when the grand plan was still a matter of debate. They worked wonders in bringing together the two, very distinct, sections of the borough which was created in 1965 by joining Wanstead and Woodford (with a prestigious and well documented history) with Ilford, much of which had been covered by Hainault Forest and was less affluent and influential, but more enterprising.

On Friday 29th September 2000 the new Redbridge Museum was officially opened by Chris Smith, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. It had been a long time coming, but was well worth the wait. The Museum Officer, Vicky Knapman, and her team worked long and hard to prepare a museum which appeals to people of all ages, from all parts of the borough and from all ethnic backgrounds. They deserve our heartfelt thanks and congratulations.

Gerard Greene took over as Museum Manager in 2002 when Vicky (now Vicky DeWit) moved onto another position. The Museum has continued to progress by working with local communities, maintaining the very high standards set, and has a varied temporary exhibition programme ensuring there is always something new to see.

The neighbouring borough museums are housed at Valence House, Dagenham, Vestry House, Walthamstow, and 39-41 Sun Street, Waltham Abbey, all old buildings with great character in contrast to the modern building at Ilford. But Redbridge Museum uses its modern facilities to great advantage. Traditional wall-mounted display cases exhibit a variety of items linked to themes such as our agricultural past. There are sections devoted to, among other things, the Woodford Cycle Meet and Dr. Barnardos, there are two room settings, various displays featuring stories from the recent past with artefacts loaned specially, and there are also interactive touch-screens focussing on three locations in the borough down the ages. I hope to feature items from the museum collection in future issues of the newsletter.

Redbridge Museum at Ilford Central Library is open Tuesday - Friday from 10am - 5pm and Saturdays 10am - 4pm, (closed Sunday and Monday) and admission is free. Why not call in?

© **Georgina Green, March 2012.**

Much of this article was written in 2001 and was published in the Essex Journal

Sources for local history : Directories

During the 19th and early 20th centuries directories were published as a commercial venture and were used much as the phone book is today. The article on page 4 shows how they provide quick and easy details of some local residents, though not everyone agreed to be included. For more information about the development and scope of directories, please see the article 'Directories of Historic Essex' by Richard Matthews in the *Essex Journal*, Winter 1990, pages 64-66 and 74. (Ask Georgina Green if you'd like to see a copy.) Meanwhile, as an example of the information included in a later directory:

Kelly's Essex Directory for 1912 ~ Ilford 100 years ago

The first part is a numerical list of names under each location. At the back there is a list for the whole of Essex by trades, including a list of pubs by name with proprietor. The pubs included also appeared in the numerical sequence under the name of the proprietor.

The section on Great Ilford covers pages 312 - 342. It starts with a description of the location with a summary of services "Great Ilford is an increasing suburb of London situated on the road from London to Colchester, and on the east of the river Roding, which here becomes navigable for barges, with a station on the main line of the Great Eastern railway to Colchester and Ipswich, and other stations at Seven Kings and Goodmayes on the same line, and is 7 miles from London, 2 north from Barking and 5 west from Romford; in 1903 a branch line was opened to Woodford. Ilford is in the Southern division of the county, Becontree half-hundred and petty sessional division, union and county court district of Romford, and in Barking rural deanery, archdeaconry of Essex and diocese of St. Albans."

The text continues with details of the various parishes formed and local government changes. It says the town was lighted by gas and electricity, and electric tram lines were laid in 1903. More information about historical aspects of local churches is given and some municipal facilities. Following pages give details of Post Offices, and Telephonic Express Delivery Office, with 16 sub-post offices listed. In Ley Street, where Miss Mary Jane Saunders was sub-postmistress, "Letters dispatched at 8.15, 9.15 & 11.15 a.m. & 1.15, 3.45, 5, 7.15, 9.30 & (except Saturdays) 11 pm; Sundays, 10pm."

Details were given of the Urban District Council with Members and Senior Officers listed, the Ilford Local Pension Committee, Territorial Force, Army Service Corps, and other public establishments such as the hospitals and cemetery, reading room etc.

The Metropolitan Police Station where Alfred Hamilton was sub-divisional inspector, had 4 station sergeants, 3 sergeants and 71 constables.

Full details were listed of places of worship (with times of services) and schools, e.g. "Christchurch road [school], erected in 1900, for 400 boys, 400 girls & 408 juniors; average attendance, 406 boys, 393 girls & 413 juniors; Henry Bateman, master; Miss Priscilla Gibbs, mistress; Miss Nora L. Edwards A. C. P., LL. A. mistress juniors."

After the various public authorities there is a list of private residents in alphabetical order, e.g. "Bailey Henry, 14 Selbourne road" followed by a list of commercial entries, alphabetical by name but giving details of the services offered. I was tickled by "Martin Eliza (Mrs.), ostrich feather curler".

Other occupations included: accountant, antique dealer, artificial teeth maker, auctioneer, baker, blacksmith, boat repairer, builder, butcher, chemist, chimney sweeper, chiropodist, coal merchant, collar & cuff maker, commercial traveller, confectioner, corn & seed merchant, dairyman, draper, dress maker, engineer, fishmonger, florist, fruiterer, gardener, grocer, hair dresser, hosier, insurance agent, ironmonger, laundress, master mariner, milliner, motor cab proprietor, newsagent, nurse, oilman, pawnbroker, photographer, physician & surgeon, picture framer, plumber, postmaster, printer, stationers, tailor, tobacconist, umbrella maker, undertaker, veterinary surgeon, watch maker.

© *Georgina Green, September 2011*

More Redbridge Rails

In my recent talk to the Society I thought that I had mentioned all the railways in the Borough. However, by chance I came across a mention of a few more yards of track that were located along the footpath that separates Lord's Bushes from Knighton Wood, in Buckhurst Hill. This marks the borough boundary, so can be included in Redbridge!

In 1872/3 an English manufacturer of locomotives, Sharp Stewart & Co., were looking for a location to site a test track that would simulate conditions in Cintra, Portugal, where it was proposed to convert a horse driven tramway between Lisbon and Cintra to steam locomotion. Apparently this footpath with an inclination of 1 in 20 fitted the requirements, and 600 yards of test track were laid to test the power of the engine. The tramway system the locomotive was to use had been invented by a Frenchman, J. Larmanjat, and similar installations been laid elsewhere, including Salford in the 1860's.

The track itself was unusual: the engine's wide flangeless driving wheels ran on flat timbers laid longitudinally, with the direction of the locomotive controlled by guide wheels that followed a central steel rail located between the wooden tracks. The adhesion between the driving wheels and the timber rails was regarded as an improvement on the usual steel wheels on steel track, providing the grip required on the heavy gradients of the Portuguese route. The track gauge was approximately 4ft 2inches.

The earliest versions of this system with lightweight locomotives must have had a tendency to derail on sharp curves, so a steering wheel mounted on the front buffer beam could be used to control the guide wheels: however this extra steering was not required on the heavier engine tested at Buckhurst Hill. The locomotive had the unusual wheel configuration of 1-1-2-1-1.



The Buckhurst Hill experiment was deemed a success and the engine was shipped to the Lisbon Steam Tramways Co. Ltd. in Portugal. The original engine did not reach Portugal, as it was lost in the sinking of the steamship *Northfleet*, which had left Gravesend for Hobart (Tasmania)

on January 13th 1873. Due to bad weather the *Northfleet* had anchored off Dungeness on the night of January 22nd where she was run down by an unknown steamer that did not stop, but was later identified as the Spanish ship *Murillo*. 293 passengers and crew of the 379 persons onboard the *Northfleet* were lost in the tragedy.

Subsequently Sharp Stewart supplied fifteen of these locomotives for the system. A British engineer, Mr Barlow, visited the tramway and in an article in *The Engineer* dated Oct. 10 1873 reported in detail on the operation of the system, mentioning that "... I did not observe that the horses were to any extent frightened by it ..."

However steam traction seems not to have been a great success, as its use ended on 8th April 1875, the system reverting to horse traction. A quote from a contemporary document reported that "In wet weather the steep gradients forced passengers to push, and in hot weather they were suffocated with dust".

© *Martin Fairhurst, July 2012*

A Mammoth Undertaking

Sunday was a busy morning. My wife Sue was in charge of opening up Barkingside library for the “torch” celebratory events and I arrived there in bright sunshine in time to see the torch relay cavalcade go flashing past. From there I drove down to Ilford to see the relay again (a friendly mixed and good-natured crowd everywhere) and watch the unveiling of a plaque on the Methodist church Ilford Lane to mark the site of the mammoth remains.

The original bronze plaque which was set up by Ilford Borough Council in 1951 (part of the Festival of Britain) was stolen. A (temporary) replacement which is fixed to the church’s outside wall was unveiled by Bill George and Professor Adrian Lister, and Ilford Historical Society were invited to attend.

Local historian and retired Barking librarian Bill George has written a pamphlet on fossil hunters Richard Payne Cotton (1820-1877) and Sir Antonio Brady (1811-81) who led excavations of clay pits (opened to make bricks) in 1863. Their finds were bought by the Natural History Museum in 1878. Ilford’s complete mammoth skull, the only one of its kind with huge tusks, is still on display at the NHM. Professor Adrian Lister, palaeontologist of the Natural History Museum brought with him some massive mammoth bones and explained to the audience that 100,000 years ago the Thames was much wider and the Ilford area was much more like an African savannah around which grazed rhinoceros, lions, elephants, hippos, and mammoths. Bones of each species, thousands of them, have been unearthed along Ilford Lane and beside the High Road where the Cauliflower pub and Boots is now. One bone is on display at Redbridge’s museum in Ilford Central Library.

Also present were Martin Fairhurst representing the church and an IHS committee member, myself and Society Secretary Janet Seward. Wilson Chowdhry of the British Pakistani Christian Association organised this new plaque, with input from Ian Dowling and the Natural History Museum. A little bit of history all round.

*Jef Page,
July 2012*

THIS WAS THE SITE OF UPHALL BRICK
EARTH PITS FROM WHICH IN THE 1850'S
NUMEROUS 200,000 YEARS OLD MAMMOTH
REMAINS WERE DISCOVERED.

THESE REMAINS CAN NOW BE SEEN IN THE
NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM LONDON.
LEARN MORE ON THEIR WEBSITE:
[HTTP://WWW.NHM.AC.UK/](http://www.nhm.ac.uk/)

THIS PLAQUE WAS INSTALLED BY THE BRITISH PAKISTANI
CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION, ON THE OCCASION OF THE OLYMPIC
TORCH RELAY THROUGH ILFORD 22nd JULY 2012, PRIOR TO THE
LONDON 2012 GAMES. IT REPLACES AN EARLIER VERSION THAT
WAS STOLEN.

AN IMAGE OF THE ORIGINAL PLAQUE CAN BE FOUND AT:
[HTTP://BRITISHPAKISTANICHRISTIAN.BLOGSPOT.CO.UK/](http://BRITISHPAKISTANICHRISTIAN.BLOGSPOT.CO.UK/)



Cranium and tusks of the Pleistocene Steppe Mammoth found in Ilford - the only complete Mammoth skull found in Britain.



Model of the Steppe Mammoth found in Ilford



AA Security Ltd



Visit Reports

London Canal Museum – Tuesday 15th May

As I trudged through the back streets of King's Cross on a very wet morning in May, I did think that I had made a big mistake in organising this visit. I knew nothing about the museum and when I made arrangements, I was told that there was no guarantee that, as a small group, we would have a guide. All my fears were dispelled when I arrived. There was a warm welcome and a guide. He was a local man, passionate about the museum and very keen to pass on his knowledge. The museum comprises two floors. Upstairs, where the barge horses were housed (they reached the canal side by a steep ramp) was a life-size model of a horse in a stall, making occasional realistic horsey snorts. There were also some short films, on a loop, from the 1920s shot from barges. These were fascinating, particularly films of the stretch from Limehouse to Old Ford which give you a glimpse of a vanished world as the area has been substantially redeveloped. The ground floor depicts the cramped but colourful life of the barges and their families, showing typical clothes and china. Also on that floor are the remains of an ice well used by Gatti, the ice cream maker, and a small exhibition about the ice cream trade. From the museum, you can step outside to the canal. By the end of the tour, the sun came out and I took a photograph to prove it. I would recommend the museum to anyone interested in London life.

London Canal Museum

12-13 New Wharf Road, London N1 9RT. Tel: 020 7713 0836



Photograph Janet Seward

Janet Seward

Valence House Museum – Tuesday 19th June

This visit was a joy. Once again, we had a local guide who was so knowledgeable but delivered it to us in an informal and friendly manner. It will not surprise you to know that Valence House is the only surviving manor house in Dagenham, parts of which date back to the medieval period. As well as seeing portraits and hearing the history of the Fanshawe family, we visited galleries devoted to the history of Barking and Dagenham from the earliest

times. One room tells the story of the Barking fishing fleet and there are room layouts of a typical kitchen and parlour in a house on the Becontree Estate. We also visited the Whalebone Gallery. The bones in this room are believed to be the much-travelled bones of a Common Greenland Whale which formed an arch next to the toll-house at the junction of Whalebone Lane and Chadwell Heath High Road. They were then moved to nearby Whalebone House and, after that house was destroyed by bombing in 1941, they were moved to the entrance of Valence House until their fragility meant that they had to be moved inside. Across the courtyard from the house is the Visitor Centre that houses the Archives and Local Studies Centre

The Museums Journal calls Valence House, 'one of the best local history museums in London' and I would certainly endorse that view. I did take a lovely picture of Doreen and David Weller outside Valence House in the sunshine but I don't know what happened as it never downloaded and appears to have vanished into the stratosphere!

Valence House Museum, Becontree Avenue, Dagenham RM8 3HT Tel: 020 8227 5222

Janet Seward

Iford Historical Society goes live!

Yes it's true. Iford HS joins the 21st century with its own website.

<http://ilfordhistoricalsociety.weebly.com/>

It has now been indexed and can be brought up on Google. Worldwide international fame and renown beckons! Well perhaps not quite, but it will help attract interest and publicity.

Created by Christine Black, it shows a brief history of Iford, our programme of talks for 2012-13, the latest Newsletters, Society officers, and a way to email us with questions or requests for information etc. The presentation will change and improve over time but it's an excellent start. Please recommend and use the site as this may bring it up to the top of the Society listed items.

Jef Page, Chairman 21 May 2012

Forthcoming Events

The new season at the Iford Hospital Chapel starts with:

10th September 2012 at 7.30m *Sir Charles Raymond and his Valentines: his wife, three daughters, his house and a ship* by IHS Vice-Chairman Georgina Green

8th October 2012 at 7.30m *An Essex lad roams around Aldborough Hatch*
By Ron Jeffries, author, historian and long time resident. (see page 9)

12th November 2012 at 7.30m *Essex Diarists: Dear diary...*

IHS Chairman, Jef Page, looks at the diaries of Pepys, Defoe, vicar Ralph Josselin and the Rev. Andrew Clark.

10th December 2012 at 7.30m **Christmas Social Evening** with wine and mince pies for all!
'The Italian Boy': a true but grisly story by author and historian Sarah Wise.

The next newsletter will be available at our Christmas Social meeting on 10 December 2012.