



Ilford Historical Society

June 2020

Dear All

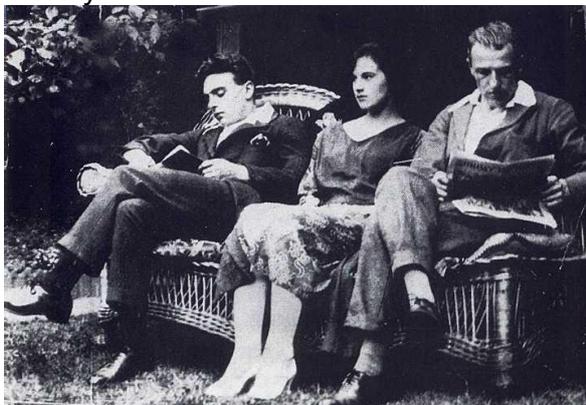
Welcome to our third mini newsletter. I hope that you are finding them interesting. We had a committee meeting last month via zoom (a computer app) where we discussed the current situation. We are hoping that we can start our 2020/21 programme in September and have our AGM in December but we will have to see what government advice is given about holding meetings. There will more information about our plans in the main newsletter published in August.

I hope you are all keeping well.

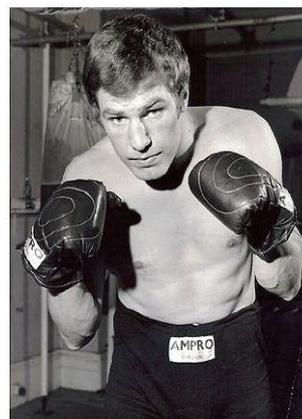
Best Wishes
Jef Page
President

A house with a history – 41 Kensington Gardens

Of course, all houses have histories, unless they are brand new, but 41 Kensington Gardens (off the Drive) has more than most. It was the home of Edith Thompson, the woman who was hanged for conspiring with her lover, Frederick Bywaters, to murder her husband on 3 October 1922. Controversy has surrounded her part in the crime which Bywaters always claimed he carried out alone. And recently during a lockdown lounge on the settee aimlessly looking at this and that on the internet, I discovered that the boxer, Billy Walker, (born 1939) known as the Blond Bomber also lived there. In an interview in September 2014 for a website called E7–NowAndThen, he says that the family moved to the house in 1946 after being evacuated to Bedfordshire. Billy thought that the house was haunted – perhaps not surprising considering its earlier history!



Edith Thompson with Bywaters left and her husband right



Billy Walker

Janet Seward

A debt of honour

An article in the Chelmsford Chronicle of Friday 19th May 1893 reported a meeting that took place to decide what action to take about an outstanding debt at the Ilford Hospital Chapel.

One of Clement and Sara Ingleby's sons, Arthur, became an Anglican priest, and was appointed chaplain of the Hospital Chapel on Ilford Hill in 1882. During his time as chaplain the Chapel was extended by the addition of the South aisle and vestries, Arthur having advanced a loan of £700 interest free (about £85,000 in today's money).

When Arthur resigned his chaplaincy in 1892 after 10 years in the post, and was succeeded by Rev. Arthur Cocks, £248 of the loan was still outstanding, so in May 1893 a meeting of the committee that had overseen the extension work was convened to discuss the steps that should be taken to pay off the outstanding amount. Collections had been taken at regular intervals to pay off the debt up to the point at which Mr Ingleby left, but they had not happened since that time, resulting in the outstanding amount. The meeting agreed that they were bound in honour to repay the debt. It was mentioned that since the Rev. Arthur Cocks had become Chaplain 'the

committee seemed to have been brushed out of existence'.



Considerable discussion seems to have taken place. Rev. Cocks said 'he had no desire to make mischief ... the debt remaining unpaid was a scandal ... he had informed Mr Ingleby that if at any time there was a surplus it should go in discharge of the debt, but he had found himself £20 out of pocket ... the average collection every Sunday was £2 8s. and he found himself paying £2 8s. towards a debt incurred rightly or

wrongly before he entered upon the incumbency'. Eventually it was resolved that a fund be opened for defraying the debt, and that the old committee be asked to act in the matter. Donations of £40 had been received, and £16 16s. was collected in the room.

[The discussion seems to have been informed by the changes in the style of worship in the chapel with successive chaplains. Rev. Arthur Ingleby was of a high church persuasion, whereas Rev. Arthur Cocks was low church and left after one year. He was succeeded by Rev A. Barnes who was high church, followed in 1895 by Rev. Hensley Henson, low church, appointed to 'undo the damage Mr Barnes has done'. In the background was the belief that the enlargement of the Chapel had been carried out 'in antagonism to the new church of St. Clements', as members of the chapel had left to start St. Clements on Park Avenue as a chapel of ease.]

Martin Fairhurst

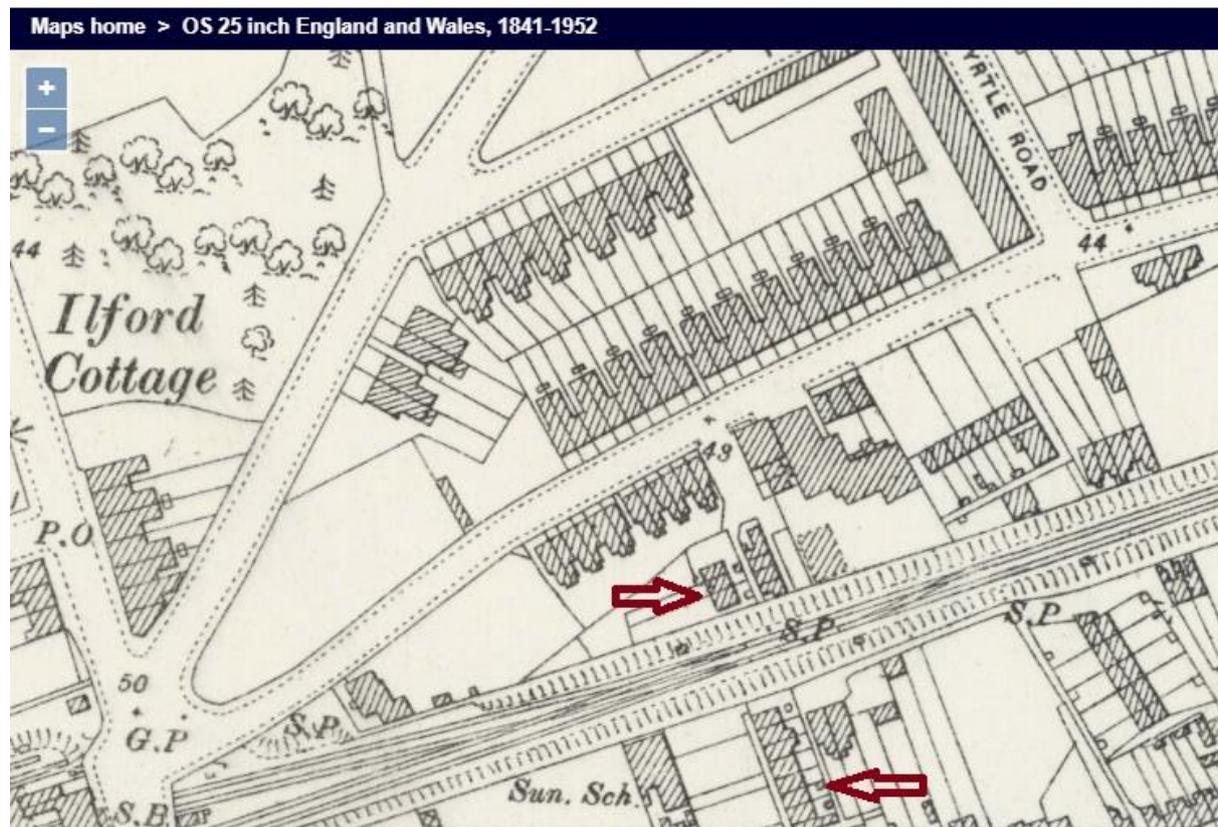
Photo Trip Advisor

A Chapel Row Without a Chapel?

I have often wondered why there are references in 19th century Census returns to three cottages called Chapel Row in Ley Street. According to the 1891 Census, Chapel Row was close to Valentines Row which was demolished in 1898 according to the annual health report. And so, armed with the Census and an online OS map of 1894, I tried to work out where it had been. And this is what I found.



Essex (1st Ed/Rev 1862-96) LXXIII.4 (East Ham; Ilford; Wanstead)
Revised: 1894
Published: 1897



You can see that there are two red arrows. The upper one is the Chapel Row off Ley Street and opposite Valentines Row. The lower one is the Chapel Row that was off the High Street and close to the Baptist Chapel. The Sunday School that you can see was behind the chapel itself. There was a Wesleyan Chapel in the village but according to the position shown on the 1860s OS map it was further east off Ley Street close to the railway line and therefore unlikely to be the chapel to which the cottages relate.

The big question is whether this is merely a coincidence that the two Chapel Rows are either side of the railway line or another explanation can be found.

Both rows of cottages are shown on the Tithe Map of 1847 and presumably date from well before the railway line was laid out. What if there had originally been a *single* row of cottages stretching from the High Road through to Ley Street and when the railway line was laid out in 1839, a number of them had to be demolished? This would account for how a Chapel Row came to be in a road without a chapel. One to follow up once we're back to normal!

Dr Colin Runeckles 26th May 2020

Little Gearies: who was 'J M'?

If your permitted socially distanced walk has taken you past the post-war flats at 'Little Gearies' recently, you may have spotted a much older stone ball and plaque with the inscription 'J M 1860' set in the boundary wall next to the Eden Peri Peri restaurant at 777 Cranbrook Road. I first noticed these architectural relics earlier this year and set about trying to find out something about 'J M' and the origin of the plaque.

Evidence for a dwelling here goes back to at least 1650 when a report of the commissioners appointed to inquire into the state of ecclesiastical benefices had proposed that a new parish should be formed at Barkingside and a new chapel built



Little Gearies 1 January 2020

'near a house called "Little Gearies in the forest"'. By 1860, on the site of today's flats stood a Georgian villa named 'Little Gearies'. Three years previously, when sold by the executors of the late Charles Johnson, the property had been described as 'an excellent residence on a moderate scale, with very complete offices, walled-gardens, green-house, yards, and numerous out-buildings; and 70 Acres of rich Meadow and Pasture, and a small quantity of Arable Land'.

County directories show that the Rev John Mee was living at 'Little Gearies' in 1860 – so here we have our 'J M', but no indication of what happened in that year to warrant the plaque. Searching the census for 1861 shows that John Mee was still at 'Little Gearies', and the enumerator recorded details of John Mee's family and household:

- John Mee, head of household, age 36, curate of Barkingside (born in Nottinghamshire)
- Eleanor Mee, wife, age 38 (born in Derbyshire)
- John Henry Mee, son, age 8, scholar (born in Riddings, Derbyshire)
- Edward Melford Mee, son, aged 7, scholar (born in Riddings, Derbyshire)
- Harold William Mee, son, aged 4 (born in Cambridge)
- Mary Ann Ainsworth, widow, aged 38, house servant (born in Little Raveley, Huntingdonshire)
- Susan Rowe, unmarried, aged 18, house servant (born in Great Stukeley, Huntingdonshire)
- Walter Rodger, unmarried, aged 22, gardener (born in Grafham, Huntingdonshire)

John Mee was born on 3 May 1824 and was educated at Gonville & Caius College and Christ's College, Cambridge. He was ordained in 1849 and his first post was a curacy at All Saints, Derby, followed by a period as incumbent at Riddings from 1850 to 1854. He was shortly to become Association Secretary to the Eastern District of the Church Missionary Society, and Clerical Secretary to the Bible Society. In October 1860, he was appointed to the curacy of Holy Trinity parish, Barkingside. It is quite likely that John Mee erected the 1860 plaque to commemorate his appointment in that year.

Mee does not warrant a mention in the Rev W S Lach-Szyrma's *History of Barkingside* (an odd history published in part-form in newspapers in 1904/1905, but good on early Barkingside incumbents). However, Lach-Szyrma does mention Mee's contemporary, Erskine Knollys, another curate at Barkingside who became vicar there in 1862, and says that 'no vicarage was yet erected'. (This is borne out by the Ordnance Survey plan surveyed in 1863, which shows no vicarage in Mossford Green – a vicarage is shown there on plans surveyed in 1893.)



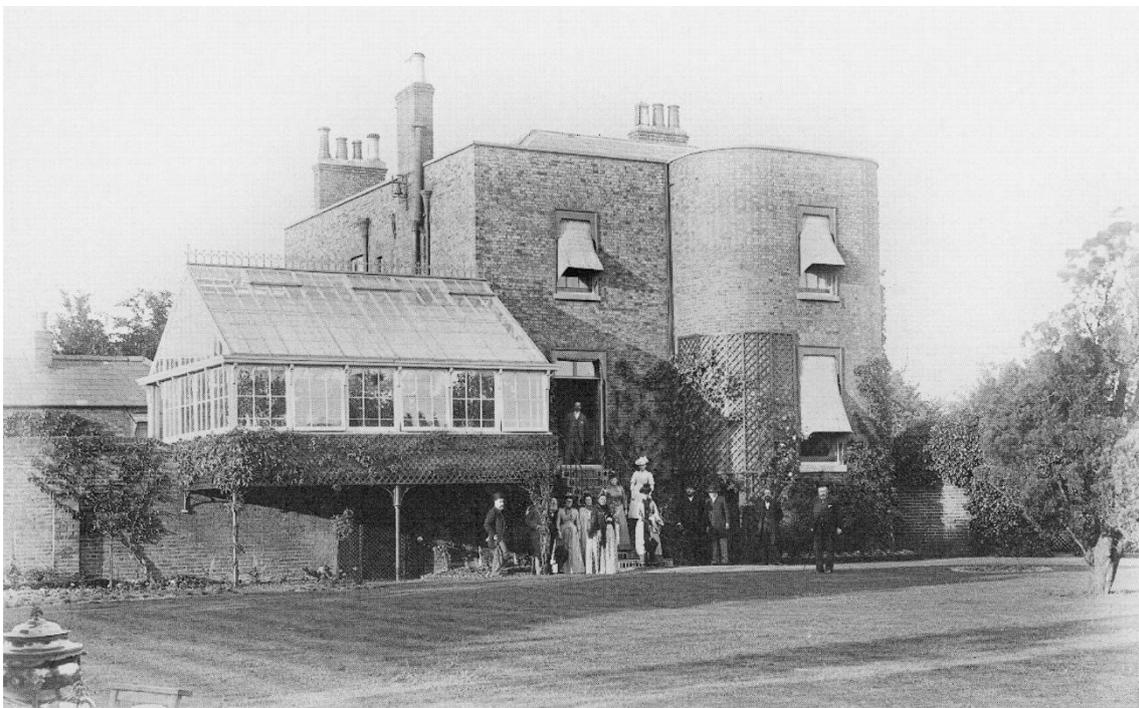
Little Gearies on Ordnance Survey plan 1863

John Mee left 'Little Gearies' in late 1861 or early 1862; county directories record that Thomas Benson was living there in 1862. Mee went with the Church Missionary Society to South Africa where he was the inaugural Dean of Grahamstown. On his

return to England he was at St Jude, Southwark from 1864 to 1871 and while there he became Secretary of the Church Missionary Society. His final appointment was at St John the Baptist, Westbourne, Sussex until his death while on holiday at Fort William, Scotland on 19 September 1883.

And what became of 'Little Gearies' itself? The property was sold several times during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. By 1939, the Register used to produce wartime identity cards and ration books recorded undoubtedly the last occupants as:

- Alfred D B Harding, born 5 January 1871, married, retired leather varnish manufacturer
- Beatrice A L A Harding, born 26 April 1878 (née Kendon, married, UDD (unpaid domestic duties))
- Alfred K Harding, born 18 November 1900, single, rent collector
- Beatrice K Harding, born 21 May 1902, single, UDD



Little Gearies 20 June 1891

Based on newspaper advertisements for staff placed by Mrs Harding, the family had been at 'Little Gearies' since at least 1910 (Masonic records show that Alfred was living in 10 Northbrook Road, Ilford in 1908.) Both Alfred and Beatrice Harding served as Ilford councillors in the 1930s and Beatrice was also Mayor in 1944-45. Alfred died in Ilford in October 1942; by the time Beatrice died in June 1951 she had moved to Hornchurch. 'Little Gearies' was still standing in August 1944, but was subsequently acquired by Ilford Municipal Borough Council and demolished. Local authority flats were under construction on the site by May 1951; in 2019, Redbridge Council approved plans to add 30 new 'affordable' homes there.



Little Gearies 7 August 1944 and 12 May 1951

Although we can't get together, the Committee would love to hear from you either to tell us what you would like to see in the mini newsletter or to contribute. Contact us by email janetseward@aol.com or post 12 Glencoe Avenue Ilford IG2 7AJ

Visit us on our Facebook page (Ilford Historical Society) and Twitter account (email janetseward@aol.com for details)

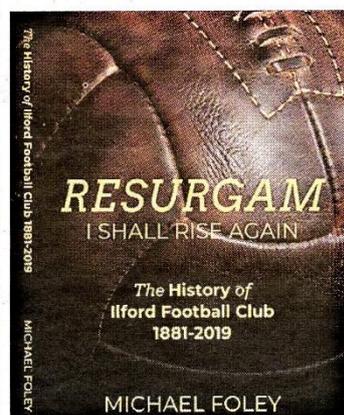
Keep well and keep in touch!

Book review: GOAL! Thought It's All Over?! – Not Quite.

RESURGAM I SHALL RISE AGAIN The History of Ilford Football Club 1881-2020.
By Michael Foley. 166 pages, £12-99 (1).

There are extensive photographs and memorabilia to catch the eye, and lashings of nostalgia about the history of the club and Ilford town which ran in parallel as both grew in success and then both suffered. Michael relates how the town developed from an Essex village to a London suburb full of civic pride and service, and how this paralleled the patrician 'Corinthian spirit' (2) and unpaid amateurism of Ilford FC versus paid, northern, working-class professionalism. The club went from vertical stripes to its favoured blue and white hoops and came to represent the town.

Many clubs are groundless, ie 'I Zingari' (Gypsies), and like them Ilford FC was nomadic for years, changing its football grounds four times as it never owned its playing surface until the Lynn Road Newbury Park ground was leased in 1903 and finally purchased in 1921. This was lucky for me as we lived just two minutes from it though that wasn't the reason my parents chose the location to buy our house in 1963.



A new book 'The History of Ilford Football Club 1881-2020' has been published and is now on sale. To order a copy for £12.99 (plus P&P) email ilfordfc.chairman@hotmail.com

Ilford FC, founded 1881, first played on a Clements farm estate field where Ilford town hall is now. Fitness and a laid-back approach were top priorities for players and match officials. In 1901 during a match "a goalkeeper was seen smoking a cigarette and a linesman seen smoking a pipe". But the route the club took was unlike West Ham United or Tottenham as Ilford turned its back on professionalism and stuck with the amateur route, winning the Essex Senior Cup many times and the fledgling Isthmian League for the first time in 1907.

Football, property speculation, politics and jobs went and in hand. Those involved with the club are a roll-call of the town's leading families: the Porters (Alfred, Edgar and Herbert) who played for Ilford FC in the 1890s (father Henry Porter ran a prominent- if 2nd hand furniture shop

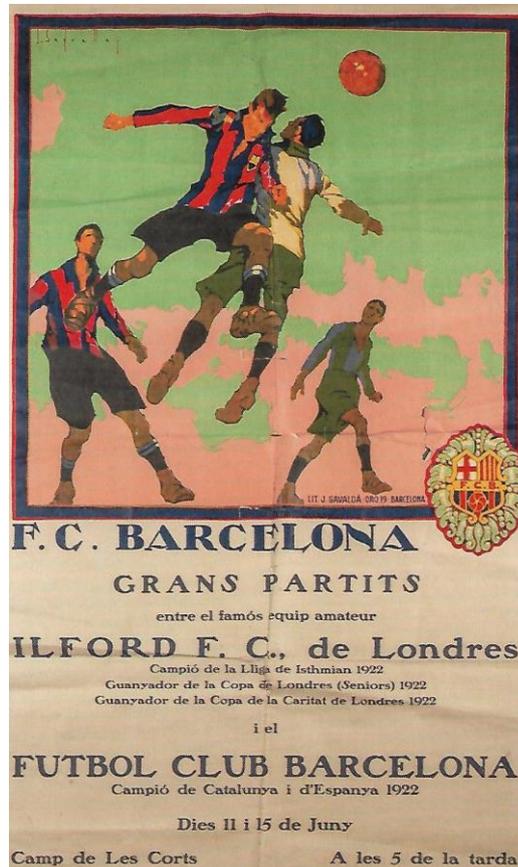
on the corner of the High Rd and The Broadway), Ben Bailey who arrived in Ilford to clear up the mess left by the Jabez Balfour-Liberator Building Society fraud and became chairman of Ilford UDC in 1901 and Club President, WP Griggs land speculator and developer of 2,000 Ilford houses who has an Ilford road named after him, and Joe Dines: Highlands School teacher and perhaps Ilford's greatest amateur footballer who played for England 25 times but was sadly killed in September 1918, just weeks before World War I ended. Edgar C Porter (1873-1934) was "a pivotal presence" in the Club for nearly 50 years, and Reverend Sir Herbert Dunnico (d.1953) was the face and 'the General' of the club. His roll call of achievements is very impressive: Baptist minister, Labour MP, Essex County FA President 1937, President of Ilford FC, singing teacher, and in 1929 was even eulogised in the Brooklyn Daily Eagle, USA.

The 'glory years' saw adventurous Ilford, a top footballing team and great attraction, travelling to the Channel Islands in 1903, Copenhagen 1905, and in 1922 '*Ilford FC de Londres*' visited Barcelona. Back in Ilford the magnificent Essex Senior Cup trophy was embarrassingly stolen from Ajax Sports Store on the High Road. On another

European tour in 1925 Ilford beat the mighty Ajax in front of 10,000 Dutch supporters in Amsterdam. There were many friendly games against German teams: Holstein in April 1914, Frankfurt and Stuttgart in 1927, Cologne 1932. But back home in 1930 Ilford trounced Bournemouth Gas Works Athletic at Upton Park 5-1 in the Amateur Cup Final. Buddy Cramer played in this final and provided much of the memorabilia which adorns the book.



Joe Dines in his England kit 1912



Ilford FC de Londres visit Barcelona

The book is written in a text that flows along in a clear font which is attractive and easy on the eye. It is laid out in four chapters: Early Years 1881-1914: long walrus moustaches are everywhere; Glory Years 1914-45 winning consistently and lots of baggy long shorts; Rise And Fall 1945-79 reads almost like a sad, lingering death in the family but Ilford still won the London Senior Cup at Arsenal's ground in 1954, and finally Resurgam 1979-2020, written from a very personal point of view by Michael who describes repeated delays and wounds from the council - but many were self-inflicted, and this is when Ilford lost its ground, was out in the wilderness, and finally landed on its feet at Cricklewood - a track and field that had been originally donated to Ilford by Cameron Corbett in 1921. Yet in 2005 Ilford FC did the 'double', winning both the amateur League and Cup, a spectacular rise.

I am of course biased in that I knew Peter Foley (Michael's father) and we had many disputes over his impish humour, historical bias and loves of Ilford FC (and Charlton FC!?) and he was a great member of Ilford Historical Society. I've never been keen on amateurism. Good sportsmanship and fair play, which Ilford were famed for, is fine but 'the hand of god' brings success, money talks, or as in 1966 was it really 'over the

line'? I also admit that I often walked onto the Club's terraces after half-time because it was free.

There are some strange omissions from the book. There is no title page or publisher listed, or worse, an index to look up things when you want to go back and check details and names: a particular bug-bear for me.

In this new age many clubs and societies have fallen: bowls clubs have gone from Valentines Park, many fishing, tennis, cricket, football and chess clubs have died for all sorts of reasons. In an aging society and changing, diverse population with many new attractions and a shortage of houses Redbridge, like many other boroughs isn't immune. In this 'new Dark Age' of Covid-19 it will be interesting to see which clubs survive - amateur or professional, where "every green space is a target for development". *Resurgam*, Latin for 'I shall rise again', expresses the Christian faith in the Last Judgement, hopefully more successful than the submarine *Resurgam* (3). I hope Ilford FC will rise, if not quite Phoenix-like, at least with hope.

- 1) The book was made possible by financial support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and edited by Gerard Greene of Redbridge Museum and Heritage Centre.
- 2) London's Corinthian Casuals (1882-1939) were noted for their status and ideals of almost extreme sportsmanship, fair play and amateurism.
- 3) *Resurgam* was an embryonic Victorian submarine that had a sad end in 1879.

Jef Page, President
Ilford Historical Society, June 2020.

And the winner is.....

Congratulations to Alan Simpson who won May's quiz & wins a £5 voucher.

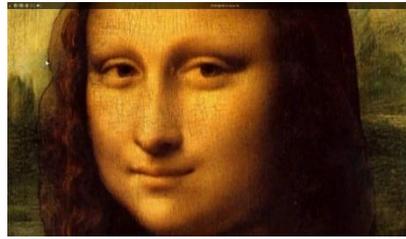
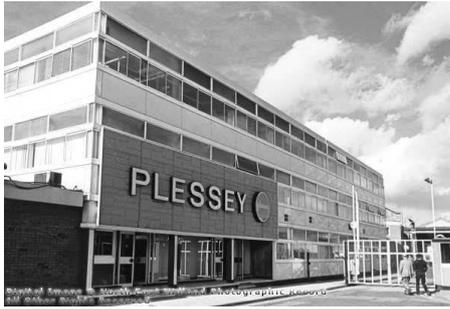
Answers:

1. **D**ick Turpin, notorious highwayman. 2. Sarah and Clement Ing**L**eby were the last owners of Valentines Mansion. 3. **F**airheads: popular Cranbrook Rd haberdasher's. 4. Cranes flew over the Cranbro**O**k stream; 5. The **R**ed Lion was the banner motif of Scotland's King James VI & James I of England; 6. The **D**unmow Flitch (a side of bacon) was awarded to the couple who hadn't had an argument all year. 7. Brother Clement Rodier of Algiers improved the growing of clementines & Clementin**E** was the name of Winston Churchill's wife. 8. The **S**avoy cabbage is named after a region in France; also a famous London palace. 9. Part of Ilford for over 100 years: Sain**S**bury's. 10. We**S**ts: another popular Ilford store. 11. A Sea**X** was Old English/Anglo-Saxon for knife and 3 of them are on Essex's badge. 12. The **red letters, read down** spell the words **Ilford Essex**.

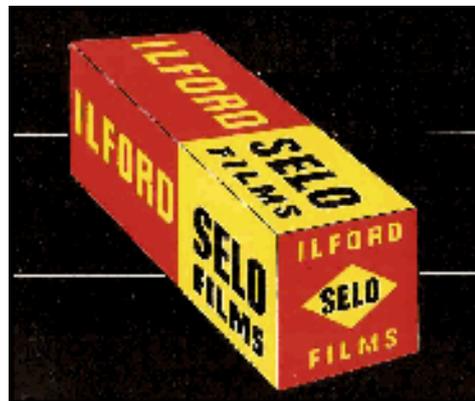
There's another quiz on the next page to test your historical knowledge!

TRUE OR FALSE: WOULD I LIE TO YOU?

Please email your answers, just **T** or **F** to janetseward@aol.com. And no phoning a friend.



1	Catherine was a very popular Tudor name. Catherine Howard became Henry VIII's 5 th wife before Catherine Parr.	T/F
2	Plessey of Ilford made vital medicines & aspirins during World War II	T/F
3	Charles Dickens really liked Chigwell & part-owned a house in Wanstead.	T/F
4	Mona Lisa's 'smile' (Lisa Gherardini, 3 rd wife of Francesco di Medici) was almost erased by a careless Louvres restorer, 1920. Her smile was quickly & quietly restored.	T/F
5	Italians were held in a temporary POW camp beside Beal's School field alongside Woodford Bridge Road, 1945.	T/F
6	Smallpox is the only infectious disease to be completely eradicated worldwide.	T/F
7	In 1740 Dick Turpin's gang robbed a Barking farm so he fled north- not on Black Bess! Captured in York, he was brought back to London in chains & hung at Tyburn.	T/F
8	Ilford Ltd was a world-famous camera-film making company. In the 1890s Ilford Council said it must use 'Ltd' on all packages/stationery to distinguish it from the town.	T/F
9	When demure Suffragette Ethel Haslam of Cranbrook Rd wasn't defacing Ilford's post boxes or vandalizing Ilford FC's turnstiles, she was a World War I nurse.	T/F
10	In a celebration dinner for Ilford FC winning the FA Amateur Cup 1929, 2 courses were Scotch Salmon with Nomads Sauce, and Peach Melba & Leyton wafers.	T/F
11	The City of London has just 3 streets: the rest are Lanes, Hills, Rows etc.	T/F
12	George Tasker's <i>Rambles Around Ilford</i> went as far as Chadwell Heath & he even walked the entire Eastern Avenue all the way to Southend to see if it was any good.	T/F
13	The Bayeux Tapestry was sewn by French needle-women in Bayeux, 1080s, instructed by Archbishop Odon, half-brother of William the Conqueror.	T/F
14	Jabez Balfour was responsible for the Liberator Building Society fraud. Balfour Road Ilford is named after him & his biblical Christian name means Sorrowful.	T/F
15	Grove Road Chadwell Heath was once called Dog Lane.	T/F



Jef Page,
June 2020.