

# BEER BARRELS AND BREWHOUSES



EXPLORING THE BREWING HERITAGE OF THE EAST END



## Welcome

Brewing was once big business in London's East End. Thousands were employed – as brewers, coopers, draymen, and accounts' clerks – at breweries throughout Whitechapel, Stepney and other local neighbourhoods. Malty smells filled the air, horses hauled drays through the cobbled streets, and pubs were emblazoned with brewers' names. And yet, much of this industrial heritage has disappeared from sight.

In summer 2017, we brought together a group of local residents to track down the story of brewing in the East End. We researched the large concerns – such as Truman's on Brick Lane, and Charrington's on Mile End Road – but we also sought out the smaller breweries. And we had a taste of the new craft breweries that have recently emerged.

This booklet brings together the stories we discovered. We hope you enjoy it. Please share it with your neighbours, and spread the word amongst your friends online: [www.issuu.com/walkeast](http://www.issuu.com/walkeast)

Cheers!

**Graham Barker**  
Project coordinator

We dedicate this booklet to Maris Ozols (1950-2017), a participant in this project and an enthusiast for East End life.



Published by Walk East, 2018. We've tried our best to ensure the content of this booklet is accurate, and apologise for any unforeseen bloomers, blips or oversights. We'd love to hear your feedback: [graham@walkeast.org](mailto:graham@walkeast.org)

# BEER BARRELS AND BREWHOUSES

## Old Brews – take a closer look at old East End breweries, big and small



8



12



22



28

## Beyond the Brewhouse – see how brewers helped shape the East End



44



48



60



66

## New Brews – get a taste of the new craft breweries rising up in the East End



72



74



76



78





# HOW TAYLOR WALKER'S BREWED THEIR FAMOUS BEER



Ever wondered how beer is made? These extracts from a 1937 Taylor Walker booklet explain the brewing process, step by step. The process has remained essentially the same for centuries.



## A TOUR ROUND

"The LIMEHOUSE BREWERY, standing almost on the banks of the busy Thames, is one of the most up-to-date breweries in the country, and so vast is it (it covers some seven acres of ground!) that merely to walk through all of its many departments is reputed to take upwards

of five hours. Any visitor would soon realise that the only constituents of beer, here as elsewhere, are malt, hops, yeast and, of course, 'the liquor', as brewers term the water they use for brewing. In certain types of beer a little sugar is added to suit local tastes, but that is all."



## 1 THE PROCESS OF MALTING

Firstly, barley is carefully cleansed, 'steeped' in water and spread on the floor of the maltings, where it is allowed to 'chit' or sprout. This process changes the internal structure of the grain, enabling the starch to be transformed into fermentable sugar during the course of the brewing. After sprouting, the grain is kiln-dried and 'cooked', developing an extremely palatable 'biscuity' taste.



## 2 PURE AND STABLE LIQUOR

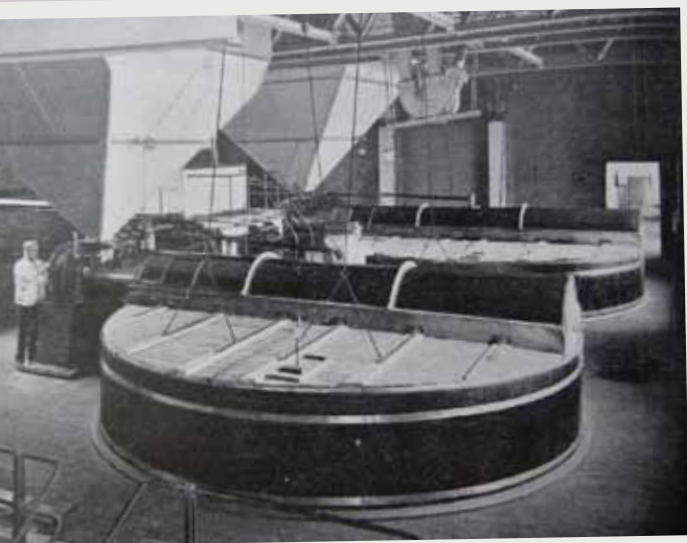
Of singular purity, the liquor obtained from the artesian wells of the Limehouse Brewery is particularly good for brewing purposes, as it contains – unlike most water supplies – none of those carbonates which are harmful to the delicate yeast.

## 3 THE VALUE OF THE HOPS

Besides flavouring the brew, the hop has essential oils which have very valuable preservative qualities and which help to keep the beer in good condition. Great 'pockets' of hops are kept at the Brewery in a store which is always dark (for light injures the hops) and whose temperature is carefully controlled.

## 4 THE MYSTERY OF THE YEAST

A good strain of yeast is the most coveted possession that a brewery can have. It is the yeast that makes beer alcoholic, for in feeding on the sugars into which the starch in the barley has been converted it converts this again into alcohol and gas, thus producing the 'head' on the beer.



## 6 FROM MASH TUN TO COPPER

In the Mash Tun, the porridgy mass is sprayed – or sparged – with a fine mist of liquor to extract the sugars from the crushed malt. Crystal clear and of a pale golden colour, the drained liquid – known as wort – flows to one of three giant Coppers (scoured and burnished to the most extreme degree of cleanliness), where it is boiled with the hops; this boiling both sterilises the liquid and extracts the aromatic tang of the hops.

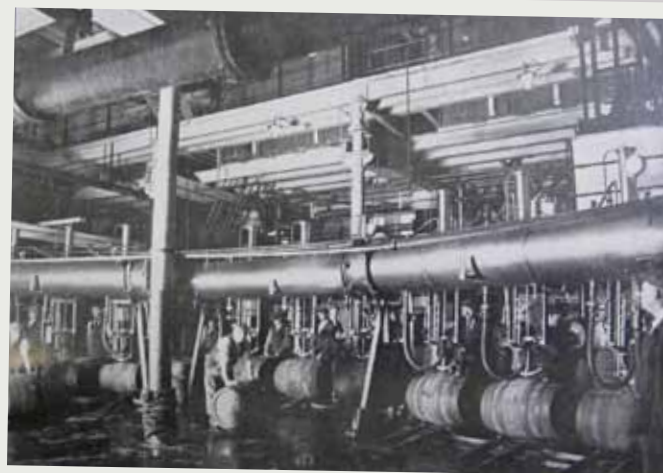


## 7 IN THE FERMENTING ROOMS

Once filtered and cooled, the wort is ready for fermenting. The Brewery's vastness of scale is forcibly brought before the eye when one inspects the Fermenting Tuns, for there are no fewer than 16 of these, some holding over 1,000 barrels (36,000 gallons) each. Here, the yeast is added and fermentation begins to take place almost at once – initially in the Tuns and later in the Settling Squares. The entire process occupies about a week.

## 5 GRIST TO THE MILL

The golden, sweet-smelling malt is emptied down a chute from which a Jacob's Ladder, or conveyor, carries it right up to the top of the Brewery. After careful screening, it falls into the Mills to be crushed into Grist. Then, in a receptacle sometimes known as the Elephant's Trunk, it is mixed with hot liquor before continuing into one of the great, circular Mash Tuns.



## 8 COLD STORE CONDITIONING

The Yeast Head is drawn off into yeast presses, and formed into solid cakes that are sold to manufacturers of foods and tonics. The beer that is to be sold as Draught, in the Cask, is first taken to one of the artic Cold Stores, where it is conditioned until required. These Cold Stores are most impressive, containing no less than 164 white cylindrical tanks, some of which hold 250 barrels each.

## 9 RACKING FOR CASK BEER

Blown from the Cold Store and filtered, the beer then runs down to the huge Racking Floor, the lowest floor of the Brewery, where it is filled into casks by racking machines that can deal with 60 barrels per hour. The beer for bottling goes through further chilling, and conditioning with hops.

## 10 BOTTLING AND LABELLING

'Returned empty' bottles are soaked, sprayed and scoured eight times in each of four tanks, making 32 processes in all, before being steam-dried and placed on a conveyor. The slowly-rotating filling machines, ablaze with burnished brass and copper, fill each bottle in turn, and place a crown cork or screw stopper in position. After the sealed bottles are Pasteurised, the Labelling machines apply the paste and labels in what is almost one swift movement.



"This enormous output could not exist were it not for the great and growing popularity of TAYLOR WALKER'S beer. Nothing that can be done to ensure purity is left undone, and that is why one finds it not only pleasant, but absolutely safe, to drink beer from the Brewery of MESSRS TAYLOR WALKER & COMPANY."



# RED LION TALES

A few snippets about the old Red Lion Brewery that once stood beside the Thames

## Alderman Stairs

Four generations of the Parsons family ran the Red Lion Brewery, and in 1693-4 it was assessed as the most valuable brewing establishment in London.

Sir John Parsons (1639-1717) – who took over from his father – was commissioner for victualling the Navy, served as Master of the Brewers' Company, and was elected Lord Mayor in 1703. This engraving depicts Sir John leaving the brewery in his mayoral barge. The 'Alderman Stairs' – named in honour of his son Humphrey, himself twice Lord Mayor – still survive, off St Katharine's Way.

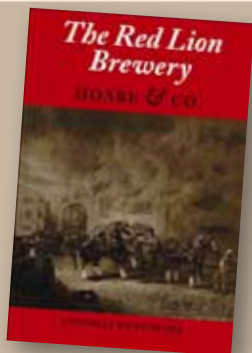
Research: Martin Melville



## How Old?

The Red Lion Brewery is known to date back to the 16th century and is believed to be even older. It was, probably, one of the 'beerhouses' mentioned in John Stow's 'Survey of London' (1597) and also 'the Lyon' beerhouse referenced in a licence given to the brewer John Merchant – a 'Fleminge' – to export 'ale called beere' by Henry VII in 1492.

*These extracts have been compiled thanks to research by Victoria Hutchings, author of 'The Red Lion Brewery: Hoare & Co.'*



## Parsons' Black Champagne

Humphrey Parsons inherited the brewing business upon the death of his father in 1717. He was a flamboyant character whose high profile contributed to the fame of the Red Lion's beer, known all over London as 'Parsons' black champagne'; it was a phrase coined by the poet Oliver Goldsmith:

**WHERE the Red Lion, staring o'er the way,  
Invites each passing stranger that can pay ;  
Where Calvert's butt, and Parson's black champagne,  
Regale the drabs and bloods of Drury-lane :**

Humphrey Parsons was reputed to be the innovator of maturing porter in vats on site at his Red Lion Brewery, rather than in rented cellars supervised by the 'abroad cooper', and in 1735 he installed huge vats holding 1,500 barrels a piece.



## Toby Jugs

Hoare & Co – owners of the Red Lion Brewery for over a century – registered the Toby jug as the trademark for their bottled beer. The figure of Toby is reputedly based on a well-known Yorkshire drinker, 'Toby Fillpot' who inspired the drinking song 'The Brown Jug' (1761). Whilst the Red Lion Brewery has long gone – it was acquired by Charrington's in 1933 – the Toby jug trademark endured: Charrington's continued to brew Toby Ales and incorporated ceramic Toby Ale panels into their pub facades (see page 67).



## What the Dickens?

The old Red Lion Brewery was demolished in the 1930s to make way for housing. However, in the 1970s when Taylor



Woodrow was redeveloping St Katharine's Dock area they discovered a warehouse that might previously have served as one of its brewhouses; they stripped it back to the timber-frame, jacked it up, and began the four-day job of relocating it beside the dock – where it now forms part of the Dickens Inn.



# EAGLE-EYED ON BRICK LANE

Peer up, peer down, peer round the corner – for hidden history at the old Truman's Black Eagle Brewery

## Water Well

**INSTITUTION OF CIVIL ENGINEERS.  
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS—SESSION, 1843.  
January 10.**

*"Abstract of paper by Mr. Davison, describing the mode adopted for sinking a well at Messrs. Truman, Hanbury, Buxton, and Co.'s."*

Robert Davison, Truman's engineer (1831-1845), described to the Institute of Civil Engineers the sinking of a well in 1839 at a cost of £5,795. Bored to over 400 feet deep – through clay, pebbles, oyster beds to chalk – it proved to be an abundant source, generating 135 barrels of water per hour.

## Brewmaster's House



Standing north of the courtyard, the former Brewmaster's House was later reinvented as the Vibe Bar. Opposite, the 93 Feet East club

was named after a boundary stone inscription in the brewery wall.



## Pavement Roundel

Inset into the cobbled pavement, a bronze roundel depicts four beer tankards. It's one of 25 pavement roundels designed by Keith Bowler in 1995 to highlight landmarks around Spitalfields.

## The Director's House



Thought to be the former brewery counting house – built c1745 and extended for Ben Truman in the 1770s – the director's house combined a

private residence and company head office. In its day, the boardroom was lined with family portraits.

## Dray Walk



Local residents complained about Black Eagle Street being blocked by brewery vehicles (or drays). The street was finally closed to traffic in 1912 and re-named Dray Walk. The 'loading bay' is still visible and a wooden notice marks it as a private road as you enter.

## Cooperage



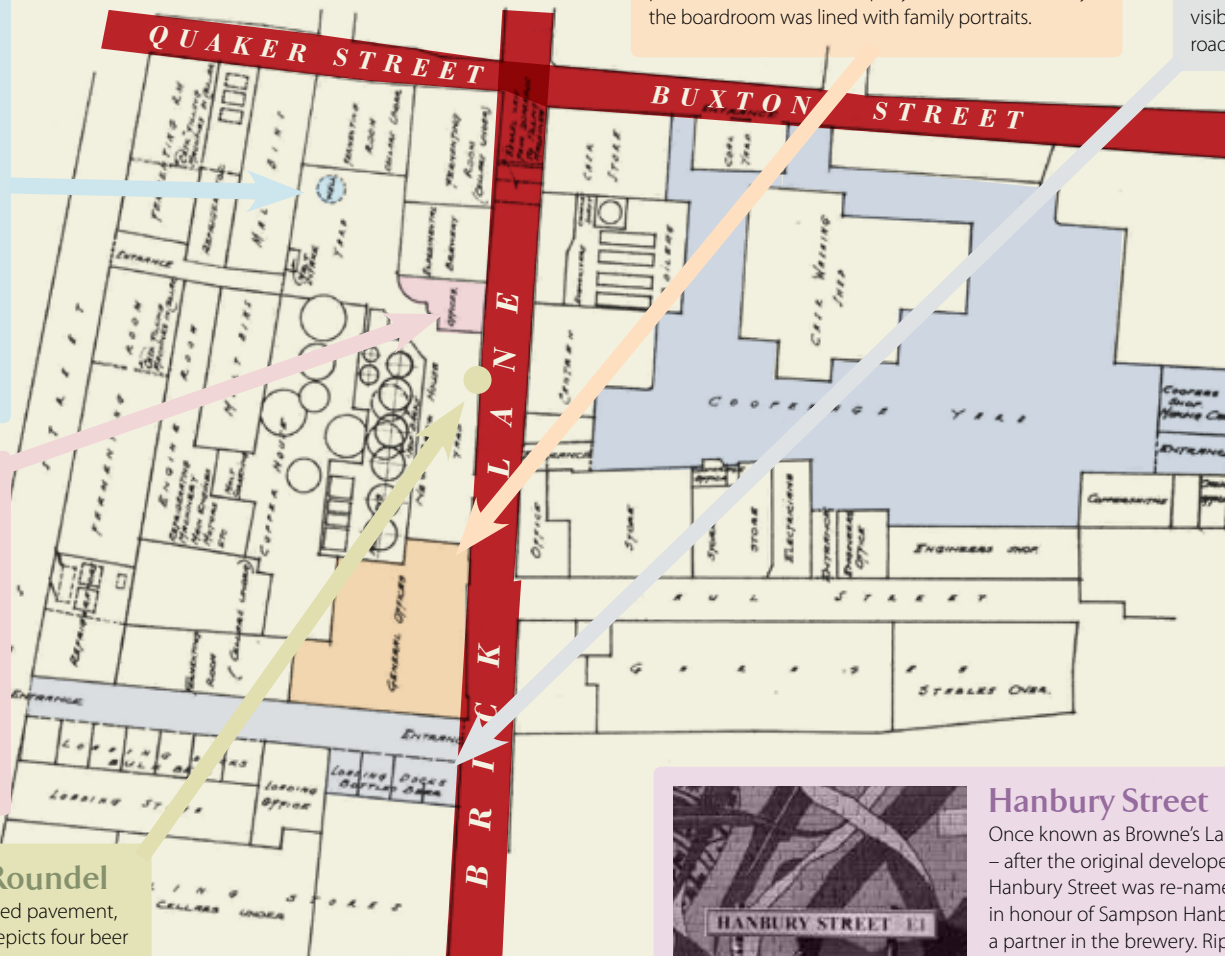
A sign on Spital Street marks the archway entrance to the former cooperage. Wooden casks – still in use until the 1950s – were made and repaired here. At the peak of production in 1855 Truman's had 60 coopers (some 25% of the total workforce) making and maintaining a stock of about 80,000 casks.

## Hanbury Street

Once known as Browne's Lane – after the original developer – Hanbury Street was re-named in honour of Sampson Hanbury, a partner in the brewery. Ripper victim, Annie Chapman was found in the backyard of 29 Hanbury Street – a location now covered by brewery buildings. These days it's a hotspot for street art.



Research: Alan Dann  
and Bill Wright





# MEET TRUMAN, HANBURY

Three names behind the  
Black Eagle Brewery on Brick Lane



Truman lived for a time at 4 Princelet Street but later built a splendid new house beside the brewhouse in Brick Lane. The brewery made Truman very wealthy; the 'weekly money' he withdrew in the 1760s ran to almost £3,750 a year, the equivalent of more than £5 million today. He bought a country house – Pope's Manor, near Hatfield – and commissioned Thomas Gainsborough to paint his portrait, in which he's depicted as the country gentleman.

Truman died in 1780 and left much of the brewery to two great grandsons; they were not interested, but a bright young man by the name of Sampson Hanbury proved in due course to be a worthy successor.

*Horse-drawn beer drays come and go from the Black Eagle Brewery (1842)*



## SAMPSON HANBURY (1769-1835)

"Under Sampson Hanbury, the Black Eagle Brewery prospered mightily," according to 'Trumans: the Brewers,' published on the company's 300th anniversary. "The ocean of porter brewed reached 100,000 barrels per year before 1800 and over 200,000 barrels annually after 1820... all helping to quench the thirst of growing London."

By this time Trumans was the second largest brewery in London (and no doubt the world). Hanbury ordered the first steam engine for the Black Eagle Brewery from Boulton & Watt, possessed of "the greatest power specified... with all possible despatch." He set high standards for the suppliers of malt and hops, and was a stickler for punctuality: "when his nephew Robert arrived early for an 8 o'clock breakfast appointment, he was taken to task by his uncle on the grounds that to arrive early was as unpunctual as to arrive late".



Hanbury was a Quaker and married to Agatha, a member of the rich Gurney family. During the eighteenth century Quakers were precluded from attending university, they mixed in close-knit societies, eschewed extravagant living and regarded hard work as a Christian virtue. Hanbury's nephew, Thomas Fowell Buxton – also a Quaker – joined the firm in 1808.

## SIR BENJAMIN TRUMAN (C1700-1780)

It was under Benjamin Truman, son of the founder Joseph, that the brewery first gained national fame, buoyed by the popularity of its porter – a dark brown, strong and well-hopped beer.

Legend has it that Truman obtained royal favour by supplying four barrels of beer to celebrate the birth of the Prince of Wales' daughter in 1737; the beer supplied initially by the Prince's regular household brewer was so awful that it caused a revolt amongst the crowds, but "the populace was pleased and satisfied" by Truman's porter.

*"Behold, the winter dusk is glimmering in this old house in Princelet Street built in the 1720s for Benjamin Truman." Spitalfields Life*





# ... AND BUXTON



## SIR THOMAS FOWELL BUXTON (1786-1845)

"To the brewery gladly enough he went in 1808," wrote Buxton's daughter Priscilla, "with a salary of £300 a year and a chance of being made a partner... He was set to keep the ledgers; this he says, he did very badly, he understood nothing about it. However, he became a complete master of it in time."

Buxton worked indefatigably and in 1811 was made a partner in the firm, which was re-named Truman, Hanbury, Buxton & Co. He successfully re-modelled the brewery's entire management system. But he was not only interested in running a profitable brewery – his employees' welfare was critical.

Buxton was concerned that many of the brewery's men were uneducated. In 1811 he announced: "this day in

six week's time I shall discharge every man who cannot read and write." He provided a schoolmaster and, by the appointed day "such was the earnestness to learn that not one man was dismissed."

In 1818 Buxton was elected Whig MP for Weymouth, a post he held for almost 20 years. On entering parliament he wrote: "I care little about party politics. I vote as I like; sometimes

pro and sometimes con; but I feel the greatest interest on subjects such as the slave trade, the condition of the poor, prisons and criminal law: to these I devote myself."

Buxton campaigned to abolish slavery throughout the British colonies as "repugnant to the principles of the British constitution and of the Christian religion". A plaque on Brick Lane and an ornate fountain at Westminster commemorates his work, and Thomas Buxton Primary School and Buxton Street were named in his memory.



Buxton Memorial Fountain, Victoria Tower Gardens.



## FLYING HIGH

We take a closer look at Truman's livery

### At the Sign of the Eagle

Black Eagle Street – off Brick Lane – gave its name to Truman's Black Eagle Brewery. And, in turn, a black eagle was adopted as the company's logo. You'll spot eagles all around Brick Lane: on the golden sign outside No 91, on a lamp, perched on the boiler house, and on the bridge spanning Brick Lane.

The eagle also featured on the company's beer brands. The new Truman's team based at 'the Eyrie' – an eagle's nest – continues that tradition; several of their beer labels depict the black eagle spreading its wings.



### Truman's vs Truman

In early pictures of Truman's pubs – and the brewhouse chimney – the brewer's name always appeared with an apostrophe 'S.

But in the 1970s the marketing department decided that the name should be shortened simply to Truman. No ifs, no buts: no 'S, if you please.

Workmen were sent up the chimney to patch out the 'S – squint and you can see a shadow of it in the brickwork. And the pub sign-writers had a field day. The branding was not updated consistently however; take a look at contrasting examples outside the Golden Fleece on Commercial Street.

Research: Alan Dann







Bow Brewery in 1827

# INDIA PALE ALE: BORN IN BOW?

George Hodgson of the Bow Brewery appears to have been a man in the right place, at the right time, with the right product



The East Indiaman Repulse moored in the East India Dock Basin (1820)

When you're next enjoying a pint of India Pale Ale – or IPA, as it's more often known – be sure to raise a toast to George Hodgson. For it was Hodgson's Bow Brewery that helped popularise the drink, due to its links with the East India Company.

Founded in 1600, the East India Company had, by the 18th century, grown to become the most powerful force, economic and political, in India. One small reason for its success was that it allowed the independent ship commanders who carried goods back from India to conduct private trade on their own accounts. This private trading could be hugely valuable: a ship's commander might well make up to £12,000 a year selling English goods in India, generally to the company's "civil servants" in the trading posts known as "factories", and bringing Indian goods back to Britain.

**HODGSONS' EAST INDIA PALE ALE.**—E. ABBOTT and CO., Wapping, are exclusively supplied by Messrs. HODGSONS and ABBOTT, of Bow Brewery, with this long-celebrated Beer, for home consumption: orders for which, in 18-gallon casks or bottles, immediately attended to. Export orders executed.—City Office, 98, Gracechurch-street.



Hodgson's advertise their "long-celebrated Beer" in the Naval & Military Gazette (1839)

There were 70 ships in regular service in the East India trade, and beer was amongst the goods carried from the outset; on their first expedition in 1601, the East India Company carried £646 15s worth of "beare" brewed at the Hour Glass Brewery in Thames Street for the sailors to drink, with a generous allowance of a gallon a man per day! And by 1750 almost 1,500 barrels of beer were being exported from England to "Asia" generally, a figure that had risen to 9,000 barrels by 1800.

When the commanders and captains of the East Indiamen went to buy beer to sell out in India, they turned to a brewer close to their base in Blackwall: George Hodgson, just up the Lea at Bow. Hodgson, who had begun brewing near Bow Church in 1752, was one of the smaller London brewers, making an average of just 11,200 barrels a year for the first 16 years of the brewery's existence. But beer from the brewery could be transported

to Blackwall easily by barge for loading onto the East Indiamen, and Hodgson gave the commanders and captains lengthy credit of up to 18 months, giving him the edge over the bigger, better-known London brewers.

The beers the East Indiamen officers bought from the Bow brewery included porter and October beer. The latter was the strong, pale, well-hopped autumn-brewed stock beer popular among 18th century country gentry. However, the October beer the East Indiamen officers bought from Hodgson spent four to six months or more at sea on its long journey to India. The journeys were certainly rough, and the slow, regular temperature changes and rocking motion had a magical maturing effect. By the time the beer arrived in Bombay, Madras or Calcutta, it was as ripe as a brew six times its age that had slumbered unmoving in an English cellar.



This Ordnance Survey map (1867) shows Bow Brewery, close to the River Lea and Bow Bridge

*"Beer from the Brewery could be transported to Blackwall easily by barge..."*





*The Bombay Grab brewery tap on Bow Road*

It proved popular – especially amongst the East India Company officers, ‘civil servants’ and the civilian middle classes – and in January 1801 the Calcutta Gazette carried an advertisement for the arrival of “beer from Hodgson... just landed and now exposed for sale for ready money only.” The Bow Brewery’s reputation was established in India, its name now a guarantee of quality: in 1809 it was being described in the Gazette as “Hodgson’s select Pale Ale, warranted of superior excellence.”

By 1811 George Hodgson’s son Mark was running the brewery. Within a couple of years, in 1813, some 4,000 barrels of Hodgson’s beer a year were being shipped to the East, four times the amount shipped in 1801. Four years later the operation had moved 230 yards east, to Bow Bridge, where a brewery tap was opened called the Bombay Grab: the name almost certainly comes from a three-masted armed cruiser operated by the Bombay Marine, the East India Company’s navy.

In 1821, the brewery – by then under the management of Frederick Hodgson and Thomas Drane – was rebuilt. Hodgson and

Drane were now ready for a coup. They would cut out the East India Company’s officers and ship their beer to India themselves, retailing it themselves once it arrived, and thus gathering all the profit of the Indian beer trade.

Naturally, the East India Company captains and officers were furious: Hodgson’s beer had previously “formed one of the principle articles in their investments,” as one commentator wrote. Hodgson and Drane also deeply upset the merchants in Calcutta and Madras, who found they too were now cut out from the most important brand in the local beer trade.

It was an ill-judged move. Powerful men in the shipping business were determined Hodgson and Drane should not be allowed to wreck a trading arrangement that had helped make their ships’ officers wealthy.



*Allsopp’s started brewing IPA with the benefit of Burton Upon Trent water*

Early in 1822 Campbell Marjoriebanks, who represented the shipping interest on the East India Company’s court of directors, persuaded Burton upon Trent brewer Samuel Allsopp to replicate “Hodgson’s India beer”, which was paler and more bitter than the ales the Burton brewers were used to brewing.

And by an extra stroke of luck, it was discovered that the well water of Burton, rich in calcium sulphate, naturally produces a much better pale, bitter ale than London water, rich in calcium carbonate, which is more suited to dark beers such as porter. Until London brewers learned how to treat, or

“Burtonise” their water late in the 19th century, a Burton brewer was always going to make a superior pale beer.

In 1863 the concern became the Bow Brewery Co Ltd, and in 1869 it turned into Smith, Garrett & Co. In 1927 Smith Garrett was taken over by Taylor Walker, and the Bow Brewery was demolished in 1933 to make way for London County Council flats, close to the present-day Bow flyover.



*Photographer William Whiffen captured this view of Bow Brewery in 1932, shortly before its demolition*

**With thanks to Martyn Cornell:** an award-winning blogger on beer, and author of ‘Strange Tales of Ale’, ‘Amber, Gold and Black’, and ‘Beer: The Story of the Pint’. [www.zythophile.co.uk](http://www.zythophile.co.uk)



## Prisca Coborn: Bow Brewster

In Bow, there’s Coborn Street, Coborn Road, and the Coborn Arms. Yet few local residents know that these names echo back to Prisca Coborn, a Bow brewster.

In 1675, Prisca Forster married Bow brewer Thomas Coborn, following the death of his first wife in childbirth. Within a few months he was dead himself, leaving his new widow to run the brewery and bring up his infant daughter Alice. Further tragedy followed when – on her planned wedding day – 15-year old Alice Coborn died of smallpox. Inside Bow Church a fulsome epitaph praises Alice’s “prudence of mind and richness of intellect... grace of carriage... the delight of her friends, the one hope of her family.”

Prisca ran the brewery with great success and when she died in 1701 she bequeathed the enormous sum of £14,000, most notably to establish a school for 50 children. Originally located near to Bow Church, the school moved several times in Bow, and is now part of the Coopers’ Company and Coborn School in Upminster. Prisca’s legacy lives on.





# SOMETHING'S BREWING ON HACKNEY ROAD

Take a closer look at the 1872 Ordnance Survey map and you'll spot four now-defunct breweries around the eastern end of Hackney Road. We dipped into the archives to track them down.



## West's Three Crowns Brewery

(N° 313-315)



This photo appears in a souvenir album presented to Three Crowns Brewery staff in 1930, shortly after Hoare's acquired the company. Job Henry West is first mentioned as a local brewer in 1836 when he insured the Nag's Head pub.



## Chandler's Wiltshire Brewery

(N° 505-507)

Established in the early 1850s, the Wiltshire Brewery of Chandler & Co was substantially rebuilt in 1893; this illustration from the Brewers' Journal shows the 120-quarter brewery designed by engineers Arthur Kinder & Son. Brewing ceased in 1911, but remarkably some buildings survive (see page 36).

## Temple Brewery and Tap (N° 428)



West's – brewers at the Three Crowns – expanded with a "branch establishment" on Temple Street, known as the Temple Brewery. The brewery had been demolished by 1932 but a photo of the Temple Street Tap survives.

452 Chapple A.  
454 Edwards C. builder  
458 Mills & Court, brewers  
(London brewery)  
462 Gibbons J. brush mfr  
466 Marshall H. tripe dressr  
468 Stevens J. H. architect

## Mills & Court's London Brewery

(N° 456-460)

Almost opposite Chandler's, the London Brewery brewed from around 1857 until the late 1880s. For a short time it operated as the London Brewing, Bottling and Mineral Water Co. The site later became the Norfolk Arms.



Old Brewery, Tap and Almshouses in 1850



*"Situated in the Mile End Road, close to the old turnpike gate... In olden times the brewery was almost hidden from the public road, for where is now the noble entrance and spacious courtyard in front of the brewery, formerly stood a row of almshouses, next to which was the counting house, brewery-tap and the Blind Beggar public house, the latter still in existence."*

*"This admirable brewery was mostly rebuilt in the year 1863, not only on account of Messrs Mann's increasing business, but for the purposes of... brewing in a more advanced and modern style. Old and dark buildings have been entirely swept away, and their place filled up with handsome structures; whilst new and valuable vessels and machines... have been added to the plant."*



The Albion Brewery, 1889

# BEHIND THE SCENES IN 1889

Extracts from Alfred Barnard's 'Noted Breweries' enables us to look around Mann, Crossman & Paulin's Albion Brewery

*"On the floor of the brewhouse... are five mash tuns fitted with copper covers, three of them constructed of iron and two of wood. All of them are fitted with Steel's mashing machines, and contain internal revolving rakes, sparging apparatus, and draining plates... All the tuns are in continual use to keep pace with the requirements of the business."*



The Avenue in the Great Tun Room

*"We next directed our steps to the great settling-back room, once the vat house, containing a number of these vessels fitted with attemporators, and used for bitter and stock ales."*



## BARNARD VISITS

In 1889-1891, Alfred Barnard visited over 110 breweries throughout the country. His mission was to produce detailed narratives on each, including descriptions of their technical equipment, brewing process and beers. This colossal undertaking resulted in a four-volume publication, 'The Noted Breweries of Great Britain and Ireland'.

Barnard visited three in the East End: Truman's Black Eagle Brewery, Charrington's Anchor Brewery, and the Albion Brewery of Mann, Crossman & Paulin. The reports were somewhat flattering – after all, he hoped the brewers would use facsimile versions as self-promotional pamphlets. Nevertheless, it's thanks to Barnard's work that we can go 'behind the scenes' to see how these breweries were organised.





New Burton Ale Stores

*"In one part of the new stores, we noticed that the casks which are piled four and five high, are marked KKK, denoting that they are London stock ales. In the other division the casks are variously marked in different colours, denoting that they are from Burton-on-Trent."*



Stable Yard, West



New Bottling Stores

*"The buildings, utilised as the bottling stores, were formerly the Whitechapel workhouse... [but] demand for their bottled beers and stouts is now so extensive, that the firm are erecting new bottling stores... in Raven Row, about 200 yards south of the brewery... In the washing room there are three single bottle washing machines and one double one, worked by steam power."*

Research: Isabel Lines and Maris Ozols

MESSRS. MANN, CROSSMAN & PAULIN,  
ALBION BREWERY, MILE END ROAD.



The Albion Brewery closed in 1979. Many buildings were demolished – with the Sainsbury's superstore now occupying much of the site – but the old brewery offices and courtyard buildings were converted to create the Albion Health Centre, a bank, and flats.

Nip into the Health Centre foyer for a glimpse of George and the Dragon – a trademark of the brewery – as well as the inscription 'Decus et tutamen' ('an ornament and a safeguard'), and the old Albion Brewery sign incorporating hops and barley.





# TUCKED OFF POPLAR HIGH STREET

In 1925, local photographer William Whiffin – camera in hand – peered into the yard of the former Eagle Brewery behind 151 Poplar High Street, close to the corner with Cottage Street. A stone eagle perches on the former brewhouse. Two men tinker with the delivery wagon. And there's the clink of glasses as the barmaid washes tankards in the Eagle pub alongside.

WITH VACANT POSSESSION.  
**PARTICULARS.**  
**Extensive Freehold Factory Premises**  
In a central position within easy access of the East and West Ends, and situated in the heart of the  
**"THE EAGLE BREWERY,"**  
151a High Street, Poplar, E.14

## 151 HIGH STREET, POPLAR

IF THE WALLS COULD  
ONLY SPEAK

### ROMANCE TO GIVE PLACE TO NEW FLATS

Poplar High Street would not stimulate the imagination of a chance passer-by to any great extent. Very little romance still clings to it.

If he could penetrate into No. 151, the Eagle Brewery, however, he would very soon lose his apathy.

Passing through the front door, which leads off the street, he is in a modern bar. Behind lie secrets of by-gone ages. Passing through a gabled doorway he sees on the right the shape of an old fireplace, cut deeply into the wall. It is said to date back to the early 16th century.

A little further on he enters a room panelled in oak. In spite of a new coat of paint the wood retains the appearance of great age.

In the Elizabethan period the room may have been the scene of many a midnight "popish plot," or merely the dining-room of a respectable family.

Upstairs the landing takes on the appearance of an old gallery. Opening off it there is a room with a Tudor fireplace, having coats of arms engraved in the top corners, but only indistinctly seen to-day.

There is another flight of stairs leading to the attics. The visitor is able to enter a room formed out of the slope of the roof and the ceiling of the room beneath. Oak beams of great antiquity support the structure. To-day no great faith can be placed in the security of the floor, as everything is in its original state—as it was 300 years ago.

Perhaps the climax of the visit is reached when the visitor descends the cellarage.

"East End News"  
16 Sept. 1932

A glance at the wall shows that at one time tunnels led out from the cellars. Arches like the opening to tunnels have been bricked up. In one of the rooms there are niches cut out into the walls and a deep shelf. At the end which faces east there is a square outlined in the floor. The square has been bricked up inside with a more modern type of brick.

Taking into consideration the size and position of this square and the niches in the wall at the other end, one is led to the belief that there was an altar at the east end, some kind of image at the other end.

Is it possible that the room was used as a chapel for "recusants" (Catholics who worshipped their God in their own way, not as the sovereign dictated), hiding their activities below the surface of the ground?

An unimaginative man might say that it has always been just a cellar. But to others it breathes of persecution, smuggling, and dark deeds, such as would take the macabre fancy of Edgar Allen Poe aptly to describe.

To-day romance holds little place. The old brewery is to be converted into working-men's flats by the East Bethnal Green and East London Housing Association. There will be four flats—three with two bedrooms and one with three. Each flat will have a sittingroom, bathroom and scullery. Hot water will be obtained from a central boiler.

The housing schemes of the Association are proving so popular that no further application for accommodation can be dealt with, but shares may be taken up at £1, and loan shares at 3½ per cent. Those who are interested should write to the address of the Association, 21 Old Ford Road, Bethnal Green.

## A SECRET CHAPEL?

Established in 1815, the Eagle Brewery – under Joseph Smith, and later James West – grew into a substantial concern. However, by 1908 it had become James Hall's mineral water works. When it was redeveloped in the 1930s the site's history was revealed; experts identified a Tudor fireplace, wall niches, and bricked-up tunnels in the cellar. As East End News asked, "Is it possible that the room was used as a chapel for 'recusants' [Catholics], hiding their activities below the surface of the ground?" Now, sadly, we shall never know.

Research: Valerie Sheekey



# TUN MEN, ENGINE DRIVERS AND HORSE HANDS

Extracts from *A Brewer's Progress* – a book celebrating the bicentenary of Charrington's (1757-1957) – give us an insight into the brewery workforce



Charrington's Anchor Brewery, 1900

*"Houses were built for brewers, engineers, and other important members of the staff. Storehouses grew up, and stables for the horses. [Until the 1860s] Wheelwrights, blacksmiths, and farriers lived in houses which made the yard look rather like the outskirts of a village instead of the appurtenance to a thriving and vigorously spreading industry."*

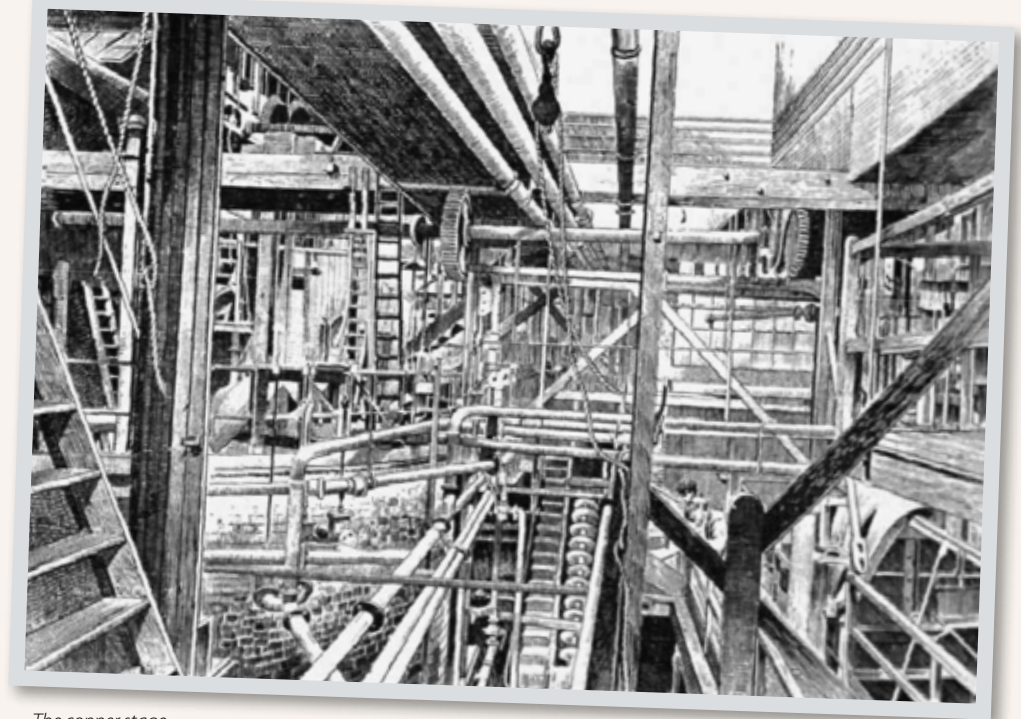


The brewery yard, viewed from north to south (Noted Breweries, 1891)



Tun men working the mash

*"In the old days of small breweries, the brewer would fill a large tub with scalding water and while one man tipped the crushed malt into the tub from a sack over his shoulder another man stood by with a long pole and stirred the mash. Great changes take place in the character of the porridge-like mixture of malt and water as the mash tun fills up... in less than one hour, the starchy material will have been changed into a sugary liquid which the brewer will convert into beer."*



The copper stage

*"The first steam engine was installed in 1828, at the modest cost of £889 8s 0d. Up till that time a great deal of the heavier work had been performed by hand, and often with apparatus that seems elementary, even ludicrous, to us today. Output rose swiftly: speed and efficiency were the watchwords."*





Horse valuation day

"By the 1850s there were about 80 brewery horses and by the 1890s the number had doubled. The horses were the subject of a traditional ceremony – their valuation by the directors. The horses were paraded one by one before expert judges who made notes of their strength, their age, and their behaviour, and estimated their market value. There was great competition between the stablemen and drivers to show each animal at its best... when the day came, their coats were combed and brushed and polished until they gleamed in the sunlight."



The brewery's fire crew

Brewing can be a dangerous business – explosions and fires were not uncommon – and so Charrington's, as other large breweries, had its own in-house fire brigade. They successfully tackled small fires but, in August 1920, a more serious blaze took hold, causing £30,000 worth of damage.

### BREWERY BLAZE

Fire at Charrington's Does  
£30,000 Damage

A destructive fire broke out early yesterday at Messrs. Charrington and Co.'s brewery in Mile End-road. The building involved was one of four or five floors, and covered a large area. The upper portion was well alight before the arrival of the fire brigade, and it was found necessary to circulate a district call. Eight motor pumps were engaged for some time before the outbreak was mastered, and considerable damage was done, particularly to the milling and malting and storage departments. The damage is unofficially estimated at £30,000.

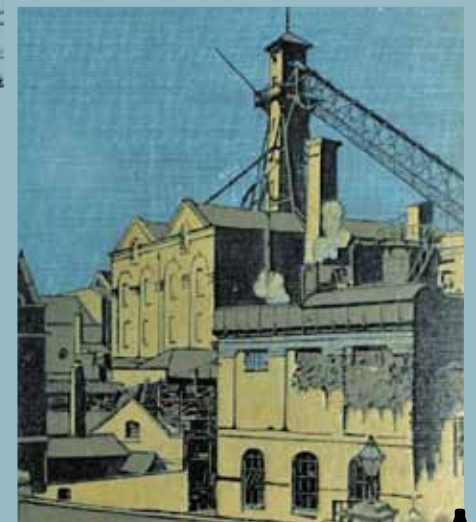
"Colourful characters abounded. There was a Mr Weller who worked in a saw-pit, and had only one ear. As if that were not misfortune enough, a legend arose that this ear had been sawn off... There was a Mr Horsford, a veteran of the Napoleonic wars, who was famous for a fund of classical quotations apt to every circumstance." And this photo shows William Carter, who worked at Charrington's for 41 years, wearing the old time drayman's smock and red woollen stocking cap.



## THE NIGHT SHIFT

Charrington's Brewery 1	Charles J. Bursley	Serv	1/1	36	Stationary Engine Driver
	John Russell	Serv	1/1	36	Brewer's Serv
	Charles E. Anderson	Serv	1/1	26	Do
	Henry J. Watson	Serv	1/1	35	Brewer's Stoker
	Mark J. Hatch	Serv	1/1	26	Do
	Charles D. Armstrong	Serv	1/1	28	Do
	William J. Lanthorn	Serv	1/1	24	Do
	Richard Gordon	Serv			
	Henry B. Lighty	Serv			
	George M. Mithere	Serv			

The 1881 census captures a glimpse of the 'night shift' working at Charrington's on Sunday 3 April. The team comprised a stationary engine driver, two brewers' servants, four brewery stores men, a couple of watchmen, and a horse-keeper.



The Anchor Brewery in 1856, and as it appeared on the cover of *The Great Acceptance*, a biography of Frederick Charrington





# BELLEVUE PLACE: A TUCKED-AWAY TREASURE

"Many who pass along Cleveland Way, off Mile End Road, probably do not realise that behind a green door in a wall lies a cul-de-sac in which gardens bright with flowers lie in front of a row of charming early nineteenth century cottages. Here some of the employees of Charrington's Anchor Brewery have their homes in what is a rare oasis of colour in the East End."

(The Sphere, 26 Aug 1961)

Bellevue Place remains a hidden treasure of the East End. Nip through the doorway and you'll discover a neat terrace of houses built in 1825-30 on land belonging to Charrington's. Old maps reveal that it originally formed a U-shape around gardens – no doubt providing the householders with a 'belle vue' – but half of it was later demolished to make way for brewery sheds.

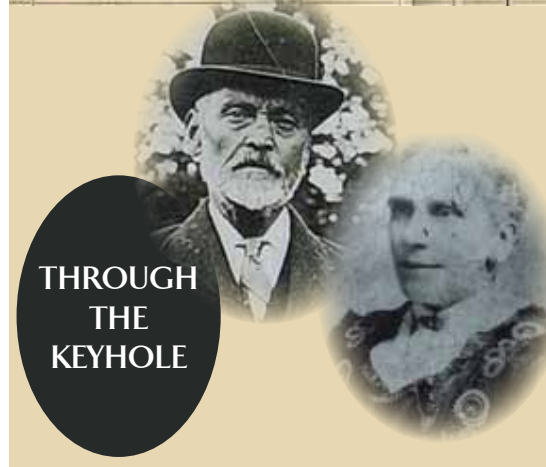
The 1870 Ordnance Survey map shows U-shaped Bellevue Place, with the Anchor Brewery a block away



Drawing by Geoffrey S Fletcher



of every Person, whether Member of Family, Visitor, Boarder, or Servant, who		For Infants under one year state the age in months or "under six months," "one month," etc.		Write "Single," "Married," "Widower," or "Widow," opposite the names of all persons aged 15 years and upwards.		State, for each Married Woman entered on this Schedule, the number of —		Personal Occupation.	
(1) passed the night of Sunday, April 2nd, 1911, in this dwelling and was alive at midnight, or		State whether "Head," or "Wife," or "Son," "Daughter," or other Relative, "Visitor," "Boarder," or "Servant."		Completed since the present Marriage has been contracted, if less than one year write "under one."		Children born alive to present Marriage. (If no children born alive write "None" in Column 7.)		The reply should show the precise branch of Profession, Trade, Manufacture, &c.	
(2) arrived in this dwelling on the morning of Monday, April 3rd, not having been enumerated elsewhere.		No one else must be included.		If less than one year write "under one."		Total Children born alive.		If engaged in any Trade or Manufacture, the particular kind of work done, and the Article made or Material worked or dealt in should be clearly indicated.	
(For order of entering names see Examples on back of Schedule.)		Age of Males.		Age of Females.		Children who have died.		(See Instructions 1 to 8 and Examples on back of Schedule.)	
1.		2.		3.		4.		5.	
1 William Halls		Head		41		Widower		Brewers Cellarman	
2 Grace A. Halls		Daughter		20		Single		School Teacher	
3 Blanche M. Halls		"		23		"		Housekeeper	
4 Oscar W. Halls		Son		21		"		Apprentice Assistant	
5 Bertie W. Halls		Son		20		"		Breweryman	
6 Mabel L. Halls		Daughter		17		"		H. Dressmaker	
7 Frederick S. Halls		Son		15		"		Brewers Cooper's Apprentice	
8									



THROUGH  
THE  
KEYHOLE

**William Halls** – originally from Goldhanger in Essex – moved to No 7 Bellevue Place in the 1880s with his second wife **Rebecca**; the Halls had ten children but only six survived to adulthood **1**, and by 1911 William is a widower **2**. He initially worked as a brewery hand (1881), brewer's servant (1883), but by 1891 he had become a cellarman **3**. Most of the Halls' children took jobs in other industries, but their youngest son, Frederick, worked as a brewery cooper's apprentice **4**.

**Old census returns** provide a snapshot of who was living at Bellevue Place at a point in time. The census was taken every ten years and detailed household records for 1841-1911 are available on subscription websites such as ancestry.co.uk and findmypast.co.uk. Looking at the heads of household in 1911, for example, gives a sense of some of the different roles at the brewery.

- Brewers' labourer: John Brett (No 1)
- Watchmen: Francis Wallinder (No 2) and Thomas Smardell (No 3)
- Millwright: William Playll (No 4)
- Cellarmen: Thomas Messenger (No 5), Thomas Smith (No 6), and William Halls (No 7)
- Foreman in the brewing department: Henry Corley (No 8)
- Gas fitter: William Cheney (No 9)
- Tun man: John Doughty (No 10)
- Foreman horse-keeper: William Sampson (No 11)

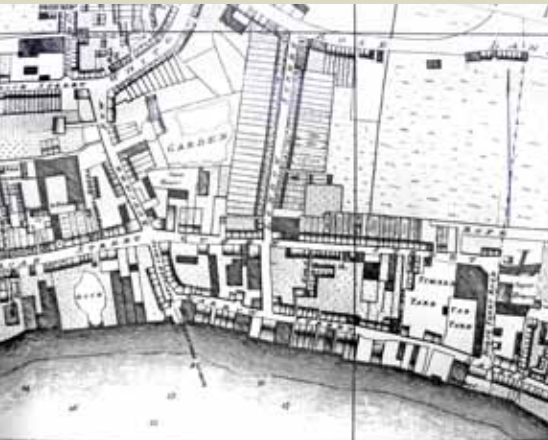


# MAPPING THROUGH TIME

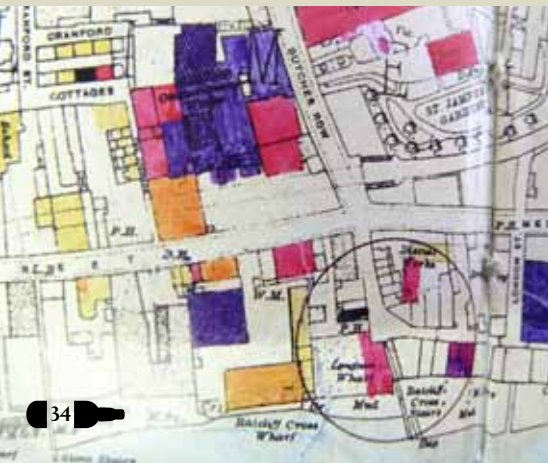
Old maps can offer insights into how individual breweries developed over time; build them up, layer by layer, to develop a fascinating picture of how the local landscape has changed.

Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives has well over 2,000 maps and plans, dating from Elizabethan times to the present day. The collection includes large-scale Ordnance Survey maps, street plans and some parish and estate maps. Whilst researching breweries in Ratcliff, for example, we looked at Horwood's map (1792-9), Ordnance Survey maps (1870, 1894 and 1914), Charles Booth's poverty maps (1886-1903), Goad plans, and Bomb Damage (1939-45) maps.

Horwood map (1792-9)



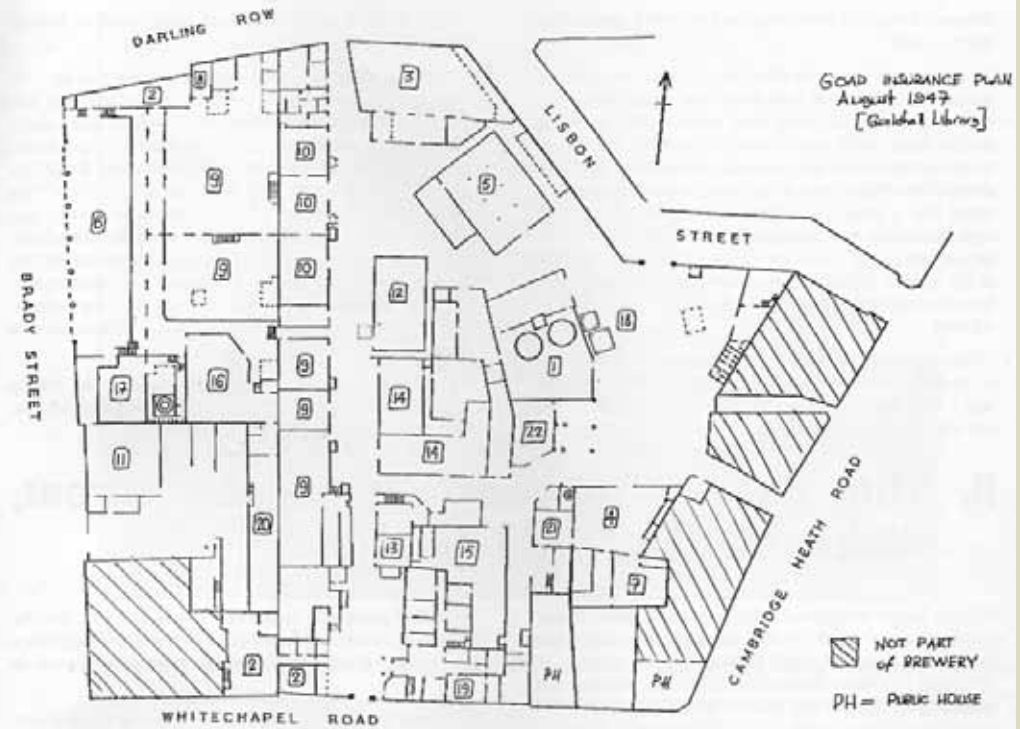
Bomb Damage map (1939-45)



Booth's poverty map (1886-1903)



Ordnance Survey (1870)



**Fig 1. Plan of Albion Brewery (from 1947 Insurance Plan)**

1. Boiling Coppers 2. Offices 3. Keg Sterilising 4. Fitter's Shop 5. Continuous Brew House  
6. Beer Stores/Loading Bank 7. Carpenter's Shop 8. Plumber's Shop 9. Fermenting Vats 10. Sugar Store  
11. Boiler House 12. Silo 13. Canteen 14. Malt Store (Ground) Engine Room (1st) Mash Tun Room (2nd)  
15. Porter Store (Vats & Barrels) 16. CO<sub>2</sub> Plant 17. Refrigerators 18. Spent Hop Tanks 19. Kitchen  
20. Electrician's Shop 21. Smithy 22. Malt Store.



*Good insurance plans – such as these 1947 plans (above) for Mann, Crossman's brewery in Whitechapel, and (left) plans for Francis Alexander's London & Burton Brewery in Ratcliff – are especially useful for industrial heritage research as they identify the construction and uses of individual industrial buildings.*



# SPOTTED ON THE STREET

A closer look at some surviving brewery buildings



## St George's Brewery, Commercial Road

"Built as St George's Brewery in 1847 by Charles Humphreys. Set at an angle to the road, reflecting the pre-1870 street pattern. Interior with cast iron supports and jack arches. Originally roofed by a large water tank; the present roofline must date from c. 1900 when the building was converted for [Johnnie Walker's whisky] bonded stores." (Pevsner)



## Commercial Brewery, Stepney

The Troxy – built as a cinema in 1931-3 – occupies the former Commercial Brewery site. The old Brewery Tap still stands on the corner, now flats. "It is probable that 7-19 Caroline Street", which also survives "was the brewery transport depot, with drays on the ground floor and stables on the upper floors." (London Brewed)



## Brewery and Brewer's House, Heneage Street

"The Pride of Spitalfields has a 20th century front concealing an older building which belonged to the White Lion Brewery. ... [and a few doors along] No 5, Brewer's House." (Pevsner). The Turner family ran the brewery from the 1830s, until it was taken over by Best & Co in 1892. The brewer's house was restored by Jocasta Innes, a writer who lived there from 1979-2013.



## Chandler's Wiltshire Brewery, Hackney Road

"In 1893 Arthur Kinder & Son built a new 120 quarter brewery to double the capacity at Chandler's; only a few ball finials on the brewhouse gables enlivened a sturdy industrial structure, lacking even any blank arcading." (British Breweries, Lynn Pearson)

# LOOKING UP



The LBB initials of London & Burton Brewery in the iron bracket at the former Prince of Wales, 2 Grove Road, E3



St George's cross – the trademark of Furze's St George's Brewery – above the former Lord Nelson pub, 230 Commercial Road, E1



The cannon trademark of Cannon Brewery – later part of Taylor Walker – was revived by Allied Domecq in the 1970s, seen here above the former King's Arms, 230 Mile End Road, E1



This 1883 date stone in Bellevue Place incorporates the anchor motif of E Charrington & Co.



## Ask the Experts

The Brewery History Society stimulates research into the history of brewing, organises brewery visits, and publishes a quarterly journal and books, including 'London Brewed', a historical directory of the commercial brewers of London from c1650. This book, together with the BHS's extensive 'Brewerypedia' site, proved to be invaluable resources to support our project. [www.breweryhistory.com](http://www.breweryhistory.com)



Edward Tilney's Alma Brewery was on Spelman Street, Spitalfields



London & Burton Brewery in Ratcliff named a beer after its brewery tap, the Queen's Head



Smith Garrett's label includes a depiction of Bow Brewery, close to Bow Bridge



# BREWING HERITAGE STEP BY STEP

Walk in brewers' footsteps from Whitechapel to Stepney Green



## ① Albion Brewery



The buildings you see – now flats and a health centre – were built in the 1860s and extended in 1905 for Mann, Crossman & Paulin; their

name arches in gold letters above the gates. Beneath the clock there's a carved relief of the firm's emblem – George and the Dragon – and the Albion Brewery sign garlanded with hops and barley. Look inside the Albion Brewery: pages 22-25.

## ② Blind Beggar



Many breweries had a brewery tap – a neighbouring pub serving their beer – and the Blind Beggar was, not surprisingly, the tap for Mann, Crossman. The original pub was rebuilt with the date (1894) emblazoned on high. Mann's merged with

Watney's in 1958 and the pub still bears Watney Combe Reid livery. Now it's infamous as the bar where gangster Ronnie Kray shot George Cornell.

## ③ 2-12 Cambridge Heath Road



Brewery workers' welfare was important and Mann, Crossman built this block around 1930

as a staff canteen and billiard room. It was designed by architects Stewart & Hendry to complement the style of the White Hart next door.

## ⑤ Brewery Engineer's Workshop

Now home to Dirty Burger, this intriguing 1905 building – “fanciful Edwardian Baroque” writes Pevsner – was

designed as workshops and offices for the Mann, Crossman engineer. Stables extended to the rear, and the carriage arch was large enough for motorised drays to pull through.



## ④ White Hart Brew Pub



The White Hart is home to One Mile End, one of several local micro-breweries that have sprouted up over recent years. Initially beers were ‘brewed beneath the street’ in extensive cellars, but with growing demand they’ve expanded to a

larger site in Tottenham. For a taste of One Mile End: pages 74-75.

## ⑥ Great Assembly Hall



Charis – a rehab centre – stands on the site once occupied by Frederick Charrington's Great Assembly Hall; thousands once queued here for tea and talks. Mychael Barratt's mural alongside depicts Mr Charrington – with a dray horse – and William Booth, another temperance advocate, who founded the Salvation Army hereabouts. Meet Frederick Charrington: pages 60-63.



## 7 Bellevue Place




Tucked behind a doorway off Cleveland Way, Bellevue Place is a hidden gem. And its connection with brewing? This neat terrace of 1820s cottages was tied to Charrington's Brewery and occupied by watchmen, horse-keepers and engineers (see pages 32-33). The later red brick house includes an anchor date stone (1883), referencing Charrington's Anchor Brewery.

## 8 Drinking fountain



As well as the high profile Salvation Army and Great Assembly Hall, there were smaller gestures to support temperance. Outside the Paragon Theatre (now the Genesis Cinema), an 1889 drinking water fountain was one of many installed by The Metropolitan Drinking Fountain and Cattle Trough Association. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," it proclaims.

As well as the high profile Salvation Army and Great Assembly Hall, there were smaller gestures to support temperance. Outside the Paragon Theatre (now the Genesis Cinema), an 1889 drinking

 To Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archive, 277 Bancroft Road E1 4DQ

Stepney Green

UNDERGROUND

12

## 11 Malplaquet House



Eagles peer down, amidst lush greenery. Malplaquet House was home to brewer Harry Charrington between 1778 and 1827. After

his death, the house went into a slow decline, being split into lodgings and extended with a shop at the front. Thankfully, the Spitalfields Trust saved it and the new owners – a museum director and garden historian – restored it to its former glory.

## 10 Anchor Brewery



The naming of the Anchor Retail Park hints that this site was once home to the Anchor Brewery, an extensive complex of towering brewhouses and stable yards run by Charrington's. Only the brewery offices (1872) remain, on the Cephas Street corner, with a 1927 extension beyond. The old gates also survive on Nicholas Road. Meet the Charrington's workforce: pages 28-31.

The naming of the Anchor Retail Park hints that this site was once home to the Anchor Brewery, an

## 12 Old Globe



Many former pubs are dotted along Mile End Road, converted to serve different needs. The Old Globe is now a betting shop,

Efes was previously the King's Arms, Sweet was once the Black Boy, and Verdi's occupies the former Three Crowns. Conversely new pubs pop up elsewhere: the Half Moon – occupies a former Welsh Calvinist chapel and fringe theatre.

## 9 Hayfield Tavern

Charrington's directors held board meetings upstairs at the Hayfield Tavern – their brewery tap – and old newspapers report on supper events, 'smoker concerts', and inquests also held here. More recently it went through incarnations as the Cockney-themed Pearly Queen, It's a Scream student bar, and Hayfield Masala restaurant, before becoming a DIY store.







# POSTCARDS FROM THE HOP FIELDS

Jackie Gooding takes us down to Kent, hopping through times past



## WHAT IS A HOP?

Hop plants are trained to grow up strings in a hop field, hop garden or hop yard. It's the flowers – picked and dried – that are used as a flavouring and stability agent in beer, to which they give a bitter, zesty, or citric flavour.

For over 160 years, there was a tradition of East End families hop picking in Kent during the summer; the annual trip to bring in the hop harvest was an opportunity not only to earn much needed money but also to breathe fresh air for a couple of weeks. Hop picking was undertaken mainly by women and children – the men stayed at home to work – and most families went to the same farms each year and met old and new friends.

Mike Tyrell – former CEO of Tower Hamlets Community Housing and himself a real 'hopper' – has compiled an extensive collection of photos and memories from East Enders' hop-picking days. It's thanks to him that we're able to share many of these images. As farmers started to mechanise the hop-picking process, such working holidays began to decline until finally stopping in the 1980s.

## CATCHING THE HOPPERS' SPECIAL

Starting out around midnight, families would walk all the way to London Bridge Station to catch the "Hoppers' Special". Travelling at night was cheap but the families were packed in so tight that children sometimes had to sit in the luggage racks! Once in Kent, most farmers provided a cart for the luggage and elderly, with families following on foot to the farm, often some miles away, in the dark.



## MAKING HOME IN A TIN HUT

Each family was allocated a wooden or corrugated tin hut, usually about 11 feet square. Some had small windows; others had light coming in only through the doors left open all day.

Cooking was done over an open fire outdoors or in a basic cookhouse. Farmers provided bundles of firewood and water came from communal taps. Toilets were small huts over a hole in the ground with a wooden plank seat over it. Lime was thrown down the hole now and again to disguise the smell.







1910

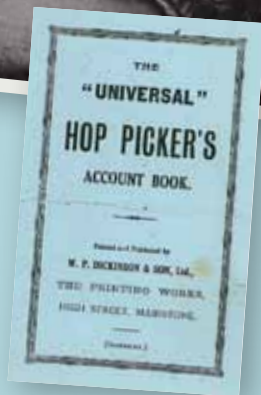
## THROUGH THE DECADES



1943



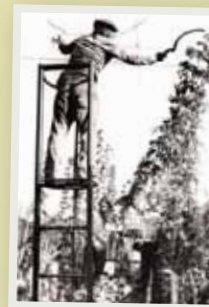
1952



1966

## OUT IN THE HOP FIELDS

Work started at 7am every day (except Sundays) and continued until at least 6pm. A pole puller would pull the hop bines from the overhead wire and lay them across the 'bin' – a rectangular sacking or canvas holdall – so that the flowers could be picked straight into it. As the harvesting progressed, the bin was moved up the field. When the bins filled, the measurer would divide the hops into bushels and put them into a large 'hop poke' sack, ready for drying. At the end of the harvest, pickers were paid according to the number of bushels they had picked, though many farmers provided advance 'subs' when needed.



## A TOAST IN THE OAST

An oast house – or hop kiln – is a distinctively shaped building designed for drying hops. Fresh hops were spread over perforated floors inside, and hot air from a wood or charcoal fire underneath would rise through them, before escaping from a cowl in the roof. Raked, cooled and bagged in large sacks called 'pockets', the dried hops were often then sent to the Hop Exchange at 24 Southwark Street near Borough, to be bought by brewers or middle men known as 'hop factors'.



**With thanks** to Mike Tyrell and Tower Hamlets Community Housing for their extensive work gathering pictures and memories of East End hop-pickers. Copies of their booklets are available to view at Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives. And when you're in Shadwell, take a look at their hop mural, inset into the covered walkway at 389-443 Cable Street.





# VERDICT ACCIDENTAL DEATH

Research: Charlotte Nicholls

In October 1865, brewer's servant Thomas Morile – upon returning to the Wiltshire Brewery after making a beer delivery – opted to have a bottle of lemonade rather than a glass of ale as refreshment. It proved a fatal decision; the cork flew into his eye and soon after the young man died.

Morile's death is one of many brewery incidents revealed within the British Newspaper Archive. Large machinery, boiling liquids, high platforms and heavy goods transported through narrow East End streets resulted in a range of dreadful 'accidental deaths' for some unfortunate brewery workers.

Health warning: these excerpts contain gruesome details!

## KILLED WITH THE CORK OF A LEMONADE BOTTLE.

On Saturday night Mr. John Humphreys, the Middlesex coroner, held an inquest at the London Hospital, respecting the death of Thomas Morile, aged 29 years, a brewer's servant, who died under the following circumstances. The evidence went to prove that the deceased had been in the service of Messrs. Chandler and Son, Wiltshire Brewery, Hackney-road, and on the 28th ultimo he proceeded with several barrels of beer to Mr. Schirmer's beer-house, No. 168, St. George-street, Ratcliff, and after he had stowed away the casks the landlord asked him to have a glass of ale. He preferred a bottle of lemonade, and while the former was opening the bottle the cork flew out and struck deceased in the eye. He complained of great pain, and was seen by a surgeon, who advised him to proceed to the hospital. He died on Friday. Mr. Bathurst, the house-surgeon, having described the extent of the injuries, the jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death."

(Morning Advertiser, 9 Oct 1865)

## FRIGHTFUL ACCIDENT AT THE BREWERY OF MESSRS HANBURY & CO, BRICK LANE

"John Ward, aged 55, engine driver... had been all night in the engine room. He was sober... While in the act of leaving the stage [to stop the engine] he fell a depth of about twenty-five feet... he struck against a crank... death was the effect of concussion of the brain, caused by a most extensive fracture of the skull.

(Holborn Journal, 20 Mar 1858)

## THE LATE FATAL ACCIDENT AT MESSRS CHARRINGTON'S

"Isaac Marshall, aged 52... [was found] lying on the floor with his left arm torn from the sockets, and he was bleeding profusely from the wound. The limb was found fixed between the pinion-wheels of the machinery, and deceased expired shortly afterwards. His head was also crushed and it was generally supposed that while the machine was in motion he attempted to grease the cog-wheels, when some portion caught the sleeve of his jacket and drew the deceased in between the works."

(East London Observer, 26 May 1860)

## TWO MEN SUFFOCATED AT A BREWERY

"William Clark, aged thirty-eight years, and Richard Sims, aged forty-three years... were found suffocated in a vat, in the brewery of Messrs Abbott & Co at Bow. On Tuesday evening they received orders to clean out one of the vats, which contains about 300 barrels, preparatory to its being filled with ale... There is an aperture on the top, and it is usual, before they descend, to place a candle to the hole, and if it is blown out the vat is full of foul air; but if it is still burns, the vat is considered quite safe. Clarke's candle was still burning on the top of the vat... [but] they had both fallen to the bottom of the vat, suffocated."

(Illustrated London News, 5 Feb 1848)

## FATAL FALLS AT A BREWERY

At the London Hospital yesterday Dr James Godding, Deputy Coroner for East London, held an inquest on the bodies of John Benjamin Cox, aged sixty years, of Limehouse; and Henry Middlebrook, aged forty-eight years, of Bethnal-green, both brewers' labourers, employed at Holts' Marine Brewery, who met their deaths through falling though a loophole. The medical evidence revealed that both men had received terrible injuries. When Dr Graham Grant, the divisional surgeon, was called Cox was lying dead on the foreshore, and the other man died a few hours later after admission to the London Hospital. It was stated that ill-feeling had existed between the two men for some time past... The manager of the brewery said he often had to intervene between them to save rows.

(Morning Post, 17 July 1907)

## SERIOUS ACCIDENT AT A BREWERY

"The engineer at Messrs. Chandler and Williams', the Wiltshire Brewery, Hackney Road, whilst endeavoring to clamber to the top of the brewery to witness a fire which had broken out in the neighbourhood, fell into a copper of water nearly boiling, in preparation for next day's brewing. He was immediately extricated and removed to the London Hospital, but so severely scalded that some doubt is entertained of his recovery."

(John Bull newspaper, 10 Jan 1853)



# HOW TO MAKE A BARREL IN 12 EASY STEPS!

## The Art of the Cooper

Coopering demanded great skill and precision. Using up to 30 different hand tools, a cooper shaped a set of wooden 'staves' (long thin curved sections) that were then fastened together with metal hoops to form different sizes of cask.

The cooper didn't rely on written measurement or patterns; everything was gauged by eye. What's more, perfection was

required since each cask must be airtight, strong enough to withhold the force of fermenting beer, and sufficiently durable to withstand years of rough handling.

Here we show the craft of cask making, step by step – with thanks to the Guinness Archive.

[www.guinness-storehouse.com/en/archives](http://www.guinness-storehouse.com/en/archives)



1  
Using the 'axe' to roughly shape the staves, typically made from seasoned oak



2  
Smoothing the stave edges with the 'jointer' to create a neat marriage between neighbouring staves



3  
'Raising up' the cask by standing the staves upright inside a metal hoop and roughly fixing them together



4  
Lowering the 'steam bell' over the cask to soften the wood for bending



5  
Pulling together the stave ends, whilst still soft, with a rope



6  
Bending the stave ends together and quickly hammering down hoops to create the curved cask shape



7  
Charring the inside of the cask, by placing it over lit wood shavings, to dry and seal it



8  
Cutting the groove with the 'croze' – ready to fit their two end panels, known as 'heads'



9  
Using the 'compass' to measure the heads, which were made from several planks slotted together



10  
Bevelling the edges of the head – a piece of 'flag' (rush) was inserted to help ensure a watertight fit



11  
Making a fresh set of hoops, after the cask had been smoothed down



12  
Hammering down the hoops onto the finished cask



# ROLL OUT THE BARREL

A glimpse inside some East End cooperages



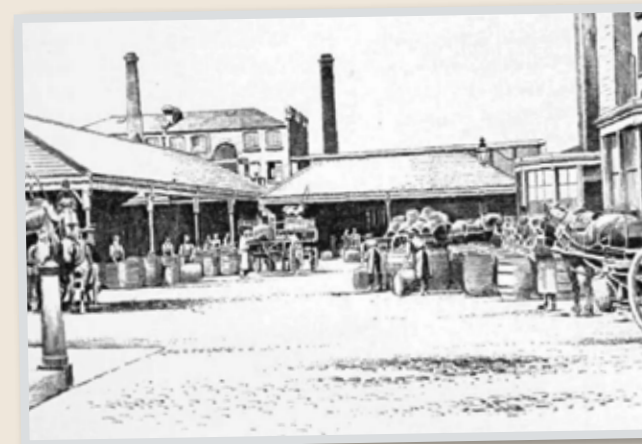
Charrington's Brewery (1957): S and A Smale (father and son) hammer down a hoop, with AS Watts (head cooper) and GE Brixey (foreman) in the background



West's Brewery, Hackney Road (1930):  
photos of the coopers from a souvenir album



Truman's Brewery: "Mending casks had to be carried out by hand, and as a beer cask could be in use from 30 to 50 years, typically 90 percent of a brewery cooper's time would be taken up by repairs. Simply storing the casks took up a large area." (Built to Brew, Lynn Pearson)



Truman's Brewery (1889): "In the cask-washing sheds... we were confronted with such an array of butts, puncheons and barrels, as excited no small surprise, which had been brought empty from the cellars of publicans to be repaired and cleaned before being again used. We next bent our steps to the cask factory, passing through a large place where Baltic timber is stored ready for use, it being absolutely necessary that the staves should be well seasoned... As many as thirty men are employed at the work [cask-making] daily." (Noted Breweries of Great Britain and Ireland, Alfred Barnard)



# “GOOD MORNING, GENTLEMEN ALL”

Reflections of Bob Gilding, an East End cooper

“Coopering has been part of the East London scene for centuries. The wine vaults below Tower Hill – similar to those situated below the gaunt, forbidding warehouses of London Dock, though not nearly so large — are said to go back to the Middle Ages. Indeed, rumour had it in the docks that the two sets of vaults were once connected.

Later on the breweries settled in the East End, their big buildings towering over the workmen's cottages. In Limehouse, at Taylor Walker's 'Barley Mow' Brewery... huge carts, drawn by three great Percherons and filled with steaming hops used to be driven in. I can

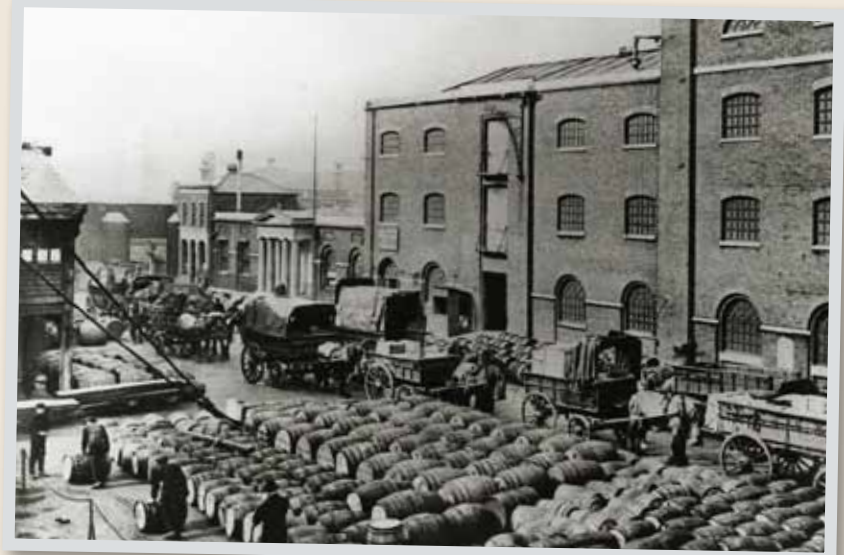
still remember the clogs of the women who worked in the bottling department, clattering home through the street.

At the time of the 1851 census there was a total of 1,051 coopers in the three parishes of Whitechapel, St. George's-in-the-East and Stepney – a third of all the working coopers in London – and some forty years later this had grown to 2,400 coopers.

Brewer's coopers were the elite of the East London coopers. Brewer's casks are the only casks shaved completely smooth inside, the reason being that were they left rough, bacteria would form in the crevices and



*Casks loaded onto the dray at Taylor Walker's Barley Mow Brewery, 1937*



*Casks of molasses being unloaded at West India Docks, 1925*

ruin the beer... The shaving out used to be tested by the foreman cooper running a silk handkerchief around the inside of the barrel.

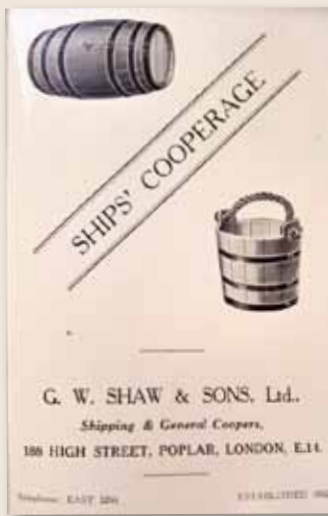
Sugar refining also employed a large number of East End coopers. It was one of the great East End industries of the 19th century, though it has now virtually disappeared... and each of the dock companies had their staff of coopers, some of them regulars, some of them casuals.

In Mayhew's time there were 50 working coopers permanently employed at the London Dock, and 170 others – 20 'first-class', and 150 'second-class' – employed by the week. At the St. Katharine's Dock there were 20 'permanent' men, 30 to 40 'preferable hands', and a fluctuating number of 'extras' – about 50 in the summer, only two or three in winter. In my day, dock coopering was definitely looked down on by other coopers... it was all maintenance work.



In the 19th century... the demand for cooper's ware gave a greater opportunity for a man to start up on his own than in the present age of receding trade... At one time railway arches were used quite extensively for these small cooperages. Although not ideal shops from a cooper's point of view, being hot in the summer and cold in the winter... the floor was solid, if uneven, and the rent low. They are quite high and give lots of storage space, a necessity in the coopering trade especially for those masters dealing in repairs and second hand barrels.





The cooperage to which I was apprenticed or 'served my time' was Shaw's, a firm of shipping and general coopers off Poplar High Street. Sandwiched between a transport yard and a block of flats and backed by the West India Docks, the yard boasted three separate coopers' shops, two of which housed piecework coopers, and the third, a semi-basement, several daywork coopers and apprentices."

As an apprentice Bob plucked up the courage to ask the head cooper why the other coopers were ignoring him: "Very calmly the large cooper informed me that anyone entering a cooper's shop had to say, "Good Morning, Gentlemen All", just as anyone leaving it at night had to say "Good Night, Gentlemen All"... Needless to say, I never failed with my "Good Morning, Gentlemen All" after that and the habit remains with me still."



#### *The Journeymen Coopers of East London by Bob Gilding (1971)*

Bob served his apprenticeship and worked as a journeyman in different East End cooperages. In the 1960s, he took a job with the Port of London Authority, working in the wine and spirit warehouses of the London Dock. After the vaults and dock closed in 1969,

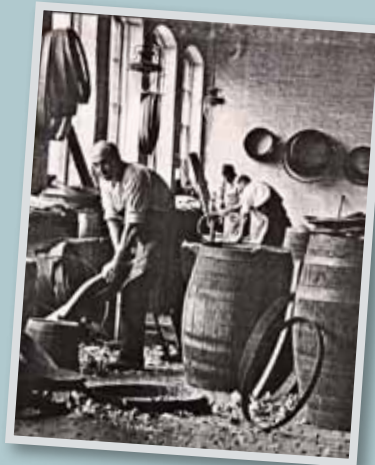
Bob started as a student at Ruskin College. There, with the encouragement of his tutor, Raphael Samuel he embarked on the recording the history of his trade.

[www.historyworkshop.org.uk/history-workshop-pamphlets-4](http://www.historyworkshop.org.uk/history-workshop-pamphlets-4)

Research: Terry Dansey

## WHITE, DRY AND WET

"There are three main categories of coopering known as white, dry and wet. White coopering involves the manufacture of pails, butter churns, tubs and other household utensils for daily use. Dry coopering involves the manufacture of casks for holding dry goods such as flour, tobacco or vegetables. Wet coopering involves the manufacture of casks for holding liquids, it was considered the most highly skilled, and it was wet coopering that was practised in the cooperage at breweries." (Guinness Archive)



## AS BIG AS A BARREL?

Wooden casks are frequently referred to as 'barrels' but the word 'barrel' actually refers to a specific capacity of cask. A beer 'barrel' is generally accepted as containing 36 imperial gallons, and other-sized casks have different names:

Pin = 4.5 gallons

Firkin = 9 gallons

Kilderkin = 18 gallons

Barrel = 36 gallons

Hogshead = 54 gallons

Butt = 108 gallons

Tun = 216 gallons



## SPOT THE COOPER



**Coopers Close**, off Cephass Street near Stepney Green, was built on part of the old Charrington's brewery site.

The former **Coopers' Company and Coborn School**



buildings – on Bow Road, and also by Tredegar Square – incorporate the Coopers' Company arms, depicting three hoops and some tools of the trade.



On **Cooper's Row** – branching from Tower Hill – travelling cask-makers once called 'Any work for John Cooper?'

**Coopers' Court** – a sheltered housing scheme on Eric Street, Mile End – was initially financed by the Coopers' Company.







# BY RIVER AND ROAD

*“A marvellous tangle of rigging, yardarms and rope; a chaos of fog, furnaces and gushing smoke; the profound and complicated poetry of a vast capital”*

This etching by Whistler (1859), coupled with Charles Baudelaire’s evocative description (1862), help set the scene around Black Eagle Wharf, located on the Thames near Wapping.

As the last wharfinger, EJ Diggins, explained in 1932: “The Wharf was purchased in 1841, and, up till about 40 years ago, seems to have been used principally for the landing of malt and hops ex-sailing vessels from Essex, Suffolk and Kent, and the distribution of beer by sailing barges to Chatham.”

From the late 1880s, hoys (barges) also undertook regular sailings to deliver general cargo “as far as Dover on the one hand and Aldeburgh on the other”. He continues,

“Soon after the war, doubt began to exist as to the wisdom of continuing to send our beer to Chatham by water. Would not motors do the work quicker, and with so much less handling? There was a very natural disinclination to break the intimate link – nearly a century old – between Brick Lane and Old Father Thames; but ultimately... sentiment had to give way



to modern methods” and Truman’s sold the wharf in the 1930s.

Research: Alan Dann, Val Nobbs, Bill Wright



Truman’s – like all other breweries – used horse-drawn drays as the means to distribute their beer to pubs around London. By 1850, for example, they had 130 horses, all requiring stabling, feeding and mucking out; the average annual cost of feed and straw for a horse around this time was £44 5s 7d.

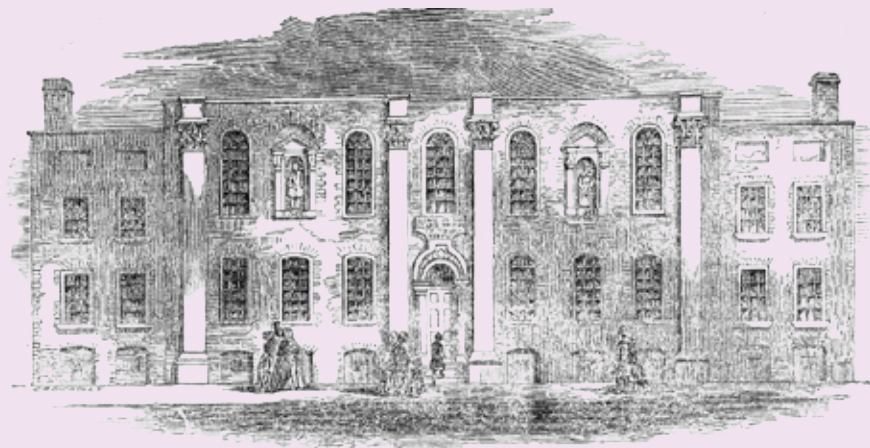


By the 1920s, motor transport became a cheaper and quicker method of distribution. A fleet of 36 motor lorries – initially used for longer trips, with horses keeping to local deliveries – was purchased for £36,000. It wasn’t until the late 1960s that Truman’s finally closed its Brick Lane stables; the Suffolk punch horses were moved to their brewery in West Bergholt, Essex. Over the years, vans and lorries also served as a means of promoting the Truman’s brand.





Raine's School building (1736) in Wapping



## RAINE'S FOUNDATION: 'THE HUNDRED POUND SCHOOL'

**Perdita Jones discovers how a Wapping brewer, Henry Raine, endowed a school that still bears his name**

Born into a wealthy family of brewers, Henry Raine (1679-1738) owned the Star Brewery on New Crane Wharf in Wapping. The brewery was a prosperous enterprise, in part due to its contracts to supply beer to navy ships that were re-provisioning on the Thames.

A devout Christian and respected member of the local community, Henry Raine had been a trustee of a charity school in Wapping for several years before deciding to become its principal benefactor in 1719.



The school – situated on Charles Street (now Raine Street, off Wapping Lane) – provided an education for 50 girls, who were taught reading, knitting and sewing, and 50 boys who were also taught reading, in addition to writing and arithmetic. 'Come In and Learn Your Duty to God and Man' was inscribed over the school entrance, with blue-coated figures of a schoolboy and girl standing in niches either side.

In 1736, Henry established Raine's Asylum, or Hospital, a boarding school

A bride hopes to win a £100 'marriage portion' at the Raine's Charity distribution on May Day, 1846  
(Illustrated London News)



for girls. Each year, ten girls from the original Lower School were selected to attend the boarding school, where they would receive further domestic training with the aim of securing work as servants.

When Henry died in 1738, he endowed Raine's Asylum with land and stocks. Unusually, he also provided £210 annually for two 'marriage portions' and two wedding festivals. Former pupils of Raine's Asylum, aged 22 or over, were eligible to apply for the marriage portions, provided that their former masters and mistresses could attest to their 'piety and industry' and that the men they intended to marry were of good character and from the parishes of St George's-in-the-East, St Paul's Shadwell or St John's Wapping.

On 1st May and 26th December each year, up to six candidates chosen by the school's trustees, drew lots from a casket for marriage portions of £100 – a colossal sum in those days – with the extra £5 providing breakfast for the bridal party. Consequently, Raine's Asylum became known popularly as the 'Hundred Pound School', with the last Wedding Festival taking place as late as 1892.

After relocations to larger premises in Cannon Street Road and then Arbour Square, Raine's Foundation School – as it became known – finally settled at premises on Approach Road in Bethnal Green.

Raine's pupils still commemorate Founder's Day annually by laying a wreath at Henry Raine's family tomb in the grounds of St. George's-in-the-East Church. A short distance from the church, the original Lower School building still stands on Raine Street in Wapping – now Grade II\* listed, it's one of the oldest surviving buildings in Tower Hamlets.



Laying a wreath at Raine's tomb on Founder's Day, Sept 2016



# THE BREWER WHO WOULDN'T BREW

Jackie Gooding looks at the life of Frederick Charrington



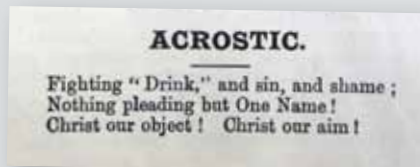
Frederick Charrington (1850-1936)

Born in 1850 in Bow Road, Frederick Charrington was heir to his father's brewery fortune. But he underwent two 'conversions' at the age of 19. In his own words:

"I read the third chapter of St John's Gospel... Light came into my soul and as I came to the words, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life," I realised that I too, possessed the "eternal life".

(The next year, approaching the Rising Sun public-house in Cambridge Heath Road), a poor woman, with two or three children dragging at her skirts, went up to the swing doors, and calling out for her husband inside, she said, "Oh Tom. Do give me some money, the children are crying for bread." At that the man came through the doorway. He made no reply in words. He looked at her for a moment, and then knocked her down into the gutter.

Just then I looked up and saw my own name, CHARRINGTON, in huge gilt letters on the top of the public-house, and it suddenly flashed into my mind that that was only one case of dreadful misery and fiendish brutality in one of several hundred public-houses that our firm possessed... There was an appalling and incalculable amount of wretchedness and degradation caused by our enormous business. What a frightful responsibility for evil rested upon us! What guilt upon my soul! I determined that I would never enter the brewery again.



Inspired by F N Charrington's initials

My father was distressed and angry but after the first shock he was extremely kind to me when he realised I could not change. Upon his deathbed, he said, "You are right, Fred. You have chosen the better part, which will never be taken away."

For the sake of his conscience, Charrington gave up over £1 million. He opened a school, led a fight to clean up the music halls, and became an enthusiastic worker for the Temperance Movement and a member of the London County Council for Mile End. He chose to remain a bachelor and live in Stepney.



Charrington's Great Assembly Hall on Mile End Road, with the family brewery towering in the distance

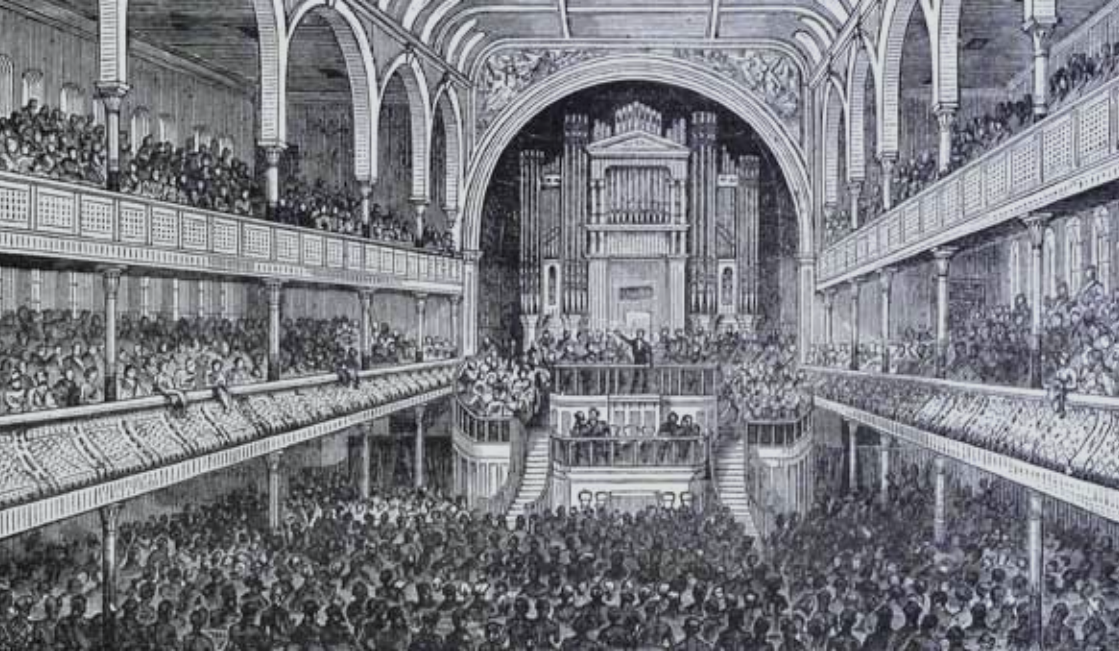
Though he is revered for his philanthropy and good works, he argued bitterly with (Dr) Barnardo because both wanted to have a Mission Hall in the same area.

In 1883, on his 33rd birthday, Charrington opened his Great Assembly Hall in the Mile End Road. This magnificent building could hold 5,000 people and was crowded on Sundays when the poor and destitute sat down for tea before the evening service. The Hall was also much used during the week with a coffee tavern, bookshop and many other activities.

Charrington died in 1936, so was spared the pain of seeing his Great Assembly Hall destroyed by bombing in 1941. His work is continued by the Tower Hamlets Mission on the same site.







Up to 5,000 people could gather here, seated on three levels



A temperance pledge card "to abstain from all intoxicating liquors"

#### TEMPERANCE DOXOLOGY

Praise God from Whom all blessings flow,  
Praise Him who saves from deepest woe,  
Praise Him who leads the temperance host,  
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

# STEP INSIDE THE GREAT ASSEMBLY HALL



Charrington dispenses tea at the Lord Mayor's East End Banquet



# WHAT'S YOUR BREW?

## Know your porter from your pale ale

### Porter and Stout



Porter originated in London as a development of brown beer, aged for longer and given more hops. It was so-named as a result of its popularity amongst porters: fellowship porters offloading 'measurable' goods at the Thames-side wharves and ticket porters delivering goods about the streets. The strongest versions of Porter were known as Stout Porter, reduced over the years to simply Stout.

**Tasting notes:** Look out for profound dark and roasted malt character with fruit, coffee, liquorice or molasses, all underscored with hop bitterness.



### Mild



Mild was once the most popular style of beer but was overtaken by Bitter from the 1950s. It was developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as a less aggressively bitter style of beer than Porter and Stout, though recent research suggests that it was a young (mild) beer as opposed to the long-slumbering vatted Porters.

**Tasting notes:** Mild ale is usually dark brown in colour due to the use of well-roasted malts or roasted barley.



### Golden Ales



This new style of winsomely gold, well-hopped and quenching beer was developed in the 1980s as independent brewers attempted to win younger drinkers over from heavily-promoted lager brands.

**Tasting notes:** The hallmark is the biscuit and juicy malt character derived from pale malts, underscored by tart citrus fruit and in some, the use of aromatic hops. Above all, such beers are quenching and are served cool.



### Bitter



This is probably the most common style of cask ale available in London, but it was not always so. From the end of the nineteenth century, brewers acquired large estates of pubs in London, and moved away from vatted beers such as Porter that were stored for many months. They developed 'running' beers that could be served after a few days' storage in pub cellars. Bitter grew out of Pale Ale and it similar in style, most falling within the 3.4% to 3.9% band, with more full-bodied Best Bitters being 4% upwards.

**Tasting notes:** With ordinary Bitter, look for plenty of hop character, a powerful bitterness, maybe with tangy fruit and/or nutty malt characteristics. Stronger Bitters tend to be maltier and fruitier but hop aroma and bitterness are still crucial to the style, and are often achieved by 'late hopping'.



### IPA and Pale Ale



First brewed in London and Burton-on-Trent for the colonial market, India Pale Ales – or IPAs for short – were golden or pale bronze in colour, strong in alcohol, and high in hops: the preservative character of the hops helped keep the beer in good condition during long sea journeys. Modern so-called IPAs with strengths of around 3.5% are not strictly speaking IPAs, with the real things starting at 5.5% and moving upwards.

Pale Ales were late-Victorian younger cousins of IPA, still golden in colour, though lower in alcohol and not as hoppy.

**Tasting notes:** On the flavour front, look for a good malt character, tangy citrus fruitiness and big spicy, bitter hop character which lingers.



**With thanks to Roger Protz.** "When I grew up in the East End in the 1950s," he recalls, "I was not allowed into licensed premises until I was 21. I had to do two years' military service and, had the need arisen, fight for Queen and country. But I wasn't permitted the pleasures of a pint of Charrington's." He has since made up for lost time, becoming editor of the CAMRA Good Beer Guide and author of more than 20 books on beer and brewing: [www.protzonbeer.co.uk](http://www.protzonbeer.co.uk)





# HIGH STREET BRANDS

In a competitive marketplace, brewers needed to stand out from the crowd. Many gave their beers memorable names, designed decorative labels and devised catchy slogans. But the larger brewers also had the opportunity to advertise on the exterior of their tied pubs. As these images show, there are still some remarkable examples of brewers' livery around the East End.



**TAYLOR WALKER** 'Barley Mow Beers, Fine Ale and Stout' were once on offer at the Turk's Head in Wapping; the Greenwich Pensioner in Poplar served 'Prize Ales and Noted Stout'; and old Taylor Walker lanterns and cannon emblem survive at Turner's Old Star by Wapping Green.



**MANN, CROSSMAN & PAULIN** This tiled sign for 'Celebrated Brown Ale' has been preserved at the former King's Arms on Cable Street.



## CHARRINGTON'S

Signage at the Sebright Arms on Coate Street in Bethnal Green has recently been revealed; the flying 1757 tankard hovers over Coupette (formerly the Bohola) on Bethnal Green Road; and Toby Ale jugs add splashes of colour to the former Fish & Ring in White Horse Road, Stepney and the Railway Tavern in Grove Road, Bow.



## SMITH GARRETT

This glazed tile sign for Smith Garrett's 'Prize Beers' is on the former Duke of York on Antill Road in Bow; it also ran the Bow Bells on Bow Road.







Golden Heart, Commercial Street



Shakespeare, Bethnal Green Road



Jolly Butchers (formerly), Brick Lane



Britannia (formerly), Chilton Street



Clare Hall (formerly), Stepney Way

**TRUMAN'S** There are many surviving examples of Truman's livery on pubs, past and present. Some are clad in trademark green tiling, others from the 1920s have buff-coloured faience signage, and eagles abound. Here we show some classic examples and lesser-spotted details.



Three Suns (formerly), Garnet Street



Good Samaritan, Turner Street



Bancroft Arms, Mile End Road

# THE ART OF SIGNWRITING

Brewers that had extensive estates of tied pubs would often employ their own in-house signwriters. And as this 1910 Post Office trade directory extract shows, there were also independent specialists.

**BREWERS' & DISTILLERS' SIGN-BOARD MANUFACTURERS & WRITERS**  
 Cheap Wood Co. (The), 16 & 17 Devonshire square E C & Deptford green SE  
 Cocks John & Henry Limited; offices, 1 & 37 Frederick place, Mile end road E; works, Grove road E & Arnold road, Bow E  
 Harris Co. (The), 178 High road, Kilburn NW  
 Jobson & Son, 33 Regent's row, Dalston NE  
 Knowles Sherid-n & Co. 207 Bow road E  
 London Sign Manufacturing Co.  
 21 & 23 Gray's inn road WC  
 andland Richard, 7 High st. St. Giles' WC  
 & 12 Page street SW

In these days of vinyl fascias and neon signs, it's refreshing to see hand-crafted signage. From the Luminor Sign Co studio on Bethnal Green Road, Ged Palmer provides custom design, lettering and sign making – with a particular expertise in gold leaf – for pubs, cafes, and shops. He counts Meantime Brewing, Fuller's and Beefeater Gin amongst his clients. And further east along Bethnal Green Road, Joshua Harris – also known as the A-Board Dude – recently created chalkboards for the Marquis of Cornwallis.

[www.luminorsignco.com](http://www.luminorsignco.com) [www.theboarddude.co.uk](http://www.theboarddude.co.uk)





# SAVED FROM THE SKIP

It's thanks to a quick-thinking brewery manager that photos of Charrington's pubs have been preserved

It's astounding to think that these pub photos – and thousands more like them – could have ended up being lost forever. But over 25 years ago Robert Humphreys spotted them dumped in a skip outside Charrington's brewery as the company prepared to move offices.

More than 3,000 photographs were rescued by Mr Humphreys, at the time an area manager for the brewery, and taken to the former Bass Museum, now the National Brewery Centre, in Burton-upon-Trent for safekeeping. It's thanks to his efforts that we're able to get glimpses of many long-lost pubs run by the company. "I think it's fair to say that this collection has some completely irreplaceable images," he said.

The National Brewery Heritage Trust (NBHT) has recently scanned the Charrington collection and put it online at Historypin. Here we share just a handful of the photos; those on this page show three magnificent pubs in E14 that have been demolished, and on the opposite page are five East End pubs that have since been converted to other uses.



**The King's Arms**, 514 Commercial Road, Stepney  
(opened before 1851, renamed 'Mariners' in 2002 and now a coffee shop)



**The Lamb**, 36 Wilmot St, Bethnal Green (opened before 1824, closed in 1993 and now residential)



**The Vulcan**, 178 Rhodeswell St, Limehouse  
(opened before 1856, closed 1967)



**The Astric Lodge**, 60 Stepney Green (opened prior to 1818, later Ship on the Green, and closed in 1997)

Photos courtesy of Heritage Assets and The National Brewery Heritage Trust, and with thanks to the Gentle Author of Spitalfields Life for the caption notes.

[www.nationalbreweryheritagetrust.co.uk](http://www.nationalbreweryheritagetrust.co.uk)  
[www.spitalfieldlife.com](http://www.spitalfieldlife.com)



**The Railway Tavern**, 116 West India Dock Road, Poplar  
(opened before 1841, known as 'Charlie Brown's' from 1897 and demolished in 1989 for the Limehouse Link Road)

**The Gladstone**,  
129 St Leonards Walk,  
Poplar (opened 1869,  
closed 1962)



**The Three Crowns**,  
237 Mile End Road  
(opened before 1719,  
renamed 'L'Oasis' in  
1999, closed in 2010  
and now Verdi's  
Italian restaurant)



**The Lord Nelson**, 230 Commercial Road (opened 1865, rebuilt 1892, closed 2005 and now Efes Turkish restaurant)





# THE EAGLE FLIES AGAIN

Truman's has been resurrected, some twenty years after the Brick Lane brewery closed its doors

Since Truman's left Brick Lane in 1989, the former brewhouses and yards have been re-shaped into a maze of offices, market halls, shops and bars. By daytime they hum with media workers, shoppers and street art tourists. And at night, the street is busy with those heading for a Bengali curry or a drink in Shoreditch.

At first sight, the Truman's name is but a shadow – a victim of the merger mania that decimated London's brewing industry in the 1970s and 80s. But all is not quite as it appears. Truman's has been resurrected, and is brewing once again – albeit some three miles east of Brick Lane, at The Eyrie on Fish Island.

It was entrepreneur James Morgan who, with his then business partner Michael-George Hemus, spotted the opportunity to

re-launch Truman's in 2010. After protracted negotiations to secure the necessary licence – from Heineken, it transpires, who owned the Truman's brand – it was all stations go.

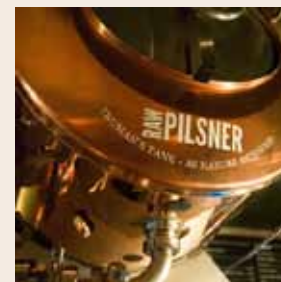
They immersed themselves in the company's history, using an extensive photographic collection at the London Metropolitan Archives and crucially, Truman's 'gyle books' – essentially the company's recipe books, which set out in fine detail how the brewers had blended their beers since 1812.

Inspired by this rich heritage, they decided on Runner as the name for their first bitter. "Truman's best years were built on the back of its famous porter, a beer known as Runner", James explains, "It was their easy-drinking session beer, a beer for the people – available to everyone everywhere."

They opted not to recreate the old recipe, but instead to innovate – in the spirit of Benjamin Truman – by producing a cask ale suitable for twenty first century tastes. It's a 4% bitter with a deep chestnut brown colour; there's a hint of chocolate, with fruity overtones and a malty finish.

"We settled here at the Eyrie – the term for an Eagle's roost – in 2013, and are proud to have brought Truman's back to the heart of East London," James adds. "It's a 40 barrel brewery, which gives us a good balance between flexibility and efficiency. It may not be anywhere near the size of the old Brick Lane site, and we certainly don't have our own private railway like Truman's had, but we love it just the same."

The beer list has expanded over the years. As well as Runner, the foundation range includes Swift golden ale, pale ale Zephyr, and award-



winning Lazarus. Overlaid, there's an eclectic range of seasonal beers throughout the year. Bow Bells, for example, started as a seasonal, proved very popular and has now become one of their first canned beers. It's made with real oranges and lemons, which help bring out the citrus qualities of American hops.

Other recent innovations include setting up the 'Brick Lane Brews' café-bar at City Airport, hosting West Ham fans at the Eyrie on match days – in conjunction with street food from The Rib Man – and 'meet the brewer' pop-up sessions in bars across town. And Truman's recently came full circle when two giant copper tanks were installed at the Big Chill Bar on Brick Lane, serving their RAW Pilsner a short hop from where the brewery first started.

"Truman's was originally made great through good beer, strong principles, hard work and a bit of luck," explains Morgan. It looks like history is repeating itself, with the new brewery growing from strength to strength. "We're proud to be the small brewery with the big name".

[www.trumansbeer.co.uk](http://www.trumansbeer.co.uk)





# BREWED BENEATH THE STREET

@ONEMILEEND



## Jayne Whiteside discovers what's brewing in Whitechapel

"Before becoming a brewer, I was a musician," explains Simon McCabe, manager of the One Mile End brewery. "On tour in the US, that's really where I discovered all the different hoppy beers. When we got back, I started dabbling with home brews, just as a hobby. Then it became more of a passion."

Luckily for Simon he lived just around the corner from the Redemption Brewery in Tottenham. He offered his services and started three days a week before quickly moving to full time. "Redemption was my college of brewing. I stayed there just over two years before coming to the White Hart to help establish the One Mile End brewery."

One Mile End initially launched in 2014 beneath the White Hart Brew Pub in



Whitechapel. Patrick Mulligan, the pub's owner, had spotted the rapid development of micro-breweries and decided to start the brewery downstairs. "Patrick had got a great piece of kit, beautiful stainless steel craftsmanship."

Simon was soon experimenting and within a month had developed 95 different recipes and produced 300 batches of beer. But not all made it to the

keg lines. "I was trying different yeast strains and mixes – cherry, calvados, oranges – but I remember clearly the first ale was a Pale Ale brewed in the middle of summer. We were peeling oranges and grapefruits by hand. That was the prototype for Salvation, which is still one of our best sellers."

## ECHOES OF THE EAST END One Mile End have named beers after...



... the Salvation Army, established in Whitechapel



... the Royal London Hospital, over the road



... the docks that once flourished in the East End



... and a local tattoo artist

And so it was, working in a series of rooms extending under the pub's front pavement, that One Mile End launched with a pale ale, bitter, porter and an IPA "brewed beneath the street". Simon produced the beer and his housemate created the artwork and branding.

In choosing names, Simon and Patrick were keen to reflect the beer's East End provenance.

Salvation Pale Ale is a nod to the Salvation Army – whose founder, William Booth, preached against the degradations of drink on Mile End Waste, just outside the pub. "It also reflects the salvation of having a hand-crafted beer, rather than a mass-produced one," adds Simon.

The Royal London Hospital, across the road from the brewery, inspired the naming of Hospital Porter. It has a roasted malt flavour and packs a punch at 5.2%; the bare-knuckle fighters depicted on the artwork might have relied on porters to scoop them up and whisk them over to the hospital.

Docker's Delight – a bitter brewed with chocolate and crystal malt – uses old Chinatown by the West India Docks as its inspiration. Whilst Snakecharmer IPA, with an aroma of blueberries and tropical fruits, has a more modern reference point, having been named after a local tattoo artist.



The success of these early beers resulted in nearly constant brewing in the White Hart basement.

"With the kit we had, each batch produced nine casks but we went through these in a week just in this pub alone." Simon was soon brewing seven times a week to keep up with demand. The expansion to bigger premises became a necessity. "We moved to

Tottenham to give us more space, but the kit beneath the street will soon be in action again for brewing some of our specials."

Some of the popular ales make it into bottled beers to be sold at festivals and other outlets, where the colourful branding helps it stand out on the shelf. And Simon continues to experiment, using seasonal fruits and other diverse ingredients. Kumquat IPA has proved a hit, and Tinker's Cuss IPA is another recent addition to the range, made with Cambodian Kampot peppercorns.

"Buddha's hand fruit is great for brewing as there's no bitterness in the pith," he explains, and other concoctions in the offing incorporate mango, passion fruit, pink guava and champagne yeast. It's all part of the magic and mystique of the apothecary brewing "under the street" in Whitechapel.

[www.onemileend.com](http://www.onemileend.com)







# NEW BREWS

Brewing has experienced resurgence in the East End over recent years

## REDCHURCH BREWERY

It's easy to miss Redchurch Brewery; tucked away in a back street, squeezed into a couple of railway arches. Yet step inside and malty fragrances waft over from the large vats. And up on the mezzanine, a taproom serves Bethnal Pale Ale, Shoreditch Blonde and Hoxton Stout to a lively and loyal following.

Since setting up six years ago, Redchurch Brewery has developed a core range of beers, with names reflecting East End neighbourhoods. As sales channels expanded to include Marks & Spencer and Waitrose, Redchurch took on additional premises in Harlow – supported by a crowdfunding campaign – to provide a 30-barrel brew house, together with bottling, labelling and keg filling lines.



Beyond that, the brewing team was also keen to create more experimental brews under the Urban Farmhouse brand – “where we push the boundaries of fermentation”, using souring techniques, mixed fermentation, and a barrel ageing project. The taproom is a good place to sample a new brew: Herb Sour or lemony Tartlette, anyone?

**275-276 Poyser Street, E2 9RF**  
**Taproom open Thurs-Sat**  
[www.redchurch.beer](http://www.redchurch.beer)



## HOWLING HOPS

Billed as ‘The UK’s First Dedicated Tank Bar’, Howling Hops certainly makes a dramatic impact. As you enter the former warehouse, long wooden benches line up, leading towards a wall of tanks. Choose from a rolling range of ten different beers including Chocolate Stout, East End Hefeweizen wheat beer, and Red Ruby dinner ale.

**Unit 9A Queen’s Yard,**  
**White Post Lane, E9 5EN**  
[www.howlinghops.co.uk](http://www.howlinghops.co.uk)



## CRATE BREWERY

“The aim of our Tasting Tours,” says the Crate Brewery “is to take guests on a journey through the history of brewing, the story of craft beer and the brewing process itself using tastings of our beers to help illustrate this tale.” Otherwise, simply sit on the bar terrace beside the River Lea, sipping a Session

IPA or Lemon Gose. And if you’re feeling peckish, their delicious homemade pizzas include Kashmiri dahl, sage and truffle, and Middle Eastern lamb.

**7 The White Building,**  
**Queen’s Yard, E9 5EN**  
[www.cratebrewery.com](http://www.cratebrewery.com)



## THREE SODS BREWERY

“We moved into the Bethnal Green Working Men’s Club in 2014,” explains the Three Sods brewing team. “We love it here; it’s a crazy place. Its full of artists, musicians, dancers, models, performers, you name it, they have it here. We fit right in.”

And how about the curious name? Brewer Jordan comes from Ireland where the availability of home-made Poitín – distilled clandestinely – would be signified by the householder painting white a sod of peat beside their front door. Being a trio, the team became the Three Sods.

Beyond the Workers Arms bar at the Working Men’s Club, Three Sods beers – such as Leap Year golden ale and Mud Puddler black IPA – could be provided at your very own do: the team offer a pop-up bar service for weddings and parties.

**42 Pollard Row, E2 6NB**  
[www.threesodsbrewery.com](http://www.threesodsbrewery.com)





## ABOUT OUR PROJECT

Over eight weeks in summer 2017, a group of local residents came together on the Beer Barrels and Brewhouses project to investigate the East End's brewing heritage. Some of us were first-time archive users, and others were more experienced researchers.

Together, we delved into old maps, photos, trade directories and other historical resources to track down individual breweries – some well known, some now almost forgotten. And we explored the local streets in search of surviving brewery buildings, large and small.

This booklet pulls together our discoveries – we hope you, like us, enjoy finding out about the remarkable story of brewing in the East End, past and present.

### Photo credits

**With thanks to:** the Brewery History Society, London Borough of Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives, Robert Humphreys (p2, 9, 70-71), The Turk's Head (p3, 66), Truman's (p2, 10-15, 51, 57, 64-65, 72-73, 77), One Mile End (p3, 39, 65, 74-75, 77), Redchurch Brewery (p3, 65, 76), Taylor Walker (p4-7, 52), Victoria Hutchings (p8-9), City of London LMA and Guildhall Library (p8, 34), Duncan Harris (p8), The Old Truman Brewery (p10-11), Suzy Rabikowska (p11), The Gentle Author at Spitalfields Life (p13, 39, 70-71), Alan Dann (p15, 36-37, 67, 68), Martyn Cornell (p16-19), Museum of London (p16, 53), National Maritime Museum (p16, 56), British Newspaper Archive (p17, 46-47), Ordnance Survey (p17, 20-21, 32, 34), Closed Pubs (p18), The Labologists' Society (p18, 37, 64-65), estate of William Whiffin (p19, 26), Andrew Barnard (p23), Charrington's (p1, 28-31, 41, 50, 70-71), Ancestry (p31, 33), Geoffrey S Fletcher (p32), Melissa Bates (p33), Christine Hall (p36), Andy Worthington (p39, 40), Pub History (p40-41), Mike Tyrell and Tower Hamlets Community Housing (p42-45), Central Press Agency (p42), Associated Newspapers Limited (p43), Guinness Archive (p48-49), Raine's Foundation School (p59), Crate Brewery (p64, 77), Heritage Assets and the National Brewery Heritage Trust (p67, 70-71), The Shakespeare (p68), Luminor Sign Co (p69), The A Board Dude (p69), Richard Pohle (p72), Howling Hops (p77) and Three Sods Brewery (p77). We have endeavoured to identify and credit all images, where possible, and apologise for any oversights.



**Project participants:** Alan Dann, Terry Dansey, Bob Dickinson, Jackie Gooding, Isabel Lines, Martin Melville, Charlotte Nichols, Val Nobbs, Maris Ozols, Valerie Sheekey, Richard Thomas, Jayne Whiteside, and Bill Wright.

**Project team:** Graham Barker of Walk East, Perdita Jones of Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives, and Ken Smith of the Brewery History Society.



### With thanks to:

Heritage Lottery Fund

Jeff Sechiari and team at the Brewery History Society

Malcolm Barr-Hamilton, Tamsin Bookey and Bridget Clay at the Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives

Don Lyons, and the Clerk and Master, at the Worshipful Company of Coopers

Philip Mernick at the East London History Society

Patrick Mulligan and Simon McCabe at One Mile End

James Morgan and Jasper Hossack at Truman's

Paul Lindt at Academy Design





# BEER BARRELS AND BREWHOUSES

Over 200 breweries – including household names, such as Truman's, Charrington's and Taylor Walker – have brewed beer in London's East End. Yet today, much of that heritage remains hidden. In this booklet – developed with local residents – we uncover this remarkable industrial heritage. And we glimpse into the emergent new micro-breweries, championing the art of brewing beer once again in the East End.

