

# PAPERS READ AT THE LAMAS LOCAL HISTORY CONFERENCE HELD AT THE MUSEUM OF LONDON IN NOVEMBER 2007: ‘THEY CAME TO LONDON: 1000 YEARS OF MIGRATION’

## SOME IMAGES OF THE LONDON JEWRY, c.1070–1290

Joe Hillaby

William of Malmesbury records that William the Conqueror transferred Jews from Rouen to London. The first firm evidence of London Jews comes in *The Disputation of a Jew and a Christian* of Gilbert Crispin, 4th abbot of Westminster (c.1085–1117/18). The Jew, who had attended the Talmudic academy at Mainz, stated his position firmly: Christ was a great prophet but he could not accept His divinity. The tone throughout was friendly and warm. Crispin explains that the Jew’s visit had been on ‘business’, probably a loan for the abbey’s building programme. Further loans included £400 in 1130, and £667 c.1230. A sculptured capital provides a portrait of William II and Crispin, holding a charter confirming the abbey’s liberties, privileges, and status as coronation church (Fig 1); the capital is lost, but drawings were published in 1834.

The *Leges Edwardi Confessoris* c.1120–30 state that ‘Jews and all they have’ are the King’s. None may subject himself to any magnate. Henry I restricted Jewish residence to London, but Stephen permitted the establishment of provincial communities. London’s primacy was challenged only by Aaron of Lincoln, d1186, and Aaron of York, ruined by 1255. The first reference to Jewish settlement, a *vicus iudeorum*, is in a St Paul’s survey, c.1127, which refers to a plot *versus*, next to, St Olave’s in Colechurch

Lane, Old Jewry after 1290. By the mid-13th century Jews lived across some nine parishes. The Jewry was no ghetto; Jews and Christians lived side by side. London’s Jewry formed a coherent self-governing community, with its own institutions, including internal control of taxation, whether for royal or communal use, as later did the provincial Jewries.



Wm. Capon, del.

N. Whittock, sc.

Fig 1. William II, seated, presents the charter to Crispin, on left with crosier

Any large room could serve as a synagogue, *scola*. The cemetery, *bet chayim*, house of life, was the first communal institution to be established, following classical tradition, outside town walls. Until 1177 Jewish burials were restricted to the London cemetery, *Leyrestowe*, outside Cripplegate; some 2½ acres, it was bounded by Aldersgate, Red Cross Street, and Jewin Street. Grimes, who excavated 1949–61, found no trace of tombstones, but fragments were discovered in Ludgate (1586), four more in Aldersgate (1617), and a sixth in London Wall (1753). Subsequently lost, their fragmentary Hebrew inscriptions were copied (Fig 2).



Fig 2. Tombstone fragment from Aldersgate of 'Abraham the Good ... died in 1211'

Evidence suggests that at Cripplegate, and elsewhere, there was a *bet tohorah*, for the ritual purification with running water of corpses prior to burial, and of those in contact with them, for he that 'touches the dead body of any man shall be unclean' (Numbers 19:11–13); the Mishnah adds, 'whether by touch, carrying or overshadowing'.

A grant of 1212–13 to Chicksands Priory records the site of London's great synagogue, behind houses fronting the north-east corner of Colechurch Lane and Lothbury. England's earliest synagogues were associated with the wealthy and powerful. There can be no doubt that the *magna scola* was built by Rabbi Josce, leader of London's medieval Jewry, whose family property in the *rue aux juifs*, Rouen, was sold only in 1103. In the 13th century houses of the wealthy and powerful, such as Aaron of York, clustered around its successor. In 1272 Queen Eleanor mischievously sold a site adjacent to the *magna scola* to the Friars of the Sack, who then complained that the 'continuous wailing, ululation and loud lamentations' disturbed their devotions. Henry III expelled the Jews, and granted their property to the Friars. What,

one wonders, did they make of the sounding of the *shofar*, the ram's horn proclaiming God as King of the Universe? In 1305 the Friars' chapel was acquired by Robert fitz Walter, and in 1411 sold to the Grocers' Company, who acquired the remainder of the fitz Walter property in 1433.

The 1130 Pipe Roll shows why Henry I and Henry II were concerned to maintain sole control of the Jewry. Firstly, Jewish credit facilities enabled the Crown to rack up its cash demands on the higher nobility, through fines, reliefs *etc*. The roll identifies the clientele of the London Jewry:

1. Ranulf II de Gernons, 4th earl of Chester, who owed Henry more than £2,000;
2. Richard fitz Gilbert, 3rd earl of Clare and Ranulf's brother-in-law, whose Welsh marcher lordship involved him in expensive castle-building at Aberystwyth and Ceredigion;
3. Osbert of Leicester, who owed Henry 1,000 marks (£666 13s 4d) for 'relaxation of *malvoentia regis* (the royal ire)'.

Secondly, it indicates the wealth, and thus the taxable potential, of London's Jewry. It records:

1. £2,000 fine 'for the sick man they killed';
2. £1,166 13s 4d outstanding from earlier rolls.

The total of £3,166 13s 4d represents 14% of the total royal income that year.

The Roll also records substantial money transfers, loan repayments, from the Crown to Rabbi Josce and Manasser.

Henry's reign came to be regarded by Jews as an era 'when their fathers had been happy and respected'. At Richard I's coronation in 1189, Jews clustering around the west door of Westminster Abbey were assaulted by the mob. The riots spread to the Jewry. Besieged from three o'clock in the afternoon to sunset, its houses were set on fire. Violence spread to East Anglia and York, where many Jews took their own lives and those of their wives and children.

Royal records and tallage rolls tell us more about members of the Jewry than any other segments of English 13th-century society, except the highest echelons of the nobility and clergy. Responsibility for monitoring Jewish bonds lay with the Barons of the Exchequer of the Jews in Westminster Hall, where, in 1235, their chamber was enlarged with 'solar, cellar and chimney', similar to the Exchequer Court on the other side.

In 1210 King John ordered the general imprisonment of wealthy Jews, to enforce payment of his £40,000 tallage. Many fled. In 1215 baronial forces captured London. Jewish houses became stone quarries for rebuilding the city's defences. Stow describes the Jews as 'prowling the city like dogs'. By 1221 Henry III's Council of Regency, appreciating the economic importance of the Jewry, re-established the London and 17 self-governing provincial communities, protected by the royal sheriffs and castellans. Later Henry's heavy taxation led to the Jewries' impoverishment, and the disappearance of the so-called plutocrats, such as Aaron of York. Elias l'Eveske, the archpresbyter, pleaded in 1254 for permission for the Jewry to quit the realm, even accusing Henry of 'purposing to destroy us ... exacting from us things we cannot give though he put out our eyes and cut our throats when he had first pulled off our skins'.

In 1232, Matthew Paris tells us, Henry III 'founded a handsome church to the honour of God and the Virgin, at his own expense', 'fit for an assembly of monks', as a house, *Domus*, for Jewish converts. Paris illustrates the chapel (Fig 3). Henry's fine chancel arch was incorporated in the 1890s into the south-east end of the Public Record Office building. The rest was demolished, but detailed records were kept. In 1307 Osgodby, Keeper of the Rolls, was appointed Master of the *Domus*. All but one of his successors also combined the posts. By 1338 Converslane had

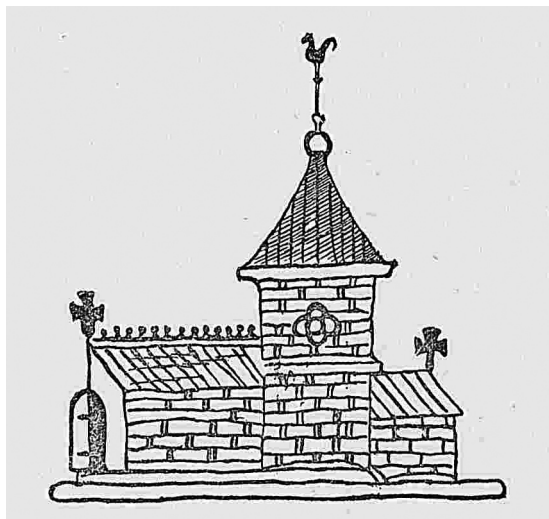


Fig 3. *Domus Conversorum*. Matthew Paris's drawing (BL MS Royal 14c, f121)

become *Chancelerslane*. In 1724 Colin Campbell demolished the original *Domus*, built a new house for the Keeper of the Rolls, and repaired the chapel at a cost of £6,000.

Two *mikva'ot*, ritual baths, primarily for monthly use by the womenfolk, have been found in London, one by Sermon at 81–7 Gresham Street (1986), the other by Watson at 1–6 Milk Street (2001). In 1290 Edward expelled the English Jewry. Tower records show that 1,461 Jews embarked from London. Poorer Jews paid 2d rather than 4d in customs dues.

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## THE LONDON HANSE: A MERCANTILE ENCLAVE IN THE HEART OF MEDIEVAL LONDON

Lyn Blackmore and Bruce Watson

### Introduction

The site commonly known as the Steelyard, in Upper Thames Street (TQ 3258 8075), now buried under Cannon Street Station, played a key part in the development of London's trade. Located at the heart of the waterfront, on the east bank of the Walbrook, it was the base of German merchants from at least the mid-12th century, later becoming the westernmost base

of the German Hanse in the mercantile alliance of some 200 cities and towns commonly known as the Hanseatic League (Bluer 1997a; Gaimster 2005). The site was partially excavated by the then Department of Urban Archaeology in 1987–89 (UTA87, directed by Angus Stevenson and supervised by Richard Bluer and Frank Meddens) when the approach to Cannon Street Station was redeveloped by Speyhawk Plc (Spence & Grew 1990, 22–3). For various reasons post-excavation work was never completed and we are greatly indebted to the City of London Archaeological Trust for generous financial support which has made it possible to revive this important project.

The lecture given at the LAMAS Local History Conference traced the history of the site from the 11th to the 19th century, setting it within its local context and outlining the development of trade between England and Germany in the Middle and Late Saxon periods. This includes finds recovered during excavations in the 1990s on the site of the Alfredian marketplace at Queenhithe, which have direct parallels in North Germany/Southern Denmark and the Rhineland, and show that merchants from these areas were trading in the City (Ayre & Wroe-Brown 1996; Wroe-Brown 1999).

In the 10th and 11th centuries wooden quays and buildings were gradually constructed between the Roman city wall and the Thames. By AD 1000 Queenhithe dominated the upriver traffic, while a new market established at Billingsgate catered for downriver trade. Between these, the Dowgate inlet at the mouth of the Walbrook became the focus of the wine trade. The western bank was held by the merchants of Rouen by the mid-11th century, while the eastern bank was the centre of the German wine trade by 1100, and possibly earlier (Keene 1989a, 16–19; Lloyd 1991, 13). By the 12th century the port of London was one of the most active in the country, used by merchants from, or with connections in, Denmark and Norway, Normandy, Antwerp, Tiel, Bremen, Cologne, Mainz, Regensburg and Lotharingia (Brooke with Keir 1975, 265–70; Keene 1989a, 16, 18). This activity is borne out by archaeological finds, especially pottery (Vince 1985, 39–43, 86; Blackmore 1999, 42–4, 49–50).

### **The German Guildhall**

There is some confusion in the literature as to

the dates of different references to the Germans, but the first mention of the Cologne merchants and the German wine trade is in a writ of Henry II (1154–89), which orders the sheriffs and bailiffs of London to let them sell their wine on the same terms as the French. Between 1157 and 1179 they acquired further privileges and protection and a property, referred to as '*domo sua Londonensi*', which by 1194 was known as their guildhall (Keene 1989a, 18; Keene 1989b, 47; Hunting 1990, 17; Lloyd 1991, 15).

It is currently unclear whether the Cologne merchants converted an existing building or constructed a new guildhall, but the property was situated between the Thames and Roper Street, or Thames Street to the north, and between the Dowgate inlet and the church of All Hallows (this church became known as the seaman's church and was used by the Germans as well as the English). As shown in Fig 4, the area consisted of a series of narrow rectangular properties, separated by four alleys extending southwards from Thames Street to the waterfront (Keene 1989a, 19–20).

The 1987–89 excavations revealed the foundations of the late 12th-century guildhall, showing that it was a substantial masonry rectangular building, oriented north–south (Keene 1989a, 20–2; Bluer 1997b; Schofield 1995, 23). It was at least 19m long (possibly up to 30m long) and 10.3m wide with a ground floor that was probably used for the storage of commodities. It was over six bays long and divided into two unequal aisles by stone columns on square plinths; some walls survived up to 1.4m in height above floor level. The hall itself was at first floor level and the presence of latrines is indicated by an external stone-lined cesspit attached to the western wall. The guildhall was the largest stone building of its kind in London, and the largest in 12th-century England to be used for mercantile purposes (Keene 1989a, 25; Gaimster 2005, 419).

Possibly the earliest named member of the guildhall is Arnold, son of Thedmar, an alderman of the City of London and, from 1251–1260, alderman of the German merchants. Born in London, 1201, he inherited property adjacent to the guildhall, including a large house (Keene 1989a, 23; 1989b, 48; Hunting 1990, 17–18), that was possibly occupied by Gerard Merbode, alderman of the guildhall in 1282 (Lloyd 1991, 44).

By c.1260 the guildhall also accommodated the merchants of Hamburg and Lübeck and was



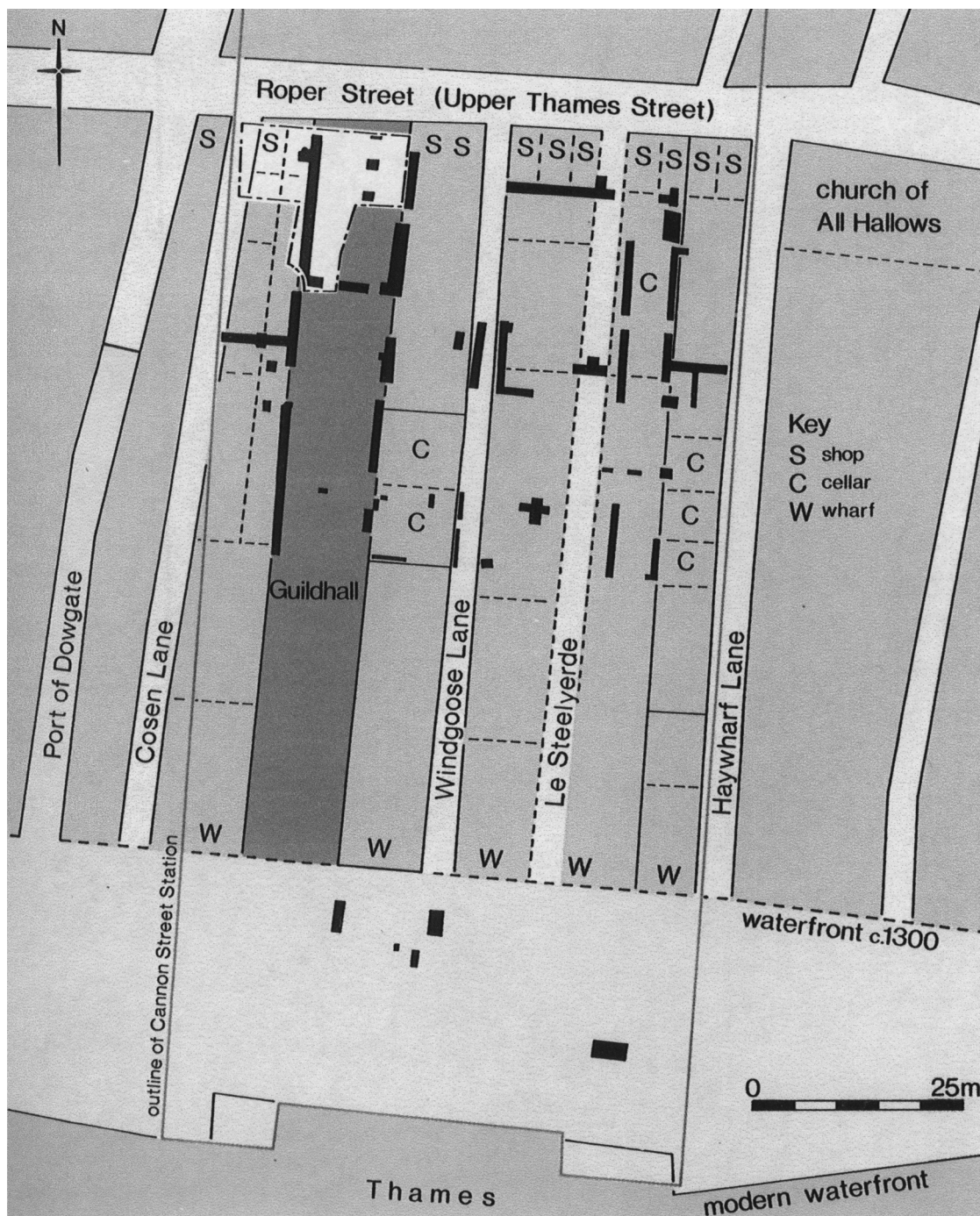


Fig 4. Plan of the Steelyard site based on archaeological remains and documentary evidence (from Spence and Grew 1990, after Keene 1989a)

referred to as the *Aula Teutonicorum* (possibly from 1224); it was also known as the *Dennishemanneshalle* (from 1275) and the *Esterlingeshalle* (from 1340) (Honeybourne 1965, 69–70; Keene 1989a, 23; 1989b, 47–8; Lloyd 1991, 19–21). During this time the area changed from one mainly occupied by rope merchants to a more mixed community of English merchants in wool, textile and wine with an increasing number of Germans, Flemings and men from Brabant (Keene 1989c, 150–1; Lloyd 1991; Bluer 1997a).

By 1320 the German merchants had apparently expanded onto rented land, and the area between Cosen Lane and Windgoose Lane, extending southwards to the Thames, was known as the *Stalhof* (Norman 1909, 390; Honeybourne 1965, 74; Keene 1989c, 151); additional buildings were constructed for the storage and sale of wine and also as living accommodation. The Hanse community comprised young, single men from a growing number of towns and rules were imposed in order to maintain discipline and exclusivity and to protect the position of the merchants and their income; from 1366 these became increasingly strict (Jenks 1989).

During the 14th century the Hanse dominated cloth trade became increasingly important and the number of cloth merchants and ancillary craftsmen such as dyers, clothcutters and metalworkers increased as the number of sailors decreased (Keene 1989c, 151–2). By 1384 John of Northampton, a leading cloth merchant, owned land to the north and south of Thames Street, including the house formerly occupied by Arnold son of Thedmar and a lane or courtyard known as Le Steelyerde (the first documented use of the name: Honeybourne 1965, 71–4). The quay was named Stielwharf and the gate leading to Thames Street was Stielwharfgate (Keene 1989a, 24). The English name Steelyard is believed to be a corruption of this word, which is probably derived from the Lower German verb '*stalen*' meaning to certify the origin and quality of cloth by means of applying a lead seal to it (Bluer 1997b, 22; Keene 1989c, 151–2).

### **The post-medieval period**

The Treaty of Utrecht in 1474/5 reinforced the privileges of the Hanse merchants and they formally acquired the properties east of the guildhall up to Haywharf Lane, which included the Steelyard (at the expense of the Cologne merchants: Keene 1989c, 152; Lloyd

1991, 281–2; Bluer 1997b, 22). This became a legally defined precinct that extended south to a masonry riverwall (probably of 16th-century date), investigation of which revealed some 160 reused and moulded stones, including fragments of Gothic tracery believed to be derived from earlier buildings on the site. The guildhall was rebuilt and a watch tower added to its southern end (Schofield 1995, 69, figs 23–24). From 1483 until 1598 the guildhall complex was one of the four principal counting-houses of the Hanse merchants (the others were in Bruges, Bergen and Novgorod). The arms of the *Kontor*, a double-headed eagle, can be seen on a 15th-century stoneware beaker found on the site in the 19th century (Gaimster 1997, 173, col pl 7). The luxury enjoyed by the German community is demonstrated by two murals painted by Holbein in the 1530s, showing the triumph of riches and the triumph of poverty (Hunting 1990, 16–17), and items of silverware. The two surviving pieces comprise a plate made c.1535 to a design by Holbein, showing the arms of the Steelyard, and a ewer made c.1562 in a London workshop (the knop on the lid of the ewer bears reference to the cloth trade that was so important for the Hanse merchants); both were in the Steelyard until 1609, when they were shipped to Bremen (Bracker 1989, 110–11). Residents around this time include Georg Gisz from Gdansk, painted by Holbein in 1532 (Schofield 1995, 132, fig 152). John Stow (c.1600) described the Steelyard as a large stone building within a precinct entered by three gates at the Thames Street end, and noted that the German merchants traded in 'wheat, rye, as well as other grain, as well cables, ropes and masts, pitch, tar, flax, hemp, linen cloth, wainscot, steel and other profitable merchandises' (Stow 1971, 233).

The history of the site from c.1550 onwards is detailed by Norman (Norman 1909, 389–426; for the economic and political situation of the Hanse to c.1611, Lloyd 1991). The German merchants were an exclusive community with special rights granted by the Crown. Their trading privileges and dominance of the Baltic trade were resented by English merchants, and this led to the withdrawal of privileges by Edward VI, and the expulsion of the Hanse merchants by Elizabeth I in 1598, when the Steelyard became Crown property (Lenz 1973). In 1606 the German merchants were allowed to return to their London base on condition

that they allowed English merchants to trade freely in Hanse towns. From this time onwards, however, the commercial importance of the Steelyard declined and by the mid-17th century, most of the premises had been converted into 65 apartments that were mainly occupied by English tenants (Lenz 1973; Keene 1989c, 152–6).

The Steelyard was destroyed by the Great Fire of 1666, but was rebuilt to the same plan by the 'house' master Jacob Jacobson (died 1680). To this end a splendid crest depicting the Hanse emblem of the London *kontor* (now displayed within the Museum of London) was carved by Caius Gabriel Cipper of Holstein to be erected over the gate on the Thames Street façade (Norman 1909, 405–6; Forsyth 1989). The Jacobson family ran the Steelyard until 1745 and the Steelyard remained in German hands until 1853, when it was sold by the towns of Bremen, Hamburg and Lübeck to the Victoria Dock Company for warehousing. In 1863 the premises were acquired by the South Eastern Railway Company, who during 1865–66 constructed Cannon Street Station on the site. This redevelopment involved the demolition of all the standing buildings on the site, destroyed a large amount of archaeological material, and stimulated antiquarian interest in the history of the site that we hope to explore in future stages of the project.

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## LITTLE ITALY IN VICTORIAN LONDON: CLASS OR COMMUNITY?

David R Green

Italians have a lengthy history of settlement in London but in the 19th century larger numbers began to settle in the city and formed an identifiable community. In the early years of the 19th century several important political exiles made London their home. Italian exiles included Guiseppe Mazzini (1837–1847), Antonio Panizzi,



who designed the Reading Room of the British Museum, and Gabriele Pasquale Giuseppe Rossetti, father of Dante Gabrielle Rosetti, and himself a poet and scholar, who settled in London in 1824. These exiles were followed by thousands of other, poorer, rural migrants and urban artisans from northern and central Italy, and they in turn were followed later in the century by much larger numbers of immigrants from the south.

Throughout the century, London was home to more than half the total number of Italians in England and Wales. In 1861 there were just under 5,000 Italians in the country, but by 1901 this had increased to more than 20,000. Holborn was the centre of this community, with up to half the total living in London located there, notably in a handful of streets around Leather Lane. It was there that the first Italian church, St Peter's, was built in 1863 to serve the entire Italian community in the UK. A report in the *Lancet* in 1879 described a visit to Fleet Court, the centre of Little Italy, and noted that 'Not a word of English is spoken there from years end to years end'.

As the numbers of Italians increased, so did the number of ethnic organisations and businesses catering to their needs. As well as St Peter's church, other institutions emerged, including a free school and a working men's club set up by Mazzini. Worried about Mazzini's influence, the Italian consulate set up a rival organisation, the Italian Benevolent Society, in 1861 which, amongst other things, aimed to send poor migrants '... back to their own country in cases of illness or want of employment'. Numerous lodging houses provided accommodation, often based on regional ties that were transferred from the home country to London. In 1871, of the 63 organ grinders who came from Bardi, 61 lived in just three houses in Summers Street and Little Saffron Hill. A similar pattern also existed for Neapolitan migrants, all of whom lived adjacent to each other in neighbouring streets or houses.

The need to live close to each other hinted at ties of mutual dependence that arose largely as a result of poverty and local loyalty. The majority of migrants were poor and lived a precarious existence playing barrel organs and hurdy gurdies on the streets, making and hawking plaster figures, or selling ice cream. The most visible and audible of these groups were the organ grinders. In some cases, children

were hired out to *padroni*, sometimes from the same villages as the parents, who provided food and lodging and who also employed the boys to play music on the streets. Over time, as Italian men began to marry local women or bring wives over, the pattern of employment changed and families became more important. The start of compulsory primary education in 1870 also helped reduce the number of children employed as street musicians. Middle-class dislike of street music was also evident in the so-called 'battle of the barrels' which took place in the 1860s and which resulted in an act of parliament in 1864 that limited the freedom of individuals to play music on the streets of the city. Michael Bass, the MP who promoted the act, came from the famous brewing family, and it was this connection that gave the battle its nickname. *Punch* famously depicted events in several cartoons published at the time.

The organ grinders, though the most numerous of the Italian migrants, were by no means the only ones to settle in London. More skilled migrants, from places such as Como and Lombardy, also migrated and they specialised in scientific instrument making, frame making, and gilding. The famous lens-making firm of Negretti and Zambra, for example, was started by two of these migrants who came to live in Holborn in this period. This group was in subtle ways different and distinct from their poorer Italian neighbours. They tended to live in larger houses in different streets, notably Hatton Garden, rather than the back streets and alleys closer to Leather Lane. They often held the leases to these properties, and had workshops on the premises. When it came to marrying, the men more often chose non-Italian brides and when their children were born, non-Italians were chosen as godparents. Poorer Italians, by contrast, relied more on fellow migrants to act as godparents.

Viewed from the outside, the Italians who came to settle in Holborn in the 19th century seemed to form a single, homogeneous group. However, there were important and subtle social distinctions between different groups, reflected in their choice of where to live and with whom, of marriage partners, and of friends and relatives chosen to act as surrogate parents to their children. In this sense, at least, there was more than just one 'Little Italy' in 19th-century London.



## **THE RISE AND FALL OF THE GERMAN COMMUNITY IN LONDON, c.1815–1914**

*Panikos Panayi*

By the beginning of the 19th century a significant and well established German community had emerged in London, building upon a previous history stretching back hundreds of years (Panayi 1996). However, hostility had begun to rise towards it as the First World War approached. The conflict itself meant an ethnic cleansing of the German community of Britain.

The 19th-century community emerged from distinct networks. In the first place Hanoverians moved to the capital, a process originating in the accession of George I to the British throne. Political migration to London was motivated by the existence of centres of revolutionary activity. Distinct occupational groups also moved to London, including foreign correspondence clerks. Waiters, meanwhile, migrated to the capital in an attempt to improve their English. Bakers moved to work as apprentices for other Germans from the 1880s. They would then set up for themselves, importing further workers, although World War I brought this cycle to a halt (Panayi 1995, 35–87).

The size of the German community in London rose from 16,082 in 1861 to 27,290 in 1911 (Panayi 1995, 92). They focused upon specific areas. The working class East End community concentrated upon St George's in the East, although numbers gradually declined as a result of railway building and the settlement of East European Jews in the area. Germans also lived in the West End between Goodge Street, Euston Road and Tottenham Court Road, which again housed a predominantly working class community from the late Victorian years. In South-West London, around Sydenham, a middle class German settlement developed, while significant numbers of Germans lived in other parts of the capital, including Islington (Panayi 1995, 93–101).

Germans found themselves employed in a range of occupations from the underclass to the highest echelons of the London social scale. Within the German underclass, we can find the destitute, who included those who had moved to the capital but failed to secure employment. Old Germans with a small pension or with nothing also fell into the underclass, as did a few prostitutes. Working class occupations which

attracted Germans included sugar baking, which was important in the development of the East End German community. This activity involved the refining of raw sugar from the West Indies but declined in importance due to the movement of large factories into Silvertown and the increased use of sugar beet from Europe. Germans also worked in fur production, tailoring, and shoemaking. By 1911 Germans also made up 10% of waiters in the capital. Germans further found employment in lower middle class occupations. They included self-employed butchers, barbers and bakers, often initially working as apprentices to other Germans already resident in London. Street musicians, a feature of Victorian street life, entered Britain during the summer and often marched through the country. But many British orchestras counted significant numbers of German players. These fit into more solidly middle class employment. The latter includes male teachers working mostly in boys' schools. The Association of German Governesses in England helped find employment for women from Germany who became popular because of their ability to teach music and languages. More successful businessmen include the Rothschild and Schroeder banking houses (Panayi 1995, 110–44).

The London German community underwent a process of acculturation and assimilation, but also maintained its ethnicity. The marriage registers of the German Lutheran church in St George's in the East demonstrate that 24.4% of unions between 1883 and 1896 included a non-German partner (Panayi 1995, 109–10). However, a whole variety of organisations came into existence on a micro-level for the purpose of perpetuating ethnicity. The churches played a central role. By 1905 there were fifteen places where Germans worshipped. The churches did not simply carry out Sunday religious services but also offered a whole variety of social welfare activities, including schooling in German. Although the vast majority of these churches were Protestant, there was also one Roman Catholic establishment in the form of St Bonifatius (Panayi 1995, 148–59, 166–8).

Philanthropy acted as a way in which the more established Germans attempted to care for their poorer neighbours with the help of the German churches. The most important charities included the German Society of Benevolence and the Society of Friends of Foreigners in Distress. The German Hospital in Dalston



*Fig 5. German beer hall (after Count E Armfelt 'German London')*

opened in 1845 and catered for both German and English in- and out-patients. In addition to the schools connected to the churches, aimed mostly at the poor, at least one private German school came into existence in the form of the German-English Boys' School in Brixton. In 1861 a German YMCA also opened in London (Panayi 1995, 171–9).

Numerous cultural and political bodies emerged, divided along class lines. Pubs and clubs came into existence for working class Germans on a local scale. These did not have the London-wide appeal of the German Atheneum established in 1869 and the German Turnverein from 1861, aimed at the cream of London German society (Armfelt 1903). Politics also proved important, especially for refugees who had migrated following repression in the middle of the 19th century, particularly after the failed revolutions of 1848. Thus we have a series of groups from the 1830s, perhaps most famously the German Workers' Educational Association (Ashton 1986; Lattek 2005). However, by the outbreak of the First World War nationalistic

and essentially anti-British groupings had also established branches in London, including the German Colonial Society, the Navy League, and the Royal and Imperial Hassia (Armfelt 1903).

By 1914 a vital German community had become established in the capital. It divided into numerous subgroups according to location, class, and political persuasion. These different micro-populations ultimately had little to do with each other despite some efforts by the German élite to keep them together. However, it is clear that by 1914 vibrant German communities had become a feature of the life of the capital.

Unlike the numerous other migrant communities, which have settled in London during the course of the 19th and 20th centuries, the history of the Germans has an almost unique history as it did not follow the normal path of integration, acculturation and assimilation, but, instead, faced what can only be described as ethnic cleansing during World War I. Indications of what would happen began to become apparent as German military and naval power rose from the 1870s. A sort of anti-German movement

emerged, most famously manifesting itself in the development of spy-fever. A few outbreaks of anti-German violence also broke out during the Boer War when Germans were perceived to have supported the Boers (Panayi 1995, 228–51).

When the Great War started the London community faced a period of Germanophobic frenzy in which Germany and its perceived representatives in Britain became victims. This racist feeling had official and popular manifestations. The government introduced a series of measures against the German community including the Aliens Restriction Act, which seriously curtailed their rights, requiring them to register with the police, forbidding them from moving outside a five-mile radius, and preventing them from changing their names (Panayi 1991, 45–69). The government also passed legislation to deal with German property, most notably the Trading with the Enemy Acts, which confiscated every German owned property by 1918, from the branches of the Deutsche and Dresdner Banks in the City of London to the small shops owned by Germans — all of which counted towards German reparations payments under the Treaty of Versailles (Panayi 1991, 132–49). Wholesale internment of adult German males, focused upon the Isle of Man, also meant the establishment of a handful of camps in London including Olympia, Stratford, Islington, and Hackney Wick. The major London camp consisted of Alexandra Palace, mostly used for housing London Germans with families. It held a peak of 3,000 prisoners but about 17,000 men had passed through its doors during the course of the conflict. Women and children faced repatriation during the War, joined by men at its cessation (Panayi 1991, 70–131).

Official Germanophobia received support from a virulent public opinion backed up by both the national and the London press, which constantly carried stories of the threat of German spies. Witch-hunts of Germans in high places occurred, together with anti-German strikes aimed at purging Britain of German employees, as seen, for instance, by the wholesale sacking of German hotel and restaurant employees at the start of the War, whipped up by the Loyal British Waiters' Society (Panayi 1991, 153–222). The most violent manifestation of Germanophobia in World War I and the one which did most, along with internment and repatriation, to cleanse London of Germans, consisted of rioting. This peaked in May 1915, following the sinking of the

*Lusitania*, when virtually every German shop in London came under attack. The worst affected areas included the East End. On 12 May the *Daily Mail* described London as 'one vast riot area'. Nearly 2,000 properties were attacked and 866 people were arrested (Panayi 1989).

The history of Germans in London is therefore unique. Certainly some of the 19th-century institutions, notably the churches, survived the Great War. However, the events of World War I destroyed the vibrant communities which had evolved before 1914 and which would never be the same again.

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## OLD PATTERNS, FRESH FACES: RECENT MIGRANTS TO LONDON IN THE 20th AND 21st CENTURIES

Anne J Kershen

The millennium of invasions that began with the arrival of the Romans in AD 43 ended with the arrival of William the Conqueror in 1066. Those that subsequently settled in London — with a few exceptions — can be categorised as what we today identify as 'economic migrants'. The emergence of London as a bustling commercial centre in the medieval period heralded the arrival of Jews from Normandy, merchants of the Hanseatic League, bankers from Lombardy, weavers from the Low Countries, tile makers from Delft, and beer brewers from Germany. In spite of restrictions being imposed on trades that could be undertaken by strangers, the steady arrival of incomers continued throughout the Middle Ages. The creation of the Church of England by



Henry VIII and the birth of Protestantism and Calvinism in Europe added another dimension to London's attraction. From the late 16th century onwards London became a refuge for religious dissidents, the breadth of 'tolerance' being completed in 1656 with the readmission of the Jews by Oliver Cromwell. With the exception of the period during the wars with France, immigration continued at a steady pace and at an acceptable volume. However the latter part of the 19th century saw a dramatic change and by 1901, the beginning of the century which marks the focus of this paper, opposition to the unrestricted entry of aliens, most particularly pauper aliens, was being voiced by politicians and the general public alike. In 1905 the Aliens Act was passed, the first act in peacetime to restrict entry to Britain. In the century that followed, immigration and immigrants, particularly in London, became issues of social and political debate and, at times, the cause of violence.

### **London a promised land**

Throughout the 20th century, and on into the 21st, migrants flowed into London; it is therefore pertinent to ask why? The most obvious reason and one that, as noted above, has remained the same for more than a thousand years, is the image of London as a city of economic opportunity. Though not always the promised land, Britain's capital city has been perceived by outsiders as a place where both the skilled and unskilled might find employment — a route to economic and social mobility. To many London has also appeared as a tolerant city, a place of refuge for those seeking sanctuary from political, religious, and sexual persecution. In the 20th century, following the establishment of the Welfare State in 1948, the availability of social benefit and support for outsiders as well as the indigenous population provided yet another reason for migrants to head for London. Finally, there is the linguistic attraction; the universality of the English language is a determining factor in many a migrant's rationalisation of places of settlement. As the global language of the internet, even if not spoken by the migrant, it is one which is familiar and perceived as a major force in communication.

Immigrant entry and settlement in London in the period under examination can be apportioned both temporally and geographically. Between 1900 and 1948 the majority of immig-

rants to the metropolis originated from Eastern and Central Europe, only a small minority emanating from Asia and Africa. Between 1948 and 1989 the flow of migrants into the capital came mainly from the Caribbean Islands of Jamaica and Bermuda and the Indian subcontinent. From the late 1980s numbers of New Commonwealth immigrants dwindled, their place taken by migrants from the former Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries. At the same time smaller numbers of immigrants were arriving from the Middle East, Africa, Australasia, and North and South America. In the age of globalisation, immigration into London has indeed become global.

### **1900–1948**

At the beginning of the 20th century the presence of Eastern European Jews in the capital was significant, the most visible concentration being in the East End — in the Spitalfields district, overflowing into Stepney and Whitechapel. Though the 1905 Aliens Act reduced the flow, migration from the Russian Empire did not come to a halt until just before the outbreak of the First World War. It was not only the Jewish immigrant community that was making its mark on the landscape of London. By 1911, the German community totalled almost 27,000, their economic activities ranging from sugar spinning to clerical work. The Italian community, centred largely around Clerkenwell, were engaged in the food and catering trades, whilst Chinese and Indian seamen added to the cosmopolitan character of the city, the latter transferring their roles from seamen to laundry owners. The First World War, the post-war tightening of immigration control, and the economic depression of the 1920s were disincentives to immigrant entry. In the interwar years, those that did gain access to London were, in the main, the more fortunate refugees from Nazism.

### **1948–1989**

Between 1948 and 1989 the migrant landscape of London was fashioned by entrants from the New Commonwealth countries. The arrival of the *Empire Windrush* on its return from Jamaica in June 1948 heralded the beginning of a new inflow of migrants, men and women seeking economic opportunity in the capital of their mother country. They were driven by the lack

of employment prospects in the Caribbean and attracted by the recruitment policies of London Transport and the newly created National Health Service. By the late 1950s immigration from the Caribbean had begun to slow, but it was rapidly replaced by a new wave of migrants from south-east Asia. The predominantly male influx heralded from India and West and East Pakistan (the latter to gain independence as Bangladesh in 1971). The intention of those migrants, as indeed it was of those from the Caribbean, was to stay for a short while, perhaps three to five years and then to return to their home countries as 'rich men of high status'. It was a myth of return that very few transformed into a reality. By the mid-1970s increasingly restrictive immigration legislation had virtually put an end to primary male entry. New migrant arrivals were classified as secondary, either the children of earlier arrivals or women reuniting with their husbands or coming as new brides.

### **The 1990s onwards**

The break up of the Soviet Union, the collapse of Yugoslavia, and political and ethnic upheavals in Africa and the Middle East heralded a new wave of immigration into London. As a result the migrant community of London has become even more culturally and linguistically diverse — a report published at the beginning of 2000 reported that more than 300 languages were spoken in the capital's schools.

As London nears the end of the first decade of the 21st century, a survey of the spatial and economic clustering of the immigrant communities provides further evidence of the capital's place in the hierarchy of migrant destinations. The largest settlement of Bangladeshis outside Bangladesh is to be found in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, with smaller communities in the boroughs of Camden, Newham and Redbridge. Ealing and Redbridge are noticeable for the clustering of Gujarati- and Hindu-speaking Indians, whilst migrants from the Punjab have settled in Hounslow and Ealing, North Africans in Westminster,

and Latin Americans in Elephant and Castle, Holloway and Stamford Hill. The earliest post-World War II arrivals from the Caribbean are now dispersed across the capital, though there is still a significant community in and around Brixton. Irish communities, too, are now to be found across London and, in addition, there are small clusters of migrants from the Middle East in central London, ultra-orthodox Jews in Stamford Hill, and Turkish and Greek Cypriots in the Green Lane district of north London. The largest influx of migrants in the years following the millennium has been from the A8 — accession-countries (Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Slovakia and Slovenia). In contrast to earlier immigrants these recent migrants are dispersed across the capital, as indeed they are across the country.

In addition to spatial clustering, migrants have a tendency to economic clustering. Eastern Europeans have found work as builders, plumbers, electricians, bus, coach and lorry drivers; a minority are employed as chefs, dentists, and bank workers. Care work, cleaning in both the private and public sector, and the more menial tasks in the hotel and catering industry have drawn workers from Latin America and Africa, whilst at the other end of the scale of skills, finance, teaching and medicine provide employment for immigrants from North America and Western Europe. Immigrants from Australasia, many on short-term work permits and visas, cover the spectrum of economic activity working as teachers, doctors and construction workers.

### **Conclusion**

It is obvious that throughout its history London has been a magnet for immigrants and refugees. A promised land that perhaps does not always live up to its promise but which continues to act as a beacon for those who believe that it offers freedom of speech, religion, and politics and the opportunity to become rich and possibly achieve 'high status'.