

Fire Stations

Camden Town – at the workhouse

Escape ladders positioned at

- Camden High Street opposite Southampton Arms;
- Kentish town opposite The Falcon

Friendly societies

LMA: MR/SBL/317/1-2; MR/SBL/318; MR/SBS/62; SBS 67

TNO: FS 6/159/261MIDD; 1/476/83

Friends of Labour Loan Society, 'Jelly Ferrer', High Street, 29 Jan 1855

Friends of Labour Loan Society, 'Hope', Camden Town 3 Jan 1856

Camden Town Working Mens Club and Institute Labour Loan Society [1864-1865]

United Camden Town and North Pentonville Benefit Building Society and Accumulating Fund [1847]

Camden Town Savings Bank, Infant and Sunday Schools, Camden St. 23 Apr 1839

Environmental Health

TNO: MH 13/270/73 Folio 152.

To: J W Phillips, Commissioner of Works, From: The General Board of Health.

Draft letter enclosing a copy of a letter from Mr Willy of Hamilton Street, Camden Town, containing suggestions for the improvements of the dwellings of the poor and others.

Date: 1855 Feb 2

TNO: H 13/270/72folios 149-151.

To: The General Board of Health. From: J Willy, 4 Hamilton Street, Camden Town,

Detailed letter enclosing Willy's remarks and observations on the Nuisances Removal and Diseases Prevention Consolidation and Amendment Bill.

Date: 1855 Feb 17



Camden Town

Lady Camden
Belgrave Square

TWELFTH ANNUAL REPORT
 OF THE
CAMDEN TOWN CLOTHING SOCIETY,
 FOR ENABLING THE POOR OF THE DISTRICT
 TO PROVIDE THEMSELVES WITH
 BLANKETS, FLANNELS, AND OTHER NEEDFUL ARTICLES
 IN THE WINTER SEASON;
 FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 1845.



ESTABLISHED 1837.

Committee,

Mrs. BAINES
Mrs. W. EVANS
Mrs. HANNAM

Miss HANNAM
Mrs. INGPEN
Miss T. KING

Miss C. SEWELL
Mrs. TUNALEY
Mrs. TURNER

Treasurer,
Mrs. HANNAM.

Hon. Secretary,
Miss HANNAM.

Collector,
H. TAYLOR.

THIS Society was established in the year 1837, for the purpose of encouraging habits of saving and fore-thought amongst the poor. Its founders being of opinion, that they could not more directly contribute to promote their welfare, than by endeavouring to awaken in their minds a desire to assist themselves.

The outline of the mode by which this object is attempted, is appended to this Report; and the Subscribers to the Clothing

Vestry minutes

At Halfway Houses – 7 houses @ 6/-,
Wm White ho. & **land of Lady Jeffries** charged to Mr Morgan. £17...

29 July 1803 We appoint John Joyce to collect and pay the same
Approx 1% tax on value

- In Kentish Town Martha Ashton for children workhouse – rent £24, pd 5s.
- Morgans land £360, rent 3.15.0; Barts land £100, rent 1.5.0
- Joyce's inmates x2 – 5/- for each.
- Pancras Wash. Wm Francis Camden Ld valued at 1700 and pays £17.14.2
- Robert Keir v £30, t 6s
- Vet Coll v £300, t £3.2.6
- Kirkman & Hendy v£88, t 18s4d
- Many then on v£16, t 3s.4d
- Kings Place 9 houses v8, t1s8d

FHW Sheppard. *Local government in St Marylebone 1688-1835*. Athlone Press, 1958

P102: Rhodes – great-uncle of Cecil Rhodes – fought 17 years to 1819 when 'the disorderly Open Vestry was extinguished by a Local Act'.

P207: 1797 Act for County rate (at three farthings) to be at same rate (ie headcount) as poor rate.

P247: St Pancras Act 1816 for church, while Church Commissioners took over building the chapel. But the odium into which the Vestry fell after 1819 – with Radicals, Dissenters and Roman Catholics – 'prejudiced the whole church-building programme.'



The social character of Camden Town at population level was recorded, through Charles Booth, at the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century. Booth made street-by-street analyses, gaining his information from local public servants – policemen and clergy. Notes were taken from the policemen as they walked each street; interviews with clergy followed a set schedule, relating to the Church of England parishes and also non-conformist churches.

Booth considered that, moving anti-clockwise from Stepney to Paddington, society moved from 2 groups (poor and destitute) to five groups (destitute to rich). St Pancras lay in the '4 groups' part of the arc, with the poorest in the south between St Pancras Station and Hampstead Road. With the arrival of railways, some of the poor from this housing were displaced: but, Booth observed, it was 'not in Camden Town near by, but in Kentish Town that the evils reappear, [in] the unfinished and unoccupied streets of new districts.

The result, if not the movement, in St Pancras can be seen in the map from the book on North West London. Booth's hierarchy runs from golden and red, through pink and magenta to blue, green and black. Somers Town is magenta and blue, south Camden Town is pink, and there is red around Camden Road. Blue emerges again further west of Kentish Town.



Booths surveyors took a walk with Inspector Bowles of the Somers Town police division on 18 November 1898.

North side of Pratt Street is St Pancras Liberal Club 'and behind it the recreation ground'. Camden Street now a 'mixture of working and middle class', with adjacent St Martins Place 'quite respectable – police etc living here'. In Georgiana Street, 2-3 rooms let for 6/6 to 9/- - 'decent'. Lyme Terrace is a 'quiet spot', children in Little Randolph street 'poor and not poor, playing about'. On the King's Road, No 80 'recently vacated by Marie Lloyd'. Further south on the Kings Road, on the east side, houses semi-detached, with tiny sloping gardens in the front - "a perfect picture in the summer".

In Little Camden Street, Maples Depository and Humphreys American Gun Factory are noted. College Place, 'having been rebuilt, with bay windows ... superior' – Bowles himself lived there and other officers from Marylebone. At the south east end of Great College Street, 'S. Pancras Labour Bureau: about 30 men reading the papers on hoardings or standing on the kerb'.

A walk again with Inspector Bowles a week later started at York Road where shops 'rapidly deteriorate'. In Clifton Road, the houses as 'apartments ... getting decidedly shabby'. This part of the 'Camden Estate ... has been affected by the removal of gates a few years ago by the L.C.C., by the building of a Board School and by the proximity of the cattle market'. Bowles remembered from his youth a saying that 'it stinks like Belle Isle' – the name of the land where the cattle market and slaughterhouses were built. St Paul's Road 'had gone down considerably ... only three families in the road kept servants now'. With rents at £45 'this necessitates sub-letting'. Camden Square's 'respectability still protected by a Square keeper'. Wrotham Road is 'working class throughout'.

A third walk, in Kentish Town with Inspector Tompkin, entered Rochester Road and Rochester Terrace and Wilmot Place, 'a wonderful quiet neighbourhood giving no trouble'. Of the 'Artisan's dwellings' at the junction of College Street and Kentish Town Road, asked if any casual labourers occupied the dwelling, Tompkin said he thought not: mainly mechanics: they were 'pretty strict'. And Jeffreys Street 'a quiet working class street'.

Booth recorded dissatisfaction with St Pancras Vestry after 1894 reforms of local administration, with its greater numbers of members and wider voting franchise. He quoted local views: 'not quite the right people' ... 'either small property owners or agents' ... 'publican's influence rules' ... 'trade union men fight solely for their own hand'. Yet, he says, 'In the supply of electric lighting there has been bold, and successful, enterprise; there were baths and wash-houses, 'liberal and economical'; environmental health matters were 'well attended to'; and of housing the difficulty was 'lack of any definite principle to act.' He reflected, 'the condemnation of the authorities is perhaps unfair ... whatever its faults, its predecessors were no more successful' (p193).

It is difficult to consider the population of Camden Town within the larger narratives of working people by historians such as Gareth Jones. He read liberal accounts of London's housing as 'a fear that overcrowding might throw the respectable working class and the residuum together' and 'a major reorientation of middle class attitudes towards the casual poor'. Yet the micro-analysis of the Booth surveys shows both the intersecting of different incomes and

social position street by street. Just as the East End became crowded through influx in the Port of London, the areas around London's railway termini became crowded partly through people 'from the country' (including Ireland) coming without work. Euston Square and Agar Town were places of first resort, and the landlord rack-rents led to sub-tenancies and lack of investment.

Jones describes 'the bulk of London's industrial population' (excluding building trades) as within five sectors – clothing and footwear, wood and furniture, metals and engineering and precision manufacture (watches, scientific instruments). These were 'commodities of relatively high value and low bulk, involving a great deal of specialisation in warehousing and preparation for final manufacture, calling upon the services of many ancillary trades and requiring large inputs of labour and small inputs of power'. Of course employment stretched wider, with women in Camden Town for example as teachers as well as servants and men in transportation, warehousing and goods yards – the railways and canal. And while Jones also describes the 'noxious trades' of soap chemicals and bonemeal manufacture in West Ham, the Camden / Islington border at Battle Bridge had had from the eighteenth century piles of rubbish which could be sifted and discharged (eg for making bricks further along the Grand Union Canal).