

**HACKNEY AND
STOKE
NEWINGTON**

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Hackney and Stoke Newington by G. E. Mitton & Walter Besant

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G. E. MITTON & WALTER BESANT

**HACKNEY AND
STOKE
NEWINGTON**

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SHOREDITCH AND THE EAST END

STRAND.

THE THAMES.

WESTMINSTER.



The Fascination of
London

HACKNEY
AND
**STOKE
NEWINGTON**

BY
G. E. MITTON

EDITED BY
SIR WALTER BESANT

LONDON
ADAM & CHARLES BLACK
1908

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PREFATORY NOTE

It is unnecessary now to introduce the series of the Fascination of London by any explanation. Everyone knows that these little books form a part of the great Survey of London on which Sir Walter Besant laboured so lovingly before his death. Volumes covering the whole of the West End of London have been issued, and form a complete and minute history of the districts street by street. In those now contemporaneously brought out—viz., Hackney with Stoke Newington, and Shoreditch with the rest of the East End—we reach the extreme limits of our mighty Metropolis eastward. Hackney and Stoke Newington are treated in the same way as the rest of the survey, but it has been thought unnecessary to give so detailed a description of the East End. A general sketch of the East End in Sir Walter's own inimitable style adds peculiar interest to this volume, and is accompanied by a more particular account of the newer districts, where such observation is of value in view of their rapid growth and the obliteration of landmarks.

The general title of the series, as is well known, arose from a sentence of Sir Walter's when he said, "This work fascinates me more than anything I've ever done." Even in the slums of the East End he found this fascination, and, what is more, he is able to convey it to others. It may be predicted that this volume, though lacking the interest which always attaches to any district in which a reader resides, will be found to be in nothing else behind its predecessors.

As will have been noticed by anyone who has taken in the whole series, all the little books are dated about the end of the nineteenth century; their value lies in the fact that they form together a complete survey of London as it was at that time, so no attempt has been made to bring the later ones up to date, for by doing so the uniformity of the series and some of the interest would have been lost. It is astonishing to note, even in this short time, how much has changed and how much has been swept away. An attempt to describe the districts as they were then would now be impossible; but the work was carefully and completely done at the time, and is here presented as a faithful and accurate record which every Londoner who loves his city should possess.

HACKNEY

DERIVATION.—All the proposed derivations of Hackney are unsatisfactory. The best is that which suggests that some Dane—Hakon or Hacon—claimed an island, *ey* or *ea*, in the marshes, hence “Hacon’s ey.” The attempt to connect the word with the hackney-coach has altogether failed. Thomas, in his manuscript, *Antiquities of Hackney*, suggests that a great battle was fought here, and that Hack is connected with the Saxon for an axe, and is the same word as “to hack or hew.” Hence he sees in Hackney “the battle of the river.” A family of the name of Hacon still live in the parish, and are said to have migrated here 150 years ago.

BOUNDARIES.—Hackney is bounded on the north by Tottenham; on the east, by Walthamstow and Leyton; on the south, by Bow, Bethnal Green and Shoreditch; on the west, by Islington and Stoke Newington. It lies just within the London County Council jurisdiction, and is divided into three parliamentary boroughs—North, South, and Central Hackney. The first of these includes Stoke Newington.

HISTORY.—Several ancient manors are to be found in Hackney, of which the principal one, Lordshold, formed part of the possessions of the bishopric of London. It is not mentioned in Domesday Book, which omission Lysons accounts for by conjecturing it was included in the Survey of Stepney.

In 1551 Bishop Ridley surrendered the manor to the Crown, and it was granted to Lord Wentworth. It remained in the Wentworth family for a hundred years, until the estates of the Earl of Cleveland were forfeited to Parliament. After this it passed through many hands, remaining but a short time with any one holder, and eventually became the property of Francis Tyssen. His son succeeded him, but left only a daughter, who by marriage carried the property to the Amhurst (or, as it is now written, Amherst) family, and afterwards, through failure of male heirs, it reverted to another heiress, whose husband, William George Daniel, assumed the name of Tyssen and the arms by royal sign-manual. His eldest son took the additional name of Amherst.

The manor next in importance was that of the Knights Templars, who purchased land in the parish in 1233. Lysons gives a list of their possessions in 1308 as follows: "£6 . 1 . 8 rents of assize; thirty-five acres and a half of meadow valued at forty pence an acre, certain services of