

# Local London

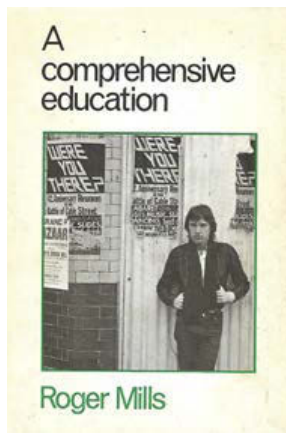
The Local London Reading Guide emerged as a way to document the various neighbourhoods, boroughs, and communities in London. Within the FWWCP, many writers write specifically about and from their specific location and emphasise how this space has affected their lives. The FWWCP has deep roots in the East End of London, particularly Hackney, because the inaugural FWWCP meeting was held at Centerprise Bookshop. From then on, London was where dozens of writing groups and publishing groups were founded. These groups include one of the founding FWWCP groups, the Basement Writers. Other groups in London, throughout the FWWCP's tenure, included Working Press; Black Ink; Centerprise; Stepney Books; Tower Hamlets Arts Project (THAP); Aldgate Press; London Voices; Hammersmith and Fulham's Ethnic Oral Histories Project, and more.



Images of FWWCP publications

Throughout the publications from London, we see writing about the shops on Brick Lane in the East End to the houses of Hoxton and Bethnal Green. We see stories of activists in Stepney and school children who went on strike to support their teacher Chris Searle. There is history about Old Poplar's churches and Kennington Park's political events. Finally, within many of the publications, we see how the various spaces of London are each unique and diverse in their own way from the types of work central to those locations to the dialects used among the community.

While the FWWCP reached at least 5 continents, London remained one of the key cities for the organisation's publishing and writing groups, its annual FED Festival, and now the location of the FWWCP Collection.



## A Comprehensive Education

Roger Mills, 1978

FWWCP/08 L 03

Roger Mills recalls his childhood and education in East London. He discusses the disconnect between childhood teachings and their purpose later in life. Prompted by unemployment, Mills shares stories ranging in topics that include friends, bullies, and holiday plans. He begins with his first day of school and concludes with a reflection ten years later.

**Keywords:** childhood | East End | education | memoir

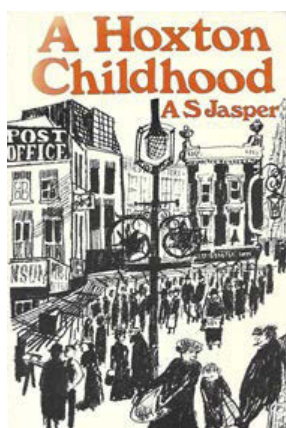
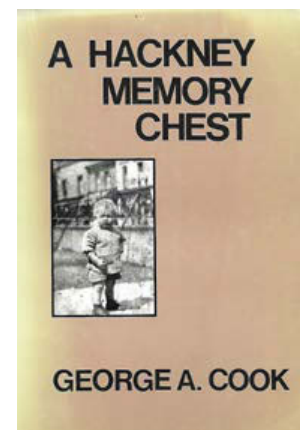
## A Hackney Memory Chest

George A. Cook, 1983

FWWCP/08 L 03

As a child, George A. Cook spent much time in a tuberculosis hospital. Instead of lamenting his diagnosis and further isolation, Cook focuses on the positive memories. Even though his stories are the majority of the book, he takes time to think about why these stories are the ones he remembers. Cook emphasises the relationships throughout his memoir and their importance from childhood into adulthood.

**Keywords:** Hackney | hospital | memoir | tuberculosis



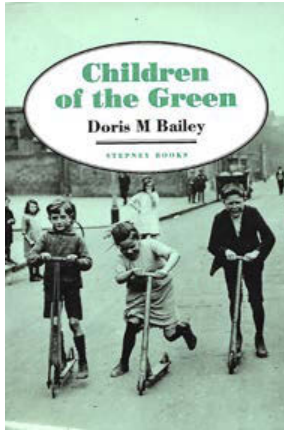
## A Hoxton Childhood

A. S. Jasper, 1969

FWWCP/08 L 03

A. S. Jasper recalls his childhood in Hoxton. He describes his family, weaving the stories together rather than telling one at a time. Jasper focuses on how his family changes after his older sister learns of her pregnancy. He deals with issues such as how alcohol, poverty, and war shapes families.

**Keywords:** childhood | Hoxton | memoir | war | working-class



## Children of the Green

Doris M. Bailey, 1981

FWWCPC/08 L 07

Doris Bailey shares stories from her childhood in Bethnal Green from 1922 to 1937. She starts with a recollection of being checked for lice by the school nurse, an instance where she learned the futility of arguing with authority figures. She includes details about her home life, her friends, and her neighbourhood in order to paint a picture of life in the 1920's East End.

**Keywords:** childhood | community | East End | memoir | working-class

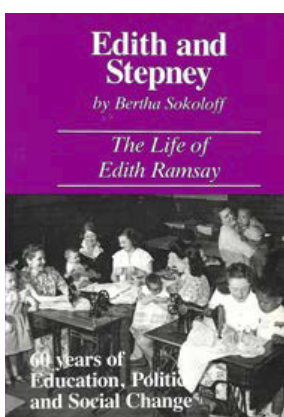
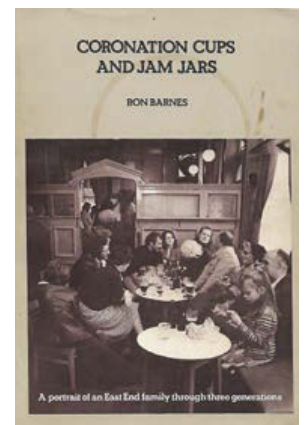
## Coronation Cups and Jam Jars

Ron Barnes, 1976

No box

Ron Barnes chronicles three generations of his family in the East End. He collects the stories of his grandparents and his parents, dedicating a section of the book to each of their times. He stresses the importance of writing down these memories to create a sort of living history, complete with humour and hardship.

**Keywords:** class | family | East End | working-class



## Edith and Stepney: 60 Years of Education, Politics and Social Change

Bertha Sokoloff, 1987

FWWCPC/08 L 07

*Edith and Stepney* by Bertha Sokoloff tells the life story of Edith Ramsey and her work with the Women's Evening Institute. These historical accounts show how Edith impacts the lives of working women and migrants in the East End. A hero among the working class, Edith was interested in the relationships between people and how they shaped society. Through her work, she was able to help change the lives of East Enders of all backgrounds.

**Keywords:** activism | East End | gender | literacy | migration



## In My World and Other Poems

Sally Flood, 1989

FWWCPC/08 L 02

Sally Flood's collection of poetry looks at the cycles of life, beginning with birth and going through our confrontations with our own mortality. This collection emphasises the importance of experiences and writing, regardless of formal education. She shows that the working class has as much truth in writing as the academic elite.

**Keywords:** class | children | community | gender | poetry

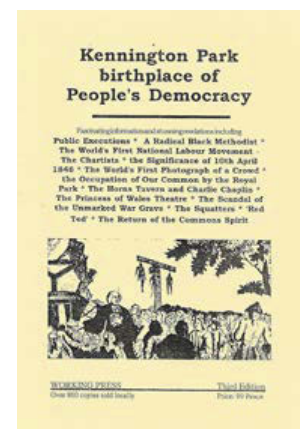
## Kennington Park: Birthplace of People's Democracy

Stefan Szczekun, no date

FWWCPC/08 L 10

This pamphlet chronicles the birth of British democracy in Kennington Park and its rise since the mid-1800s. There are short sections on various topics, including executions, radicalism, and war. In addition to historical information, it includes current events from the time of publication in the late 1990s. It looks at the history and contemplates the changes throughout the years.

**Keywords:** class | history | political conflict



## Memories

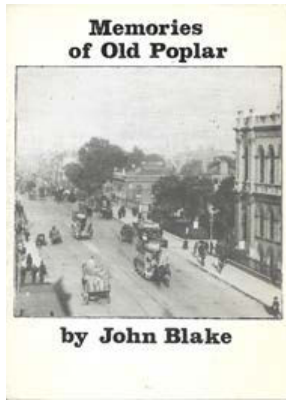
Paul George, 1977

FWWCPC/08 L 14

Paul George's *Memories* is a reflection of his childhood. George uses both prose and poetry to tell his stories. After migrating to England from Grenada, he wrote this collection at the age of sixteen, shortly before he left school in 1976. He includes tales of working and having fun as a child in the prose section, and the poetry section focuses on more serious issues such as prejudice and oppression.

**Keywords:** childhood | migration | poetry | Southall





## Memories of Old Poplar

John Blake, 1977

FWWCPC/08 L 07

John Blake's *Memories of Old Poplar* recounts his life in Poplar during Edwardian times. He realises that changes have happened and seeks to preserve the everyday memories of the past. In addition to his family, Blake describes churches, entertainment, and political events that stuck out in his mind. He remembers Poplar as a vibrant and thriving place in his youth, but he also remembers the decline in the dock working industry.

**Keywords:** activism | community | dock workers | memoir

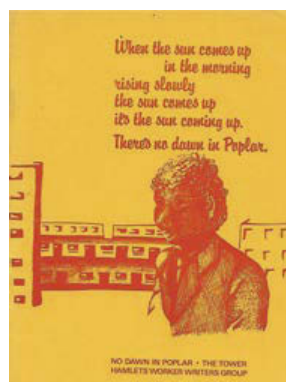
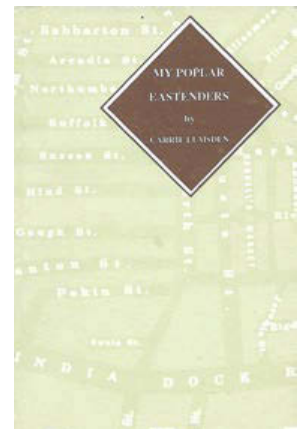
## My Poplar Eastenders

Carrie Lumsden, 1991

FWWCPC/08 L 07

Carrie Lumsden reflects on growing up in Poplar and working in Aldgate. She chronicles events that happen before, during, and after World War I. Her memoir covers events from her birth in 1912 to the end of her employment in 1921. She includes stories of childhood entertainment, holidays, and education.

**Keywords:** adolescence | community | World War I



## No Dawn in Poplar

The Tower Hamlets Worker Writers Group, 1980

FWWCPC/ RM Part 1

Multiple authors contribute to this collection of creative writing. It includes prose, poetry, photographs, and drawings that reflect personal experiences. Many of the pieces place the writers in the role of an outsider, emphasising the details that alienate them from their surroundings. The pieces evoke a sense of desperation with little hope of escape.

**Keywords:** East End | poetry | prose



## Old Age Ain't No Place for Sissies

Gladys McGee, 1986

FWWCPC/08 L 14

Gladys McGee tackles the topic of changing times in her collection of poetry. She includes poems commenting on finances and class structure. Many of her poems include an element of humour and humility, showing both the positive experiences and the struggles of the working class.

**Keywords:** class | East End | old age | poetry

## Paper Talk

Sally Flood, no date

FWWCPC/08 L 02

In this book of poetry, Flood describes life at her home in East London. Here, she writes about sleepless nights with family, as well as drawn out days working as an embroidery machinist. Her poetry simultaneously draws attention to the beauty and hardships as a working-class woman.

**Keywords:** class | community | family | gender | migration | poetry | poverty | work | working-class | women's writing



## Scenes... from a Stepney Youth

Charles Poulsen, 1988

FWWCPC/08 L 09

In this memoir, Charles Poulsen recalls growing up as a Jewish migrant in the East End during the 1920s and 1930s. He includes descriptions of his education and employment in a workshop, and he details his struggles with racism, economic diversity, and becoming "British." He goes on to describe entertainment and politics, featuring colourful characters of the time.

**Keywords:** adolescence | East End | Jewish | migration | working-class



## Star Mum's: Poetry from Canning Town

Multiple authors, 1980

FWWCPC/08 L 07

This collection features poems by mothers that are unaltered by the publishing company, striving to be an example for other aspiring poets. Some of the topics include childhood nostalgia, motherly love, adulthood, and education.

**Keywords:** childhood | community | education | family | gender | motherhood | poetry

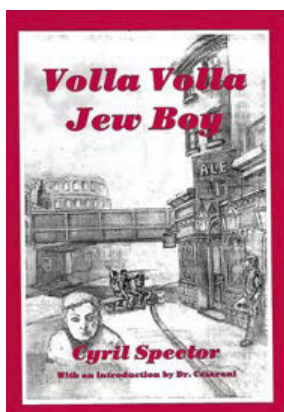
## The Oak King

London Voices, 2000

FWWCPC/08 L 05

*The Oak King* collects poems and prose from multiple authors that celebrate the themes of strength and nature's wonders. Drawings accompany some of the stories. This anthology is divided into five sections, including hopes, trauma, love, and people. The remaining section is devoted to Bill Eburn, a founding member of London Voices.

**Keywords:** community | London Voices | poetry | trauma



## Volla Volla Jew Boy

Cyril Spector, 1988

FWWCPC/08 L 03

Cyril Spector's memoir reflects on the history of Jewish life in London, from migration to establishing employment. Instead of the image shown in recent times, Spector shows the long journey that Jewish migrants and their descendants had from the early 1900s to the 19980s. Spector includes sections of his own education, family, and employment.

**Keywords:** East End | Hackney | Jewish | migration | racism