

# Migration

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Although the FWWCP began in London, England, the network has included writing/publishing groups from across the globe for multiple decades. Some groups were located throughout the North American, African, and Australian continents. However, FWWCP groups in England often published texts about coming to England as migrants from other places in the world. For instance, within the FWWCP Collection, there are bilingual stories detailing the journey from Poland, Bangladesh, Ireland, Iran, Jamaica, Greece, and more.



**Above:** Photo by Jessica Pauszek, London, June 2018

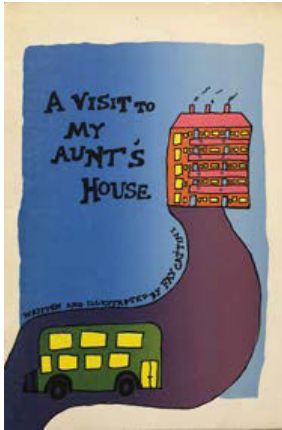
**Right:** "Borders" by saaste is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.



Each of the texts in this reading guide is concerned with migration, immigration, and emigration in the twentieth century. The publications appear as books, booklets, short stories, poetry, and anthologies.

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Often written as a memoir or life history, writers offer reflections on their lives in their home countries, as well as obstacles to meaningful lives in England. Sometimes, writers describe differences between their hometowns and Britain in regard to housing, culture, food, identity, labour, and stereotypes, while others reflect more on politics and activism.



## A Visit to my Aunt's House

Fay Cattini, 1982

FWWCP/08 L 09

Fay Cattini wrote and illustrated a book about her childhood for her two preschool-aged daughters. Cattini describes the people, locations, food, and games from her early years in India. The story is set in Cattini's childhood home and her aunt's house. Recurring themes of childhood memories, imagination, and culture are complemented with illustrations, which make it easy for a young child to follow.

**Keywords:** childhood | culture | family | short story | travel

## Across Seven Seas and Thirteen Rivers: Life Stories of Pioneer Sylhetti Settlers in Britain

Catherine Adams, editor, 1987

FWWCP/08 L 12

*Across Seven Seas and Thirteen Rivers: Life Stories of Pioneer Sylhetti Settlers in Britain* was compiled and edited by Catherine Adams and published in 1987 by THAP Books. The book is a historical account of the relationship between Britain and the Bengal region of India in the 19th and 20th centuries. The first part of the book focuses on Bengali men who left home to work at foreign shipping companies (Calcutta Crews, Lascar Seamen) and who settled in London after their contracts expired. The second part of the book describes how those men learned how to live life in England.

**Keywords:** Bangladesh | employment | family | government | labour | laws | migration | World War II



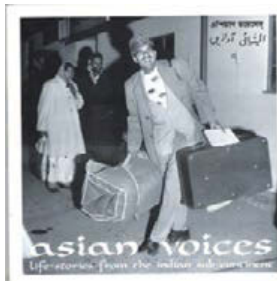
## 'Across the Irish Sea': An Age Exchange Publication Based on Memories of London Irish Pensioners

Pam Schweitzer, editor, 1989

FWWCP/08 L 12

*Booknews No. 3, Women Writers* is an educational magazine focused solely on women's writing groups within the FWWCP. It was primarily for "teachers who want to know about writing and publishing outside the mainstream and like to encourage active involvement by their students in the writing process." By encouraging a range of works across the FWWCP, they hoped to showcase the rich tradition of women's writing through a variety of forms and genres.

**Keywords:** family | labour | marriage | nostalgia | theatre



## Asian Voices: Life stories from the Indian Subcontinent

Hammersmith and  
Fulham Community  
History Series, 1993

FWWCPC/ RM 01

*Asian Voices* is a joint project between the Hammersmith & Fulham association, the Bangladesh Association for Culture and Education, and the Ethnic Communities Oral History Project in 1993. The book is a collection of memoirs and autobiographies from people from different regions of India. Many authors remark on the blissful simplicity of their childhood and their experience of immigration to England. Many also comment on the hardships that emerge from immigration. Stories are written in English, Bengali, and Urdu.

**Keywords:** childhood | family | housing | labor | memory | sports

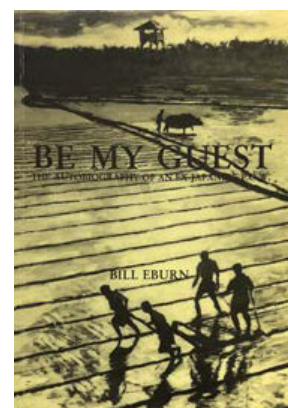
## Be My Guest: The Autobiography of an Ex-Japanese Prisoner of War

Bill Eburn, 1985

FWWCPC/08 L 12

Eburn's autobiography begins with his early childhood being raised by his aunt and uncle. He then focuses on his time in World War II, writing about his feelings surrounding the draft, following his time on the HMS Collingwood, being assigned to submarines, his capture and coming home. Perhaps most poignantly, he also details the contrast between the glory that comes from wearing a military uniform and the realities of war. This publication is written like a diary, with poetry included.

**Keywords:** childhood | poetry | war



## Home to Home: Reminiscences of Bangladeshi Women in Sheffield

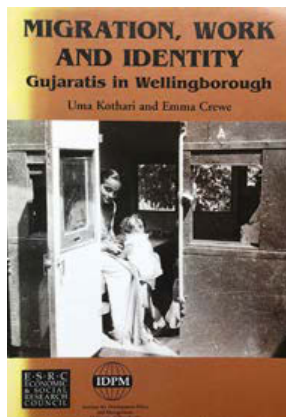
Safuran Ara and Debjani  
Chatterjee, 1995

FWWCPC/03 Y 12

*Home to Home* is a collection of stories from Bangladeshi women compiled and edited by Safuran Ara and Debjani Chatterjee. Writers discuss cultural differences related to gender roles, language, appearance, and the maintenance of their gendered identity. Some writers reminisce on the difficulties of cooking in England, where the tools needed for their way of cooking are unavailable. Many of these writers discuss the loneliness that they feel in England. *Home to Home* is a bilingual text, in English and Bengali, with some images.

**Keywords:** education | family | gender | language | marriage





## Migration, Work and Identity: Gujaratis in Wellingborough

Uma Kothari and Emma Crewe, 1997

FWWCPC/03 Y 12

This publication recounts the journey of the Gujarati people coming to Britain beginning in 1833 and ending in 1950. The narrative traces the move from India to East Africa before settling in Wellingborough where the first Gujarati, Nagarbhai Patel, settled. The authors discuss feelings of acceptance in Britain, learning about British culture, maintaining their cultural identity, and eventually becoming active in British society by supporting Indian social and political initiatives.

**Keywords:** autobiography | education | Gujaratis | housing | racism | West Asia | work

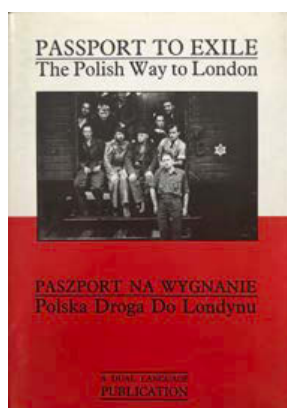
## Our Experience: Women from Somalia, Tanzania, Bangladesh and Pakistan Write About Their Lives

Gatehouse, 1996

FWWCPC/ RM 01

*Our Experience* is a collection of stories written by women from Somalia, Tanzania, Bangladesh, and Pakistan about their lives. These women talk about the differences in cultural expectations, including food, money, religion, school, and gender roles. Many focus on their first night in England and how they eventually came to consider England home. *Our Experience* represents some of the authors' first writings in English. Some stories are translated into Somali, Ki Swahili, Bengali, or Urdu, and have illustrations.

**Keywords:** childhood | education | gender | language | patriotism | religion | war



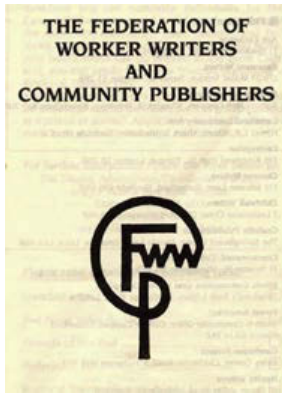
## Passport to Exile: the Polish Way to London

Hammersmith and Fulham Community History Series, Sav Kyriacou and the Polish Reminiscence Group, 1988

FWWCPC/08 L 12

*Passport to Exile: the Polish Way to London* is the second publication in the Hammersmith & Fulham Community History series. This bilingual publication was transcribed, translated, and edited by Sav Kyriacou and the Polish Reminiscence group. The publication includes five autobiographies, which describe Poles coming to London in the 1940s, their lives in their new homes, and the reasons they chose to stay. Cultural expectations dominate discussion of bias and stereotypes. This publication continues into another called, *Travelling Light: Poles on Foreign Soil*.

**Keywords:** activism | art | childhood | family | labour | Poland | war



## So This is England

Multiple authors, 1984

FWWCPC/ RM 01

The memoirs in *So This is England* are mainly from people of African-Caribbean descent, while some Vietnamese, Italian, and Irish descendant stories are also included. Stories are divided and presented in five sections: coming to England, housing, work, schooldays, and memories. Many of the stories describe processes of migration, acclimation to daily life in England, and cultural assimilation.

**Keywords:** childhood | factory | family | labour | work

## The Irish in Exile: Stories of Emigration

Hammersmith and Fulham Community History Series, no date

FWWCPC/08 L 12

*The Irish in Exile* contains memoirs of Irish immigrants that came to Britain in the first half of the 20th century. Those who emigrated as children describe feeling very secure in Ireland, yet, once in England, recall great economic, social, and educational disadvantages. Others who came to London for work describe the impact of labour shortages in Ireland as drivers of immigration. Authors focus on the struggles of changing labour conditions and the daily impact of poverty.

**Keywords:** activism | childhood | emigration | housing | Irish | labour | short story



# Further Reading in the FWWCP Collection:

## **A Bowl of Wisdom**

Multiple authors. Eastside Books, London, 1997.

FWWCP/08 L 12

**Digital Collection:** <http://fwwcp.gn.apc.org/node/6816>

## **Brick Lane 1978: The Events and their Significance**

Leech, Kennet. Sidelines, 1980.

FWWCP/ RM Part 4

## **Home from Home British Pakistanis in Mirpur**

Imran, Irna and Tim Smith. Brandford Heritage Recording Unit, 1997.

FWWCP/03 Y 13

## **Just for Five Years? Reminiscences of Pakistani Senior Citizens of Sheffield**

Iqbal, Mohammed, Safuran Ara and Rachel Van Riel. Sheffield City Libraries, Yorkshire, 1990.

FWWCP/03 Y 12

## **Sailing on Two Boats: Second Generation Perspectives**

Multiple authors. Ethnic Communities Oral History Project, London, 1993.

FWWCP/08 L 12

## **The Motherland Calls: African/ Caribbean Experiences**

Multiple authors. Ethnic Communities Oral History Project, Hammersmith/Fulham Community History Series, London, 1992.

FWWCP/08 L 12

## **Travelling Light: Poles on Foreign Soil**

Multiple authors. Ethnic Communities Oral History Project, Hammersmith/Fulham Community History Series, London, 1989.

FWWCP/08 L 12

**Digital Collection:** <http://fwwcp.gn.apc.org/node/6864>

## **Xeni: Greek-Cypriots in London**

Multiple authors. Ethnic Communities Oral History Project, London, 1990.

FWWCP/08 L 12

**Digital Collection:** <http://fwwcp.gn.apc.org/node/6863>