

GROWING UP IN THE EAST END

Stanley Silverman

We lived just off Jubilee Street. On the corner of Stepney Way was Blooms, the butcher, the uncle of the main Blooms. When we fancied a change from school dinners, if we had enough money we got together to go to Barnett's and had baked klops [chopped meat] and this was a real treat. Another memory is of the pickled cucumber barrels with people picking out their own cucumbers. I didn't understand politics at the time but as a child there were signs all over the place for people to vote for Solly Kaye who was a communist.

I started my school life at Deal Street School, just off Hanbury Street. It was mainly a Jewish school with Jewish teachers. I was very happy there and still have a couple of friends from that time. We had our own kosher dinners. After that I moved on to Robert Montefiore Senior School. The headmaster there was Sir Rhodes Boyson who later became an MP. Coincidentally when I lived in North Wembley he was my MP. He told later that he had a meeting with Miriam Moses who was the leader of Brady Girls' Club to find a way to have more integration between all the pupils to create an inter-denominational assembly at our school.

In those days all the youngsters found a suitable club. I started going to Brady Boys Club and thoroughly enjoyed all the facilities, especially table tennis and billiards and the excitement of Sunday morning football. After a time I transferred to Oxford & St. George's Club where I had a chance to get into the first team.



I remember very well that all the stallholders outside and around Whitechapel station collectively were called 'The Waste' and still are. The Jewish menswear shops were Grays, Sable Brothers and Davis. Johnny Isaacs. The fish and chip shop had a 'fling' drink machine.

All the youngsters used to go there after club; it was definitely a lot of fun. The salt beef bars were Barnetts, which held functions, Strongwaters and, of course, Blooms. Blooms was expecting Jackie Mason, after he appeared in the West End to come and eat there. My friend and I went there. Blooms mistook my friend for Jackie Mason but afterwards when he turned up, we met him.

My father was a member of Great Garden Street Shul, the flag ship of the Federation. My family didn't frequent shul but my father took me on the Yom Tovim.

My mother insisted that I attended Redmans Road Talmud Torah until my bar mitzvah. The senior authority there was Rev Goldbloom. I remember that most of the time he had a cigarette dangling from his mouth which turned his grey beard yellow. (editors note: Rev Jacob Koppel Goldbloom 1872-1961, introduced Ivrit to the UK and was an early Rabbinic convert to Zionism. Famously he gave the boys the day off the day that Mendel Beilis was cleared of a blood libel accusation in Russia in 1913 – somewhat before Stanley's time).



Rev Goldbloom

I remember around Pesach time the children from the Brady Street buildings used to cut holes in the matzo boxes and we lined the boxes up against the wall with different number rewards. We all then used to throw marbles at the boxes hoping to win. On Yom Kippur all the youngsters who lived all around the East End, went to the Tower of London to sit on the cannons and look over the Thames for Taschlich. It was always a lot of fun because there were so many of us.