

Bishopsgate Library is an independent library, wholly funded by the Bishopsgate Foundation. It is open to everyone, with no membership required. All visitors are welcome to explore the Library's unique and internationally recognized collections.

Opening hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday*: 10am–5.30pm. Wednesday: 10am–8pm.

*Please note: the Library closes at 2pm on the 1st Friday of the month.

The London Collection

Bishopsgate Library's London Collection covers inner London, with a focus on the City of London and Spitalfields, and describes all major aspects of the character of London and its social, economic and architectural development. It is particularly strong on 19th-century social history, but has many wider materials about the capital's long and varied history. The collection continues to grow with the addition of publications and other materials concerning the modern development of London.



St Paul's Cathedral

- 45,000+ books, pamphlets and journal extracts
- 2,000+ photos
- 275 prints and watercolours
- 250+ maps, from as far back as the 17th century
- 350+ miscellaneous deeds
- 40 currently received journals, magazines and annual reports plus 350+ titles that are no longer published
- newspaper cuttings and ephemera, starting from the late 19th century, about Bishopsgate and Spitalfields

Guides to a changing London

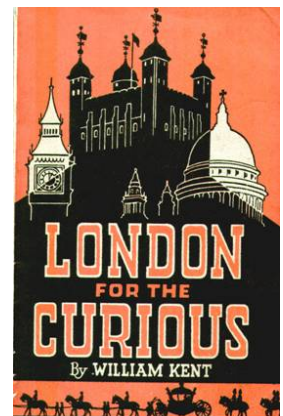
Within all the items in our collection, covering all different topics of London history, we are particularly proud of our guidebooks and trade directories.

'Few sources chronicle the growth and development of the great cities more minutely than do guidebooks. A series of Baedekers detail, edition by edition, new business, new sights and amusements, changes in public transport and even in the exchange rate of the pound.'

'A Survey of London'. Friends of the Library: Bryn Mawr College, 1982.

We have 800+ guidebooks, starting from 1755 and including multiple editions of *The Golden Guide*, *Baedeker*, *Langham Hotel Guide* and *Blue Guide* among many others, to the most current *Rough Guide*, *Lonely Planet* and *Time Out* guides. In addition, we have many restaurant guides which track the city's changing culinary tastes.

Trade directories are excellent resources for tracing individual businesses or researching the changing use of buildings and character of streets. Our collection starts in 1740, and we have a trade directory (by Pigot, Robson, Kelly or the Post Office) for nearly every year up to 1990.



A 1947 guidebook cover

Photographs, prints and drawings

Jeffrey Abbott, 2002



'St Helen's Bishopsgate and the Erotic Gherkin'

Our photographs document the architectural and social history of much of London from the middle of the 19th century to the present day. These include prints by S.H.R. Salmon of churches, Paul Barkshire's images of buildings, and the London History Workshop collection which illustrates extensively the capital's social and cultural life. We also have 120 photographs from the Society for Photographing Relics of Old London, taken between 1875 and 1886. The prints and watercolours are of churches and buildings in Bishopsgate and the City, many of which are by J.L. Stewart and a number by T.H. Shepherd.

Maps of London and its environs

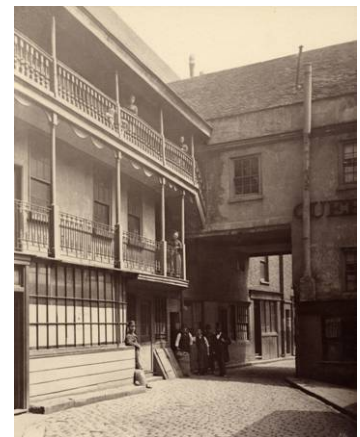
Maps are another interesting way of studying the growth and change of the city. Among our many examples are a reproduction of John Roque's 1746 map, Charles Booth's 1898/9 poverty maps, 20th-century A-Z's, bus and tube maps, Ordnance Survey 1894/6 1:1250 scale map and the London Topographical Society's publications of Elizabethan, Restoration, Georgian, Regency, Victorian and World War II bomb-damage maps.

News cuttings, ephemera and archives

Many events and businesses will never be recorded in books or pamphlets, so to help fill the gap we actively collect cuttings from local and national newspapers and magazines, handbills, advertisements and ephemera relating to individual streets and events in Spitalfields and the eastern fringe of the City.

Described below are some archive items relating to London and its institutions:

- **Spitalfields Inventory:** Survey records and colour transparencies of architecture in the Bishopsgate and Spitalfields area between 1990 and 1991.
- **Liverpool Street Station campaign:** Records of the campaign to stop the redevelopment of Liverpool Street Station in the mid-1970s.
- **Raphael Samuel:** The papers of historian Raphael Samuel include records of his involvement with Michael Young's study into family and kinship in Bethnal Green, alongside oral history interviews conducted with Barnardo's Boy and East End criminal Arthur Harding and others.
- **London Co-operative Society:** Minute books, records and photographs detailing the activity of the LCS and its predecessor bodies, including Stratford, Edmonton, West London and Gray's co-operative societies from the mid-19th century to the late 1980s.
- **London Collection Manuscripts:** We hold an eclectic selection of over 50 smaller archive items collected since the opening of Library in 1895, concerning the City and the East End. Highlights include records of St Botolph's without Bishopsgate Parish, the White Dog Benevolent Society (a charitable organization for the poor), deeds and other material concerning Crosby Hall.



Queen's Head Inn Yard, Southwark

Society for Photographing Relics of
Old London, 1875-1886

We have many more materials and resources than can be described in a short leaflet. Come and visit us at Bishopsgate Library to find out more.