

This park was one of two provided by Bermondsey Council using the proceeds from the sale, one of many improvements carried out at the urging of the borough's MP Dr Alfred Salter, a lifelong campaigner to improve the environment for the people of Bermondsey. Just beyond on the north are the vats of Sarsons vinegarworks.

Return to Bermondsey St

Further north is White's Grounds, formerly flanked by Steam Flour Mills, Wool warehouses, a Tannery, a Curriers and the Black Eagle Brewery; little trace now remains. Tyers Gate has two large warehouses; on the north is the former Kenson Leather Co, and some smaller properties. Beyond this on Bermondsey St are some smaller, earlier, more

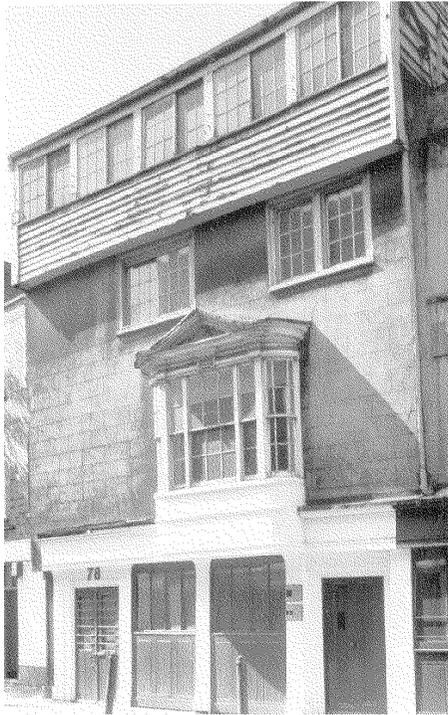
domestic buildings from the C17, including one with a fine oriel window and a weather boarded loft (78). Ash & Ash are printers' engineers. Carmarthen Place formerly housed an India Rubber works and yet another tannery, East, Kinsey & East. Beyond on the east side (65-71) is an attractive 4 bayed warehouse, and beyond that a former pub and a former police station. Tempo Leather (55) has gone, but the sign remains. The yard opposite was a distillery, and north of that were wool and hop warehouses. On the east side in 1914 was the Coral Chocolate Manufactory.

At the junction with St Thomas St, turn left, and immediately bear left past another warehouse (Overseas Leather Co) into Snowfields

London Bridge Station opened in 1836 with London's first passenger service; the italianate station by Henry Roberts came four years later, and then had to be rebuilt around 1850 to cope with increased traffic generated by the Crystal Palace. The large train shed dates from 1860 and the tower is New London Bridge House (R Seifert & Ptnrs, 1973). On the left is a typical Board School, enlarged in 1900, and then to the right a typical 1930's flat block with ground floor shops. Arthur's Mission, built in the 1890's, is now used by the Shaftesbury Society. The ornate Guinness Trust dwellings of 1897/8 replaced a pub, the Ship and Mermaid, and many small cramped dwellings.

Turn left into Weston St

The warehouses to your left and the buildings set back from the road at the right (75, the offices of B B Vos & Son) were all used in the leather trade. At



the corner of Leathermarket St is the Leather, Hide and Wool Exchange (1878, George Ellington & Sons), its hefty porch supported by twin Atlases. A series of five roundels depict the leather trades. The exchange had a short active life, apparently only functioning as such until 1912. It now houses a pub, the Jugglers Arms, and a first floor room is used for juggling tuition by the company More Balls Than Most. Beyond this, the earlier (1833) Leather Market originally had a covered archway at each end; a major current use is as a warehouse for coloured paper specialists G F Smith of London. Through the near arch is a range of C19 warehouses. In Leathermarket St (22) is a former leather factors with an impressive entrance arch.

Return up Weston St and turn left in Snowfields.

The area to the north, now various extensions to Guy's Hospital, was formerly occupied by hop warehouses, dominated by the 1975 Guy's Tower. Up Great Maze Pond can be seen the 1852 extension to the hospital. Continuing along Newcomen St, the Royal Arms on the Kings Arms pub (dated 1760, King St) are said to be from old London Bridge. Opposite are the former Marshall's Charity offices, 1853 Tudor.

Turn left into Borough High St and walk back to Borough station.

Some good late C19 and early C20 warehouses remain among mediocre recent developments.

above left: 74 Bermondsey St above right Leather Hide & Wool Exchange, Weston St
below: 22 Leathermarket St on other side: Morocco St and Leathermarket St



published by Peter Marshall 31 Budebury Rd Staines Middx 0784 456474
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West Bermondsey

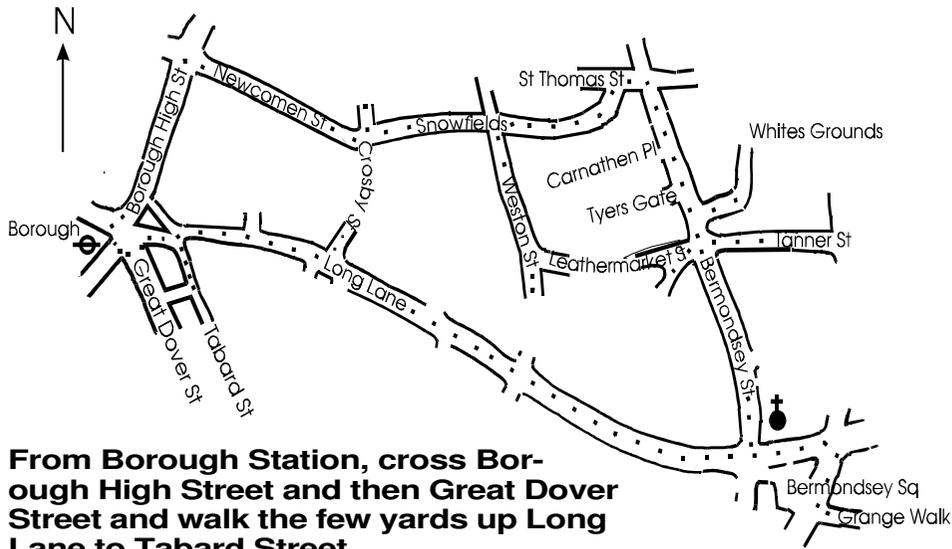


The leather area

Bermondsey grew up between the Thames and Bermondsey Abbey, demolished at the Reformation. Trades then developed based on its position next to the wharves of the Upper Pool and on the traffic from the South East and South into London. Up to relatively recently its main industry away from the river was leather — fell-mongering, tanning, marketing and manufacturing of leather goods etc. Its loss has left a gap, with many empty industrial buildings. Other traditional industries - hops and wool - have also disappeared, as have cargo handling and food manufacture. Gone are the days when Bermondsey was only a stone's throw from "the breakfast table of England". One traditional Southwark industry has diversified and expanded into the area — printing and allied trades such as plate making, paper selling and graphic design. Much of the north of the area is now covered by the sprawling Guy's Hospital, its future currently under discussion. Transfer of the Caledonian Market from Islington to Bermondsey Square in 1950 makes this a popular attraction for antique and bargain hunters on Friday mornings. The boundary between Southwark and Bermondsey boroughs ran irregularly north to south through the area; the present London Borough of Southwark was formed by amalgamation of these with Camberwell in 1965.

an industrial archaeology walk

by Peter Marshall
Parts of this walk are based on a walk led by Tim Smith for the GLIAS Recording Group



From Borough Station, cross Borough High Street and then Great Dover Street and walk the few yards up Long Lane to Tabard Street.

This was the original road to Dover (known as Kent St); Great Dover St was an early bypass (around 1815), built probably as much to allow military movement to discourage possible disaffection as to relieve traffic. A few yards down Tabard St (19) is the unusual tower of Harding & Sons, Hardware Merchants, Tinplate Works and Japanners, now owned by Thom & Cook Ltd, Board and Paper Merchants.

Return to Long Lane, turning right.

Harding's main Japan and Tinplate works was on the north side of Long Lane (25-33 & 35) - now demolished. Considerable industry was situated along Long Lane, and some still remains, much used by paper and printing trades. Worsleys Collecting (60), built in 1903, was a part of C W Trotman's Steam and Range Boiler Works. Iron working is another traditional Southwark industry - its origins in the illegal trade of Wealden iron before crossing London Bridge to Leadenhall Market, then the only legal trading place.

Turn into Crosby Row

A few yards down are the attractive 1908 gate houses to Plain Place; at the turn of the century this was the yard of a rag merchant, John Thomas Harradine. Baden Place a little further north - now new offices - was then in much more varied use, housing a maker of printer's wipes, a diabetic food manufacturer, a druggist, a distiller's chemist and a tea warehouse.

Return to Long Lane

The Selected Rug Co, with its distinctive green bricks (84), was part of the wire weavers Bedford, Steer, End & Co, founded on this site as the original Southwark Wire Works in 1824. Just past this on the north side of the road (101-3) was the vinegar works of White, Cottell & Co.

Extensive redevelopment in this area by both the local councils and the LCC in the 1930's - 50's provide some interesting architectural comparisons - for example between 100 Long Lane and the facing flats of the Lockyer Estate on the north side.

St Christopher's House (205) is now a hostel for Guy's Hospital. The premises part occupied by Profoto (217) were formerly a multistorey

stables (architect J Butterworth, 1886), belonging in 1900 to bonded carman Samuel Taylor. A house with some fine brickwork fronts the property on Long Lane. The 1950 factory (237) housed Oyez Ltd, the Solicitors Law Stationers Society. The large warehouse at 239 was built for Hepburn & Gale, tanners, who merged in 1920 with Samuel Barrow & Sons to form the Barrow Hepburn Group Ltd - advertising slogan 'Everything in Leather'— with a world-wide trade (239). The building was more recently used by Britz Brothers, fur dealers.

A short detour across Bermondsey Square takes you to Grange Walk

Nos 5-7 are the much rebuilt remains of the South Gatehouse, the only surviving remains of the medieval Bermondsey Abbey (demolished

around 1541). The gate is said to have hung on the hinges visible on 7 until 1760. Nos 8-11 are probably late C18. Excavations of the Abbey site are currently being made just to the north in Tower Bridge Rd.

Re-cross Bermondsey Square - now best known for its Friday morning antique market - to Bermondsey St.

On the SE corner is the Watchhouse, built 1812; St Mary Magdalen was rebuilt in 1680, and is currently being restored. Next to the church is the former rectory, c.1830, and next to that a building with a high seven-stepped gable and Art-Nouveau style lettering 'Time & Talents Settlement 1907'. Much of this end of the street is C19 warehouses now taken up by antique storerooms.

The great majority of buildings in and around Bermondsey St were originally connected with the leather industry - C19 maps show many tanneries and tanning pits. No 156 is a curious concrete structure housing the General Iron Foundry Co Ltd. Through its arch is Royal Oak Yard, with some remaining buildings from tanners Francis Bacon & Sons in various other uses. Across the street, Christy's of Bermondsey was the largest hat factory in the world; a series of alleys leads to nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings now occupied by printing and allied trades. Just beyond these is a large warehouse which is now used by the cork merchants, Rankin Bros & Sons (139).

Turn into Leathermarket St

From the corner is one of the best remaining glimpses of the former townscape of leather warehouses; R W Autos with its horses heads was formerly a Smithy, but all of the buildings down Morocco St (then Upper Russell St) were in the leather trade - fell-mongers Strong & Rawle, tanners

P Margetson & Co and Benjamin White, leather dressers, leather manufacturers, hide and skin merchants etc. Leathermarket St (then just Market St) had its share too, including another tanner (Oastler, Palmer & Co Ltd) but was slightly more varied with a wool factor, a hop factor (Wild, Neame & Co) as well as a Gas and Sulphate producer. The empty corner site is the result of a fire unfortunately too common in empty properties in conservation areas.

Return to Bermondsey St and cross to Tanner St

At the corner of Tanner St were the premises of William Cockle & Co, wire workers; part of their sign is still visible. Along Tanner St (3-7) were buildings occupied around 1880 by the wool merchant James Lord, which by the turn of the century were Simmons & Co, Patent Perambulator Makers. No 3 has been recently restored with the aid of old photographs; these buildings are thought to date from around 1830; rumour suggests that the architect for them may have been one of Telford's assistants then busy on St Katharine's docks.

The tennis courts are on the site of the Bermondsey Workhouse; in them is a part of the tower of St Olave's Church, Tooley St, built in 1846 and demolished in 1928 for the building of St Olave's House.

